

Season of Creation 2026: Living Water

Eco Contemplative Liturgy, Sunday 27th September 2026

Led by Deborah Colvin

Gathering

Let us be still, slow and deepen our breathing. As the season turns, we bring ourselves to full presence in this place and this time, wherever each of us is in the real world, perhaps with our feet on the earth or floor, back and limbs relaxed and comfortable. We both *invite* and *offer* relationship with beloved earth. If you are online, perhaps there is a green growing being outside your window, or a stone, or a piece of the sky to support you. We breathe deeply and listen to a 3-minute excerpt from 'Ten Wells', a composition giving voice to St James's parish wells.

If you are participating online, please go to this page <https://earthjustice.sjp.org.uk/projects/wellspring> and click the button 'Hear a short sample'.

We will take a short pause before and after each reading.

Readings

Like the water
of a deep stream,
love is always too much.
We did not make it.
Though we drink till we burst,
we cannot have it all,
or want it all.
In its abundance
it survives our thirst.

In the evening we come down to the shore
to drink our fill,
and sleep,
while it flows
through the regions of the dark.
It does not hold us,
except we keep returning to its rich waters
thirsty.

We enter,
willing to die,
into the commonwealth of its joy.

'Like the Water', Wendell Berry

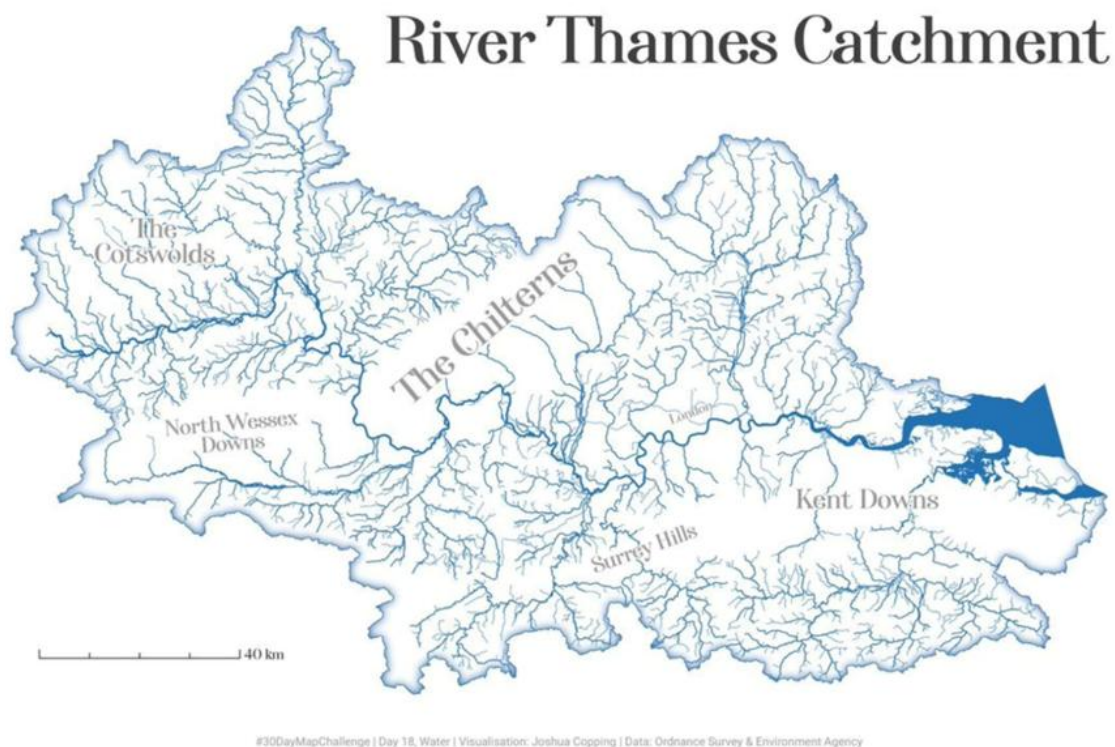
Then he uncovered my inward being towards him
And filled me with his love...

And speaking waters touched my lips
From the fountain of the Lord generously,
And so I drank and became intoxicated
From the living water that does not die...

From the 'Odes of Solomon', thought to be baptismal hymns from the first century CE

Individual contemplative time

We now have 15 minutes for silent contemplation in the St James's garden situated downstream in the River Thames watershed, or, for those online, a space where you feel you can connect with the real world around you.



Regathering

A time to share any experiences or insights from our time of contemplation.

Reading

Rivers are recognised as living entities with at least the following fundamental rights.

1. The right to flow
2. The right to perform essential ecosystem functions
3. The right to be free from pollution
4. The right to feed and be fed by aquifers
5. The right to native biodiversity
6. The right to regeneration and restoration
7. The right to legal guardians

This declaration is non-binding but serves as a template for local declarations.

Universal Declaration on the Rights of Rivers

Blessing

May our lives be rivers, continually renewed,
a source of life and refreshment to all those around us.

As the river flows, so may we find the grace to adapt, the hope to grow, and the desire to restore and create.

So be it.



Image by Sara Mark, depicting Grinling Gibbons font at St James's