

## Commissioning for Faithful Stewards of Sacred Waters

**Invocation:** Come, all and gather in prayer and worship. We all thirst for the water that satisfies our bodies and our spirits. All who thirst, come to the sacred water.

**All: We long for the water that refreshes and gives life.**

### **Opening reflection:**

All life comes from water. Everything that lives, needs water - from the smallest plants to the largest whale. Today we celebrate water, which connects and nourishes all life.

We need to claim our identity as living beings filled with water! For we are water. Each one of us is a body of water. There are rivers and streams within us that connect us to the rivers that run through our cities, to the creeks down the mountain slope, to the streams that curl their paths through pastures. We are connected in a material and spiritual way to all the tributaries of the watershed; they are a part of us and we are a part of them because we are all bodies of water. (Adapted from Rev. Neal Halverson-Taylor) (If outdoors:) Let us take a moment of silent gratitude, listening to the voice of Creation, whose life is dependent upon water, a gift from God.

(If indoors:) Let us take a moment of silent gratitude for God's gift of water, upon which all life in Creation depends.

Today we are embarking on a journey of becoming Faithful Stewards of Sacred Waters. We ask the Creator of the universe to open our minds and hearts for all that we will learn: from one another, from our Creator, and from Creation.

We can listen for the voice of God in Creation.

### **Litany of Water Scriptures from the Qur'an**

**Reader: Qur'an 21:30** We have made from water every living thing.

**Response: We are praising God by caring for Creation. May our healing actions be pleasing to Allah.**

**Reader: Qur'an 2:22** We sent down rain from the heavens, and brought forth therewith fruits for your sustenance.

**Response: We praise God by caring for Creation. May our healing actions be pleasing to Allah.**

**Reader: Qur'an 16:65** And God sends down water from the skies, giving life thereby to the earth after it had been lifeless: in this, behold, there is a message indeed for people who listen.

**Response: We are praising God by caring for Creation. May our healing actions be pleasing to Allah.**



**Commissioning:** (process forward as guided) to receive water that unites all life.

**Water Blessing:**

All of our water flows into a common watershed – the Chesapeake Bay and thereby connects us to each other. This water connects us all, physically and spiritually.

The waters of our world have been here since the beginning of time. Through the cycles rain, condensation, and evaporation, this life-giving water is the same water that Moses parted and Jesus was baptized in. This water belongs to lakes and streams, reservoirs that quench our thirst, great oceans that circle the globe, the source of all life.

All living things are connected by water, for it runs through our veins and courses through the stems and leaves of plants.

We ask each of you to come forward, take a bottle of water from the waters we have brought that join us together. We want you to carry this water back home as a reminder that we are a joined together as a community of Faithful Congregational Stewards, working together, holding each other in prayer through the challenges of this class, accomplishing together what we cannot do alone. Keep this bottle on your desk or kitchen window sill and remember that you do not labor alone. Look around you – your classmates labor with you.

May our separate work join into one collective effort. Like drops of rain, we can add up to an ocean of change. And, may we draw strength from the wellspring of life, our Creator, who sustains us on this journey.

**Final Blessing:** May God guide and inspire us to become Faithful Stewards of these Sacred Waters of the Chesapeake Bay. May God's beautiful Creation inspire us as we dedicate ourselves to the service of healing Creation.

**Leader:** Let us pledge ourselves to be restorers of sacred waters with this closing prayer:

**Closing Prayer**

**We implore you, O God, most merciful, renew us with your blessed water, and bring forth a renewed commitment to the full restoration of the rivers and streams and lakes and ponds, the full restoration of the Chesapeake Bay, the full restoration of ourselves of God's Creation. All this we pledge in praise of Allah.**