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A liturgy for the Season of Creation (SoC) 2012: Earth Sunday. Source: <http://ecofaith.org/mnc/soc>

You might also like to use elements of the original SoC liturgy: www.seasonofcreation.com, or the Seasons of the Spirit resource, which now also follows the SoC.

This liturgy was written to accompany the [ProjectReconnect](#) DVD resource (which includes an all ages reflection, adult reflection, additional readings with video accompaniment and songs. You can also download the videos free at <http://ecofaith.org/mnc/soc>.

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For Project Reconnect users: about this liturgy and DVD

Thanks to the project reconnect team for inviting me to contribute to these DVDs. Over time, “contribute” shifted to “produce the whole thing” as I thought of new possibilities, though technical and time limitations meant that many of them were scaled back- maybe next year! Any technical glitches in September’s DVDs are my fault, not the regular team’s!

I provided this liturgy which uses all or most of the resources on the DVD, so that you have a complete package if that is what you are looking for. It is also on the DVD in the extras folder with a couple of books.

Of course, you might only pick a couple of things off the DVD and write your own liturgies, or be using the original Season of Creation resources, or even the Season of the Spirit resources.

The DVD itself has been arranged so that everything is on the one menu screen, so you don’t have to dive into submenus for the songs.

The screenshot shows a DVD menu titled "SEASON OF CREATION SKY". The menu is organized into two columns of options. The left column includes: "INTRODUCTION" (green background), "ECOFAITH COMMUNITY: 2MIN" (purple background), "ECOFAITH COMMUNITY: 4MIN" (purple background), "ALL AGES BOWERBIRD" (blue background), "SKY REFLECTION" (blue background), "QUESTIONS (STILL)" (blue background), a central image area with "eco-faith" and "season of creation" text, "ASHES 2 ASHES" (blue background), and "LORD OF SEA&SKY" (blue background). The right column includes: "GOD UNITES HIS SCATTERED" (blue background), "PS148 PRAISE" (blue background), "BEAUTY OF EARTH" (blue background), "WHEN MORNING GILDS" (blue background), "IMMORTAL INVISIBLE" (blue background), "LORD OF SEA&SKY" (blue background), "BE THOU MY VISION" (blue background), "HEAVENS SHALL DECLARE" (blue background), "FROM HEAVEN YOU CAME" (blue background), "WIDE SKY ROLLS (INSTR)" (blue background), "WIDE SKY ROLLS (C)" (blue background), "MAY THE FEET (C)" (blue background), and "NOW UNTO HIM" (blue background). Callout boxes on the left explain: "Story about a community that meets to worship God under the sky (2&4 min versions)", "Bowerbird (a prodigal son parable)", "Dr Miriam Pepper", "Press MENU to exit", and "The songs start here this week". A callout box on the right explains: "Most songs this week are straight from the ProjectReconnect archive", "Italics means there are theme based backgrounds (final version may have more than shown here)", and "(c) means you need copyright permission to project words to play these."

Hopefully the colour coding makes it easy to distinguish the various sections.

It has been a steep learning curve, both technically, and in terms of what seems to work when speaking to a camera instead of a live gathering, I hope you find the included material helpful in our common quest to live better on the Earth, as disciples seeking the reconciliation and renewal of all creation (for us Uniting Church types, that’s from the *Basis of Union* chapter 3).

Some songs appear in more than one version, usually one with and without lyrics, which you can play depending on whether you have the relevant CCLI license to screen words in public. The ones with copyrighted lyrics end in (c). Others have public domain lyrics and so only one version.

Thanks to all the congregations who sang for this week’s DVD, mostly ones already on the project reconnect song archive.

There are more songs this week, giving plenty of choice, so some of the prayers are left blank, assuming that you will tie them into whichever song you choose to play before-hand.

copyright notice

This liturgy was prepared by Jason John as part of the MNC Uniting Church ecoministry , and you are free to do whatever you like with it except sell it. If used unaltered, acknowledgment would be great. If altered, something like “based on a ... by Jason John, MNC ecoministry” would do.

Songs on the DVD menu which have a (c) after them include lyrics which are copyrighted. To use them, you will need to have a license like CCLI, giving you permission to project the words in worship.

Setup ideas

Why not spend part of the liturgy out under the sky. You could use a version of the liturgy used in the Adelaide and Bellingen Ecofaith Communities. A sample is in the book at http://ecofaith.org/ecofaithcommunity/ecofaith_story_2007.pdf

You might like to play one of the many CDs of forest birds or forest noises in the background for the entirety of the service, or if your location suits, just open the windows!

In lieu of the other video resources, you could play “Home” (<http://homethemovie.org>) silently in the background, which has stunning images of our planet and what happens upon it.

You might want to appoint someone to jot down notes during the discussion, and/or to watch the reflection before hand, to use in the prayers of intercession.

Opening reading/Call to worship:

The temple I frequent is high,
A turquoise vaulted dome---the sky,
That spans the world with majesty.
Omar Khayyam c1120

So come...

Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens;

praise him in the heights!

Praise him, all his angels;

praise him, all his host!

Young men and women alike,

old and young together!

Let us praise the name of the LORD,

for his name alone is exalted;

his glory is above earth and heaven. (Ps 148 abridged)

Opening prayer:

God of 70,000, million million *million* stars and countless planets.
We give thanks for your interest in ours.

Our ancestors imagined you up there in the sky, looking down from the heavens.
And told stories of the perils of trying to build towers to reach you and become like you.
For you alone could control the skies, the rains, the storms.

Now we gather as a people who have begun to affect the sky ourselves.
Affect, but not control.

As we gather to worship you today we give thanks for your presence amongst us, on earth as in the heavens, and pray for a sense of your presence.

May the skies humble us, and glorify you.

Your kingdom come, your will be done - may we find hope- on earth as in the heavens.
Amen.

Optional song: Ashes to Ashes (DVD/download)

A song by Andrew Dutney, the new president of the Uniting Church, written in the 80s.
People might like to start trying to sing along if they heard it last week.

Welcome/introduction (optional DVD/download)

Or get people to look out the window (or look up if you're outside).
Today as we gather we remember that the God of the skies is beyond our control, a wind blowing where it will...

Song: options on DVD

Confession

Try to follow on from the song theme.

“all ages” input (DVD/download)

This week we have a story of a bowerbird who pursued more and more, before eventually pulling back and learning to be satisfied with enough. A brief take on the first part of the prodigal son story. This is followed by a brief reflection by Jason on his family needing to decide what is enough for a family of four, before inviting you all to as well.

Song: Several options on DVD

Offering

Reading: Psalm 19:1-6 and Mark 15:33-39

In this is the Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God!*

Or

In ancient words we have heard the Spirit speak anew. *Thanks be to God!*

Reflection (DVD/download)

Questions

There is a DVD still you can select which will loop the questions for as long as you need them. Press the menu button to stop the loop.

1. Have you looked at the sky and felt called to praise God?
2. Have you looked at the sky and felt abandoned by God?
3. How might a deeper awareness of the sky help humans see our place in the web of life in a new way?

Optional story (DVD/download)

In Bellingham and Adelaide faith communities have formed which deliberately meet outside, under the sky, to connect with the uncontrollable God of all of life. There is a two and four minute version of a story about the Adelaide ecofaith community on the DVD.

Song: Several options on DVD

Notices?

Intercession

A time of open prayer, or

A led prayer based on the themes and discussion which follows.

(appoint someone before hand to jot down some notes.)

And/or the "Lord's prayer:" Matthew's version would be best (Matt 6:10ff)

Song: Several options on DVD

Sending forth/Blessing

You can read "May the Feet" together off the DVD if you have copyright clearance, or ...

Go to live out your faith under the sky:
Whether turquoise vaulted, grey and thunderous, or even black as night.

Knowing that the love of God, the kindness of our Lord Jesus, and the friendship of the Spirit goes
with us
Amen

Exiting song: Now Unto Him is on DVD