



A Service on the theme of Climate Change

Call to worship

Entry of the Bible

"To the Lord belong the earth and everything in it, the world and all its inhabitants".

Psalm 24

In our worship we reflect on the power of God whose Word brought all things on the Earth into being. God created a web of life on planet Earth - with human well-being interwoven with all life on earth and its ecosystem. As we are dependent on God, so too we are dependent on the earth and the natural environment and in this age of serious climate change we have to learn anew what it means to be interwoven into God's creation.

Hymn: R&S 85 God in his love for us lent us this planet

Prayers of approach

- L We are the people of God, the Almighty.
All **Created in the image of God, stewards of the creation.**
L. We are the people of God, the Redeemer.
All **Released in Jesus Christ, carriers of reconciliation.**
L We are the people of God, the Giver of Life.
All **Open to the inspiration of the Spirit in faith, hope and love.**
L Praise to you, Creator of heaven and earth.
All **You give us the food of the earth and the water of the well.**
L Praise to you, Jesus Christ, who walked our ways.
All **You have revealed the will of God and the holiness of the earth.**
L Praise to you, Holy Spirit, Giver of Life.
All **You awaken our song of praise in faith and struggle.**
(Per Harling, ECEN 2004)

Creating God, your name is written in every leaf, every bird, every river, every living being. Thank you for calling us by name.

Thank you for your continued creating power in moisture, rivers, and oceans.

Make us attentive to the wounds of the earth and willing to work for the healing of the whole creation. Let our children enjoy an abundant nature and live a long life on earth.

(2003 Lutheran World Federation Assembly in Winnipeg)

Prayer of Confession

Creating God, you give light and life, and express delight in your creation.

You gave the command to till and care for your garden,
but we have abused the beauty of creation.

We confess we have not taken care to understand the earth, and care for it.

We have taken the climate for granted and unthinkingly polluted the earth.

We confess the churches' lack of concern for the well-being of creation.

We confess the excesses within our own daily lives, our pursuit of comfort and pleasure at the expense of the earth.

Creating God, we have desecrated your creation and darkened your light.





In a moment of quiet we confess our faults.

Lord, you are a gracious God and you forgive all those who confess their faults and with your help fully intend to live better lives - coming ever closer to you.

We feel your pardon with us now and we are glad.

Words of Renewal

God of life and God of light,

as we seek a new relationship with your created order,

may we sense the grace and peace of a new relationship with you.

Amen. (Eco-Congregation - used with permission)

Symbolic action:

Congregation bring forward an object from nature (flower, leaf, berry or fruit, or other). Tearfund or Operation Noah cards pledging to reduce our carbon emissions are given out

Leader: Almighty God, Creator and Lifegiver,
we are part of your beautiful but fragile creation.
We have the responsibility to protect,
to nurture and to respect it.
We bring before you tokens of the beauty of the earth
exchanged for our commitment to cut our carbon emissions
for the sake of the planet and all your people.
Give us the grace to honour the commitment we
make this day, and live more lightly on the earth.

Amen

Family Time: (with accompanying PowerPoint)

The leader might like to focus on 3 things:

1. the unfair carbon footprint - how the rich countries are responsible for most of the carbon emissions as a result of our lifestyles but the poorest communities are hit disproportionately hard by climate change.
2. God the Creator who made the earth, all creatures and humankind. God wants us to have a close relationship with Him but also to look after and respect the earth, because if the earth suffers, we suffer and we have nowhere else to go. God will guide us along a path of more simple living.
3. We each have to cut back our carbon emissions and have a smaller footprint, more to the size of our brothers and sisters in poor countries.

Prayer

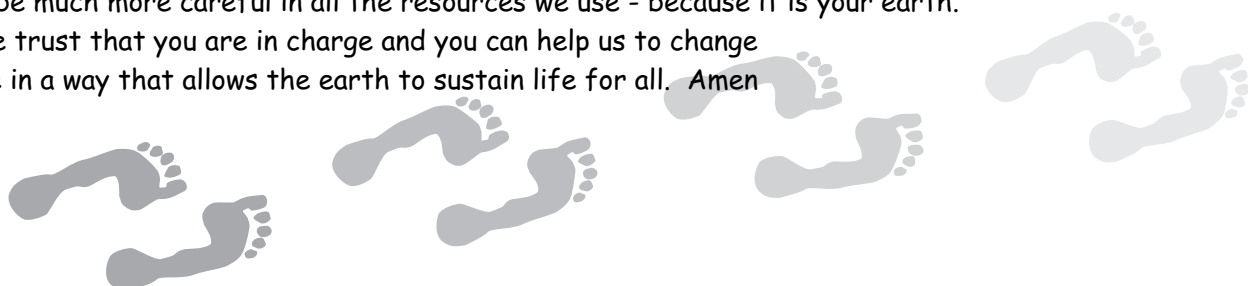
Father we confess that we have been blind to how our lives impact on others, and especially on the poorest communities.

Father we confess that we have taken the earth for granted, and used electricity and petrol without a second thought and not seen it as part of the problem.

Father we turn back to you and ask you to help us to live simpler lives

and to be much more careful in all the resources we use - because it is your earth.

Lord we trust that you are in charge and you can help us to change and live in a way that allows the earth to sustain life for all. Amen





Hymn: R&S 60 God who spoke in the beginning

Offertory and dedication

Readings: The theme of creation is a recurring theme in the Bible. The Powerpoint presentation takes a number of key passages. If you are not able to use the Powerpoint you may want to select from some of the following passages:

"To the Lord belong the earth and everything in it, the world and all its inhabitants. For it was he who founded it in the seas and planted it firm on the waters beneath". Ps 24

"God created the great sea creatures . . . the beasts of the earth according to their kinds . . . And God said it was good. . . And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. . . And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy".

"The Word was first, the Word present to God, God present to the Word. The Word was God, everything was created through him; nothing - not one thing - came into being without him. What came into existence was Life, and the Life was Light to live by." John 1:1-4 (The Message)

Christ is "the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation...by whom and through whom all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible . . . all things were created by him and for him . . . and in him all things hold together. " Colossians 1:15-17

"God so loved the world that he sent his only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Matt 6:9-10

"he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor . . . to set the oppressed free." Luke 4:16-18

"You shall love your neighbour as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these." Mark 12:31

Sermon: Creation in the Bible (with accompanying powerpoint)

Focus 1: God's earth; a loving God created a web of life on planet earth, with human beings interwoven with all life on earth. God saw that it was good - full of harmony, peace, justice, wisdom and power. All should rest on the Sabbath. As we are dependent on God, so too are we dependent on the earth and the natural environment. Christ continues God's work in creation. The "earth" and "the world" are writ large in the mission of Jesus who came to link heaven and earth, and to build the Kingdom of God on earth.

Focus 2: Our responsibility to respect and protect the created order and share its resources. This is linked to God's passion for justice and care for the most vulnerable, and His command for us to love our neighbour, and for this love to be not words but in action. We start by responding in faith and trust in God, by understanding something of the urgency of climate change and the price being paid by the poorest people. We look at own carbon footprint and that of the church and seek to reduce it by acting locally and urging others to commit to lowering their carbon usage.





Hymn: R&S 586 All our hope on God is founded.⁵

Creed⁶

God creates all things, renews all things and celebrates all things.
This we believe.

Earth is a sanctuary, a sacred planet filled with God's presence,
a home for us to share with our kin.
This we believe.

God became flesh and blood, a piece of Earth,
a human being called Jesus Christ, who lived and breathed
and spoke among us, suffered and died on a cross
for all human beings and for all creation.
This we believe.

The risen Jesus is the Christ at the centre of creation,
reconciling all things to God,
renewing all creation and filling the cosmos.
This we believe.

The Holy Spirit renews life in creation,
groans in empathy with a suffering creation
and waits with us for the rebirth of creation.
**This we believe. We believe that with Christ we will rise
and with Christ we will celebrate a new creation.**

Prayers of intercession for the Church and the world

Hymn R&S 532: Lord of Creation, to You be all praise!

Blessing

Lord Jesus, our present guide and hope for the future.
Help us look after planet earth until you return.
Show us the joyful path of walking more lightly
On the earth in your name.
And may the blessing of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. . . Amen

⁵ Hymns in Rejoice and Sing appropriate to the theme: 59, 60, 82, 85, 86, 89, 90, 91, 95, 180, 482, 520, 532, 605, 612, 630, 642, 650, 651, 654, 680.

Eco-Congregation Module 2 includes a list of hymns from a range of hymn books (www.ecocongregation.org/englandwales/downloads/m2.doc).

The Iona Community have a number of fresh modern hymns that are appropriate and specifically "All the wonder that surrounds us" from 'One in the Body'.

"Creator God, abundant life your mark" - powerful words written by Pat Bennett for the Climate Change service in London on 4th Nov. '06 download: www.christian-ecology.org.uk/scc-service.doc.

⁶ Australian Planet Earth Sunday liturgy 2 www.seasonofcreation.com/studies/earth/ used with permission

