



Season of Creation 6

Water Justice

Climate change is supercharging the weather. We are seeing an increase in droughts and flooding in different parts of Southern Africa. Cape Town suffered from a three-year long drought, the worst in 100 years. The government declared "Day Zero" – the day when the taps would be turned off and all residents forced to queue for 20 litres of water per person. In this context the Church was forced to consider the value of water. A Water Justice Conference was organized at which Bishop Ellinah from Swaziland shared the impact of drought on her country.

This image reflects the findings of the conference, there are two streams which are important for us as Christians: "Water is sacred" and "Water Justice"

"Water is sacred" As Anglicans, water is sacred, we are baptized into the family of God through the waters of baptism and we also partake of bread, water and wine at our Eucharist celebration. Water is mentioned 722 in our Scriptures. In this image we see the water on the altar as a symbol of the sacredness of water. Bishop Ellinah is watering a tree, which many bishops are now encouraging at confirmation and baptism, that young people should plant a tree as a symbol of their spiritual growth

"Water Justice". As people of faith we are committed to strive for water for all. In this image we see the lack of safe sanitation for many as well as the challenge for those who have to walk long distances to fetch clean water. We also see the plastic pollution which is now clogging our rivers as well as the alien plants which need to be removed.

This Season of Creation let us celebrate the sacredness of water and work for water justice for all.

FOREWORD

Our moral opportunity on Climate Change

Hurricanes, monsoons and other types of extreme weather are a part of life on earth for many. The trouble is that climate change is loading the dice by intensifying storms and making rain patterns less predictable. Climate change is the human thumb on the scale, pushing us toward disaster. It is not a distant danger — it is already with us. As we continue to burn fossil fuels, its effects will only grow.

As people of faith, we don't just state our beliefs — we live them out. One belief is that we find purpose and joy in loving our neighbours. Another is that we are charged by our creator with taking good care of his creation. The moral crisis of climate change is an opportunity to find purpose and joy, and to respond to our creator's charge. Reducing the causes of climate change is essential to the life of faith. It is a way to love our neighbour and to steward the gift of creation.

Different expressions of the Christian faith are freshly united around the need to care for our common home. The Catholic, Anglican and Orthodox Churches have come together with the World Council of Churches to celebrate a monthlong Season of Creation. During this season, people all around the globe pray and act to address climate change and to protect the earth. People of faith have a unique call to address the causes of climate change. Let us act together in ways that will safeguard our shared gift of creation — and the lives of those who will inherit it from us.

Archbishop Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In this Season of Creation we explore five themes:

Each section contains sermon notes, liturgical materials and a fact sheet.

Sermon on Stewardship – Rev Canon Dr Claire Nye Hunter

Sermon on Water – Rev Doug Kirkpatrick

Sermon on Land – Bishop Ellinah Wamukoya

Sermon on Waste – Bishop Geoff Davies

Sermon on Biodiversity – Rev Tim Gray

Front cover illustration – Dr Bob Mash



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More resources are available on www.seasonofcreation.org

In being broken, poured out and buried, life sprang forth again. In the breaking, there is an opening up; in the pouring out, there are the roots of sharing; in death and burial, there is the seed of the new life to come.

As we look in our world, in our lives, and in our hearts, for his second coming, keep us close to this vision that we have seen. Through the giving in the bread and wine, reconcile us to our world. Send upon us, and upon all your creation, the life-giving Spirit who first moved upon the waters of the deep. Stir in us the creative and redeem the destructive. Unite us with you through the body and blood of your Son, your Word made flesh.

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.

The Lord's Prayer etc.

Final Blessing

Go out into the world rejoicing, and encounter the Creator who waits to meet you there;

Rejoice in its richness and diversity and live as those who praise God for its bounty; and the blessing of the Creator God,

the Eternal Father, the Risen Son and the Promised Holy Spirit bless you that you might be a blessing to others today and always

Amen

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER FROM "CELEBRATING SUNDAY"

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Worship and praise belong to you, Source of all being. Your power invigorates, your presence

sustains and your love restores our broken world. You are unceasingly at work: bringing order from chaos, creating, restoring, and filling emptiness with life. In raising Christ from the dead you usher in the dawn of a new age.

Your Spirit is fire in us, your breath is power to purge our sin and warm our hearts to love. As children of your redeeming

GATHERING

Great Spirit God,
we give you thanks for another day on this earth.
We give you thanks for this day
to enjoy the compassionate goodness of you, our
Creator.
We acknowledge with one mind
our respect and gratefulness to all the sacred cycle
of life.
Bind us together in the circle of compassion
to embrace all living creatures and one another.
Amen.^{vi}

Confession

Holy and merciful God, we confess that we have failed to honour you by rightly claiming our kinship with all your creatures. We have walked heavily on your earth, overused and wasted its resources, taken for granted its beauty and abundance, and treated its inhabitants unjustly, holding future generations hostage to our greed. Have mercy on us and forgive us our sin. Renew in us the resolve to keep and conserve your earth as you desire and intend, with grateful and compassionate hearts, through your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**^{vii}

PROCLAMATION

Affirmation of faith

You, O God, are supreme and holy.
You create our world and give us life.
Your purpose overarches everything we do.
You have always been with us.
You are God.
You, O God, are infinitely generous,
good beyond all measure.
You came to us before we came to you.
You have revealed and proved
your love for us in Jesus Christ,
who lived and died and rose again.
You are with us now.
You are God.
You, O God, are Holy Spirit.
You empower us to be your gospel in the world.
You reconcile and heal; you overcome death.
You are our God. We worship you.^{viii}

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Prayers of the People

Creator God, you have called the whole of creation into covenant with you and have called us to care for the earth and its creatures. We pray for all to whom you have given life and being, saying, "**Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.**"

For the well-being of the earth; for its resources of water, air, light, and soil, may they be tended for the good of all creatures, we pray: **Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.**

For the waters of the earth; for their careful use and conservation, that we may have the will and the ability to keep them clean and pure, we pray: **Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.**

For the mineral and energy resources of the planet, that we may learn sustainable consumption and sound care of the environment from which they come, we pray: **Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.**

For the animals of the earth, wild and domestic, large and very small, that they may be protected in the web that sustains all life, we pray: **Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.**

For all who shape public policies affecting the planet and its creatures [especially and our local leaders and], that they may consider wisely the well-being of all who come after us, we pray: **Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.**

For all those engaged in conservation, in agriculture and fishing, in mining and industry, and in forestry and timber-harvesting, that the health, fruitfulness, and beauty of the natural world may be sustained alongside human activity, we pray: **Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.**

For the creatures and the human beings of your world who are ill, or in danger, pain, or special need [especially], and for all who suffer from the unjust, violent, or wasteful use of the earth's resources that all may one day live in communities of justice and peace, we pray: **Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.**

Amen.^{ix}

CELEBRATING AT GOD'S TABLE

Prayer at the preparation of the Table

As the grain once scattered in the fields and the grapes once dispersed on the hillside are now reunited on this table in bread and wine, so, Lord, may your whole Church soon be gathered together from the corners of the earth into your kingdom. **Amen.**

Or

Blessed be God,
by whose grace creation is renewed,
by whose love heaven is opened,
by whose mercy we offer our sacrifice of praise.

Blessed be God for ever.^x

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

We have been guests of Jesus Christ. We have received God's good gifts. Now we go to our homes, to our neighbours, to our work equipped to put Jesus' words and being into action, to be the salt of the world, to seek justice, to make peace, to preserve creation, to gain life. **Amen.**^{xi}

CREATIVE IDEAS

The altar can be decorated with fruit, vegetables and plants.

The Sunday School can prepare posters about the beauty of the Earth

A powerpoint presentation with Archbishop Tutu's Prayer for the Earth: <http://www.ccow.org.uk/resources/archbishop-tutus-prayer-powerpoint/?cn-reloaded=1>

SERMON

A Call to Persevere

Following three years of devastating drought, Cape Town was threatened with having its taps turned off "Day Zero". What lessons can we learn from Scripture when faced by similar challenges?

Hebrews 10: 19-25

19 Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, 20 by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

As a little boy I went fishing with a friend in a little boat. The mist came down and we got lost and couldn't find our way. We called out for help "Dad, Dad". Through the mist a voice came and so we paddled as hard as we could towards him. In a few moments we broke through the midst into sunlight and it was like heaven on earth.

When it comes to issues of water, we have chosen to drift from God's ways, we have stopped being stewards of precious water and have become lost – using water as we will, dependant on anything but God. Faced with devastating drought in Cape Town, I have been asking the question – 'what does it take for a city to be in 'sackcloth'? In a city surrounded by water on all sides but facing a major drought, we are lost, calling out to God, our Father, to give us direction, to show us the way forward. And many people are afraid...

Persevere

Hebrews 10: 19-22 is a call to persevere. We do not need to panic, we do not need to despair, as Christians we are called to Persevere. Three particular aspects of this Perseverance are striking:

- v19 "we have confidence"
- v 22 "full assurance of faith"
- v23 "let us hold fast to the confession of our hope"

In times of crisis how do we - the Christian community - reveal that God is trusted? How do we hold fast? The writer to the Hebrews makes

very important theological points for you and me to take hold of:

Position

We can call out to God in confidence.

23 Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. Our confidence comes because we know the character of Jesus "By the blood of Jesus the Christ; so as a result of who Jesus is and what Jesus did we can confidently be in the presence of God who is faithful;" (v 19-23). We are Children of the Most High, Sons and daughters of the King. Let us continue to present ourselves as hopeful for we are calling out to our loving father.

"Persevere in the position you have, and put it into practice" (Steven Cole)

If we say we have faith, we must also take action. Since we are joined with Christ each day in the body of His Church our purpose is to recommit ourselves and our families to the ways of God by the actions we take. The Church reveals our commitment by the actions of our lives. Action reveals faith.

Practice

24 And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Keeping this simple it seems that we are called to encourage each other into being people who express love and do good. In this particular time of crisis, the people of the city are learning that we all are interdependent and that as we all do our best to consume less water and other things too we can beat day zero. We can share ideas and encourage one other in practical ways. So in a time of drought, how should we pray?

Perseverance – to express hope in the One to whom we belong;

Position - to be determined to remind one another that we are in Christ;

Practice – to show each other what it means to express love and to do good by every action we take by the power of the Holy Spirit in whom we have life.

This is living for Christ then; in a time of crisis we trust God to give us determination to express love and do good as members of our communities and so present God to those who desire direction, security, comfort and freedom. Let us persevere in the position we have, and put it into practice!

Rev Doug Kirkpatrick

Jeremiah 2: 1-13

*But you came and defiled my land
and made my inheritance detestable.*

v 6 -7 In one of the most powerful environmental verses in Scripture we see the importance of water for the people of Israel. For forty years they have wandered through the barren wilderness, totally dependent for life on finding sources of water during their travels. What joy, when they finally come into a land flowing with milk and honey – a fertile land full of fruit and rich produce. And rather than caring for the land, they have defiled it and made it detestable. What have we done to God’s Earth and water? Clear life-giving streams have become clogged with plastic and toxins, aquifers are polluted, the oceans are warming. These verses call upon us to lament.

And so God judges his people in verse 13:

My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.

God is the spring of living water – living water flows up from the depths of the mountain and does not stop even in a time of drought. We however try to confine our spirituality in manmade tanks. In this image we compare the living streams flowing from a mountain to a manmade tank where the water becomes stagnant. And not only that – the tank is leaking! In turning from God’s living waters and embracing the idols of materialism, we are destroying the Earth.

Psalm 107:33-38

*The waters of life bring blessing and food
for the hungry*

Psalm 107 is a psalm about the faithfulness of God and the unfaithfulness of human beings. Time and time again we turn from him. Some were wondering in the desert and God brought them out to a safe city . Others were suffering in torments of prison and God released them from their shackles. Others went out as merchants in their ships and were caught in a great storm but God saved them. And in verse 33 we find this shocking verse “he turned rivers into a desert, flowing springs into a thirsty ground, fruitful land into a salt

waste” – because of the wickedness of those who live there We have turned from God, just like the merchants in the ships, we are worshipping the gods of consumerism, filling the empty space in our souls with more and more material goods. How do we understand this harsh judgement of God? We are reaping the consequences of our actions. And yet if we turn back to God he will turn the deserts again into pools of water and the parched ground into springs. What a vision of hope!

Hebrews 10: 19-25

The cleansing power of God’s water

The writer of Hebrews has been explaining why the new covenant is superior to the Old Covenant- on this we base our confidence. In the Old Covenant the blood of animal sacrifice was ceremonial, it could not clean the conscience – it reminded us that our sin remained. What a beautiful image then when blood is replaced by cleansing water. Under the new covenant we are washed free of all feelings of guilt

Matthew 3: 13-17

The waters of baptism

Jesus was baptised in the Jordan river – what does it mean for us that we entered the family of God through water? We have become separated off from the sacredness of water – it comes to us from a tap or in a bottle. In the Old Testament the Old Covenant placed great emphasis on ceremonial cleanliness. Priests and other worshippers had to follow certain washing rituals in order to communicate with God (Exodus 30:18-21). Jesus, as he often did, was freed from narrow restrictions. He chose to go out into nature – to a river with all its movement and mud – to be baptised. He was cleansed by the water but also made the water sacred by his presence. What does it mean that we have taken the waters of baptism back into the church building and changed them from a roaring torrent into a few splashes of water from the tap?

Do we know where the water that we use in that tap comes from? From which river or dam does it come? And how polluted is that river with plastic or toxins? What does it mean that our river Jordan is polluted?

GATHERING**Opening Sentence**

Blessed be God: Creator, Word, and Spirit, who brings all things into being and calls them good.

Bless your Creator, all animals of the land.

Let us praise and exalt our Creator together.

Bless your Creator, all birds of the air.

Let us praise and exalt our Creator together.

Bless your Creator, all creatures of the sea.

Let us praise and exalt our Creator together.

Bless your Creator, all children of God.

Let us praise and exalt our Creator together.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.^{xlvii}

Confession

God of Life

We praise you for the beauty of Creation

Its richness and variety

Yet through greed and ignorance

We choke your world with plastic waste

And throw so much away

Make us more like Jesus

Trading gently on our common home

And breathe your Spirit on us

That we may care more deeply for your Earth

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.^{xlviii}

PROCLAMATION**The Affirmation of faith**

You, O God, are supreme and holy.

You create our world and give us life.

Your purpose overarches everything we do.

You have always been with us.

You are God.

You, O God, are infinitely generous,
good beyond all measure.

You came to us before we came to you.

You have revealed and proved

your love for us in Jesus Christ,
who lived and died and rose again.

You are with us now.

You are God.

You, O God, are Holy Spirit.

You empower us to be your gospel in the
world.

You reconcile and heal; you overcome
death.

You are our God. We worship you.^{xlix}

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD**Prayers of the people**

Creator of earth, sea, and sky, kindle the
fire of your Spirit within us that we may
be bold to heal and defend the earth, and
pour your blessing upon all who work for

the good of the planet. **God,
Giver of life, Hear our prayer.**

Breath of life, receive our thanks for the
beauty of the Earth and all who dwell in
it, and grant us the wisdom and will to
conserve it. **God, giver of life, hear our
prayer**

Source of life, heal and redeem the
wounds of your creation, and visit the
places and people who suffer from our
indifference, neglect, and greed.
God, Giver of life, Hear our prayer.

Lover of all you have made, we thank
you for the wondrous diversity of your
creatures, and we pray for their wellbeing.
God, Giver of life, Hear our prayer.

Author of the book of nature, receive
our gratitude for places of restoration
and healing, and continue to bless those
places that feed our lives and spirits.
God, Giver of life, Hear our prayer.

Giver of all good gifts awaken us daily
to our dependence upon your bounty
and make us always thankful for the
abundance of your blessings.
God, Giver of life, Hear our prayer.

Divine Physician heal our communities,
especially those where neglect, greed, or
violence inflict suffering upon people and
other creatures.

God, Giver of life, Hear our prayer.

Eternal God, the light of all who know
you, come and fill our hearts with your
love. Help us speak when many keep
silent, help us stand for what is right
when many sit in indifference. Increase
our faith and charity, until your kingdom
comes, and heaven and earth rejoice in
everlasting glory; through your Son, our
Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.ⁱ

CELEBRATING AT GOD'S TABLE

Behold the Saviour who will not save
himself;

Behold the Creator, whom the world
disowns.

His cross is the reconciliation;

Christ is peace between God and the
world,

peace between the world and God.ⁱⁱ

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Christ calls you to be his disciples,
to serve him with love and compassion,



Green Anglicans
Anglican Church of
Southern Africa
Environmental Network
www.greenanglicans.org



**SEASON OF
CREATION**

www.seasonofcreation.org

“Creation is standing on tiptoe waiting for the children of God to be revealed” Rom 8:19

The climate crisis is one of the primary indicators that we are living in a time of great change, great conflict, and great confusion. There is no consensus on the moral principles that should ground our society. Factions define progress by conflicting standards -- economic growth for corporations and the wealthy, individualistic freedom to act and believe in almost any way, technological advances, or health for communities both human and ecological.

Not only does the climate crisis create an opportunity for the church to be fully and faithfully engaged in mission, it is also an opportunity for the church to rediscover and reclaim our purpose. If the Christian church does not claim this opportunity, then we'll be unable to inspire humanity to engage a new moral era.

There is an opportunity for theological renewal. If we take seriously what science tells us, we can come to new wonder and commitment about the intricate creation in which we live and which is held in love by God. As we re-read our sacred texts and examine our traditions, we can rediscover that the promise of faith is for communities as well as individuals. As we recognize the urgency of these times, we'll see that faithfulness is about action as well as belief.

There is an opportunity for renewal in preaching and worship. When our worship springs from compassion for a global and intergenerational community, we're drawn out of self-centered and domesticated rituals. Worship and prayer may be taken to the streets and the parliament, as well as the church building. Preaching that speaks to this time of crisis will be both pastoral and prophetic.

There is an opportunity for discipleship and witness. Theology and ethics will draw us into service of those who face injustice and suffering in this climate-distorted world. We will speak, not only within our church communities, but in the broader society about the standards for justice, for the expansive range of neighbor love, about hope and the possibility of transformation. We'll be called to speak good news that is equal to the scale of this crisis.

There is an opportunity for community and collaboration. In a time of division and partisanship, honest and confessional conversation can bridge disagreement and rebuild trust. When we join forces with scientists and activists and community leaders, we'll find energy and effectiveness in new coalitions.

“Climate change is an opportunity for which the church was born.” Claiming this opportunity will revitalize the church in its mission and ministry. That's good for the church, and it is a gift to the world.

– Rev Peter Sawtell: Executive Director,
Eco-Justice Ministries

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