Water for Cambodia

Scripture: Genesis 1:20-23 (NRSV)

And God said, ‘Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.’ So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.’ And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

Story Foundation
Life for young Thearith Chantol lacked childhood delights of laughing and playing with friends. Instead, he was frequently wrought with trips to the doctor, medicines and days home sick from school. He was even afraid to return to school because he missed so many days.

Thearith and his family live in rural Cambodia, in a village without access to safe water and sanitation. A place, where the drinking water was frequently contaminated by animals and where public defecation was the norm. Until, that is, someone enabled Church World Service to reach out to Thearith and his village.

Because a community just like yours supported Church World Service’s CROP Projects, Thearith’s village now has a safe water source, a concrete ring well, and his family has a water storage system that ensures their water won’t become contaminated. They’ve learned how to ensure that their water stays clean and the importance of proper sanitation. Today, Thearith is healthy. He goes to school regularly and plays with his friends.

(Read the full story at: cwsglobal.org/thearith.)

Connecting Scripture and Story
Water is the very foundation of life. It is from water that God first calls forth life, and nurtures it into being. Water makes up a large part of us, and the majority of the Earth’s surface. Without water, we would find ourselves quickly without life. Furthermore, water is the tie that binds us, and connects us. From the beginnings of life to the new life waters of baptism.

(over)
In most of the United States, we take our water for granted. Not only that, but we take access to clean and safe water, and clean sanitation, for granted. But we also know that in many places around the world, clean and safe water cannot be taken for granted.

We hear the story of Thearith Chanthol and realize the impact clean water and sanitation can have on so many aspects of life — our work, our play, our ability to provide for our family. Many of us know what it feels like when our baby has diarrhea, and we often feel helpless to stop it. It is hard to imagine that being a regular part of our lives. But for many families in Cambodia, it is just that.

Our reality of living lives blessed with clean water, and God’s work of bringing life out of the water, reminds us it is possible and is God’s plan for all of life. God’s work with water is not done — God continues to work, through our gifts, through our hands and feet, to bring forth life through clean, safe water. God called life out of the water, and called it good. May we continue that good work.