



Abundant Life Garden Project

An interactive Scripture-based instructional program offered to parishes, teachers, families and others who seek to share the ministry of Episcopal Relief & Development

Blessing of a Garden

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Introduction

The blessing of farms or gardens is strongly “rooted” in Anglican tradition. On Rogation Days, the community would process around the perimeter of the parish with banners and bells, marking the boundaries of property at memorable trees or other landmarks. The work “rogation” derives from the Latin word rogare – “to ask.”

This modern interpretation of a Rogation Day blessing uses the ancient form of this procession, while incorporating the theological concepts of our Baptismal Covenant. Instead of setting up boundaries around their gardens (and their hearts), participants are encouraged to break down the boundaries of purely self-centered concerns. In the biblical tradition of using gardening imagery as a teaching tool for spiritual growth, communities are led in praying for their harvest as a means of sharing with those in need both locally and around the world – and in growing toward the full stature of Christ.

The full Abundant Life Garden Project curriculum may be downloaded at www.episcopalrelief.org/Children.

Gathering and Procession

The community or family might gather together before the Blessing of the Garden, forming a procession around the garden to be blessed. In the tradition of Anglican Rogation Days, banners and bells might accompany the procession. When those gathered have formed a circle around the garden, this litany may be said:

(Leader's prayers are **boldface**; children and others' lines are in *italics*.)

Leader: **The Lord be with you!**

Community: And also with you!

We gather together to ask God's blessing on our garden and to reflect on our own blessings. We dedicate our efforts in this garden to the glory of God, to be used for God's purposes here on earth.

The Leader will read the litany of prayers for blessings; the community will join each prayer for blessing with the words, "We pray you, Lord, to bless our garden." Holy Water might be sprinkled upon plants, seeds, soil, and all those in attendance at the conclusion of this blessing.

As all the earth is a garden, Lord, we ask that you bless this small piece of the earth. As Your Light shines upon us and upon this garden, giving us life, likewise help us to give light and life to others.

We pray you, Lord, to bless our garden.

We ask you, Lord, to bless the water that will nourish this garden. Help the roots of our plants tap into life-giving water. Help us to always be rooted in your love and in the water of the Holy Spirit.

We pray you, Lord, to bless our garden.

We ask you, Lord, to bless the soil that nourishes new life in this ground and in this community. Help us to look in awe at the mysteries of your work not yet seen. Help us to appreciate the nourishment of your earth and use it wisely.

We ask you, Lord, to bless our garden.

We ask you, Lord, to bless the seeds planted here. Help them to sprout and grow. Give all new life within this garden the right conditions to grow and bear fruit in Your Light.

We pray you, Lord, to bless our garden.

We ask you, Lord, for the knowledge, wisdom, and tools to best tend our garden and do your work to give life to ourselves and others.

We pray you, Lord, to bless our garden.

Gathering and Procession (cont.)

We ask you, Lord, for a bountiful harvest, both in our garden and in our lives. Give us the wisdom to take what we need to feed ourselves and to use our abundance to the benefit of others.

We pray you, Lord, to bless our garden.

Bless this garden, O Lord, and all life within it. Give us nourishment from this garden, as we feed ourselves and the entire human family through your love and your gifts.

In Christ's name, Amen.



At the conclusion of the blessing, community members might choose a special place in the garden as a personal place of reverence and prayer. Members of the community might also choose to hold in prayer a farm or community garden made possible by Episcopal Relief & Development through its local partners. For information on these efforts to alleviate hunger and improve the food supply, please see www.episcopalrelief.org/what-we-do/alleviating-hunger.