Intergenerational Worship

Prayers of the people based on Isaiah 35:1-10

Year A – Advent 3 Dec 11 2016 Isaiah 35:1-10
What is this: Intergenerational Prayers

Where it’s used: In any intergenerational gathering, but specifically Lectionary based gatherings.

Time: 5-10 minutes

Bible Focus/theme: Isaiah 35:1-10

What’s needed:
- 5cm² squares of sandpaper
- corrugated cardboard cutouts of bodies (see template below)
- metallic or transparent blue/clear cellophane 30cm strips
- ‘safe’ animal road signs (google images ‘animal road signs’ and choose friendly animals. Print these on cards 5cm²)

Extra ideas for gathering

You may wish to decentralize this prayer in your gathering space, by making four stations, at which the symbols and written prayers are found, allowing people to move around the stations in any order, pending as much time as they like there, and offering prayers together with others as they are comfortable.

Or

You may wish to invite four households or friendship teams to present each of the fours sets of prayers.

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Introduction

In the Bible reading from Isaiah today we hear of amazing transformations, ‘wow!!!’ kinds of changes. And these are transformations that show that God is at work. This is the kind of stuff God does. So, it’s the kind of thing that we can join in with praying for.

There are four things in Isaiah that experience amazing transformation. And these fours things will help to guide our prayers today.
The four things are:

**Land** that had dried up becomes fertile and fruitful again. Flowers bloom, and flowers mean fruit!

**People:** Bodies that were weak, feeble or disabled become strong and full of life. And emotions that were worn thin and fearful become courageous again.

**Water** flows again abundantly where it is needed. All kinds of good things happen when there is plenty of fresh water.

**Travels:** Roads are made safe and people can move around freely, and best of all, find their way home.

Each of you have been given a set of these four symbols. As we pray through our liturgy, you are invited to take each of these one at a time in your hands. Feel the rough dry land, the shape of body, the slippery water and the safety sign.

There will be time between the sections of prayer for you to add your own prayers – out loud or quietly.

You might like to take these symbols home to continue your prayers together as a household.

As we pray join in the responses in **bold italics**

**Let’s pray:**

**LAND**
The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

**We pray for the land**

Loving Creator God, you have filled the earth with amazing growing living things. We know we are dependent on the earth and its abundance for our life and nourishment.

**We pray for God’s land**

We pray for the systems of the earth. Where dry desert has crept over the land because of over use, or pollution. We pray for rest and restoring of the land.
We pray for wise farming, restraint in taking from the earth, and care in all our ways of living that the earth may be honoured and kept healthy.

**We pray for our land**

We pray for those whose lands have been overrun with hardship, where enough food cannot be found, especially because of injustice, war or exploitation. May the transforming ways of your kingdom come.

**We pray for all lands**

**BODIES**

Is 35:3-6 “Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you."

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

**We pray for our bodies**

Loving Living God,
We thankyou for our lives and our bodies.
We pray that we would take care of our bodies and each other’s bodies, helping each other with health and safety and care and wisdom and adventure and service. All the good things you have made our bodies to do.

**We pray for hurting bodies**

We pray especially now though, for those we know whose bodies are suffering, or sick or struggling with pain. May your comfort and healing be close to them.

**We pray for diverse bodies**

We pray for the ways in which our bodies are limited. All of us. None of our bodies are super-powered. We are all human and we need each other. Help us to be aware and attentive to the ways we need assistance and advocacy, and of the ways that each of us is a gift to others. May our community be a place of welcome, safety, participation and inclusion for every – body.

**We pray for every body**
WATER

Isaiah 35: 6-7 For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

We pray for water

Life giving Spirit of God, We know how important water is. And we hear in your stories that water is often a symbol for You. You are essential for our life, just as water is. May we always know our need and thirst for you.

We pray for living water

We pray for the waters of our land, that they would be cared for well, kept healthy and safe in your justice for all.

We pray for safe water

We pray for the waters that surround our land –we pray for those who arrive here through those waters – that they would come with safety and your peace, finding welcome and new home

We pray for welcoming waters

We pray that we would be mindful of the resources of water amongst us and for others. Remind us of the basic need that unites all people through water, and the basic justice that this requires of us all.

We pray for just water.

TRAVELS

Isaiah 35:8-10 A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God’s people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there.

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

We pray for travels
Lord God, all of our journeys are in you. You go with us, and before us, and beyond us, and there is no where we could go in all the cosmos that you are not there. We pray for those whose lives have taken them on roads that are struck with danger.

We pray for our travels

We pray for those whose lives have been lived in endless journeying, seeking refuge and home.

We pray for travellers, refugees and asylum seekers

We pray for those who travel in order to bring resources, justice, hope and goodnews where it is in short supply.

We pray for our travels of compassion

We pray for those who are on journeys that we do not know or understand. Lead them back to your safety and home with joy.

We pray for all travels and roads

Amen.