



Au Sable Institute

Liturgies of Restoration

WORKBOOK

Liturgies of Restoration

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LITURGY	COUNTER-LITURGY
<p>We are created to love and worship God. God- and other-oriented; contentment; wonder and amazement; humility and modesty; transcendent frame; honor limits (we are creatures); trust</p>	<p>We live for our own fulfillment. Self-oriented; restlessness/malaise; control; mastery; immanent frame; transcend limits (we play God); fear</p>
<p>We thrive in community, partnering with others to bring about flourishing. Community and connection; interdependence; vulnerability and openness; relying on God and others</p>	<p>We must become independent of others in order to succeed. Autonomy and isolation; independence, self-protection and tribalism; self-reliance</p>
<p>We are called to serve, protect and restore the earth. Stewardship and responsibility; generosity and gifting; frugality and self-control; respect and care; cooperation with nature</p>	<p>We stand over and against the earth and can do what we please. Consumption and disposable mentality; hoarding; self-gratification; shame and blame; competition with nature</p>
<p>God's work of transformation happens in the ordinary moments of our lives. Silence and contemplation; presence and incarnation; repetitive and slow; ancient; noticing goodness, truth, and beauty; embodied, seasonal, and temporal</p>	<p>Life is only meaningful if it is new and stimulating. Noise and distraction; virtual reality; stimulating and fast-paced; novel; news cycle, doomscrolling; disembodied, instant, disconnected from natural cycles</p>
<p>Facing grave ecological challenges, we hope and act anticipating God's restoration of heaven and earth. Honesty and lament; engagement; hope and courage; wisdom and prudence; appropriate risk-taking; eschatological vision of restoration</p>	<p>We have damaged the earth beyond all repair OR we will save ourselves through technology. Self-deception, ignoring or numbing to reality, withdrawal and paralysis, anxiety and fear, cynicism, false optimism in technological solutions, fatalism and despair</p>

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Friends,

For the past fifty years, the Au Sable Institute has been a place where God meets people as they engage in His work of restoration. We created this workbook to help the students in our summer science programs understand how their daily lives and coursework are part of an integrated life of worship. Then we realized this integration is not just beneficial for students, but for all Christians. So we made this workbook available to everyone.

I am so thankful that you are joining our community by engaging this workbook. By diving in, you are expressing your commitment to better understand and solve the Earth's toughest environmental problems.

In different seasons of life, you establish new habits and practices during your daily life. Liuan writes in the workbook, "these everyday practices form us into the kind of people we want to be—or they deform us, pulling us away from our true identity in Christ and our God-given vocations."

The world and culture around you are full of noise and distraction. In many ways it is not a fair fight, as you are constantly bombarded with messages from companies that make money off your attention. The good news is that there are other voices, much quieter, that are also present. These voices offer assurance that you are not alone, that you are loved, and that you are enough. Again and again and again the world will make you feel shame, fear, and isolation. And again and again and again the Lord will show that He is close to you and is for you.

I have a prayer by Frederick Buechner taped to the door of my office. It reads: *Be present especially with the young who must choose between many voices. Help them to know how much an old world needs their youth and gladness. Help them to know that there are words of truth and healing that will never be spoken unless they speak them, and deeds of compassion and courage that will never be done unless they do them.*

Amen! Whether you are young or young at heart, you are invited into the Lord's work of truth-telling and healing. May this workbook help you along the path of worshipping God and serving, protecting, and restoring God's good earth.

Jon Terry, Au Sable Great Lakes Campus

LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR

Dear Readers,

This workbook you are holding is a little piece of my heart. In recent years I have been devastated by the ways humans have damaged our beloved blue-green planet. I have wondered what, if anything, my Christian faith has to say about our predicament. I have lamented the ways we have been spiritually malformed by the gospels of capitalism, nationalism, and white supremacy. I have longed to grieve, wonder, and hope with others who share in the Biblical vision for God's kingdom come to earth. Thankfully, there are others, including those in the Au Sable community.

I want to thank Ben Lowe, who connected me with Au Sable, Jon Terry who entrusted me with his original ideas and this project, the folks who joined our February 2021 Zoom meeting to discuss the themes of the workbook and provide input, and Dorcas Cheng-Tozun who shared her editing expertise.

Join me in practicing these liturgies of restoration. When we are doing this as a community, it is less lonely, less heavy. Together, we will find a way forward.

Liuan Huska
Eastertide 2021

Introduction to *Liturgies of Restoration*

At Au Sable, we believe that our call to worship God is deeply connected to our call to be caretakers of creation. **Worship is not just a thing we do on Sunday mornings but includes the daily habits of our lives.** In fact, our everyday practices form us into the kind of people we want to be—or they deform us, pulling us away from our true identity in Christ and our God-given vocations.

You might call our everyday habits liturgies. **Liturgies are the things we do that shape our “way-of-being-in-the-world.”** Tish Harrison Warren, author of *Liturgy of the Ordinary*, writes, “our way-of-being-in-the-world works its way into us through ritual and repetition. James K.A. Smith explains that a particular view of “the good life” is ingrained in us through repetitive practices that motivate how we live and what we love.”¹

In other words, **what we regularly do adds up to become who we are.** We are called to be people of restoration (Isa. 61:4), but many of the habits and practices offered by the world around us call us in another direction—toward distraction, self-gratification, and despair. For example, though we may hope in the promise of God’s kingdom come to earth, the regular practice of doomscrolling can undermine that hope, distracting us from purposefully partnering with God in bringing about his kingdom. **Yet we can counter this pull toward meaninglessness by intentionally practicing liturgies of restoration—habits that point us to our true identity and calling, and tell us God’s story.**



In this workbook we’ll explore five liturgies of restoration, as well as the counter-liturgies that our culture offers us. We’ll explore how our habits shape our character and inform the larger stories we tell ourselves. We’ll identify practices that reinforce our identity as God’s people of restoration, in addition to practices that distract us from or undermine our purpose.

This workbook contains 5 chapters. We encourage you to go through 1 each week. Take this journey on your own, or - even better - with a group of fellow believers. Each chapter starts with a short reading on a specific liturgy and counter-liturgy, and then offers some questions for reflection. Feel free to use these questions as journaling or prayer prompts, or discuss them with your small group.

Then we lay out some practices. As you look through them, consider what you feel drawn to. Perhaps you want to try one or two practices each week; perhaps there are some you’d like to incorporate into your daily life. Each chapter ends with written prayers that you can use on your own or with others.

May this workbook help you along the path of worshipping God and serving, protecting, and restoring God’s good earth.

A note: Liturgies form our identities, but we do not do these practices to earn our identity: “Though these rituals and habits may form us as an alternative people marked by the love and new life of Jesus, they are not what make us beloved. The reality underlying every practice in our life is the triune God and his story, mercy, abundance, generosity, initiative, and pleasure.”²

Chapter I:

Who is at the Center?

“The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it; for he has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers.”³

– Psalm 24:1-2

We have discovered so much about the world through our intellect, senses, and observations. We can view tiny floating protozoa from river water through microscopes and zoom in on faraway galaxies with high-powered telescopes. With all that we have discovered, we may conclude that we can know all there is to know. **We may feel that “the material universe we live in is all there is and ever will be.”⁴ And we, the humans, appear to be the masters.**

Professor Alan Noble, referencing the philosopher Charles Taylor, calls this way of being the “immanent frame.” It assumes a closed universe, without a transcendent reality beyond what we can see or know. While we Christians say we believe in a God who stands outside of our reality and is our ultimate reference point for truth, beauty, and goodness, we can still operate as if nothing exists outside of our daily experiences, as if we were the center of the universe.

Noble gives the example of a morning before church. Your cell phone rings, a testament to human ingenuity; we no longer need to rely on the position of the sun in the sky to tell time. You eat eggs, almost miraculously clean, white, large, and government inspected for safety. Another testament to the human ability to manage risk and efficiently sustain ourselves. You dress in ready-made clothes, drive to church in a gleaming, energy-efficient sedan, noting people in the cars around you as they glance at their devices while stopped at the traffic light. On the way to church, you note other monuments to human achievement: fire trucks, businesses, skyscrapers, and more.

“At church, you sing songs praising God’s provision, his mercies, his creation, and his grace. **But everything you experienced on the way to church, from the food you ate to the beauty you witnessed, testified to humanity’s ingenuity and mastery of the world. Your experience of the world was a testament to humanity, not God, because everything in your experience conditioned you to look at this world and its physical laws.**”⁵ In such an existence, Noble writes, it’s hard to even understand that we need God, much less that we are called to love and worship God.

The hour and a half we spend in church worshipping God on a Sunday morning is not enough to reorient our working frame of reference. It has been too deeply shaped by our modern world—through advertisements, the stories and images swirling around us, and larger public discourse. **We need daily practices that remind us of God’s reality.**

Which leads us to our first liturgy and counter-liturgy. As followers of Christ, we know our primary identity is to be worshippers and lovers of God. When a lawyer asked Jesus which command was greatest, he replied, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind’ And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’” (Matt. 22:37-39). **We are, first and foremost, lovers of God and neighbor.**⁶ But many of our modern habits form us to be primarily lovers of self. We put on various spiritualities and lifestyles if we feel they are “our thing” and fit our current sense of self. We are invited to do what feels good—assuming that our individual definitions of “good” are enough. We assess the value of the people, places, and other living and non-living things around us based on how well they may serve our needs or the needs of our group.

Liturgy & Counter-Liturgy #1:
We are created to love and worship God.
vs.
We live for our own fulfillment

If we buy into the story that life's end goal is our own fulfillment, that we are the ultimate deciders of what is good, beautiful, and true, several character traits emerge. **First and most obviously, we become self-centered.** We resist external authority and sink into a kind of relativism where there is no meaning outside of the self. Each person decides what is meaningful. We have no sense of collective direction. "What else is there?" we might ask, if the world is just about our own interpretations and experiences. Noble calls this "the malaise of immanence."⁷

Next, if we place ourselves at the center of the universe, we start to view our role in the world as that of control and mastery. Just as Adam and Eve did in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3), we put ourselves in the place of God, deciding what is good and evil. The world and its wonders become ours to own, rather than evoking humility and awe. Noble writes, "This is what mostly replaces gratitude for creation in the contemporary world: an overweening pride in the human ability to perceive, define, circumscribe, discover, measure, test, validate, reproduce, analyze, categorize, or otherwise contain the universe."⁸

But behind the pride is fear. **When we put ourselves in the place of God, we lose the sense that Someone Else is at the helm of the universe.** We fragile humans are left to take care of ourselves, to make things work out right. And we can never do that. We are finite, limited creatures. Yet we try our best to overcome our limits, rather than live within them and place ourselves in God's hands.

Though we may profess that God is at the center and the goal of our lives is to love him, **it can be hard, in practice, to decenter ourselves. For that, we need concrete habits, liturgies of worship.** If you come from a liturgical tradition, you already know the rituals and practices within a Sunday service as liturgy. But even if your tradition doesn't use that word, we can all affirm that a worship service is made up of "practices and habits that aim our love and desire toward God."⁹

All elements of a worship service are designed to point us to God and form us into God's people. In this workbook we'll identify how some of these elements might translate into our everyday lives. In this chapter, we focus on the idea of worship itself. **Contrary to the character traits of self-centeredness, pride, and desire for control and mastery, the act of worship cultivates God-centeredness, humility, and awe.** We acknowledge that we are not the creator, but the creatures. We are dependent on God, not independent, self-sufficient beings.

On Sundays, we observe what the Jewish people call Sabbath—a day when God rested from his work of creation (Gen. 2:3) and invites his people to do the same (Deut. 5:12-15). By stopping our regular activities to worship God, we resist the narrative that we are at the center of the universe, we are beneficiaries of our own human ingenuity, and we must work in order to live. Instead, **we live an alternate story, with God at the center: We are beneficiaries of God's extravagant gifts. We can't do it all. We rely on God for our life and breath.**

So, how can we live out God's story beyond Sunday mornings? How can we work these habits of worship into our everyday activities? Use the questions below to examine what you worship, and how you worship, in your day-to-day living. Then we invite you to take up one or two of the practices listed below during your week, and perhaps even make some of these practices a regular part of your life.

Questions for Reflection

1. Think about the things you do regularly throughout the day, especially the activities that structure your day. What do you do first thing in the morning? Last thing at night? Before a meal? When you get home? In your spare time? Our habits, writes Justin Whitmel Earley, are liturgies: "Our habits often obscure what we're really worshipping, but that doesn't mean we're not worshipping something."¹⁰ What might your habits say about what you value, the stories you believe, and whom or what you worship?

2. Consider the worship service at your own church and the various elements of the service. What role does each element (from the call to worship and the passing of the peace, to the sermon and the sending/benediction) play? What stories do these words and rituals tell us about our identity and purpose? How do these stories differ from those we hear from society?

3. "One of the only ways to take hold of the mind is to take hold of the body," writes Earley.¹¹ Our smartphones have become a ubiquitous part of our bodily lives. We spend so much time bent in front of the screen, thumbs scrolling. We curl up with our phones in bed; our phones are always at our sides. What kinds of feelings and bodily sensations does your phone evoke for you? When you don't have your phone at hand, how do you feel? If what happens in our bodies affects our hearts and minds, how are our phones affecting us? What liturgies (stories) do our phones offer? Do you agree with these stories?

4. What is your core identity, the most basic story you tell yourself about who you are? Is there coherence between your stated identity and your daily living? In what ways do you live out your core identity in concrete practices? Are there areas of your life where you want to live out your identity more fully?

Practices

EMBODIED WORSHIP

The most obvious form of worship in a church service is the singing. We know it as worship because of the way it involves our bodies. We raise our voices, we join with others to form a harmony, we stand up, and—depending on the church tradition—we may kneel, raise our hands, sway, or even dance. Singing grabs us because it takes hold of our bodies, which then takes hold of our minds.

Are there ways you can embody your worship of God in your everyday life? Here are a few options:

- Sing a favorite hymn or worship song when you wake up or before you go to bed.
- Kneel in prayer at the beginning, middle, and end of the day. (If you're in a public place, you could simply turn your palms upward, put them on your knees, or walk to a window.)¹² Your prayer could be a simple line from the heart, such as, "Thank you, God, for this new day," or "Help me in the work I'm about to do." Or you can repeat the same phrase, such as this ancient prayer known as the Jesus Prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."
- Create something worshipful. Depending on what gets your creative juices going, you may want to write a psalm of praise, draw or paint, dance, or compose a song. Consider sharing what you create with your small group or church. Our own acts of worship are not just for ourselves; when they are shared in community, they can draw others into worship.

VISIO DIVINA WALK¹³

You may be familiar with *lectio divina*, a way of reading Scripture slowly and repetitively that invites God to speak. In *visio divina*, we meditate on nature or an image and invite God to speak through that. Consider taking a prayerful walk outside and noticing something in nature that stirs you. It might be beautiful or intriguing, or it might be disturbing. Invite God into that moment. "Both attraction and repulsion can be cues that there's something more." Allow what you see in front of you, as well as your inner response, to draw you beyond yourself toward God and God's work in the world.

As you observe, keep in mind that every living being, simply by being and doing what God created them to be and do, is worshipping. Au Sable board member Ben Lowe recalls being on the dock at Louie's Pond (at Au Sable's Great Lakes campus) and feeling irritated and distracted by the spring peepers making noise. "I realized that, far from being a distraction to me as I was trying to pray, their deafening chorus was part of their worship," he said. Can we allow other living creatures to teach us—lead us—in worship?

SACRED IDENTIFICATION

The work of science is about naming and categorizing, and it is part of what we do as humans. Naming, after all, can be a way of knowing and loving. Adam's naming of the animals in Genesis was part of God's call to him to be in relationship (Gen. 2). However, naming can easily slip into controlling. When we put something into a category, it can feel as if we've mastered that thing, as if we have absolute power over it. Then we no longer allow that creature or thing to speak back to us or transform us. If naming is about relationships, scientific naming can be the opposite—distanced, objective mastery. How can we restore the sacred, relational work of naming?

Robin Wall Kimmerer, a botanist and member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, tells the story of a scientist who entered the rainforest with an indigenous guide. The guide began rattling off many of the scientific names of the plants. The botanist said, "Well, well, young man, you certainly know the names of a lot of these plants." The guide nodded and replied with downcast eyes, "Yes, I have learned the names of all the bushes, but I have yet to learn their songs." The psalmist says that creation tells the glory of God (Ps. 19:1-4). Do we hear it? As we learn about God's handiwork, including the scientific names of plants and animals, consider how you might also "learn their songs."

Here is one idea: Look up a plant or animal's local or indigenous name. For example, the genus *Phytolacca* is also known as pokeweed, poke sallet, or dragon berry. All these names have stories and communities behind them. Explore some of this history, which speaks to how humans have been in relationship—in both beneficial and destructive ways—with the rest of creation. In your exploration, you might sense a need to lament, or perhaps celebrate. Let your naming and your learning become part of your worship.

GET ENOUGH SLEEP

Can rest be a form of worship? In ordaining Sabbath, the seventh day of creation, as a day of rest, God built rest into the worship framework. Resting from our work puts us back in the transcendent frame, where we acknowledge that God is at work, sustaining the world, even when we dependent, finite creatures need to stop, eat, and sleep.

Make a point to get enough sleep for a day, a week, or even consistently. This might mean setting a bedtime for yourself and telling some friends your aim so they can hold you accountable. You might need to shut off your phone by a certain time in the evening to avoid overstimulation and give you time to relax before sleep. Or perhaps you could carve out some time in the afternoon for a nap. Getting enough sleep is a habit, a liturgy, that tells us God's story of who we are as his beloved creatures—sustained by him, not by ourselves. Recall Psalm 127:2: "It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives sleep to his beloved."

STONES OF REMEMBRANCE

When the Israelites miraculously crossed the Jordan into Canaan after forty years of wandering in the desert, God had Joshua command each tribe to place a stone at the camp. The pile of stones served as a sign, so that when their children asked, "What do these stones mean to you?" then you shall tell them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off in front of the ark of the covenant of the Lord So these stones shall be to the Israelites a memorial forever" (Josh. 4:1-7).

Sometimes we need physical reminders of how God has broken through for us. We can get so caught up in the "immanent frame"—the story that we take care of our own needs and are responsible for ourselves—that we forget God's work. God, the holy, transcendent One, is here among us, making a way for us.

Is there a place out in nature where you have particularly sensed the nearness of God? The Celts called these places "thin places," where the transcendent becomes immanent. Pile some stones in this place to remind yourself how God has shown up for you. Or take a stone from there and put it in a prominent place in your room so you can remember that encounter.

Prayers

O merciful Creator, your loving hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature: Make us always thankful for your loving providence, and give us grace to honor you with all that you have entrusted to us; that we, remembering the account we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of your good gifts, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.¹⁶

We who have lost our sense and our senses—our touch, our smell, our vision of who we are: we who frantically force and press all things, without rest for body or spirit, hurting our earth and injuring ourselves: we call a halt.

We want to rest. We need to rest and allow the earth to rest. We need to reflect and to rediscover the mystery that lives in us, that is the ground of every unique expression of life, the source of the fascination that calls all things to communion.

We declare a Sabbath, a space of Quiet; for simply being and letting be; for recovering the great, forgotten truths; for learning how to live again.¹⁷

God is the foundation for everything

This God undertakes, God gives.

Such that nothing that is necessary for life is lacking.

Now humankind needs a body that at all times honors and praises God.

This body is supported in every way through the earth.

Thus the earth glorifies the power of God.¹⁸

Chapter 1 Reflections:

Chapter 2: *Made for Relationship*

*"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another.
Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.
By this everyone will know that you are my disciples,
if you have love for one another."
— John 13:35*

First, we are called to worship. Then, Jesus commands us to "Love your neighbor as yourself," second only to the first and greatest command to love God (Matt. 22:39). **Becoming God's people of restoration can't happen without being in community.** In fact, relationship sits at the very heart of the universe.

We read in the Bible that a triune God created the world. The Holy Spirit—the third person of the Trinity—hovered over the waters (Gen. 1:2). God created all things in and through Christ, the second person of the Trinity (Col. 1:15-17). When God created people, he said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness . . ." (Gen. 1:26, italics added). We are made in the image of a relational God-in-three-persons, ever loving, ever vulnerable to one another.

Justin Whitmel Earley writes, "Everything in the universe has its roots in friendship. **That means the longing to be in right relationship with other people and things is at the heart of every molecule in existence—and most powerfully in our hearts.**"¹⁹ **This desire also lies at the heart of our call as earth keepers: we seek to gain knowledge, skills, and ethical groundings so we can relate rightly to God's earth.**

In the course of daily life, many opportunities will arise to be vulnerable, speak honestly, forgive, and love one another. **We have a chance, as we go about our days of eating, washing dishes, studying, working, and resting, to embody the worshipping, loving community that Jesus calls us to, with one another and with the rest of God's creation.**

Yet our ingrained habits don't always facilitate this kind of connection. We've become accustomed to digital interactions and less comfortable with face-to-face conversation (maybe even more so in the pandemic). While there are many things to appreciate about digital connections, **many forms (such as social media or texting) have a way of dividing our attention and allowing us to sidestep the deep work of in-person interactions.**

Digital interactions are safer. "You can rehearse and edit what you say. You can hide the furious blush spreading across your face. There are no uncomfortable silences where people are simply present together, waiting for others to respond or figuring out how to respond themselves. If there's a pause in a text or online thread, you assume that other people are busy managing their ten other digital interactions. If you don't know what to say next, you can pretend that you are the busy one."²⁰ Media scholar Sherry Turkle's interviewees thought that unrehearsed, "real-time" conversations made a person "unnecessarily" vulnerable.²¹

But there is a level of relational depth that can only happen with real-time vulnerability. The other person sees your splotchy face from crying earlier. Or you can't hide your blush from not telling the full truth. Face-to-face conversation is risky and vulnerable, for sure. It means someone might get uncomfortable. The other person might laugh at or judge or simply dismiss something you share from the heart. You might be misunderstood. You might get hurt or hurt someone else. And you might be seen and known. The last possibility is both utterly terrifying and utterly exhilarating. **What if we could really be ourselves with each other? What if we could find acceptance and grace when we show up to other people as the complex, unfinished, awkward, and wounded human beings we are?**

You may have experienced glimmers of this kind of community in your family or church or among friends. Perhaps it is something you are still looking for. Or maybe you've been burned in relationships and are afraid to show up in a real way again. If that is the case, seeking counseling through your church or through a trained therapist might be the healthiest next step. It takes time to heal to a point where you can take the risk of relationship again. But we must start that healing journey because **deep, life-to-life relationships are what we were made for.**

Liturgy & Counter-Liturgy #2:

We thrive in community, partnering with others to bring about flourishing.

vs.

We must become independent of others to succeed.

Even so, our society can teach the opposite. Digital technologies train us to engage in shallow “sips” of conversation instead of drinking deeply.²² In addition, **our production-oriented economy teaches us that independence is a virtue.** “Successful” people in our society are those who are wealthy (financially independent), able-bodied (physically independent), mobile (independent of ties to place), and powerful (they can do what they want without accountability).

Compare that to the teachings of Jesus from his Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:1-11). **Jesus’ definition of “blessed” includes those who are poor, mourning, meek, hungry and thirsty, merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers, and persecuted. This stands in stark contrast to our society’s definition of success.** Jesus centers vulnerability, humility, and reliance on God and others, not ourselves.

How can we become this kind of blessed, beloved community? **We can start with three things: courage, intentionality, and forgiveness.** We need courage to take the risk of showing up to other people. It might not go smoothly—and it certainly won’t be a scripted Hollywood scene—but it will be real. We can trust that when we show up to others, God is at work. His spirit is actively bringing others to meet us halfway.

We also need to be intentional. **How can we prioritize relationships if we don’t make the time to talk?**²³ So many of us are trained to prioritize doing (productivity) over being (relationality). But Jesus’s life and ministry show us that people are infinitely more valuable than whatever is on our agenda.

Finally, we practice forgiveness. **Real-time community is messy because we humans are imperfect.** We constantly do and say things that hurt others, intentionally or not. “It’s so important that we keep forgiving one another—not once in a while, but every moment of life,” writes the Catholic priest Henri Nouwen. “Before you have had your breakfast, you have already had at least three opportunities to forgive people, because your mind is already wondering, What will they think about me? What will he or she do? How will they use me?”²⁴

We have resources within our faith to practice courage, intentionality, and forgiveness. “We love because [God] first loved us” (1 John 4:19), says the apostle John, who calls himself “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 21:20). We courageously reach out to others because God first reached out to us. We forgive because God forgives us. We make time for relationships because God is eternally calling us into communion with himself. Out of this communion with the divine, we learn new ways of relating to one another. And, as we’ll see in the next chapter, we find new ways of relating to the rest of God’s creation.

Questions for Reflection

1. Digital interactions are safer, whereas in-person interactions are more vulnerable. When do you prefer to communicate digitally versus in person? What has the pandemic showed you about the differences between digital and in-person communication? Imagine how some of your digital interactions would change if you had them in person.

2. What are some instances where you've experienced the grace and liberation of true community? What needed to take place for that kind of open and honest interaction to happen? What were the prerequisites?

3. Has church been a place where you can show up as you really are? Why or why not?

4. Examine your own schedule and habits. What does your schedule reveal about what you prioritize? Have you made space for relationships? Or what keeps you from doing so? What practices or strategies could help you carve out time for deep conversation?

Practices

CALL-AND-RESPONSE

In worship services, there are several elements that draw our attention to relationships. One is the passing of peace, where congregants shake hands (do we remember that pre-COVID practice!?) and offer Christ's peace to one another. Another is the call-and-response element of liturgical services, where Scriptures are read responsively; the leader and members take turns reading lines. In Black churches, the preacher's sermon is also a time of call-and-response, where people in the pews respond with "amens" and affirmations, engaging in the message. In addition, writes Tish Harrison Warren, "Christian friendships are call-and-response friendships. We tell each other over and over, back and forth, the truth of who we are and who God is."²⁵

How can you practice call-and-response this week and beyond? Is there someone who has reached out, whom you've been meaning to respond to? Or maybe someone keeps coming to mind. Could that be an invitation from God to call that person? Maybe there is someone in your community whom you feel drawn to. Could you take the risk of starting a conversation? It could start with an invitation for a walk or sitting down at a meal and asking, "How are you, really?"

ONE HOUR OF CONVERSATION WITH A FRIEND

Justin Whitmel Earley suggests making a point to have one hour of face-to-face conversation with a friend once a week.²⁶ A couple ways to start:

1. Set up a standing meeting with a friend, say on Thursday evenings or Saturday mornings to grab coffee or take a walk. "Don't be discouraged by the fact that sometimes you have to miss; be encouraged by the fact that the rule is getting together, and the exception is missing it sometimes."²⁷
2. Set aside a time to meet weekly with those you live with—most likely your roommates. This is not a time to talk logistics and housework but simply to check in and talk about life without other distractions.

INTENTIONAL MEALS

There's eating, and then there are meals. In our busy lives we often treat food as an afterthought, something we must do just to get on to the next thing. Often we are scrolling on our phones, emailing, or reading articles as we eat. When we bring our phones to the table with others, we signal that we're not ready for a "deep gulp" of conversation—just little sips.

Try leaving your phone in your pocket (or better yet, in your room) during your next meal. You might want to ask your meal partners to do the same, or simply say, "I'd really like to have a conversation and phones are so distracting. Do you want to try keeping our phones silent and out of sight?" It's risky, and the other person might scoff or say no. But you might be surprised to find that someone else is also longing for a deep gulp of conversation.

RELATIONSHIP TREE

We draw family trees to show our biological lineage. What about our relational lineage? Make a list, or a map, or a tree (whatever helps you visualize) of the people who have profoundly shaped and nourished you as a person. What values or virtues have they passed on to you? What shared experiences are you grateful for?

PRACTICING FORGIVENESS

Asking for and extending forgiveness are two of the hardest and most crucial things a person can do. Is there someone you need to apologize to, or someone who has hurt you? Maybe it's someone you live with, for something minor like leaving their belongings strewn all over your shared space. Or maybe it's a bigger wound. Whether you did the hurting or are the one hurt, start by naming the wound. From there, it is possible to ask for and offer forgiveness. But it's okay if you can't. Naming the wrong is the first step to making it right. That may be all you can do for now.

If the hurt is related to someone who is not present or whom you're not ready to engage with, consider writing a letter. We can start by practicing the posture of repentance and forgiveness in our hearts, and asking God for the courage and grace to put it into action. Remember that healing is a process, not a one-time event. Warren writes, "In this body of Christ, we find a place where we can be gloriously and devastatingly human. We find a place where we can fail and repent and grow and receive grace and be made new."²⁸

Prayers

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
 where there is hatred, let me sow love;
 where there is injury, pardon;
 where there is doubt, faith;
 where there is despair, hope;
 where there is darkness, light;
 where there is sadness, joy.*

*O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
 to be consoled as to console,
 to be understood as to understand,
 to be loved as to love.
 For it is in giving that we receive,
 it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
 and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
 Amen.²⁹*

*O God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Savior, the Prince of Peace:
 Give us grace to take to heart the grave dangers we are in through our many divisions.
 Deliver your Church from all enmity and prejudice, and everything that hinders us from
 godly union. As there is one Body and one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one
 Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so make us all to be one heart and
 of one mind, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and love, that with
 one voice we may give you praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns
 with you and the Holy Spirit, one God in everlasting glory. Amen.³⁰*

Chapter 2 Reflections:

Chapter 3:

The Human-Earth Relationship

“The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.”

– Genesis 2:15

Recently a prominent Christian political figure noted how “rabid environmentalists” are always the villains in comic books. For example, Marvel’s character Thanos believed that overpopulation was the problem and wanted to wipe out half the universe. “The view of the Left is that people are a disease,” this politician said. Setting aside discussions on comic book interpretation and polarizing political statements, it’s worth examining the commonly held assumptions revealed here.

The assumption is that people and the environment are at odds, that care for “the environment” necessarily means being anti-human. Also assumed is that care for people justifies environmental neglect and destruction. This is a false dichotomy, religion professor Steven Bouma-Prediger points out. “We do not exist over and against something called ‘the environment’ . . . which suggests something we live in but is apart from us.” The word nature, he added, can have similar connotations—as something that excludes humans, who are part of *culture*.³² Bouma-Prediger suggests a better word, ecology, which in Greek means the study (logos) of the house or home (oikos). **Earth is our home. We are inescapably embedded here.**³³

Some of us may come from Christian communities that have taught something different: that earth is temporary, about to be burned. The Christian mission of saving souls has nothing to do with taking care of the earth. That narrative has become ingrained in popular imagination as *the* Christian story, even leading some to believe that Christianity is to blame for our current ecological crisis.³⁴ Indeed, if we believed that story, we’d have little motivation to care about the bleaching of coral reefs, endangered species, or deforestation.

But a closer, fuller interpretation of the Bible tells a different story about humans and our place on earth. Starting with Genesis 1-2, we see that God lovingly and purposefully created the world. God imbues creation with his own creativity, empowering humans and other creatures as partners in the work. God calls creation *good*.³⁵ Then, in Genesis 9, after Noah’s flood, God makes an everlasting covenant with the earth and its creatures.³⁶ Later in Job (38-42), we see a breathtaking vision of God as maker and sustainer of the universe, where even things that appear to be “wild, repugnant, and dangerous,” such as the Leviathan (sea monster), have a place.³⁷ Finally, in Revelations (21-22), we see a vision of God’s good future, which includes the city of God coming down—God making his home among us—and a renewed heaven and earth. **Within the arc of the entire biblical story, we get a sense of God’s ongoing love for the things he has made, and his desire to see creation thrive, not be destroyed.**

Within this beautiful, earthly world, what are humans called to do? We see that God made humans in his own image (Gen. 1:27)—part of creation, yet somehow set apart, having “dominion” over creation. *Dominion* has often been interpreted to mean domination, as if we can do whatever we want to the planet. And humans throughout history, especially today, have certainly exploited the planet for our consumption, as if we were the only ones that mattered.

Yet the meaning of dominion, if we understand Jesus to be the truest example, is one of service.³⁹ “For Jesus, to rule is to serve. To exercise dominion is to suffer, if necessary, for the good of the other;” writes Bouma-Prediger. This definition of true ruling illuminates God’s further call to humans in Genesis 2:15 to “work and keep” the earth. In other words, **humans are called to serve and protect the earth**—the core of our mission at Au Sable Institute.

Liturgy and Counter-Liturgy #3:
**We are called to serve, protect and
restore the earth.**

vs.

**We stand over and against the earth
and can do what we please.**

Are you starting to see how the stories we tell change everything? And, in turn, how our everyday practices shape our stories? You've probably heard the term throwaway society, a way of life driven by the production of more and more things that we use up quickly and throw away. **When most of the objects we use are disposable, we easily apply this mentality to other aspects of our lives.** Are relationships "disposable"?⁴⁰ Is the marsh in our neighborhood "disposable"?

"We think we throw things 'away,' but we fail to realize there is no away," writes Bouma-Prediger.⁴¹ If we understand ourselves to be part of this planet, and this planet is not going anywhere but will be renewed by God so he can dwell among us, then we start to see the folly of our insatiable consumption of resources, our thoughtless disposal and pollution. We are destroying our home.

The immensity of our ecological problems can be overwhelming, leading to paralysis and despair. There is so much we've messed up. Where do we start to right the wrongs? In Chapter 5 we'll delve into the practice of lament—the important work of naming the wrongs and repenting. But, for now, we can start with whom we are becoming.

Our culture of consumption forms in us a "disposable mentality" and a sense of being in competition with the rest of the natural world. This paradigm assumes we live in scarcity and, as a result, must hoard what we have, accumulating more and more. But, through the creation story, **we understand that the living world is filled with God's extravagant gifts.**

Have you ever been in an apple orchard during harvest season or stumbled upon a Juneberry tree heavy with sweet, ripe fruit? When we receive these gifts—from God and not of our own making—our hearts fill with gratitude. **Gratitude, in turn,**

fosters relationship and responsibility. We receive the gifts of the earth, and we are compelled to ask, "What can we give in return?" We want to nurture as we are nurtured. A gift economy, writes Robin Wall Kimmerer, stands against our modern market economy, where there is no gratitude in the exchange, only a sense of "I bought this. I deserve it."⁴²

Receiving God's good gifts also spurs us to share. The abundance is not just for us, to be stored away as security for the future in an act of isolated independence. **When we share in the abundance, we build relationships of reciprocity, forging deeper security as an interdependent community.** Kimmerer tells the story of an anthropologist who asked a hunter in the Brazilian rainforest where he would store the meat from a sizable kill that was more than his family could eat. The hunter was puzzled by the question.

Store the meat? Why would he do that? Instead, he sent out an invitation to a feast, and soon the neighboring families were gathered around his fire, until every last morsel was consumed. This seemed like maladaptive behavior to the anthropologist, who asked again: given the uncertainty of meat in the forest, why didn't he store the meat for himself, which is what the economic system of his home culture would predict.

"Store my meat? I store my meat in the belly of my brother," replied the hunter.⁴³

It starts with the stories we tell. **Do we live in an abundant, good world that God wants to restore with us, where we relate interdependently with every living being? Or do we live separate from the rest of God's creatures, about to be scooped up to heaven, only here on this planet to fend for ourselves in the meantime?**

Our habits reflect the stories we tell. What stories are we telling?

Questions for Reflection

1. Growing up, what stories did you learn about the human-earth relationship? How does that compare to your understanding today?

2. Have you been part of faith communities that value serving and protecting the earth as an integral part of the Christian mission? If you have, what has that looked like, practically? If not, how would you define what your faith communities see as the Christian mission?

3. Why do you think there can be such a disconnect between Christian mission and ecological concern?

4. Reflect on this statement: "When most of the objects we use are 'disposable,' we easily translate this disposable mentality onto other aspects of our lives." Do you agree? What is the connection between using disposable objects and our view of other people and the world around us?

5. How is seeing the world as a gift to receive different than seeing the world as a commodity to buy and sell? How would seeing everything around you as a gift change how you live in the world?

Practices

PRAY FOR THE PLANET

In many orders of service there is a time for intercessory prayer, where the congregation names the needs of the world. Usually this involves naming the leaders of the world and the church, as well as those who are sick and in hard circumstances. What would it look like to name the needs of other living things and our planetary ecosystem, in addition to the needs of people?

Write a prayer that names some ecological needs, local or global, on your heart. Perhaps you want to name some local rivers or a species in danger of extinction. Offer gratitude for their gifts and name their needs. Perhaps you also want to include a prayer of blessing and sending, similar to the prayer at the closing of a worship service, that names our human responsibility. Put this written prayer somewhere in your room so you can be reminded to pray it regularly throughout the week.

LEAVE A PLACE BETTER

You may have heard of the Leave No Trace ethic for outdoor activities.⁴⁴ Visit the website Int.org/why/7-principles to familiarize yourself with these seven principles of care and respect for our surroundings. Also consider: beyond leaving no trace or damage, are there ways we can leave the places we pass through better?

Kimmerer tells how, when she camped with her family as a child, her mother always had them perform a pragmatic “ritual of respect: the translation of reverence and intention into action.”

Before we paddled away from any camping place she made us kids scour the place to be sure that it was spotless. No burnt matchstick, no scrap of paper escaped her notice. “Leave this place better than you found it,” she admonished. And so we did. We also had to leave wood for the next person’s fire, with tinder and kindling carefully sheltered from rain by a sheet of birch bark. I liked to imagine their pleasure, those other paddlers, arriving after dark to find a ready pile of fuel to warm their evening meal. My mother’s ceremony connected us to them, too.⁴⁵

How can you leave a place better, in a way that connects you with those who will come after you? Think of something you can do this week.

HONOR TRASH

Pick up a piece of litter while you are out and about, and place it in an honored place in your room. Contemplate it until you are able to see its beauty. See if you can find a new purpose for it.

Professor Sasha Adkins encourages her students to do this. She writes, “Of course, picking up one piece of litter won’t change our cityscape. But it can transform us. Some students find emotions surfacing that they were not expecting, such as a deep longing for reconciliation with estranged loved ones. If you are skeptical about the connection between throwing away a ‘to go’ cup and throwing away a relationship, I urge you to try it for yourself.”⁴⁶

GET TO KNOW YOUR WATERSHED

How can we love the earth as God does if we live distant from it? We must begin by becoming intimate with our surroundings. Getting acquainted with the word around us is part of how we love God and what God loves.

How can we carry this out in ever fuller ways in our daily lives? One way to start is to identify your watershed and consider how everything relates within this watershed. How are you part of this watershed ecology? Perhaps you want to draw a diagram to visualize these relationships. As you get to know your place and see yourself embedded in this local ecology, offer thanks to God—perhaps in a prayer or a song or a piece of art—for how he sustains you through the good gifts of creation.

BUY NOTHING FOR A WEEK (OR A MONTH, OR A YEAR!)

Many resources are available to help people reorient their relationship with the material world in a more respectful, non-commodifying way. One of these is the Buy Nothing Project.⁴⁷ The idea is to find ways to opt out of an economy that depletes and pollutes our planet, and instead forge a different economy based on sharing and generosity. Commit to buying nothing for a week or longer. Observe how some of your “needs” disappear. Or you may find different ways of meeting those needs, such as borrowing from a friend or finding something on sharing websites such as Freecycle.org. See this as an exercise in creativity and community, an invitation into God’s alternate, abundant kingdom economy.

Prayers

God, restore my perspective so that I will see you as Creator and Owner and myself as steward and servant, caring for your property in a faithful and reverent way. Amen.⁴⁸

*You delight in creation, its color and diversity; Yet we have misused the earth and plundered its resources for our own selfish ends. Lord have mercy.*⁴⁹

*Lord of creation, your world reveals your glory. Grant us eyes to see your glory in all that you have made, from the beauty of a sunset to the pattern of a snowflake. Give us minds to grasp something of your purposes in creation and the humility to take our place as co-workers serving you in your garden. Give us hearts to love you in loving all your works, and tenderness in nurturing life in all its fullness. Through Jesus Christ, who is alive with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. Amen.*⁵⁰

*God of the Universe,
you made the heavens and the earth,
so we do not call our home merely "planet earth."
We call it your creation, a divine mystery,
a gift from your most blessed hand.*

*The world itself is your miracle.
Bread and vegetables from earth are thus also from heaven.
Help us to see in our daily bread your presence.*

*Upon this garden may your stars rain down their blessed dust.
May you send rain and sunshine upon our garden and us.*

*Grant us the humility to touch the humus,
that we may become more human,
that we might mend our rift from your creation,
that we might then know the sacredness of the gift of life,
that we might truly experience life from your hand.*

*For you planted humanity in a garden
And began our resurrection in a garden.
Our blessed memory and hope lie in a garden.*

*Thanks be to God,
who made the world teeming with variety,
of things on earth, above the earth, and under the earth.*

*Thanks be to God
for the many kinds of plants, trees, and fruits
that we celebrate.*

*For the centipedes, ants, and worms,
for the mice, marmots, and bats,
for the cucumbers, tomatoes, and peppers,*

*we rejoice
that we find ourselves eclipsed by the magnitude
of generosity and mystery.*

*Thanks be to God.*⁵¹

Chapter 3 Reflections:

Chapter 4:

Ordinary Transformation

*Blessed are those whose strength is in you,
whose hearts are set on pilgrimage.*

*As they pass through the Valley of Baka,
they make it a place of springs;
the autumn rains also cover it with pools.*

*They go from strength to strength,
till each appears before God in Zion.*

– Psalm 84:5-7 (NIV)

After graduation, most college students are bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, ready to change the world. **We have studied the problems. We are eager to be part of the solution. And then, we run into real life.** Most of our time, we will realize, is spent doing ordinary things that every human needs to do to live: sleep, brush your teeth, put on clothes, wash your clothes, cook or procure food, eat, clean up your messes, cook or procure more food, eat, clean up, sleep, and so on and so forth. Even the most revolutionary, world-changing people spend most of their waking hours doing these things.

We could see these activities as hindrances—inconvenient physical necessities to slog through to get to the important parts of life. But perhaps it is in these mundane moments that the deep work of discipleship happens. **The late pastor Eugene H. Peterson called discipleship “a long obedience in the same direction,” but notes that we much prefer instant fixes and shortcuts** (“life hacks,” if you want to use today’s lingo). Our society has conditioned us to assume that “anything worthwhile can be acquired at once.”⁵²

Peterson wrote these words over forty years ago, but the mindset he describes has only intensified since then. Today, you can buy and sell stocks in minutes to gain tens of thousands of dollars, or compose a tweet of less than 280 characters and be launched to viral internet stardom. It’s easy to fall into the Tyranny of the Now. We

feel it from the moment we roll over in bed in the morning to check the endless notifications on our phones, to the moment we finally turn off our screens at night, maybe checking one last time to make sure we didn’t miss anything. **We are under constant pressure to catch up with The Latest New Thing.** We live with waves of FOMO: fear of missing out.

Amid this torrent of news, information, and status updates, we quickly lose our way. Everything seems important. Everyone seems to be shouting for our attention. **If we try to heed every call, our attention is sliced into a thousand tiny slivers and we end up giving nothing our full attention.** In fact, in the times when we are called to focus deeply—whether to pray or study or listen to the person in front of us – we find ourselves itching to check our phones. Our ability to concentrate has eroded.

It’s no surprise that more and more people are turning to practices of meditation and mindfulness; we are realizing the need to retrain our minds and hearts. **We are tired of being everywhere at once and nowhere at all. We long to be here.**

Meditation and mindfulness have their roots in eastern spiritual traditions, but within the Christian faith, many teachings point us in this same direction. **The contemplative and monastic traditions invite us into the ancient, tried-and-true practices of silence, solitude, and stillness.**⁵² They draw from biblical stories, such as the prophet Elijah’s encounter with God, who was not found in the wind, earthquake, or fire, but in “a sound of sheer silence” (1 Kings 19:11-18).

Perhaps the most compelling invitation comes from Jesus himself. Jesus started his public ministry when he was about thirty years old, but until then he lived in obscurity, doing the manual work of a carpenter, living with his family, immersed in everyday existence. Were these early years “wasted”? What was the Son of God doing as a regular human being? Why didn’t he reveal his divinity and perform wonders earlier?

Liturgy and Counter-Liturgy #4:
**God's work of transformation happens in the
ordinary moments of our lives.**

vs.

Life is only meaningful if it is new and stimulating.

Maybe these early years weren't pointless, but essential. The author of Hebrews writes that Jesus "learned obedience through what he suffered" (5:8), referring to the events leading up to and through his crucifixion. But if our lives are "a long obedience in the same direction," then Jesus must have been practicing obedience in small, unnoticed ways all the way up until those momentous days.

His ability to say yes to the cup of suffering set before him, which would lead us all to redemption, did not happen at once, but grew out of the many yeses he said to God throughout his life. Yes, I will obey my mother and father. Yes, I will forgive my siblings when they hurt me. Yes, I will serve my people with my hands and this wood. Yes, I will be faithful in these mundane moments of eating and washing and cleaning. Yes, and yes, and yes again. Yes, I will be baptized by my cousin John. Yes, I will go out into the wilderness. Yes, I will eat with sinners. Yes, I will heal the sick. Yes, I will offer myself up to die.

In each of our lives, we have a thousand small opportunities to say yes to God. And perhaps, one day, when we have learned to say yes countless times in seemingly insignificant matters, our hearts will be ready to hear the big question God asks of us, and we will be ready to say our yes. Or maybe there will be no big yes. Maybe the sum of our innumerable small yeses is enough, adding up to one big yes.

We can only start here and now, paying attention to how God invites us to transformation in the ordinary moments of our lives. "Everybody wants a revolution, but nobody wants to do the dishes," said Dorothy Day, the founder of the Catholic Worker movement. Or, to put it in ecological terms: "Everybody wants to save the planet, but nobody wants to pick up the trash."

Instead of being tourists in our own lives, taking pictures to show we were here or always looking for the new and stimulating, **we are called to the long, steady task of discipleship, or pilgrimage**, writes Peterson.⁵⁴ Pilgrims, as the psalmist depicts in the passage that opens this chapter, set their hearts on the long journey. They endure the valleys and dry spots, the places where nothing much seems to be happening. Because they have established a deep connection with God, forged through countless small yeses in prayer, silence, solitude, and service, they find springs of water, autumn rains, strength and refreshment—even in these desert places.

Can we, too, become pilgrims? Can we resist the pull to distraction and noise, to the voices that tell us we're only significant if we have likes and followers and a platform? Can we set our hearts and habits on the journey, knowing that it is long and arduous, often unseen and boring? "The gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life," Jesus said (Matt. 7:14). But take note: this is the path that leads to life.

Questions for Reflection

1. Who are your models for a life of significance? What makes their lives meaningful and significant? Imagine how these people live(d) in the ordinary moments of their lives.

2. This chapter suggests that constant digital distractions make it hard to engage in the deep work of discipleship. Do you agree? What aspects of digital technologies have helped you in your spiritual journey? What aspects of digital technologies have made it harder for you to grow?

3. Have you ever tried to be silent or still or turn off your phone for an extended period? What was the experience like? What emotions came up? How did the practice change your day, or your life?

4. Where do you sense God inviting you to say yes in your life? How are you responding to God? How can your community support you?

5. Reflect on your own pilgrimage with God. Identify some valleys, or dry spots, where nothing important seemed to be happening. Looking back, do you notice any spiritual growth from those times? What facilitated growth? What prevented growth? Maybe you are unsure and still processing, especially if you are recalling a season of pain or suffering. Consider processing with someone you trust.

Practices

THE WORD, INCARNATE

In worship services, a major element is reading Scripture aloud. When the Gospel books are read aloud in the Anglican tradition, the lector holds the book up high and walks into the center of the congregation to read it, signifying how God's Word came to be among us in flesh in the incarnation of Jesus (John 1:14). What would it look like to bring God's word into your everyday life? Perhaps you already read the Bible regularly, or maybe you feel an invitation from God to make this a regular practice. Some ways to start:⁵⁵

1. Get a daily devotional book or a book of liturgical readings, such as *The Book of Common Prayer* or *The Divine Hours* and use it regularly.⁵⁶
2. Read a morning Psalm, or spend a month reading a chapter a day of the gospel of Matthew, or a half-chapter a day of Romans.
3. Invite a friend to join you in memorizing a favorite passage of scripture, such as Psalm 23 or Isaiah 55.
4. Write scriptures on notecards and place them in visible places around your room or house.

FIVE MINUTES OF SILENCE

Silence is intimidating, but, as the prophet Elijah discovered, sometimes it is the only place where God can be found. Trying setting aside five minutes a day to be silent and still when you wake up first thing in the morning or before you go to bed at night. If you find yourself getting distracted and carried away by thoughts, gently return your attention to your breath and to the One who gives you breath. Earley writes, "Silence begins as a personal practice, but it always ends as public virtue . . . When we can't answer the question of who we are in silence, we can't answer it in public either."⁵⁷

MEDIA FASTING

It's true we need our phones and computers to conduct much of our daily lives. But at times they cease being conduits of connection and become conduits of disconnection, taking us away from the people and places right in front of us. Consider this invitation to media fasting as a way to resist the lure of your phone, of a constant online presence, so that you can be present in person. Possible practices:

1. Turn off your phone for an hour each day, perhaps right at the end of your work or study day, the last hour of the day, or an hour at work/school when you really need to concentrate.⁵⁸
2. Stay off social media on Sundays, or whatever day is your designated Sabbath.

Earley writes, "To resist absence is to love neighbor."⁵⁹

EMAIL MANAGEMENT⁶⁰

Think about your relationship with email in the morning and throughout the day and evening. What do you notice about your stress levels as you engage in email? (For example, does checking email first thing in the morning bring a dreaded task to mind that you spend the rest of your morning worrying about, even when you can't do anything about it?) Are there changes or adjustments you'd like to make to how you engage in email?

BREATH PRAYER

Prayer, like silence, can be intimidating, because we often don't know where or how to start. A simple way to start is with a breath prayer, which you can do at any point of the day when you feel overwhelmed, distracted, or aimless. As you focus on your inhale and exhale, utter one word or phrase, such as "Jesus, I love you" or "Creator, you sustain me." Remain with your breath until you feel more centered, and then carry on with the task at hand.

Prayers

Thanks be to thee, my Lord Jesus Christ, for all the pains and insults thou hast borne for me, and all the benefits thou hast given me. O most merciful Redeemer, Friend, and Brother: Grant that I may see thee more clearly, love thee more dearly, and follow thee more nearly, day by day. Amen.⁶¹

*Most High, all-powerful, all-good Lord,
All praise is Yours, all glory, all honor and all blessings.
To you alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no mortal lips are worthy to pronounce Your Name.
Praised be You my Lord with all Your creatures,
especially Sir Brother Sun,
Who is the day through whom You give us light.
And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor,
Of You Most High, he bears the likeness.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars,
In the heavens you have made them bright, precious and fair.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air,
And fair and stormy, all weather's moods,
by which You cherish all that You have made.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water,
So useful, humble, precious and pure.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night
and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.*

*Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister,
Mother Earth
who sustains and governs us,
producing varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.
Praise be You, my Lord, through those who grant pardon
for love of You and bear sickness and trial.
Blessed are those who endure in peace,
By You Most High, they will be crowned.
Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Death,
from whom no-one living can escape.
Woe to those who die in mortal sin!
Blessed are they She finds doing Your Will.
No second death can do them harm.
Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks,
And serve Him with great humility.⁶²*

Chapter 5:

Hope in Ecological Crisis

“For the creation waits in eager longing for the revealing of the children of God;

for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will

but by the will of the one who subjected it,

in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay

and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.”

– Romans 8:19-21

Since 1970, over 20 percent, or more than 280,000 square miles, of the Brazilian Amazon rainforest has been cleared, an area bigger than the state of Texas. Since 1979, 1.1 million square miles of sea ice has melted, more than four times the area of Texas. There are one-third fewer wild animals on this planet than there were just forty years ago.⁶⁵

What emotions come up as you read the above facts? Sadness, anger, frustration, determination, despair? Perhaps you want to care but are feeling compassion fatigue and numbness. Maybe you have some of activist Greta Thunberg’s fire and desire to take to the streets in protest, furious at the irresponsible actions of leaders of previous generations. Or maybe you feel swamped by more pressing demands in your own life and unable to give time and thought to these global issues. **Perhaps, as a Christian, you have also wondered, “What does the gospel have to do with the earth and its future?”**⁶⁶

In their book *Let Creation Rejoice: Biblical Hope and Ecological Crisis*, Jonathan Moo and Robert White describe a range of possible responses to our planet’s predicament, from “ignorance is bliss” and denial to problem-solving and despair.⁶⁷ Is there anything, they ask, that a biblical vision of God’s future can offer to the conversation?

The Bible warns us, Moo and White write, of the ways human behavior can harm the earth. The prophet Isaiah, for instance, observed: “The treaty is broken, its oaths are despised, its obligation is disregarded. The land mourns and languishes; Lebanon

is confounded and withers away; Sharon is like a desert; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their leaves” (33:8-9). But Moo and White add, **“the Bible also sets out clearly . . . the sure and certain hope that we have in Christ for restoration and a setting of all things right in the new creation.”**⁶⁸ We see promise of this throughout the Bible, especially in the writings of Isaiah, Paul (Romans 8), and the apostle John (Revelations).

Hoping for God’s renewal of creation can seem ridiculous and even dangerous, considering our present reality. It is obvious that humans have really screwed things up. **Doesn’t trusting that God will make everything right absolve us of responsibility to fix the problem ourselves?** Does it give us permission to sit back and do nothing, waiting for God to intervene?

Answering these questions takes us back to the first chapter of this workbook, titled “Who is at the Center?” **There is a real temptation, given the liturgies of our day, to believe that we humans are at the center.** We are, after all, living in the era of the Anthropocene—a geological age where humans have dominant influence over the climate and environment.

Liturgy and Counter-Liturgy #5:

Facing grave ecological challenges, we hope and act, anticipating God's restoration of heaven and earth.

vs.

We have damaged the earth beyond all repair OR we will save ourselves through technology.

Putting humans at the center of the story results in two possible outcomes. The first is despair: We are the main characters, and we've made such a mess. There's no way we can get ourselves out of this. We are doomed. The second is false optimism: *We are the main characters. We are clever and resourceful. Just as we found technological solutions to our earlier problems, with ingenuity we'll figure out how to reverse climate change and fix all our other ecological crises.*

We can feel the allure of both these responses. **But the God of the Bible calls us to something different: courage and hope.** Hope in the New Testament, Stephen Bouma-Prediger writes, "is centered on God, not us . . . The good future for which we hope rests on the person and work of Jesus Christ, not on our good works."⁶⁹

We believe that what God has started through creation and redeemed through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, God will also complete. **As we worship Christ in whom all things hold together (Col. 1:17) we find the courage to face our grim ecological realities and join him in bringing his kingdom to fruition on earth.** "It is above all in worship that we are enabled again to see our present in the light of God's future, to discover afresh our proper place within God's creation, and to find ourselves transformed by the renewing of our minds and hearts so that we can persevere in bearing faithful witness to the Lamb."⁷⁰

It starts with worship—putting God at the center so we can take our rightful place as servants, friends, and partners in God's work. Worship energizes us to endure the long and difficult road of obedience. We have seen God's beauty. We are with God's people. We know this is the road that leads to life.

Some of our worship will involve lament. There is a long biblical tradition of lament, including nearly one-third of the Psalms. In lament, we name what has gone wrong and voice our longing to God for things to be made right. In lament, we stare honestly at our suffering and at God's apparent lack of involvement. We hold God to his promises, writes J. Todd Billings, and in this way, lament and hope go hand in hand.⁷¹ **Lament—saying that things are not as they should be, paves the way for hope—anticipating that God will make things right.**

Worship also retrains our imagination. Our imaginations have been stunted by the liturgies of the day. The focus on human ingenuity or our tendency to highlight the worst news makes it almost impossible to imagine alternative futures where God's kingdom breaks through in new and surprising ways. **In worship, we tell ourselves God's stories, such as that of the Israelites crossing the Red Sea (Ex. 14) or Jesus' many acts of healing in the Gospels. We place ourselves within this larger story.** "Hope," Bouma-Prediger writes, "requires using our imagination to envision some good future, even if it transcends our traditional ways of thinking."⁷²

Worship, lament, and igniting our kingdom imaginations. Out of these postures we can begin to take wise and hopeful action. We have a realistic view of ourselves, not as the saviors of the planet, but as God's creatures, tasked to work with God to serve, protect, and restore his good earth. We are connected, by God's spirit, to the church and its many stories of faithful followers of Christ who have embodied hope in the face of dire circumstances, such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was executed by the Nazis in 1945, or Mother Teresa of Kolkata (previously called Calcutta), who faithfully served the poor in her city even when she felt only God's absence.

In worship we are connected to God himself, who grows in us the fruits of the spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22). **We are enabled, by regular practice of liturgies of restoration, to take our place in God's larger story, becoming living witnesses to God's kingdom in the now and yet to come.**

Questions for Reflection

1. How do you tend to respond to bad ecological news? What feelings and questions arise? What resources (or lack thereof) have you found within your faith to process these feelings and questions?

2. Discuss this statement by Moo and White: "Our view of the future can and does have a profound effect on how we engage with the present."⁷² How do you see this truth working out in the world? How does your own view of the future affect your actions today?

3. Does believing that God's good future is an unmerited gift that we cannot secure by our own efforts release us of responsibility to do all we can to work toward that good future today? How can we hold together both God's grace and human responsibility for the restoration of creation?

4. Feelings of despair and hopelessness are normal human responses to seemingly inevitable bad outcomes. How can we work through these feelings on our own and with others, and reach a place of wise and hopeful action? How can we sustain this action even when we don't see progress or things seem to be getting worse?

Practices

CORPORATE LAMENT

Some worshipping communities set aside time during service for confession, lament, and repentance. Liturgical churches also observe Advent and Lent as times to acknowledge our individual and corporate darkness and our need for a Savior.

Using the model of the Great Litany (found at www.bcponline.org/GreatLitany/Litany.html), write your own Great Litany for humans and the planet. Include prayers that name God's character and works, identify our ecological offenses, and seek forgiveness and restoration. Invite your friends or worshipping community to a corporate lament session and recite the litany together.

WRITE OUT YOUR PAIN⁷⁴

Journaling can be a helpful tool for processing. Though we may sometimes resist writing out painful feelings and thoughts, when we do, we often come to greater clarity on what is really bothering us. Journaling can also help us gain wisdom into appropriate next steps, or simply give us the courage to wait for God to show up in the pain.

Whether you are feeling despair about the environment or about something else, trying sitting down and writing it out. Do a brain dump, and keep writing for as long as you can. Challenge yourself to write for 15 minutes and see what comes. Then offer it to God.

MEDITATION: JESUS IN THE STORM⁷⁵

Read Mark 4:35-41, on Jesus calming the storm. Then put yourself in the boat. Where do you picture yourself? Can you rest like Jesus? Or are you distressed like the disciples?

Name the storms that distress you and reflect on where Jesus is. What is he doing? What do you need to tell him? Imagine how Jesus might be responding to you, and asking you to respond, in your most agonizing storms.

MAKE A SELF-CARE PLAN

Those of us who work toward God's kingdom on earth are on a long journey. We don't see quick results; it's easy to start ablaze with energy and ideas, and fizzle into burnout. We feel the weight of the world on our shoulders and the pressure to keep on working, even when we are tired and our bodies need care.

Jesus says that his yoke is easy and his burden is light. He invites us to find rest in him (Matt. 11:29-30). When we realize we are not the saviors, but he is, we can take the time to listen to our bodies and stop to take care of ourselves. This is not optional to kingdom work, but imperative.

Take the time now to list out the things that give you life, that nourish and sustain you. Maybe this is regular exercise, time outdoors, weekly Sabbath, reading novels, or taking baths. Keep this list in a safe place and refer back to it when you're feeling burned out and discouraged. And be sure to do some of the things on your list!

COLLECT SIGNS OF HOPE

"The growing discipline of restoration ecology is finding ways to help scarred land to heal and degraded habitats to be restored or created anew."⁷⁶ Au Sable Institute is part of this growing work. What other groups, initiatives, or projects give you hope? For some ideas, check out the resources in Appendix I. How can you join this good work?

Prayers

*Creator God, you made this earth and all its creatures to sing your praises.
We confess that our overuse of resources and our destruction of habitats is turning
creation's joyful music into the sound of mourning and the echo of silence.
Lord have mercy.⁷⁷*

*O gracious Father, you open your hand and fill all living things with plenteousness: Bless
the lands and waters, and multiply the harvests of the world; send forth your breath, and
renew the face of the earth; show your loving-kindness, that our land may yield its increase;
and save us from selfish use of what you provide, that the poor and needy may give
thanks to your Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.⁷⁸*

*The power of God, displayed in creation, fill you with grace to serve God in his world; The
peace of God, breathing in every living thing, enable you to spread God's peace wherever
you go; The love of God, which fills the universe, flow through you that you might reflect his
image, and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among
you and remain with you always. Amen. Go into God's world in peace to love and serve
the Lord in the name of Christ. Amen.⁷⁹*

Chapter 5 Reflections:

Appendix I: Suggested Outline of Vespers

We encourage you to use this sample liturgy with your church or small group. It includes elements that we've discussed in the workbook and which are part of many worship services. Feel free to insert different psalms, songs, readings, and prayers (including those in the workbook) and even offer some of your own prayers. This outline is meant to give structure to your time together, while also allowing freedom and creativity. You are by no means bound to this structure, but we hope it is a helpful starting point.

(In many liturgical services leaders will read the unbolded text and the people respond with the bolded text. We have indicated where this "call-and-response" could be implemented.)

INVITATION/WELCOME

"The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it; for he has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers."

— Psalm 24:1-2

SONG OR PSALM OF WORSHIP

(Option to read responsively)

Blessed is the one

who does not walk in step with the wicked

or stand in the way that sinners take

or sit in the company of mockers,

² but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,

and who meditates on his law day and night.

³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,

which yields its fruit in season

and whose leaf does not wither—

whatever they do prospers.

— Psalm 1:1-3

NEW TESTAMENT

(NT passage of choice)

CONFESSION

Leader: Let us humbly confess our sins to Almighty God.

People:

I confess to Almighty God,

And to you, my brothers and sisters,

That I have sinned through my own fault, in my thoughts and in my words,

In what I have done,

And in what I have failed to do;

And I ask you, my brothers and sisters,

To pray for me to the Lord our God.

or

Creator God, you made this earth and all its creatures to sing your praises.

We confess that our overuse of resources and our destruction of habitats is turning creation's joyful music into the sound of mourning and the echo of silence. Lord have mercy.

(Silence)

Leader: Forgiveness comes from God, and it is good to be told by a human voice that your sins are indeed washed away. God is zealous to find his people and make them whole. Know that you are forgiven and loved.

People: Amen.

DWELLING

(A time to share reflections on becoming people of restoration.)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

(Feel free to elaborate on these prayer prompts or insert prayers from the workbook and other sources.)

- For the preservation and healing of creation.
- For our capacity to serve the common good.
- For the commitment to do justice and show mercy.
- For the weak, the poor, the sick, and the vulnerable.
- For eyes to see God's work in the world around us.
- For courage and hope to become people of restoration.

(Following each request): **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: For what else do we pray?

(Time for spontaneous prayer requests)

PASSING THE PEACE

Leader: We are a people who seek reconciliation with one another and the restoration of relationships. Making peace is a daily action in our lives.

Leader: The Peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us greet another as a sign of God's peace.

(All may greet one another in the name of the Lord and offer a sign of peace.)

CLOSING PRAYER

O heavenly Father, you have filled the world with beauty. Open our eyes to behold your gracious hand in all your works; that rejoicing in your whole creation, we may learn to serve you with gladness; for the sake of him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING AND SENDING

The power of God, displayed in creation, fill you with grace to serve God in his world;

The peace of God, breathing in every living thing, enable you to spread God's peace wherever you go;

The love of God, which fills the universe, flow through you that you might reflect his image, and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

Go into God's world in peace to love and serve the Lord in the name of Christ. Amen.

SOURCES:

A Communion Service Celebrating God's Creation, A Rocha, <https://atyourservice.arocho.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/WWW-Order-of-Service-Biodiversity-Communion.pdf>.

The Book of Common Prayer, Anglican Liturgy Press, 2019.

Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals, Shane Claiborne, Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, and Enuma Okoro, Zondervan, 2010.

Appendix 2: Further Reading and Resources

BOOKS

Bread for the Resistance: 40 Devotionals for Justice People (InterVarsity Press, 2019), by Donna Barber

Earthkeeping and Character: Exploring a Christian Ecological Virtue Ethic (Baker Academic, 2020), by Steven Bouma-Prediger

For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision of Creation Care (Baker Academic, 2001, 2010), by Steven Bouma-Prediger

Be Kind to Yourself: Releasing Frustrations and Embracing Joy (InterVarsity Press, 2020), by Cindy Bunch

The Buy Nothing, Get Everything Plan: Discover the Joy of Spending Less, Sharing More, and Living Generously (Atria Books, 2020), by Liesl Clark and Rebecca Rockefeller

Green Revolution: Coming Together to Care for Creation (InterVarsity Press, 2009), by Ben Lowe

Doing Good Without Giving Up: Sustaining Social Action in a World That's Hard to Change (InterVarsity Press, 2014), by Ben Lowe

Let Creation Rejoice: Biblical Hope and Ecological Crisis (IVP Academic, 2014), by Jonathan A. Moo and Robert S. White

Disruptive Witness: Speaking Truth in a Distracted Age (InterVarsity Press, 2018), by Alan Noble

A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: Discipleship in an Instant Society (InterVarsity Press, 2019, 40th anniversary edition), by Eugene Peterson

Let Creation Rejoice: Biblical Hope and Ecological Crisis (IVP Academic, 2014), by Jonathan A. Moo and Robert S. White

Simplicity: The Freedom of Letting Go (Crossroad Publishing Company, 2004), by Richard Rohr

Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants (Milkweed Editions, 2013), by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Liturgy of the Ordinary: Sacred Practices in Everyday Life (InterVarsity Press, 2016), by Tish Harrison Warren

The Common Rule: Habits of Purpose for an Age of Distraction (InterVarsity Press, 2019), by Justin Whitmel Earley

GUIDES

The Wisdom Pyramid, by Brett McCracken. This visual offers a helpful way to balance our "media diet" and be wise about where we focus our attention in an age of information overload. www.brettmccracken.com/blog/2017/8/3/the-wisdom-pyramid

A Liturgy Audit, by Tish Harrison Warren. A list of questions to look more closely at the daily liturgies that are shaping who we are and what we love. www.ttf.org/a-liturgy-audit

ORGANIZATIONS

A Rocha is an international Christian organization that, "inspired by God's love, engages in scientific research, environmental education and community-based conservation projects." www.arocha-usa.org

Care of Creation is about pursuing a God-centered response to the environmental crisis. They think that the people who believe God made the world should be passionate about taking care of it. www.careofcreation.net

Circlewood, based in the Puget Sound region of the Pacific Northwest, seeks to accelerate the greening of faith through local work, their podcast Earthkeepers, and providing resources to the global faith community. www.circlewood.online

Evangelical Environmental Network "seeks to equip, inspire, disciple, and mobilize God's people in their effort to care for God's creation." The group Young Evangelicals for Climate Action is under this umbrella organization. www.creationcare.org and www.yecaction.org

Plant with Purpose is an international Christian nonprofit committed to holistic sustainable development through local empowerment, regenerative agriculture, reforestation, building economic resilience, and restoring relationships throughout all of creation. www.plantwithpurpose.org

Footnotes

- ¹ Tish Harrison Warren, *Liturgy of the Ordinary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2016), 28-29.
- ² Warren, 20.
- ³ All Bible quotes are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted.
- ⁴ Alan Noble, *Disruptive Witness: Speaking Truth in a Distracted Age* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2018), 56.
- ⁵ Noble, 56-57.
- ⁶ Shane Claiborne, *The Irresistible Revolution: Living as an Ordinary Radical* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006).
- ⁷ Noble, 80.
- ⁸ Noble, 95.
- ⁹ Warren, 30.
- ¹⁰ Justin Whitmel Earley, *The Common Rule: Habits of Purpose for an Age of Distraction* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019), 9.
- ¹¹ Earley, 37.
- ¹² Earley, 31-44.
- ¹³ Adapted from Cindy Bunch, *Be Kind to Yourself: Releasing Frustrations and Embracing Joy* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2020), 20.
- ¹⁴ Bunch, 20.
- ¹⁵ Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* (Minneapolis, MN: Milkweed Editions, 2013), 43.
- ¹⁶ *The Book of Common Prayer* (Huntington Beach, CA: Anglican Liturgy Press, 2019), 652-653.
- ¹⁷ "A Call to Prayer:" *Let All Creation Praise*, <https://sites.google.com/site/letallcreationpraise/liturgy/prayers>.
- ¹⁸ Hildegard of Bingen, "A Prayer of Awareness," *Let All Creation Praise*.
- ¹⁹ Earley, 97. Bolded type added.
- ²⁰ Luan Huska, *Hurting Yet Whole: Reconciling Body and Spirit in Chronic Pain and Illness* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2020), 105-106.
- ²¹ Sherry Turkle, *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age* (New York: Penguin Books, 2015), 142.
- ²² Sherry Turkle, "The Flight From Conversation," *The New York Times*, April 21, 2012, <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/22/opinion/sunday/the-flight-from-conversation.html>.
- ²³ Earley, 100.
- ²⁴ Henri Nouwen, "From Solitude to Community to Ministry: Jesus Established the True Sequence of Spiritual Work," *Christianity Today*, April 1, 1995, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/1995/spring/51280.html>.
- ²⁵ Warren, 117.
- ²⁶ Earley, 109.
- ²⁷ Earley, 109.
- ²⁸ Warren, 124.
- ²⁹ Shane Claiborne, Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, Enuma Okoro, *Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 542.
- ³⁰ *The Book of Common Prayer*, 646-647.
- ³¹ Jason S. Campbell (@jasonscampbell), Twitter post, February 1, 2021, <https://twitter.com/JasonSCampbell/status/1356378635779911680/>.
- ³² Steven Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision for Creation Care* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), xiv-xv.
- ³³ Steven Bouma-Prediger, *Earthkeeping and Character: Exploring a Christian Ecological Virtue Ethic* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 23-24.
- ³⁴ Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty*, 57-80.
- ³⁵ Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty*, 84-90.
- ³⁶ Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty*, 92.
- ³⁷ Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty*, 93-98.
- ³⁸ Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty*, 104-110.
- ³⁹ Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty*, 64.
- ⁴⁰ Sasha Adkins, "Plastic and the State of Our Souls," *Sojourners*, February 2020, <https://sojo.net/magazine/february-2020/poison-body-and-soul-plastics-spirituality>.
- ⁴¹ Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty*, 75.
- ⁴² Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, 30-31.
- ⁴³ Robin Wall Kimmerer, "The Serviceberry: An Economy of Abundance," *Emergence Magazine*, December 2020, <https://emergencemagazine.org/essay/the-serviceberry/>.
- ⁴⁴ Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, "The 7 Principles," <https://lnt.org/why/7-principles/>.
- ⁴⁵ Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass*, 35.
- ⁴⁶ Adkins, "Plastic and the State of Our Souls."
- ⁴⁷ The Buy Nothing, Get Everything Plan, www.buynothinggeteverything.com.
- ⁴⁸ Eugene H. Peterson, *Praying with the Psalms: A Year of Daily Prayers and Reflections on the Words of David* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993).
- ⁴⁹ A Rocha, *A Communion Service Celebrating God's Creation*, quoting from Common Worship: Times and Seasons, <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-10/gs1549-times%20and%20seasons%20and%20festivals%3A%20a%20report%20by%20the%20liturgical%20commission.pdf>.
- ⁵⁰ A Rocha, *A Communion Service Celebrating God's Creation*, quoting from A New Zealand Prayer Book, <https://anglicanprayerbook.nz/>.
- ⁵¹ Claiborne, Wilson-Hartgrove, and Okoro, *Common Prayer*, 561-562.
- ⁵² Eugene H. Peterson, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: Discipleship in an Instant Society*, 40th anniversary commemorative edition (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019), 10.
- ⁵³ See Kyriacos C. Markides, *The Mountain of Silence: A Search for Orthodox Spirituality* (New York: Image, 2002); Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation* (New York: New Directions, 1962); and Ruth Haley Barton, *Invitation to Solitude and Silence: Experiencing God's Transforming Presence* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2010).
- ⁵⁴ Peterson, *A Long Obedience*, 9-12.
- ⁵⁵ Earley, 92-94.
- ⁵⁶ Phyllis Tickle, *The Divine Hours* (New York: Doubleday, 2000). There are three volumes: *Prayers for Springtime*, *Prayers for Summertime*, and *Prayers for Autumn and Wintertime*.
- ⁵⁷ Earley, 74.
- ⁵⁸ Earley, 77.
- ⁵⁹ Earley, 77.
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- ⁶¹ Richard of Chichester, *Book of Common Prayer*, 672.
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- ⁶⁴ Moo and White, 58.
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- ⁶⁷ Moo and White, 17-18.
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- ⁶⁹ Bouma-Prediger, *Earthkeeping and Character*, 115-116.
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- ⁷² Bouma-Prediger, *Earthkeeping and Character*, 110.
- ⁷³ Moo and White, 18.
- ⁷⁴ Adapted from Bunch, *Be Kind to Yourself*, 39.
- ⁷⁵ Adapted from Bunch, *Be Kind to Yourself*, 40.
- ⁷⁶ Moo and White, 50.
- ⁷⁷ A Rocha, *A Communion Service Celebrating God's Creation*, <https://atyourservice.arocha.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/WWWWW-Order-of-Service-Biodiversity-Communion.pdf>.
- ⁷⁸ *The Book of Common Prayer*, 653.
- ⁷⁹ A Rocha, "The Dismissal," *A Communion Service Celebrating God's Creation*.



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