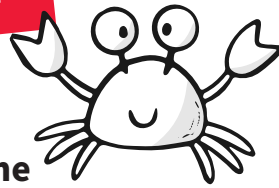


BEACH TREASURE

LITURGY



An all age
resource for
**caring for
creation**

Kia ora

As a church, we are passionate about encouraging tamariki to make a positive impact in the world, making a proactive step to care for God's creation. We want them to know that we are kaitiaki (guardians) of this beautiful earth, and they are part of an intergenerational church who share in this responsibility.

This **Beach Treasure Liturgy** is great for young families, preschoolers, and intergenerational gatherings

Here in Aotearoa New Zealand, many of our communities have beaches and waterways nearby. If you are in a central area, perhaps you can adapt this for cleaning up of nearby rivers, lakes and waterways.

This resource was developed by Lyall Bay Community Church, part of the Anglican Diocese of Wellington, and shared with aroha and encouragement for other churches to give it a go!

What you'll need

- An outdoor space like a beach or waterway, with safe spaces to explore for treasure hunting.
- Picnic blankets or camping chairs.
- Genesis 1:20-28 in your favourite translation, or a kids storybook bible.
- Sticks for drawing in the sand
- (Optional) Beach clean up supplies.

Welcome

Gather children, families and all ages on a nearby beach or outdoor space suitable for the Beach treasure hunt. Welcome everyone with a karakia (prayer) and let them know what the plan for the day will be. *Keep an eye on the weather forecast, and consider how those with additional mobility needs can be accommodated.*

Beach treasure hunt

Send everyone out to search the beach for one piece of beach treasure each. A treasure is something natural that we often find at the beach - such as a stone, a shell, piece of sea glass, seaweed, a crab leg, etc. If you are in a wide open space, let them know where the search boundaries to keep a safe parameter. *(5 minutes)*

When they are back, get them to keep hold on to each of their treasures as they sit on the mat in a circle. Ask them to describe what they have found, and why it caught their eye.

Beach intro

Gathering on the beach for a beach clean up may be a regular church activity, or perhaps this is the first time you have gathered like this. Ask: "Why do you think we have gathered at the beach today?" Listen to their answers and engage in the korero, particularly if it is led by the kids. Explain that we're going to do some fun and creative prayer outdoors today.

Bible story

We're going to read a story from the beginning of the Bible, which tells us about when God created everything. Listen carefully to hear what the story says about what God has made, and what God asks us to do.

Genesis 1: 20-28

"God said, "I command the ocean to be full of living creatures, and I command birds to fly above the earth."

So God made the giant sea monsters and all the living creatures that swim in the ocean. He also made every kind of bird. God looked at what he had done, and it was good.

Then he gave the living creatures his blessing - he told the ocean creatures to live everywhere in the ocean and the birds to live everywhere on earth. God said I command the earth to give life to all kinds of tame animals, wild animals, and reptiles. God made every one of them. He looked at what he had made, and it was good.

So God created humans to be like himself, he made men and women. God gave them his blessing and said,

"Have a lot of children! Fill the earth with people and bring it under your control. Rule over the fish in the ocean, the birds in the sky and every animal on the earth."

Korero and questions

Facilitate a conversation about the Genesis reading with some discovery questions:

- What did God make?
- Did anybody hear what God asks humans, men and women to do?
- What job does God give us?
- I wonder how God felt when he looked at all that he had made?

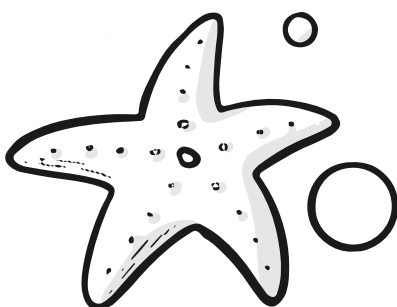
Talk about how God wants us to care and protect all that he has made. Highlight the final instruction God gives us, to care for all of creation.

Explain that God made our beach and the creatures that live at the beach and in the water. God wants us to protect them and care for them too. One way we can do this is by cleaning the beach and picking up rubbish to keep it clean.

Beach Scene Drawing

This activity draws together the treasures found on the beach, and creates a large beach mural for everyone to participate in.

- Draw a big box shape in the sand
- Draw a line for the sand/water and a line for the sky.
- Ask the kids and adults to place their treasures in the picture
- Give them sticks to draw in the sand, and encourage them to draw fish in the water and creatures on the land and birds in the sky.
- Let the creativity roll, and invite everyone to see that it is good at the end.



Prayers

We can also pray for the beach and the creatures that live here. Ask kids what they like about the beach, and what they're grateful for. Write them down and include them in the prayer.

Teach short prayer with simple actions, a simplified extract from *Prayer for the Earth in Laudato si'* and come up with your own actions for each line:

Prayer for the Earth

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe (*stretch tall*) and in the smallest of your creatures. (*shrink down small*).

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. (*hug your body*)

Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. (*hold out hands*)

Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world. (*make a heart shape with both hands*)



Final thanksgiving

Adapted from the Benedicte Aotearoa:

Thank you God for creating the world. You made the stars, the deserts and volcanoes, the green and growing things, the kauri and pine, rata and kōwhai, mosses and ferns.

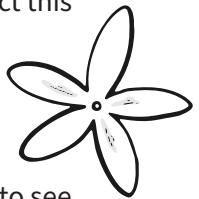
The dolphins and kahawai, sea lion and crab, coral, anemone, pipi and shrimp, rabbits and cattle, moths and dogs, kiwi and sparrow and tūi and hawk.

Lord we thank you for:
List all the things that the group were grateful for, and the names of all the children present

Please teach us to care for your creation/world and protect this beautiful beach.

In Jesus name,
Amen.

Extra: Spend 10 minutes to see how much rubbish you can find on the beach (Gloves and bin bags required).



Mix it up

You may like to rearrange the pieces of the liturgy to best suit your group. Some may find it easier to end with the beach scene drawing, if it would be difficult to regroup again!

