

A Service of the Wordⁱ

All Stand.

Officiant: The grace of our Redeemer Jesus Christ
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
be with you all.

People: **And also with you.**

Officiant: Let us pray.
We thank you, O God, that you have brought us together on this,
your day, to praise you for your goodness and your blessing,
and to lift up before you the work of The Primate's
World Relief and Development Fund.
Give us grace to see your hand in the week that is past,
and your purpose in the week to come; through Christ our Lord.

People: **Amen.**

Officiant: Dear friends in Christ,
as we turn our hearts and minds
to worship almighty God,
let us confess our sins.

People: **Most merciful God,
We confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us,
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

Officiant: Merciful God,
grant to your faithful people pardon and peace,
that we may be cleansed from all our sins
and serve you with a quiet mind;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

People: **Amen.**

A hymn may be sung according to the parish tradition.

A Collect for Creation Care

Alternative collects for the natural seasons of Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter can be found in Appendix I.

Celebrant: God of our salvation,

People: **Your bow in the clouds proclaims your covenant
with every living creature.**

**Teach us your paths and lead us in your truth,
so that by your Holy Spirit,**

we may remember our baptismal vows

and be keepers of your trust with the earth and its inhabitants.

Amen.ⁱⁱ

The Proclamation of the Word

The Readings

The following readings are offered as suggestions only. They form the basis for the sample sermon found in Appendix III. Alternatively, the worship leaders may wish to choose from the lectionary readings appointed for the Sunday that the service is taking place.

A Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures

Genesis 9:8-17 – The First Covenant

God's first covenant is often described as being with Noah, but a careful reading reveals two things: it is a covenant made between God and ALL OF CREATION, of which humans are a part, and God repeats it SIX times just in case we missed it the first, second, third, fourth or fifth times. It's important. It's important to God. It's important to Creation. It's important to humankind as PART OF Creation.

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, "As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." God said, "this is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to

destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

A Reading from the Psalms (to be read responsively or sung)

Psalm 23 – The Divine Shepherd

The setting for the Twenty-Third Psalm – The Divine Shepherd, is by African-American composer, conductor and musician Bobby McFerrin. He dedicated it to his mother: "She was the driving force in my religious and spiritual education, and I have so many memories of her singing in church... I realized one of the ways we're shown a glimpse of how God loves us is through our mothers. They cherish our spirits, they demand that we become our best selves, and they take care of us. For the musical setting or the NRSV wording of the Psalm, please see Appendix I.

The Lord is my Shepherd, I have all I need,
She makes me lie down in green meadows,
Beside the still waters, She will lead.

She restores my soul, She rights my wrongs,
She leads me in a path of good things,
And fills my heart with songs.

Even though I walk, through a dark and dreary land,
There is nothing that can shake me,
She has said She won't forsake me,
I'm in her hand.

She sets a table before me, in the presence of my foes,
She anoints my head with oil,
And my cup overflows.

Surely, surely goodness and kindness will follow me,
All the days of my life,
And I will live in her house,
Forever, forever and ever.

Glory be to our Mother, and Daughter,
And to the Holy of Holies,
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
World, without end. Amen

A Reading from the Revelation to John

Revelation 21:1-5; 22:1-5

The bible begins and ends with stories that contain the beautiful image of the "tree of life." It is found in the middle of the Garden of Eden in Genesis and it is there again in John's powerful vision of Eden restored with a tree of life bearing twelve fruits and whose leaves are "for the healing of the nations." In between the tree of Genesis and the tree of Revelation are the stories of God's people keeping and then breaking, keeping and then breaking, covenant, over and over again. And there is the story of Jesus who, in his life, death and resurrection keeps covenant with and for us and ALL OF CREATION.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

"See, the home of God is among mortals.
He will dwell with them;
they will be his peoples.
And God himself will be with them.
he will wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death will be no more;
mourning and crying and pain will be no more,
for the first things have passed away.

And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new."

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life; bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual Hymn

(according to parish tradition)

All stand for the Gospel.

Reader: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Reader: The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

People: **Glory to you, Life-giving Jesus Christ**

A Reading from the Gospel of John

John 15:1-5 - The Vine and the Branches

Jesus uses agricultural imagery to remind us, once again, that we are part of God's created order: God is the vine grower, Jesus is the vine and we are the branches. In order to keep covenant, in order to live faithfully, in order to "abide" in Jesus, we must do two things: bear fruit and be pruned.

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing."

Reader: The Gospel of Christ.

People: **Praise to you, Life-giving Jesus Christ.**

Response to the Word

A sample sermon in response to the readings and focused on the work and witness of PWRDF is offered as Appendix III. The worship leader may wish to write his or her own sermon or make use of the PWRDF stories found in Appendix II.

Affirmation of Faith

Either the Apostles' or Nicene Creed may be used, or the following Profession of Faith:

Officiant: Let us confess our faith as we say,

All: **We are not alone; we live in God's world.**

**We believe in God: who has created and is creating,
who works in others and us through the Spirit.**

We trust in the Creator.

We are called to be,

to celebrate God's presence,

to live with respect in creation,

to love and serve others,

to seek justice and to resist injustice,

to seek out models for hope and peace.

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.

We are not alone.

Prayers of the People

The cycles of prayer for the Anglican Communion, the Anglican Church of Canada, diocesan prayer cycles, the national Indigenous cycle or any others may be offered at

this time. Then the following litany or another appropriate to the worshipping community may be used.

This litany was offered by Archbishop Mark MacDonald, National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop during PWRDF's Sharing Bread Learning Exchange at the Sorrento Centre, B.C., July 2015. In introducing the litany Archbishop Mark noted, "This first prayer that we're going to do is an adaptation; I think a beautiful adaptation that we will share with you that is based on the Mohawk thanksgiving prayer. If you've ever heard the Mohawk thanksgiving prayer don't be afraid because it takes a few hours to go through it."

Reader: It was decided by our Creator that whenever we join together for any reason, we should give thanks. So let us put our minds together and think on all of the creation and the Creator's gifts.

Response: **Loving God. We give our thanks.**

Reader: Let us think of the reason why we are gathered. For this place, for all of the things that bring us here.

Response: **Loving God. We give our thanks.**

Reader: Let us think of all the people of the world, the men, women and children, with a special thought for the children who are our future.

Response: **Loving God. We give our thanks.**

Reader: Let us think of our Mother, the Earth, upon whom we walk and who supports us. We pray we can learn to walk on her with more respect.

Response: **Loving God. We give our thanks.**

Reader: Let us turn our minds to the waters of the world, the great oceans, lakes, rivers and streams, and the life that lives in the waters that gives itself up to be our food.

Response: **Loving God. We give our thanks.**

Reader: Let us now turn our thoughts to the plant life of the Creator's world. That which is below ground; the roots and vegetables. That which puts just its head above the ground: the grasses, medicines, plants and bushes. All of the many kinds of good fruit the Creator has given us. And finally, the great trees of the forest that we know of as the "Standing Ones."

Response: **Loving God. We give our thanks.**

Reader: Let us think of all the animals in the world. We give thanks for those that provide food for us and those that provide beauty.

Response: **Loving God. We give our thanks.**

Reader: Let us think of the “Three Sisters,” corn, beans and squash. They are gifts from the Creator and our sustenance.

Response: **Loving God. We give our thanks.**

Reader: Let us think of the birds of the air. The feathered ones that are the messengers between us and the Creator.

Response: **Loving God. We give our thanks.**

Reader: Now let us turn our thoughts to that which is above our world; those helpers placed there by the Creator to ensure our world continues.

Response: **Loving God. We give our thanks.**

Reader: Let’s turn our thoughts to the four winds, or the four directions, they that blow from a place we cannot see.

Response: **Loving God. We give our thanks.**

Reader: Let us think of our Grandfathers, the Thunderers, they that bring the rain to replenish the world’s waters.

Response: **Loving God. We give our thanks.**

Reader: Let us think of our Elder Brother, the Sun, for his light and warmth.

Response: **Loving God. We give our thanks.**

Reader: Let us have a special thought for our Grandmother, the Moon. She who regulates the passing of time and the coming of children.

Response: **Loving God. We give our thanks.**

Reader: Let us turn our thoughts even higher, to our Brothers and Sisters the Stars. They that shine above us at night and give us beauty and direction.

Response: **Loving God. We give our thanks.**

Reader: And finally we take all that we have spoken of, all that we do, and roll them all together and send it to the Creator with thanks.

Response: **Loving God. We give our thanks.**

The Peace

Officiant: We are the body of Christ; in the one spirit we were all baptized into one body. Let us pursue all that makes for peace and builds up our common life. The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Collection hymn (according to parish tradition)

When the offering is placed on the altar or other suitable place, all say:

**God of honey and harvest,
Of grain and grape
Of ocean and orchard:
This harvest time
May we both praise and pray;
Praise you for the abundance
And pray that this harvest is not just shared
But shared justly. Amen.ⁱⁱⁱ**

The Lord's Prayer

Two versions are offered below. A third, from the New Zealand Book of Prayer, is offered in Appendix I.

Officiant: As our Saviour taught us, let us pray,
People: **Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
On Earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
As we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
And deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
And the glory are yours,
Now and for ever. Amen.**

Or

Officiant: And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us,
we are bold to say,
People: **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be they name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on Earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Officiant: Glory to God
All: **Whose power, working us,
can do infinitely more
than we can ask or imagine.
Glory to God from generation to generation,
in the Church and in Christ Jesus,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Blessing and Dismissal

Officiant: As we prepare to leave
and embrace the challenges
of our lives and our world,
let us ask for God's blessing.
May God bless us with wisdom
to care for our earth.

People: **Amen!**

Officiant: May God bless us with love to bring forth new life.
People: **Amen!**

Officiant: In the name of God,
the Maker of the whole world,
of Jesus, our new covenant,
and of the Holy Spirit, who opens eyes and hearts.

People: **Amen!**

Deacon: Go in peace and be witnesses to hope.

People: **Thanks be to God! Amen!**^{iv}

ⁱ Adapted from "three Supplementary Eucharistic Prayers for The Book of Alternative Services and Two Services of the Word," (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1998).

ⁱⁱ See endnote i.

ⁱⁱⁱ See endnote iv.

^{iv} See endnote viii.