Welcome and Introduction
Leader: Today we celebrate World Environment Day, a day when we come together to reflect on our world and how we treat it or mistreat it. Our world and all that is in it is a gift from God and as part of God’s creation we are called to show respect and care for it. We are given the privilege of protecting the environment and ensuring responsible action for created life. Let us pray today that we can do all we can to “care for our common home”.

Gathering Song: (Choose a suitable opening song eg. Cosmic Hymn of Praise, Canticle of the Sun, For the Beauty of the Earth, All Things Bright and Beautiful, Joyful Joyful Lord We Adore Thee, God Has Done Marvellous Things, Laudato Si’, Song at the Centre)

Reader One: "Connecting People to Nature", the theme for World Environment Day 2017, implores us to get outdoors and into nature, to appreciate its beauty and its importance, and to take forward the call to protect the Earth that we share. This year’s theme invites us to think about how we are part of nature and how intimately we depend on it. It challenges us to find fun and exciting ways to experience and cherish this vital relationship.

Reader Two: World Environment Day is the biggest annual event for positive environmental action and takes place every 5 June. It is a day for everyone, everywhere. Since it began in 1972, global citizens have organized many thousands of events, from neighbourhood clean-ups, to action against wildlife crime, to replanting forests.

Call to Prayer
Leader: For all the rocks and earth we walk on.
All: Thank you, Awesome God (single clap)

Leader: For the running streams and oceans wide.
All: Thank you, Awesome God (single clap)

Leader: For the insects, birds and crawlies
All: Thank you, Awesome God (single clap)

Leader: For the grass and trees and flowers
All: Thank you, Awesome God (single clap)

Leader: For all the animals in the wild, for all the farm animals, for all our pets
All: Thank you, Awesome God (three claps)

Leader: For all your children everywhere, as they play in fields and grow in health
All: Thank you, Awesome God (Hurrah!)

Opening Prayer
Leader: Generous God, who gave us this beautiful world for our enjoyment, help us to appreciate your wonderful gift. With your help, may we become people of action, ready and willing to care for the land, the sea, the air and all creatures who live on our planet. We ask this prayer in Jesus’ name.

All: Amen.
The Word of God
Leader: As people of faith, our responsibility to the environment is so important as we consider the future for all people and all of God’s creation. We are called to improve the health of the environment and global community through sharing our abundant resources – especially those that can be used in the developing world. We need to protect the Earth and provide care to those who need our help. When we take conscious steps to protect the environment, we are working with God to preserve life. This reading from Genesis reminds us of our special call as human beings to care for God’s creation.

Reading: Genesis 1:26-31 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

So God created humankind in God’s image, in the image of God they were created; male and female. God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. God saw everything that God had made, and indeed, it was very good.

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Response
Video: I Am the Earth  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wkn1B7cjYQo

Prayer of the Faithful
A Sports/Health/Environment Teacher might lead the Prayer of the Faithful

Teacher: God’s plan for us is that we are healthy and active. To do this, strangely enough, we need to learn to sit still and breathe deeply. As we breathe in and out, we are praying to God for health. (Teacher leads assembly in quiet breathing in and out)
Teacher: Lord, hear us
All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Teacher: God’s plan for us is that we are strong and confident. To be like this, we need to move our bodies in the fresh air. Stand now, and without talking, run on the spot, for this is a prayer for health and fitness. (Teacher leads assembly in running on the spot. Indicates to stop)
Teacher: Lord, hear us
All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Teacher: God’s plan for us is that we get to know nature well. We can walk in the bush, swim in the ocean, climb a few hills, or go camping. This is something we need to plan to do... to spend some time
in nature every day. Let’s shut our eyes and think of how we and God can spend time together out in the great outdoors.

(Teacher leads assembly in standing still with eyes closed)

Teacher: Lord, hear us
All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Teacher: God’s plan for the earth is that it is protected. We are to look after nature with great care and responsibility. Sometimes we don’t do this properly. Hold your hands out wide and look to the sky. Promise God you will be on the side of nature forever.

(Teacher leads assembly in looking up with arms extended)

Teacher: Lord, hear us
All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Final Prayer

God of all creation, as we look at the environment, your divine power and immense love are always present. We thank you for the beautiful creation and abundant resources you have provided your children.

We ask for your help in revealing how we can be better stewards of your creation. Help us to use only the resources we need, never being selfish by taking more than necessary.

Please give us the opportunity to appropriately share our wealth with those who are less fortunate instead of disposing of our surplus.

Help us to remember that the environment is home to all life and that we must take up the responsibility to ensure all life is respected. We thank you for this day and ask for your blessing on this journey. We ask this through Jesus the Cosmic Christ, Amen.

Blessing and Dismissal

Leader: May we learn to enjoy our time outside, with the sun on our face, the breeze in our hair... and with plenty of sun-screen.
All: Amen.

Leader: May we learn to watch and learn about the marvels of nature - respecting all God’s amazing creatures... especially our pets.
All: Amen.

Leader: May we learn to share our outside time with good friends and family... and be always grateful for the land we live in.
All: Amen.

Leader: Now, let us go and play in the fields and be close to our God.
All: Thanks be to God.

Closing Song: (Choose a suitable closing song eg. Go Out to All the World, Together We make a Difference, We Are Called, We Belong to the Earth, A New Heart for a New World, Go Make a Difference)

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