

## Opening Prayers

O Great Creator,  
cleanse our hearts of all stain from sin and brokenness,  
that we may walk with you along the good road, your holy way.  
Purify our minds, that we may be guided by your holy word.  
Clear our eyes, that we may see the goodness you have created.  
Open our ears that we may hear your voice.  
Make our souls one with yours,  
that we may worship you in spirit and in truth,  
and love you with all our hearts, minds, bodies and souls.  
May our hearts always beat as one with yours,  
through your Great Messenger, your Son, Jesus. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

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Creator, we offer you our praise.  
Cleanse our thoughts and hearts  
that we may hear and be guided by your word and direction.

We thank you for all our relations:  
the four leggeds, the wingeds,  
the star people of the heavens  
and all living things you have blessed us with to sustain this life.

Empower each of us through the bringer of Peace,  
your Son Jesus,  
to see and change for better the common life  
of all people and creation.

Hear our prayers this day and everyday.  
Accept our thanks for all the blessings you have given us,  
and for the opportunities to use these blessings  
for your honour and glory in service to others. Amen.<sup>2</sup>

## A Four Directions Prayer:<sup>3</sup>

Creator, we long for wholeness in our families, for honest, open communication to say what we need to say in safety and without fear.

Creator, we give thanks for the knowledge you give in all traditions of the world.  
Help us to honour the gifts of all traditions.

### **Teach us to know how to love and live.**

We give thanks for new life, for youth, represented by the eastern direction. We give thanks for new learning, for the sun which rises to begin each new day, and for the teachings of the peoples of the east, and yellow-skinned peoples.

### **Teach us to know how to love and live.**

We give thanks for the south, for the black-skinned peoples of the world, for the growth of the summertime in our lives, the learnings of our adult lives, to be kind and accept ourselves. Teach us as parents to love and respect our children, to care for the elders and those who cannot care for themselves.

### **Teach us to know how to love and live.**

We give thanks for the west, for the gifts of Aboriginal peoples of the world, for understandings of care of the earth, for teachings about rocks, leaves and trees, for the knowledge we have in our own teachings, all of these given by our Creator. Help us to use our understandings to bring joy and new life to our communities.

### **Teach us to know how to love and live.**

We give thanks for the northern direction, for the white-skinned peoples of the world, and white-haired peoples in our families and communities. Help us to receive gifts of wisdom from all peoples. Help us to grow our roots deeper through life's journey, that we may grow in kindness to ourselves and each other.

### **Teach us to know how to love and live.**

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Huron LAIC (Lenni-Lenape, Algonkian, Iroquoian Council of the Diocese of Huron)

<sup>2</sup> Source unknown, found in ACIP Indigenous Sacred Circle worship resources.

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<sup>3</sup> Source: *The Dancing Sun*, Volume VII, a United Church of Canada/Anglican Church of Canada resource for First Nations Communities. Permission to copy granted to ACC and UCC congregations.

## A Four Directions Prayers of the People<sup>4</sup>

1<sup>st</sup> Reader: There are gifts from each of the peoples in the four directions of the world. The winds of the different directions remind us of these gifts. Let us turn now to the East. The east represents the yellow-skinned peoples of the world. This direction symbolizes new life on the earth and reminds us of our connectedness to creation. The sun rises in the east; each day is a gift; life itself is a gift. Help us to be mindful of the new life offered in your Son, we pray.

**All: *Come, Holy Spirit, come.***

2<sup>nd</sup> Reader: We turn to face South. South represents warmth and growth. This direction represents women, the doorway to life. The colour of the south is black, representing the black-skinned peoples of the world. May we be encouraged to walk through the doorway to life and light. Give us your strength and courage to endure, we pray.

**All: *Come, Holy Spirit, come.***

3<sup>rd</sup> Reader: We turn to face West. West, symbolized by the colour red, represents the gift of rest, the passing of time and of those who have gone before. Aboriginal peoples of the earth are symbolized in this direction. Give us the wisdom and grace to use your gifts of time and leisure well, we pray.

**All: *Come, Holy Spirit, come***

4<sup>th</sup> Reader: We turn to face North. North is symbolized by the colour white, and represents coolness and the white-skinned of the world. A gift of this direction is clarity of vision and a sense of the strength we need to live each day. Help us to see more clearly your role for us, especially in the Stewardship and healing of Mother Earth, we pray.

**All: *Come, Holy Spirit, come.***

5<sup>th</sup> Reader: We turn to complete the circle and to look:

To God who cleanses our Earth

With snow, wind and rain.

To Jesus Christ who fills us with the wideness of mercy and

Lovingly embraces us all,

And to the Holy Spirit who inspires us.

**All: *Come, Holy Spirit, come.***

## Prayers for Reconciliation

Gracious God,  
your Word spoken through the Prophets  
became the Voice that proclaimed  
your justice and healing in Nazareth.  
Through Jesus you invite all creation  
into your reconciling love.  
As you freed his followers  
from their fear of the risks of discipleship,  
so move within us, in your love,  
with the strength, compassion and courage  
to give of ourselves in the ministry of reconciliation entrusted to us  
through Jesus Christ, your Son, Amen.

Merciful God, you have searched us out and known us:  
the hopes we hold and regrets that cling to us,  
the hurts we absorb and ferment;  
the tears we both cause and shed.  
We stand before you: all that we have been  
and all that we are,  
knowing that only in you are we truly known  
as the ones you would have us be.  
Guide us to face our selves and each other,  
within the forgiveness of your love,  
that we might welcome with joy the gifts and challenges  
that your new creation brings  
Through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns  
With you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Loving God, Creator of all, maker and redeemer of history,  
you hold the pains and joys of our past, our present, our future;  
you open us to the gifts of time  
and to the possibilities of new beginnings,  
You grant us the confidence to face our sin and loss with hope.  
Breathe in us the grace to trust in your loving forgiveness,  
that we may face our histories with courage.  
Guide us by your Holy Spirit in our walk of repentance,  
as we turn to embrace the new life you have given to us,  
through Jesus Christ, your Son, Amen.

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<sup>4</sup> Source: *For the Healing of the Land*, Rupert's Land Indigenous Council, 2003

A Psalm of the Woodland<sup>5</sup>

As a tree in the forest becomes tall reaching for the light,

**May we grow above the shadows of sin, fear and doubt**

As it gives shelter and shade to its friends of fur and feather,

**So may we help those brothers and sisters that are smaller and weaker than ourselves.**

The tree sends down roots deep into the soil that it may be nourished by Mother Earth.

**May we be as firmly grounded by the love of Christ and sustained by his grace.**

If a tree falls and decays, it provides nourishment for new plants and gives its place in the sun for others.

**Our Lord and Savior died to make new life and a new place for us.**

When a tree in the forest is cut down, its wood is used for shelter and fuel.

Jesus taught that only when life is surrendered, when love is poured out, can we build His Kingdom and reflect the warmth of His spirit.

**Amen.**

Blessings

May the Creator watch over you,

May the Spirit guide and lead you.

May Jesus be present in all that you do.

And the blessing of God Almighty,

The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

Be with you, within you and surrounding you and those you love,

This day and always. Amen.<sup>6</sup>

God is before us.

**God is behind us.**

God is above us.

**God is below us.**

God's words shall come from our mouths.

**For we are all God's essence, a sign of God's love.**

All is finished in beauty.

**All is finished in beauty.**<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Source: *Rupert's Land Indigenous Council??*

<sup>6</sup> Source: The Rev'd Mark Loyal

<sup>7</sup> Source: Navajo prayer tradition