

SEASON OF CREATION 2025



PEACE WITH CREATION



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A Kairos Moment: 1700 Years of the Nicene Creed

“We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth... in the Lord Jesus Christ through whom all things were made... and in the Holy Spirit, the giver of life” (Nicene Creed).

The year 2025 marks 1700 years since the adoption of the Nicene Creed—a shared confession that continues to unite Christians across divisions. Rooted in this ancient communion, we are invited to witness to our faith by working for peace and justice in a troubled and divided world, including peace with Creation.

A Call to Action: “The Effect of Justice Will Be Peace” Isaiah 32:17

God calls us to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9), to live in peace and to work for a just and sustainable world. Creation, declared good by God, reflects divine generosity. Though sin damaged this relationship (Genesis 3:17–19), we are called to restore and protect it.

“Until a spirit from on high is poured upon us...” (Isaiah 32:15). The Holy Spirit urges us toward ecological conversion and a renewed understanding of our interconnectedness. We must change our mindsets, embrace justice, and pass these values on to future generations.

True peace with Creation involves repentance, repair, and reconciliation—between humans and nature, among communities, and with God. Jesus calls us to restorative justice and transformation, not simply restoration of the past.

“The effect of justice will be peace” (Isaiah 32:17). Though the challenges seem great, Christ reminds us, “With God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26). Hope fuels our actions.

We are invited to show that care for Creation is central to our faith—through advocacy, sustainability projects, environmental clean-ups, education, and more. These acts build unity and offer hope.

“The wilderness will become a fruitful field” (Isaiah 32:15). Even divided groups can be reconciled through shared action: planting trees, cleaning rivers, building wells.

May this anniversary of the Nicene Creed renew our commitment to justice, peace, and harmony with Creation. May the Spirit be poured upon us—so that together, we may seek peace with all that God has made.

www.seasonofcreation.org

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This icon is inspired by Wangari Maathai and the dove of peace is symbolised by the humming bird. Wangari Maathai was a Kenyan environmentalist and Nobel Peace Prize laureate. She founded the Green Belt Movement, empowering women to plant trees and restore degraded environments. Maathai championed democracy, human rights, and sustainability, becoming a global symbol of ecological activism and resilience. Her legacy continues to inspire environmental justice worldwide.

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A Ecumenical service for Creation Day

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR CREATION

5

READINGS

Isaiah 32: 14-18

Psalms 148

John 14: 15-17

WEEK ONE

THE POTTER'S EARTH

READINGS

Jeremiah 18: 1 - 11

Psalms 139: 1 - 5, 12 - 18

Philemon 1- 21

Luke 14: 25 - 33

COLLECT

O Creator and Potter of all,
You formed the earth
and shaped our lives with care.
When we distort Your design,
You do not discard
but reshape in mercy.
Mould us to be caretakers
of Your creation, humble, responsive,
and full of hope.
Let our lives reflect Your restoring
hands, through Christ, who makes all
things new.

Amen

COLLECT

God of all life,
we tremble at the silence of the birds
and the ruin of the land.
Through our greed,
forests fall and creatures flee.
Yet still You call us
to repentance and renewal.
Stir in us a deep love
for all You have made,
That we may heal what we have
harmed.
Restore the beauty of Your earth,
Through Christ, our hope and our help.

Amen





WEEK THREE HEALING THE WOUNDS OF CREATION

READINGS

Jeremiah 8: 18 - 9: 1
Psalm 79: 1 - 9
1 Timothy 2: 1 - 7
Luke 16: 1 - 13

COLLECT

God of compassion,
Our hearts are heavy,
our eyes weep for a wounded world.
The harvest is past, the summer ended,
yet the earth is not healed.
Is there no balm, no physician
for creation's pain?
Forgive our delay, our silence, our
neglect.
Break our hearts for what breaks Yours.
Lead us to acts of healing and hope,
Through Christ, the balm for all
creation.

Amen



WEEK FOUR ACTS OF STUBBORN HOPE

READINGS

Jeremiah 32: 1 - 3a, 6 - 15
Psalm 91: 1 - 6, 14 - 16
1 Timothy 6: 6 - 19
Luke 16: 19 - 31

COLLECT

Faithful God,
You called Your servant
to buy land as a sign of hope.
In the midst of brokenness,
You promise restoration and life.
Help us to trust Your future for
creation,
To care for earth with patient hands
and steadfast hearts.
May fields once barren flourish again,
And life spring forth where there was
despair. through Christ,
our redeemer and restorer.

Amen

The Theme for Season of Creation 2025 is “Peace with Creation”

Peace is more than just the absence of war. In the Hebrew Bible, shalom represents a far deeper concept—one that extends beyond the absence of conflict to the full restoration of broken relationships. This restoration encompasses our relationship with God, ourselves, the human family, and the rest of Creation.

Throughout history, many human activities have contributed to the destruction of Creation. Yet today, more than ever, some human activities take the form of a war against Creation. Our impact has expanded from local to global, manifesting in unsustainable lifestyles, excessive consumption, lasting pollution, and a throwaway culture.

This year we are focussing on the Jeremiah readings for our sermon and liturgical materials. The book of Jeremiah offers powerful environmental themes through vivid imagery and prophetic warnings. In Jeremiah 18:1–11, the potter shaping and reshaping the clay reflects God's relationship with creation—both its fragility and the hope of renewal if people turn from destructive ways.

Jeremiah 4:11–12, 22–28 paints a bleak picture of environmental devastation as a consequence of human foolishness: the earth is desolate, the heavens darkened, and cities in ruins. This ecological collapse is not arbitrary—it's a direct result of moral and spiritual decay. In Jeremiah 8:18–9:1, the prophet weeps over the suffering land and its people, mourning a creation groaning under injustice and neglect.

Finally, in Jeremiah 32:1–3a, 6–15, amidst crisis and destruction, Jeremiah buys a field as a sign of hope—trusting in the promise of restoration. Together, these passages highlight the deep link between spiritual health, justice, and the wellbeing of the land.

THE FIVE MOVEMENTS OF THE LITURGY

How to use the manual

The Liturgical materials in this manual are arranged within the five liturgical movements, namely God gathers us, Service of the Word, Responding to the Word, Service at the Table and Sending out.



God gathers us:

The congregation is welcomed and the theme of the service is introduced.

The penitence/confession can take place here as part of the preparation or it may follow the sermon.



Proclamation of God's word:

The word of God is read and preached.

The affirmation of our Faith can be an important part of the Proclamation.



Responding to God's word:

Intercessions and prayers of the people are included here. Creative responses such as drama, liturgical dance or short video clips can be used. The penitence can also follow the word.

The Peace is shared according to custom



Celebrating at the Table:

Two Eucharistic Prayers for the Season of Creation are included.



Sending out:

Post Communion prayers, prayers of commitment on the theme of the day and a blessing.

This Season of Creation we are using the readings from the Revised Common Lectionary rather than themes. Each section contains sermon notes and liturgical resources.

First Eucharist Prayer For Season of Creation

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts

We lift them up unto the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God of all Creation

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

You spoke the Word and all that is in heaven and on the earth, all things came to be.

Your Spirit hovered over the primal elements, and you brought forth life in forms innumerable, including this our fragile earth, and we amongst its inhabitants.

You made a covenant with Abraham the father of many nations and entrusted the care of the land to his descendants so that they might be a blessing to all nations.

When they disobeyed your commandments you made them exiles in a foreign land.

Yet they repented, you heard their cries for help, reconciled them to you and restored them to the land.

In the new covenant, You write Your law in our hearts and give us Your Son, the first-born of creation to show us the way of righteousness. By his passion and cross we are lovingly redeemed.

As bearers of the first fruits of the Spirit we

groan with all creation in hopeful longing, awaiting that promised time when we shall be set free from the bondage of decay and obtain the glorious freedom of eternal life.

And now we give you thanks because you have given the earth into our care and call us to praise you day by day for the marvels of your creation.

And so with the wonders of creation and the songs of praise of all your creatures both in heaven and on earth we join in one great act of awe and adoration:

Holy, holy, holy Lord

God of power and might

Heaven and earth

are full of your glory:

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna is the highest.

We ask that your Holy Spirit fall upon us and upon these fragile, earthly gifts so that they may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the night that Jesus was betrayed, he took bread, work of human hands, gift of our earth and gave thanks to God. He blessed it and broke it, saying: *Take this all of you and eat it. This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.*

In the same way he took the wine, work of human hands, gift of our earth and gave

thanks to God. He gave the cup to his disciples and said: *Take this all of you and drink from it, this is the cup of my Blood, the Blood of the new and everlasting covenant which is shed for you and for all/ many so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me.*

So we proclaim the mystery of faith

Christ has died

Christ is risen

Christ will come again

As we raise up to you the fruits of Your creation and the works of human hands we acknowledge the goodness of the earth, lament our sinful actions, that have led to its decay, and commit ourselves to being good stewards.

Restore in us the oneness with creation,

lost through sin, and empower us for works of justice, equity and restoration, that the earth may be filled with a knowledge of the glory of God, as the waters cover the sea. Together with those who have drawn sustenance from this soil to which they returned to it, those with whom we share the earth, and those to whom we will pass it on, we share this bread and drink this cup in fulfilment of the Lord's command:

By whom and with whom and in whom, in the unity of your Creative Spirit, with all that has been, is and will be in your universe, we stand before you and worship you, God of all in songs of everlasting praise.

Blessing and honour and glory and power be yours for ever and ever. Amen

New Eucharistic Prayer

The Great Thanksgiving

God the Creator is with us Indeed!

God is with us, and amongst us.

Lift up the thoughts of your hearts

Indeed, we lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks and praise with harps and drums to the Lord our God.

It is indeed fitting and good so to do.

God of our ancestors and all things living on earth and in heaven; when you thought of creating human life, you created us to worship you and to care for all creation,

and you embraced us with your boundless love.

But we your creatures gradually abandoned you, despised and trampled upon your embracing love.

We overstepped the boundaries of your laws, followed paths of evil and deserted you.

Yet you, Creator God showed compassion by sending your forerunners, the preachers of old, to warn us, and to journey with us to bring us back to your paths of goodness.

You sent your first-born Son, Jesus Christ, the great High Priest, who came to be an atoning sacrifice for the sins of humanity. By overcoming death, he brought peace between God and humanity.

And so with all of creation, angels and those who have gone before us, we raise a mighty praise song:

**You are great, Almighty God
You are glorious, Lord of all the Earth
From the rising of the sun to its setting
We honour you, Mighty God!**

Hear us Creator God, as we remember with thanksgiving the sacrifice of Jesus Christ who poured out his life on the cross, and send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts of bread and wine, so that they may be to us his body and blood.

On the night in which Jesus was betrayed, when the feast was ready, he sat with his friends, took the bread, and looking up to heaven, gave thanks to you, our Creator God. He broke the bread and gave it to them saying: *"Take and eat, this is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me"*.

After supper he took the cup of wine, gave thanks and gave it to them saying: *"take*

this all of you and drink from it, this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for all so that sins may be forgiven; whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me".

Let us join together to proclaim the mystery of our faith:

Christ has died

Christ is risen

Christ will come again

As we recall these great mysteries, we give thanks and praise to you Creator God. In your greatness you humbled yourself by becoming one with us. As we share together in this holy feast, we pray that through this act of remembrance, you will bless us as your people with your Holy Spirit, so that we may be a blessing to all your creation.

Through this sacred feast, make us one so that we may grow in holy fellowship with Mary, the Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, and all your faithful people.

Accept this sacrifice of thanks and praise, God our Creator, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, in unity with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. **Amen!**

These two Eucharistic Prayers are authorised by the Synod of Bishops of ACSA for Experimental use. Please go to www.acsaliturgies.co.za and share your comments and suggestions on the prayers

ECUMENICAL SERVICE FOR CREATION DAY/ FEAST OF CREATION (1st of Sep)

From www.seasonofcreation.org

GREETING AND CALL TO WORSHIP

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Come, let us worship God, the Creator of
all things, who calls us to dwell in
peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings
and quiet resting places.

**We gather in gratitude for God's
creation, longing for justice and peace
to abide in the land.**

Come, let us follow the Lord Jesus Christ,
who reconciles all things and leads us in
the way of righteousness, so that the
wilderness may become a fruitful field,
and the fruitful field be deemed a forest.

**We come to walk in the footsteps of
Christ, seeking healing for creation
and peace for all people.**

Come, let us move with the Holy Spirit,
the breath of life poured out upon us,
bringing renewal to the earth
and restoring the harmony of creation.

**We praise God, who revives the land,
and calls us to be peacemakers
with all creation.**

The effect of righteousness will be peace,
and the result of righteousness,
quietness and trust forever. God of justice
and peace, we gather in Your presence,
united with all living beings.

**We come in hope, worship, and
commitment to live as caretakers of
Your world.**

May our prayers rise like incense,
and our worship be a song of love for all
creation.

**We thank the Lord for giving life to all
creation!**

**We thank God for our neighbours'
life—human and non-human alike.**

As we gather, we share the hope and the
sufferings of our sisters and brothers
throughout all creation. In communion
with the waves of the sea, and the rustling
of the trees,

We recite Psalm 139:14 together:

**"I praise you, for I am fearfully and
wonderfully made." We love you, God!
Amen.**

(Adapted from WCC Ecumenical Centre's Morning
Prayer, Geneva, led by ACT)

PSALM 148:1-13

Praise the Lord!
Hallelujah!

Praise the Lord from the heavens,
praise God in the heights.

**Praise the Lord all you angels;
sing praises, all you heavenly host.**

Praise the Lord, sun and moon;
sing praises, all you shining stars

**Praise the Lord, heaven of heavens,
sing praises, you waters above the
heavens.**

Let them praise the name of the Lord;
who gave the command and they were
created,

**who made them stand fast for ever
and ever, who gave them a law which
shall not pass away.**

Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea-
monsters and all deeps;

**fire and hail, snow and fog,
tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**

mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all
cedars;

**wild beasts and all cattle, creeping
things and winged birds;**

sovereigns of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the world;

**young men and young women, old and
young together.**

Let them praise the name of the Lord,
whose name only is exalted, whose
splendour is over earth and heaven.

**The Lord has raised up strength for
this people and praise for all loyal
servants, the children of Israel, a
people who are near to the Lord.
Hallelujah!**

(Saint Helena version)

(A creation-themed hymn can be sung
here.)

PENITENCE

All creation is full of God's praise,
and we are called to join in with joy,
righteousness, and peacefulness.
Yet as we look around us, we see conflict
and destruction.

All too often, we fail to live as we are
called—to be ambassadors of peace,
righteousness, and reconciliation.
Let us confess our sins and come before
the Triune God, asking for forgiveness and
renewal.

**Loving God,
we have failed You
and abused the gift You have given us.
We have offended You and defiled what
You have made.**

**Forgive us for betraying Your trust.
Forgive us for our greed and arrogance.**

**Forgive us for what we have done to
Your earth, to Your oceans, to Your
creatures on the land, in the sky, and in
the depths.**

**Hear, O God of Compassion:
The cries of the land have become a
desert; lands laid barren through
corrupt agriculture, pollution, mining,
and deforestation.**

**The cries of islands drowning in rising
seas, oceans swelling with the melting
ice.**

**The cries of Mother Earth in storm and
drought.**

(©2012 Rev. James Bhagwan, Fiji, source: <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/prayer-cycle/oceania>)

PROCLAMATION OF FORGIVENESS

May our God have mercy on us, forgive us our trespasses, and give us new life.

Indeed, God has promised grace and forgiveness: “My people will abide in peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.” (Isaiah 32:18)

Let us rejoice and trust in our calling, to live as we are called—reconciled with the Father, ambassadors for Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit. Sing a hymn praising God as Creator.

THANKSGIVING

God of life, God of love, God of Creation, thank You for all the wonderful creatures You have made.

We thank You for the gift to inhabit and enjoy this world.

Thank You for forests that provide our air and shade on hot days.

Thank You for the sun’s shining energy, and the rains that refresh the earth with their fragrance.

Thank You for fertile soil that feeds us and sustains many creatures.

Help us recognize the earth’s community as a democracy of life, rooted in the local economies of those who tend the land.

Give us strength to defend biodiversity and cultural diversity, putting the common good first, honouring all beings’ right to sustenance.

Help us value every species, every person, every culture, knowing each has intrinsic worth.

Help us walk this world with faith and hope, to be good caretakers of Your creation—to protect it, respect its resources, and heed its limits.

Give us courage to fight for life, resilience in the face of destruction, and resolve to resist those who exploit creation for profit.

Thank You for each life we offer back to You, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

(Source: United Evangelical Lutheran Church, Argentina and Uruguay. Translation: Season of Creation.)

SCRIPTURE READINGS

(Allow a short silence for reflection after each reading.)

First Reading: Isaiah 32:14–18

Second Reading: John 14:15–17

REFLECTION / SERMON

Focus on Isaiah 32:14–18, themed “Peace with Creation”

(A creation-themed hymn can follow the reflection.)

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Nicene Creed or another appropriate Creed.

OFFERING

Include a creation-themed hymn during the offering which could be for environmental ministry.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

O Lord our God,
help us call upon You with one heart and soul, according to Your will!

We pray for Your created world:
You made the universe and all that lives and exists in it. The earth is filled with Your creatures. You make grass grow, plants, and fruit-bearing trees;
You feed the birds of the sky and care for all creatures on earth.

Out of Your love, You created humanity;
give us strength to faithfully cultivate and guard Your creation according to Your will.

For Jesus Christ we ask,
Lord, hear our prayer!

We pray for humanity—every community and every person. Grant that we may treat all with respect and uphold the dignity of our neighbours, accepting all in their diversity.

Give us grateful hearts, understanding, responsible thought, and value-creating work.

For Jesus Christ we ask,
Lord, hear our prayer!

We pray for Your Church,
that she may be a messenger of life and an agent of Your love worldwide. Instil courage in the hearts of those who follow You, that we may proclaim hope to the fearful, encouragement to the doubting, and comfort to the despairing.

Grant unity to proclaim Your Gospel in word and deed as part of a world in crisis.

For Jesus Christ we ask,
Lord, hear our prayer!

We pray for the sick, destitute, oppressed, and vulnerable—especially those affected by environmental disasters, famine, drought, floods, storms, and fires.

Bring justice to those who cry out, and humble our hearts to relate to them as true brothers and sisters. Let Your life-giving will be done in our world.

For Jesus Christ we ask
Lord, hear our prayer!

Heavenly Father, grant that the future of the world, humanity, the Church, and all people be in Your hands.

May we live in true hope for the sake of our living Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

(Source: Oratio Oecumenica; Zsuzsa Koltai, Ecumenical Working Group for Season of Creation, Hungary. Translation: Season of Creation.)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

In the language of our hearts, let us pray together "Our Father...."

CONCLUSION AND BENEDICTION

Let us give thanks and praise to the Most Holy and Glorious Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

It is right and just.

Truly, it is right and just to glorify You, bless You, praise You, adore You, and give You thanks,

O Maker of all things, visible and invisible. The highest heavens and all their powers praise You; the sun, the moon, and all the stars; the earth, the seas, and all that is in them; the heavenly Jerusalem and the assembly of the firstborn enrolled in heaven; the angels, archangels, and heavenly hosts—all sing Your majestic glory with triumphant hymns, unending voices, and acclamations.

It is right and just.

With them and with all creation, we cry out and proclaim:

**Holy God, Holy Mighty,
Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.
Holy God, Holy Mighty,
Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.
Holy God, Holy Mighty,
Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.**

Go in peace, brothers and sisters, live in peace with creation.

And may the blessing of the Most Holy Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—accompany you, now and always.

Amen.

(Source: Liturgy of the Antiochene Syriac Maronite Church, Anaphora of Saint James, Brother of the Lord.)



WEEK ONE

THE POTTER'S EARTH

READINGS

Jeremiah 18:1-11

Psalms 139:1-5, 12-18

Philemon 1-21

Luke 14:25-33

COLLECT

O Creator and Potter of all,
You formed the earth
and shaped our lives with care.
When we distort Your design,
You do not discard but reshape in mercy.
Mold us to be caretakers of Your creation,
Humble, responsive, and full of hope.
Let our lives reflect Your restoring hands,
Through Christ, who makes all things new.
Amen.

SERMON NOTES

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Jeremiah 18: 1 - 11

Introduction

God who formed us from the clay is presented here as a potter, shaping and reshaping clay—a metaphor for divine sovereignty and humanity's responsiveness. This passage calls for a renewed relationship with the Earth, urging repentance from destructive ways. Just as God warns Israel of judgment for moral failure, our environmental crises reflect the consequences of exploiting creation. Yet, hope remains: if we turn from ecological harm, God can reshape our future. Peace with creation begins with humility, acknowledging our failures, our role in environmental degradation, and embracing a new relationship with Creation. Like clay, we must be reformed into agents of healing for the Earth.

JEREMIAH 18:1 - 11

Jeremiah was instructed to visit a potter, and it would be there that God intended to teach him more. He probably knew instinctively that whatever God had in store for him would likely be very challenging. After all, Jeremiah is experienced at carrying out God's bidding and would be fully aware that there are difficult twists and turns he will have to navigate. But, like God, Jeremiah is stubborn too! His attention to God's instructional detail will rub people up the wrong way and may even offend them! Despite being mocked and ridiculed by previous recipients of God's messages it doesn't stop Jeremiah from being obedient, no matter what the personal cost.

Jeremiah observed the potter bungling a piece of clay. He noted that the potter quietly accepted his error and promptly

begins to remodel that same piece of clay to a better standard. Jeremiah may have pondered what the potter's work has to do with him. It's justifiable that he may have discerned that the lump on the potter's wheel is like God putting him on the wheel too! This poignant precursor was yet to unravel God's plan that would be of much greater significance than Jeremiah's spinning imagination!

Crafting requires creativity, patience, concentration, and at times a revised plan. The wood chisels of Māori carvers in Aotearoa NZ are known to inadvertently drift from their designated paths when hit with a mallet. Carvers may choose to simply 'pause & rest' to assess the carving. This practice can lead to a reimagined and unexpected masterpiece. The newly accepted direction of artistry is prophetic. The not-so-perfect piece will often reveal a beauty unequalled by any other carving.

As for God's revealing plan, it starts with "Can I not do with you, Israel, as this potter does? Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand". Okay, Jeremiah can accept the concepts of God, potter, bungle, and fix!! Then God's plan gets much darker. Plans to uproot, tear down, and destroy if evil prevails in Israel is a harsh blow to accept, even for Jeremiah!

Then, in a 'damned-if-you-do-and-damned-if-you-don't' twist, God proposes to ditch that plan once the bungled Israel accepts God's remodelling of them! The quandary for Jeremiah is in the translation. How is he to tell of God's analogy to transition from bungled to better in a way that listeners will understand him, or more importantly understand God?

It turns out, that we are the marred clay and God is granting us another chance to be remodelled. How so? Have we bungled the work of our own

hands in such a way that it is no longer what God potted in the first place?

As one part of God's perfect creation we, over time and with self-centredness, have let our chisels, our wheels, and our clay, become grossly bungled and marred. When we accept this more deeply, we realise that God's clay was perfect in the first place! It was gifted to us just as God intended! It is what we have negligently done to the clay that is unacceptable in God's plans. Little wonder our natural perfect world has become volatile against us.

Let's break that down a little:

- If we don't tend to the clay responsibly and temperatures rise, it will get too hot and dry causing cracks.
- If we add too much water to cool it down, we create a mud bath.
- If we overwork it too much, it will become too thin and fragile.
- If it is neglected and not worked enough, it will become rocklike without movement, growth, or formation.
- If we don't make good of this perfect clay and perfect world, God will intervene but with conditions.

Jeremiah is the messenger of

these sombre realities. How will he mould his rhetoric to tell us of our marred-ness? With God's help! How do we accept our bungled attempts at better-ness? With God's help! If we are humble enough to accept Jeremiah's message of truth we can translate it to that adage, "if at first you don't succeed, try again". Yes, with God's help! God will adjust, realign, reshape, restore, and remodel the human potted work on the wheel of life so that we too can be a better clay model within creation. We have an inherent duty to care for God's gifts. If we bungle it, we must 'pause & rest' enough to know that the ongoing perfection of the clay is up to us! Let's not wait for God to fix it! Open our senses and know that our crafting needs tweaking. Let go and let God!

Even with all that in mind, we are told what we already know. God's plan with all its twists & turns, cracks, muddiness, and fragility is good news for creation. The threat of life as we know it being uprooted, torn down, and destroyed, must surely summon our defences so that we can do much better. Averting God's implementation of consequences must be our plan!

Consequential law is deeply embedded in Māori lore. The cyclic pause & rest by imposing seasonal closures, and temporary prohibition, is a

traditional indigenous practice. Rahui, as it is known, is the staunch protest to cease all practices that are detrimental and negatively affect our ecosystems. Not surprisingly, Māori are aggressively confronted by industries, economists, cattle farmers, agriculturaists, fisheries, and the like. They feel offended, aggrieved, and hotly defensive to take whatever they want for financial gain. Māori insist that without absenting from over-harvesting and negligent care of our resources we seriously harm our ecosystems and in turn, ourselves! Our disobedience to nature's cry for care has led to the revealing of the world being uprooted, depleted, and destroyed today.

God has a plan, and Jeremiah has advised the troublesome folk about it. Clearly our wayward ways means that God's clay craft of us is still in dire need of remodelling. And in that act from evil to righteousness, surely "goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives"!! We are granted permission to halt God's plan by simply doing the right thing! Not just for us but for all of creation.

"We are the clay, and you are the potter, we are all the work of your hand".

Jeremiah 64:8



Rev Jacynthia Murphy

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**NOTES FROM OTHER
READINGS**

PSALM 139:1–5, 12–18

This psalm affirms God's intimate knowledge of and presence within all creation. The psalmist celebrates being "fearfully and wonderfully made," revealing the sacredness of human life as part of God's intricate design. This deep divine involvement extends to all life and ecosystems. Recognizing that every creature is known and cherished by God invites us to honour and protect the Earth. Peace with creation arises when we see the natural world not as a resource to exploit, but as a beloved work of God, deserving reverence, care, and sustainable coexistence.

PHILEMON 1–2

This passage, centred on reconciliation between individuals - from slave to brother- , offers a profound model for peace with creation. Paul urges Philemon to receive Onesimus not as a slave but as

a beloved brother—highlighting restored relationships marked by dignity and mutual respect. From a care for creation lens, this call to reconciliation extends beyond human relations to our bond with the Earth. Just as Paul reimagines social structures, we are called to reimagine our relationship with creation—not as masters, dominating and controlling nature, as a resource, but now seeing nature as kin. Peace with creation involves restoring harmony, embracing justice, and recognizing Earth as a partner in God's redemptive work. This is Franciscan theology – St Francis spoke of Mother Earth, and Sister Water – challenging us to see Nature as our kin.

LUKE 14:25–33

True discipleship challenges followers to count the cost of discipleship, demanding total commitment and the relinquishing of attachments. This radical call invites us to reconsider our consumerist lifestyles and their impact on the Earth. Just as discipleship

requires sacrifice, peace with creation calls for intentional choices—reducing waste, living simply, and prioritizing sustainability over convenience. Jesus urges thoughtful planning and wholehearted dedication; likewise, ecological restoration requires long-term vision and deep resolve. True discipleship today includes caring for our common home, embodying peace with creation through disciplined, compassionate, and countercultural environmental action.

LITURGY: THE POTTER'S EARTH

THE GATHERING

CALL TO WORSHIP (PSALM 139 V 5 ,12)

You have enclosed us behind and before,
and laid Your hand upon all creation.

**Even the darkness is not dark to You;
the night shines as the day, for You made the
light.**

Let us worship the Creator who holds the earth in
His hands, and whose presence fills the skies and
the depths.

**With grateful hearts, we celebrate God's care
for all creation, the land, the sea, and the skies
above. Amen.**

PENITENCE

Merciful God, You are the Potter
who shapes the earth and us with care,
but we confess we have marred Your handiwork.
We have exploited the soil, polluted the waters, and
harmd the creatures You formed.

Like stubborn clay, we resist Your call to change
and repentance. Forgive our selfishness, greed and
apathy. Mould us anew to be faithful keepers of
Your creation, that we may honour Your work and
restore the earth's beauty.

In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH - CREATION

**We believe in one God, the Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
Of all things visible and invisible,**

**Creator of land, sea, and sky,
Sustainer of every living thing.
And in the Lord Jesus Christ,
Through whom all things were made,
Who renews the earth by His grace,
The Word through whom life is restored.
We believe in the Holy Spirit,
The Lord, the Giver of Life,
Breathing new life into creation's heart.**

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We gather as the Baobab tree,
rooted deep and reaching high,
Strong in community,
sheltering all beneath our branches.
God of our elders, hear our prayer:

Like the flowing River Nile,
source of life and renewal,
Bring refreshment to lands
parched by neglect and greed.
God of living waters, hear our prayer:

As the drumbeat calls the village
to dance and unity,
May our hearts beat in rhythm with creation's cry.
God of harmony, hear our prayer:

Like the sun that rises over the savannah,
Bring light to the places darkened
by despair and destruction.
God of light and hope, hear our prayer:

We lift our voices like the soaring eagle,
That soars above the mountains, watching over all.
God of justice, hear our prayer.



CELEBRATING AT THE TABLE

Use the theme of the potter – clay jugs and a chalice if possible, clay vases for the flowers. Clay pots can be placed around the altar, of different sizes and shapes to show that we are all the work of God's hand.

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Creator God, You shape us and the earth with loving hands.

Today, we commit ourselves to be faithful caretakers of Your creation. Mould our hearts to care deeply for the land, the water, and all living creatures.

Help us to respond with humility and courage when Your Spirit calls us to change. May our actions

reflect Your renewing work, restoring beauty where there is brokenness, and hope where there is despair.

Shape us, O Lord, as vessels of Your peace and healing for the earth.

BLESSING

May the God who formed the mountains and rivers,
Who shapes the clay and breathes life into dust,
Bless you with strength to protect the earth's fragile beauty. May you go forth renewed and reshaped,
Carrying the Spirit's power to nurture and restore all creation.

And the blessing of the Creator,
the Redeemer, and the Sustainer
Be upon you and all the earth,
now and always. **Amen.**





WEEK TWO

WHEN THE EARTH MOURNS

READINGS

Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28

Psalm 14

1 Timothy 1:12-17

Luke 15:1-10

COLLECT

God of all life,

We tremble at the silence of the birds and the ruin
of the land.

Through our greed, forests fall and creatures flee.

Yet still You call us to repentance and renewal.

Stir in us a deep love for all You have made,

That we may heal what we have harmed.

Restore the beauty of Your earth,

Through Christ, our hope and our help.

Amen.

SERMON NOTES

Rev Chesnay Frantz,
Anglican Church of Southern Africa

Jeremiah 4:11–12, 22–28

Introduction

This passage portrays a land devastated by human wickedness, where the Earth mourns and creation is undone. The prophet describes chaos reminiscent of Genesis before creation—dark, empty, and lifeless.

He warns of the ecological consequences of moral and spiritual failure. Humanity's foolishness and disobedience bring destruction not only upon themselves but upon the land. Yet, God's refusal to make a "full end" signals hope. Peace with creation begins with repentance and the restoration of right relationships—with God, each other, and the Earth—heeding the call to live justly and sustainably in God's world.

JEREMIAH 4:11–12, 22–28

Jeremiah 4 paints a bleak picture. The prophet speaks of a world unraveling; landscapes scorched by hot wind (vv. 11–12), cities laid in ruin, and a planet that seems to regress into formlessness, echoing the primordial chaos before creation (v. 23). The prophet's vision is not only political or spiritual, it is ecological. The whole earth mourns the violence and disobedience of humanity. Here, judgment is not abstract, it is embodied in the land, the air, the desolation of trees, and the absence of birds.

The passage is unsettling: "I looked on the earth, and lo, it was waste and void." These words intentionally mirror Genesis 1:2. What God once brought into ordered beauty now dissolves into chaos because of human arrogance and folly. The people "are skilled in doing evil, but do not know how to do

good" (v. 22). There is no peace between humanity and creation—only a deep fracture.

In our South African context, Jeremiah's warning resonates sharply. We have seen how excessive mining, driven by greed scars the earth and poisons water sources, how entire ecosystems are sacrificed in the name of economics. We witness how township communities face the double blow of environmental neglect and economic injustice, where dumping grounds lie close to homes, and clean air is a privilege. Like Jeremiah, we must ask: what happens when creation itself bears the consequences of our decisions?

Yet, within this lament, there is a theological invitation. God's sorrow is not rooted in destruction for its own sake. God's heartbreak emerges from broken relationship. The judgment here is not divine

revenge but divine grief, a grief that calls for return. The word *shuv* (return) is a central theme in Jeremiah's prophecies. To care for creation is to return; not just to Eden, but to covenantal living. It's a call to reimagine peace not only between peoples, but with the earth itself.

We cannot preach "peace with creation" while ignoring the wounds carved into the land by systems of oppression. Jeremiah's lament is not just about personal sin, it is also about the violent structures that devastate land and people alike. In South Africa, this includes the dispossession of land under colonialism and apartheid, where both people and ecosystems were exploited for profit. The same hands that bulldozed indigenous forests also displaced entire communities. Reconciliation with creation, then, must be more than planting trees, it must mean returning stolen land, restoring dignity to

the disinherited, and dismantling the economic engines that keep exploiting both earth and labour. God's judgment in Jeremiah is not arbitrary, it is the cry of a Creator whose covenant has been betrayed by greed. True peace with creation will only come when justice rolls down, not just in clean rivers, but in land reform, environmental reparations, and the healing of both soil and soul.

Jeremiah 4 is not easy to read. It does not end in comfort but in disruption. Yet it is precisely this disruption that we need. We cannot talk about peace without confronting the violence done to land, water, and air. As Christians, we are not only citizens of heaven, we are soil-born creatures, dust and breath. Our redemption is tied to the redemption of the earth. **"Peace with creation" is not sentimental it is sacramental.** It is about restoring the integrity

of the relationships God wove together in the beginning.

To make peace with creation is to choose life—again and again.

HOW DO WE RESPOND?

- Acknowledge our role in environmental harm, not abstractly, but concretely. Where in our neighbourhoods is creation groaning? Can we see the land, water, or air crying out?
- Recommit to lifestyle repentance. Ask: does my daily choices—my consumption, my waste, my travel—either build peace or sow destruction?
- Join or support local environmental justice efforts. In Cape Town, this might mean joining water conservation work, river clean-ups, or standing with

communities fighting polluting industries.

- Begin with the small but powerful. Start composting. Plant indigenous trees. Reduce plastic use. Use your voice in community forums. Peace with creation begins with humility and daily faithfulness.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR SMALL GROUPS

- Jeremiah's vision shows creation in mourning. Where do you see creation "groaning" in your local context?
- How does this passage challenge your understanding of sin and its consequences?
- What practices might help you live more at peace with creation—not only individually, but as a faith community?



Rev Chesnay Frantz

Anglican Church of Southern Africa

Rev Chesnay is actively engaged in the intersection between faith and social transformation, drawing upon the principles and insights of Black theology to inform my practice and advocacy.

NOTES FROM THE OTHER READINGS

PSALM 14

This Psalm laments human corruption and the denial of

God, declaring, "There is no one who does good." This moral decay extends to our treatment of the Earth. The folly of denying God manifests in the exploitation of creation, ignoring its sacred

value. The psalm highlights injustice and the oppression of the vulnerable—echoed today in environmental degradation that harms the poor the most. Yet, hope remains: "God is with the

righteous.” Peace with creation begins with wisdom that recognizes God’s presence in all life, calling us to justice, stewardship, and restoration of the natural world.

1 TIMOTHY 1:12–17

Reflects Paul’s transformation through divine mercy, emphasizing grace, repentance, and renewal. Paul’s journey mirrors humanity’s potential to turn from environmental harm to healing. His confession of ignorance and violence resonates with our exploitation of the Earth—often driven by

short-sightedness or indifference. Yet, God’s mercy offers a new path. Just as Paul became an example of grace, we are called to become examples of ecological repentance and restoration. Peace with creation arises when we acknowledge past wrongs, embrace God’s mercy, and live sustainably as caretakers of God’s life-giving, beloved creation.

LUKE 15:1–10

Through the parables of the lost sheep and lost coin, reveals God’s deep care for what is lost and vulnerable. This reflects

God’s concern for every part of creation—especially what has been neglected or harmed. Just as the shepherd seeks one lost sheep, we are called to seek restoration for damaged ecosystems and endangered species. The joy in recovering what was lost mirrors the hope found in ecological renewal. Peace with creation involves hope and hard work, active compassion, and rejoicing in every effort that brings healing to our interconnected, God-loved world.

LITURGY: WHEN THE EARTH MOURNS

THE GATHERING

Come, all who hope in the Lord,
for salvation brings new life to the earth.

**The wilderness will rejoice and blossom,
the desert will sing with joy and bloom.**

Rivers will flow where dry lands once lay,
and the parched ground will become a garden.

**God's justice renews the face of the earth,
bringing peace and plenty for all creation.**

Let us praise the Lord who restores all things,
whose love turns deserts into springs of life.

PENITENCE

Based on Jeremiah 4:23-28

Merciful God,
We confess that we have turned away from Your
ways, and the earth groans under the weight of our
sin.

The land is broken and barren, the heavens
darkened, and the fields destroyed. We have
ignored the signs of Your warning, choosing
selfishness over compassion, neglecting the cries
of Your creation.

Forgive our hardness of heart and renew our spirit,
That we may live in harmony with all You have
made. Restore us, O Lord, to walk gently on the
earth, and to cherish the beauty of Your handiwork.
Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

PEACE WITH CREATION

**We believe in God, the Creator of all life,
who formed the earth and breathed life into
every creature.**

**We believe in Jesus Christ, the Prince of
Peace, who reconciles all things to God,
renewing the earth and humanity.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Sustainer of
life, who calls us to care for creation with
justice and love.**

**We believe that all creation is interconnected,
and that peace with the earth is peace with
one another.**

**We commit to living in harmony with the land,
to healing what has been broken,
to guarding the forests, rivers, and skies,
until God's peace fills all creation. Amen.**

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

PEACE WITH CREATION

Creator God,
You made the earth and all that dwells within it.
Teach us to live in harmony with all creation.
May our actions bring peace, not harm,
to the earth.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Jesus, Prince of Peace,
You reconciled all things
through Your love and sacrifice.
Heal the wounds we have inflicted
on the environment.
Help us to be peacemakers
for the land, air, and waters.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Holy Spirit, Giver of Life,
Inspire us to care for the earth
with reverence and joy.
Guide our choices so that
future generations may thrive.
Strengthen us to protect the vulnerable and restore
what is broken.

Lord, hear our prayer.



God of all creation,
may Your peace flow through us like a river,
bringing hope, healing, and justice to the world.

Amen.

CELEBRATING AT GOD'S TABLE

Decorate the altar with symbols of the destruction
caused to the earth – dried out plants.

Place symbols of environmental destruction as
people come into the door, posters or displays
made by the youth or Sunday school - plastic
pollution, dirty water, photos of animals or birds
entangled in plastic or covered by oil.

Based on Jer 4: 25-26

SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE BLESSING

May the God of the rising sun
warm your spirit with hope.
May the wisdom of the elders
guide your steps in the forest of life.
May the rains fall gently on your land,
and the winds carry your prayers
across the savannah.
May you be as rooted as the acacia,
as bold as the lion,
and as joyful as the birds at dawn.

Go now, in peace with creation—
And may the blessing of the Creator,
the Christ, and the Spirit
Surround you and all living things,
now and forever.

Amen.





WEEK THREE

HEALING THE WOUNDS

OF CREATION

READINGS

Jeremiah 8:18-9:1

Psalms 79:1-9

1 Timothy 2:1-7

Luke 16:1-13

COLLECT

God of compassion,
our hearts are heavy,
our eyes weep for a wounded world.
The harvest is past, the summer ended,
yet the earth is not healed.
Is there no balm, no physician for creation's pain?
Forgive our delay, our silence, our neglect.
Break our hearts for what breaks Yours.
Lead us to acts of healing and hope,
through Christ, the balm for all creation.

Amen.

SERMON NOTES

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Jeremiah 8: 18 - 9: 1

Introduction :

Jeremiah 8:18–9:1 expresses deep sorrow over the suffering of the people and the land. The prophet grieves not only human pain but also the desolation of creation: “Is there no balm in Gilead?” This lament echoes the Earth’s own cry under human exploitation. The prophet’s tears reflect God’s anguish over ecological devastation and injustice. Peace with creation begins with such lament—honest recognition of environmental harm and heartfelt compassion. Like Jeremiah, we are called to weep with the Earth and seek healing through repentance, justice, and renewed commitment to God’s vision for a flourishing world.

JEREMIAH 8:18 - 9:1

The dry earth, the unbound fountains, and the vanishing rivers and streams are not merely physical occurrences, they are signs, symbols of abundance or death. When the soil cracks and the water disappears, it is not only a matter of climate or misfortune, it is a sign that something has gone wrong in the relationship between people, creation, and the Divine.

The prophet Jeremiah cries, “*O that my head were a spring of water and my eyes a fountain of tears, so that I might weep day and night for the slain of my poor people!*” (Jeremiah 9:1, NRSV). His lament is deeply ecological. His tears are as abundant as springs and fountains, life-giving sources that now flow only in sorrow. This grief emerges after a communal reckoning: “*The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved*” (Jeremiah 8:20). These words cut deep. The harvest is supposed to symbolize sufficiency, joy, and the rhythm of life in its fullness. To say that the harvest has come

and gone without salvation is to name a dissonance or a rupture between what should be and what is.

Filipino theologian Ferdinand Anno writes of this rupture through the lens of “creation wounded.” In his work on (*Responsibility and Kinship with Nature*), he describes ecological crisis as “the visible sign of a spiritual forgetting.” When we forget that the land is relative or kapwa, we stop listening to its cries, and begin to treat it as mere object, mere backdrop to human ambition. For Anno, creation care is not a moral add-on but an act of healing our fractured relationships with God, with one another, and with creation itself.

Indigenous spiritualities in the Philippines have long held this vision. Drought, famine, and disease are not simply natural calamities, they are seen as signs of a fractured relationship between human beings and the cosmos. In traditional cosmologies, everything is relational. A good harvest is not only the result of labor, it is the fruit of harmony with the spirits of the land, the ancestors,

and the Creator. That is why rituals are essential. Babaylans, mumbaki, and elders are called to discern and to heal. Their work is relational theology in action. For the mumbaki in Ifugao, healing is a double task: the healing of plants and the healing of people. There is no division between ecological and human well-being. In fact, it is understood that when one suffers, so does the other.

In many Indigenous gatherings, such as cañao, people come together not only to celebrate abundance but also to renew the relational bonds that sustain life. Offerings are made, songs are sung, and dances are performed. At the core, these are participatory acts that affirm interdependence. The land is not a commodity; it is kin. This perspective is a far cry from extractivist worldviews that see the earth as an object to be subdued. In contrast, these spiritualities echo what theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether describes as the twin oppressions of ecological exploitation and human marginalization (Gaia and God, 1992).

In this sense, Jeremiah's lament becomes our own. When we see typhoons increasing in strength, when heat waves scorch the soil and sea levels rise, we are also watching harvests vanish, water recede, and hope falter.

Our task, then, is not only to weep with Jeremiah but also to listen; to the cries of the land, to the wisdom of Indigenous peoples, and to the Spirit of God still hovering over the waters, even the ones that have dried. This kind of theology invites us to return to the relational. It calls us to see creation as sacred, interconnected, and groaning not for destruction but for renewal (Romans 8:22).

The streams and rivers of our time may be blocked or polluted, but the memory of living waters; of a world where the land

provides and people rejoice, still flows through scripture, tradition, and Indigenous wisdom. Perhaps our call is to become springs again. Not only fountains of tears, but also fountains of hope and restoration.

*O Jeremiah,
You do not lament alone. The
mother, whose bare feet press
the ancient earth, chants with
rhythms passed down through
generations echoes of ancestors
woven into each step.*

*The farmer, hands weathered by
seasons and soil, whistles
melodies of hope beneath open
skies, dreaming of harvests yet to
come. The elders, who watch the
shifting colors of dawn and dusk,
Turn their eyes toward the
horizon with you,*

*Reading the signs the heavens
reveal. The children, playing in the
river's embrace, feel the weight of
your sorrow and carry it forward
Your tears are not wasted.*

*Let them be rivers of justice,
Overflowing through the
parched fields
Of forgotten bodies.
Let them seep through the
cracks of the earth,
Stirring the soil to life once
more.*

*Your tears are not wasted.
Let them be signs of rejoicing
Among peoples whose songs
rise with the earth.*

AMEN



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NOTES ON OTHER READINGS

PSALM 79:1–9

Psalm 79:1–9 is a lament over the destruction of Jerusalem, where the land and its people suffer due to violence and disregard for God's ways. The psalm's grief over the devastation of the land reflects how ecological destruction is intertwined with social and spiritual degradation. The plea

for God's mercy highlights a desire for restoration, not only for humanity but for the Earth itself. Peace with creation requires acknowledging how environmental harm affects both the planet and its people. As we seek God's mercy, we are called to restore both relationships with God and the Earth.

1 TIMOTHY 2:1–7

Paul urges prayers for all people, emphasizing that God desires all

to be saved and live in peace. This call for universal peace extends beyond humanity to all of creation. Just as God desires reconciliation among people, we are called to seek peace with the Earth, living in harmony with the environment. The passage's emphasis on intercession and compassion mirrors the need for collective action to care for creation. Peace with creation involves recognizing the interconnectedness of all life, seeking justice for both people

and the Earth, and living in alignment with God's will for a flourishing world.

LUKE 16:1-13

the parable of the dishonest manager, teaches the shrewd use of resources for a greater purpose, emphasizing faithfulness in small things. This passage challenges us to steward our resources wisely,

not for personal gain but for the common good and the flourishing of creation. The manager's use of resources to secure a future for himself parallels how we must use our wealth and influence to promote ecological justice and sustainability. Peace with creation involves shifting from wasteful consumption to responsible care for creation, ensuring that the Earth's resources are used justly and

sustainably for all. A wise steward must consider the needs of the generations to come.

LITURGY: HEALING THE WOUNDS OF CREATION

THE GATHERING

CALL TO WORSHIP

Based on Psalm 79:5, 8–9

How long, O Lord? Will You be angry forever?

Do not remember our past sins—let Your mercy come quickly to meet us.

We are brought low; the earth cries with us under the weight of our wrongs.

Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Your name.

Deliver us and forgive our sins,

That we may rise to praise You and walk in Your ways.

Let us worship the God whose mercy is greater than our failings,

And whose love restores the earth and all who dwell in it. Amen

PENITENCE

Based on Jeremiah 8:18, 22 and 9:1

O God, our comforter,

Our grief is beyond healing

our hearts are faint within us.

We look upon the land, and it is bruised;

The forests are silenced, the rivers choked,

the skies heavy with sorrow.

Is there no balm in Gilead?

Is there no healing for creation's wounds?

We confess that we have turned a blind eye,

Profited from destruction,

and forgotten that the earth is Yours.

O that our heads were a fountain of tears,

That we might weep day and night

For the soil poisoned, the creatures lost,

And the future we have placed at risk.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

Forgive our apathy and restore our courage.

**Heal us, and heal the earth we have wounded.
In Your compassion, make us whole. Amen.**

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in God,

whose heart breaks with the suffering of the world,
whose Spirit groans with creation under the weight
of our sin.

We believe that God's compassion does not fail,
even when the land is wounded and the people
mourn.

We believe there is balm in Gilead,
and healing in the hands of our Creator.

We believe that tears are sacred,
and that God weeps with us over every broken tree,
poisoned river, and lost creature.

We believe in the call to repent,
to turn from destruction and walk the path of
restoration.

We believe that through God's mercy,
creation can be renewed, and we can be made
whole.

Amen.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Creator and Sustainer of all life,

We lift our voices in sorrow and hope,

As we see the earth groaning under the weight of
war and exploitation.

Lord, have mercy. Restore Your creation.

We pray for places torn apart by war—

Where bombs scar the earth,

forests are burned, and rivers run with blood.

Where wildlife flees,

and ecosystems collapse beneath human conflict.

May peace take root, and healing begin for land



and life.

Lord, have mercy. Restore Your creation.

We remember the poor and vulnerable,
Those who suffer most when the rains fail, when
the air is toxic,
When forests are cleared and water is polluted.
Open our hearts to justice, that we may lift the
burdens they carry.

Lord, have mercy. Restore Your creation.

We pray for food security—
For farmers facing droughts,
floods, and dying soils,
For communities where children
go hungry as crops fail.
May sustainable paths be found,
and the land yield life once more.

Lord, have mercy. Restore Your creation.

God of peace, God of justice,
Teach us to be guardians of the earth
and protectors of the vulnerable.
Give us courage to change our ways and wisdom
to care well for what You have made.

Lord, have mercy. Restore Your creation.

Amen.

CELEBRATING AT GOD'S TABLE

Place images of the destruction of war, loss of lives
and environmental destruction at the foot of the
altar. Have a moment of silence to remember lives
lost and eco-systems destroyed as we pray for
peace and justice.

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

PRAYER OF COMMITMENT

Based on Jeremiah 8:18, 22 and 9:1

O God of the drumbeat and the drought,
Of rivers that run deep and skies that remember
rain,

Our hearts are heavy,
like dry earth waiting for the first drops.
We have seen the pain of the land,
and we have heard its cry.
Where is the balm for the wounds of creation?
Where is the healing for the broken soil
and the broken spirit?

Today, like mourners in sackcloth,
we bring our sorrow and turn it into purpose.
We commit to walk with gentler steps,
to till the land with care,
To protect the forests, the waters,
and the lives they hold.
Make us your healers, O Lord
carrying the medicine of love,
The strength of community,
and the wisdom of the ancestors.
In Your mercy, may our lament
become the song of renewal.

Amen.

BLESSING

May the God who weeps with the wounded earth
surround you with the comfort of the wind
through the acacia trees.

May your tears, like the early rains, water the soil of
hope and awaken new life.

May your hands be strong like the hands of the
potter, shaping justice, peace, and healing in all you
do.

And may the blessing of the Creator,
the Compassionate Christ,
and the Spirit who dances through creation
go with you through every village path,
mountain trail, and river bend, now and always.

Amen.





WEEK FOUR

ACTS OF STUBBORN HOPE

READINGS

Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15
Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16
1 Timothy 6:6-19
Luke 16:19-31

COLLECT

Faithful God,
You called Your servant to buy land
as a sign of hope.
In the midst of brokenness,
You promise restoration and life.
Help us to trust Your future for creation,
To care for earth
with patient hands and steadfast hearts.
May fields once barren flourish again,
And life spring forth where there was despair.
Through Christ, our redeemer and restorer.
Amen.

SERMON NOTES

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Jeremiah 32:1–3a and 6–15

Introduction:

This passage tells of the prophet's purchase of a field during a time of impending destruction, symbolizing hope for restoration. This act of investment in land, even amid devastation, represents faith in God's promise of renewal for both people and the Earth. The land, though suffering due to human disobedience, remains a part of God's creation with intrinsic value. Peace with creation involves recognizing that, even in times of ecological crisis, the Earth holds hope for future restoration. Like Jeremiah, we are called to invest in the long-term protection and healing of the planet. We are called to live out hope in action.

JEREMIAH 32: 1-3, 6-15

The Good News of Bad News

The army of the king of Babylon was then besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was confined in the courtyard of the guard in the royal palace of Judah. Now Zedekiah king of Judah had imprisoned him there, saying, "Why do you prophesy as you do? You say, 'This is what the Lord says: I am about to give this city into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it.

Jeremiah was not a yes-man, or a sycophant – in the face of bad news he spoke out.

Like Jerusalem we are facing extremely bad news. We know that the exacerbation of extreme climate events can no longer be seen as "natural disaster" but rather Creation's super-powered response to a war which continues until we set aside the injustice of a global fossil fuel economy benefitting some, harming many. Such change is beyond individuals, but communities can encourage it. How can people of good faith

best support their leaders in decisions for the good of all? What can we learn from the prophet Jeremiah?

What do you see coming? What can you do to share what you see? What sort of peace may still be made with the Creation against whom the late Pope Francis observed, humankind has been waging war?

We need to preach the bad news!

The Christian Gospels- books of 'Good News' are actually characterized by a large proportion of warning vocabulary – bad news! John the Baptist's blunt and forthright message is described as "good news". The Sermon on the Mount ends with the parable of the wise and foolish builders - surely one of the most up-to-date parables for our time: the imperative of responsive action in a climate circumstance well beyond immediate control. Here the builder on rock survives (though presumably not without some damage and flooding) - whereas the builder who pig-ignorantly – (or is this

optimistically?) chooses sand does not. Both have the same opportunity to assess their climate. But faced with threats beyond our immediate control, salvation is still by the skin of our teeth.

The scenario of this part of the Book of Jeremiah has a similar, but brutally acute relevance to how we engage with a post-1.5 degrees world, in which an initially unstoppable momentum of extreme climate events, ecocide, extinctions and more will be part of all our shared future.

And it may well be "a long time" before the results of the best decisions of nations bear fruit in peace with Creation. Jeremiah acted as if he knew that it's vital to act now in any case.

"Everything is going to be all right" has become dishonest and harmfully misleading to our peoples and their planet. Of course, the climate emergency will also affect our investments and calculations. Jeremiah here makes an "investment in hope" well beyond what the market of that time would consider wise.

In all our geographical contexts today, Things Will Get Worse, and the honest acknowledgement of that now moves into the mode of Good News- just like the confirmation for Jeremiah of God's tip-off that his relative will come and try to rip him off over a property option in a time of recession.

Jeremiah's meticulousness over the following procedure is striking, and includes attention to durability, to investment in hope beyond the grim and immediately foreseeable future. "Take these documents, both the sealed and unsealed copies of the deed of purchase, and put them in an earthenware jar, in order that they may last for a long time". It's the sort of prophetic 'madness' - with eyes wide open - that rebels against the common sense of despair, rather than evades or denies the crisis.

Beyond the time of tipping points, the remaining Good News of 2025 is to warn clearly of immediate bad news, and offer not facile solutions, but mitigation strategies, which may initially seem either alarmingly costly, humiliating, or - as for Zedekiah - politically unfeasible for as long as the idolatrous fictions of 'prudently, gradually

eventually" still masquerade as wisdom. These three words "prudently, gradually eventually" are used by politicians defending a retreat from Net Zero targets at a time when the UK government has been soft-peddalling what they might previously have touted as climate leadership.

In the background of the passage, - as the Book of Jeremiah proceeds, we find to our horror what Zedekiah was afraid of, but kept at arm's length. Psalm 79: 1-3, also this week, fills it in graphically. The temple will fall, Jerusalem will be reduced to rubble, blood poured out like water and no one left to bury the dead.

During the reign of Zedekiah Jerusalem fell. The Babylonian army, led by Nebuchadnezzar II, breached the city walls. This event marked the end of the Kingdom of Judah and the beginning of the Babylonian exile

But this is why there is no 'good news' component in denial.

King Zedekiah took the way of least resistance by imprisoning Jeremiah in an attempt to silence his "good news". But acting on the prophet's unwelcome truth might have spared him the

butchering of his sons - and therefore the future of his family identity as the last thing he saw before his eyes were put out, followed by the remainder of his life in suffering and humiliation.

Bible commentaries have characterized Zedekiah as weak and foolish, but this was a king of a city already under siege, with pressures way beyond those that assail the leadership of my own nation. Few can act wisely or rationally when this level of urgency takes hold.

The fear of political opposition led Zedekiah to permit the people the people to continue their "pollutions" (2 Chron 36:14).

That's a good word to choose. The refusal of our leaders at every level, to enable a just transition from lifestyles which harm both our local and global ecosystems, calls at least for protest, but even more for our support and encouragement of the best of our leaders in the bold decisions which may be for the good of all. What does it cost us to enable them to give leadership in this time of crisis of nature and climate?



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NOTES ON THE OTHER READINGS

PSALM 91:1–6 AND 14–16

Psalm 91:1–6 and 14–16 emphasizes God's protection and faithfulness, offering refuge from harm. This psalm affirms that God's safeguarding extends to all of creation. Just as God promises to shield the faithful, the Earth itself is under divine care, and we are called to honour that sacred relationship. The psalm's imagery of God's wings covering us reflects the protective, nurturing role humanity is meant to take in relation to the environment. Peace with creation arises when we recognize God's ongoing care for all life and commit to living in harmony with and protecting the Earth.

1 TIMOTHY 6:6–19

1 Timothy 6:6–19 contrasts contentment with greed, urging believers to store up treasures in heaven rather than on Earth. This passage challenges the consumerist mindset that exploits the Earth's resources for personal gain. True contentment comes from living simply and sustainably, understanding that wealth is not in accumulation but in stewardship. The call to "fight the good fight" and "take hold of the eternal life" invites us to pursue ecological justice, living in a way that honors the Creator and ensures peace with creation. Care for Creation, not exploitation, is central to peace with the Earth.

LUKE 16:19–31

Luke 16:19–31, the parable of the rich man and Lazarus highlights the stark divide between wealth and poverty, with the rich man ignoring the needs of the poor. This parable also reflects how humanity often neglects the Earth's vulnerability while prioritizing personal gain. Just as the rich man's disregard for Lazarus leads to his downfall, the exploitation of natural resources without regard for ecological balance brings suffering to the planet and its vulnerable communities. It is the over consumption of the richest people on earth that is causing the worst environmental degradation. Peace with creation calls for us to recognize our responsibility to both the poor and the Earth, embracing justice and sustainable stewardship.

LITURGY: ACTS OF STUBBORN HOPE

THE GATHERING

CALL TO WORSHIP

Based on Psalm 91:1–6

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High
Will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

**We will say of the Lord,
“You are our refuge and our fortress,
Our God in whom we trust.”**

God will deliver us from the snare of the fowler,
And from the deadly pestilence.

**Under His wings we will find refuge;
His faithfulness will be our shield and
protection.**

We will not fear the terror of the night,
Nor the arrow that flies by day,
Nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,
Nor the plague that destroys at noonday.

**Come, let us worship the God who protects,
who shelters, and who saves!**

PENITENCE

Based on Luke 16:19–31

The Rich Man and Lazarus

Merciful God,
You have shown us what is good:
To act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with You.
Yet we confess that we have lived
like the rich man—
Feasting while others hunger,
Closing our gates to those
who suffer at our doorstep.

Forgive us
for the times we have ignored the cries of the poor,

For our comfort that blinds us to their pain,
And for turning away
from those whom You call beloved.

Open our eyes, Lord,
to see Lazarus in every struggling neighbour,
And soften our hearts
to respond with compassion and justice.

May we live not for ourselves,
But as people transformed by Your mercy,
Who seek peace, equity, and dignity for all.
In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD CREED OF HOPE AND RESTORATION

Based on Jeremiah 32:1–3a, 6–15

We believe in God,
Who speaks hope in the midst of despair,
And calls us to trust in promises not yet seen.

We believe in the God of Jeremiah,
Who told him to buy a field in a land under siege—
A sign that life, not destruction, will have the final
word.

We believe that houses, fields,
and vineyards shall again be bought,
Because God is faithful, even in the ruins.

We believe that God calls us to act in hope,
To plant seeds of justice, peace, and healing,
Even when the world is broken.

We believe in a future shaped by God's promise,
Where restoration will come, and joy will rise from
the dust.

Amen.



RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God of hill and valley,
 God of ocean, river, and rain,
 You who breathed life into the soil
 and sang the stars into being.
 Hear our prayer for Your wounded world.

Christ of the cosmos, heal our Earth.

For the rising heat and failing rains,
 For storms that shake the ground
 and seas that swallow homes,
 We pray for those most vulnerable
 to climate change—the poor, the coastal,
 the voiceless, the forgotten.

Christ of the mountains, shelter and sustain us.

For the rivers choked with plastic,
 For skies thick with smoke
 And soil poisoned with waste,
 Forgive us, O God, for what we have done
 in greed and carelessness.
 Teach us to live more lightly on the land.

Spirit of the wind, purify and renew us.

For every species vanishing from the earth,
 For every bird that no longer sings,
 For the forests falling silent
 and the seas growing empty,
 We grieve what is lost
 and pledge to protect what remains.

**Guardian of creation,
 awaken our wonder and our will.**

O Three in One,
 Root, Branch, and Fruit;
 Help us to walk the ancient paths in new ways,
 To cherish the earth as gift, not possession,
 And to restore the web of life
 with reverence and love.

**From the rising of the sun to its setting,
 May we honour You in all we do.
 Amen.**

CELEBRATING AT GOD'S TABLE

Invite the young people and children to write letters of hope – for the future that they dream of. These can be sealed in an envelope and placed at the altar in a jar – like Jeremiah's act of hope of buying the plot of land.

SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

COMMISSIONING

Go now, as children of the earth and sky,
 Guardians of the rivers, forests, and fields.
 Walk gently upon the soil,
 Speak kindly to the winds,
 And live with the peace of the morning sun.

May the ancient wisdom
 of the land guide your steps,
 And the sacred rhythms of earth
 and sea inspire your heart.
 Carry the blessing of creation wherever you go
 To heal, to hope, and to bring peace.

BENEDICTION

May the peace of the wildwood rest upon you,
 The quiet of the hills calm your soul,
 And the song of the river renew your spirit.
 May God's breath be the wind beneath your wings,
 And the light of the everlasting stars
 Shine upon your path this day and always.
 Go in peace with creation,
 In the love of the Creator,
 The Wisdom of the Spirit,
 And the grace of the Beloved.
Amen.





PEACE WITH CREATION PRAYER

Creator of all,
we praise you for the gift of life
and for the faith that unites us in care for our common home.

We confess how estranged we have become—
from one another, from your Creation, and from our truest selves.
We acknowledge that our greed and destructive impulses
have fractured our relationships with you, with others, and with the Earth.
Fertile fields have become barren,
forests lie desolate,
oceans and rivers are polluted.
Thriving communities have become places of suffering,
and the earth cries out.

Beloved Christ,
who spoke “Shalom” to frightened hearts,
stir us to compassionate action.
Inspire us to work for the end of conflict,
and for the full restoration of broken relationships—
with you, with the ecumenical community,
with the human family,
and with all Creation.

Prince of Peace,
through your wounds, teach us to stand in solidarity
with the woundedness of others,
of creation, and of the world.
Through your resurrection,
make us people of hope—
with a vision of swords turned into ploughshares
and tears transformed into joy.

May we come together as one family,
to labour for your peace—
a shalom where all your people
may dwell in safety,
and rest in quiet places.
Amen.

Download this prayer and other resources from www.seasonofcreation.org

Mash, R
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