



PACIFIC CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES



Living Water

Season of Creation 2026

Immersion in Living Water

Ezekiel 47:9, 12

RESOURCE GUIDE

1ST SEPTEMBER - 4TH OCTOBER, 2026

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WELCOME TO THE SEASON OF CREATION!

Welcome from the Season of Creation Ecumenical Steering Committee Members!

Welcome to this year's Season of Creation. Thank you for bringing your community together for this special season of ecumenical solidarity.

Each year from September 1 to October 4, the Christian family unites for this worldwide celebration of prayer and action to protect our common home. It is a special season where we celebrate God as Creator, and acknowledge Creation as the divine continuing act that summons us as collaborators to love and care for the gift of all that is created. As followers of Christ from around the globe, we share a common call to care for Creation. We are co-creatures and part of all that God has made. Our well-being is interwoven with the well-being of the Earth.

We rejoice in this opportunity to safeguard our common home and all beings who share it with us. This year, the theme for the Season is "Living Water."

More resources, including webinars and prayer services, sample promotional materials, and the official Season of Creation social media channels, are available online. Please visit SeasonOfCreation.org to access all the materials.

We look forward to praying, celebrating, and advocating together in hope and action with Creation this Season!

In Christ,

Season of Creation Ecumenical Steering Committee Members

WELCOME FROM THE PACIFIC CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES

Warm Pacific greetings in the name of Jesus Christ.

On behalf of the Pacific Conference of Churches, I welcome our member churches, National Councils of Churches, congregations, families, schools and communities to the Season of Creation 2026. From 1 September to 4 October, we join Christians around the world in prayer, reflection and action under the theme, “Living Water.”

For us in the Pacific, water is lived reality. Water surrounds us, sustains us and connects us. The ocean carries the memory of our ancestors, provides food and livelihood, shapes our spirituality and holds the future of generations yet to come. The ocean does not separate us. It gathers us as one household of God.

Yet our living waters are wounded by warming seas, pollution, plastics, extractive industries, biodiversity loss and the continuing failure of those with the greatest responsibility to act with justice. Ezekiel’s vision comes to a people living through loss and displacement: a river flows from God’s sanctuary, and “wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live” (Ezekiel 47:9). It is a vision of healing which also calls us to participate in God’s work of healing.

~ Rev. James Bhagwan

General Secretary at the Pacific Conference of Churches

DO KAMO LENS

As we do this work, we cannot forget to ground ourselves in the principles of our traditions and ways of being. Therefore, we invite you to remember our Do Kamo Lens in the following way...

Since the 12th General Assembly in 2023 in Kanaky – the theme and methodology framing of PCC's work has been "Khrist of the Islands! Reveal the Do Kamo (Ongoing Transformation into Your Authentic Humanity) Within Us. From the 8 Tribes of Kanaky the following 8 principles resonate with the theme:

- 1.DĚWAWĒ (Kunye Language):** The Connection to the Ancestors - a deep connection to a communal way of life.
- 2.DŌKAMURU (Xaracû Language):** The Hominization Process: self-control - awakened consciousness connected to the spirits of the cosmos and the Earth.
- 3.DŌKAMŌ (Ajie Language):** The Humanization Process with the Environment - the authentic human being as deeply connected to its environment and who is never static but dynamic... dynamic in a constructive way, always.
- 4.ÂJU AMBORO (Paici Language):** The Harmonious Relationship - welcoming, leading by service, a strong spirit of community and unity.
- 5.TEIN ÄGUK (Nelemwa Language):** The Holistic Maturity - the maturity of the being is the fruit of the life process and experience. Your ancestors reveal themselves in you.
- 6.HINGAT (Iaai Language):** The Posture of Righteousness - the integrity of life between one another and with all living beings.
- 7.NYIPIATR (Drehu Language):** The Quest for Knowledge and Wisdom - "the aspiration of becoming a dignified human being".
- 8.NIDINGOME (Nengone Language):** Relation to the Divine - through service to the community.

These principles will also guide our reflections in these studies.



GROUNDING PRAYER

As we enter into this season, we invite you to watch and contemplate the following video. May we take strength and courage from its words and vision...

A Pacific Prayer for the Moana - Archbishop Emeritus Winston Halapua

INTRODUCTION



Living Water

Season of Creation 2026

Immersion in Living Water

Ezekiel 47:9, 12

“Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live. [...] Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.”

(Ezek 47:9,12)

This year's theme, “Living Water”, explores Ezekiel 47:9 and 12 as a powerful biblical vision of hope and ecological healing. Set amid exile and loss, the image of living water flowing from God's sanctuary reveals divine healing that renews land, water, biodiversity, and human responsibility towards the whole creation.

Our symbol for 2026 - Immersion in Living Water - is a symbol of renewal and birth: water flowing from the Temple as a sign of God's caring and healing for us. We are called to step into the water, until we are so deep that we must depend on God's grace to sustain us. Those who receive this water are invited to become sources of life for others, allowing God's love to flow through them into the world. And thus the water of God will become in us "a spring of water welling up to eternal life", as Jesus promised (John 4:13).

The symbol pictures water flowing from the Temple of God - at first a tiny stream which grows deeper and deeper and as it does so it brings life to dead areas and restores fertility to damaged or barren ecosystems. Through living water comes healing, but in order to receive new life we too must step into the water and also become part of God's river of life, taking part in the healing of creation. The symbol invites Christians to a spiritual immersion - praying together while contemplating water from rivers, sources, fountains, baptismal fonts, lakes and sea, inspired by the Spirit of God, working together for the renewal of Creation.

This Symbol also urges us to dive into the "tears" of creation (Romans 8:22-23), by allowing our hearts to be touched by the suffering of our siblings. Indeed, the Season of Creation is also an appropriate time for solidarity with the vulnerable and the poor, chiefly those who suffer from environmental degradation. We can learn from their stories, from their resilience, from their commitment, and together keep hope alive.

WEEK 1: THE WATER OF HISTORY

*"YOU, GOD, ARE MY GOD, EARNESTLY I SEEK YOU;
I THIRST FOR YOU, MY WHOLE BEING LONGS FOR YOU,
IN A DRY AND PARCHED LAND, WHERE THERE IS NO WATER. I HAVE SEEN YOU IN THE SANCTUARY AND BEHELD YOUR POWER
AND YOUR GLORY." (PSALM 63:1-2)*

Our Ancestors and water in caves



Water descending from the mountain



How have our ancestors been in relationship to water?

Focus Scripture: *Ezekiel 47:1-2*

Theological and Scriptural Background for Teachers/ Leaders

Historical Context of Ezekiel 47:9, 12

The context of this text is one of political, social, theological and national catastrophe. Jerusalem has been destroyed by the armies of Babylon. The Temple of Solomon has been razed to the ground. Many of the people of Israel have been taken into exile in Babylon, carried far from their homeland. By the rivers of Babylon they weep and lament (cf. Ps 137).

The Book of Ezekiel is set during the Babylonian exile (Ezekiel 1:1), after the fall of Jerusalem at the beginning of the 6th century BCE. Ezekiel, a priest, is among those exiled and is commissioned by God as a prophet (Ezek 3; 33:1-9).

His message initially centres on God's judgment against Israel's idolatry and injustice, interpreting the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple as divine judgment carried out through the Babylonian armies (Ezek 7-10; 21). Yet Ezekiel's message does not end in judgment: God has not abandoned his people.

Ezekiel proclaims that God's sovereignty is not confined to the Temple, God remains present with the exiles, and restoration is promised. Significantly, the Temple is at the center of Ezekiel's vision of renewal (Ezek 40-47). Although it had been profaned and destroyed, it is now transformed into a symbol of blessing, healing, and God's presence through the whole of creation. The wonderful river described in Ezekiel 47 embodies this future renewal: when the Lord dwells again among his people, the land itself will be restored.

Immersion in Living Water : Repentance and Healing

Scripture repeatedly associates water with divine healing and renewal: Naaman dipping himself in the Jordan river (cf. 2 Kings 5), and the healing of the person with disabilities waiting by the pool (cf. John 5). Ezekiel himself is immersed progressively deeper into the river, echoing baptismal imagery and symbolising transformation. Stepping into the river reminds us of baptism. In the early Church, large baptism fonts were often used for immersion, and they were entered by steps - reflecting the progressivity of Ezekiel's vision (Ezek 47:3-6).

Earlier in the book of Ezekiel, God promises cleansing, a new heart, and a new spirit precisely through water (Ezek 36:25-27). We are reminded of the water and blood that flowed for healing from Jesus' side (John 19:34). As believers, we are promised that if we receive and accept the water from the Temple - that is, God's healing - then "rivers of living water" will also flow from our hearts (or bellies, as the Greek says!) (John 7:38).

As we are healed and renewed - living water will also flow from us for the healing of others and of creation.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

CHILDRENS BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

Lesson Topic: The Waters of History- How have our ancestors been in relationship to water?

Materials Needed:

1. Jug or pitcher of clean water
2. A large bowl or water basin
3. Paper and coloring pencils

Introduction:

Today I brought something to show you.

(Teacher shows a jug of water)

Does anyone know what this is?

(ask students to guess)

Yes, it's water. Water is very important.

Why? (students share responses)

Water helps all living things stay healthy and grow. We use water every day for drinking, washing, cooking, and having fun. That was true hundreds of years ago as well. Our ancestors throughout the Pacific had strong connections with the water. Listen to this story shared by a minister from Kanaky.



Story

Long ago, our ancestors in MOMAWE, Kanaky, lived close to water because it helped them survive. Water came from rivers and natural springs, and sometimes people used traditional knowledge to find new springs. When villages were built, they were often near rivers because people needed water for drinking, growing food, and everyday life. Rivers were also places where people caught fish to feed their families. Some special places in the water were sacred, which means they were treated with great respect and used for important cultural ceremonies.

Every waterhole had its own name and was cared for by certain families or clans. Some clans carried totems that connected them to the water, such as the eel, carp, black mullet, loach, shrimp, or even water itself.

There were important rules about caring for the rivers. People did not fish in some deep



waterholes because they were safe places where fish could lay eggs or hide during dry times. People also used traditional ways of fishing that allowed them to catch enough food while protecting nature. These traditions taught everyone to respect and care for the water, because water gives life to people, animals, and plants.

Water Basin (Teacher pours water into the basin or invites an older student to pour it) We are celebrating the Season of Creation in the church. For five weeks we will learn about the importance of water, the ways in which it connects us with one another and God, how it is being misused and polluted, and how we are called by God to protect this important resource. The water in this basin reminds us of God's love. It is our job to take care of this Living Water and all the waters that surround us.

(You may place a picture or object next to the basin to represent the ancestors or elders of your community. Explain how water was important to these people.)

Biblical Connection:

Long ago, our ancestors in the faith—the men, women and children whose stories are told in the Bible—understood the importance of water. They remembered that God created the heavens and the earth, the land and the seas, the animals, the plants and human beings. God declared that all of creation was good (Gen. 1). The prophet Ezekiel said that swarms of living creatures, fish and fruit trees will live and grow where water flows (Ezek. 47:9, 12). Throughout the Bible, people did many things in and around water. Many people, like the Samaritan woman who met Jesus, drank life giving water from wells (John 4). Many people, like the disciples who followed Jesus, cast their nets into the water and fished from boats (Mark 1:16). They fed their families and communities. Others, like the women in Philippi whom the apostle Paul met, gathered by the river for worship and prayer (Acts 16:13).

Activity:

- Ask students what they like to do in the water. Invite them to draw a picture of their favorite water activity. Invite students to share their pictures with the group.
- If time permits, play a game of charades, inviting students to silently act out one water related activity while other students guess their word. You might include swimming, fishing, diving, paddling, cooking, drinking, washing, splashing, bathing, etc.

My Prayer:

Dear God, we give you thanks for the gift of water in our lives. Our ancestors understood just how important it is. Help us learn from their wisdom as we enjoy the wonders of your creation and help us take care of the rivers and seas, so that all living things may be healthy and grow. Amen.

For the Week Ahead:

Talk to an elder in your community or family. What did they like to do in the water when they were a child?

YOUTH AND ADULT BIBLE STUDY GUIDE



Theme: The Waters of History: How have our ancestors been in relationship to Water?

Scripture: *“Then he brought me back to the entrance of the temple; there water was flowing from below the entryway of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east), and the water was flowing down from below the south side of the temple, south of the altar. Then he brought me out by way of the north gate and led me around on the outside to the outer gate that faces toward the east, and the water was trickling out on the south side.” Ezekiel 47:1-2*

Season of Creation 2026 SUP against Single-Use Plastics and Ecocide

A Season of Creation Eco-Pilgrimage for Ecological (Biodiversity) Custodianship On Land and on the Water

This Viti Levu Eco-Pilgrimage is offered as one living expression of a wider call: on land through a community awareness team travelling by road, and on the water through PCC General Secretary Rev. James Bhagwan and fellow Suva SUP ocean health advocate Graham Taylor.

On the water, Rev. James Bhagwan and Graham Taylor will carry the public witness of the pilgrimage as stand-up paddlers moving around Viti Levu in line with the Living Waters theme.

Their paddling reflects years of advocacy, paddling, and ocean health concern within the Suva SUP community. On land, a community awareness team will travel by road to engage the vanua, churches, schools, youth, women's groups, and local communities through talanoa, awareness sessions, biodiversity education, and public action.

This programme will help communities engage with:

- Care for Creation as biodiversity protection, not only as a general environmental concern.
- Living Waters as a theme that holds together oceans, rivers, catchments, wetlands, mangroves, reefs, and sea.
- Single-use plastics and other forms of marine and ocean pollution that threaten ecosystems, livelihoods, and community wellbeing.
- The insights of LMMA and CMMA stewardship as local expressions of ecological custodianship.
- Vanua-based relationships with place, especially where water, identity, memory, and responsibility are closely held together.

As a shared witness, this Eco-Pilgrimage offers a visible and hopeful way to connect biblical faith, biodiversity protection, and community responsibility during the Season of Creation. It invites churches and environmental partners alike to stand together for living waters: for rivers as well as oceans, for mangroves as well as reefs, for communities as well as species, and for a future in which faith is expressed not only in words, but in ecological custodianship.

We invite PCC members and partners to walk with this journey through prayer, participation, hosting, accompaniment, and practical support.

Each week Rev. Bhagwan will share a reflection from his journey based on the theme for the week. Click here to access this [reflection for week 1](#), The Waters of History.



Discussion/Talanoa Questions

- What have your elders taught you about water?
- Do you have a story or memory of being brought to a stream, river, pond or ocean as a child? What did you do there? What did your family share about that particular body of water?
- How did our ancestors view waters- streams, rivers, pools, oceans?
- How have these attitudes changed? Have they?
- What do our ancestors have to teach us about how to care for the waters around us?

Group Activity for Youth:

One of the greatest threats to our waters, streams, rivers, oceans, etc. is waste. As you saw and heard in the reflection from Rev. Bhagwan, that waste often ends up causing irreparable damage to these fragile ecosystems.

Throughout the Season of Creation all PCC youth are invited to actively counter this damage through the construction of a Compost Pit that can be used by church communities. Tutorials will be included each week outlining construction details filmed at the Lomana N Vulagi Eco Farm.

It's important for the Pacific Conference of Churches to walk the talk on climate change and stewardship of creation.

That's why we're building an eco-school for our youth on 50 acres of land in Tailevu on Fiji's North-Eastern coast. This Farm will become a place where young people and churches from all around the Pacific can come together to exchange learning about traditional farming and cultivation knowledge, traditional herbal medicine and learn how our member churches can better become stewards of their vanua.

Completely off the grid and using organic methods and traditional crop raising and land use wisdom, we've already planted cassava, banana, pineapple, lemon and coconut trees. Beehives were installed within the last 6 months along with beekeeping training and there are pigs to complement the 26 cattle on site.

The farm is set among native trees which will be maintained and added to as part of our carbon sequestration project. A tree inventory has been developed, allowing us to take stock of existing and newly planted trees and categorize them.

The centrepiece of the farm will be a small school where young Pacific islanders can be inspired to integrate traditional organic farming methods to protect the environment, mitigate against climate change and build food security

[Composting Activity Link - Click Here](#)

Group Activity for Adults:

Riparian refers to the interface, bank, or area where land meets a natural watercourse, such as a river, stream, or lake. These transitional, moisture-rich ecosystems are vital for biodiversity, filtering pollutants, and stabilizing banks, acting as critical links between aquatic and terrestrial habitats.

Key Aspects of Riparian Areas

- **Location:** They are located along the banks of rivers, streams, lakes, and other water bodies.
- **Ecological Importance:** Riparian zones act as buffers to trap sediment and filter contaminants, keeping water cleaner.
- **Biodiversity:** They support a high variety of plants and wildlife, often characterized by water-loving vegetation.
- **Definition of Zones:** These areas can be narrow strips or wider corridors often referred to as riparian corridors or zones.
- **Legal Context:** The term also relates to "riparian rights," which concern the legal rights of landowners whose property borders a waterway.

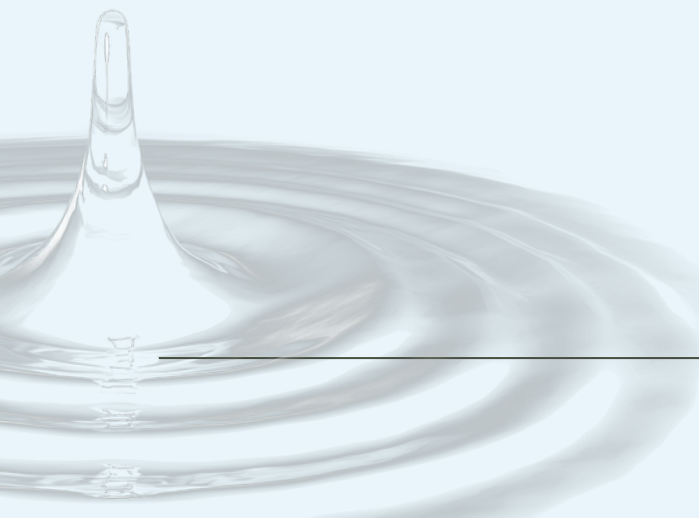
Ezekiel's vision describes waters flowing from God's sanctuary, bringing life, healing, renewal, and abundance to all. Churches can reflect this message by advocating for the issues impacting our human and physical water cycles: caring for catchments, rivers, drinking water resources, wetlands and seas, and all life in them, loving our neighbours who depend on them, directly and indirectly.

We are calling for Christians around the world to step into God's vision of fullness of life and abundance for all creation through living lives that glorify and reflect God's heart for restoration and flourishing.

Research and discuss 'riparian zones' in your area.

Where are they? How have they been used in the past? How are they being cared for now?

How can these crucial zones be a metaphor for the ways God works through individuals and communities- the new fresh water meeting the old embankments, water bringing sustenance meeting land which filters and provides homes for life?





Prayer:

O God of life, You who cause the living waters to gush forth, as in the vision of the Prophet Ezekiel, we thank you for the ocean that surrounds us. Thank you for the waters of the Pacific, which feed our families, sustain our communities, and sustain life in all its richness. Teach us to respect these waters, to protect them with wisdom and humility, so that they may remain a source of blessing for generations to come. When challenges worry us, remind us that, like the river of Ezekiel, your grace can renew, heal and give life. Make us faithful guardians of your creation, attentive to the needs of our land and sea. May our lives be like these living waters, bringing peace, justice and hope around us. Amen.

Pasteur PADOME Paul

President of the Protestant Church of Kanaky New Caledonia

For the week ahead:

Campaign for Riparian (river banks and wetlands) Protection & eco-system restoration
Take some time to think about how you and/or your church can protect riparian zones.
Can your church participate in tree planting/growing or engage with local and national governments to create policies to stop water pollution?

WEEK 2: THE WATERS OF GOD

WHEN YOU PASS THROUGH THE WATERS, I WILL BE WITH YOU; AND WHEN YOU PASS THROUGH THE RIVERS, THEY WILL NOT SWEEP OVER YOU. (ISAIAH 43:2)

Thio-IAAI Sea Crossing



Bridge Connecting Islands



Iaai: Resilience Strength



How do we see God in our waters?

Focus Scripture: Ezekiel 47:3-6a

Theological and Scriptural Background for Teachers/ Leaders

Theological Overview: Ezekiel 47:1-12

Ezekiel has been describing the building of a new temple in the desert from chapter 40 through chapter 46. This new temple is impressive but empty and lifeless. It is only in chapter 47 that life finally appears.

In this passage, the prophet is brought in a vision to the entrance of a future, idealized temple. From beneath its threshold flows water that begins as a trickle and becomes an ever-deepening river - too deep to cross. This river courses through lands once barren, transforming deserts into fertile deltas, restoring fish, vegetation, and even healing the salt-laden waters of the Dead Sea.

The prophet's vision is a River of Life representing a renewal that extends beyond human salvation to include the healing of creation itself. The trees whose leaves are "for healing" suggest not only physical sustenance but holistic flourishing, encompassing both humanity and creation. Ezekiel 47:1-12 contains a distinct environmental message that speaks of global healing, renewal and transformation of life, of the interdependence between humanity and the natural world, and of hope through action in caring for the earth, our common home.

From Sacrifice in the Temple towards God's Water of Life

Ezekiel's vision decisively reconfigures the meaning of the Temple. In Israel's tradition, the sanctuary was the place of sacrifice, where blood — the bearer of life — was shed for reconciliation. Blood signified both judgement and mercy, reminding the people that life was both costly and fragile.

In Ezekiel 47, however, the dominant image is no longer blood flowing toward the altar but water flowing outward from the Temple threshold. Holiness is expressed primarily through generative abundance. Divine presence does not consume life; it releases it. This shift from blood to water is both theologically and ecologically significant. Ezekiel does not reject sacrificial theology, but situates it within a wider horizon. Reconciliation with God results not only in restored worship but in renewed land, healed ecosystems, and abundant life. Ethical implications follow naturally: if God's presence manifests itself as life-giving water, authentic worship cannot be confined only within ritual observance.

Faithfulness must be measured by its impact on all conditions that sustain life. Care for creation thus emerges as a direct consequence of a restored relationship with God. Hope for renewal and healing starts in the place of prayer, worship, and sacrifice. The tiny drop of hope begins in our own lives, in our repentance and transformation.



SUNDAY SCHOOL CHILDRENS BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

Lesson Topic: The Waters of God- How do we see God in our waters?

Materials Needed:

1. Water basin filled with clean water
2. A symbol or symbols to represent God (e.g. cross, bible, prayer book, ect.) to place next to the water basin
3. Paper, coloring pencils, child friendly scissors

Introduction:

Last week we focused on our ancestors and how they have been in relationship with water. We learned that water was important for people who lived a long time ago, just as it is for us today. Our ancestors in faith, whose stories are recorded in the Bible, and generations of our own grandparents and elders understood that water was a gift from God that gives us life and should be protected.

I wonder if any of you talked to an elder in your family or community about what they liked to do in water when they were a child. Put your hand on your head if you learned something from an elder.

(you may invite students to share what they learned from their elders)





Water Basin (place an object that symbolized God next to basin before the lesson)

Today our church school lesson is called “Waters of God.” Let’s look at our basin of water. Do you notice anything new next to our basin?

(talk about the item or items you’ve chosen to include)

We will talk about how we see God in water and why Jesus referred to God’s holy presence as Living Water.

Story and Biblical Connections:

In the Gospel of Matthew, we read many important stories about Jesus and the people he knew. We will look at a story from chapter 3 that describes when Jesus was baptized by a man named John.

Did you know that John the Baptizer and Jesus were related? That’s right. Jesus’ mother, Mary, and John’s mother, Elizabeth, were cousins. That means Jesus and John were part of the same family. Now John was a wild looking man who lived in the wilderness. He wore camel hair clothing, with a belt around his waist, and ate locusts and honey. People visited John to hear him teach about God and to be baptized by him in the Jordan River. Do you know anyone who has been baptized?

One day, Jesus visited John and asked to be baptized in the river. At first, John didn’t want to do it because he didn’t feel worthy. He thought Jesus should baptize him instead. But John eventually agreed and baptized Jesus in the waters of the Jordan. Do you know what happened when Jesus came out of the water? The Spirit of God came down upon him like a dove, and a voice from the heavens announced “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17).

God was and is present in the waters of baptism. We recognize that at the baptismal fonts in our church sanctuaries and all bodies of water-rivers, lakes, lagoons and oceans-where people are baptized in the name of our triune God. But God isn’t just present in the waters of our church buildings and worship services.

We see God in all the waters of creation. The Spirit of God, called Ruach in Hebrew, hovered over the waters of creation and brought forth all life (Gen. 1). We still see God in the waters that help our crops and food grow, in which fish and mammals live, that flow from springs and rivers. Sometimes that water rises from the heights of our lands, the hills and mountains, and journeys down to the sea. Yet it comes from deep within the earth. God is like that too. God is present in the depths of the earth; God rises out of the darkness and ascends toward the light.

God's presence also is within each of us. Jesus said, "Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38). Jesus teaches us that God's Spirit is alive within our hearts and is as powerful as life giving water.

Activity: Hearts of Living Water

1. Invite students to draw a picture of a heart on a piece of paper or cut out a large heart by folding the paper in half, cutting the shape of half a heart, and unfolding to reveal the whole heart.
2. Write "Living Water" on one side of the heart.
3. On the back of the heart, invite students to draw a picture or write a message to God giving thanks for blessing us with water.

Note: Please make an extra Heart to use at the beginning of next week's lesson.

My Prayer:

Holy God, our Living Water, we give you thanks for blessing us with your Spirit. Help us to see you in the waters that surround us, in springs, rivers, lagoons, oceans and the falling rain. May we remember that, like water, you provide us with what we need to live and grow. May our hearts overflow with your love, so that we may share your Living Water with all of your creation. Amen.

For the Week Ahead:

Look for God's presence in the waters in your community. Where do you see God? Remember to give thanks for that Living Water.



YOUTH AND ADULT BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

Theme: The Waters of God: How do we see God in our waters?

Scripture: *“Going on eastward with a cord in his hand, the man measured one thousand cubits and then led me through the water, and it was ankle-deep. Again he measured one thousand and led me through the water, and it was knee-deep. Again he measured one thousand and led me through the water, and it was up to the waist. Again he measured one thousand, and it was a river that I could not cross, for the water had risen; it was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be crossed. He said to me, “Mortal, have you seen this?”*
Ezekiel 47:3-6a

Reflection:

“Christians need to recover a fuller understanding of creation. Creation is not only scenery, resource, or backdrop for human life. It is the living community of life itself: rivers and reefs, mangroves and forests, fish, birds, soil, watersheds, ocean currents, and the many relationships that make life possible. To speak of creation in today’s world is therefore to speak about biodiversity, and about the place of human beings within that web of life. The crises of our time make this unavoidable. Climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and the wider reality of crossing planetary boundaries all reveal how deeply damaged our relationship with the Earth has become. They also reveal the limits of any theology that imagines people as apart from biodiversity rather than part of it. The Season of Creation is therefore a call to ecological conversion: a turning of mind, heart, worship, and practice towards renewed relationship with God’s creation. In this regard, our SUP journey has been developed in line with the Season of Creation 2026 theme, Living Waters, as a call to renewed understanding from theological, ecological, and cultural perspectives. It invites churches and communities to reflect on oceans and rivers, on water as gift and sacred trust, and on people as belonging within biodiversity, not standing outside it.” Rev. James Bhagwan - General Secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches



Hear from Rev. Bhagwan as he reflects further on how we see God in our waters. ([Video link here](#)).



Discussion/ Talanoa Questions

- This scripture shares a vision of abundance, water that gets deeper and deeper, more and more, water flowing for everyone, a vision of God's love poured out. How is water like God and God like water? How do we express God's love like water, flowing outward and bringing life?
- Do you have an experience of this ever flowing love in your life?
- How do we understand water as both a symbol and the reality of God's love?

Group Activity for Youth:

In 2023 the Pacific Conference of Churches' Regional Ecumenical Youth Council (REYC) arrived at the following outcome: *"Youth are to be recognised, empowered, and included as ethical leaders of ecological justice and transformation, grounded in Pacific spirituality, storytelling, and prophetic action."*

Throughout the Season of Creation we invite you to deep thinking and action around environmental wellbeing, justice, cultural knowledge, and community mobilisation. Youth are encouraged not only to learn but to lead.

As leaders, reflect on Ezekiel's words. If God is in our waters, then keeping them safe, healthy and life-giving is of utmost importance. As you engage in learning about and building a compost pit, share where your household waste goes. How does reflection about our impact on the world around us allow us to engage more fully in the waters of God's love? Can we become more fully aware of both the harm and the beauty that is possible from our lives on this planet?

[Link to Compost lesson](#)

Group Activity for Adults:

Though God's abundance is highlighted through the words of Ezekiel, we know that we, as humans, have not always followed through in making water available equally to all. As you hold Ezekiel's vision of abundance in your hearts and minds, research/ think about/ discuss how people get clean, safe drinking water in your area.

- Where does it come from?
- Who is tasked with getting it?
- Is it available for everyone?
- How can we, as people of faith, respond to Ezekiel's vision in our own contexts, creating avenues for everyone to access water?

Advocacy for Safe, Affordable Water Access

Consider organizing a Sunday of Reflection on Water Inequality (sermon/prayers with a discussion forum after church).

The Discussion Forum could incorporate testimonies from:

- Women spending long hours fetching water
- Schools lacking reliable water
- Elderly and persons with disabilities
- Water officials departments
- NGOs, fishermen, farmers, women's groups
- Youth climate activists

Discussions could revolve around;

- Inequality in water access
- Impacts of pollution
- Over-extraction from rivers and aquifers (including underground water)
- Climate-related droughts and floods
- Gendered burdens of water scarcity



This could be followed by a *Dialogue on National or Global Water Justice*

- Involve a mix of scientists, activists and Bible scholars on a topic such as:
- Inequality in water access for example: impact on gender, education, the elderly or people living with disabilities.
- Water and conflicts, water and peace.
- Causes and impacts of pollution, as well as possible solutions. Over-extraction from rivers and aquifers.
- Climate-related droughts and floods.
- These meetings can result in statements or a joint action plan or with formal engagement with water providers in your area.

Biblical Resources on Water Justice

You can find many biblical resources on water justice on the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Water network site

<https://www.oikoumene.org/what-we-do/ecumenical-water-network>

Prayer:

Dear Creator God,

Your magnificent creations are a testament to your greatness, constantly reminding us
of our purpose in this world.

We are grateful for the mighty kangaroos, who embody resilience and inspire us to fight
for those who are weak and vulnerable.

We give thanks for the cuddly koalas, who teach us the value of gentleness and
compassion towards all living beings.

We are grateful for the rainbow lorikeets, whose vibrant presence reminds us to
embrace and celebrate the beauty that diversity brings.

We give thanks for the laughing kookaburras whose infectious laughter reminds us to
find moments of joy amidst the chaos of life.

We are grateful for the wedged-tail eagle, whose soaring wings symbolize equality and
inspire us to spread love and justice to all without discrimination.

We give thanks for the emus, who teach us humility and the importance of recognizing
and serving our neighbors with respect.

Thank you, God, for these wonderful creations.

May we learn from them and be ever reminded of our responsibility to protect and care
for our shared home.

Amen.

A Prayer by Michael Ramaidama Utoni

Activities for the week ahead:

- Organise a clean up of river or ocean.
- Get your friends together and spend some time collecting trash! Go to your favorite beach/ riverbank/ stream and clean up. This can coincide with the Global Coastal Clean up on the 19th of September.



WEEK 3: LIVING WATERS

WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND HIS BLESSING WILL BE ON YOUR FOOD AND WATER. I WILL TAKE AWAY SICKNESS FROM AMONG YOU. (EXODUS 23:25)

Trolling : Subsistence



Diving in iaai Island : Gift of the sea!



How do our waters provide life and sustenance?

Focus Scripture: Ezekiel 47:6b-9

Theological and Scriptural Background for Teachers/ Leaders

Living Water: Water as Life

Ezekiel's vision reframes water — the most basic element of life — as a divine agent of renewal, justice, and hope, a life-giving force flowing from God's sanctuary. In Ezekiel's time, water was a symbol of divine presence and blessing. Great civilizations depended on mighty rivers such as the Nile, as well as the Euphrates and the Tigris which were two of the rivers that watered the Garden of Eden (cf. Gen 2:10). The water of the oceans too is teeming with life! The vision begins with a small trickle. From a tiny stream it grows to an unstoppable river — the first marvel.

But the second marvel is greater still. The river does not merely sustain life, it restores entire ecosystems. The prophet saw "on the bank of the river a great many trees on one side and on the other.... This water flows towards the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, and when it enters the sea, the sea of stagnant waters, the water will become fresh." (Ezek 47:7,8) While describing how the river flows into the "sea of stagnant waters" the prophet is referring to the Dead Sea, one of the most lifeless places in his region. So powerful is this river's water that the salt waters will become fresh and teem with life.

An Ecological Reading of Ezekiel 47:9,12

Ezekiel's claim that fresh water will make salt water become fresh (Ezek 47:8–9) is deliberately shocking — it names something ecologically impossible in order to proclaim something theologically decisive. The Dead Sea symbolised death: no fish, no plants, no outflow — a place where life goes in and dies. By declaring that the fresh water heals the salt sea, Ezekiel echoes Genesis imagery, where God brings order and life out of chaotic waters. This is a new creation. Ezekiel could have said the river bypasses the Dead Sea. Instead, it enters it. The point is theological. God does not bypass the place of death — God enters it.

The trees which bear fruit every month represent a form of life that has moved beyond scarcity. Ezekiel is saying: in God's restored order, life is abundant. The imagery deliberately recalls Eden, yet exceeds it. Eden had trees "pleasant to the sight and good for food" (Gen 2:9), while these trees have twelve harvests a year! This is not nostalgia; it is restoration — Eden has been opened.

Note: This paragraph, based on Ezekiel's vision of a river, is not meant to diminish the value of oceans and seas which are made of salt water and yet have also been created as living waters. Indeed, the oceans are home to much of the planet's biodiversity (cf. Gen 1:21). Moreover, the oceans contribute to climate regulation.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

CHILDRENS BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

Lesson Topic: How do our waters provide life and sustenance?

Materials Needed:

1. Example of Living Water Heart from last week
2. Water basin filled with clean water
3. Fruits and vegetables in a bag
4. Coloring pencils, scissors or other materials for the activity

Introduction:

Last week we took our hearts filled with Living Water home and out into the world. We invited you to look for God's presence in water. Did you see God? Where? Let's share.

(Invite students to share how and where they experienced God in water over the past week)

Today we are going to talk about the ways in which God's living waters provide life and sustenance. Sustenance is another way of naming the things that keep us healthy and strong.

I've brought in a bag of items I'd like to share with you.

1. Show students the bag. If possible, include several different types of fruits and vegetables inside.
2. If you like, make a game out of revealing its contents. You may have students come up, one at a time, reach into the bag, hold one item without looking at it, and guess what they will pull out of the bag.
3. Once all the items are revealed, ask students to name how these items are similar.
4. What do all of these fruits and vegetables need to grow (sunlight, soil, water)?

Water Basin

Let's bring our fruits and vegetables over to the water basin. We'll put them all around it to remind us that water is essential for plants to grow.

Story and Biblical Connection:

Healthy sources of water support all life on earth. That's how God created it. The Psalmist wrote, "The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it, for God has founded it on the seas and established it on the rivers" (24:1-2).

All living things need water to survive. The plants, animals and people that live on land need fresh water to drink from springs, rivers, wells and rain.

How many of you drank a glass of water today? Did you know that our bodies are made mostly out of water? Our bodies use water in our cells. Water transports oxygen and nutrients to our organs and muscles through blood, it flushes out waste, and helps us maintain our temperature. Have you ever sweat on a hot, humid day? That's water cooling us down. That's why human beings need to drink lots of water.

Plants and animals that live in our rivers and oceans depend upon the water as well. There are so many different types of mammals, fish, and plants. All throughout the Pacific and around the world, God's creation depends upon healthy, clean fresh and salt water.

The prophet Ezekiel shared a vision about a river of living water, fresh water, that flows into a sea of salt water (Ezek. 47:9). Most animals and plants can only live in either fresh water or salt water, not both. But have you heard about Mana or mud lobsters? You can find them in many places, including Fiji. Mud lobsters live in coastal wetlands, mangrove swamps, and estuaries where fresh water rivers mix with salt water sea. Maybe you have put on your high boots and walked through the mud, setting traps, and pulled those lobsters from the mucky, wet ground. They are a source of food and income for many people.

Think about where you live. What animals and plants are found in the rivers, lakes and seas? Let's make a list.



Activity:

Let's add some of the animals and plants we've named around our Basin. We'll need to create them. Your job is to draw and cut out pictures of the animals and/or plants you'd like to see at our Basin.

(When students have completed their pictures, they can share with the group and place their picture by the water.)

My Prayer:

Almighty and ever living God, we thank you for your love in all creation, and especially for your gift of water that sustains and nourishes all life. We are grateful for the waters that bring beauty to all that we enjoy, the wild places, the bush, the mountains, coast and the sea. We give you thanks and praise for the ways in which you, as Living Water, support and care for us. Help us to remember that in every moment of every day. Amen.

For the Week Ahead:

Pay close attention to what lives around and within the waters of your home and community. What do you see? Make a list and talk about the importance of water with your family and friends.





YOUTH AND ADULT BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

Theme: Living Waters: How do our waters provide life and sustenance?

Scripture: *“Then he led me back along the bank of the river. As I came back, I saw on the bank of the river a great many trees on the one side and on the other. He said to me, “This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, and when it enters the sea, the sea of stagnant waters, the water will become fresh. Wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish once these waters reach there. It will become fresh, and everything will live where the river goes.” Ezekiel 47:6b-9*

Reflection:

The passage in the book of Ezekiel 47:5-9 offers a powerful picture of the "Living Waters" as a source of life and sustenance.

In this vision, the prophet Ezekiel sees a river that gushes out of the sanctuary and becomes deeper and deeper, impossible to cross. This water is not like a simple river: it is the symbol of a life that comes from God, abundant and inexhaustible. The text explains that wherever this river goes, everything comes back to life. The waters even transform the Dead Sea into healthy water, the fish become numerous, and the banks are covered with trees whose fruits nourish and whose leaves heal. In other words, where these waters arrive, death recedes and life sets in.

How do these waters bring us life and sustenance?

First of all, they represent: a spiritual source. As water is indispensable to the body, the presence of God is indispensable to the soul. It refreshes, restores and gives meaning to life. **Secondly, they symbolize: abundance and provision.** The river nourishes the land, makes trees grow and multiplies resources. It evokes a life where basic needs are met, not in lack, but in generosity. **Finally, by these waters bring: healing, and transformation.** Where there was sterility or death, they produce fertility. This can apply to our lives: difficult situations, tired hearts, or broken environments can be renewed by this "living water."

In short, Ezekiel's living waters are not just a natural image: they speak of a divine life that nourishes, heals, and makes prosperous everything it touches.

Concerning the waters of the Pacific. In the context of the Pacific, this image takes on a very concrete dimension. **First of all, the waters give us the** most direct life. The ocean is an essential source of food, fish, crustaceans, shellfish. As in Ezekiel's vision of "many fishes," the lagoons and reefs of the Pacific are among the richest in the world. They feed families, support communities and perpetuate ancestral knowledge. Secondly, these waters provide subsistence. Fishing, whether artisanal or larger, provides a living for many people. **They also structure trade, the local economy, and even cultural identity.** **The ocean is not just a resource: it is a life partner. But there is also a spiritual and symbolic dimension.** In many Pacific cultures, the sea is linked to life, to ancestors, to respect for creation. Like the river in Ezekiel's vision that transforms salt water into living water, it reminds us that water can be both fragile and renewing. If it is respected, it continues to give, if it is neglected, it can lose its ability to feed. Finally, this passage invites responsibility. The river brings life wherever it goes, but today, our oceans face challenges: pollution, overfishing, warming. The question then becomes: how can we preserve these "living waters" so that they continue to provide a living for future generations? In the Pacific, as in Ezekiel's vision, water is the source of life, food, work, and hope. It reminds us of both our dependence and our duty to protect, in gratitude to God's grace. Amen

Pasteur PADOME Paul

President of the Protestant Church of Kanaky New Caledonia



Hear from Rev. Bhagwan as he reflects on the miraculous life and sustenance in the waters of the Pacific Ocean throughout his SUP journey. [Link here.](#)

Discussion/ Talanoa Questions:

- What are the ways water brings us life and sustenance?
- Listen to the vision of Ezekiel, "Wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish once these waters reach there." Have we lived up to this biblical vision? How can we ensure that Ezekiel's words continue to be our lived reality?
- What do you know about biodiversity in our oceans, rivers and streams?



Group Activity for Youth:

The waters around us are not just resources for human consumption, they are home to a plethora of plants and animals. This multitude was created by a God who took delight in the bounty and diversity of life.

In our Pacific cultures, we've always known: The land is alive. The land is us. The ocean carries our memory. The ocean is us. The mountain is a relative. The mountain is us. We know, through the Dokamo, that true transformation is not just internal — it is rooted in the earth, in the ancestors, in the breath of creation and God's Spirit.

So today, as youth, to live the covenant means:

Saying NO to exploitation,

Saying NO to the desecration of sacred lands,

Saying NO to lifestyles that suffocate the earth,

And saying:

YES, to the wisdom of our elders

YES, to protection of the oceans and forests

YES, to becoming kaitiaki — guardians of the covenant, stewards, and bearers of hope.

We, the youth, are not too young to act — we are the ones the covenant is waiting for. We carry not only the wounds of a broken world, but the fire of re-creation and healing.

To be Dokamo people is to walk in rhythm with the moon, to listen again to the winds, to enter into covenant — not just with God and neighbour, but with tangata whenua, the living land, and tangata moana, the living ocean.

We are not only heirs of the Gospel — we are bearers of transformation, seeds of justice, signs of hope.

As you take the next step to create a compost pit, think and discuss the diversity of life in your community. What plants and animals depend on the waters around you? How does pollution of the waters affect those plant and animal populations? How is their plight a theological issue?

Group Activity for Adults:

Mountains, rivers, trees, and all creatures glorify the Lord simply by living as they were created to. Worshipping amidst nature allows us to join in this continuous praise.

Compost Pit Activity [Link Here](#)

Scripture and Prayer Walk

Over the next ten minutes take the time to walk or sit outside.

When you come back together as a group, take some time to pray, ending in the responsive 'Via Creationis'.

VIA CREATIONIS

THE GOODNESS OF LIGHT

℣. Praise be to you, Creator God.
℟. We thank you for your magnificent Creation.

In the beginning... God said: Let there be light, and there was light. God saw that the light was good. (Gn 1, 1. 3-4)

℣. Thank you, dear Creator, for the gift of light.
℟. Amen.

THE GOODNESS OF THE SKY

℣. Praise be to you, Creator God.
℟. We thank you for your magnificent Creation.

Then, God said: Let there be a dome... God called the dome “sky.” (Gn 1, 6. 8)

℣. Thank you, dear Creator, for the gift of the sky.
℟. Amen.

THE GOODNESS OF EARTH AND SEA

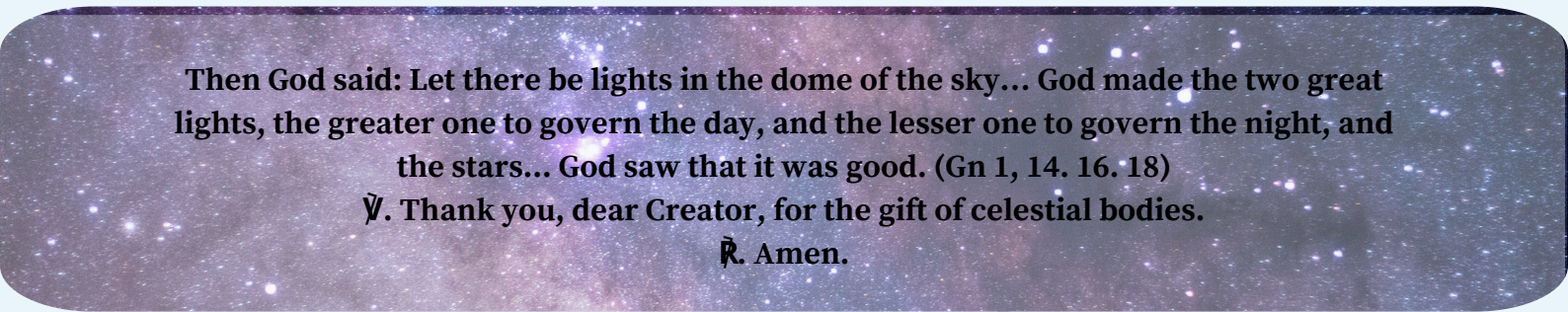
℣. Praise be to you, Creator God.
℟. We thank you for your magnificent Creation.

Then God said: Let the water under the sky be gathered into a single basin, so that the dry land may appear... God called the dry land “earth,” and the basin of water he called “sea”. God saw that it was good. Then God said: Let the earth bring forth vegetation: every kind of plant that bears seed and every kind of fruit tree... God saw that it was good. (Gn 1, 9-12)

℣. Thank you, dear Creator, for the gift of the earth and the sea.
℟. Amen.

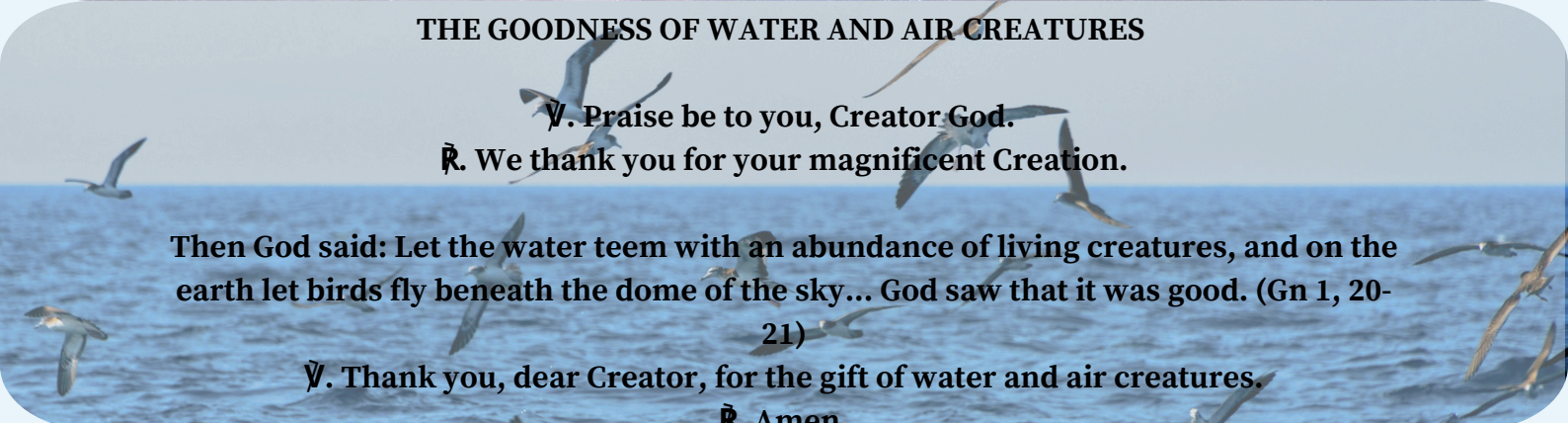
THE GOODNESS OF CELESTIAL BODIES

℣. Praise be to you, Creator God.
℟. We thank you for your magnificent Creation.



Then God said: Let there be lights in the dome of the sky... God made the two great lights, the greater one to govern the day, and the lesser one to govern the night, and the stars... God saw that it was good. (Gn 1, 14. 16. 18)

**℣. Thank you, dear Creator, for the gift of celestial bodies.
℟. Amen.**



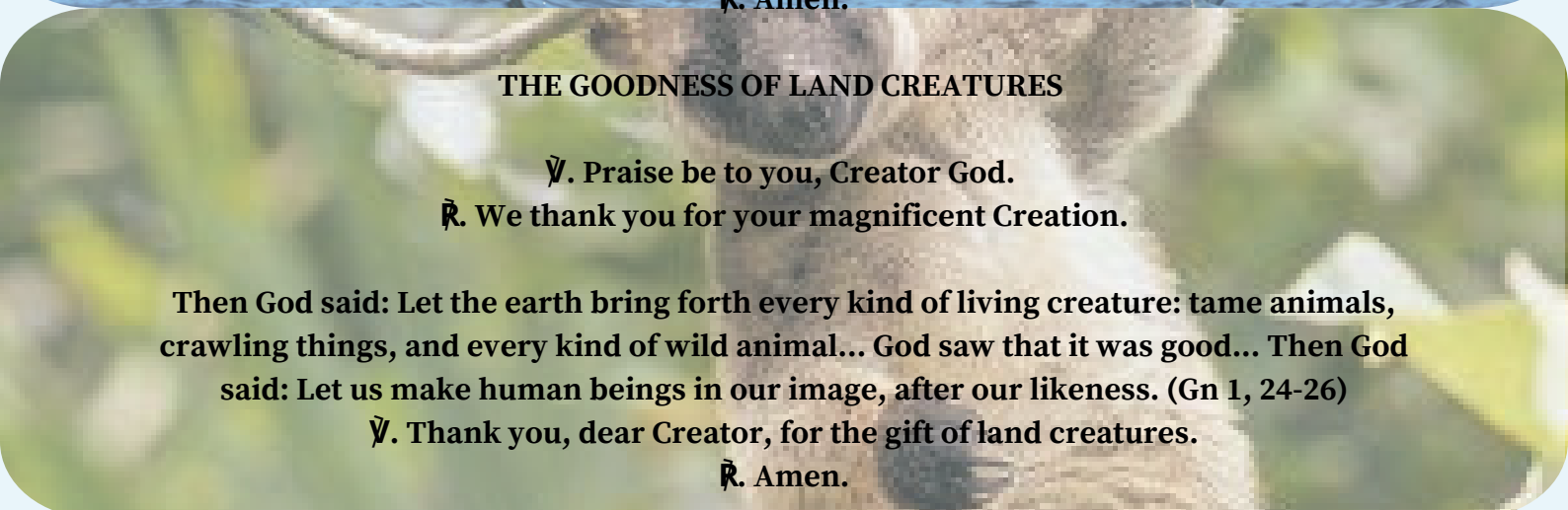
THE GOODNESS OF WATER AND AIR CREATURES

℣. Praise be to you, Creator God.

℟. We thank you for your magnificent Creation.

Then God said: Let the water teem with an abundance of living creatures, and on the earth let birds fly beneath the dome of the sky... God saw that it was good. (Gn 1, 20-21)

**℣. Thank you, dear Creator, for the gift of water and air creatures.
℟. Amen.**



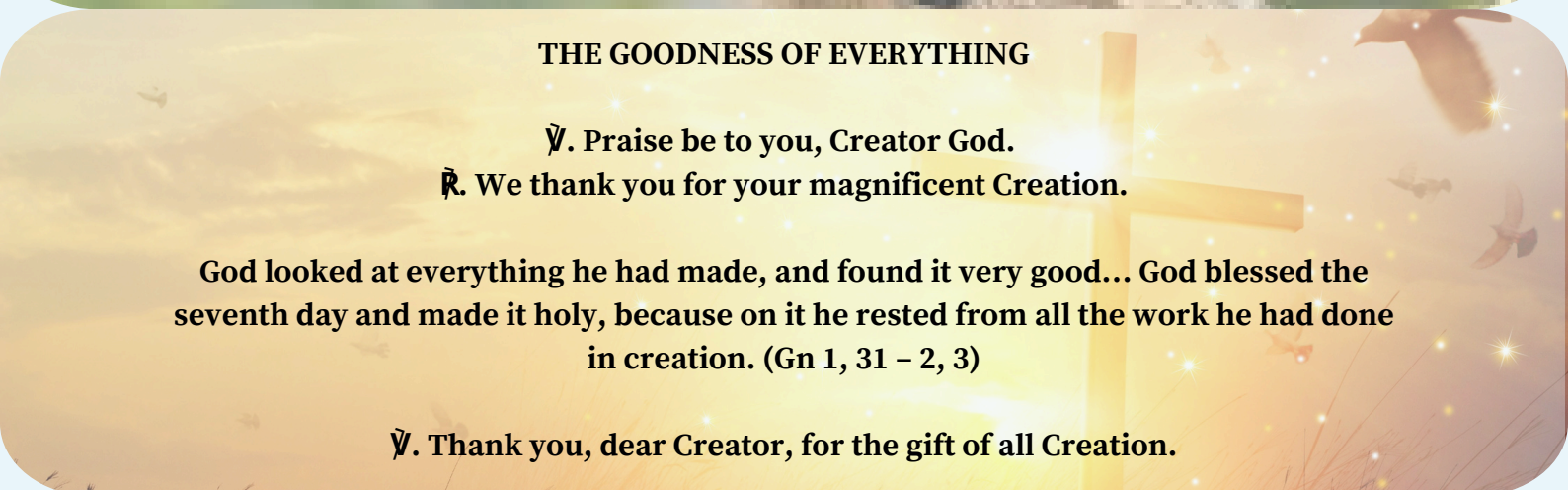
THE GOODNESS OF LAND CREATURES

℣. Praise be to you, Creator God.

℟. We thank you for your magnificent Creation.

Then God said: Let the earth bring forth every kind of living creature: tame animals, crawling things, and every kind of wild animal... God saw that it was good... Then God said: Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness. (Gn 1, 24-26)

**℣. Thank you, dear Creator, for the gift of land creatures.
℟. Amen.**



THE GOODNESS OF EVERYTHING

℣. Praise be to you, Creator God.

℟. We thank you for your magnificent Creation.

God looked at everything he had made, and found it very good... God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work he had done in creation. (Gn 1, 31 - 2, 3)

℣. Thank you, dear Creator, for the gift of all Creation.

℟. Amen.



Transition: As we thank God for the gift of creation, we also recognize how we have failed to care for it, driving the ecological crisis in its various dimensions: climate change and its consequences on vulnerable populations, decrease in biodiversity, accumulation of toxic pollution in the air, water, in the soil. All of this poses a serious threat to generations to come and fuels a global ecological anxiety that affects younger people and paves the way for more conflicts.

We pray with this year's theme and symbol for Season of Creation: Let Justice and Peace Flow like a mighty river, to heal the injustice and violence against other creatures and the poor.

Money and Greed (Wafi-Golpu Prayer)



*O Lord I stand and I pray for the ocean
They want to dump mining waste into the sea
Protect it and keep it from being a waste dump
filled up with arsenic, lead, mercury
We know that it holds all life together
Sparkling in sunshine, this beautiful sea
Could be a wasteland of tailings and dead life
It could be ruined, by money and greed.*

*O Lord I stand and I pray for the people
Who live in the villages down by the sea
The water, their lives – they all depend on it
they know it by heart and it gives all they need
The creatures they sing as they swim by in freedom,
The seaweed it dances and waves at the trees
Everything mirroring all of God's goodness
It could be destroyed, by money and greed.*

*I see a village that knows its power:
It stands as a guardian protecting them all
Help them to see their largeness in spirit
equip them with power to never feel small
Fill them with courage and knowledge, unite them
With one voice and heart, to strongly proclaim:*



*This is our land and our sea and our future,
We won't give in, to money and greed.*

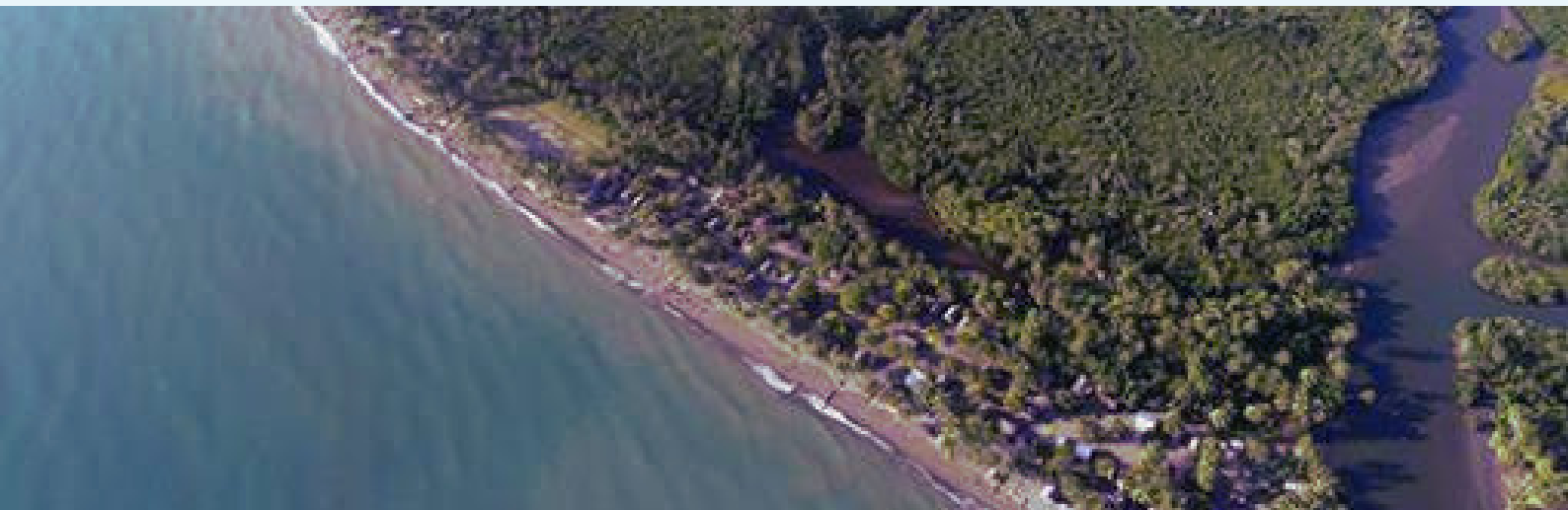
*I see people they're rising across the big city
They're standing together and shout out so free!
As they walk in the streets under banners and singing
Solwara bilong yumi*

*I see the light in their eyes and their spirits
With hope they declare that victory will be
They all believe the impossible happens
They know their power, over money and greed.*

*I see children they're swimming in crystal clear waters
They're happy and laughing and splashing their feet
They're going to school and they're growing so well
They have great friends and all that they need.
Their parents they stand, knee deep in the water
Beholding goodness in all that they see
They know their battle will never be wasted
The time they won, against money and greed.*

The time we won, against money and greed.

Prayer by Emily Price





The Wafi-Golpu copper and gold mine is planned to be located in the Morobe province of Papua New Guinea. The mine plans to dump all of its mining waste – 360 million tonnes of tailings - into the sea. This would be equivalent to more than 35,000 Eiffel Towers, which if placed end to end, would stretch further than from Auckland to Beijing.

Planned by two Australian companies, Newcrest Mining (based in Melbourne) and Harmony Gold (Australia) Pty Ltd (based in Brisbane), the mine will run for over 28 years. These Australian companies not only want to dump the waste into the ocean less than 5km from Lae, PNG's second biggest city, but to pipe the waste there directly through the middle of the city, under its streets, passing homes, businesses and government buildings. Lae is also prone to earthquakes and flooding.

The people of the Huon Gulf coastline depend entirely upon the ocean for their livelihood – approximately 400,000 people in the current generation alone. Communities continue to oppose DSTP. They say, “Solwara bilong mi” (our sea). Legal actions in-country remain ongoing as at time of writing, and an international campaign continues to support the people. More information is available at nowafigolpudstp.org

This poem, written as song lyrics, is written in the midst of the pains of the struggle - and imagines and envisions the hope for the people – a prophetic prayer for them to win.

Activities for the Week Ahead:

Organize a pilgrimage by a river, beach or lake praying together while contemplating how the water flows and all the life that is sustained by the water. Let us remember that God speaks to us both through Scripture and through nature - if we take time to listen! (Rom 1:20).

There are beautiful passages from the Psalms that can enrich your reflection - as well as powerful poems - here is an example.

«Mother, today I sat inside the river and let the water name me, not with words, but with erosion, the slowest kind of touch. A pebble isn't born smooth; it gets that way from staying. Once, I thought softness was a kind of failure. Now I know it is what remains after all the sharpness has been loved away. The current does not ask me to change; it asks me to stay and keep becoming.»

(From Tendrils; Ecopoetics of community and justice published by Spiral House, 2026)

WEEK 4: WATERS IN JEOPARDY

"AS WATER REFLECTS THE FACE, SO ONE'S LIFE REFLECTS THE HEART"
(PROVERBS 27:19)

Human Disturbance of Nature



Iaai Beach: EROSION and Rising Waters



What is happening to our waters right now?

Focus Scripture: Ezekiel 47:10-11

Theological and Scriptural Background for Teachers/ Leaders

Water between Crisis and Hope- The current Water Crisis

Ezekiel's vision stands in sharp contrast to the reality of the water crisis we face.

According to the United Nations UN News, 1.7 billion people lack basic hygiene services at home, and 2.1 billion people still lack access to safe drinking water - that is 1 in 4 people on the globe!

As climate change intensifies, and groundwater extraction increases, several countries are now reaching a so-called "point of water bankruptcy", that is a condition marked by irreversible losses of natural water capital. Although access to water is a human right for all, the multifaceted water crisis disproportionately affects vulnerable communities, future generations, and non-human life that has no voice in political or economic systems. These issues are leading to migration, pushing people into exile, with loss of homes and culture.

The impact on ecosystems and biodiversity is devastating: according to the World Wide Fund for Nature, we are facing catastrophic declines in aquatic wildlife, with freshwater populations dropping by a staggering 85 % and marine populations by 56 % in the last 50 years.

From a theological perspective, this crisis reflects broken relationships — between humankind and God, within the human family itself, and between human beings and other living beings.

Hope from Faith and Action

Ezekiel's vision is ultimately one of hope. As co-workers with the Creator, Christians' relationship with non-human creation should be grounded in the biblical vision of creation as an interconnected community of life (cf. Gen 9:8–17; Hos 2:18; Ps 24:1). Our relationship is that of sacred partnership and mutual custodianship rather than domination. Pope Francis described this as “a relationship of mutual responsibility between human beings and nature” (Laudato si' 67, 68, 116). Christians are called to confront the aforementioned injustices and to reject a worldview that treats water as a disposable resource. For instance, in the last 20 years, the WCC Ecumenical Water Network (EWN) has promoted the preservation, responsible management and equitable distribution of water for all, based on the understanding that water is a gift from God, and access to drinking water as a fundamental human right. On every continent, inspired by our faith, Christians are acting: rivers are being restored, water sources are being protected from pollution and extractive industries - and arid lands are becoming green again. Wells are being dug and water provided for parishes, villages, and health care centres.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

CHILDRENS BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

Lesson Topic: Waters in Jeopardy- What is happening to our waters right now?

Materials Needed:

1. Water basin half-filled with water
2. Rubbish to put into the water in the basin, especially single use plastic items like bags, cups, utensils
3. Coloring pencils, scissors or other materials for the activity

Introduction:

Last week we learned that God's living waters provide life and sustenance to every living thing on this earth. Many are named at the beginning of creation in Genesis chapter 1.

- All vegetation, plants yielding seed of every kind and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it (verse 12)
- The great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm and every winged bird of every kind (verse 21)
- The wild animals of the earth of every kind and the cattle of every kind and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind (verse 25)
- Human beings (verse 27)

All of these living things need water to live, grow and be healthy.

Story

But not all water is safe. Have you ever heard of the Dead Sea? This is a body of water located between Israel, the Palestinian West Bank, and Jordan in the Middle East. It is very different from our springs, rivers, lakes and sea. It is 10 times more salty than the Pacific Ocean. That's too salty for fish, seagrasses and humans. You won't find coral or tuna or turtles in this water. You would never use it to water your plants. People visit the Dead Sea, but they don't drink the water. If they dip their toes in or float on its surface, they need to get out after 15 minutes or it will irritate their skin and make them feel sick.

The Dead Sea isn't the only water that is unhealthy. Let's go back to our water basin.

Water Basin

Fill the water basin with rubbish, especially single use plastic items

What do you notice about our water basin today? Would you want to drink this water?

Would you use it to water plants? Does it look healthy? Why not?

Sometimes sources of fresh and ocean water become like the Dead Sea, where no animals or plants can survive. That happens because of the ways people misuse and abuse our water.



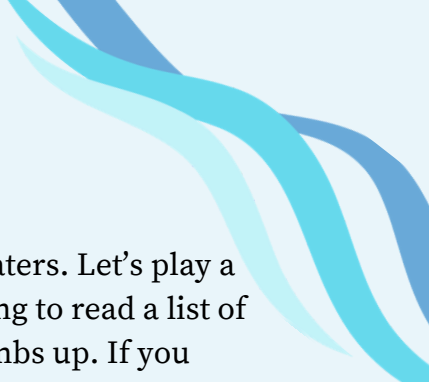
Biblical Connection:

Long ago, when the Holy One created the heavens and the earth, God made human beings the caretakers and guardians of all creation (Gen. 1:26). Men and women, children and youth are responsible for the health and wellbeing of the air we breathe, the land on which we live, and all the waters that provide life.

But human beings have not always acted in ways that live up to God's call. Some people and nations forget to respect nature and our important connection to it. That is especially true of our waters.

- Deep sea mining for minerals on the ocean floors destroys marine habitat and pollutes our waters.
- Burning fossil fuels sends large amounts of carbon dioxide into the sky contributing to climate change.
- Nuclear bomb testing has poisoned the waters of the Pacific and nuclear submarines put our waters at risk.
- Companies and factories emit greenhouse gases that affect our weather.
- Many people in the world do not have access to clean drinking water because it is polluted, misused or drying up.

These are big problems and some of them are caused in far away places.



But there are things happening near our own homes that affect our waters. Let's play a game to help identify the things that put our waters in danger. I'm going to read a list of actions. If you think these activities help protect water, show two thumbs up. If you think these activities may harm water, wag your index finger back and forth. *(You might make this a gross motor activity by designating one corner of the room for protect and another corner for harm. Students should physically move to the corner they think represents each action you read from the list)*

- Throwing a drinking bottle or can on the ground
- Reusing a plastic container
- Using more water than we need
- Bringing your own reusable bags for the items you buy at the market
- Tossing rubbish off the boat
- Pouring old car oil down the drain
- Using a plastic spoon when metal spoons are available
- Cleaning up your mess after eating outside
- Taking too many fish from our waters (overfishing)

Activity:

Through today's activity we will remind ourselves and others that our actions may protect or harm our waters. Let's make signs to show people what to do and what not to do if we want to protect our waters.

1. Use coloring pencils to draw a circle on paper.
2. Draw a picture of something people should do (e.g. throw rubbish in the trash) or shouldn't do (e.g. littering). If time permits, students could illustrate one of each on the front and back of the paper.
3. If your picture shows something that may harm the water, draw a solid line through it to indicate DON'T.
4. Invite students to share their signs with the group

Alternatively, you may have students draw a line down the middle of the paper and label them Do and Don't at the top. Draw or write about what actions protect and harm water.

My Prayer:

O God whose love flows like living water, we are sorry for times we have forgotten to take care of your creation. Help us to remember that you want us to guard and protect the waters that surround us. Give us strength to change our ways and the ways of this world, so that all may enjoy life giving water. Amen.

For the Week Ahead:

Talk about your sign with members of your family or your friends. Think about the ways in which you can protect our waters from pollution and misuse.

YOUTH AND ADULT BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

Theme: Waters in Jeopardy: What is happening in our waters right now?

Scripture: *“People will stand fishing beside the sea from En-gedi to En-eglaim; it will be a place for the spreading of nets; its fish will be of a great many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea. But its swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they are to be left for salt.”* **Ezekiel**

47:10-11



Reflection

In my view of the world, and in relation to this theme, the earth is not merely the ground upon which we walk. The earth is the Mound; it is the origin; it is the anchor of our identity; and it is also the unbreakable link to our ancestors.

For us, the people of Oceania, the world begins and breathes in waves. In this vast blue expanse, the ocean is a womb; the ocean is amniotic fluid, nourishing and protective. At the heart of this infinite womb, the island is an embryo. It is fragile, in a state of perpetual becoming; people of Oceania, the world begins and breathes through the water. In this vast blue expanse, it carries within it the memory of all our clans and also the future of our children.

But today, the amniotic fluid of our world is sick. Through our collective negligence, global warming has transformed the cradle into a threat. This reflection or essay is, for me, a cry from the earth and the sea, a meditation inspired by the wisdom of culture and the vision of the prophet Ezekiel to awaken our slumbering conscience.

Ezekiel's Vision and the Nourishing Ocean

In chapter 47 of the Book of Ezekiel, the prophet receives a vision of a spring of water gushing forth from the sanctuary, from the temple itself. As this water flows, it becomes a mighty river that descends towards the Dead Sea, purifying its toxic waters. Wherever this torrent flows, life flourishes: 'Every living creature that was dying shall live wherever the torrent flows...' (Ezekiel 47:9)

For us, as Oceanian people, this sanctuary is not a building of stone but nature itself, entrusted to us by the Creator and our Ancestors. The ocean in its natural state is Ezekiel's river of life. It has long healed, nourished and cradled the Embryo Island. The ocean currents have provided sustenance; the trade winds have brought rain for our tarodier fields and our yam fields. The ocean and the island lived in perfect symbiosis, each enveloping the other with the tenderness of a mother carrying her child.

Global Warming

However, we have broken the taboo. Blinded by the pursuit of profit, excessive industrialisation and our disconnection from our land, we have committed the sin of neglect. The modern world has forgotten that one must not pollute one's mother's home – and therefore that of one's maternal uncles[1].

Global warming is the physical manifestation of this spiritual and ecological neglect. The ocean's temperature is rising; the womb has a fever. The acidification of the waters is eroding our coral reefs, which are the protective skin of our embryonic island. Cyclones, growing ever more violent, are no longer the fleeting outbursts of the spirits, but the convulsions of a climate thrown out of balance by human activity. The embryo finds itself suffocating, threatened with being swallowed up by the very waters that were meant to nurture its growth.

The salt marshes of our neglect

Ezekiel's vision, whilst bearing immense hope, contains a tragic warning that resonates with chilling clarity in our contemporary Pacific.

In verse 11, it is written: 'These marshes and pits shall not be reclaimed; they shall be left to the salt.' This sentence is the sad reality of our islands today. With rising sea levels, salt water has seeped into the groundwater of our atolls and low-lying coasts. The ocean water, which once nourished our lands, now invades our traditional fields as a force of destruction. Our fertile lands, where taro and yams grow – the wealth of our culture – are gradually turning into barren salt marshes.

1] For Kanak People, maternal uncles are deeply sacred because they are where life comes from.



We have allowed our pits to be abandoned to the salt. Our failure to reduce our emissions, our slowness in protecting our coastlines and our partial abandonment of the agricultural practices respected by our ancestors have accelerated this agony. The wood is withering, the water brackish. The island is slowly dying from within.

Deacon Marcel Piliwe WENEHOA

Plum Parish – Nouméa Consistory

Protestant Church of Kanaky New Caledonia

Reflection (Video from Rev. Bhagwan: [Link here](#))

Discussion Questions/Talanoa

- Where do you see injustice in how land or ocean is treated in your area?
- Are women, children, youth, the elderly, those amongst the most vulnerable, being heard in environmental decisions? How can your community strive to hear from these populations and engage them in decision making?
- How can your group be part of restoring justice and harmony?

Group Activity for Youth

This vision from Ezekiel ends with a stark warning, “These marshes and pits shall not be reclaimed; they shall be left to the salt.” As Deacon WENEHOA says, “This sentence is the sad reality of our islands today. With rising sea levels, salt water has seeped into the groundwater of our atolls and low-lying coasts.”

As you watch the video about composting and finalise your project, consider how small acts of recycling and composting allow us to combat these larger forces. Consider also the power of community action through individual churches and your relationship with the Pacific Conference of Churches.

Together with REYC, we can advocate for a Pasifika environment that:

- maintains ecological justice
- liberates our *vanua* from bondage and decay
- transforms our *moana* from monetization to local source of life
- thrives in Oceania spirituality
- empowers Pacific youth to actively proclaim ecological integrity
- and most importantly, an environment that gives hope to the people of God where there seems to be no hope at all

Through Christ, we are being called to be active advocates of the above statements. As Pacific youth, let us hope for what we do not see and wait for it with patience in faith and works.

Composting Video - [Link here](#)

Group Activity for Adults:

As a species, we are quickly discovering that biodiversity and maintaining living waters is not just for human benefit. The web of life, birthed through our oceans, and referenced so often by Ezekiel, is intricately connected in ways we are constantly discovering. As people of faith, this biblical vision calls on us to not only repent, but to act, and quickly, to preserve the living waters and divinely created beings in our midst.

Take some time to think about water justice and biodiversity in your town/ city/ region. Are there possibilities for community building? Can we as people of faith bring others together to assure that “Wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live”?



Here are some ideas...

Bring together Christians and other faith groups to discuss urgent local issues. You could invite different speakers such as water officials, scientists, NGOs, fishermen, farmers, women's groups, youth activists. Invite theologians, Bible scholars, and members from your Church who have studied environmental issues in the light of the Gospel values. Issues to be discussed might include:

- Inadequate access to water, sanitation, and hygiene in rural villages, poor districts, and informal settlements, as well as in critical locations such as prisons, healthcare facilities, schools, and refugee camps.
- Protection of the aquatic ecosystem, i.e. wetlands, rivers, oceans, etc.
- Protection of water infrastructure for civilians during conflicts. Caring for, using wisely and replenishing underground water resources.

- Watershed management, through inclusive processes and integrated water resources management.
- Unaffordable water tariffs.
- Frequent water rationing.
- Pollution from industries, crude oil extraction, farms, or sewage systems.
- Unsustainable sand harvesting and riparian encroachment.

A simple petition or letter to a newspaper can be prepared addressing these issues.

Deliver the petition during the Season of Creation to:

- Member of Parliament / Government.
- The Water Departments.
- Local water service providers.
- Ward administrators or community environment committees.
- The business that is causing the pollution.

Prayer:

I Am

*The Tides sweeps in
To the toes of I Am
To the ankles of I Am -
There is a foreboding presence
What is that? I Am asks
Wind whispers in the far off trees
I Am feels a change
The foam now reaches the calves of I Am
A tide mark left on the knees
I Am surfs out for help -
It keeps rising to the thighs and hips
I Am shouts
A heavy swell on the chest of I Am
Seawater flows into the heart
Cries remain unheard
Tongue tastes brine
The tears of I Am
Hands of I Am reach for the air
But who will notice?
On a dead zone
I Am waves goodbye
I Am What Once Was*

Prayer by: Michael Ramaidama Utoni



For the Week Ahead:

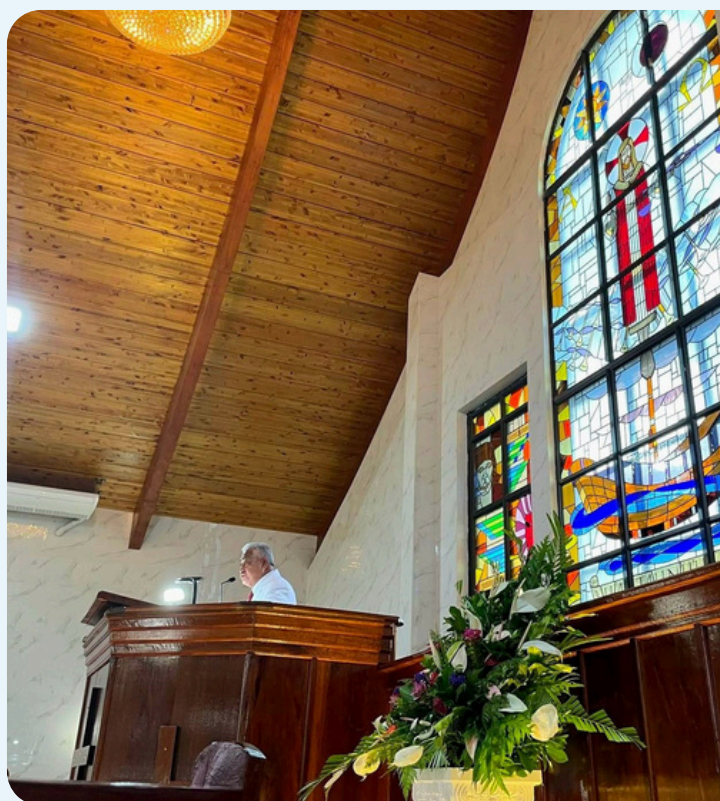
The Season of Creation ends on the 4th of October, which also marks the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi. St. Francis was born Giovanni di Pietro di Bernardone (c. 1181 – 3 October 1226), later becoming known as Francis of Assisi. He was an Italian mystic, poet and Catholic friar who founded the religious order of the Franciscans. Inspired to lead a Christian life of poverty, he became a beggar and an itinerant preacher.

Saint Francis is the author of the Canticle of the Creatures, and Pope John Paul II declared him, in 1979, the Catholic patron saint of those who cultivate ecology.

St. Francis is remembered as one who loved animals and creation. Today, many churches hold special 'Blessing of the animals' celebrations on the 4th of October in his honor.

Consider hosting an ecumenical celebration for the Feast of St. Francis or a special service to bless household pets or farm animals.

You can also participate in the Season of Creation Closing Event on the 4th of October with youth voices from around the globe (3:00 pm CEST). You might like to plan a community screening to experience this event together from anywhere in the world.



WEEK 5: GOD CALLS US TO THE WATER

"LET MY TEACHING FALL LIKE RAIN AND MY WORDS DESCEND LIKE DEW, LIKE SHOWERS ON NEW GRASS, LIKE ABUNDANT RAIN ON TENDER PLANTS" (DT 32:2)

Sediment Traps:



Planting Mangrove Pods



What can we do to protect our waters?

Focus Scripture: Ezekiel 47:12

Theological and Scriptural Background for Teachers/ Leaders

A Call to Action

Food security: Ezekiel's prophecy speaks of trees that "bear fresh fruit every month" (Ezek 47:12). We are called to shape and influence our policies and practices so that all people have access to nourishing food. Churches can promote greening projects which reflect Christian values on their own land, and equip their members with skills to grow some of their own food.

Water pollution: We are called to refrain from harmful pollution, and to urge governments, local authorities, industry, and agriculture to act responsibly and protect water sources.

Water and sanitation: Many of our siblings still lack regular access to safe drinking water and sanitation. Therefore, we must act so that households, schools, healthcare facilities, and places of worship — including churches and parishes — have access to clean water and proper sanitation.

Environmental education: Parents, catechists, clergy, and faith communities are thus called to foster a holistic care for creation — human and non-human alike — drawing not only on technical knowledge, but also on relationships, ethics, and spiritual formation.

Drawing spiritual inspiration from Creation: Through contemplation of the natural world created by God (Job 7–12), we are invited to move from domination to humility, from exploitation to care, and from short-term profit to long-term flourishing. urban environments—they truly bring healing to the nations.

Caring for our oceans: — our “Blue Lung” — which face rising threats from waste discharge, overfishing, pollution, and deep-sea mining. Life and biodiversity beneath the waves must not be treated as out of sight and out of mind. May educators help our communities see and value these marine worlds. May government leaders act with courage to protect marine biomes and livelihoods. And may we choose guardianship that keeps the Blue Lung breathing for generations.

Ecosystem and biodiversity restoration and protection: We are called to restore land in our churches, homes, and communities. There are many initiatives which we can engage with : a Decade of Climate justice has been declared by the World Council of Reformed Churches and the World Council of Churches; there are online platforms such as Laudato si’ Action Platform, Anglican Communion Forest and national programmes such as Green Church or Eglise Verte.

Let us overcome our fear and step into the water of God’s love - to be part of the River of Transformation, to see the literal healing and renewal of creation and the blessing of the Earth.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

CHILDRENS BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

Lesson Topic: God Calls us to the Water: What can we do to protect our waters?

Materials Needed:

1. Water basin filled half way with water and with the rubbish from last week
2. A jug of clean water
3. Coloring pencils and paper

Introduction:

Last week we focused on the ways our waters are in danger. Some people misuse and pollute the waters of our island homes and the actions of those in far away lands can be bad for our waters as well. Remember that we are called by God to keep our rivers, lagoons and oceans healthy and clean. Did you share your Do and Don't signs with someone you know?

This week our job is to share the good news that everyone, even the smallest children, can make a big difference in our world. We can help protect our waters and make Ezekiel's vision of God's living waters happen today.

Biblical connection

Two weeks ago we talked about the prophet Ezekiel. He was a man who shared God's hope for a brighter future. In that vision, a river of living waters flows out from God's temple. It flows deeper and deeper until it empties into the Dead Sea. Do you remember our lesson from last week? Why do they call that sea dead? Nothing grows or lives in it. But the river of living waters changes everything. The Dead Sea becomes a place filled with life. Listen to Ezekiel's words:

"Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live. [...] Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing." (Ezek. 47:9, 12)

Ezekiel's message is filled with hope for renewal and life.

Water Basin

Let's look at our water basin. It is filled with rubbish and half of the water is gone. What can we do to make this look healthy and safe?

Let's remove the rubbish we added in week 4 and fill it back up with fresh, clean water. *(Remove the rubbish and throw it away. Next, fill the basin with clean water until it is full)*

Now it looks like the kind of water we talked about in week 1, the kind our ancestors and elders called special and protected. It is the kind of water we talked about in week 2, the kind in which we see God. It is the kind of water we talked about in week 3, that feeds people, fruit trees and crops. It is a safe place for fish and birds and all of God's creatures. It is the living water God wants us to share with the world, the kind Ezekiel shared in his vision.

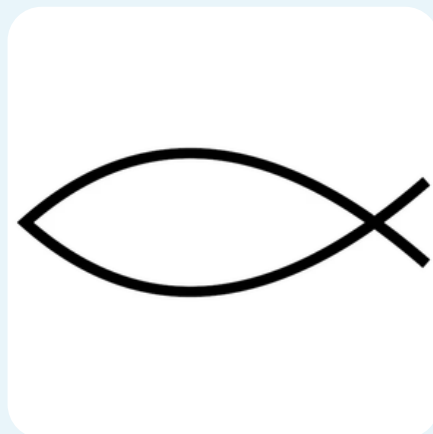
Call to Action:

Now it's our turn to help make this vision come true. During the Season of Creation, we have focused on how important our waters are. We know that there are people who forget to take care of God's waters. Sometimes we forget to do that ourselves.

Let's make a promise to change that today. Let's listen to our ancestors and elders, to people like Ezekiel from the Bible, and our own hearts that are filled with God's love and Living Water.

Let's promise to protect the waters that are on and surround our island homes. We will respect our waterways, the animals and plants that must have healthy, clean water, and our brothers and sisters who need water for drinking, cooking, bathing, growing food, and having fun. And let's make a symbol to remind us of that promise.

One of the first symbols or pictures that Christians used hundreds of years ago was a fish. It was a very simple design that told others we believe in God and we follow the teachings of Jesus. It looked like this:



We will use this symbol to remind us of the fish in Ezekiel's hope filled vision and our promise to protect the living water.

Activity:

1. Draw the early Christian symbol of a fish on a piece of paper
2. You may cut this out with scissors
3. Near the top of the fish write the words "I promise"
4. Below, draw a picture or write a message of how you will help protect God's water and make Ezekiel's vision come true
5. Invite students to share their fish with the group

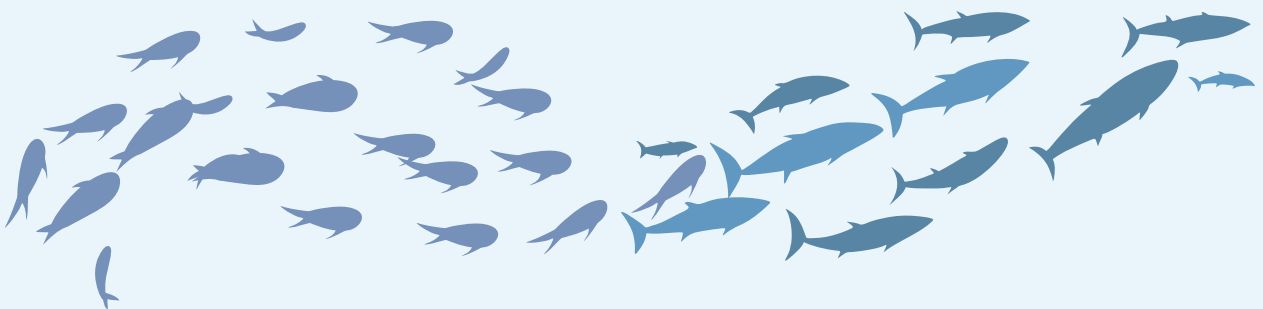
If time permits, you may make extra fish for members of the congregation, family and friends. You may choose to write simple words and sayings on each fish like "Protect," "Living Waters," "Safe," "Blessed," "Sacred," or others of your choosing. You may hand these out to others and explain what you have learned during this Season of Creation. You might also consider making a mural on an empty wall space in the church to display these fish.

My Prayer:

Holy God, Creator of all that lives and breathes, we give you thanks. During this Season of Creation, we have learned so much about your Living Waters and our relationship with you. We are grateful for your care and the responsibility you provide, so that we may protect the waters of our island homes and share in their blessings. Grant us the strength and courage to make your hope filled vision real, today and in all our tomorrows. We lift this prayer to you in the name of Jesus the Christ.
Amen.

For the Weeks Ahead:

Hang your fish somewhere you will see it. Remember what we have learned over the past 5 weeks and try to keep your promise to help protect God's living waters.





YOUTH AND ADULT BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

Theme: God Calls Us to the Water: What can we do to protect our waters?

Scripture: *“On the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.” Ezekiel 47:12*

Reflection

The path to healing

Kanak culture teaches us that words carry weight, and that every action taken in nature has a consequence. The ocean is not a rubbish tip, and the island is not merely a patch of rock, a source of nickel, destined to vanish beneath the waves of indifference or global profit. To save the embryonic island, we must rediscover the path to the sanctuary of which Ezekiel speaks. This return involves:

- Reconnecting with the earth: putting respect back at the heart of our relationship with the environment, by honouring the cultural knowledge that has preserved our biodiversity for millennia.
- Collective action: acknowledging our share of responsibility for this neglect, but also raising our voices in the concert of nations. The Pacific must not pay the price for the excesses of the rest of the world.
- Restoration: allowing the living waters of conservation to flow once more, by replanting our mangroves, protecting our lagoons, and rejecting projects that sacrifice our natural world on the altar of short-term economic gain.

The image of the embryonic island bathed in the womb-like ocean must once again become a symbol of hope, not of tragedy. It is our duty to ensure that the waters surrounding us once again become that biblical river where, on both banks, fruit trees grow whose foliage shall never wither and whose fruit shall never run out, so that the embryo may, at last, be born and flourish in a healed Pacific.

Deacon Marcel Piliwe WENEHOUA

Plum Parish – Nouméa Consistory

Protestant Church of Kanaky New Caledonia

Reflection (Video from Rev. Bhagwan. [Link here.](#))

Discussion/ Talanoa Questions:

- Ezekiel's vision describes waters flowing from God's sanctuary, bringing life, healing, renewal, and abundance to all.
- How can churches reflect this message by advocating for the issues impacting our human and physical water cycles: caring for catchments, rivers, drinking water resources, wetlands and seas, and all life in them, loving our neighbours who depend on them, directly and indirectly?
- How can we call for Christians around the world to step into God's vision of fullness of life and abundance for all creation through living lives that glorify and reflect God's heart for restoration and flourishing?
- What are you doing to care for the Waters of Creation? What hopes do you have for the waters that surround you/ are meaningful to you?

Group Activity for Adults:

As we conclude the Season of Creation we invite you to reflect on the past five weeks. What have you learned? What have you shared? What has moved you and what do you need to mourn, challenge, ponder, learn?

As a faith community we bring forth our joy at the Living Waters that surround us, and our concern for their future. Engage in the following activity allowing your community to share in moments of lament and hope.

Method

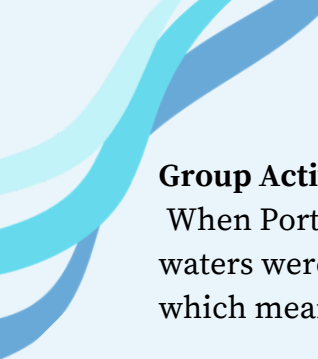
Fill a clear glass bowl about a third full of water and place it in the center of the circle on the floor or a table. The water represents our tears for the world. All are invited to come to the bowl as they are moved. Dipping a hand in the water and letting it trickle through their fingers, they can say, "My tears are for..." and speak of specific beings and places. After everyone is finished, the group processes to any nearby body of water, or to a garden or natural area where you can pour the water, saying something to the effect of: "Our tears for the world are the tears of God."

Variation

Place a little ceramic bowl of salt next to the bowl of water. Then give instructions to this effect: Salt is essential to life. It is in our oceans and in our tears. Because our tears are also essential to life, we place a pinch of salt in the water. Then dipping a hand in the water and letting it trickle through your fingers, you can say, "My tears are for..." and speak of beings and places you mourn.

You can conclude by using these words, "We ask the Lord to pour out rivers of living water to heal the harm we have caused, to strengthen our love and service, and to inspire us to walk together toward a just and fraternal world."

Contributor/Author: Joanna Macy & Molly Brown



Group Activity for Youth:

When Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan reached the ocean in 1520, he felt the waters were calm and relaxed. As a result, he called the body of water “Mar Pacífico,” which means “peaceful sea” in both Portuguese and Spanish.

Centuries before Ferdinand Magellan named the Pacific Ocean, Hawaiians, Maori and other island cultures had their own names for the sea, and referred to the Pacific Ocean as Moananui’akea or Te Moana Nui a Kiwa in Te reo, based on its vastness and power. The Pacific Ocean is the world’s deepest, and at roughly 63 million square miles, it covers more area than all the land on Earth. It’s a huge source of the world’s fish supply and a major factor in the world’s weather patterns.

The Pacific Ocean / Moananuiakea is more than just a vast, powerful, and peaceful sea. Just as the rays of Sun shine through into the depth of the Ocean, and even where there is darkness below the depths of the ocean, the ocean suffers – issues such as coral reef destruction, deep sea mining, effects of oil spills, as well as indirectly causing displacement from rising seas, to name a few.

For youth, this injustice is visible in polluted rivers, coral reef destruction, displacement from rising seas, and loss of traditional knowledge. Yet Ezekiel also offers a promise —“on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.” Ezekiel 47:12.

Young people are rising up across the Pacific to defend sacred lands, protest deep sea mining, and advocate for indigenous-led conservation. Justice restores harmony in our communities and ecosystems. As Pacific youth, we are not just the future—we are the voice of justice today.

Below you will find instructions for using your newly created compost pit. As you watch the final video, consider the words above. How are you the voice of justice today? How do your ancestors, your God, your vanua and moana, and your communities help you to live out this justice seeking? How can you, as a part of God’s beloved creation, affirm yourself as well as the world around you?

Composting Video: [Link](#)

For more information about composting, [Click Here!](#)



eco·cycle

STEPS IN BACKYARD COMPOSTING

By following these directions you can help accelerate the natural decomposition process to produce compost from your own backyard!

Step 1: Obtain a bin or designate an area in your yard that is approximately one cubic yard (3x ft. x 3 ft. x 3ft.)

Size is important to achieve the proper temperature. Piles that are too small cannot hold enough heat for effective microbial activity, and piles too large (more than 5 feet cubed) do not allow for enough air to reach microbes in the center of the pile.

Step 2: Mix two parts "brown" content (dry leaves, small twigs, straw, etc.) with one part "green" content (grass clippings, kitchen scraps, etc.)

This 2:1 ratio in volume provides the best mix of carbon (brown materials) to nitrogen (greens).

Step 3: Chop or break up twigs and large pieces of fruit and vegetable waste

Materials will break down more quickly with increased surface area. Half- to one-inch pieces are best for optimal decomposition.

Step 4: Keep it moist

Water your compost when needed to keep it damp, like a wrung-out sponge (not soggy). Here in Colorado, you may have to water your pile more frequently than you expect, given the dry climate. One way to mitigate moisture loss is to choose or build a compost bin with a top and enclosed sides (with holes for aeration).

Step 5: Keep it turning

Compost needs air. Turning the compost will help it break down and prevent unpleasant odors. In warmer months, compost should be turned every two weeks or so. In the winter, it is best to leave the pile as undisturbed as possible so it will retain heat. When adding material, dig a small well in the top or side of the pile, place material in, and cover, so the pile does not lose too much heat.

Use your compost!

When it is ready, your compost should look like dark, rich soil and smell earthy, like a forest after the rain. Use finished compost to feed your garden, flowers, potted plants, and lawn! You can apply it as a top dressing, mix it into the first few inches of soil, or when you are digging a hole to add an established plant or a new sapling, you can mix some compost into the hole with the resident soil. The most common backyard composting problem is unpleasant, strong odors which indicate a lack of oxygen in the compost, usually caused by overloading your pile with food waste that causes the content to become too wet. Solution: Stop adding food waste until the worms and micro-organisms have broken down what food is in there, and gently stir up the entire contents to allow more air in.

BACKYARD COMPOST GUIDELINES

Once you've set up your backyard compost bin or pile, use the following guidelines to help you keep an optimal mixture of carbon (browns) and nitrogen (greens). **Maintain a 2:1 ratio of "BROWN" to "GREEN" content**, and make sure all materials added to your compost pile or bin are no bigger than 2 inches.

BROWNS



Dry leaves



Wood chips



Grass, straw, and hay



Dry pine needles



Weeds (before seeding)



Sawdust



Napkins, paper towels, and tissues (if no toxic chemicals are absorbed)

GREENS



Fruit and vegetable scraps



Fresh grass clippings



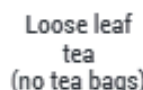
Freshly fallen leaves



Eggshells (no eggs)



Coffee grounds and filters (preferably unbleached)



Loose leaf tea (no tea bags)



Perennial plant clippings

KEEP IT OUT!

Many of the following items may attract wildlife, or create contamination in your compost pile. Keep them out!



NO meat, fish, or bones



NO oily or greasy foods



Eggs (eggshells ok)



NO cheese, yogurt, or other dairy



NO compostable serveware

NO:
Pet waste
Vacuum waste
Dryer lint
Tea bags

Prayer

Creator God,
We come before you as a small piece of your vast creation.
We come in awe at the beauty and wonder of our planet,
and we feel its pain.

Let the embers of our burning bushland
Rekindle the flame of Pentecost
Shine your light in us that we may strive for a greener future.

Let the dryness of the land in seasons of drought
Remind us to thirst for your leadership
Holy Spirit, lead us towards the well of hope for a sustainable
planet.

Let the waters of our flooded plains and rivers
Drench our hearts with your mercy
Living Water fill us with mercy for your suffering creation.

Let the roaring of raging winds and cyclones
help us hear the cry of Mother Earth
Jesus, give us your peace to calm our storm, and peace to
strengthen our calling.

Let the rise in sea levels
raise our concern and love towards our neighbour
Risen Christ, resource us with your love for the world.

Creator God, we are your people, called and purposed to be
good stewards of our planet.

Bless this day.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.

By Michael Ramdaian Utoni



For the Week Ahead:

Digital advocacy campaign #SeasonofCreation

Consider ways to educate others about the jeopardy our waters are facing. Using some of the materials from Season of Creation think about creating awareness raising webinars on Water Justice that can be widely shared.

Use social media, newspapers and local radio stations to:

- Highlight polluted or dying rivers, lakes or wetland areas.
- Share stories of communities affected by water scarcity.
- Celebrate positive steps by governments and communities.
- Publicly call for urgent action.

Offer faith perspectives that link Scripture, justice, and environmental stewardship:

- Weekly educational posts or podcasts.
- Short testimonies from farmers, women, and youth.
- Infographics on pollution impacts.
- Calls to sign petitions or attend town halls.
- Stories of local rivers and springs.
- This will amplify the voices of faith communities beyond the walls of the church.



ECUMENICAL PRAYER SERVICE

Introduction

We encourage you to use this prayer service to mark the start of the Season of Creation. The Season starts on the 1st of September, which is celebrated by some Christian denominations as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation and celebrated by some as the Feast of Creation. It ends on October 4th, the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi. You can also use it at events and services that you hold during the Season.

In planning your service, you may wish to invite participants to bring a small bottle of water (avoiding plastic!) from their homes. During the “Thanksgiving for Water”, a small portion of each person’s water may be poured into the font or into a large bowl prepared for the “Blessing of the Waters.”

The water gathered in the bowl is then blessed. In some traditions, it can be used to sprinkle the congregation, recalling our baptism and our shared calling to care for the gift of water. After the service, participants may take home the remaining water in bottles (preferably made of glass or renewable materials) as a sign of renewal and a reminder of their commitment to protect and cherish water as a sacred gift of God. (See the proposal of “Commissioning blessing with the Living Water” in the Celebration Guide under, Ideas for Celebrating the Season of Creation and Ways to Live out the Symbol)

You can also consider a creative moment of lament when you bring visual images or examples of the tears of creation.

Portions of the service read by one person (or leader) are in regular font, congregational responses are in bold.

Scripture passages are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition (NRSVUE).

Welcome and Opening Word

We hold our prayer service today as part of the ecumenical Season of Creation, a season of prayer and action for our common home that takes place every year from September 1 to October 4. The theme for the Season of Creation this year is “Living Water,” which is taken from Ezekiel 47:9 and 12.

Call to worship

Leader: In the beginning, the Spirit of God hovered over the waters. And God called them good.

All: Come Holy Spirit and cleanse the waters.

Leader: The prophet saw a river flowing from the Temple, and wherever the river flowed, everything lived.

All: Come Holy Spirit and renew the face of the Earth.

Leader: Jesus cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me... Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water."

All: Come, Holy Spirit and heal your people.

Thanksgiving for the Waters

Almighty and ever living God, we thank you for your love in all creation, and especially for your gift of water to sustain and cleanse all life. Christ is the living water, cleansing, refreshing, and making all things new. So now we offer our thanks for the waters that bring beauty to all that we enjoy, the wild places, the bush, the mountains, coast and the sea. We give thanks and praise for all good lands, for the trees and pastures, for our plentiful crops, and for the living water that quenches them.

(Adapted from Anglican Aotearoa NZ Prayer Book)

We praise you for giving us life through water, and for all waters everywhere. We especially praise you for the waters who sustain us in this part of our common home. *Here local bodies of water may be named, as people from different churches or areas bring a bottle of water (avoiding plastic) from their context (river, ocean, lake) and pour it into the baptismal font or bowl.*

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning you created us in your image and placed us in a well-watered garden. In the desert, you promised pools of water for the parched, and you gave your people water from the rock. When we did not know the way, you sent the Good Shepherd to lead us to still waters. At the cross, you washed us from Jesus' wounded side, and on this day, you shower us again with the water of life. You bathe us in your forgiveness, grace, and love. You satisfy all who thirst, and give us the life only you can give.

(Adapted from All Creation Sings, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America)

But we lament that we have neglected this gift, and taken the waters for granted.

Lament

Lamenting is a passionate expression of sorrow or grief; a song, hymn or poem of mourning to express sorrow, mourning, or regret aloud; to regret strongly. Often sins are confessed in the plural, as a sign that, even if we personally have not committed each sin, our souls are bound up one with the other. The response in this service is, 'ashamnu', which means in Hebrew 'we have all been guilty'.

Leader:

We look upon your waters, O God, and we grieve:

Rivers run polluted.

Oceans choke with plastic.

Marine life disappears from warming seas.

Coral reefs fade and fisheries collapse.

All: Ashamnu (we have all been guilty)

Leader:

The seas rise and swallow coasts.

Storms grow stronger.

Floods destroy homes.

Drought cracks the Earth and children thirst.

All: Ashamnu (we have all been guilty)

Include other laments referring to the impacts on water from your own context.

Leader:

We confess that we have not guarded your waters.

We have consumed water without restraint.

We have polluted what you called good.

We have forgotten that the river of life flows from your throne. **All: Forgive us, O God.**

During a hymn of lament a creative moment may take place (suggestions: - bring up photos or pictures drawn by children of polluted water - or a liturgical dance - a silent protest, etc.) A bowl to reflect the salty tears of creation and hurting humanity.

Absolution

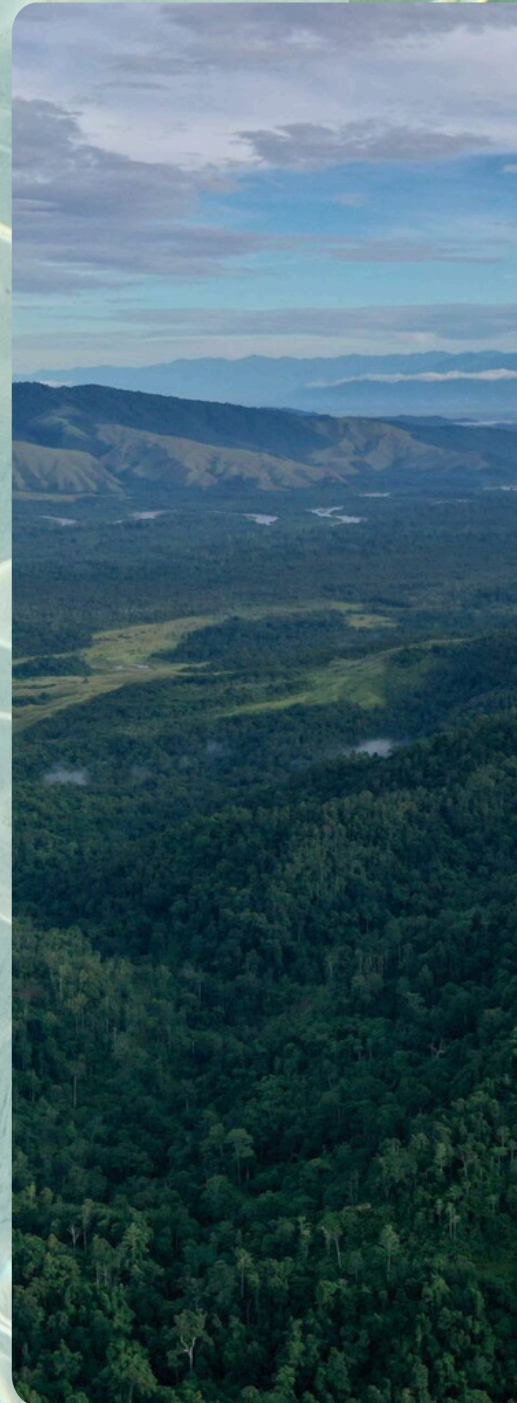
God's mercy flows like living water. The love of God, incarnate in Jesus who spoke to troubled waters, forgives us and calms our hearts so that justice may flow to all the dry places in our lives. In the name of Christ, may this grace free us to follow and proclaim the good news of the healing of all creation.

All: Amen.

Responsive Psalm 65: 5-13

5 God our Savior, You answer us
with awesome and righteous deeds,
**the hope of all the ends of the Earth
and of the farthest seas,**
6 who formed the mountains by your power,
having armed yourself with strength,
7 who stilled the roaring of the seas,
**the roaring of their waves,
and the turmoil of the nations.**
8 The whole Earth is filled
with awe at your wonders;
**where morning dawns, where evening fades,
you call forth songs of joy.**
9 You care for the land and water it;
you enrich it abundantly.
The streams of God are filled with water
**to provide the people with grain,
for so you have ordained it.**
10 You drench its furrows and level its ridges;
you soften it with showers and bless its crops.
11 You crown the year with your bounty,
and your carts overflow with abundance.
12 The grasslands of the wilderness overflow;
the hills are clothed with gladness.
13 The meadows are covered with flocks
**and the valleys are mantled with grain;
they shout for joy and sing.**

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.



Scripture Readings

First Reading: Ezekiel 47:9-12 (The Season of Creation Theme text)

Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live [...]

Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.

Leader: May the Word, as living water,

All: make everything live.

Second Reading: Revelation 22:1-7 (Or another of your choosing)

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. Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever. And he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true, for the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place." "See, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

Leader: May the Word, as living water,

All: make everything live.

A creation themed song/hymn or Alleluia before the reading of the Gospel.

**Third Reading – John 7:37-39
(Or another of your choosing)**

On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, ‘Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.’ ” Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive, for as yet there was no Spirit because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Leader: May the Word, as living water,
All: make everything live.

Preaching or Participatory Reflection

**(Focusing on the Ezekiel passage,
Season of Creation theme and symbol)**

A creation-themed hymn can be included after the reflection.

An Affirmation of Faith
(Alternatively, the Nicene Creed can be used)

**We believe in God, who creates all things,
who embraces all things, who celebrates all things,
who is present in every part of the fabric of creation.**

**We believe in God as the source of all life,
who baptizes this planet with living water.**

**We believe in Jesus Christ, seen in the suffering one,
the poor one, the malnourished one,
the climate refugee - who loves and cares for this world
and suffers with it.**

**And we believe in Jesus Christ, the seed of life,
who came to reconcile and renew this world
and everything in it.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the breath of God,
who moves with God
and who moves among and with us today.**

We believe in everlasting life in God.

**And we believe in the hope that one day God will put an end to death and all
destructive forces.**

(Lutheran Theological College, South India, adapted)

Offering Prayer

You might like to collect an offering of money, signs or intentions for a particular project or ministry that contributes to ecological restoration, or an aspect of climate justice that is meaningful for your context.

A Creation-themed hymn or song can be included during the collection of the offering.

God, whose Spirit moved over the deep: We thank you for the gift of water — the waters on the Earth, and under the Earth, the waters above us, and within us. Make us mindful of the care of all the planet's waters, that it may richly sustain life for us and for those who come after us. Accept the first fruits we offer here. Bless and multiply these gifts to our nurture and the care of your creation; for the sake of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ.

(All Creation Sings, Augsburg Fortress, 2026)

Intercessory Prayers

Reader: God of living waters, today we pray for a wounded world where waters are exploited, polluted, and withheld.

(Pause)

Reader: We pray for places where plastics, toxins, and oil spills blacken creeks and wetlands, for communities whose fishing waters are contaminated and whose children drink from polluted streams.

(Pause for petitions, naming local creeks, wetlands or contaminated places)

Heal what has been poisoned. Bring justice where profit has silenced truth.

All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Reader: We pray for all rivers dammed without the consent of the vulnerable; for farmers whose soil dries seasonal flood; for indigenous peoples whose sacred waters are engineered for distant cities and data centers; for the suffering of communities whose livelihoods are stolen by corporate greed, and whose health is sacrificed for global consumption.

(Pause for petitions naming local rivers, farmlands and affected peoples)

Free what has been unjustly controlled. Let rivers flow again with dignity and life.

All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Reader: We pray for oceans burdened by plastic and chemical waste; for coral reefs bleached by warming seas; for great whales navigating through labyrinths of nylon and ghost nets; for the microscopic life, the plankton and the krill, now mingling with the invisible dust of synthetic waste; for the rivers that carry our runoff — the fertilizers, the dyes, and the heavy metals.

(Pause for petitions naming nearest oceans and those around the globe)

Turn our guilt into grace and our apathy into action. Make us a people who live justly and bring healing to every shore and stream.

All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Reader: We pray for communities where rising seas claim communities and ancestral lands, where saltwater invades freshwater wells, where graves are washed away with memory and belonging; for those who have contributed least to climate change, yet suffer first and most.

(Pause for petitions)

Hold them in dignity and strengthen global resolve for justice.

All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Reader: We pray for informal settlements and rural villages where taps run dry or water is unsafe to drink; for children walking miles to collect water or women burdened by scarcity; for those whose sickness is caused by contaminated supply.

(Pause for petitions)

We pray for those whose lives are closely intertwined with water - coastal peoples, fisherfolk, marine biologists, water engineers - who can teach us wise ways to live with water. We pray for people to be moved to action and use their inherent or entrusted power to create change. Stir governments, corporations, and communities to protect and share water justly.

All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

(Methodist Church of Southern Africa)

Leader: Convert our hearts, O God.

Where we have treated water as a commodity, teach us to receive it as a sacred gift.

Where we have consumed without thought, teach us simplicity.

Where we have used water without reverence, teach us to protect it as a gift entrusted to every generation and honour water as a source of life for all.

Where we have been silent and tolerant of injustice make us courageous protectors of rivers, defenders of seas, and companions to those who suffer water injustice until justice and mercy flows like the river of life.

All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Alternative or additional prayer

You who hold all of creation in your womb and spring us forward onto the Earth at birth. Spirit of Tides, remind us of the rise and fall of your rhythms so that I may discover them deep within my own being. Spirit of Greenness, bring moistness and vigour to my life so that I might savour the experience of your energy moving through me out into the world.

Blessings of water be upon me.

May [we] be carried by the flow of the great river of life.
May [we] discover a hidden spring within, gushing forth.
May [we] be carried to the shores of the sacred and renewed.
(Trinity wall street Lenten reflections
based on St Hildegard of Bingen)

All: Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Leader: Let us pray together in the way Christ taught us, each in the language of our hearts...

Blessing of the Waters

The worship leaders and, if appropriate, the congregation, proceed to the font into which the waters have been poured. The blessing texts may be shared by the leaders present, according to local custom.

Holy Trinity, transcendent in essence, goodness and divinity, the Almighty who watches over all; Creator of all beings, the Light, that enlightens every being that comes into the world.

We glorify You, Master and Lover of creation. We glorify You, Creator and Fashioner of all. We glorify You, only-begotten Son of God.

On the day of your baptism in the Jordan, the grace of the Holy Spirit descended on the waters in the likeness of a dove.

The sun shines, and the world is lighted by the light of the Lord. The moon shines with the world in its beams.

The shining stars adorn the universe with their radiance.

The clouds from heaven nourish the Earth with showers of justice. The waters of the Jordan are changed to healing by the presence of the Lord.

The whole creation is watered by mystical streams.

By the light of the Wisdom of God, we have been illuminated.

The whole creation is lighted from on high.

The land and the sea share the joy of the world, and the world is filled with rejoicing.

You are Great, Lord, and wondrous are Your works.

All: Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.

By Your will you brought all things into being from nothingness. With Your love and goodness You sustain creation. You framed creation out of four elements and encircled the year with four seasons. The sun and the moon praise You. The stars intercede with You. The ocean currents flow before You. The water-springs serve You. You spread out the heavens like a curtain. You established the Earth upon the waters. With sand you walled in the sea.

All creation sings praises to You, who revealed Yourself in solidarity with the stuff of creation. For You, God, appeared upon Earth and dwelt among us.

(Make the sign of the Cross over the water 3 times)

Therefore, Creator who loves all creation, be present even now, by your Holy Spirit, and sanctify this water.

All: Amen.

Give it the grace of redemption, the blessing of Jordan. Make it a fountain of life. May it be to all who receive it a healing of souls and bodies, and a grace to protect the waters, to be Living Water for the healing of all creation.

All: Amen.

We praise You holy God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; both now and ever, unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

(Adapted from The Service for the Great Sanctification of Water at the Theophany of the Lord, by Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem (Orthodox Liturgy))

We sing a song or hymn of water.

Using a branch from a local plant or aspergillum, the congregation may be sprinkled with water from the font, recalling our baptismal vocation to become water guardians.



Final Blessing and Sending

May the God who sprung water from a rock, quenching the thirst of those who wandered in fear, spare us from the drought of a senseless life. May the God who flows from the wells of salvation, and who is Living Water to the foreigner, the stranger, and the unknown, keep us in peace. May the God who rolls on like a river, changing the course of the world with streams of righteousness that guide the Church's vessel in this world, empower us to work for transformation. And may the blessing of our merciful God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, keep us and preserve us in eternal life.

All: Amen.

(Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil)

Go in peace, as people of God made Christ's own through the waters of baptism. In the power of the Holy Spirit. Alleluia! Alleluia!

All: Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

(Congregants can take the blessed water home to bless their homes, gardens etc. You may want to provide extra containers for the gathered)



**SEASON OF
CREATION**



Living Water

Season of Creation 2026

Immersion in Living Water

Ezekiel 47:9, 12