

Lord, Lead Us to Just Waters

a litany & ritual of commitment
from the World Council of Churches

Editor's note: This litany and ritual are adapted from Churches' Week of Action on Food from the World Council of Churches (WCC). They are taken from Day Two of the resource: "Lord, Lead Us to Just Waters."

The WCC service includes a symbolic intercession and act of commitment, which could be led by youth or young adults. You will need enough water and paper cups for all of the congregants, plus a glass of clean water, a glass of dirty water, a bottle of cola and an empty glass. Display the last four items on the altar table, and place the water and paper cups at or near the altar, or at various stations in your worship area.

For the ritual, congregants will come to the stations, pour cups of water and be prepared to drink them. During the intercession, the leader will hold up the other items as symbols. After this, all will drink from their cups as a symbol of gratitude and commitment.

Litany of Confession and Lament

ONE: God, the source of life, whose spirit hovered over waters at the time of creation; God in Jesus Christ, who came as living waters to quench the thirsty; God the Holy Spirit, who waters and brings forth the fruit; we come to your presence confessing our attitudes of greed, dominance and insensitivity towards your wonderful creation, and particularly towards water.

MANY: Let justice roll down like rivers, and let rivers roll out in justice.

ONE: We confess that we have been irresponsible in our use of water, wasting it to satisfy our comfortable lives. In many places we have commoditized and privatized water, a natural resource, denying people access to it. In the name of development projects, water sources have been drained or polluted with industrial waste, causing risk to flora and fauna.

MANY: Let justice roll down like rivers, and let rivers roll out in justice.

ONE: We acknowledge the lack of cooperation between different authorities and organizations to manage water resources fairly. We confess our failure, as faith communities, to address water justice and seek forgiveness for not speaking out for the thirsty and the dying in situations of drought.

MANY: Let justice roll down like rivers, and let rivers roll out in justice.

ONE: We confess that we have been silent spectators as many vulnerable communities walk miles every day in search of water for their families. We regret our involvement in the privatization of rivers and other natural waterbeds, resulting in contamination and reduction of water supplies. We come to your presence ashamed of our apathy and insincerity towards the abuse of water and other natural resources, asking you to inspire us to be challenged to conserve, preserve and use water prudently.

MANY: Let justice roll down like rivers, and let rivers roll out in justice.

All: God who brought water out of the rock, God who quenched the thirst of those dying in the wilderness, God who in Jesus gave the living waters so that those who taste them would never thirst, God who in Jesus died on the Cross thirsty, for there was none to quench his thirst, listen to all those who truly confess and grant us forgiveness so that we act responsibly in our use of water, become sensitive to the desperate needs of those without water, and gain wisdom in conserving and preserving water so that rivers roll out in justice among all nations and all peoples. Amen.

Intercession

ONE: Let us pray for the whole universe and hold up every living thing as part of the Beloved Community. *(Holds up the glass of clean water.)* Lord, let this glass of clean water remind us of

the available sources of fresh drinking water. Help us to protect the gift of water and utilize it with the spirit of sanctity and responsibility. May our lives be so balanced that greed makes way for need and the tendency to waste makes way for a commitment to save.

MANY: Fountain of life, wash us clean from greed and sin.

ONE: *(Holds up the glass of dirty water.)* Let this glass of unclean water remind us of the tears of those whose lives have been threatened by the pollution of their water resources. Let those who contribute to the contamination of water shed tears of repentance. May we find ways to begin to reverse this process and begin to make our water clean again.

MANY: Creator of new life, transform us so that we may be channels of life to others.

ONE: *(Holds up a bottle of cola.)* God of justice, make us aware that many of our corporations and developmental processes are plundering our natural resources and threatening the livelihood of millions. Show us how to counter these activities. We pray for all organizations involved in the preservation of water, and with it, your gift of life. Help, guide and sustain them in their endeavors.

MANY: God of justice, strengthen those who seek to preserve your creation.

ONE: *(Holds up the empty glass.)* Lord, we pray for all communities involved in the issues of water justice. Give us compassion to walk with those who lack the water for life sustenance. Help us to empty ourselves of prejudice and fill us with a vision of solidarity and fellowship so that we can work together in conserving the Gift of water.

MANY: God of justice, give us your vision.

Act of Commitment

ONE: *(Holds up the glass of clean water.)* As an act of commitment, let us draw water in

the cup, lay our right hand on the full cup of water, and pledge before God in a silent prayer to advocate for water justice in the knowledge of the various lives that depend on water. To partake in the holy fellowship of solidarity, let us drink the water. *(All drink.)*

ONE: Lord, we pray for the universal church and its mission and vision. Inspire us to work towards water justice. Transform our lives so that we may be channels of justice—not just in what we preach, but in our daily practice. Let your churches be role models within our communities in conserving water and preserving life in all its fullness. Bring churches together to work in unity so that justice will prevail and water will be available for our generation and future generations.

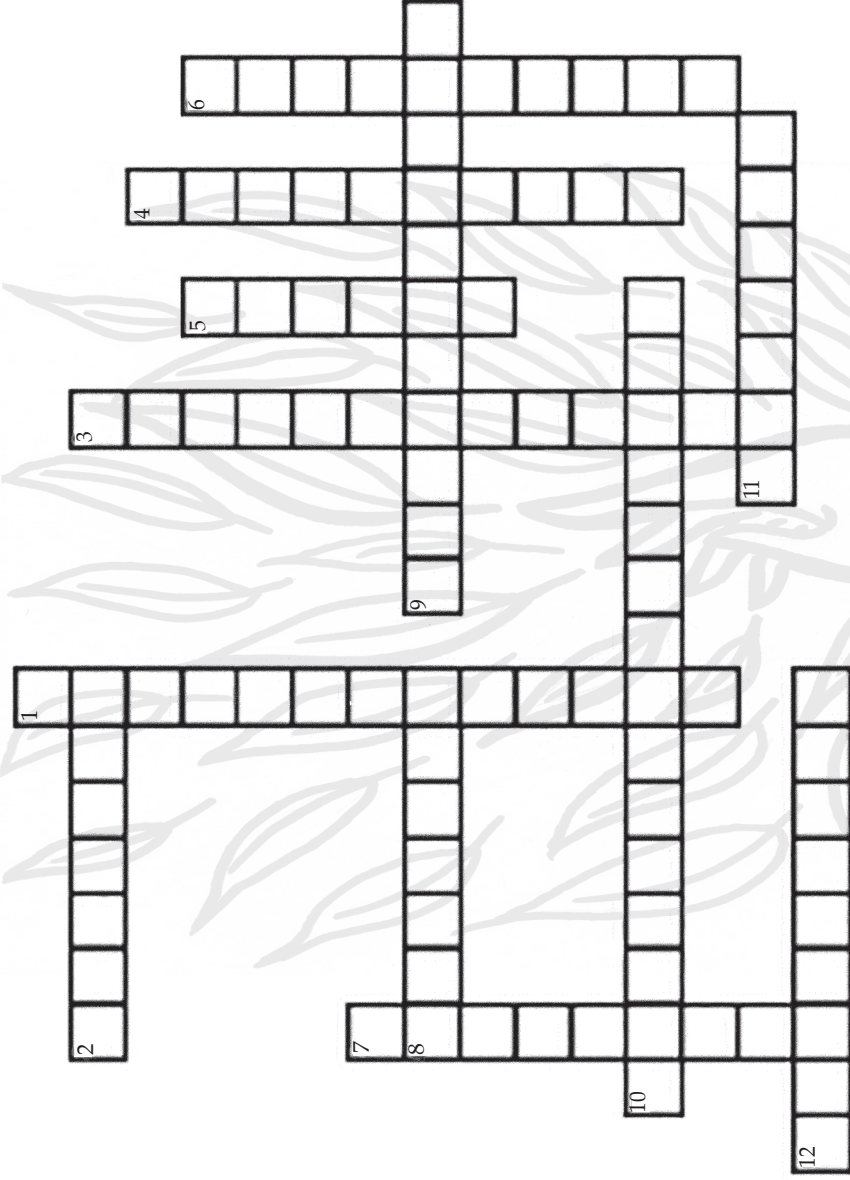
MANY: God of hope, make us instruments of hope. Amen.



art by Jesse Manning

Earth Care Crossword

compiled by Rachel Boyle



ACROSS

- 2 The average weather conditions of a place over a long period of time
- 8 When a plant or animal species dies out, it becomes this
- 9 The state hosting America's first offshore wind farm
- 10 A measure of the total amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere each year by any person, appliance, building, etc.
- 11 This European country generated 140 percent of its national electricity needs from wind turbines on an unusually windy day in 2015
- 12 Coral ___ is the process by which coral colonies under environmental stress expel their microscopic symbiotic algae and appear whitened

DOWN

- 1 The cause of 11 percent of all global greenhouse gas emissions
- 3 The primary greenhouse gas emitted by human activities, according to the United States Environmental Protection Agency
- 4 This belt of naturally-occurring gas in Earth's atmosphere typically protects against ultraviolet radiation, but has been damaged since the 1980s, particularly over the Antarctic
- 5 Coal, oil and natural gas are ___ fuels
- 6 The ___ effect refers to rising global temperatures caused by gases in Earth's atmosphere trapping more heat radiated by the sun
- 7 Solar and wind are two forms of this type of energy