

# Season of Creation IV

Praying for our home planet and her people

**Song: Creation calls - by Brian Doerksen**



<https://youtu.be/28sqs5H5hao>

## Call to Worship and lighting of the candle

WRITTEN BY MICHAEL RAMAIDAMA

Creator God,  
We come before you as a small piece of your vast creation.  
We come in awe at the beauty and wonder of our planet,  
and we feel its pain.

Let the embers of our burning bushland  
Rekindle the flame of Pentecost.  
**Shine your light in us that we may strive for a greener future.**

Let the dryness of the land in seasons of drought  
Remind us to thirst for your leadership.  
**Holy Spirit, lead us towards the well of hope for a sustainable planet.**

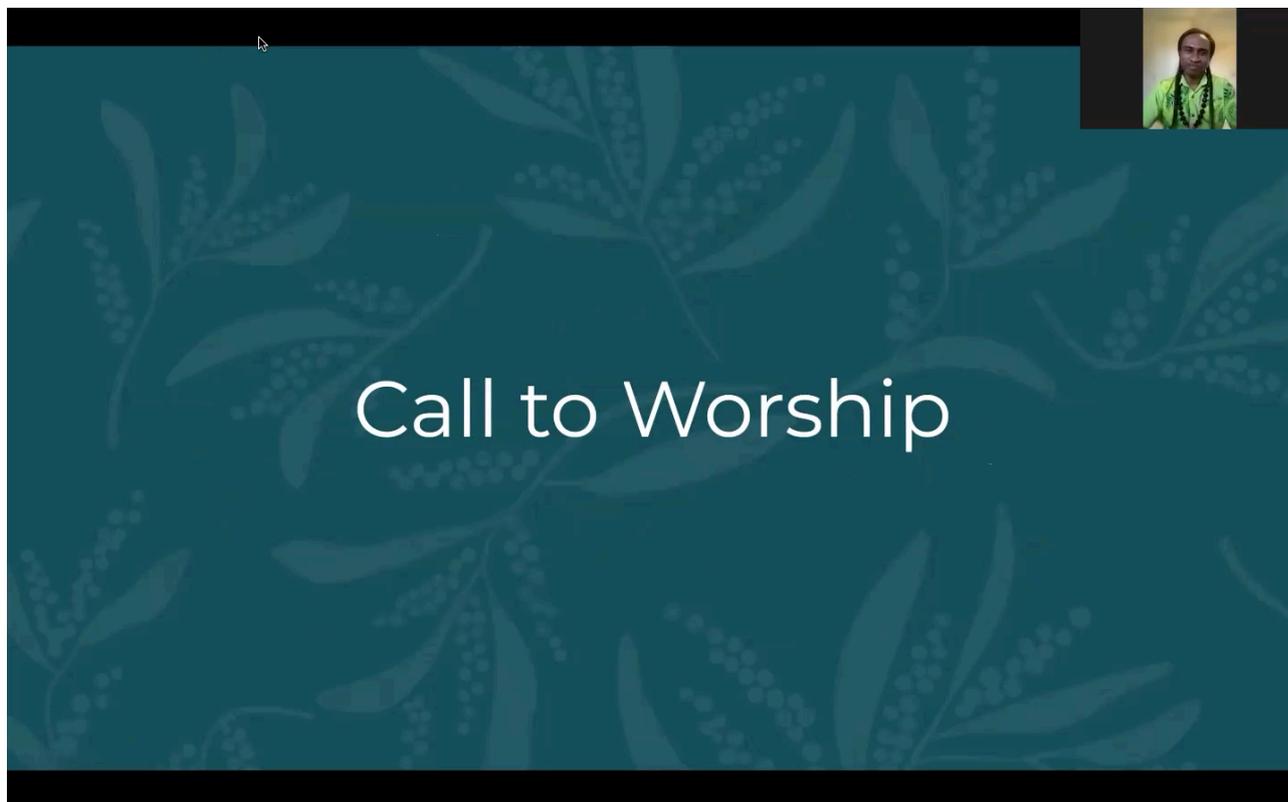
Let the waters of our flooded plains and rivers  
Drench our hearts with your mercy.  
**Living Water fill us with mercy for your suffering creation.**

Let the roaring of raging winds and cyclones  
help us hear the cry of Mother Earth.  
**Jesus, give us your peace to calm our storm, and peace to strengthen our calling.**

Let the rise in sea levels raise our concern and love towards our neighbour.  
**Risen Christ, resource us with your love for the world.**

Creator God, we are your people,  
called and purposed to be good stewards of our planet.

Bless this day.  
**In Jesus' name, Amen.**



## **Welcome and acknowledgement of country**

A warm welcome is extended to all.  
Especially those who are here for the first time  
or who have returned after an absence.

For thousands of years Indigenous People have walked in this land,  
on their own country.

Their relationship with this land is at the centre of their lives.

We acknowledge the Wiradjuri people and their stewardship of this land throughout the ages.

This Southern Region gathering of the Uniting Church in Australia on Wiradjuri land is a safe place  
for all people to worship regardless of race, creed, age, cultural background, or sexual orientation.

Your presence both enriches us  
and this time of celebration together.

## Spoken song: “At the door of the year” (adapted)

At the door of this season  
when the past meets the future,  
let this moment be light  
for the roads we will tread,  
when the clock seems too fast  
or goes slowly within us,  
let our faith tell the time -  
there are good things ahead!

**Welcome in this season of creation,  
welcome in, hopeful people!  
Make a vow, that somehow,  
we will all create peace!**

In the sun, in the snow,  
in each season of living,  
let the faces of peace  
show the world how it's done,  
when the lion and lamb  
both can lie down together,  
think of violence gone,  
think of gift, not a gun:

**Welcome in this season of creation,  
welcome in, hopeful people!  
Make a vow, that somehow,  
we will all create peace!**

In the smile that we smile,  
in the hands held in welcome,  
in the catching of joy  
like a child's bright balloon,  
let the colours of peace  
spread as far as the rainbow  
arching over an earth  
where we all sing in tune -

**Welcome in this season of creation,  
welcome in, hopeful people!  
Make a vow, that somehow,  
we will all create peace!**

## Colouring the Earth - Rex Hunt (adapted)

*A black circle/cloth is placed on the floor/altar.*

Now the earth was formless and empty  
and the shadow of a breath caressed the surface.  
And the emptiness quivered with potential  
and life became known.

*Stand and face North.*

We turn to face the direction North  
and the season of Summer and the element of water,  
and search it for a blessing that we might carry into a future, yet unknown,  
which shall be woven out of our possibilities and realities,  
our hopes and our fears.

The gift of the North is love,  
for it speaks of great endurance.  
Love offers us, above all else, the power of strength in adversity.

May we hold love in our hearts.

**May we hold love in our hearts  
and bring to our future the gentle power of strength in adversity.**

*Blue fabric is brought forward and placed on the black cloth.*

We bring blue, the colour of water  
stronger than any obstacle,  
and place love in our circle, the world.

*People turn right and face the East.*

We turn to face East, the direction of the rising sun,  
the season of Spring and the element of air,  
and search it for a blessing that we might carry into a future, yet unknown,  
which shall be woven out of our possibilities and realities,  
our hopes and our fears.

The gift of the East is wisdom.  
In the morning light we can see and know  
and understand more clearly.  
It speaks of the breath of new life on earth.

May we hold wisdom before us.

**May we hold wisdom before us  
and bring to our future the confidence to know ourselves more fully.**

*White fabric is brought forward and placed on the black cloth.*

We bring white, the colour of air, wrapping all life  
and place wisdom in our circle, the world.

*People turn right and face the South.*

We turn to the South, the direction of Winter and the element of earth  
and search it for a blessing that we might carry into a future, yet unknown,  
which shall be woven out of our possibilities and realities,  
our hopes and our fears.

The gift of the South is mystery, for, in the silent darkness of earth,  
possibility stretches towards its future light.

May we hold mystery in the depths of mystery in the depths of our being  
and bring to our future the courage to dream and wait and dream again.

*Green fabric is brought forward and placed on the black cloth.*

We bring green, the colour of earth, fertile with possibility  
and place mystery in our circle, the world.

*People turn right and face the West.*

We turn to the West, the place of the setting sun,  
the season of Autumn and the element of fire,  
and search it for a blessing that we might carry into a future, yet unknown,  
which shall be woven out of our possibilities and realities,  
our hopes and our fears.

The gift of the West is beauty,  
for it speaks of great peace and serenity.

May we carry beauty in our lives.  
May we carry beauty in our lives  
and bring to our future the freedom to live in wonder and gratitude.

*Red fabric is brought forward and placed on the black cloth.*

We bring red, colour of fire, dancing and casting light  
and place beauty in our circle, the world.

## Lament

“Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with coloured flower and herbs.”

With these words, Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her.... This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she “groans in childbirth.” And so we confess:

Jesus Christ could not find a place to lay his head. Because of our will to dominate, millions of our human family are displaced from their homes. Many lack access to clean water, sanitation, and dignified places for personal hygiene.

**Have mercy on us, for the sake of the earth and all that is in it.**

Foxes of the field and birds of the air have a place to call home but because we misuse the land, the soil, water and air, habitats are desecrated and millions of species face extinction.

**Have mercy on us, for the sake of the earth and all that is in it.**

Your promise was to be a blessing for all the people of the Earth. But when we exploit the gifts of creation, Indigenous lands are devastated and those who live close to the earth lose their ways of life.

**Have mercy on us, for the sake of the earth and all that is in it.**

The mustard seed is great because it provides shelter for many. But we seek security for ourselves, instead of mutual care and faithful hospitality towards our co-creatures.

**Have mercy on us, for the sake of the earth and all that is in it.**

Let us remember that we ourselves are dust of the earth. Our very bodies are made of her elements, we breathe her sacred air, and receive life and refreshment from her sacred waters. May we hear this truth as a promise and a calling.

**Turn us O God, from our desire to unroot ourselves from our home in the garden, and from our will to dominate your Earth.**

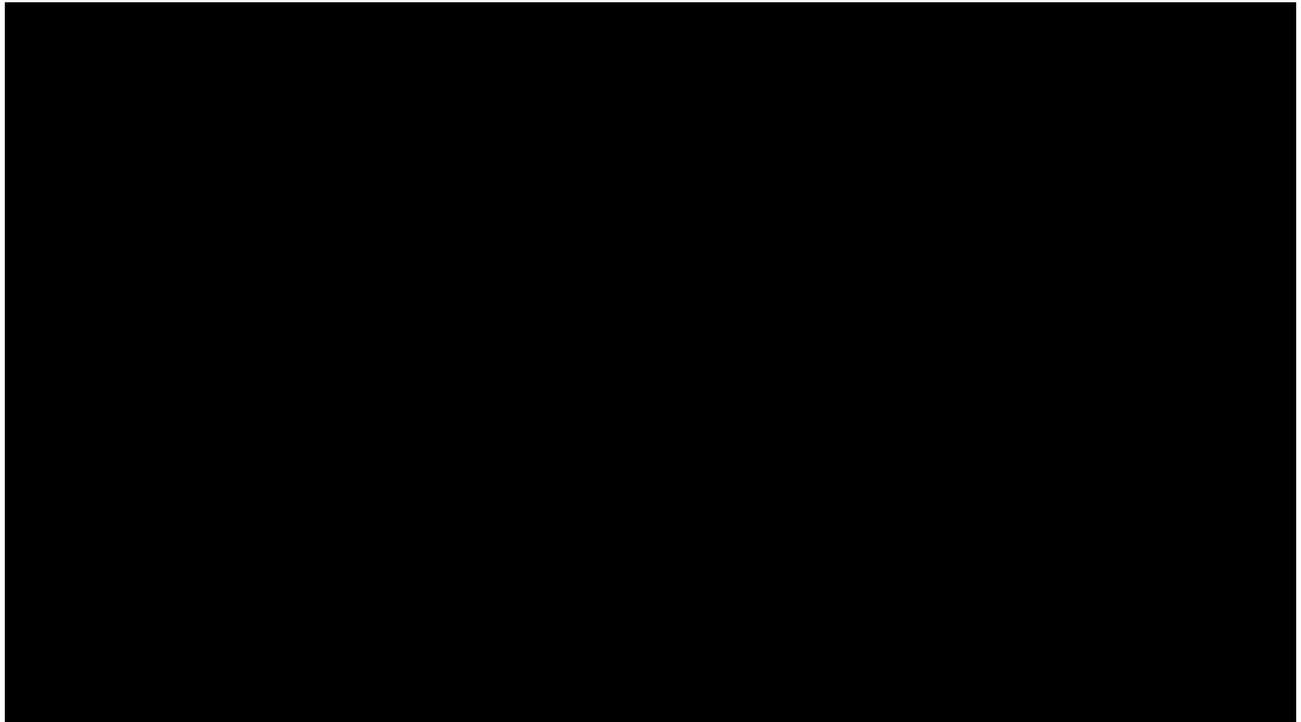
**Call us again to till and to keep.**

**Gather us into a power of just relationships that heal and sustain.**

**Enlighten us by Your Spirit that renews the face of your Earth and safeguards a home for all.**

**Amen.**

## Song: Garden



### Bible Readings

#### Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22 (NIV)

So the king and Haman went to Queen Esther's banquet, and as they were drinking wine on the second day, the king again asked, "Queen Esther, what is your petition? It will be given you. What is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be granted."

Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have found favor with you, Your Majesty, and if it pleases you, grant me my life—this is my petition. And spare my people—this is my request. For I and my people have been sold to be destroyed, killed and annihilated. If we had merely been sold as male and female slaves, I would have kept quiet, because no such distress would justify disturbing the king.

King Xerxes asked Queen Esther, "Who is he? Where is he—the man who has dared to do such a thing?" Esther said, "An adversary and enemy! This vile Haman!"  
Then Haman was terrified before the king and queen.

Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs attending the king, said, "A pole reaching to a height of fifty cubits stands by Haman's house. He had it set up for Mordecai, who spoke up to help the king." The king said, "Impale him on it!"

So they impaled Haman on the pole he had set up for Mordecai. Then the king's fury subsided.

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Mordecai recorded these events, and he sent letters to all the Jews throughout the provinces of King Xerxes, near and far, to have them celebrate annually the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar as the time when the Jews got relief from their enemies, and as the month when their sorrow was turned into joy and their mourning into a day of celebration. He wrote them to observe the days as days of feasting and joy and giving presents of food to one another and gifts to the poor.

## Mark 9:38-50 (NIV)

“Teacher,” said John, “we saw someone driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us.”

“Do not stop him,” Jesus said. “For no one who does a miracle in my name can in the next moment say anything bad about me, for whoever is not against us is for us. Truly I tell you, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to the Messiah will certainly not lose their reward.

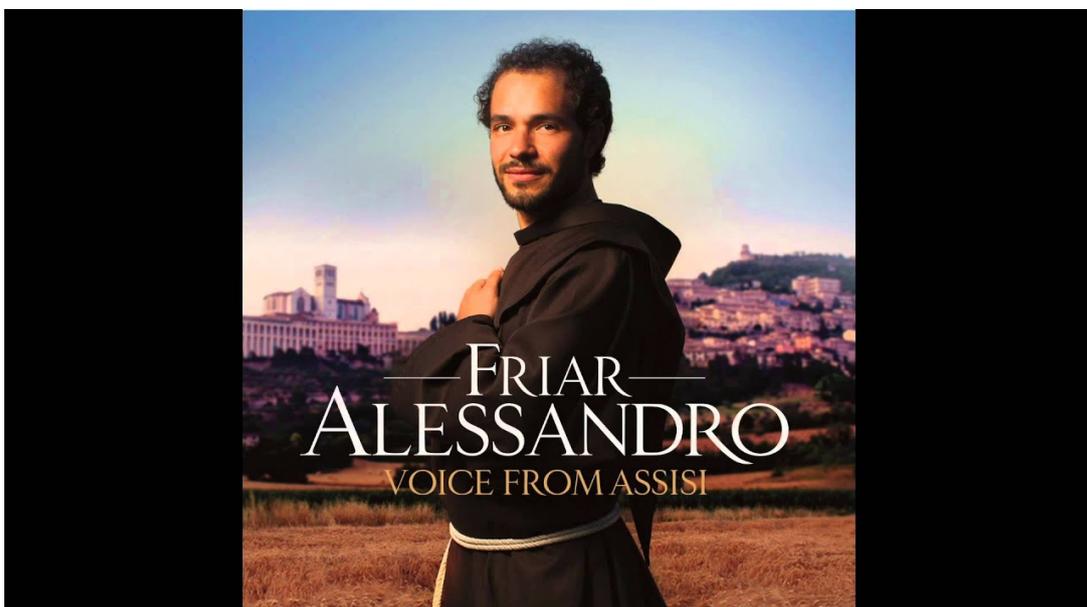
“If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them if a large millstone were hung around their neck and they were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, where  
“the worms that eat them do not die,  
and the fire is not quenched.’

Everyone will be salted with fire.

“Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt among yourselves, and be at peace with each other.”

## Reflection

The kingdom of God is coming,  
a home for all people and all creatures,  
for water and earth and air and fire,  
the kingdom of God is coming because:  
somewhere someone is kind when others are unkind,  
somewhere someone shares with another in need,  
somewhere someone refuses to hate, while others hate,  
somewhere someone is patient - and waits in love,  
somewhere someone returns good for evil,  
somewhere someone serves another, in love,  
somewhere someone is calm in a storm,  
somewhere someone is loving everybody.  
Is that someone you?



## Hymn: Make me a channel of your peace

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6aq-QM\\_Fh6o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6aq-QM_Fh6o)

## Holy Communion

Many will come from east and west, and from north and south, and sit at the table in the Kingdom of God. At Emmaus, when our risen Lord was at table with those who had walked the earth with him, He took the bread and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognised him. In the same way, He now invites all who choose to trust him to share in the broken bread.

Let us pray.

Blessed are You, God, faithful and strong. All Your works, the height and the depth, echo the silent music of Your praise. In the beginning Your Word summoned light, night withdrew, and creation dawned. Then, as if the ages had passed unseen, waters gathered on the face of the earth and life appeared. When at last the days had ripened and the earth was grown full of abundance, You created in Your image man and woman, the stewards of all creation. You gave us breath and speech, that all the living might find a voice to sing Your praise, and to celebrate the creation You made and called good.

All-holy God, how wonderful is the work of Your hands! Because sin rose up to leave a fault-line, even in the earth, You stepped forward to enter into a covenant of peace that can renew the whole creation. As a mother tenderly gathers her children, as a father joyfully welcomes his own, You embraced a people as Yours, filling them with a longing for peace that will last, a justice that will never fail. Through countless generations Your people hungered for the bread of freedom. From them You raised up Jesus, Your Son, the living bread in whom ancient hungers are satisfied. He healed the sick, though He himself would suffer; He offered life to sinners, though death would hunt him down. But with a love stronger than death, He opened wide His arms and surrendered His Spirit.

Eternal God, let Your Holy Spirit move in power over us and over these earthly gifts of bread and wine that we may have communion in the body and blood of Christ, and that in Him we may become one with His life, death, and resurrection, for the healing of the world and the glory of Your name.

And so we remember ....

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God, we thank you for walking together with us through the spilt blood and wounded body of Your Son, Jesus. In the peace this brokenness has brought us, we are made whole. May we live as Your Holy People, outstretching the edges of Your peaceable Kingdom to the North, South, East, and West - in this and every season.

Amen.

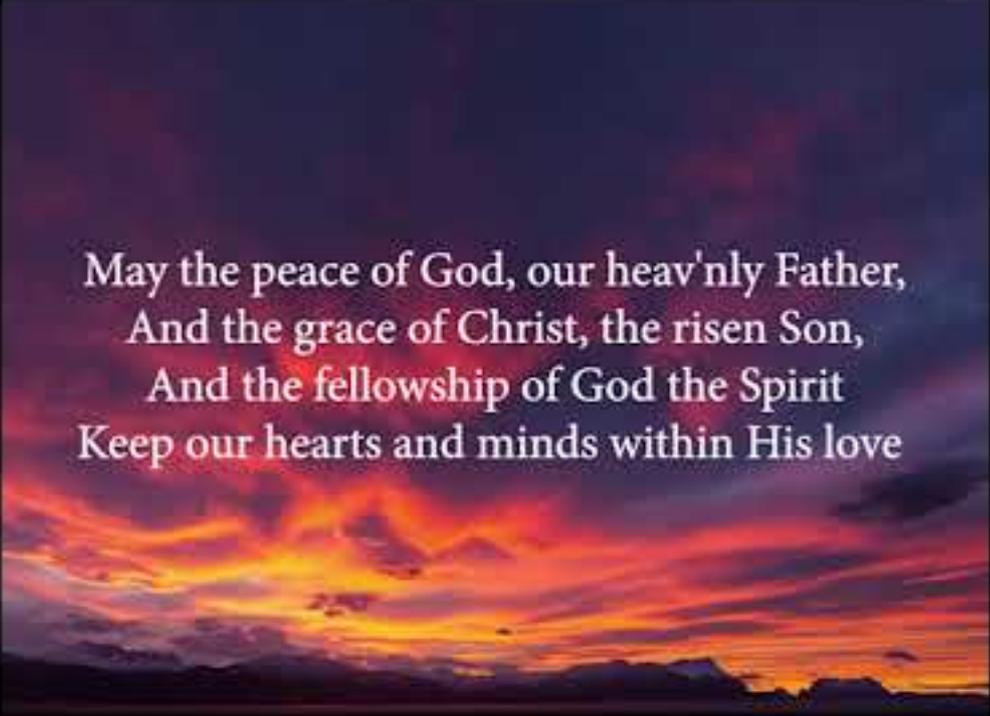
## Benediction

Lord, may your glory be seen in us, that with all Your creation we may reach farther up and farther in to all the goodness You have prepared for us in love.

In the sacred name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

**Song: May the peace of God**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KwyyN86Z3fc>



May the peace of God, our heav'nly Father,  
And the grace of Christ, the risen Son,  
And the fellowship of God the Spirit  
Keep our hearts and minds within His love