Older versions have more script.

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**Big Green Week**

**Sunday 8 June 2025**

**Greeting:**

O God, make speed to save us.

**O Lord, make haste to help us.**

Send forth your Spirit, O Lord

**and renew the face of the earth.**

**Hymn 184:** For the beauty of the earth

Introduction Prayer

Great God, your Word and the Earth brought forth plants yielding seed and trees of every kind bearing fruit. The rivers, mountains, minerals, seas and forests sustained life. The eyes of all looked to You to satisfy the needs of every living thing. And throughout time the Earth has sustained life. Through the planetary cycles of days and seasons, renewal and growth, you open your hand to give creatures our food in the proper time.

In your Wisdom, you granted a Sabbath; a blessed time to rest in gratitude for all that you have given; a time to liberate ourselves from vicious consumption; a time to allow the land and all creatures to rest from the burden of production.

But these days our living pushes the planet beyond its limits. Our demands for growth, and our never-ending cycle of production and consumption are exhausting our world. The forests are leached, the topsoil erodes, the fields fail, the deserts advance, the seas acidify, the storms intensify.

We have not allowed the land to observe her Sabbath, and the Earth is struggling to be renewed. As we mark our concerns for climate change today, we ask you to grant us courage to observe a Sabbath for our planet. Strengthen us with the faith to trust in your providence. Inspire us with the creativity to share what we have been given. Teach us to be satisfied with enough. And as we speak out for climate change, send Your Holy Spirit to renew the face of creation. In the name of the One who came to proclaim good news to all creation, Jesus Christ.

**Amen**

**Prayers of Penitence:**

We confess our sin, and the sins of our society,

in the misuse of God’s creation

God our Father, we are sorry for the times when we have used your gifts carelessly and acted ungratefully.

Father, in your mercy: **forgive us and help us.**

We enjoy the fruits of the harvest,

but sometimes forget that you have given them to us.

Father, in your mercy: **forgive us and help us.**

We belong to a people who are full and satisfied,

but ignore the cry of the hungry.

Father, in your mercy: **forgive us and help us.**

We are thoughtless, and do not care enough for the environment and the world you have made.

Father, in your mercy: **forgive us and help us.**

Glorious God,

The whole of creation proclaims your marvellous work:

Increase in us a capacity to wonder and delight in it,

That heaven’s praise may echo in our hearts

And our lives be spent as good stewards of the earth,

Through Jesus Christ our Lord

**Amen**

**Hymn 450:** Morning has broken.

# **Psalm 104 (**This celebration of the God of creation sees the Earth in all its wonder as God’s handiwork.)

Praise the Lord, my soul.

Lord my God, you are very great;  
you are clothed with splendour and majesty.

The Lord wraps himself in light as with a garment;  
he stretches out the heavens like a tent  
and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters.

He makes the clouds his chariot  
and rides on the wings of the wind.  
He makes winds his messengers,   
flames of fire his servants.

He set the earth on its foundations;  
it can never be moved.  
You covered it with the watery depths as with a garment;  
the waters stood above the mountains.  
But at your rebuke the waters fled,  
at the sound of your thunder they took to flight;  
they flowed over the mountains,  
they went down into the valleys,  
to the place you assigned for them.  
You set a boundary they cannot cross;  
never again will they cover the earth.

He makes springs pour water into the ravines;  
it flows between the mountains.  
They give water to all the beasts of the field;  
the wild donkeys quench their thirst.  
The birds of the sky nest by the waters;  
they sing among the branches.  
He waters the mountains from his upper chambers;  
the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work.  
He makes grass grow for the cattle,  
and plants for people to cultivate—  
bringing forth food from the earth:  
wine that gladdens human hearts,  
oil to make their faces shine,  
and bread that sustains their hearts.

Music

The trees of the Lord are well watered,  
the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.  
There the birds make their nests;  
the stork has its home in the junipers.  
The high mountains belong to the wild goats;  
the crags are a refuge for the hyrax.

He made the moon to mark the seasons,  
and the sun knows when to go down.  
You bring darkness, it becomes night,  
and all the beasts of the forest prowl.

The lions roar for their prey  
and seek their food from God.

The sun rises, and they steal away;  
they return and lie down in their dens.  
Then people go out to their work,  
to their labour until evening.

How many are your works, Lord!  
In wisdom you made them all;  
the earth is full of your creatures.  
There is the sea, vast and spacious,  
teeming with creatures beyond number—  
living things both large and small.  
There the ships go to and fro,  
and Leviathan, which you formed to frolic there.

Music

All creatures look to you  
to give them their food at the proper time.  
When you give it to them,  
they gather it up;  
when you open your hand,  
they are satisfied with good things.  
When you hide your face,  
they are terrified;  
when you take away their breath,  
they die and return to the dust  
When you send your Spirit, they are created,  
and you renew the face of the ground.

May the glory of the Lord endure forever;  
may the Lord rejoice in his works—  
he who looks at the earth, and it trembles,  
who touches the mountains, and they smoke.

I will sing to the Lord all my life;  
I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.  
May my meditation be pleasing to him,  
as I rejoice in the Lord.  
But may sinners vanish from the earth  
and the wicked be no more.

For the Word of the Lord, **thanks be to God**.

Homily

Psalm 104 is a song of praise bursting with wonder at the power, beauty, and order of God’s creation. From the heavens to the oceans, from the animals in the field to the birds in the sky, every element of creation bears witness to the greatness of God. This psalm is not merely a reflection on nature—it is a deep expression of worship from someone who sees the Creator’s fingerprints everywhere.

In our modern world, filled with distractions, concrete, and artificial light, it is easy to forget the rhythms and majesty of the natural world. Psalm 104 calls us to pause, look around, and recognize that creation itself is a sermon—preaching the glory of God.

So what does Psalm 104 teach us today?

This psalm invites us to open our eyes. Look at the trees, the stars, the oceans, and the animals. Every part of creation is a testimony to the glory of God. Don’t miss the sacred in the ordinary. Take time to walk, to listen, to notice—and let that lead you to praise.

If God feeds the lions, if He gives water to the donkeys and birds a place to nest, won’t He care for you? Jesus echoes this in Matthew 6:26—“Look at the birds of the air... your heavenly Father feeds them.” You can trust the God who provides for His creation to provide for you.

Conclusion

Psalm 104 is more than a nature poem—it’s a theology of creation and a call to worship. It reminds us that God is not only the Creator of the universe but also its maintainer. Today, and every day, let us echo the psalmist’s words: “Bless the Lord, O my soul! Praise the Lord!” Amen.

**Hymn 6:** All creatures of our God and King

**Revelation 22:1-2**

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

**Sermon**

Text: Revelation 22:1-2

*“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.”*

As the Bible draws to a close, God gives us one final picture—a vision of life, abundance, and healing. The last chapter of Revelation doesn’t end in destruction or chaos, but with hope, restoration, and a promise of eternal communion with God. Revelation 22:1-2 paints a scene that connects the beginning of Scripture with its end—a paradise restored.

These two simple verses give us a window into the heart of God’s plan: to bring life where there was death, to bring healing where there was brokenness, and to dwell among His people forever.

1. A River from the Throne

This river flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It’s a divine source, not something man-made or polluted by the world. This reminds us that true life, spiritual energy come only from God. Just as the rivers nourished the Garden of Eden in Genesis, this river sustains the New Jerusalem.

2. Clear as Crystal

The clarity of the water speaks to its purity. There is no abuse, no hidden danger, no fear of what’s beneath the surface. It is completely transparent—reflecting the nature of God’s presence, nothing hidden, everything holy.

II. The Tree of Life

On each side of the river stood the tree of life, a direct reference to Eden..

In Genesis 3:24, Adam and Eve are expelled from the garden and prevented from eating from the tree of life. That tree represented the eternal life that sin had now made inaccessible. But here in Revelation 22, the tree reappears—not guarded, but gloriously available.

It signifies that through Christ, what was lost in Eden is now restored. The presence of the tree shows that life in God’s eternal city is not temporary, not uncertain—it is everlasting.

Perhaps the most striking part of this vision is the last phrase: “And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.”

This tells us that the healing work of God is not limited to individuals or even one nation. The nations—once divided by language at Babel, at war with each other throughout history—are now healed. The conflicts, wounds, and scars of humanity are gone. This is a vision of reconciliation, not only between God and man but between all peoples.

So what does this heavenly vision mean for us today?

Revelation 22:1-2 is a vision not just of a future paradise, but of the faithfulness of God—a God who finishes what He starts. He began with a garden and ends with a city. He started with a tree and ends with a tree of life open to all.

Amen.

**Affirmation of Faith**

We say together in faith

**Holy, holy, holy**

**is the Lord God almighty,**

**who was, and is, and is to come.**

We believe in God the Father,

who created all things:

**for by his will they were created**

**and have their being.**

We believe in God the Son,

who was slain:

**for with his blood,**

**he purchased us for God,**

**from every tribe and language,**

**from every people and nation.**

We believe in God the Holy Spirit:

**the Spirit and the Bride say, ‘Come**

**Even so come, Lord Jesus!**

**Amen.** *cf Revelation 4.8,11; 5.9; 22.17, 20*

**Hymn 900:** Think of a world without any flowers

**Prayers**

**Intercessions**

In peace let us pray to the Father, through the Son and in the power of the Holy Spirit, who make, sustain, and renew all things.

Heavenly Father, with the dawn of each day, may we be awakened to the beauty of the earth and rejoice in the wonder and diversity of creation in all its forms and colour.

Lord hear us, **Lord graciously hear us.**

Lord of life, as all living things depend on the good quality of the air, the soil and water, may your wisdom guide us as we care for the environment.

Deliver us from selfishness and greed and help us to share the rich resources of this world gladly and justly.

Lord hear us, **Lord graciously hear us.**

Lord of mercy, we bring before you areas affected by chronic shortage of water and pray for those suffering as a result of drought or the lack of safe water to drink.

We pray for those suffering from the effects of extreme weather and whose environment has been damaged by cyclones, floods or destructive wildfires.

Lord hear us, **Lord graciously hear us.**

Lord of the universe, you have made us from the stuff of the earth, and to earth we shall return.

May we tread lightly upon this earth and succeed in the innovation and development of sources of renewable energy and green technology.

By your grace, may we live our days wisely, live sustainably, and at the last come with all your saints to enjoy creation made new.

Merciful father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen**

**Lord’s Prayer**



Our Father who art in heaven

**You are also at home in the air, soil, forests and oceans.**

Hallowed be your name.

**By the care we take of your creation**

Your kingdom come.

**All that you see is good.**

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

**Your will to till and to care.**

Give us this day our daily bread**.**

**That all may have sufficient to live life in fullness.**

Forgive us our trespasses.

**Our greed, our exploitation, our lack of concern for other species and for future generations.**

As we forgive those who trespass against us

**by reconciliation with justice and peace**

Lead us not into temptation.

**The temptation to equate dominion with exploitation**

And deliver us from evil.

**the evil of destroying your gift of creation**

For yours is the Kingdom.

**Yours, Lord, not ours**

**The power and the glory**

In the cross and resurrection, you were the beginning and you are the end.

**For ever and ever**

Amen

**So be it.**

**Hymn 249:** Great is thy faithfulness

**Closing Prayer**

You asked for my hands that you might use them for your purpose,

**I gave them for a moment, then withdrew them, for the work was hard.**

You asked for my mouth to speak out against injustice.

**I gave you a whisper that I might not be accused**.

You asked for my life that you might work through me.

**I gave a small part that I might not get too involved**.

At Hemblington we are committed to living in greater harmony with the earth. Our churchyard is a tranquil, green oasis – but we know that there is more we need to do if we are to play our part in addressing the challenges of the climate emergency.

**Blessing**

May God the Holy Spirit, who hovered over the waters of creation and formed the world from chaos, form us in the likeness of Christ and renew the face of the earth.

And the blessing of God almighty,

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

be among you and remain with you always.

**Amen.**

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