

# Touch the Earth Lightly

## Session 3: Water

### Materials Needed

- Photographic backdrop paper – Order online: Savage seamless pure white #66 roll (The paper comes in different sizes)
- Blue beaded curtain - Blue beaded curtains: [www.shopwildthings.com](http://www.shopwildthings.com)
- Baptismal Banner pattern purchased from Ellen Cavendish Phillips - [www.ellenphillipsartist.com](http://www.ellenphillipsartist.com)
- Xacto knives and large size self-healing mats
- Banner pole
- Bolts of various ribbons in the color and shades of blue, green, silver iridescent, teal. Make sure the ribbons are different widths as well.
- Large plastic bowl to hold water
- Large pitcher of water

### Gathering Activity

Play this music video while everyone is assembling and working on their activities.

<https://youtu.be/CCaTi1Rf9uo>

- Continue folding origami peace cranes
- Collect pictures of creation taken on cellphones as people are gathering (or ahead of time). Examples: sunset, animals, insects, trees, flowers. Have someone receive these during the session to
- Cut out a Baptism paper lace banner to use in worship on Baptism Sundays
  - At two 8' tables put together, put the Baptism banner on the photographic backdrop paper and cut out the pattern using the Xacto knives
  - Take the beaded curtain and attached it to the banner pole using pipe cleaners
  - Hang the paper lace over the banners

### Opening Prayer

Leader: The Lord be with you!

People: **And also with you!**

Leader: Please repeat this prayer and these motions after me.

**May God be in my mind** (using your right hand, touch middle of forehead)

**May Jesus be in my heart** (using your right hand, touch middle of chest)

**May the Holy Spirit be by my side** (using your right hand first touch the left shoulder, then the right shoulder.)

**Amen!**

### **Song – Touch the Earth Lightly (Stanza 3)**

*Let there be greening,  
birth from the burning,  
water that blesses and air that is sweet,  
health in God's garden,  
hope in God's children,  
regeneration that peace will complete.*

### **Call to Worship/Opening Sentences/Gathering Litany**

Leader: We invite the rivers to worship with us:

**People: the Mississippi, the Hudson,  
and all the rivers that flow to the sea.**

Leader: We invite the streams to sing:

**People: perch, sunfish, and flashing bass,  
trout streams and gleaming fountains.**

Leader: We invite the fauna to praise God with us:

**People: loon, heron, and mallard duck,  
dragonflies and sleepy tortoises.**

Leader: We join with the waters in praising God:

**People: waterfalls singing upstream and ripples  
dancing at the river mouth.**

Leader: We celebrate the song of the river!

**People: Sing, river, sing!**

### **Opening Song**

SONG OF THE WATERS – LAUDA ANIMA (Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven)

*Watch once more the windswept storm clouds;  
Suddenly the sky has wings!  
God has come to rain among us,  
Giving hope to all dry things.  
Sing a song of splashing waters,  
Pulsing through the veins of Earth.*

*Taste the moisture of the morning,  
Smoother than the best red wine;  
Toast the lifeblood of the planet:  
Here's to God's great vast design!  
Sing a song of flowing waters,  
Pulsing through the veins of Earth.*

*View anew the dark blue ocean,  
Whales cavorting, spraying foam;  
God at play with deep sea monsters,  
Feeling very much at home.  
Sing a song of laughing waters,  
Pulsing through the veins of Earth.*

*Feel the breath of God move softly,  
Gentle mists that brush the skin;  
Earth is breathing God's own spirit,  
Life renewed from deep within.  
Sing a song of living waters,  
Pulsing through the veins of Earth.*

Words: © Norman Habel 2001

## Scripture

### Psalm 104 1-14 from *The Message*

*(Have a large plastic bowl and a large pitcher of water and invite different people to pour water into the bowl as you read about water).*

O my soul, bless GOD!  
You blanketed earth with ocean,  
covered the mountains with deep waters; *(pour water) - child*  
Then you roared and the water ran away—  
your thunder crash put it to flight.  
Mountains pushed up, valleys spread out  
in the places you assigned them.  
You set boundaries between earth and sea;  
never again will earth be flooded.  
You started the springs and rivers, *(pour water) - youth*  
sent them flowing among the hills.  
All the wild animals now drink their fill, *(pour water) - adult*  
wild donkeys quench their thirst.  
Along the riverbanks the birds build nests, *(pour water) - child*  
ravens make their voices heard.  
You water the mountains from your heavenly cisterns; *(pour water) - adult*  
earth is supplied with plenty of water.  
You make grass grow for the livestock,  
hay for the animals that plow the ground.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Word.

## Thanks be to God.

*(let all the children take turns to put their hands in the bowl and let the water run through their fingers)*

Greet someone and say the name of the person: John, Miriam, Anne, Charlie, Linda, etc. and say: **Julie, Beloved Child of God, remember your baptism and be thankful. Amen.**

And now let me tell you a story.

### Reflection/Proclamation/Story

#### TIDDALIK THE GREEDY FROG



Once upon a time there lived a big frog called Tiddalik. Tiddalik, the frog was thirsty. Because he was so big and so thirsty, he started to drink the rain which fell from the sky. He just opened his mouth as wide as he could. From that time onwards all the rain was drunk by Tiddalik. But this was not enough. He was still very thirsty so he looked at the pools, the rivers, the streams. He wanted more and more water. Then he drank. Even when he was full, he kept on drinking and drinking. Every last drop of sweet fresh water on earth was drunk by Tiddalik. He became a very big frog as big as a mountain. When he walked he crushed trees and plants under his enormous webbed feet.

Then the animals began to notice that something strange was happening. The plants and the trees were dying of thirst. The drought was killing everything and the animals were beginning to starve.

But Tiddalik was growing bigger and bigger.

The animals called a meeting to discuss what they could do. Some said that Tiddalik was far too big and powerful, he would never give the water back. Others said that it was all just too terrible and they wanted to give up and die.

Then a wise owl spoke. He took a step forward into the circle of animals and said “I have an idea. We must go to Tiddalik and persuade him to give our water back. Surely he will hear our cry and spout the water out of his mouth”. The animals agreed with owl. This was a good idea. They could try to make Tiddalik give the water back. But he was such a bad-tempered frog that they were scared.

They went to the place where Tiddalik lived. He didn't even look at the animals, he just sat with his huge swollen stomach. First the Lion roared – “Give us back our water”. And all the animals said **“please Tiddalik we are so thirsty please give us our water back.”** Have everyone repeat after you.

But Tiddalik was so huge that he just looked down his nose at lion. He wasn't afraid of him. The rabbit came up and said please Mister Tiddalik we are so hungry and thirsty all the plants have died. And all the animals said "**please Tiddalik we are so thirsty please give us our water back**". Have everyone repeat after you.

But Tiddalik just turned his head away. The porcupine came up and said "give us back our water or I will poke you with my spines". And all the animals said "**please Tiddalik we are so thirsty please give us our water back**". Have everyone repeat after you.

But Tiddalik just looked down from his huge height and said nothing. He wasn't afraid of those tiny little spines. And then the chimpanzee came up, and he didn't say anything at all, he began a dance, he danced like a crazy monkey and made funny faces (ask everyone to do the same). And far away up at the corner of his mouth Tiddalik's lip began to tremble. The chimpanzee stood on his head and waved his toes and Tiddalik's eyes began to gleam with pleasure. He held his belly for he did not want to laugh. And then suddenly he was laughing "ho,ho, ho" and as he laughed, all the waters of the world gushed out. Big streams of clear beautiful water. The water soaked into the earth and the plants began to grow again and the animals were happy

### **Follow up discussion:**

Is water free? That has been our attitude for so long that we think nothing of taking long showers, watering our lawns, washing our cars with a hose, leaving the tap running etc. But in many places clean water is becoming scarce and expensive. Imagine not having enough water to drink or having to worry about deadly diseases in your water supply. Those are problems many people face.

Our rivers and lakes are being polluted by garbage and by poisonous chemicals that are being dumped into them from factories, and from mines. We also need a lot of water to grow our food. If we are greedy like Tiddalik with water there will not be enough for others.

### **Sending/Challenge**

Distribute copies of the handout: "What Can I do to Help?"

### **Focus Activity**

- Weave together blue, green, teal, white silver ribbons to make paraments for the pulpit, lectern, and communion table.
- Create a small individual banner (each ribbon represents a river, lake, ocean) – and hang it on a chop stick as a symbol for clean water, preservation?



### Focus Activity

- Create Haikus – a Japanese poem of seventeen syllables in three lines of 5, 7, 5 evoking images of Water

#### Example:

Beautiful Water  
Claim us a child of God  
Quench our thirst for love.

### Closing Prayer

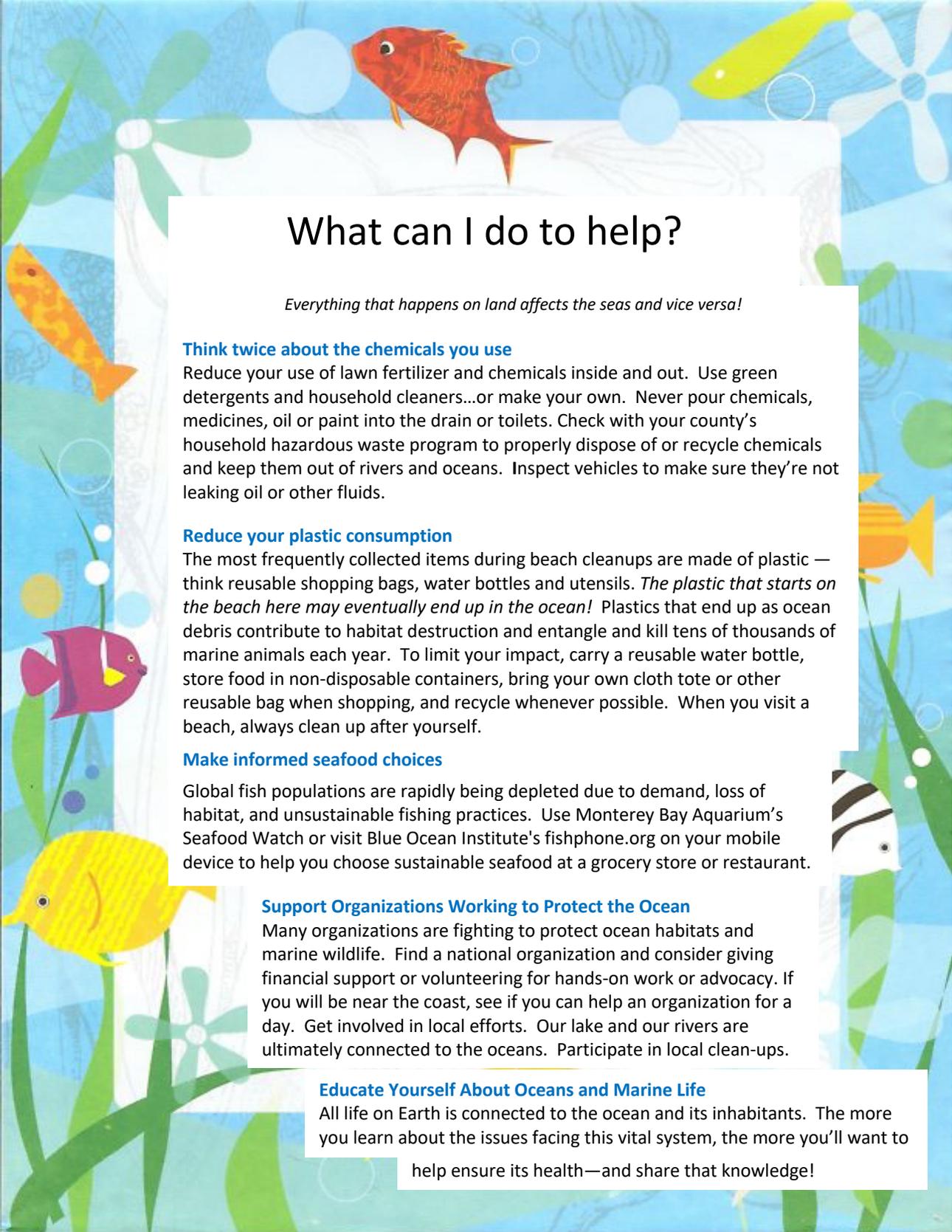
Leader: Christ calls you to be his disciples,  
to serve him with love and compassion,  
to serve Earth by caring for creation  
to serve by caring for all creatures.

Hold again the symbol in your hands  
and go forth to serve.  
Will you care for creation?

**People:**     **We will care for the ocean!**  
                  **We will nurture our planet!**  
                  **We will care for one another!**  
                  **We will celebrate life!**

### **Closing Song**

Show creation photography taken by members of the congregation during the singing of  
*All Things Bright and Beautiful*



## What can I do to help?

*Everything that happens on land affects the seas and vice versa!*

### **Think twice about the chemicals you use**

Reduce your use of lawn fertilizer and chemicals inside and out. Use green detergents and household cleaners...or make your own. Never pour chemicals, medicines, oil or paint into the drain or toilets. Check with your county's household hazardous waste program to properly dispose of or recycle chemicals and keep them out of rivers and oceans. Inspect vehicles to make sure they're not leaking oil or other fluids.

### **Reduce your plastic consumption**

The most frequently collected items during beach cleanups are made of plastic — think reusable shopping bags, water bottles and utensils. *The plastic that starts on the beach here may eventually end up in the ocean!* Plastics that end up as ocean debris contribute to habitat destruction and entangle and kill tens of thousands of marine animals each year. To limit your impact, carry a reusable water bottle, store food in non-disposable containers, bring your own cloth tote or other reusable bag when shopping, and recycle whenever possible. When you visit a beach, always clean up after yourself.

### **Make informed seafood choices**

Global fish populations are rapidly being depleted due to demand, loss of habitat, and unsustainable fishing practices. Use Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch or visit Blue Ocean Institute's fishphone.org on your mobile device to help you choose sustainable seafood at a grocery store or restaurant.

### **Support Organizations Working to Protect the Ocean**

Many organizations are fighting to protect ocean habitats and marine wildlife. Find a national organization and consider giving financial support or volunteering for hands-on work or advocacy. If you will be near the coast, see if you can help an organization for a day. Get involved in local efforts. Our lake and our rivers are ultimately connected to the oceans. Participate in local clean-ups.

### **Educate Yourself About Oceans and Marine Life**

All life on Earth is connected to the ocean and its inhabitants. The more you learn about the issues facing this vital system, the more you'll want to help ensure its health—and share that knowledge!

## Additional Resources

### Hymns

Baptized in Water  
By the Waters of Babylon  
Crashing Waters at Creation  
Ho, All Who thirst  
I've Got Peace Like a River  
Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore  
Our of Deep, Unordered Water  
Shall We Gather at the River  
Take Me to the Water  
Wash, O God, Your Sons and Daughters  
We Know That Christ Is Raised  
You Thirsty Ones, Come  
You Walk Along Our Shoreline

### Call to Worship

Leader:

In the name of the Spirit of God  
who hovered over the primal waters.  
In the name of the Word of God  
who parted the waters for Earth to appear.  
In the name of the Wisdom of God,  
who filled the deep with amazing designs. Amen.

**People:**

**Holy! Holy! Holy!**

**The oceans are filled with God's presence.**

Leader:

Christ, we come into your presence,  
today, to worship in this sanctuary called Earth.

**People:**

**Holy! Holy! Holy!**

**Earth is filled with your presence.**

Or

God of creation,  
we give thanks for the goodness of the earth  
that you made and sustain.

**Our voices join in praise with all creation:  
with the sea that roars,  
the trees that clap their hands,  
and the birds that sing in joy.**

Unite us by your Spirit,  
that we may be signs of your abundant mercy  
and live in thanksgiving for your grace,  
as we wait for the completion of your creation  
in Jesus Christ.

**Let us worship the God of the waters.**

**Closing Prayer**

**Jesus Christ, teach us to empathize with Earth.  
Make our spirits sensitive to the cries of creation,  
cries for justice from the land, the seas, and the skies.  
Jesus Christ, make our faith sensitive  
to the groans of the Spirit in creation,  
groans of longing for a new creation.  
Jesus Christ, make our hearts sensitive  
to the songs of our kin, songs of celebration from the sea,  
the forest, and the air. Christ, teach us to care. Amen.**

Or

Leader:  
May the Spirit of God,  
who is above all and in all and through all,  
fill you with the knowledge of God's presence in Earth  
and the pulsing of Christ within you.

Go in peace!  
Serving Christ and loving Earth!

**People:  
We go in peace,  
serving Christ  
and loving Earth.**

Or

**Beloved people of God,  
our baptism is the sign and seal  
of our cleansing from sin,  
and of our being grafted into Christ.  
Through the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ,  
the power of sin was broken  
and God's kingdom entered our world.**

**Through our baptism we were made citizens of God's kingdom,  
And freed from the bondage of sin.  
Let us celebrate that freedom and redemption  
Through the renewal of the promises made at our baptism.**