



WATER

Forum Preparation

Set up:

Chairs should be arranged where each participant can hear and see the video as well as the facilitator. Because there will be discussion groups, facilitators may choose to use tables, but tables are not necessary. Participants should be able to move their seats around so that they may speak with one another.

Questions for group discussion should be posted somewhere easily seen by all of the groups. There should be newsprint or a whiteboard for the facilitator to write on.

Needed Materials:

- A way for the facilitator to keep time (a smartphone timer would work nicely)
- Newsprint or a whiteboard and markers
- Audio-visual capabilities, including speakers
- One copy of the *Signs of Life Practice Sheet* per participant

Learning Goals

The learning goals for Water are:

- Connecting the sign of water to personal spirituality or experience
- Understanding how water plays a role in Christian worship and community life
- Learning a new contemplative practice that can help participants connect more deeply to the sign of water

Forum Plan

Collect (5 minutes):

Gather the group's attention, and pray this collect:

Ever-creating Spirit, who brooded over the waters of chaos and brought forth all life from them: We thank you for the wondrous gift of water through which we die with Christ and are raised by you to the new life of grace; and we pray that we may ever be faithful stewards of this gift and make it available, clean and pure, to all living beings, that in so doing the springs of living water promised by Christ Jesus may well up in every human heart; through Jesus our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Father, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Watch Video (15 minutes):

Read the following prompt:

"As you watch this video, pay attention to the various ways water is explored, and think about how water is present in the life and liturgies of your worshiping community."

Press play and watch the video through to the end.

Reflection Question (5 minutes):

After the video is over, read the following script:

"Take a few moments to think about this prompt: 'What body of water has meant the most to you, and why?' [Pause] Now turn to a neighbor. You will each have two minutes to share your experience. One of you will start, and the other should listen. At the end of two minutes, I'll ask you to switch. When one person is talking, the other should not interrupt. Please listen to your partner."

Use a timer to give the group one minute to think about the question. At the end of one minute, invite them to share with their neighbor, reiterating that they will each have only two minutes to answer the question, and that the listener should not interrupt. After two minutes of sharing, invite the other participant to take their turn. At the end of the second two minutes, call the group back to attention.

Discussion Groups (15 minutes):

Read the following script:

- “Please gather into groups of four or five. You will take the next 15 minutes to discuss the following three questions:*
- Where does water show up in the life and liturgy of your worshipping community? How does water help you tell the Story?*
 - In the video, the brothers talk about how they see their baptism in moments of surrender. Reflect on a time when you chose to surrender. How did you experience resurrection?*
 - All people and creatures need clean and safe water to live and flourish. Is this need being met in your community? How does your worshipping community meet this need?*

You will be able to reference the questions here [gesture to where you’ve posted the questions] or on your handout. You may decide to answer all three questions, or spend more time on one or two. This is a conversation. Please be inclusive, and remember that not everyone needs to respond to every question. I’ll remind you when you are halfway through your time.

We will then gather back together so that the groups can share.”

Use a timer to remind participants when seven minutes have passed. When there are two minutes remaining, give participants a two minute warning.

Gathering Conversation (10 minutes):

Ask one person from each small group to share a highlight of their discussion with the larger group. Responses may be gathered on whiteboard or newsprint.

Closing:

Bring attention to the *Signs of Life: Water Practice Sheet*. Read this script:

“Here is a reminder of the daily practice for this Sign of Life. This week while you wash your hands, you are invited to take time to feel the water and remember your baptism.”

Pray the collect:

Ever-creating Spirit, who brooded over the waters of chaos and brought forth all life from them: We thank you for the wondrous gift of water through which we die with Christ and are raised by you to the new life of grace; and we pray that we may ever be faithful stewards of this gift and make it available, clean and pure, to all living beings, that in so doing the springs of living water promised by Christ Jesus may well up in every human heart; through Jesus our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Father, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Thank participants for participating. The session is over.