

Earth Team Worship – Highlands in July

Call to worship

L: We remember God's faithfulness

R: We wait in hope

L: In times of suffering or eager longing

R: We wait in hope

L: We belong to creation, we weigh it down, we need it, we cause it pain

R: We wait in hope

L: We want to be set free to be unattached

R: We wait in hope

L: Together

R: We wait in hope

Prayer of thanksgiving

Dear God

Thank you for this weekend we have had together.

Thank you for friendship with the opportunity to use this house, with its magnificent surrounds you have created.

Thank you for the rain, sunshine and wind we have experienced this weekend, giving us warmth, noise, something to view, water to cook with and energy for lighting and watching videos.

Thank you for the koala and kangaroos we saw so close to the house and the magpies and kookaburras your alarm clock and guide.

Thank you for the talents each one of us has brought to the weekend, that when put together make something really special.

Thank you for being with us as we each make our separate ways and bless Stuart and Judy on their travels.

Amen

Song

Chorus

All I can see is caught in the circle of life

Yet there is a seam cut off from the circle of life

I have a dream that is born in the circle of life

Creation restored dancing for joy in the circle of life

Seasons rejoice in the fullness of their Godly design

Death of a leaf, an offering of life in this Godly design

Transforming decay, the beauty within

Continues on in this life

Repeat Chorus

Prayers of confession and forgiveness

L: God,

We acknowledge our thoughtlessness when we turn away from the earth and her need,

When we turn away from one another in their distress.

We confess our sense of separateness from her and our neighbours,

We look to you to guide us towards lives of balance and follow Jesus' examples of how to live.

R: We are sorry God

L: God knows we are on a journey and we are forgiven.
She blesses us with her Grace.
Amen

Reading

Romans 8:18-25 – NRSV

Invite congregation to partake in a clapping sequence after each verse as a sign of our waiting.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us.

Clapping

19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God;

Clapping

20 for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

Clapping

22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now;

Clapping

23 and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

Clapping

24 For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen?

Clapping

25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Clapping

25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Clapping

25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Prayers for others

Dearest God

We have ears – let us listen.

Help us to hear your creation.
For the world has groaned and is yet still groaning.
Sometimes the groaning of creation is the shifting of the status quo.
A newness that is being born.

But often it is the groans of pain, anguish, misunderstanding. Let us listen to the groaning now.
Give our hearts a connectedness to the earthyness of life.
May we worm our ways through the artificial gunk of our wasteful ways and sit in the grit of reality for a moment.

And listen.
Listen to the groaning.

Lord, countless are your peoples who feel the injustices we cannot know.
Who gnash and grind their teeth in despair already. As they call from a burning bush of desire for hope grant us the courage to declare 'Here I am'. So much of the earth has crept to the precipice of fear.
Where this fear exists, may we know your grace. In the groaning of Afghanistan give sweet lashings of hope. In the groaning of the USA grant the virtues of understanding and peace.
In the groaning of the leaky boat that tosses in the waves of Australia, bring the terrified refugee safely to a new home.
In the groaning of the mother in childbirth, give a song of reassurance.
In the groaning of your church, grant a newness of expectation.
In the groaning of decay, give us all the courage that acknowledges our own impermanance.
Lord, when the groaning rumbles beneath our feet, take away the shock absorbers.
Make us take stock.
Give us the connectedness to the creation once again.
And when others fear, grant us the courage to hope.

Song – Taize chant

Bless the Lord, my soul (Bless the Lord my soul)
And Bless God's holy name
Bless the Lord my soul
And Bring us into life

Reverse Offering

A pile of fallen gum leaves were placed around the Christ candle in the centre of the worship space. When Joy Murphy – a Wurrunjuri elder welcomes us to country, she invites us to take a gum leaf. If we choose to do this it means we are welcome to everything from the tops of the trees to the soil deep below and we must respond in acknowledgement and responsibility. The congregation were asked to take a leaf, to smell it, to feel it and to remember their connectedness to the land.

Blessing

Go into the world quietly
So that the ants and the beetles
Look up at you in friendship.

Listen for the cries of the earth and her people
Make space for a fire in your heart
Use it to transform your anger into right action

Use it to spread warmth and justice everywhere.

Watch for the dewdrops in the morning
A thousand million tears that God cries every day.
Know that you are not alone in suffering.

Breathe in truth
Breathe out peace
Go with awakened hearts and open eyes
Amen.

Sending out

Go now from this place of relaxation and natural beauty
And be like the ants of this world.
Move with purpose,
Regenerate the Creation
And prepare for new life out of decay.
Amen