



## AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE VOICES OF CREATION AND SALVATION

Written for the European Churches Environment Network Assembly Opening Worship - Sweden, September 2006. The themes was **ENERGY**.

The voice for narrator should be centrally located within the worship space – ideally with people facing inwards to a central focal point combining cross, icons, placed alongside a bowl of water, a bowl of leaves, green branches etc. The voices for creation and slavation should begin at opposite ends of the room and end up standing next to the central symbols.

**Narrator** Excuse me, You, over there in the distance. Who are you? I can only just see you.

**The voice of Creation** I am the **energy of creation**, born out of the nature of love that longs to create the Other and to give that Other – which is creation – its own beauty, creativity, potential and freedom,

**Narrator** Excuse me, You, over there in the distance. Who are you?

**The voice of Salvation** I am the **energy of salvation**, born of the nature of love that longs to redeem the broken beauty, the cramped creativity, the purposeless potential and fraught freedom of the Other – which is the whole of creation.

**Narrator** And what is your energy?

**The voice of Creation** You would know it only as the light which enlightens everyone who comes into the world. The light that is both wave and particle. The light that transforms all things. The light that creates the conditions for life. The light that is the Word of Life and calls others to be creative in their co-creating.

**The voice of Salvation** You would know it only as the light that shines in the dark. The light that cannot be overcome by the dark. The light that shines from within. The light that gives light and is the Word of life. The light of Emmanuel.

**Narrator** So you are the energy and light of creation?

**The voice of Creation** Yes

**Narrator** And you are the energy and light of salvation?

**The voice of Salvation** Yes.

**Narrator** So how is that you two have grown so far apart and now only talk to each other from such a great distance?

**The voice of Creation** We have been talking to each other with one voice from the very beginning.

**The voice of Salvation** It is you that have kept us apart in your doctrines, dogmas and dualisms, in your vision and values, in your aspirations and attitudes, above all in your religion and rituals.

**The voice of Creation** For we are one and the church has separated us. Some who seek for salvation and celebrate its story in Christ turn their back on creation and its goodness. They have forgotten that, through Christ, all things came into existence.

**The voice of Salvation** Those who seek to understand and celebrate creation, turn their back on the Christ who is the beginning and the end of all things. They have forgotten that the One through whom all things are created is the One who suffers and dies to redeem, reconcile, restore and renew.

**The voice of Creation** We are the same agency of creation, inspired by the same spirit.

**The voice of Salvation** And of redemption

**The voice of Creation** And the same source of inspiration and creativity.

**The voice of Salvation** Search now in your hearts and you will find it so.

**The voice of Creation** Open your hearts and minds and let the same Spirit speak to you who was in Jesus and in the acts of creation. There is so much waiting to be learnt and discovered by you.

**The voice of Salvation** Then you will know the truth in all its potential and beauty, close to your own creativity.

**The voice of Creation** Then you will see the light and energy of all things shining in the glory of God who is creator, redeemer and inspirer.

**The voice of Salvation** Then perhaps you will turn and notice this light and energy wherever you look and in whatever you do.

**The voice of Creation** Then perhaps you will understand what responsibility has been given to you - for all you see and all you do.

**The voice of Salvation** In that seeing and doing, you will come to know the source and purpose of all things.

**The voice of Creation** And you will see and do things by the light and energy that has been given to you and to all things.

**The voice of Salvation** Then perhaps you will glimpse us together not apart.

**The voice of Creation** Then perhaps you will understand and perceive all things differently.

**Narrator** We are here to worship the God who made us, redeemed us and inspires us. In the name of this God, Father Son and Holy Spirit, we offer this service of worship.

**ALL**

Holy God, Holy and strong, have mercy upon us  
Holy God, Holy and strong, have mercy upon us  
Holy God, Holy and strong, have mercy upon us



**VOICES FROM SCRIPTURE**

**Reader 1** In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said 'let there be light' and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. *Genesis. I*

**Reader 2** In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it. *St. John's Gospel. I*

**Reader 3** He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible. He himself is before all things and in him all things hold together. *Colossians I*

**ALL STAND**

**ALL**

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible and in one Lord Jesus Christ, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, light of light, very God of very God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father by whom all things were made who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man. And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilot. He suffered and was buried, and the third day he rose again according to the scriptures, and ascended into Heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Catholic and Apostolic church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**Reader 4** For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven by making peace through the blood of his cross.

**STAY SEATED**

**HYMN**

*Sung slowly and gently. The flute will play the first verse unaccompanied.*

## **SOLO VOICE**

Be still for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One is here;  
Come bow before him now, with reverence and fear.  
In him no sin is found, we stand on holy ground.  
Be still for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One is here.

## **ALL**

Be still for the glory of the Lord is shining all around;  
He burns with holy fire, with splendour he is crowned.  
How awesome is the sight, our radiant King of Light  
Be still for the glory of the Lord is shining all around.

Be still, for the power of the Lord is moving in this place,  
He comes to cleanse and heal, to minister his grace.  
No work too hard for him, in faith receive from him;  
Be still for the power of the Lord is moving in this place.



**VOICES OF ENERGY AND TRANSFORMATION** *Voices speak from where they are sitting spread out across the space with a pause before the lines from the psalms.*

**Narrator** Let's listen to the voices of the Bible and the voices of science talking to each other about our theme of energy.

**Voice 1** *The total entropy - from the Greek 'trophe; transformation - of any isolated thermodynamic system tends to increase over time, approaching a maximum value.*

There are many who say 'Oh, that we might see some good!

Let the light of your face shine upon us O Lord'. Ps 4

**Voice 2** *When a process is irreversible, the entropy change is equal to the amount of energy required to return the system to its original state.*

For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light. Ps 36

**Voice 3** *A heat 'engine' is a thermodynamic system that undergoes a sequence of transformations which return it to its original state, during which the engine may exchange energy with the environment. By the conservation of energy, the net energy lost by the environment is equal to the work done by the engine.*

It is you who light my lamp; the Lord my God lights up my darkness.' Ps. 18

**Voice 4** *If a system is thermally and mechanically isolated from the environment, the entropy of the system as a whole will increase.*

Once a system reaches this maximum-entropy state, no part of the system can perform work on any other part.

The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom then shall I fear? Ps. 27

**Voice 5** *Light is just one part of the full spectrum of electromagnetic radiation. Light is perceived as both wave and particles. Light waves are both waves and particles of energy.*

Happy O Lord are the people who walk in the light of your countenance. Ps 89

**Voice 6** *The amount of energy in a light wave is proportionally related to its frequency: High frequency light has high energy; low frequency light has low energy. Thus gamma rays have the most energy, and radio waves have the least. Of visible light, **violet** has the most energy and **red** the least.*

Bless the Lord O my soul; you are clothed with honour and majesty, wrapped in light as with a garment, you stretch out the heavens like a tent; you set the beams of your chambers on the waters, you make the clouds your chariot, you ride on the wings of the wind. Ps 104

**Voice 7** *Light not only vibrates at different frequencies, it also travels at different speeds. Light waves move through a vacuum at their maximum speed - 300,000 kilometres per second or **186,000 miles per second**, which makes light the fastest phenomenon in the universe.*

If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me and the light around me become night, even the darkness is not dark to you. The night is as bright as the day for darkness is a light to you. Ps 139.

**Voice 8** *Light waves slow down when they travel inside substances. The way different substances affect the speed at which light travels is key to understanding the bending or refraction of light.*

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. I John



## **VOICES FROM THE CHURCHES**

- We who are from many places, both distant and near
- We who care about creation and salvation
- We who long for the churches to turn belief into action
- We who long to learn and yearn in our longings
- We who long for the harm to stop
- We who commit ourselves to play our part
- We who long to find new ways for the future

**ALL We are glad to be here.**

### **Narrator**

We now celebrate our coming together in the name of the One who came to us. May the Immortal One, who is the splendour and glory of all light, give us light and energy for our discussions and decisions on this our journey to light eternal.

**HYMN** *Please stand. The tune will be played over once by the piano or flute. Solo voice for 1<sup>st</sup> verse*

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,  
In light inaccessible, hid from our eyes,  
Most blessed most glorious, the ancient of days,  
Almighty victorious thy great name we praise.

### **ALL**

Unresting, unhasting and silent as light,  
Nor wanting, nor hasting, thou rulest in might;  
Thy justice like mountains high soaring above,  
Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all life you givest to both great and small,  
In all life thou livest, the true life of all;  
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,  
And wither and perish; but naught changes thee.

Great Father of glory, pure Father of light  
Thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;  
All laud we would render, O help us to see  
'tis only the splendour of light hideth thee.



### **PRAYERS OF OFFERING**

So we bring our gifts and concerns from our work in the churches across Europe. Some of us know each other and some do not. Let's take the time now to greet each other in the name of Christ and to wish each other that peace which is both beyond our understanding and His gift to us.

The peace of the Lord be always with you

**ALL And with you.** Everyone greets each other.



### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

O Holy God who has caused all things to come into being for our use and your glory, teach us how to recognise your energy and light, your purpose and inspiration in all work places.

**AMEN**

May all people in their daily lives and work know their contribution to your creation and creativity. Thank you for your presence in the transformation of things into human goods and services.

**AMEN**

Send your Spirit, that people in the workplace may discover new, spiritual significance in what they do and so may touch the things they handle with new reverence and respect.

**AMEN**

Give to all people that precious gift of seeing your presence everywhere.

**AMEN**

Give to your church a new vision and passion that we may be willing to work in new ways, with new people, in new places, for we have much to learn.

**AMEN**

Give to each of us a new commitment to love and serve you in our use of the good things of your creation.

**AMEN**



## **CONFESSION**

We offer you Lord these moments of silence to remember our need of your forgiveness, for ourselves, our churches and our society.

**Silence for reflection**



## **VOICES OF CONFESSION**

- we consume more than we need at the expense of others and the earth
- we take for granted the energy which enables us to live in warmth and light, to travel and to work, to create and to serve
- we waste too much of this energy as we transform the good things of your creation into human utility and beauty
- we use up the raw materials of energy with little thought for the future
- we do not do enough to invest in research and development for future renewable technologies

**ALL**

Lord Forgive us

Lord Heal us

Lord Inspire us

Lord Guide us

Lord Fill us with your energy to turn our ideas into love and our love into action for the benefit of others and the wellbeing of your creation.

**AMEN**

## **ALL STAND**



### **PRAYERS OF COMMITMENT AND LIGHTING OF CANDLES**

*Our candles are lit and we pass this light amongst us as a sign of our commitment for the future.*

#### **ALL**

May our footprint on this earth be light  
May we discover the holiness of your presence everywhere  
May we learn how to value your gifts without harm or waste  
May we enrich the flourishing of beauty in the things we make and use

#### **AMEN**

We commit ourselves to live more simply for the sake of the future  
We commit ourselves to invest our skills and knowledge in ways that create a better future  
We commit ourselves to follow you in the service of others, in care for the planet and in gratitude for your presence, goodness and gifts.

#### **AMEN**



### **PRAYERS**

Almighty God in Christ you make all things new. Transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace and in the renewal of our lives make known your heavenly glory.

#### **AMEN**

O Master Carpenter of Nazareth, wield well thy tools in this thy creation, that we who come to thee rough hewn, may by thy hand be fashioned to a truer beauty.

#### **AMEN**

## **HYMN**

*(Solo voice for 1<sup>st</sup> verse – Marijke Van Duin)*

Hail gladdening light of his pure glory poured  
From the immortal Father, heavenly blest,  
Holiest of holies, Jesus Christ our Lord.

#### **ALL**

Now we are come to the sun's hour of rest,  
The lights of evening round us shine,  
We hymn the Father, Son and Holy Spirit divine.

Worthiest art thou at all times to be sung  
with undefiled tongue  
Son of our God, giver of life, alone;  
Therefore, in all the world thy glories Lord they own.



## **VOICES FROM THE FUTURE**

“We shall not cease from exploration, And the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.” *Little Gidding. T.S. Eliot.*

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit producing its fruit each month and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun for the Lord God with be their light and they will reign forever and ever. Rev 22



## **BLESSING**

May the Lord who creates, redeems and inspires,

**ALL – Lead our thoughts and guide our plans,**

May the Lord who calls us all to new life in His service

**ALL - Teach us how to learn from each other and the gifts of his goodness**

May the Lord who is the source of all creativity

**ALL - Give us new vision and inspiration for our tasks**

And may this God, ever loving, Creator, Redeemer and inspirer

**ALL - Show us the light of his countenance now and for ever more. AMEN**

**ALL LEAVE PICKING UP A LEAF FROM THE BOWLS AS THEY GO.**

## **SUGGESTIONS**

**Voices** – the number of voices can be increased or decreased. The intention is to create participation.

**Lighting** - The chapel or church used should be lit mostly by candles.

**Music** – Taize or similar songs could be added if there is time. A flute or other instrument could be used to create a background atmosphere before and throughout the Liturgy.

**Movement** - Appropriate movements and choreography should be used for the parts taken by different voices and groups of voices. Some voices should come from the community/congregation and move in and out from a central liturgical focal point or installation –central candle, cross, icons, natural objects and vegetation, water, symbols etc. If possible chairs should be facing inwards towards this central installation.

A Rehearsal is essential so that the voices work well together and know the choreography, pace and style of the Liturgy.

Rev Robin Morrison. 2006.