

SENSIO DIVINA: DIVINE SENSING

Sanctuary, November 2020

GATHERING

We gather in the name of the Creator:

the author of life;

in the name of Christ:

the wellspring of life;

in the name of the Spirit:

the breath of life. Amen.

Welcome and introduction

CONFESSION

O God, you created us, you made this world,
and you called your creation very good:

We confess that we are entangled in sin.

*Sin is anything which damages or disrupts the
shalom which God intends for the world.*

We confess how we have turned from love and trust:

Brief pause for reflection.

Lord, hear us:

Forgive us our sins.

We confess how we have hoarded abundance:

Brief pause for reflection.

Lord, hear us:

Lead us not into temptation.

We confess how our consumption wounds the earth:

Brief pause for reflection.

Lord, hear us:

Deliver us from evil.

We confess how we have capitulated
to the powers of the world, the rules of the market:

Brief pause for reflection.

Lord, hear us:

The kingdom, the power and the glory are yours.

We turn to you,

O God of re-creation and renewal,

We renounce greed,

We reject self-centredness.

We seek to be reconciled

with the whole of creation,

and with you, O Lord.

Hear the good news: Christ came to reconcile all
things. So turn to God, receive forgiveness and know:
you are at-one with God, each other, and the world:

Thanks be to God.

GOD'S PRESENCE

We stand with each other:

We share a common earth.

We share birth and suffering:

We share love and death.

The sky opens above us:

We receive space.

The earth stands beneath us:

We receive ground.

The air swirls around us:

We receive breath.

Many things die for us:

We receive food.

We too will die:

We will return to dust.

We are the people:

The people of earth.

Let us care for each other:

Let us care for the earth.

Let us worship the creator:

Let us attend to the earth.

For the earth is filled with God's presence.

Our ancestor Jacob woke from his sleep and said,

Surely the Lord is in this place

—and I did not know it!

And he was afraid, and said,

How awesome is this place!

This is none other than the house of God,

and this, the gate of heaven.

Let us acknowledge this place's traditional custodians,
the peoples of the Eastern Maar Nation.

May we wake up to

this place and its peoples.

May we wake up to God's holy presence.

Let us attend to the earth:

the very dwelling place of God. Amen.

SENSIO DIVINA

'Do I not fill the earth?' says God (Jer. 23:24b).

Like Jacob, people have sensed God's presence in creation for millennia, and perhaps this is why Jesus so often prayed outdoors. Today we will use a simple exercise to help us observe God's presence around us. Move through the steps in order, or float between them: they are just a tool. It gets easier with practice, so feel free to take this sheet home to use at other times, too.

PREPARING

Breathe slowly and deeply in, then out. Relax your body; uncross your legs; uncomplicate your heart. Ask God to help you surrender to whatever it is that God wants to do in you or say to you today.

SENSING

Sense what is around you: earth, sky, plants, birds, air. What can you see, hear, smell? Be inquisitive. Notice the fullness of where you are. Gradually, attend to a detail which fascinates you. Savour the detail. If any emotions or feelings arise, notice and let them go.

IMAGINING

Stepping back, imagine all that led to this place in this point in time. Imagine what this place might become. Imagine yourself not as an observer, but as participant. What thoughts or feelings arise? What Biblical texts or images come to mind? Take a thought, feeling, text or image and contemplate it with curiosity and receptivity. What is being said to you? Do you sense any invitation?

RESPONDING

Allow God to speak to you, or rest in God's presence. Tell God about anything emerging in you. If you feel called to action, ask God to show you the next step. If any word, phrase or image persists, let it guide you. Soak up God's presence and love. At any point, return to an earlier stage if you feel so led.

15 minutes to reflect in silence. Move around the property, but please maintain physical distance. We will then regroup to reflect on what emerged.

PRAYER-POEM

... Geese appear high over us,
pass, and the sky closes. Abandon,
as in love or sleep, holds
them to their way, clean,
in the ancient faith: what we need
is here. And we pray, not
for new earth or heaven, but to be
quiet in heart, and in eye
clear. What we need is here.

What we need is here. Amen.

PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD

Let us pray.

Holy God, whose word creates life,
we name people and places
who need love, light and healing:

*We pray (aloud or silently) for people or situations
in need of God's care, ending with the words:*

Lord, hear our prayer:

Lord, hear our prayer.

God of all places and this place:

You promised a new earth where the hungry will feast
and the oppressed go free:

Come, Lord, build that place among us.

God of all times and this time:

You promised a new day when the fearful will laugh
and the sick find healing:

Come, Lord, speed that time among us.

God of all people, our God:

Take what we have and what we hope for,
to make this a world where all people find good news.

***Help us share in the work of your kingdom,
until the new earth is created among us.***

LEAVING

Through the prophet Isaiah, God says:

My word will accomplish what I desire
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it:

You shall go out with joy and be led forth in peace;
the mountains and the hills

will burst into song before you,

and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

Instead of thistles, manna gums will grow,
instead of blackberries, sheoaks.

This will be a witness to God,

living and lasting evidence of God. (Isaiah 55:11b-13)

Creator Spirit, as we prepare to return
to home, school, workplace, neighbourhood,
open our eyes anew
to your presence all around us.

***May we see, hear, smell, touch and taste
your glory in all creation.***

As we go in peace to love and serve the world,
help us sing in harmony with manna gum and sheoak:

In the name of Christ: Amen.

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in *Bread of Tomorrow*. London: SPCK / Christian Aid, 1992: 175 + Sensio divina:
Draws from mysticchrist.co.uk + Geese appear ... is here: Wendell Berry + God of all
Places: Adapted from TableLife, Oxford.