



*Seasons of Creation 2023:  
Let Justice and Peace Flow*

*But let justice flow like  
water, and integrity like an  
unfailing stream.*

*Amos 5:24 Jerusalem bible*

**Leader:**

**“A mighty river” is the symbol chosen to go with this theme, representing biodiversity at risk.**

“The prophet Amos cries out, “But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!” (Amos 5: 24), and so we are called to join the river of justice and peace, to take up climate and ecological justice, and to speak out with and for communities most impacted by climate injustice and the loss of biodiversity.”<sup>1</sup>

The quotes above are from the Season of Creation website. They call us to the urgent task of acting now to bring justice and peace into our rapidly dying world. We can’t ‘wait and see’ what happens. We can’t wait until tomorrow. We are called today to look, listen and act.

**Opening Hymn:** All Creatures of Our God and King CBW III # 543

**Opening Prayer:** All

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<sup>1</sup> <https://seasonofcreation.org/2023/03/03/we-are-launching-season-of-creation-2023-let-justice-and-peace-flow/>

O God, Creator and Sustainer of all living beings the beauty and goodness of your creation surround us. In your ever-unfolding creation, since the moment of the great flaring forth of your love, you have fashioned and cared for countless beings: sun, stars, moons, oceans, mighty rivers, and wandering streams, giraffes and raccoons, bears and bumblebees, carrots and kiwi fruit, great maples and tiny violets. Gracious, Gifting God, how wondrous and awesome your creation is!

**Leader:** As believers in the God of Life, we are called to listen to what God desires for creation in every time and place, including in our days and spaces. Joan Chittister says: “We begin to discover the sacred where we are and to create it for others so that all of life can be holy where we are.”<sup>2</sup>

**Reader 1:** A reading from the message of Pope Francis for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation: 1 September 2023

Dear brothers and sisters!

“Let Justice and Peace Flow” is the theme of this year’s ecumenical Season of Creation, inspired by the words of the prophet Amos: “Let justice flow on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream” (5:24).

The evocative image used by Amos speaks to us of what God desires. God wants justice to reign; it is as essential to our life as God’s children made in his likeness as water is essential for our physical survival. This justice must flow forth wherever it is needed, neither remaining hidden deep beneath the ground nor vanishing like water that evaporates before it can bring sustenance. God wants everyone to strive to be just in every situation, to live according to his laws and thus to enable life to flourish. When we “seek first the kingdom of God” (Mt 6:33), maintaining a right relationship with God, humanity and nature, then justice and peace can flow like a never-failing stream of pure water, nourishing humanity and all creatures.<sup>3</sup>

**Response - Psalm 117 - All:**

Alleluia! Praise the Lord, all you nations; glorify him all you peoples!

For steadfast is his kindness toward us, and the fidelity of the Lord endures forever.<sup>4</sup>

**Leader:** Indigenous peoples have been leaders in caring for the land, sea and life-communities in which they live because they saw that humans are reciprocally dependent on all life around

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<sup>2</sup> *Reflection on Giving New Life* by Joan Chittister in Cry Justice! Cry Hope! p. 23 by Joan Chittister, Beverley Bell and Women around the World Lent 2010

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2022/documents/20220716-messaggio-giornata-curacreato.html>

<sup>4</sup> Psalm 117 The New American Bible © 1970 by Benziger

them. We need to care for and give back in order to sustain all created life. Let us listen to Tumia Knott spalá' from the Kwantlen First Nation in British Columbia.

**Reader 2:**

I was told that our laws are a part of conducting ourselves in a good way in accordance with our values. Our laws were not written. Rather, they were taught and observed through being and doing things in community. They were passed down through generations embedded in culture and traditions, and understood as simply the way things worked, or *the way it is*, always with the consciousness of connection to our broader world view. In my community, our law *to take only what we needed from our precious sacred river* was a law of conservation and sustainability that ensured the salmon and other resources harvested from it could replenish and maintain balance for the seasons, our relatives up and downriver, other species and future generations.<sup>5</sup>

**Leader:** Beauty, strength, abundance and life are God's gifts. We humans fail to value and appreciate them. Let the following images speak to your heart. I will shortly invite you to share your reflections with someone near you. (Allow five minutes for silent reflection then invite sharing.)



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<sup>5</sup> The Way It Is – Our Growing and Necessary Re-Connection to Indigenous Laws by Tumia Knott, spalá' [https://www.firstpeopleslaw.com/public-education/blog/the-way-it-is-our-growing-and-necessary-re-connection-to-indigenous-laws?vgo\\_ee=i3tXQqgw7f5Gg99%2BXcCgDm00K%2FnIRmhMV%2FWPIWTMKY%3D](https://www.firstpeopleslaw.com/public-education/blog/the-way-it-is-our-growing-and-necessary-re-connection-to-indigenous-laws?vgo_ee=i3tXQqgw7f5Gg99%2BXcCgDm00K%2FnIRmhMV%2FWPIWTMKY%3D)

## **Leader 2:**

The response to the petitions is: **Lord, have mercy on us all.**

For the mindless pollution of the mighty river of life in all its forms, we pray. R.

For the ways we have destroyed the beauty and vitality of creation, we pray. R

For our failure to see how interconnected and interdependent we humans are on all life around us and on each other, we pray. R

## **Closing Prayer: All**

O God, Creator and Sustainer of all life, we remember the promise you spoke through your prophet, Ezekiel, in his vision of the great river flowing from the temple. The earth is your temple. The river of life, justice and peace flows from it and through it. Ezekiel spoke of the fruitfulness and abundance of the river, saying: "Along both banks of the river, fruit trees of every kind shall grow; their leaves shall not fade, nor their fruit fail. Every month they shall bear fresh fruit, for they shall be watered by the flow from the sanctuary. Their fruit shall serve as food, and their leaves for medicine." <sup>6</sup>

May we care for and protect the sacred river of your creation. Amen

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<sup>6</sup> Ezekiel 47:12 The New American Bible ©by Benziger

Images: mighty river channeled through rocks by thiva -unsplash

Polluted river: Ospan Ali: <https://unsplash.com/photos/tR1jDlcE1-Q>

Waterfalls by Cedric Letsch: [https://unsplash.com/photos/7Ew3m\\_d75Os](https://unsplash.com/photos/7Ew3m_d75Os)