

Jubilee for the Earth

Opening prayer

Leader: We gather in the name of the Triune God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of Earth and all its creatures!

All: Praise be to the Holy Trinity! God is sound and life, Creator of the Universe, Source of all life, whom the angels sing; wondrous Light of all mysteries known or unknown to humankind, and life that lives in all.

Hildegard of Bingen, 13th Century

Leader: We gather in the image of the Creator

All: . . . *who is a community of love.*

Leader: We gather in the name of the Redeemer

All: . . . *who reconciles all of creation.*

Leader: We gather in the presence of the Life Giver

All: . . . *who inspires new life and renews it.*



Psalm 25

Leader: Bless the Lord, O my Soul!

All: *All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.*

Leader: You have made the moon to mark the seasons; the sun knows its time for setting. You make darkness, and it is night, when all the animals of the forest come creeping out.

All: *All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.*

Leader: From your lofty abode you water the mountains; You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills, giving drink to every wild animal;

All: *All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.*

Leader: You cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for people to use, to bring forth food from Earth's soil, wine to gladden the human heart, oil to make the face shine, and bread to strengthen the human heart.

All: *All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time. When you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.*



Confession (based on Leviticus 25:1-25)

Leader: We praise you God, for Earth that sustains life. Through the planetary cycles of days and seasons, renewal and growth, you open your hand to give all creatures our food in the proper time. In your Wisdom you gave a Sabbath for the land to rest. But these days our living pushes the planet beyond its limits. Our demand for growth, and an endless cycle of production and consumption are exhausting our world. The forests are leached, the topsoil erodes, the fields fail, the deserts advance, the seas acidify, the storms intensify. Humans and animals are forced to flee in search of security. We have not allowed the land to observe a Sabbath, and Earth is struggling to renew. And so we confess:

Leader: God of mercy and justice, You tell us the land must rest, free from the burden of production.

All: *We confess our demand that Earth produce beyond its limits, and our bondage to desire more.*

Leader: You assure us that we can be filled from the yield of the land.

All: *We confess our lack of trust that we can thrive within Earth's limits.*

Leader: You affirm that our security is found in enough.

All: *We confess our lack of faith, not loving you with our whole heart and strength and mind, or our human and non-human neighbors as ourselves.*

Leader: You call us to leave enough fruit on the vine and in the fields to feed our neighbors, animals, and replenish Earth's soil.

All: *We confess our failure to share what we receive from Earth.*

Leader: The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God

Romans 8:26–27

All: *Amen*

Reading of scripture followed by reflection

The Lord said to Moses on Mount Sinai: Speak to the Israelites and tell them: when you enter the land that I am giving to you, let the land, too, keep a Sabbath for the Lord. During the seventh year the land shall have a Sabbath of complete rest, a Sabbath for the Lord, when you may neither sow your fields nor prune your vineyard. The aftergrowth of your harvest you shall not reap, nor shall you pick the grapes of your untrimmed vines. It shall be a year of rest for the land. And if you say, “what shall we eat in the seventh year if we do not sow or reap our crop”? I will command such a blessing for you in the sixth year that you that there will be crop enough for three years and when you sow in the seventh year, you will still be eating from the old crop. *Leviticus 25: 1,4-5, 20-21*

Leader: We belong to the Creator in whose image we are all made.

All: *In God we are breathing, in God we are living, in God we share the life of all creation.*

Leader: We belong to Jesus Christ, the true icon of God and of humanity.

All: *In Christ, God is breathing, in Christ, God is living, through Christ, we are reconciled.*

Leader: We belong to the Holy Spirit, who gives us new life and strengthens our faith.

All: *In the Spirit love is breathing, in the Spirit truth is living, the breath of God always moves us.*

Leader: We belong to the Holy Trinity, who is one in all and Three-in-One.

All: *In God we are all made, in Christ we are all saved, in the Spirit we are all united.*

ALL: OUR FATHER

Leader: May God who established the dance of creation, who marveled at the lilies of the field, who transforms chaos to order, lead us to transform our lives and the Church to reflect God's glory in creation. **AMEN.**

