

DAY SEVEN: MORNING

Earth as the Original Liturgy

OPENING PRAYER

We pray this morning, joining in with the great unfolding liturgy of praise already being sung all around us through blackbird and robin, fox and deer, cedar and magnolia. We kindle our hearts with a joyful celebration of the Creator of all.

OPENING SONG

Creation's Hallelujah

Refrain: Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

FIRST READING: THOMAS BERRY

From an early period Christians adopted a liturgy that carefully observed the correspondences of human praise with the numinous moments of the dawn and sunset and with the transitions of the various seasons of the year. This liturgy was carried out most faithfully in the Benedictine and Cistercian monasteries of Europe up through the medieval period. The social order was itself governed by this basic rhythm of life.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Wisdom, open my lips and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 148

Hallelujah!

The cosmos praises God!

The sun, the moon, the stars and galaxies

The infinite regions of space—

All being made by the Word which is creating them over eons of time.

The earth praises God!

The deep mystery of the seas, the tall mountains,
forests, grasslands, savannahs, croplands and deserts.

The beasts, insects, reptiles, birds,

all expressing exuberance of the force of life.
The people praise God!
The wise, the rulers, the lowly, the children
The ones who see the splendor of the cosmos and the single beauty of every star
The people praise God!
the star in the center of every heart
creating them in love.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

SECOND READING: WAY OF THE PILGRIM

And while I prayed in the depths of the heart, everything around me seemed transformed: the trees, grass, birds, earth, air, light—every created thing seemed to proclaim that bears witness to God's love for humanity. Everything was praying.
Everything sang glory be to God.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

PRAYERS OF CONCERN

We offer prayers now for all that is on our hearts.

In the rhythm of creation, O God, we discover ways to pattern our prayers, offering them to you with hope. In the chatter of dawn chorus, our hearts burst into song as we join this hymn of praise. Yet we ache for toucans and quetzals, howler monkeys and red-eyed tree frogs whose voices are threatened as rainforests are decimated. We pray for them and for the communities whose lives are being irreparably changed. Give leaders of governments the courage to stop the destruction and the desire to preserve this wondrous eco-system.

Sung Response - O God of Earth, we celebrate your presence.

In the midday heat, our toes tingle with pleasure as cooling waves lap over them. In this ebb and flow we recognise the ebb and flow of life. Enfold in hope those caught in currents of despair or brokenness. Hear our thanks for those whose pain is soothed and healed by your love. We learn from ocean's wisdom of your presence in both ebb and flow, finding solace in you.

Sung Response - O God of Earth, we celebrate your presence.

In the burnt orange glow of setting sun, our faces soak in the lingering warmth and our breathing stills as we move towards rest. We offer prayers of gratitude for the day that has been and for the mystery of nature's soul food. We pray for those whose spirits are famished. May they discover nourishment in sunrise and sunset, and in all Earth's gifts.

Sung Response - O God of Earth, we celebrate your presence.

Please add the prayers you are longing to express.

Sung Response - O God of Earth, we celebrate your presence.

CLOSING SONG

Join in the Joy

Refrain: Join in the joy of the cosmic dance, join in the joy.

CLOSING BLESSING

Listen to how everything sings:

the streams and stones,
leaves and branches,
fish and fur-covered ones,
birds leading the chorus.

See how your desire to praise
is echoed in every living thing,
how in quiet moments
the heart is moved to gratitude
for all of Creation,
for the lavish abundance of it all,
how nothing is earned,
no achievements are needed.

May you simply show up with breath, blood, and bones,
and your loving attention to hymns erupting
everywhere, until you can no longer tell
where yours begin and nature's ends.

SUNG AMEN



CREDITS

All songs and texts used with permission

Opening Prayer written by Christine Valters Paintner

Opening Song: *Creation's Hallelujah* by Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

First Reading from Thomas Berry. *The Great Work: Our Way into the Future*. New York: Crown Publishing (1999)
p. 23-24.

Sung Psalm Opening and Doxology by Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

Interpretation of Psalm 148 by Rev. Christine Robinson

Second Reading from Way of the Pilgrim. Quoted in Jean-Yves Leloup, *Being Still: Reflections on an Ancient Mystical Tradition*. New York: Paulist Press (2003) p. 83-84.

Prayers of Concern written by Valerie Allen

Sung Response by Betsey Beckman

Closing Song: *Join in the Joy* by Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

Closing Blessing: *Earth as the Original Liturgy* written by Christine Valters Paintner

Please note: All of the Opening and Closing Songs are published on CDs in the Abbey of the Arts collection. In addition, these songs have accompanying gesture prayers and/or dances created by Betsey Beckman that can be found on the corresponding DVD (each album has a DVD companion). The Psalm Opening, Doxology, and the Response to the Prayers of Concern also have accompanying congregational gestures. The audio and video recordings of these are available at AbbeyoftheArts.com.

DAY SEVEN: EVENING

Earth as the Original Liturgy

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray in thanksgiving for the perpetual praise being sung all around us each day through birdsong and breezes, through the dance of trees and the jubilation of seas. We ask that we might hear more deeply the love song always arising in us in response to the One who wove us into being and delights at the hymns of our hearts.

OPENING SONG

Now I Walk in Beauty

Chant: Now I walk in beauty. Beauty is before me. Beauty is behind me, above and below me.

SUNG PSALM OPENING

O Wisdom, open my lips and my mouth will declare your praise. (Repeat)

PSALM 98

Sing songs of praise and thanks!
for the cosmos around and the moral law within.

Shout with joy, all you lands;
lift up your voices, rejoice, sing!
Sing with harps, with voices,
with trumpets and horns.

Listen! The sea thunders along!

All life sings its song.
The rivers clap their hands
The hills ring out with joy.
All these—the voices of God,
Who is everywhere.

SUNG DOXOLOGY

Glory to the Maker, Lover, and Keeper; as ago, in this breath, and will be ever. Amen, Amen.

READING OF THE NIGHT: SAINT HILDEGARD OF BINGEN

The fire has its flame and praises God. The wind blows the flame and praises God. In the voice we hear the word which praises God. And the word, when heard, praises God. So all of creation is a song of praise to God.

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

CLOSING POEM

St. Columbanus in the Forest

He learned long ago
he doesn't have to seek out
wild things, only rest and wait,
when his heart is full
he starts to sing until
birds twitter and trapeze
branch to branch,
land tiny feet on his shoulders,
brush his bristly face.

Squirrels dizzy with delight,
maelstrom of scamper and bustle
to climb his thin arms,
their giggling red heads
peer from folds of his robe
as if playing a secret game
meant only for them,
only for those who believe
such things are possible.

CLOSING SONG

Be Still (Psalm 46)

Chant: Be still and know that I am God.



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Opening Prayer written by Christine Valters Paintner

Opening Song: *Now I Walk in Beauty* by Lorraine Bayes

Psalm Opening and Doxology by Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

Interpretation of Psalm 98 by Rev. Christine Robinson

Reading of the Night from Hildegard of Bingen. Quoted in *Original Blessing: A Primer in Creation Spirituality* by Matthew Fox, Jeremy Tarcher (2000) p. 69.

Closing Poem by Christine Valters Paintner, *The Wisdom of Wild Grace*. Paraclete Press (2020).

Closing Song: *Be Still* by Simon de Voil

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