

DIOCESE AND CANBERRA AND GOULBURN
CREATION SUNDAY

HOLY COMMUNION, THIRD ORDER
(A Prayer Book for Australia, page 167)

If possible, church decorations could be on the theme of water. A portable water feature could provide the sound of running water, and rocks, potted plants, blue material and other items can be used to create an artificial pond.

The font could also be used as the focus for additional decorations.

Depending on the weather and the location of the church, the service could start outside, with people moving into the church after the introduction.

1. Priest: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.
People: **And also with you.**

Sentence: The Lord said: "Strike the rock, and the water will come out of it, so that the people may drink."

Introduction:

Today on this Creation Sunday we will celebrate the gift of water as we recognize it as essential to all life. We are currently painfully aware of the consequences of a lack of water. We will pray for all who suffer the anguish of such consequences. We will acknowledge our misuse of water and ask forgiveness and wisdom to work with God for the good of all creation. And we will remember that Jesus promises to come to us as the spring of Living Water that we might not thirst even though the wells run dry.

The leader or another person could take a large jug of water and slowly pour it into a bowl (if possible earthenware). If the service starts outside, the bowl could be carried to the front of the church or to the font to be blessed as part of the offertory.

2. *The minister says:*

Let us pray.

Almighty God,

To whom all hearts are open, all desires known,

And from whom no secrets are hidden:

Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts

By the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,

That we may perfectly love you,

And worthily magnify your Holy name,

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the great and first commandment.

And a second is like it. You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

3. *The Gloria or another hymn of praise may be sung*

4. *Collect*

Grant O merciful Lord that your people may have the mind that was in Christ Jesus, who emptied himself and took the form of a servant, and in humility became obedient even to death. For you have exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, Jesus Christ the Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God in everlasting glory. Amen.

The above is the Collect for the Day from the Prayer Book. Parishes may wish to use the following alternative collect:

Almighty God, Creator and Redeemer of all that is, source and foundation of time and space, matter and energy, life and consciousness; grant us grace to be true witnesses to your glory and faithful stewards of your gifts, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

5. Old Testament Reading – Exodus 17:1-7.

Psalm 78:1-4,11-16.

6. New Testament Reading – Philippians 2:1-13.

Hymn or song

7. Gospel – Matthew 21:23-32.

8. *The sermon is preached here or after the creed.*

9. *Nicene Creed.*

10. *Sermon (if not given earlier).*

11. *Hymn or song*

12. Prayers.

God of all Creation,

we see destruction of your earth,

Give us wisdom and courage to face the challenge of Your call -

Your call to listen to your voice in creation,

Your call to enable creation,

Your call to heal creation for future generations.

God of all Love,

We long for your love to set us free,

Give us freedom from greed, pride, apathy,

That we might live for You in all creation.

God of all Compassion,

We see the suffering of many through drought, flood, hunger and poverty,

Fill us with compassion to fuel action for justice.

God of all Peace,

We know your world as broken, through Earth's degradation, war, inequity and other violence

Give us a burning desire for healing,

that we may become creatures of peace for all life.

God of the Cross and Resurrection,
Fill us with your Presence,
That lives through death,
That loves despite hatred,
That hopes in the face of hopelessness,
That longs for the redemption of all creation. Amen

A short time of quietness could follow during which a recording of the sound of running water could be played (e.g. Trish Watts' "Deep Water") or a music group could sing an appropriate song.

Conclude with the Lord's Prayer.

13. *Exhortation.*

We are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in them purify themselves, just as he is pure.

1 John 3.2-3

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

Romans 8.22-23

14. *A time of silence may follow.*

Confession

God our Creator and Heavenly Father, you have loved us with an everlasting love, but we have broken your holy laws and have left undone what we ought to have done. We are sorry for our sins and turn away from them.

Today we recognize especially that we take water for granted. We waste it, we pollute it, we have forced it from its natural courses, diverting too much of it from other parts of your creation. Forgive us for using water selfishly or

thoughtlessly. Forgive us for not recognizing and supporting those who suffer through lack of water.

Father, forgive us. Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord

Amen.

15. *Absolution*

God is slow to anger and full of compassion, forgiving all who humbly repent and trust in his Son as Saviour and Lord, and God as Creator.

God therefore forgives you in Christ Jesus, In whom there is no condemnation. Amen.

16. All stand. The Greeting of Peace is introduced.

We are the body of Christ.

His Spirit is with us.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

All may exchange a sign of peace

17. *Offertory hymn or song*

Blessing of the water (adapted from Indigenous Prayers and Liturgies
www.acc.asn.au/Liturgy)

The leader moves to the bowl which was filled with water at the start of the service.

Priest: Lord, Almighty God, hear the prayers of your people.

For thousands of years, water has given life to this land and cool refreshment and cleansing to its people.

It is a symbol of life for us.

In baptism you make water holy, you give us new life and you refresh us with your Holy Spirit.

May this water remind us of our baptism, and let us share in the joy of all who have been baptised.

Loving Creator, we ask you to bless + this water, and to keep us faithful with Jesus to the Spirit you have given us in Baptism.

The people are invited to dip their hands in the bowl as they leave the sanctuary rail after Communion, and if they wish, to make the sign of the cross.

18. Prayer of Thanksgiving (4th or 5th form which emphasise that while we are entitled to enjoy the gifts of God's creation, we have an obligation to God, to poorer nations and to future generations to look after creation).

19. Communion sentence

20. Communion

Hand-made bread could be used.

21. *If the Lord's Prayer has not been said earlier, it is said here.*

This or another thanksgiving is then said.

Gracious God, thank you for feeding us
With the spiritual food of the body and blood
Of our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Thank you for assuring us of your goodness and love,
And that we are living members of Christ's body.

22. *All say together*

Father,

We offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Send us out in the power of your Spirit.

To live and work to you praise and glory.

23. *Gloria.*

24. *Blessing*

Thank you for water as a sign of your presence with us. May our recognition of water's beauty, endurance and capacity to renew stay with us every day. And may the blessing of God – Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier – be amongst the whole community on earth, that we may live to care for all creation and know divine peace.

25. *The deacon may say*

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord:

In the name of Christ. Amen.

A few suggestions for hymns and songs.

All Creatures of our God and King (*Together in Song, 100*)

For the Beauty of the Earth (*Together in Song, 137*)

Let All Creation Dance (*Together in Song, 187*)

Enemy of Apathy (*Together in Song, 418*)

I the Lord of Sea and Sky (*Together in Song, 658*)

Touch the Earth Lightly (*Together in Song, 668*)

Shout to the Lord (*Together in Song, 738*)

Let All the World (*Australian Hymn Book, 13*)

Lord of Creation (*Australian Hymn Book, 557*)

Lord, Enthroned in Heavenly Splendour

Dance and sing, all the earth (*Iona Community*)

We will not take what is not ours (*Iona Community*)

While earth remains (*Iona Community*)

Brother sun, sister moon (*John Michael Talbot*)

God who made the endless stars (*Elizabeth J. Smith "Songs for a hopeful church" 15*)

O Spirit Come! Refresh us now (*Elizabeth J. Smith "Songs for a hopeful church" 36*)

Where wide sky rolls down (*Elizabeth J. Smith "Songs for a hopeful church" 62*)

Mother Earth (*from "As One Voice"*)

Canticle to the Sun (*from "As One Voice"*)