

O God, the Great, Wide Seas are Yours

MELITA 8.8.8.8.8.8 (“Eternal Father, Strong to Save”)

O God, the great, wide seas are yours!
You carved the oceans’ rugged floors.
You set the waters in their place
And made all sea life by your grace.
You also made humanity
To care for earth and sky and sea.

Forgive us when we disobey
And fail to care for what you’ve made.
Consuming more than what we should,
We harm the waters you call good.
Forgive us when we fail to be
Good stewards of your wondrous sea.

We pray for those who seek to care
For troubled waters everywhere—
For those who work to stop the spill
Of all that would destroy and kill,
For those who work with loving hands
To tend your marshes, shores and sands.

God, may we hear your call anew
To care for all these gifts from you.
May we protect the sea and shore
By using less, conserving more,
And humbly learning how to live
As stewards of this world you give.

Biblical references: Genesis 1-2:4

Tune: John B. Dykes, in *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, 1861.

Text: Copyright © 2010 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved.

Email: bcgillette@comcast.net

Hymn Background: The hymn-prayer was written in response to the ongoing oil spill from the Deepwater Horizon offshore drilling rig that started on April 20th. Churches are also using other creation hymns by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, including her popular “[The Earth is the Lord’s.](#)” The first five hymns in her [Songs of Grace: New Hymns for God and Neighbor](#) (Upper Room Books, 2010) have creation themes. Carolyn Winfrey Gillette is co-author of “[A Journey to a Green Church.](#)” A complete list of her 160 hymns can be found at: www.carolynshymns.com

More News: “The Deepwater Horizon oil spill is a massive ongoing oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico that started on April 20, 2010. The oil spill covers a surface area of at least 2,500 square miles (a larger area than the state where the hymn writer lives) according to estimates reported on May 3, 2010. The spill is expected to eclipse the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill as the worst US oil disaster in history. Experts fear that it will result in an environmental disaster as the oil from the well site reaches the Gulf coast, damaging the Gulf of Mexico fishing industry, tourism industry, and habitat of hundreds of bird species” (Wikipedia).

May 6th News: “Oil sheen from a massive crude spill in the Gulf of Mexico has started washing ashore on an island off Louisiana, officials said Thursday, confirming a land impact for the first time. The Chandeleur Islands form the easternmost point of Louisiana and are part of the Breton National Wildlife Refuge -- the second oldest refuge in the United States and home to countless endangered shorebirds.”

Greater Context: “[How We Wrecked the Ocean](#)” is an online April 2010 TED Talk by Jeremy Jackson, the Ritter Professor of Oceanography and Director of the Center for Marine Biodiversity and Conservation at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, on how the oceans are overfished, overheated, polluted and getting worse.