

Habel Hymns 1

Songs for Celebrating *with* Creation

Norman C Habel
c. 2004



All the trees of the forest sing for joy
(Ps. 96.12)

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Preface

To the

HABELS

who gathered around the piano
at the family home,
my mother Silvia,
a singer
who played the piano
and conducted the church choir,
my father, Ted,
a farmer
who loved the giant red gums
and rich black soil,
my brother, Arnold,
a shearer,
with whom I climbed every tree
for miles around,
my sister, Carolyn,
a naturopath,
who knows the mysteries of nature
alive in the body,
my son Simon,
an environmentalist and
my daughter Fern,
a theatre nurse,
both of whom celebrate new life
in their gardens each Spring,
my daughter Robyn,
a better songwriter than I will ever be,
my daughter Anjali,
who has begun writing melodies
for the songs of her old man,
my twin brothers Richard and Edward,
who died at birth but sing silently,
and especially,
my great grandfather Wilhelm,
an early environmentalist
who led the Habels from Germany in 1849
and for years fought the locals in a struggle
to plant a nature reserve at Lake Linlithgow

and won.

Introduction

Celebrating *with* Creation

The songs in this collection are written to help us celebrate with creation.

A major difference between most of these songs and traditional hymns that praise the Creator is that they also involve creation in the celebration—trees, animals, mountains, seas, birds and so on. The songs reflect an awareness of Earth as a sanctuary for God's presence.

These songs invite us to listen to Earth, to learn from Earth and to celebrate with the Earth community. The language of these songs is more than poetic expression; it is designed to evoke the presence of Earth and Earth community as an integral part of our worshipping community.

In the current environmental crisis and with a new consciousness of Earth as a living reality, I believe it is time to join with Earth and the Earth community in worship. It is time to recognise that all the creatures of this planet are our kin, born, like Adam, of Earth and the Spirit of God.

These songs are intended to help us:

- praise our Creator *with* our kin in creation
- discern Christ in the very web of life
- empathise with Earth in her suffering
- face the ecological crisis with Christ
- serve Christ in the healing of creation
- hail the risen Jesus as the cosmic Christ

These creation songs may be sung at any time, but they are especially written to be celebrated in a creation or Earth liturgy like those found in *The Seven Songs of Creation*, published by Pilgrim Press (2004) where many of these songs have also been published. These songs are also appropriate for worshipping communities who choose to include **A Season of Creation** in their Church year.

I have written the lyrics to each of these songs, sometimes using traditional melodies from known songs to facilitate immediate use in worship and retreats. In some cases, where new melodies have been

written, worshippers have a choice of using the new melody or the traditional melody.

Songs Chosen for Celebrating with Creation

For almost 50 years I have been writing songs, not as a professional songwriter, but as the need arises for a particular occasion, celebration, or worship event. The current need for songs that link us anew with creation has led me to select some of the Earth songs and creation hymns I have written over the years. My hope is that they will prove helpful to singers, worshippers and creation lovers as they celebrate with creation.

1. Song of the Sanctuary

*This song is a deliberate re-writing of the well-known hymn **Guide me O Thou Great Jehovah**. The traditional words of the hymn, as the second line demonstrates, devalue Earth and direct the eyes of the worshipper to heaven. Instead of viewing heaven as our only true home, this song also affirms Earth as our true home, the sanctuary chosen for us humans to live and for God to fill with God's own glory. (Isa. 6.3)*

2. Song of Sky

*In this song, we are faced with the amazing reality of a vast and overwhelming cosmos, a Sky beyond human imagination. Within that vast Sky, one piece of stardust is chosen by God for the birth of life, the presence of God and the splendour of Earth. That humans should raid such a beautiful sacred place is even more amazing (cf. Ps. 19). The melody chosen for this song is **Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken**.*

3. Song of Earth

*This song is a celebration of Earth, that mysterious domain first revealed by God in the beginning, when God summoned Earth to appear from beneath the waters (Gen. 1.9). In this song the mystery, wonder and honour invested in Earth are proclaimed loud and strong. This song has all the joy of a resurrection cry and can be sung to the melody of **Jesus Christ is Risen Today**.*

4. Song of Waters

*Song of Waters is a fresh rendering of Psalm 104, focusing on the way God celebrates waters in a rich range of forms. The invitation in this song is not only to sing about these life-giving waters, but to experience the waters and the presence of God in, with and under these waters. The traditional melody used here is **Praise, my Soul, the King of Heaven**, a song tune that complements the invitation to celebrate the God of waters.*

5. Song of Sophia

This song is an expression of the profound mystery of Sophia (Wisdom) present with God at creation, now embedded in creation and celebrating life with each of us as we dance the songs of creation. The words are based largely on Proverbs 8.22-31. The melody is the inspired work of Alan Cadwallader, both a musician and a New Testament scholar.

6. Song of the Wild

This song is an exploration of the domains of Earth portrayed in the great speech of God from the whirlwind in Job 38-39. These domains are the world of the wild, the mysterious world that humans can only begin to understand but never master or dominate. The melody was written by my teenage daughter, Anjali.

7. Mother Earth, Our Mother Birthing

*The occasion for this song was the 40th Anniversary of the ordination of Rev. John Sabel who is a poet and a disciple of St Francis of Assisi. The poem honours St Francis by acclaiming Earth, Air, Water and Fire as our kin, components we have in common with planet Earth and with Jesus of Nazareth. In addition to the strong melody written by Doug Petherick, singers may wish to use the traditional tune, **Praise, my Soul, the King of Heaven**.*

8. God's Sacred Secret Garden

This song celebrates Earth as a garden, as a sacred site, as a sanctuary and as a place of love and promise. There are several connotations to the expression 'sacred secret'—a sanctuary that is filled with mysteries from the hand of the Creator and a deep hidden truth that we are privileged to

know. Among Indigenous peoples, the ‘sacred secret’ story or symbol is only known to the initiated. The music is a creation of Leigh Newton.

9. Be Still and Feel the Presence

*This brief refrain is written for inclusion at the beginning of liturgies where the worshippers pause to sense the presence of God, or for occasions when people meditate in natural contexts. The melody is associated with a similar theme, namely, **Be Still and Know that I am God.***

10. Celebrate the Land

In this song, I seek to reflect the Australian spirituality of those who sense a kinship with the land that ‘feeds our soul’. The wagtail is a cheeky bird and the North wind in summer is a portent of bushfires. The sacredness of rock and tree reflects a bond with the Indigenous people of the land. The melody of Leigh Newton is designed to lift the soul in celebration.

11. Hear the Earth Mourning

*In this song we are summoned to hear the cries of Earth, everything from the forest to the blood of innocent children crying from the ground. There is a subtle interplay with the original words and traditional melody of **Morning has Broken.** The close bond between the suffering of the land and the Indigenous peoples of the land is reflected in this song.*

12. Song of Healing

I created this Earth song in Geneva where a team of Lutherans from around the world met to write materials for the 2003 Lutheran World Federation assembly in Winnipeg. Healing was the theme for the assembly; the song captures key themes and images of healing expressed by writers in the team. This song is a sequel to the preceding song and employs the same melody.

13. Today in New Creation Day

This song belongs to my St Louis days when I wrote and worshipped with youth groups across America. The melody was written by, a then student of mine, Paul Weber. The celebration of new creation—in nature and in life—was a bold message for youth in the 60s and remains so today.

14. Rise, Creator Spirit, Rise

*The words of this song were written in a workshop with the Indigenous Rainbow Spirit Elders of North Queensland in Australia, who have redeemed their beliefs in the Creator Spirit, also known as the Rainbow Spirit, as consistent with their Christian faith. They reflect their experience of God and all life emerging from Earth below rather than descending from heaven above. The Dreaming is the life force that emerged from creation at creation, comes alive in sacred ceremony and is shared by humans and other living creatures. The popular melody, **Hark, The Herald Angels Sing**, was chosen by the elders as one they loved.*

15. Feel the Pulsing of God

*In this song we feel the moments of creation celebrated in Genesis One. Instead of simply listing these moments as a catalogue of divine deeds, we experience creation happening around us as the life pulse of God brings all creation to life. Each of these verses also corresponds to the ten moments in creation reflected in the rich Indigenous art of a book entitled **The Rainbow Spirit in Creation** (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2000). The melody chosen for this song is known as **Anna's Song** is the work of Robin Mann. The original text of **Anna's Song** is found in **Outback Christmas** which I developed with the artist Pro Hart (Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1990).*

16. The Cosmic Christ

*I wrote this song to fill a gap in most of our hymnals. We praise Christ as our redeemer, our risen Lord, our friend in need and our coming King. But rarely do we acclaim the risen Christ as the deep cosmic force that sustains and reconciles all things in creation. At the suggestion of my daughter, I chose the melody of **Amazing Grace**, a song about the amazing Cosmic Christ. (See Eph. 1-10; Col. 1.15-20)*

17. Now Thank We All

*This song is a revision of the traditional hymn **Now Thank We All Our God** designed to raise our consciousness to and appreciation of domains that we would have preserved if we had indeed been thankful and not*

greedy in our concern for creation. Hopefully that concern will now move use to heal rather than hurt creation.

18. For This Great Sunburnt Land

*In 1979 we held a Habel Family Reunion at Lake Linlithgow to honour my great-grandfather Wilhelm who was an environmentalist ahead of his time. He planted native trees to create a reserve around Lake Linlithgow in Western Victoria. Farmers rooted them out saying, 'God intended the land for sheep not for a pleasure park'. Eventually Wilhelm got approval for the reserve which stands to this day. The song celebrates, with creation, all pioneers. The song also celebrate the Indigenous people who were the original custodians of this land. Following the theme of the preceding hymn, the melody employed is also **Now Thank We All our God**.*

19. We Invite Creation

*In 1969, in St Louis, USA, Richard Koehneke and I wrote a jazz liturgy entitled **Invitation**. This hymnic response is a revision of the opening invitation of that liturgy, reflecting the current environmental context.*

20. The Garden of Life

In 2004, the Anglican Church of Adelaide, South Australia, held a song melody competition. I provided the lyrics for this competition. The winning melody for this song was created by Shane Byrnes. This song and melody is printed with the permission of the Anglican Church of Adelaide who holds copyright. The theme of this song is especially appropriate for a Season of Creation liturgy.

21. O for a Thousand Trees

*In 2004 the Uniting Church of Australia piloted a Season of Creation. This song, sung to the traditional melody **O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing**, captures the theme of celebrating with creation and, in particular, the forest, the land, the Outback and the rivers.*

1. SONG OF THE SANCTUARY

1. You who watch the highest heavens
Wond'ring where God's mansions are;
You who hope to spot an angel
Spinning like a falling star;
Earth is calling, Earth is calling,
Come back home and rest in me.
Come back home and rest in me.

2. You who build exotic buildings
Taller than the forest tree,
Don't you know that all foundations
Deep, deep down reside in me.
Earth is calling, Earth is calling,
Come back home and live in me.
Come back home and live in me.

3. You who travel Earth as pilgrims,
Dreaming where you'd rather be;
God's own glory fills my body,
I am God's own sanctuary.
Earth is calling, Earth is calling,
Come back home to God in me.
Come back home to God in me

4. You who hope for joys in heaven,
Do you know the joys of Earth?
Ancient forests filled with singing,
Seas that shout when whales give birth?
Earth is calling, Earth is calling,
Come back home and sing with me.
Come back home and sing with me.

5. You who long for bread like manna
Falling from the hand of God?
Know that Earth provides your water,
Precious breath and daily food.
Earth is calling, Earth is calling,
Come back home and dine with me.

Come back home and dine with me.

Words: © Norman Habel 2000

2. SONG OF SKY

1. Lord of suns and star exploding
Galaxies and swirling skies,
Where you chose to show your glory
Took the heavens by surprise.
Lord of solar winds and wisdom,
Super stars that blow our mind,
Choosing such a fragile planet
Hardly seems a grand design.

2. On this piece of stardust swirling,
On this spinning spot in space,
Life itself was born like music,
When you showed your hidden face.
What an honour to be chosen,
Silent planet blue and green,
Filled with glory, grace and gardens,
Where the breath of God is seen.

3. What is even more amazing
We have poisoned Earth like fools.
Help us change our way of living,
Love the Earth and love her rules.
Help us stem the tide of traders
Leaving Earth an empty store;
Join us now Creator Spirit,
Come renew your Earth once more.

Words: © Norman Habel 1999

3. SONG OF EARTH

1. Hail the Earth that first appeared. Alleluia!
When a word from God was heard. Alleluia!
Let the Earth arise and be. Alleluia!
Filled with living mystery. Alleluia!
2. Hail the rainbow flying high. Alleluia!
Spun by God across the sky. Alleluia!
Giving Earth a solemn word. Alleluia!
Never to unleash a flood. Alleluia!
3. Hail the planet blue and green. Alleluia!
Where the face of God is seen. Alleluia!
Glory filling all the Earth. Alleluia!
Celebrating every birth. Alleluia!
4. Hail our body made with clay. Alleluia!
Given breath to praise and pray. Alleluia!
Clay God honoured by God's birth. Alleluia!
As a human life on Earth. Alleluia!
5. Hail the groans of Earth in pain. Alleluia!
From the weight of human sin. Alleluia!
Longing for the Christ who died. Alleluia!
All creation to revive. Alleluia!

Words: © Norman Habel 1999

4. SONG OF THE WATERS

1. Watch once more the windswept storm clouds;
Suddenly the sky has wings!
God has come to rain among us,
Giving hope to all dry things.
Sing a song of splashing waters,
Pulsing through the veins of Earth.
2. Taste the moisture of the morning,
Smoother than the best red wine;
Toast the lifeblood of the planet:
Here's to God's wild wet design!
Sing a song of flowing waters,
Pulsing through the veins of Earth.
3. View anew the dark blue ocean,
Whales cavorting, spraying foam;
God at play with deep sea monsters,
Feeling very much at home.
Sing a song of laughing waters,
Pulsing through the veins of Earth.
4. Feel the breath of God move softly,
Gentle mists that brush the skin;
Earth is breathing God's own spirit,
Life renewed from deep within.
Sing a song of living waters,
Pulsing through the veins of Earth.

Words: © Norman Habel 2001

5. SONG OF SOPHIA

1. Before stardust was spun
Into planets and stars,
I was there.
And before Earth was born
In the grey primal dawn,
I was there.
I am Sophia!
2. I'm that Wisdom God saw
In each natural law;
I was there.
I'm the myst'r'y God found
In each light-wave and sound.
I was there.
I am Sophia!
3. When the world was created,
We joined hands, celebrated;
I was there.
Like a child when delighted
I got God quite excited,
I was there.
I am Sophia!
4. When the sages divine
Read the landscape of time ,
I was there.
Saw the stars that were made
When God's female form played,
I was there.
I am Sophia!
5. In each hidden design
Of creation you find,
I am there.
I'm the song, I'm the soul
Of all life that evolves,
I am there.
I am Sophia!

6. SONG OF THE WILD

1. Will you come back with Me to the birth of the Earth,
Before all its life forms evolved?
Will you sing with the heavens amazed at the sight:
A planet with secrets to unfold?

Refrain:

Will you praise,
Be amazed
With eyes as wide as a child's?
Will you praise,
Be amazed
And sing
The song of the wild?

2. Will you walk home with Me on the way to the wild
And watch baby birds break from their shells?
Do you know how I serve as a mid-wife to all,
The lion, the lizard and gazelle?
3. Will you gather with Me as the wading birds dance,
Preparing to migrate North once more?
Can you fathom the code I have fixed in their souls
To navigate oceans when they roar?
4. Will you sleep with your God in the desert one night
And wake with the creatures of the sand?
Can you fathom the wisdom instilled in their mind
To live without water, sun or man?
5. If you don't feel at home with the rain forest snakes,
If you're troubled when creatures change their skin,
Then surrender the claim that you rule on this Earth
And discover creation as your kin.

7. MOTHER EARTH, OUR MOTHER BIRTHING

1. Mother Earth, our mother birthing
Ev'ry creature from the ground.
Jesus too was flesh and breathing,
Kin to all that's green and brown.
Celebrate with all creation:
God has joined the web of life.
2. Sister Air, our sister lifting
Ev'ry creature born with wing;
Jesus shared the breath of forests,
Breath that makes our spirits sing.
Celebrate with all creation:
God has joined the web of life.
3. Brother Water, brother pulsing
Deep through ev'ry vein and sea,
Jesus drank the very raindrops
For our wine and in our tea.
Celebrate with all creation:
God has joined the web of life.
4. Father Fire, our father burning
With the sacred urge to live.
Jesus' death completes the cycle,
Bringing life beyond the grave.
Celebrate with all creation:
God has joined the web of life.

Words: © Norman Habel 1999

8. GOD'S SACRED SECRET GARDEN

1. A million spinning galaxies
A trillion orbs in flight,
Yet God chose one to be a home,
A sacred secret site.
A million brilliant shafts of light
Projecting into space,
Yet God's own glory fills the Earth,
A mask to veil God's face.

This Earth!
This Earth!
God's sacred secret garden.

2. A million mighty forms are found
Pulsating high above,
Yet God let human form reveal
God's sacred secret—love!
A million ugly human acts
May lay God's garden bare,
Yet rainbows promise all of us
The gardener still cares,

For Earth!
For Earth!
God's sacred secret garden.

3. God chose a piece of common clay
To share the pain of birth,
To suffer with this broken land
And heal the wounds of Earth.
Now healing from the garden flows
From Christ, the living tree,
To lift the pulse of all that lives
And give them power to be.

This Earth!
This Earth!
God's sacred secret garden.

Words: © Norman Habel 2000

9. BE STILL AND FEEL THE PRESENCE

1. Be still and feel the presence of God,
The presence pulsing, pulsing through Earth,
Be still and feel the pulse of God.
2. Be still and hear the Spirit of God,
The Spirit breathing, breathing through Earth,
Be still and hear the breath of God.
3. Be still, behold the glory of God,
The glory filling, filling this Earth.
Be still, behold the face of God.

Words: C Norman Habel 2004

10. CELEBRATE THE LAND

1. When the wagtail tips her tail to God
And the kookaburra laughs and laughs aloud,
It's time for all who love this Earth,
To celebrate the land, this land,
The land who gives us birth.
2. When the stately red gum stands alone
And the birds of the forest lose their home,
It's time to fall upon our knees
And celebrate the land, this land,
The land who give us trees.
3. When the outback windmill turns to rust
And a hot North wind fills the sky with dust
It's time to watch for bushfire smoke
And celebrate the land, this land,
The land that gives us hope.
4. When the welcome rains have ended drought
And the seed in the soil begins to sprout
It's time for city, country, scrub
To celebrate the land, this land,
The land who gives us bread.
5. When the Spirit lifts our eyes to see
There is sacred power in rock and tree,
Then may a treaty bind us all
To celebrate the land, this land,
The land who feeds our soul.

Words: © Norman Habel 1995

11. HEAR THIS EARTH MOURNING

1. Hear this Earth mourning deep in pollution,
Hear this Earth mourning, death in her lungs:
“How I keep longing for that first morning,
When all creation broke forth in songs”.
2. Hear the trees falling deep in the forest,
Hear the trees calling, tortured by chain:
“Where are the song birds, thousands of voices,
Rising in one symphonic refrain”.
3. Hear the blood crying, crying for justice;
Hear the blood crying, deep in the ground:
“Massacres, murders, species forgotten!
Where is the healing? Where is it found”?
4. Hear the land wailing deep in the darkness,
Hear the land wailing, crying in pain:
“Where are my children, torn from their homelands?
Children, my children, come home again”!
5. Hear that man crying, crucified dying;
Hear that man crying, gasping for breath:
I’ll share your suffering! I’ll stop your bleeding!
I’ll bring you healing, even in death”!

Words: © Norman Habel 2000

12. SONG OF HEALING

1. Healing is flowing, deep in the waters,
Flowing from Eden, flowing from old.
All through creation, God sends forth waters,
Oceans of healing, for all the world.
2. Healing is rising, fresh with the morning,
Healing is rising, bursting with grace.
Christ, our rich healing, deep in creation,
Heal Earth's deep wounds and rise in this place.
3. Healing is offered, leaves from the life tree,
Healing is offered nations at war.
Come, wounded Healer, torn by the violence,
Rise from the grave, bring peace to our shore.
4. Healing is given, flows from forgiveness,
Healing is given, flows from our faith.
Christ, give us heart to love your deep healing,
Living forgiveness, even in death.
5. Healing is rising, free in Christ's body,
Healing is flowing, free with Christ's blood.
May this deep healing pulse through our bodies,
Heal the world's wounds still bleeding and red.

13. TODAY IS NEW CREATION DAY

1. A wind flame from the ancient void
Swept wild across the groaning deep,
A voice like lightning struck the sea
To rouse her from her ancient sleep,
And stars exploded with the dawn
As green and glist'ning Earth was born:
Today, today is new creation day!
2. Deep birthquakes through the universe
Portend a world where children play,
As Earth in labour pain awaits
The cosmic liberation day,
For Christ erupted from the Earth
To make this day a day of birth:
Today, today is new creation day!
3. Like young birds trapped in caverns cold
We yearn to soar with endless flight;
In Christ we find our newborn selves
And freedom from the daily fight,
Affirming life as birth to be
At one with those in agony:
Today, today is new creation day!
4. With Christ we plunged beneath the grave
And rose like dawn created new,
Our exodus through tidal waves

Purged us for celebrating true,
All human dignity and worth
Through Christ our partner on this Earth:
Today, today is new creation day!

Words: © Norman Habel 1970

14. RISE CREATOR SPIRIT RISE

1. Rise Creator Spirit, rise,
From this land across the skies.
Rise from deep within this land,
Move across the desert sand.
Rise, create this land anew,
Make your Dreaming song come true.
Fill this land with life again,
Make the desert bloom with rain.
Fill this land with life again,
Make the desert bloom with rain.
2. Rise, Creator Spirit, rise,
From this land across the skies.
Rise from deep in mystery,
Rise to set your people free.
Hear the land cry out in pain,
Hear her people call your name.
Let your rainbow span this Earth
Giving hope and giving birth.
Let your rainbow span this Earth
Giving hope and giving birth.
3. Rise, Creator Spirit, rise,
From this land across the skies.
Rise from deep within the tomb,
Making Jesus' grave a womb.
Plunging back into your cave,

Bringing life to ev'ry grave,
Life that rose with Jesus Christ,
Rose to fill our hearts and eyes.
Life that rose with Jesus Christ,
Rose to fill our hearts and eyes.

Words: © Norman Habel 1996

15. FEEL THE PULSING OF GOD

(In the Ten Moments of Creation)

Moment One – The Beginning

1. Feel the pulsing of God
Silent, steady and slow
In the dark and the deep,
While Earth waits down below.
Feel the pulse!
Feel the pulsing of God.

Moment Two - Light

2. Feel the pulsing of God
In the darkness of night,
As the morning breaks forth
In a shimmer of light.
Feel the pulse!
Feel the pulsing of light!

Moment Three - Sky

3. Feel the pulsing of God
Sending signals on high,
Making space for the sea
And a ceiling called sky.
Feel the pulse!
Feel the pulsing of sky!

Moment Four - Earth

4. Feel the pulsing of God
In a labour of birth,
Parting waters to watch

The arrival of Earth,
Feel the pulse!
Feel the pulsing of Earth!

Moment Five – Vegetation

5. Feel the pulsing of God
In the brown and the green,
Stirring seeds from the soil
So the bush could be seen.
Feel the pulse!
Feel the pulsing of green!

Moment Six – Sun and Moon

6. Feel the pulsing of God
Where the lights start to shine,
Sending signals through space
So that Earth beats in time.
Feel the pulse!
Feel the pulsing of sky!

Moment Seven – Sea Life

7. Feel the pulsing of God
In the deeps of the sea,
Water life starts to swim
In a wild symphony.
Feel the pulse!
Feel the pulsing of sea!

Moment Eight – Animals

8. Feel the pulsing of God
In the heart of the ground,
Where soft cells start to form
And new creatures are found.
Feel the pulse!
Feel the pulsing of ground!

Moment Nine – Humans

9. Feel the pulsing of God
Making woman and man,
With a spirit to praise
The amazing I AM.
Feel the pulse!
Feel the pulsing I AM!

Moment Ten - Celebration

10. Feel the pulsing of God,
Racing without regrets,
As God cries out in love,
'Just as good as it gets!'
Feel the pulse!
Feel the pulsing of love!

Words: © Norman Habel 2003

16. THE COSMIC CHRIST

1. Amazing is the Christ who died
To void all sin and curse,
Just as amazing is his life
That fills the universe.
2. The risen Christ is more than one
Who waits on some far shore;
In, with and under ev'ry thing
Christ is the living core.
3. The hidden Christ sustains for us
The blueprint of the skies,
The wisdom in each fragile form,
The soul that lights the eyes.
4. The cosmic Christ moves deep below
To heal the wounds within,
When all creation groans in pain
Because of human sin.
5. The cosmos hails the Christ, the One
Who reconciles all things,
'Til all creation rises new
With healing in her wings.
6. As Christ unites the universe,
Restores this Earth once more,
A cosmic song reverberates,
A rich symphonic score.

Words: © Norman Habel 2004

17. NOW THANK WE ALL

1. Now thank we all our God
In whom this Earth rejoices,
For creatures great and small
Who now have lost their voices;
And species calling us
Before they disappear,
To love this fragile Earth
That God would have us share.
2. O may this bounteous God
In ev'ry tree be near us
To help us feel the pain
Of barren lands so cheerless,
Where once like Eden fresh,
Wild birds in freedom flew
To celebrate a land,
Where life rose crystal new.
3. All praise and thanks to God
Our Father now be given,
Who kept alive on Earth,
This tribe of greedy humans,
Who sent an only son
To suffer earthly pain,
That cosmic ill and death
Should never rule again.
4. O Spirit from the land
Rise up like sacred leaven
To free us from the ills

Polluting Earth and heaven;
Inspire us with the drive
To be like healing rain,
Renewing life on Earth
And praising God again.

Words: © Norman Habel 1991

18. FOR THIS GREAT SUNBURNT LAND

1. For this great sunburnt land
We join in celebration,
With all its native life,
The joy of God's creation:
Fresh lakes and tall blue gums
Who raise their voice on high,
Black swans that sweep with grace
Across the morning sky.
2. Now thank we, God, this day
For pioneers with vision,
Who found this heritage
A gift from God's deep passion.
O God of this wide land,
Grant us the faith to see,
You filled its soul with song,
A sacred mystery.
3. With this great sunburnt land
We join in celebration,
With roos and cockatoos
And mobs from ev'ry nation;
Custodians God chose
For bush and billabong,
We join with grateful voice
To sing this country strong.

Words: © Norman Habel 1991

19. WE INVITE CREATION

- 1 V. We invite creation to worship with us.

R. We invite the skies to thunder God's word,
Deep space to rumble and ring,
The stars to celebrate light
And planet Earth to sing.
- 2 V. We invite the forest to worship with us.

R. We invite wild apes to swing through the trees,
Soft ferns to glisten and wave,
Green frogs to glow in the night
And ev'ning bats to praise.
- 3 V. We invite the oceans to worship with us.

R. We invite young seals to dance in the waves,
Old whales to trumpet their spray,
Electric eels to rejoice
And manta rays to pray.
- 4 V. We invite small creatures to worship with us,

R. We invite shy skinks to sing under rocks,
All timid beetles and ants,
To raise their voices below
And fairy wrens to dance.
- 5 V. We invite creation to worship with us.

R. We invite the God who celebrates life

To quake and quiver below,
To join the cheering of Earth
And take a cosmic bow.

Words: © Norman Habel 1969

20. THE GARDEN OF LIFE

Words: 2000 Norman Habel

Music: 2004 Shayne Byrne

1. In a haven of space
On a planet called Earth
God planted a garden
With four flowing streams;
From the soul of its soil
Gentle life forms emerged,
And breath from our God
Gave hope to their dreams.

And life was born,
Life was born,
Born of Earth and the Spirit of God.

2. Like an artist entranced
The Creator felt free
To play nature's chords,
And lift heaven's voice;
'Til the music of life,
Caused creation to dance,
The four winds to sing
And oceans rejoice.

And life went wild,
Life went wild,
Wild with Earth and the Spirit of God

3. Somewhere deep in the garden
Where God's Wisdom is found,

The Spirit was moved
To make a new choice,
And a human was formed,
With a spirit inside,
Created to sing
With Wisdom's deep voice.

And life sang forth
Life sang forth
Sang with Earth and the Spirit of God.

4. Then the humans arose
With colonial power,
Invaded creation
And caused life to hide.
With pollutants and toxins
And cruel disdain,
They battered the garden
And life forms soon died.

Creation groaned,
Cried and groaned,
Groaned with Earth and the Spirit of God.

5. The Creator then chose
To assume human flesh
To suffer and groan
With Earth under strain;
After three days with death
In the warm womb of Earth
God rose from the ground
To start life again.

And Life arose,
Life arose,
Rose from Earth and the Spirit of God

21. O FOR A THOUSAND TREES

O for a thousand trees to sing
And join with us this day,
With ferns and frogs and butterflies:
A forest hymn of praise.

Come celebrate with all the land,
Let species rare begin,
With geese and owls and cockatoo:
A choir of country kin.

How can we hear creation groan,
The Outback cry in pain?
With desert dragons we rejoice
When Earth is born again.

Let ev'ry stream and river flow
In song toward the sea;
With whale, and seal and albatross
We thank God we are free!

O for a thousand trees to sing
And join with us this day,
With ferns and frogs and butterflies:
A forest hymn of praise.

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