

Is your church celebrating the season of Creation?

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The Season of Creation runs from Sept. 1—proclaimed as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation—through the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi on Oct. 4. Christians across denominations are encouraged to join together in prayer for creation and environmental stewardship. Why has this practice been established, and what is its significance?

The Bible provides the strongest evidence of the importance of Creation and our role in it. Prof. David Rhoads (www.webofcreation.org/archive-of-resources/590-reading-the-bible-with-care-for-creation) discusses 17 creation-related themes found in the Bible, including: Humans belong to the Earth; Creation was not formed for human beings alone; God wants all creatures to thrive; Human beings were created so that they could take care of the garden Earth that God had created, so that they serve and preserve it; The human responsibility to care for creation shows in the Sabbath laws of the land of Israel; All of life is sacramental; As with humans, all creation is called to praise God; The biblical books of wisdom show us that humans learn from creation; Justice for humans is related to justice toward Earth; The kingdom of God restores all creation,



and it involves rescuing the least; Jesus died for all creation; All creation is groaning; The Book of Revelation portrays the most amazing vision of the future unity of all creation.

We are grateful to God for providing us with the means to sustain our very lives. The air we breathe, the food we consume, and all the amenities that make life pleasant; but also making life worthwhile—enjoying the beautiful and mysterious Universe, from the complex subatomic particles to the ‘event horizon’ beyond the farthest galaxies. We are grateful for being endowed with senses to perceive and enjoy these gifts, and with abilities to share our enjoyment and experiences with others in the various groups we are part of. The Season of Creation gives us the opportunity to reflect on

these gifts and their profound importance to us, individually and as a community. It is also a period to re-examine our role as stewards of the Creation, for us and particularly for the generations to follow us. We wish them to enjoy the same, or better, gifts

and experiences as we have. This task has been given us clearly: “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and keep it”. With climate change impacts, unprecedented loss of species, plastic pollution, coral reefs bleaching and numerous other environmental crises we now face, the Season of Creation gives us the opportunity to reflect on our ways, priorities and practices to ensure these are aligned with the God-given responsibility.

Numerous resources are available on the internet to churches that desire to participate in the Season of Creation. The above website is a good starting place, but many others provide alternatives, e.g. The Anglican Church of Canada (<http://www.anglican.ca/news/season-creation-raises-ecological-awareness-prayer/>), the Anglican Communion Environmental Network (<http://acen.anglicancommunion.org/>), and

others (<http://seasonofcreation.org/>, <http://www.textweek.com/festivals/index.htm>, <http://www.webofcreation.org/about-us>). Parishes also found a study of Pope Francis’ Laudato Si (Praise be to you, my Lord) providing valued insight and inspiration in Creation care.



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