



## SEASON OF CREATION

# PRAYER OF LAMENT

*Many small candles are lit in advance of the service, quiet music plays.*

One We gather in the image of the Creator

**Many who is a community of love.**

One We gather in the name of the Redeemer

**Many who reconciles all of creation.**

One We gather in the presence of the Life Giver

**Many who inspires new life and renews it.**

## Psalm 104

One Bless the Lord, O my Soul!

**Many O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the Earth is full of your creatures.**

One You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills, giving drink to every wild animal; the wild beasts quench their thirst. By the streams the birds of the air have their habitation; they sing among the branches.

**Many O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the Earth is full of your creatures.**

One From your lofty abode you water the mountains; the Earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work. You cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for people to use, to bring forth food from the Earth, and wine to gladden the human heart, oil to make the face shine, and bread to strengthen the human heart.

**Many O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the Earth is full of your creatures.**

One           The trees of the Lord are watered abundantly, the cedars of Lebanon that God planted. In them the birds build their nests; the stork has its home in the fir trees. The high mountains are for the wild goats; the rocks are a refuge for the coney.

**Many           O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the Earth is full of your creatures.**

One           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. These all look to you to give them their food in due season;

**Many           O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the Earth is full of your creatures.**

One           when you give to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled with good things. May the glory of the Lord endure forever;

**Many           O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the Earth is full of your creatures.**

## Confession

One           We praise you God, for the manifold wonders of your creation. With the psalmist we are amazed at the diversity of your work. The Earth is full of your creatures and in your holy wisdom you have made them all.

But in our self-centeredness, we have overlooked our fellow creatures and neglected our work of tending and keeping the Earth (Genesis 2:15). We have polluted the land and the waters; we have destroyed delicate habitats. Your precious species die. We know that creation waits with eager longing in the hope of being set free from this bondage to our decay (Romans 8:19-22). And so we confess. God of mercy and justice,

**Many           We confess our broken relationship with you, your world and our fellow creatures,**

One Living without humility or reverence, as though the Earth's resources were limitless and our sole right, and neglecting our duty of care for the whole web of life and our common home.

**Many We confess our overuse of transportation,**

One the need for speed overriding the healing of the Earth's fever.

**Many We confess our hyper-consumption of food and energy,**

One producing meat and electricity on demand, but too often exhausting and poisoning the backyards of the poorest.

**Many We confess our soaps, our cosmetics, our synthetic clothes,**

One ignoring that their unseen, plastic microbeads run into our streams and oceans, now residing in fish, and probably in some of us.

**Many We confess our junk, the piles of what we throw away,**

One the sewage smelling of our lack of concern.

**Many We confess our mind-set,**

One too often concentrating on our ability to buy rather than asking what we really need, what our world needs.

**Many We confess our unfaithfulness, not loving you with our whole heart and strength and mind,**

One not loving our human and non-human neighbours as ourselves,

**Many not caring for the creation you have given us as a gift.**

One Turn us from our cursed practices

**Many to life that is really living, giving ourselves away, following Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.**

One 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).

**Many Amen**

(adapted from the Lutheran World Federation)

## Symbolic and sung lament

*A time of silence is kept as people go forward to extinguish candles in memory of communities that are being wiped out by environmental degradation and creatures that are becoming extinct.*

*We sing or play: Senzeni na? What have we done?*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5fDU1PYWT8A>

## Reflection

*This PowerPoint is shown:*

<http://www.greenanglicans.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Biodiversity-loss-lament.-Biodiversity-under-threat-.pdf>

*...and the following read:*

When there's so much biodiversity, why does the loss of some species matter? Two analogies: rivet-popping and torn tapestries...

### Rivet-popping on spaceship Earth

"In most cases an ecologist can no more predict the consequences of the extinction of a given species than an airline passenger can assess the loss of a single rivet. But both can easily foresee the long-term results of continually forcing species to extinction or removing rivet after rivet.

"No sensible airline passenger today would accept the continuous loss of rivets from jet transports.

"Before much time has passed, attitudes must change so that no sane passenger on spaceship Earth will accept a continuous loss of populations or species of nonhuman organisms."

[Paul Ehrlich, Bing Professor of Population Studies and professor of biological sciences at Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA. From: Ehrlich, Paul & Walker, Brian. (1998). Rivets and Redundancy. Bioscience. 48. 10.2307/1313377.]

## Pulling threads from a tapestry

“Tapestries have long been used as metaphors for the richness and complexity of biological systems (for example, the ‘tapestry of life’). As a metaphor for environmental degradation, each small act of destruction is like pulling a thread from a tapestry.

“At first, the results are almost imperceptible. The function and beauty of the tapestry is slightly diminished with the removal of each thread. If too many threads are pulled, especially if they are pulled from the same area, the tapestry will begin to look worn, and may tear locally. There is no way of knowing ahead of time whether pulling a thread will result in a tear or not.

“The tapestry is not just an aesthetic object. Like the airplane in the rivet metaphor, the tapestry (i.e. biophysical systems) sustains human life.

[Carlos Davidson, conservation biologist. From his paper: Economic Growth and the Environment: Alternatives to the Limits Paradigm: <https://academic.oup.com/bioscience/article/50/5/433/264211>]

## **Repentance and (re)commitment:**

“In a Jesus society, you repent not by feeling bad but by thinking different”

Mennonite author Rudy Wiebe in *The Blue Mountains of China*

Today our hearts break. Identify your heartbreak - for this is the area where God is calling you to make a difference. What do you commit to today in the presence of God? We are the ones we have been waiting for.

*During a time of silence, people can write their commitments on small pieces of paper or come up to a large paper to write them publicly.*

*We sing together: Beauty for brokenness – Graham Kendrick*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08utbDFP9AE>

*Words and sheet music:*

<https://grahamkendrick.co.uk/images/songfiles/charts/God%20Of%20The%20Poor.pdf>

## Blessing

May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half truths, and superficial relationships, so that you may live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people, so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, and war, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and turn their pain to joy.

And may God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this world, so that you can do what others claim cannot be done.

*Amen.*

