

[S#1] This liturgy was written at the invitation of Five Oaks Education and Retreat Centre in Paris, Ontario. Photos were taken at Five Oaks. The sacred space which is Five Oaks was the inspiration for this service. The liturgy was written by Darrow Woods, Oakville; Linda Nash, Hamilton; Darryl Webber, Milton, and Bob Root, Peterborough.



If possible, it would be wonderful to have this service outdoors; if not, and the technology is available, use photos (either attached to this service or from your geographic area) to invite the outdoors in. You may also want to include symbols –a fountain, flowers, wheelbarrow of dirt, a pile of stones. Punctuate the service as much as possible with sounds, sights, smells, silences – anything that engages more of the senses. Use wind chimes, a rainstick, plants that don't set allergies off. But don't over-do it – less is more.

Inspiration Corner:

The following prayer chant was written by the Rev. Linda Nash and has quickly become our mantra at Five Oaks.

Running river,
Sacred space,
Towering trees,
Reflect Your grace,
Running river,
Sacred space,
Towering trees,
Show us, show us, our place

HYMNS: (choices have been made for the service, but here are more options)

VU#296 This is God's Wondrous World
MV#135 Called by Earth and Sky (written by Pat Mayberry while at Five Oaks)
VU#820 Make a Joyful Noise, All the Earth

VU#282	Long Before the Night
MV#144	Like a Healing Stream
MV#98	Like a River of Tears
MV#92	Like a Rock
MV#115	Behold! Behold! I Make All Things New
MV#37	Each Blade of Grass
MV#174	Soil of God, You and I
MV#87	Water Flowing from the Mountains
MV#39	Mother Earth, Our Mother Birthing
MV#3	River
MV#163	River Run Deep
VU#226	For the Beauty of the Earth
MV#30	It's a Song of Praise to the Maker
VU#703	In the Bulb, there is a Flower

Rehearse any unfamiliar music before the service begins. (The music for the chant and also the sound file need to be included.) This is also a good opportunity to explain that the “style” or “format” of worship may be different than usual. Invite people to be welcoming of the change and encourage them to go with the flow. Use lots of pauses and silences as opportunities to really hear the words and make room for the Spirit.

GATHERING:



[S#2] As we continue together in worship [the assumption being that when people arrive, worship begins],
 I invite you to sit quietly,
 to breathe in God's goodness,
 to breathe out all our cares,
 that we might fully be in this place,
 present with and to the One who created us
 in the beginning,
 whose love enfolds us now. (pause)

And now listen!
 Listen to the sounds of creation –

Sit with your eyes closed
until you have heard five different sounds.

And marvel at what God is doing
in the world.

All Sing:

Running river,
Sacred space,
Towering trees,
Reflect Your grace,
Running river,
Sacred space,
Towering trees,
Show us, show us, our place.

Silence

[S#3] "You make the gateways of the morning and the evening shout for joy."



And we, your people, join in Your praise.
As surely as the rivers of our lives flow to You,
So, welcome, settle, soften us
that we may shout and sing together for joy,
this day, and all our days.

Hymn: #282VU Long Before the Night

LISTENING:

[S#4]



This is a time to collect ourselves before we enter into the world of scripture. To be aware of where we are, and who we are with, to bring our cares and joys to this time. We are not alone, we live in God's world. Take a moment to reflect on a place in God's world where you feel most alive, most at peace....

Scripture: [SLIDES #5-25] Psalm 65:5b-13 – using photos to illustrate the Psalm as it is being read, or inviting people to hear the scripture with their eyes closed and imagine it visually.

The Psalm is a Powerpoint – I'm not quite sure how to send it (USB drive perhaps? Any suggestions?) – I think it's pretty cool....

End the Psalm by singing the chant: [S#26]



Running river,
Sacred space,
Towering trees,
Reflect Your grace,
Running river,
Sacred space,
Towering trees,
Show us, show us, our place

Sermon:



[S#27]

Reflect on Paul's words:

¹⁷So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! (2 Corinthians 5.17 NRSV)) -- what might that mean for you as you deepen your relationship with Jesus and with the world he loved?

What are the gateways of your life that make you shout for joy?

As you acknowledge the many gifts of creation, what is God calling you to do? to be? to live for, perhaps to die for?

The Psalm reminds us that God is the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas. What does it mean to live with those words as our mantra?

The Psalm invites us to let go of our artificial boundaries – the words describe a thin place where the veil between this world and the next is tissue paper thin. We can see God in every aspect of creation, even in bread that is broken, in pathways that are walked in the dark of night, in the generosity of the earth which provides for us in abundance.

The Hymn VU#226 For the Beauty of the Earth

The Quietness of Prayer – accompanied by quiet drumming, a rainstick, periods of silence, wind chimes, quiet music –



[S#28]

Introduce the prayers – more reflective, with pauses, sounds – invite people to open their hands to receive the gifts the Spirit would give during this prayer time.

Holy One,
in love You created the universe
and all that is in it.

We cannot take in all the beauty
that surrounds us
in the intricacy of Your design.
By your energizing power
You established the mountains,
their presence a witness to Your strength.
From east and west,
from north and south,
Your goodness is known everywhere.
We stand in awe. (pause) (drumming???)

Your gifts overwhelm us
and invite us to generosity and care.
Full of water are You, River of Life,
flowing, nourishing, gurgling,
bringing forth life,
your song carrying us on our journey to You.

All creation praises You:
the trees with branches raised;
the geese flying overhead;
the bird songs offering praise
as naturally as breath itself;
the fragrance of soil and shrub;
the earth generously sharing its fruits
in example to us
to to be as generous with one another
as creation shows us You are.

As waters join in sacred gathering,
so we gather in holy gratitude.
May our presence in Sacred Creation
be honouring and holy,
that our praise flow as freely
as all that You have made.

All Sing: [S#29]



Running river,
Sacred space,
Towering trees,
Reflect Your grace,
Running river,
Sacred space,
Towering trees,
Show us, show us, our place

The Prayer of the Church (said or sung)

RESPONDING:

Offering



[S#30]

As the earth cannot help but give generously,
so may we also give with joy
that others may know
how great God is.

VU#538: For the gifts of creation....

The Hymn MV#135 Called by Earth and Sky (written by Pat Mayberry while at Five Oaks)
verse 1: everyone
verse 2: women

verse 3: men
verse 4: everyone

The Blessing

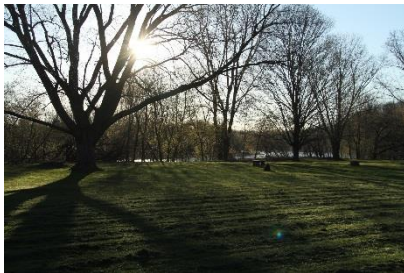


[S#31]

God, who makes the gateways of the morning and the evening shout for joy,
blesses you:
generously, kindly, abundantly,
for the days that you have been given
and the life that you are living:
God blesses you with a love that is beyond the telling of it,
but not beyond the knowing;
a love that is seen in every blade of grass,
every star in the sky,
every breath of wind
And may you share these gifts of God's kindness
with a waiting world
all your days.

Choral Blessing: All Sing:

[S#32]



Running river,
Sacred space,

Towering trees,
Reflect Your grace,
Running river,
Sacred space,
Towering trees,
Show us, show us, our place.

Have seedlings, plants, bulbs available for people to take with them as signs of a commitment to care for creation and for all who live within it.