

Gathering of the Waters Ceremony

Our Many Blessings

This simple ceremony expresses many things: rivers joining as metaphor for community, thanksgiving for the many blessings of fresh water, consciousness of how we heal or pollute our habitats and our bodies with our thoughts and words. It has been performed at youth education retreats, end of summer celebrations, blessings for church gardens, and annually at the Northwest Regional conference since 2003.

Unity Earth Care Northwest developed this outline as a vessel for Inspiration. The ceremony may last from 20 minutes to an hour or more, depending on the needs and intention of each gathering. You may do it outside or indoors.

Through the joining of many waters in many places, this ceremony continues to overflow its bounds! Please share it with others, in gratitude for Spirit's deep ocean of creativity.

Preparation

Invite participants ahead of time to bring water from their travels or homes.

The Ceremony

Call everyone together with a song, chant, drumming, etc. The music can begin slightly before the ceremony starts. If performed outdoors, gather at a local water body (pond, stream, fountain), meditation garden, or other special place. If indoors, gather in a circle with a water vessel in the center.

Thank everyone for coming to honor the waters. Then give a short talk about water [*the following are suggestions*]:

- ❖ Our bodies are 72% water.
- ❖ Flowing fresh water, on which all terrestrial life depends, is only 1 percent of all water on Earth.
- ❖ Flowing water is energy in motion.
- ❖ Water comes in many forms in our lives: snow, rain, clouds, streams, waterfalls, oceans, drinking water, showers, cooking water.
- ❖ Words of praise create perfect crystals of water, while negative emotions disrupt the crystals. Blessing words can purify water [*The Hidden Messages in Water* by Dr. Masaru Emoto].
- ❖ Ceremony creates seed water to take back with us to our source.

Say a prayer of thanksgiving for all the ways water supports our lives. Invite participants to honor the water with a word.

Dip out of the local water body into the mixing vessel, which becomes Mother Water. Invite people to bring forward their water, name where it came from, and add it to the Mother Water.

Stir the joined waters clockwise and pray, giving thanks that the family of waters is together. Give thanks for the water's help.

Take the joined waters around the circle, inviting each person to hold their hand over the water or to touch the water (their choice) to bless it.

Those who brought water are invited to refill their containers with the blessed waters to take home with them as seed water. Those who didn't bring water take the healing energy on their hands home with them. All are invited to add this healing energy to their local waters at home.

Pour the Mother Water back into the source, claiming that healing waters flow to all places.

In closing, pray the *Prayer for Protection* for all the waters of the world.

Variations

If you have sage, you may smudge each participant at the beginning of the ceremony to cleanse away any burdens. Use an abalone shell or cast iron pan to hold the ashes and a feather to waft the smoke. Lightly smudge all around each person with the smoke.

Keep a "guest book" for participants to record their names and where their water came from.

Songs, chants, and group prayers can be added anywhere in the ceremony. Suggestions are the *Chinook Prayer Ceremony* [in *Poets of the Spirit* by Don Compton, ed.] and a chant for the four elements:

Earth my body
Water my blood
Air my breath
Fire my spirit

If you have questions or want more information on how to conduct this service, please contact us at unityearthcare@yahoo.com.