

A Liturgy for Sunrise

By Matthew Clark, from [*Every Moment Holy Volume III: The Work of the People*](#), ed. Douglas Kaine McKelvey (*slightly adapted*)

Creator God, you spoke this world's most brilliant beginning, you quickened the cosmos with a gladdening Word!

Now, before the sun rises, we are watching. Your world is an instrument sleeping in its case. Waiting to be touched by light, waiting to be stirred by new, merciful music.

O Lord, awaken the dawn! O Lord, kindle a new song. O holy, holy, holy Lord, make your face to shine upon us!

Silence may be kept as dawn begins

O Lord, our sun borrows its light from you, and through its warmth we feel your affection. Your inextinguishable love is at reality's core, it lights upon our skin with a tender touch. And this morning we witness the living sign of your heart's unending search for us.

O Lord, this rising sun of ours is a clear promise, a radiant herald, igniting these cloud banners with color, daily bathing us in baptismal light.

The grasses grow green as we keep watch. **You have come near to us today, Lord.**
The trees are topped with glowing orange. **We turn our face to the gathering light.**
The water leaps and laughs in the dawn. **We are gathered by your light, Lord.**

The air itself is a chalice brimming with joy, as you garment your world in goodness, Lord, dressing Creation with daylight.

We feel it urging us to keep trusting that, in Christ, you have smiled upon us, and that you will waken every sleeper and raise all who look to Jesus for mercy.

You have surprised us with a smile, and our faces cannot help but smile in return. In this moment we feel you delighting in us.

**May the True Light you've given rise through us to bless a shadowed land.
Gladden us, our Radiant Redeemer! Quicken us and kindle us with your joy!**

We've watched you wake up the world today, we've seen it grow bright with your blessing, we've heard the songs that the morning makes.

With that light and with those songs, **hold us fast, Heavenly Father. Cleanse us and comfort us, Lord Jesus. Fill us and send us, Holy Spirit, this day.**

For you have made your face to shine upon us! **Amen.**

A Liturgy for Sunsets

From [*Every Moment Holy Volume I*](#), by Douglas Kaine McKelvey

As the sunset begins:

We make ourselves present to delight in your handiwork O Lord. We make ourselves present to revel in this unique, one-time display of your dynamic and infinitely-faceted glory.

We praise you, O God, for what we are about to witness, in patterns of cloud illumined and crossed by a play of color and light.

You have infused your created order with an inexplicable beauty that is inseparable from the expression of your nature.

Open our hearts, therefore, to the work of your beauty cast on the canvas of sky, to the echoes of your glory written pon this your creation.

May this meditation upon your glories not leave us unmoved. May we receive the expression of this beauty as we would the lavish endearments of a love letter.

Tender our hearts to receive it.

Silence is kept for the duration of the celestial display. As the last colors of sunset fade to western darkness, an appropriate psalm, hymn, or song of praise may be sung or recited.

May the patterns of your eternal beauties be fixed in our souls, O Lord.

That the lives we lead and the words we speak might hereafter be infused with a grace that would show forth your beauty.

May your people be as winsome as the sunset, O God, and give as little cause for offense, as they carry your name, your truth, and your love into this world.

Our hearts and our lives are your canvas, O Spirit of God. We yield them to you.

Go forth, you image bearers of God. Go forth sharing God's beauty.

Amen.

A Liturgy for the Labors of Community

From [*Every Moment Holy Volume I*](#), by Douglas Kaine McKelvey

Our lives are so small, O Lord, **our vision so limited,**
Our courage so frail, **our hours so fleeting.**
Therefore give us grace and guidance for the journey ahead.

We are gathered here because we believe that we are called together into a work we cannot yet know the fullness of.

Still, we trust the voice of the One who has called us.

And so we offer to you, O God, these things:

Our dreams, our plans, our vision.

Shape them as you will.

Our moments and our gifts.

May they be invested toward bright, eternal ends.

Richly bless the work before us, Father.

Shepherd us well lest we grow enamored of our own accomplishment or entrenched in old habit. Instead, let us listen for Your voice, our hearts ever open to the quiet beckoning of Your Spirit in this endeavor.

Let us in true humility and poverty of spirit remain ever ready to move at the impulse of your love in paths of your design.

You alone, O God, by your gracious and life-giving Spirit have power to knit our imperfect hearts, our weaknesses, our strengths, our stories and our gifts, one to another.

Unite Your people and multiply our meager offerings, O Lord, that all might resound to Your glory.

May our acts of service and creation, frail and wanting as they are, be met and multiplied by the mysterious workings of Your Spirit who weaves all things together toward a redemption more good and glorious that we yet have eyes to see, or courage to hope for.

May our love and our labors now echo your love and your labors, O Lord.

Let all that we do here, in these our brief lives, in this our brief moment to love, in this work you have ordained for this community, flower in winsome and beautiful foretaste of greater glories yet to come.

O Spirit of God, now shape our hearts.

O Spirit of God, now guide our hands.

O Spirit of God, now build Your kingdom among us.

Amen.

A Liturgy for Gardening

From [*Every Moment Holy Volume I*](#), by Douglas Kaine McKelvey

O Creator who calls forth life, may this ground and our labors here invested, yield good provision for the nourishing of both body and soul.

Lord, let our labors in this garden be fruitful. Lord, let our labors in this garden be blessed.

As we work in the soil of this garden plot, furrowing, planting, watering, and harvesting may such acts become to us a living parable, a prayer acted out rather than spoken.

Lord, let our labors in this garden be fruitful. Lord, let our labors in this garden be blessed.

As we colabor with you and with your creation to produce a beneficial harvest, may we find in such toil a kind of rest. May this plot of ground become a hallowed space and these hours a sacred time for reflection, for conversation with friends and family, and for fellowship with you, our Creator.

Lord, let our labors in this garden be fruitful. Lord, let our labors in this garden be blessed.

Through our tending of these your delightful creations - vegetables and fruits, beans and berries, vines and stalks and roots and flowers - renew our own tired hopes, redeem our own wearied imaginations. As we cultivate gentle order, training, pruning, weeding, and protecting, so cultivate and train our wayward hearts, O Lord, that rooted in you the forms of our lives might spread in winsome witness, maturing to bear the good fruit of grace, expressed in acts of compassionate love.

Lord, let our labors in this garden be fruitful. Lord, let our labors in this garden be blessed.

Walk with us now, O Lord, in the stillness of this tilled and quiet space, that when we venture again into the still greater garden of your world, we might be prepared by the long practice of your presence, to offer our lives as a true and nourishing provision to all who hunger for mercy and hope and meaning, a true and nourishing provision to all who hunger for you.

Lord, let our labors in this garden be fruitful. Lord, let our labors in this garden be blessed.

Amen.

A Liturgy for a Walk in the Woods

By Jon Lowry, from [*Every Moment Holy Volume III: The Work of the People*](#), ed. Douglas Kaine McKelvey (*slightly adapted*)

God of the Wandering Forest Path, trailblazer of these winding woodland ways, gardener of brilliant wildflower fields, who stretched greenest canopies of shade, how wonderful is your creation! How much more marvelous are you!

O Architect of living cathedrals, pillared sanctuary halls of oak and elm, the weaver of a tapestry of moss, a carpet for this kingly realm, how wonderful is your creation! How much more marvelous are you!

Wellspring of this overwhelming joy, you share a running joke with each sparkling stream, and send it bubbling over into laughter, refreshing thirsty roots along its vein. How wonderful is your creation! How much more marvelous are you!

O great composer of wood thrush song, O grand choreographer of swaying pine, conductor of the bullfrog's baritone and metronome of the cricket's perfect time, how wonderful is your creation! How much more marvelous are you!

So let me be a part of this wild poem and in the quiet find my soul restored, joining nature gathering in worship, singing "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord."

How wonderful is your creation!
How much more marvelous are you!

Amen.

A Liturgy For Birdwatching

By Chris Slaten & Douglas McKelvey, from [*Every Moment Holy Volume III: The Work of the People*](#), ed. Douglas Kaine McKelvey

Our Father, Creator of Land, Sea, and Sky, whose vision encompasses galaxies but whose compassions extend even to the common sparrow, you me to consider your birds and flowers, rather than to worry about what I will eat or wear.

You hide food and drink for the jay and bless him with a mind to find them. You clothe even the smallest hummingbird with extravagant iridescence. You are ever mindful of the ostrich's eggs, even when her attention is elsewhere.

Yet the loud voices of my own needs and desires so often deafen my ability to perceive your gracious provision and tender care for me. So quiet me, O Christ. Quiet the noise in my head and heart.

As I consider your kindness to your creatures, let me also find a deeper trust and a deeper rest in your lovingkindness toward me. Let me even now make space to still my thoughts, and meditate more intentionally upon your works both great and small.

As I ponder the myriad forms, the varied habits, and the peculiar beauties of the birds you created, O Lord, shepherd my thoughts and awaken my perceptions for all I have disregarded as scenery. Open my eyes to your glory displayed in their particularities and varieties. Open my hearts to your joy expressed in their calls and songs. Open my heart to your concern for their common cries and daily dramas.

More than merely looking, may I actually see. More than merely hearing, may I truly perceive. Teach me to trust more deeply your infinite provision and intimate attention that I might partake of your unselfconscious delight in all you have created.

Let me join you in the joy of noting the great diversity of crests, wingspans, beak lengths, nests, habits, colors, patterns, rituals, voices, and character traits among the species I observe. Lead me to cast off the veil of familiarity, that I might detect notable nuances in what at first seems so similar, beholding your glory in numberless, distinct lives beyond my own.

O Christ, use the practice of birdwatching to refine my vision to more fully see as you see, to look hard for the unseen and the unpraised, as you so perfectly modeled for us when you admired the widow's secret sacrifice in the temple, or stooped to the cries of suffering outcasts along the road, or looked up in love at the desperate tax thief perched in a tree, for I know my own blindness extends well beyond the birds of my yard.

Let this practice incline my heart to better see as you see, O Lord, my neighbors, my family in Christ, even my enemies.

Let this avocation of birdwatching become for me a training ground, tutoring my thoughts, my heart, my habits, to more intently see your love expressed in all the details of your creation, your world, your people.

As I am daily moved by that wild choir of praise inadvertently raised by the bustle of these little beings, so let my own daily love living and interacting with others also bring you much glory.

Amen.

For the Preparation of a Meal

From [*Every Moment Holy Volume I*](#), by Douglas Kaine McKelvey

O Bread of Life,
Meet us in the making of this meal.

As we perform the various tasks of washing, chopping, sifting, mixing, simmering, baking, and boiling, let those little acts coalesce into an embodied liturgy of service - an outworking of love offered for your purposes, that through us, your tender care might be translated into the comforting and cheery language of nurturing food and drink offered for the benefit of others.

Let us invest in this preparation a lovingkindness toward those who will partake.
Let us craft this meal with care as would befit any endeavor touching eternity.

Meet us in the making of this meal, O Lord, and make of it something more than a mere nourishment for the body. Make it the center of a sheltered space where grace freely flows. Let the slow savoring of these foods give pause to those who will soon partake, prompting them to linger a little longer at the table, taking rest from the labors of the day, engaging in good conversation.

Let the comforting qualities of the dishes we prepare become catalysts for a rich fellowship, a warm consolation, and a fruitful increase of holy affections.

May this meal serve to remind those who share its pleasures of the goodness and the hope that infuses all creation.

Unto that end, let us labor creatively, with imaginations engaged, know that we are cooks in the kitchen - yes - but we are also agents of a deep eternity, whose prepared meals might feed more than the body, nourishing also the hearts and hopes of those sometimes-weary souls who are well-served by our labors.

Amen.