

KAIROS Sunday 2008: On Holy Ground

Liturgy, song and scripture and readings

What: A chance to celebrate and renew your faith community's work for social justice! Hold a regular or special service, either in your own congregation/parish/ community or with partners from other churches or faiths.

KAIROS is the social justice organization of eleven Canadian churches and church agencies. One of the aims of KAIROS Sunday is to raise awareness of the faithful action for justice that KAIROS strives to offer our churches and world. It's also a chance for your faith community to focus on its own justice work, and that of your faith community.

When: We suggest the last Sunday before Lent (also Transfiguration Sunday) as one option for a justice-focused service that helps prepare us for the season of Lent. In 2008, this Sunday falls on February 3. But any Sunday in which your faith community chooses to focus on the Gospel call to justice and peace can also be KAIROS Sunday.

Who: Invite members of a local KAIROS group, KAIROS Anti Poverty Fund Committee, or members of your own church involved in KAIROS to speak or read. Invite the community, especially any who use your building or partner with you on programs.

Supplies you need: Beeswax candles; copies of the KAIROS Sunday bulletin insert; KAIROS resources downloaded from our website (especially for the 2007-08 campaign resources) or ordered in advance; resources from your own tradition.

About the liturgy: This is an ecumenical liturgy, designed to be used either in an interchurch service or in your own church. It reflects the various traditions which have come together to form KAIROS. Please use all or part of it as you see fit, and be sure to add your own material.

We've also produced a bulletin insert, homily/ sermon notes, suggestions for children's time, and a reflection on the beeswax candles we recommend for the service of worship. Check our website or that of your denomination as needed for resources on specific topics or campaigns.

Since this service can be held at any time of year, the readings we suggest do not follow the lectionary.

Copyright notes: All materials used here can be used for worship purposes. All can be photocopied **unless otherwise noted**. The materials were written by KAIROS unless otherwise noted. Please use them freely but let us know how you used them and how we might improve them. And please seek KAIROS' permission before reprinting any materials outside of a worship context. Contact info@kairoscanada.org Writers and editors for this year's service: Sheryl Johnson, Shannon Neufeldt, Julie Graham, Jennifer Henry and Sara Stratton.

Suggested scripture readings for KAIROS Sunday 2 008:

Moses at the Burning Bush: **Exodus 3: 1- 6**
Psalm 65

The Parable of the Rich Fool: Luke 12: 13- 21

Romans 8: 18-25

Suggested hymns and songs: (Note that many of these titles appear in a number of hymn books.)

Voices United: 518: As Those of Old Their First-fruits Brought, **303:** For the Beauty of the Prairies, **517:** Praise God for the Harvest, **227:** For the Fruit of All Creation, **229:** God of the Sparrow, **297:** All Praise to You **307:** Touch the Earth Lightly

Book of Praise (Presbyterian): 667: God you touch the earth with beauty, **714:** Wordless, ancient earth's foundations, **716:** Pray for the wilderness, **717:** We cannot own the sunlit sky, **719:** God in great love for us lent us this planet, **720:** Our cities cry to you, O God

Lutheran Book of Worship: 251 O Day of Rest and Gladness, **462** God the Omnipotent, **466** Great God, Our Source, **366** Lord of our Life, **416** O God of Every Nation, **413** Father Eternal Ruler of Creation, **414** O God of Love, O King of Peace, **420** Lord, Save Your World

Common Praise (Anglican): 656: She Comes Sailing on the Wind, **576:** For the Healing of the Nations, **577:** God of Grace and God of Glory, **578:** O Healing River, **589:** Come, O God of All the Earth, **593:** O God of Every Nation

Catholic Book of Worship: 531: For the Beauty of the Earth, **532:** For the Fruit of All Creation, **539:** Great God Whose Will is Peace, **541:** I Sing the Mighty Power of God, **547:** All Praise to God, **420:** Creator God, Creating Still, **478:** O God of Earth and Space, **503:** For the Healing of the Nations

More Voices (United): 135: Called by Earth and Sky, **10:** Come and Seek the Ways of Wisdom, **158:** Dream a Dream, **217:** Hey Ney Yana, **144:** Like a Healing Stream, **143:** We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky, **41:** O Beautiful Gaia, **163:** River Running in You and Me, **174:** Soil of God, You and I (Holy Ground), **152:** You Who Watch the Highest Heavens

Mennonite: Hymnal A Worship Book: 407: We are People of God's Peace, **405:** Where Cross the Crowded Ways **403:** The Church of Christ in Every Age, **390:** God of the Fertile Fields **367:** For the Healing of the Nations, **417:** All Who Love and Serve Your City: **2:** In Thy Holy Place We Bow

Worship in Song: A Friends' Hymnal: 29: This is My Father's World, **152:** This Is Holy Ground, **303:** Peace in Our Time, **304:** A Song of Peace, **309:** God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens, **311:** Take Off Your Shoes, **312:** The Earth is My Mother, **320:** Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race, **335:** The Trees of the Field

Psalter Hymnal: Christian Reformed Church in North America: 29: Give Glory to God, All You Heavenly Creatures, **104:** Your Spirit, O Lord, Makes Life to Abound, **437:** Thank You, God, for Water, Soil, and Air, **455:** For the Fruits of His Creation, **602:** Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life, **604:** God of All Living, **611:** As Stewards of a Vineyard

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Call to Worship

As we gather to worship, we stand on God's holy ground
May the fire of God's presence warm us.

As we gather to sing, we praise the Creator who gives us all good things
May God's fire enliven us.

As we gather to journey together, we are one small part of God's family
May God's fire inspire and guide us.

Lighting of the Christ candle

(Invite children, teens and elders to read.)

Voice 1: As we light this beeswax candle, a renewable energy source, we are reminded of the bush that burned but was not consumed. And God was present.

Voice 2: As we gather as a community to worship, let us, like Moses, trust and follow the voice of God in our midst. The Holy Spirit is present.

Voice 3: As we light this Christ candle, we confront injustice and walk the path of peace. And Jesus is ever present with us.

Voice 1: Let our ways be challenged, our minds engaged, and our spirits lifted at this sacred time, on this holy ground.

AMEN

A collect from the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples

Creator God, from you every family in heaven and on earth takes its name.
You have rooted and grounded us in your covenant love,
and empowered us by your Spirit to speak the truth in love,
and to walk in your way towards justice and wholeness.

Mercifully grant that your people, journeying together in partnership,
may be strengthened and guided to help one another grow into the full stature of
Christ,
who is our light and our life.
Amen.

Prayer after scripture reading

Beneath our toes
Beneath our shoes
Beneath our floors
Beneath basement and cement and foundation

We are still standing on holy ground

Amidst cheerful chatter
TV drones and telephones
Planes and trains
Sirens, horns, and the squeal of tires

We listen for the call of the Earth

As we live with square, grey scenery
As we live amidst trash, contamination, pits, and pollution,
Waste seen and unseen,
We become a tired people, grasping for energy, and yet
We are still standing on holy ground

As creation groans beneath the weight of waste and excess
Beneath even that sits holy ground
Firmly rooting all in the moving, shaping,
Cleansing powers of creation.
As bike riders and gardeners whisper alternatives
We too have voices to raise, and

We listen for the call of the Earth

--- Sheryl Johnson

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Confession and Assurance

One: In Jesus' words we find the guiding wisdom of our faith. Let us speak his words together with open hearts, contemplating where we have fallen short.

All: Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

One: Yet we get caught up in doing things the "right" way; the educated way; the efficient way, ignoring the wisdom of the children and our elders.

All: Jesus said, "One thing you lack. Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

One: Yet we get caught up in consumerism, trying to make our life worthwhile through the things we buy, or hoping to ensure our future by building bigger bank accounts.

All: Jesus said, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand."

One: Yet we persist in our warfare and conflict, deeply and violently divided by greed and fear.

All: Jesus said to Peter, who was sinking in the water, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

One: Often we think that changing the world is up to us alone. We become afraid because we know we cannot do it all.

All: With Peter we want to fall at Jesus' feet and say, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful person!"

Assurance:

One: But Jesus said to us,
"Take heart, daughter, your faith has healed you."
"Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."
"With God all things are possible."
"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in shadows, but will have the light of life."
"Peace be with you!"

(Here the community may wish to pass the peace of Christ)

Prayers of the People/ Prayers of intercession

(Add a short sung response (eg, Taizé or other) after each section if you wish.)

Creator of heaven and earth, you have birthed a multitude of people and a great variety of landscapes and circumstances. Help us to recognize the beauty and strength in diversity. We pray for all those whose life and communities are threatened by scarcity in the abundant world you have created. We name the people around the world from Indonesia to Ecuador; from the child in Zambia orphaned by AIDS to the child in Canada left to fend for herself while a single parent works to make ends meet. We long to see poverty lifted.

God of Justice, make us mindful of the needs of others.

Great Comforter, breath of the Almighty, you are the life-force that moves all there is in the world. Slow us from our frenzied pace. Ease our constant desire for more that fuels our oil consumption. Give us your energy as we explore alternatives – walking and biking, eating locally, using wind and solar power, refusing to be complicit with the way that things are. We name the many concerns associated with our dependence on oil, including its contribution to pollution, illness, land destruction, conflict, and climate change.

Holy Spirit, push us to break our life-harming habits.

Light of the World, you taught that the greatest commandments are to love God and to love our neighbour. Illuminate the many ways our neighbours go unloved. Move us to speak against the genocide in Darfur, the oppression of Indigenous peoples in Mexico, and the refusal to recognize the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Bring justice to those oppressed by unsafe conditions, long hours, and low pay. Lend your voice to those silenced by fear, those reduced to mundane and monotonous tasks, those discriminated against. We long to see human rights and dignity respected here at home and around the world.

Jesus our brother, open our eyes to the ways we can bring loving justice to the world.

God of the Trinity, you created us out of the dust of the Earth, and we depend on it to sustain our lives. Help us transform the global economy into one that is just for all and sustainable for the Earth. We name those who advocate and practice fair trade, corporate responsibility and responsible investing. We name all those who show us how to live more lightly in your creation.

Our Provider, raise all peoples to work in new ways.

As you challenged Moses to believe the unbelievable and humbly follow your call, we ask you to walk with us. Remove our shoes to walk more intentionally and gently in our own lives.

God, challenge us anew and move us to action. Amen

Closing prayer:

God of the mighty wind,
send the warmth of your Spirit
so we can embrace one another.
Send the breath of your Spirit
so we can speak in our own tongues
and yet understand one another
as we go about our daily lives.
Send the fire of your love
so we can avoid conflicts and tribal clashes.
Holy Spirit, come and fill us with your gifts
So we are strong in joy, love, patience, kindness and peace
With one another and all the neighbours around us,
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

*--George Arende (Kenya), with open permission for worship use only. From **In God's Hand: Common Prayer for the World**. Hugh McCullum and Terry MacArthur, eds. World Council of Churches.*

Benediction

May the God of justice, of Moses and Miriam, enlighten our path
May the Christ who walked with foolish and wise alike stay with us on our road
May the Spirit enliven us with holy and sustaining fire throughout our journey
AMEN
