

The Abundant Life Garden Project®  
offered by Episcopal Relief & Development

# WATER

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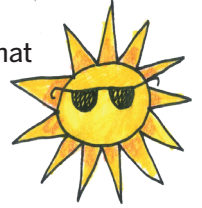
## The Abundant Life Garden Project®

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# WATER

### GARDEN GOALS

Participants will learn that God gives us gifts for abundant life, including water. It is important that we care for and share this gift with others.



This lesson is part of the **Abundant Life Garden Project®**. There are 6 lessons in total, plus an optional end-gathering. These lessons could be used during the following times: Lenten Soup Suppers or Small Groups, as VBS offering for adults, Sunday School/ Adult Forum hour, in preparation for beginning a Church Community Garden, or with the existing volunteers and participants of a Church Community Garden.

### Lesson 1: Water

## Welcome

Welcome to the **Abundant Life Garden Project®** offered by Episcopal Relief & Development. For the next several weeks we are going to learn what it means to have and to share the gift of abundant life and we are going to use the example of a garden as our guide to learning.

## Prayer:

As I begin this work:

### May God be in my mind

(using your right hand, touch middle of forehead)

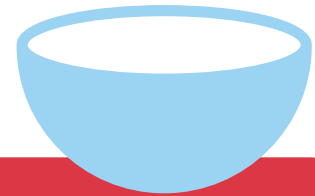
### May Jesus be in my heart

(using your right hand touch middle of chest)

### May the Holy Spirit be by my side

(using your right hand first touch the left shoulder, then the right shoulder.)

**Amen!**



Place a large clear bowl of water in the center of your meetings space.

## Stocking the Tool Shed

These are the items you will need this week:

- A large blank writing surface (paper, poster board, white board)
- At least one Bible (two or more copies preferable)
- At least one Book of Common Prayer or access to the BCP online.
- Television or Screen, and laptop if you will be watching the Digital story options
- Large Bowl
- Water
- Printed Copy of Stories from the Field Booklet
- Printed or displayed copies of the Closing Litany
- Printed copies of the Fact Cards





## Topic Introduction:

## Water!

Hand out the Water Facts cards from your **Printables Packet**. If this is a new class with people who are unfamiliar to each other, ask them to introduce themselves by sharing their name and why they came to this class, then ask class members to share the info on their card with the class:

EXAMPLE: My name is Kim, I came to this class because I like to garden and the water fact I have to share is...

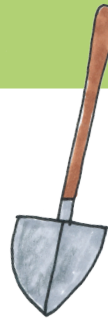
## Stories from the Field

For this option you will want to print out a copy or two of the **Stories from the Field Booklet** unless you choose to use the digital story option.

## INDEX CARDS:

## Water Facts

- One billion people on earth do not have access to clean water within a 15-minute walk of their home.
- Since water is an essential element of human life, good health and recovery from extreme poverty is not possible without access to clean water.
- There is the same amount of water on Earth as there was when the Earth was formed. The water from your faucet could contain molecules that dinosaurs drank.
- Nearly 97% of the world's water is salty or otherwise undrinkable. Another 2% is locked in ice caps and glaciers. That leaves just 1% for all of humanity's needs — all its agricultural, residential, manufacturing, community, and personal needs.
- Water regulates the Earth's temperature. It also regulates the temperature of the human body, carries nutrients and oxygen to cells, cushions joints, protects organs and tissues, and removes wastes.
- 75% of the human brain is water and 75% of a living tree is water.
- A person can live about a month without food, but only about a week without water (source <https://www3.epa.gov/safewater/kids/waterfactsoflife.html>)



## FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS:

- Which of these facts most surprise you?
- What do you think Water has to do with having or sharing the gifts of abundant life?

### Hard Copy Option:

#### **Building Access to Clean Water**

Ask for volunteers to read this brief true story. Take time to review together.

#### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

- What do you have to do to get water?
- How would your daily life change if you had to walk ten minutes to get water?
- How would you feel about walking to get water?
- What could you, your family, your church, or your community do to help people who do not have easy access to clean drinking water?

### Digital Options:

#### **Wells in Nicaragua**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x0NjSvtKQhY&lr=1&uid=9H4DbjpmVd3l-1e--txDg>

#### **Water and Sanitation in Nicaragua**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c9riTPKTfT4&lr=1&uid=9H4DbjpmVd3l-1e--txDg>

#### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

- How would it change your life if you had to walk 10 minutes to a stream to get water?
- How would you feel about walking to get water?
- What could you, your family, your church, or your community do to help people who do not have easy access to clean drinking water?

# Stories from our Faith

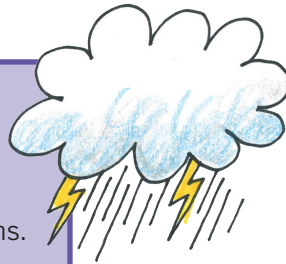
**Leader:** Let's now take a moment to look at water in the context of scripture:

**What are some of the Bible Stories or Church Traditions that include water?**

**Possible answers:** Story of creation, Noah and the Flood, Jonah and the Big Fish, Moses (as a baby, crossing the Red Sea, water from the rock), John baptizing Jesus, Jesus turning water into wine, Peter walking on the water, Paul in the shipwreck, Baptism, Eucharist.

**Leader:** I think it is obvious that water is an essential aspect of our faith, and within these these stories and traditions are lessons on how to have abundant life. Let's learn more about one of these stories/tradition.

**Ask for a volunteer to read your chosen text** (Old Testament, New Testament, or BCP)



**Hard Copy Option 1:** Old Testament Study

**Water from the Rock** Exodus 17:1-7

After your volunteer has read, discuss these questions.

**QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:**

- *What happens in this story?*
- *How would you feel if you saw this happening in person?*
- *Are there people in the world today who may feel like the people in this story, confused about where God is?*
- *How would you answer them?*
- *For people who are living in a similar situation, how can you help provide "abundant life"?*

**Option 2:** New Testament Study

**The Baptism of Jesus** Mark 1:4-13

**QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:**

- *What happens in this story?*
- *How would you feel if you saw John baptizing Jesus and others?*
- *How do you think the angels waited on Jesus in the wilderness? What would he need?*

Draw a picture or write words on blank paper or in your Garden Journal to describe how water was used in these scenes from the Bible.

**Digital Option 1:**  
**Wells in Nicaragua**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x0NjSvtKQhY&lr=1&uid=9H4DbjpmVd3l-1e--txDg>

**Digital Option 2:**  
**Water and Sanitation in Nicaragua**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c9riTPKTfT4&lr=1&uid=9H4DbjpmVd3l-1e--txDg>

**QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:**

- *What do you have to do to get water?*
- *What would your family have to do differently if you had to walk 10 minutes to a stream to get water?*
- *How would you feel about walking to get water?*
- *What could you, your family, your church, or your community do to help people who do not have easy access to clean drinking water?*

# Book of Common Prayer Study

## **Thanksgiving Over the Water**

Pages 306-307



### **QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:**

- ***What Bible stories do you recognize in these words?***
- ***What words are used as prayers in this passage?***
- ***What will the water be used for after these words are said?***

## Wrapping it Up



Let's Pass the bowl of water around your group.

Ask each person to dip their hands in the water.

Next, ask everyone to take a few deep breaths, and think about what they saw, heard or experienced during their time today.

Going around the room so that each person has a turn, ask the following questions (or just the last one). (If someone wants to take a "pass" and remain silent, that's okay.)

Ask class members to share an answer to one of the following:

- ***What did you learn during our time together?***
- ***Do you think about anything differently now?***
- ***What might change in your life as a result of this time together?***
- ***How will you share the gift of abundant life this week?***

# Closing Litany

You may ask one or more volunteers to read the leaders portion of this litany.

**Leader:** I will read several prayers about water. Since water is such an important gift, please respond to each of these prayers with, **We thank you, Lord, for the gift of water.**

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

**People: And also with you!**

**Leader:** Let us pray

**Leader:** Lord, thank you for the gift of this time together, and for the gift of water. Bless us in our use of water, in our mindfulness of how we manage our resources, and bless those in need of clean and more abundant water. Children and helpers: Amen.

(Litany Begins)

**Leader:** We thank you, Lord, for your creation that gives life on earth.

**People: We thank you, Lord, for the gift of water.**

**Leader:** We give thanks for rain, snow, fog and dew. We give thanks for water under the ground, above the ground and in the oceans.

**People: We thank you, Lord, for the gift of water.**

**Leader:** We give thanks for vast waters of the oceans, for water in lakes, rivers and streams. We give thanks for waters in glaciers, on the polar caps, for water bubbling out of rocky streams, for aquifers running underneath us and water in the tiniest puddles and buckets.

**People: We thank you, Lord, for the gift of water.**

**Leader:** We thank you, Lord, for the many uses of water. We give thanks for water to drink, water for cooking, water for bathing and cleaning, water upon and through with we travel to places far and near, and for water that cools us, warms us, and in which we might play.

**People: We thank you, Lord, for the gift of water.**

**Leader:** We especially thank you, Lord, for the gift of water to grow our food. We ask you to bless us and all people on the earth with enough water for our farms and gardens, to satisfy the thirst of ourselves and of our animals, and to wash away germs and keep us healthy.

**People: We thank you, Lord, for the gift of water.**

**Leader:** We thank you for the stories of water in the Bible—for the story of the creation of the earth, for the story of new life after the earth was flooded, for the story of water saving your people in the desert, for the story of crossing through water to get to the promised land.

**People: We thank you, Lord, for the gift of water.**

**Leader:** We thank you Lord, for the water in which Jesus was baptized and for the stories of water during his time on earth. We thank you for the water turned to wine, for the water that quenched his thirst, and for the water made into bread and wine during his Last Supper.

**People: We thank you, Lord, for the gift of water.**

**Leader:** We ask your help, O Lord, through all floods, droughts, and storms, to see the new creation that follows each one. We ask you to help us remember that you will be with us always in the gift of water.

**People: We thank you, Lord, for the gift of water.**

**Leader:** Help us to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbors as ourselves. Help us to strive for justice and peace among all people, and to respect the dignity of every human being. In Christ name, Amen.