

Living water

a prayer ritual

Gather together at a water source or around a large bowl of water and a large candle (a baptismal candle is ideal). Darkness or silence may help create the right ambience for this ritual.

Candle-lighting prayer as we move from the Shabbat to Sunday:

“Kodesh L'kodesh. From holiness to holiness.”

Meditation:

Lord God, your gift of water is a symbol of your grace.

*We remember that at the dawn of creation
your Spirit hovered over the waters
as you breathed the world to life.*

*In the waters of the great flood
you shed tears for the human family, lost in its sin.
And yet, as the waters settled and the rainbow arched,
your children once again lifted their faces to you.*

*It was water, Lord God,
that slaked the thirst of your chosen people in their earliest beginnings.
Our Father Abraham dug wells, and prospered.*

*It was over water drawn from wells that so many love stories began; where Rebekah was
sought to be Isaac's wife; and where Jacob fell in love with Rachel. It was at a well that
Moses met Zipporah, who would become his wife.*

Through water, Lord God, you performed miracles.

*When Hagar – alone with her dying son in the wilderness - cried out to you, your angel
led her to lifesaving water.*

*When your people were in the grip of slavery, on the waters of the Nile came a tiny child
destined to save your people.*

Through the waters of the Red Sea you led your people, Israel, out of slavery.

*As your people wandered 40 years in the desert you released water from rock to slake
their thirst and to encourage them in their journey to the promised land.*

*As Moses died on the hills of Moab, did he envy Joshua in that epic water-crossing as he
led the people of Israel across the Jordan River into the promised land?*

And how could Joshua ever know the significance of that crossing?

*That one day another young man would enter the Jordan waters
and emerge with a saving mission.*

*For it was in the waters of the Jordan that Jesus was baptized by John,
and from those waters his public mission began in earnest.*

From that day how abundantly did the water - lifegiving waters - flow!

*Water turned to wine, and feasting invited faith.
Waters of Lake Galilee, where fishermen left their boats behind
and raised sails of discipleship.
Waters where lepers were cleansed and hope proclaimed.
Water from a Samaritan well
Water bursting forth from the mouth of the Jordan, from the rock of Peter.
Who do you say I am? In water we find answers.
Terrifying, lifegiving, lifechanging answers.*

*When Jesus hung on the cross, water and blood flowed from his side.
In the birth of each human being, water and blood flows from the mother.
In waterfalls of grace and spirit, tears and triumphant telling and re-telling,
the world's rebirth began!
In joyous waters, Lord, your disciples were baptized.
In water we, too, were baptized:
"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."*

[Dip hand in water and make the sign of the cross]

*Through the grace of that day, Lord,
continue to recreate us in your image,
cleanse us from sin and fill us with your life.*

Amen.

This meditation might be followed with a sharing. E.g.,

- Share baptism memories. Renew your baptismal vows.
- Share thoughts on the Gospel passage.
- Share favorite 'water' stories.
- Do you know the story of your birth?
- Pray especially for expectant parents, co-creators of life.
- Pray for deceased loved ones; may they enjoy eternal life.