

## **Land Acknowledgement:**

Today we acknowledge that we are in the aboriginal territories and lands of the Salish and Kalispel people. We honor the path they show us in caring for this creation, the path they led in this land before the forced removal of their tribes to reservations working with creation, her seasons, her movements, to best care for this place. We hope to honor this land together in the path you have always shown us in caring for this place for generations to come.

## **Confession and Assurance of Forgiveness**

All praise, honor, and trust is due to God,  
The source and ground of our being,  
The + pioneer of our salvation,  
The sustainer of all that is and will be. **Amen.**

God is present in contrite hearts. Longing for forgiveness is a sign of the Spirit's work.

*Silence for reflection.*

God, our God, your mercy and love are beyond our understanding.

**Like a prairie thirsting for rain,  
We are open to you, O Lord.  
Nothing is hidden from you.  
Revealed by your Love, we acknowledge  
Our mistakes and our omissions,  
Pain we have caused and callings we have failed to heed.  
We confess all of this to you  
And we admit that it is already known to you,  
Along with those things we have forgotten.  
Renew us by your grace  
That we may live in harmony among ourselves  
And with your whole creation.**

Beloved of God, it is the will of the Divine  
That all may know the nearness of love and abundant forgiveness.  
Like the rain and the snow, God's word of grace pours forth  
And does not return without accomplishing its task of healing and restoration.  
You, beloved, are forgiven all your sins.  
Go in the world, led by the Spirit, to be met by Christ in all you do.  
Amen.

**OR**

## **Thanksgiving for Baptism**

Gathered in the name of God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit,  
We give thanks for the water of life, into which we were born by grace  
and which renews us again and again.

Glorious God of all rivers, streams, and creeks,  
We thank you for your continuous, moving love from before the beginning of all things.  
Your love is the source of our existence and sustains our hope.  
On the currents of your mercy, we are borne through this life and we are never alone.

Generous God of ponds, lakes, and reservoirs,  
Your holy stillness is an anchor for us in a chaotic world.  
Held in the Spirit's embrace, we become more aware of our deep connection  
To you, to one another, and to the whole creation.  
In an outpouring of your lovingkindness, we are made into community beyond our own  
understanding and definitions.

Gracious God of glaciers, aquifers, and clouds,  
We are in awe of your power, might, and majesty.  
Through the waters of our baptism,  
Strengthen our awareness of your presence and your will.  
Help us commitment ever more fully to the work  
Of imitating Christ, loving our neighbors, and caring for the world you have made.

To you, Creator of the Universe,  
All glory, honor, and praise is due  
Now and forever.  
Amen.

## **Greeting**

The Lord be with you, **And also with you**

## **Prayer of the Day (Week 3)**

God of power and might, we put our hope in you as our shield from all harm. We trust that you are indeed grieved by destruction and pain in the earth. Help us to perceive the presence of Jesus with us in times of pain and terror. Bring into our hearts and into all creation the peace that can only come from the One to whom the wind and the waves listen. Amen.

## **Blessing of the Lector**

Lord you sustain our hearts with your Word. Be present with those who will read to us the Scripture this day. **Amen**

### **Week 3: God Does Not Delight in Destruction**

*Trusting in the truths that creation belongs to God and God delights therein, we cannot also hold that God rejoices in destruction. We look to the scriptures to understand that pain in creation is never God's desire nor God's will. Even when the scriptures indicate that God is the cause of destructive elements, God's grief is part of the story. Neither passive nor intentional human destruction of creation is part of God's instructions for stewardship of the earth.*

#### **Genesis 9:8-17**

*The flood narrative shows two aspects of God's grieving. God ached for the wickedness evident in human behavior and God grieved the destruction of creation, which included people, plants, land, and non-human animals. The covenant with Noah reveals a truth about Divine Love. This Love does not find joy in destruction and covenants for flourishing with all life- not just people.*

<sup>8</sup> God said to Noah and to his sons with him, <sup>9</sup> "I am now setting up my covenant with you, with your descendants, <sup>10</sup> and with every living being with you—with the birds, with the large animals, and with all the animals of the earth, leaving the ark with you. <sup>11</sup> I will set up my covenant with you so that never again will all life be cut off by floodwaters. There will never again be a flood to destroy the earth."

<sup>12</sup> God said, "This is the symbol of the covenant that I am drawing up between me and you and every living thing with you, on behalf of every future generation. <sup>13</sup> I have placed my bow in the clouds; it will be the symbol of the covenant between me and the earth. <sup>14</sup> When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, <sup>15</sup> I will remember the covenant between me and you and every living being among all the creatures. Floodwaters will never again destroy all creatures. <sup>16</sup> The bow will be in the clouds, and upon seeing it I will remember the enduring covenant between God and every living being of all the earth's creatures." <sup>17</sup> God said to Noah, "This is the symbol of the covenant that I have set up between me and all creatures on earth."

#### **Psalm 33:13-22**

*Wars and disasters are never God's desire for creation. The Holy Spirit is always on the move, providing more than we need. This same Spirit works continuously to make us aware of God's power and presence in the world.*

<sup>13</sup>The Lord looks down from heaven;

he sees every human being.

**14 From his dwelling place God observes  
all who live on earth.**

**15** God is the one who made all their hearts,  
the one who knows everything they do.

**16 Kings aren't saved by the strength of their armies;  
warriors aren't rescued by how much power they have.**

**17** A warhorse is a bad bet for victory;  
it can't save despite its great strength.

**18 But look here: the Lord's eyes watch all who honor him,  
all who wait for his faithful love,**

**19** to deliver their lives from death  
and keep them alive during a famine.

**20 We put our hope in the Lord.  
He is our help and our shield.**

**21** Our heart rejoices in God  
because we trust his holy name.

**22 Lord, let your faithful love surround us  
because we wait for you.**

### **Colossians 1:15-23**

*Christ's relationship with people is one revelation of God's love for the whole creation. The distance perceived between people and their Creator is a function of people's misperceptions, not God's desires. The everlasting love revealed in Jesus is God's eternal refutation of the implication of a destroyed relationship between the Divine and creation.*

**15** The Son is the image of the invisible God,  
the one who is first over all creation,

**16** Because all things were created by him:  
both in the heavens and on the earth,  
the things that are visible and the things that are invisible.

Whether they are thrones or powers,  
or rulers or authorities,

all things were created through him and for him.

**17** He existed before all things,  
and all things are held together in him.

**18** He is the head of the body, the church,  
who is the beginning,

the one who is firstborn from among the dead  
so that he might occupy the first place in everything.

**19** Because all the fullness of God was pleased to live in him,

**20** and he reconciled all things to himself through him—  
whether things on earth or in the heavens.

He brought peace through the blood of his cross.

<sup>21</sup> Once you were alienated from God and you were enemies with him in your minds, which was shown by your evil actions. <sup>22</sup> But now he has reconciled you by his physical body through death, to present you before God as a people who are holy, faultless, and without blame. <sup>23</sup> But you need to remain well established and rooted in faith and not shift away from the hope given in the good news that you heard. This message has been preached throughout all creation under heaven. And I, Paul, became a servant of this good news.

### **Mark 4:35-41**

*The disciples were dismayed that Jesus seemed unaware of their distress and fear. Yet, Jesus was truly with them the whole time. In Jesus' presence, we have One whom even the winds and the waves obey. For He, as part of the Godhead, is their source. Neither Holy Parent, Holy Son, or Holy Spirit rest in the presence of destructive forces.*

<sup>35</sup> Later that day, when evening came, Jesus said to them, "Let's cross over to the other side of the lake." <sup>36</sup> They left the crowd and took him in the boat just as he was. Other boats followed along.

<sup>37</sup> Gale-force winds arose, and waves crashed against the boat so that the boat was swamped. <sup>38</sup> But Jesus was in the rear of the boat, sleeping on a pillow. They woke him up and said, "Teacher, don't you care that we're drowning?"

<sup>39</sup> He got up and gave orders to the wind, and he said to the lake, "Silence! Be still!" The wind settled down and there was a great calm. <sup>40</sup> Jesus asked them, "Why are you frightened? Don't you have faith yet?"

<sup>41</sup> Overcome with awe, they said to each other, "Who then is this? Even the wind and the sea

### **Statement of Faith**

We believe in God the Creator, giver of all that is seen and unseen in heaven and on Earth

We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ the Redeemer, the uncreated Word, light of the world, who entered Creation, coming down from Heaven for us and our salvation. He was born human, incarnate with the Spirit, wholly created and wholly divine, he was crucified and died for all of creation to be free from sin. He lives and reigns with the Creator and the Sustainer and will judge the created.

We Believe in the Spirit, the Sustainer, the giver of Life, who mingles in creation nudging the church toward reconciliation. Through the Sustainer the creation is made holy and redeemed. We believe in this holy church, in one baptism for the forgiveness of sins, and look toward the life to come Amen.

## **Peace**

### **Offering Prayer**

All that we have, O God, comes from you. Our time, our possessions, our skills, and our knowledge are gifts from your generous spirit. We offer to you what is your own that it may be used to your glory and for the good of your creation in this community and throughout the world. Amen.

### **Great Thanksgiving**

The God of all creation be with you.  
**And also with you.**

The presence of Christ fill you with peace and wholeness  
**May it be the same for our neighbors and friends.**

The Spirit of holiness and restoration stir within you.  
**Make it so for us and for all creation.**

You are worthy, our Lord and God, by your very nature to receive glory and honor and power. Out of your wisdom and love, you created all things- seen and unseen. The scope of your creation is beyond our full understanding and we are in awe of your holy imagination. Out of this love for all things, Jesus came into the created world and lived among us- that we might grow in deeper awareness of the Divine presence, will, and love. All creation is redeemed through his life, death, and resurrection. And so, with singing plains and calling mountains, with whispering cottonwoods and swaying pines, with howling wolves and chattering prairie dogs, with all the saints who have gone before, we join in the song of all creation and sing your praise:

**[Holy, holy, holy]**

Indeed, you are holy, worthy of praise and our highest allegiance.

We cannot flee from your presence nor would we wish to.

You are present in the calmest of days and in the whipping of a windstorm.

You are present in the swirl of river rapids and in the cracked earth of a dried pond.

You are present in the in panting of a deer and in the screech of an osprey.

You are present in the tang of the huckleberry and the mildness of Montana wheat.

Your holy presence is most clear to us in Jesus Christ, the word made flesh and the pioneer of our faith.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

With this bread and this cup, we give thanks for the Word living in and among us,  
Full of wisdom and power.  
We rejoice in our new life through his death and resurrection.  
As we await Christ's coming again in glory,  
We pray for the Holy Spirit to empower us as his body on earth,  
To do the work of caring for others and for the whole creation.  
May his presence in this meal grant us the willingness and the strength to  
Imitate him more fully in all things.

To the One who hears all our prayers,  
At this meal, where you promise to meet us,  
We offer our deepest gratitude, our most sincere awe,  
And our humblest requests for your guidance and help.  
Amen.

### **Post- Communion Prayer**

Creator of all, at this table  
You have fed our faith and given us a foretaste of the feast to come.  
Send us out, renewed, into your world  
That we may carry the good news of Christ's love  
And do the good work of his compassionate healing  
Wherever the Spirit leads us.  
**Amen.**

### **Blessing**

From the breath of the plains,  
To the heights of the mountains,  
There is nothing that can separate you from the love of God,  
In whom you live, move, and have your being.

God- Creator, + Redeemer, and Sustainer of all creation- bless you now and forever.  
**Amen.**

### **Dismissal**

Go in peace to care for God's creation.  
**Thanks be to God.**