

# CELEBRATE THE SEASON OF CREATION

1 September - 4 October

Month of prayer and action for the  
care of creation



ANGLICAN  
DIOCESE OF  
AUCKLAND



# LET'S CELEBRATE THE SEASON OF CREATION!

The Season of Creation is an annual celebration of prayer and action to protect creation. Each year, from the 1 September to 4 October - St Francis of Assisi Day, many Anglicans around the world use this time as an opportunity to reflect on our relationship with creation and our mission to safeguard the integrity of creation.

In the Anglican Diocese of Auckland, several ministry units use this time as an opportunity to draw attention to our relationship with creation and our Creator God. In the Lectionary/Te Maramataka, the days before and after the 4th of October are the Days of Prayer for the Care of Creation - Ngā rā īnoi kia tiakina ngā mea katoa i hanga.

This is a guide to support your ministry units to participate in the Season of Creation in a way that is appropriate to your context.

# WHY HAVE A SEASON OF CREATION?

*The Season of Creation is a time to renew our relationship with our Creator and all creation through celebration, conversion, and commitment together.*

*“The heavens proclaim the glory of God: and the vault of the sky reveals God’s handiwork.”* Psalm 19:1. Our God is a creative God who made all of creation! When we pause and notice the beauty of creation around us, we are led into prayer and worship.

In the creation narrative, before humans were created, God looked at the land, the plants, the creatures and each day He said: “it is good”. Creation is God’s primary way of providing for our basic needs for air, shelter, water and food. In turn God instructs humanity to be good caretakers of creation.

In a world obsessed with more consumption at the expense of other inhabitants (human and other-than-human), we have failed to look after our common home. Through Jesus, we live in the hope that God is reconciling to himself all things on earth and in heaven (1 Colossians 1:20).

It is important that we as the church are able to be a reminder to each other of what it means to be human within God’s creation.



# A SEASON FOR WORSHIP!



Ministry units may wish to dedicate the entire month of September to the Season of Creation, or choose some Sundays over the month to focus on creation care.

Within the New Zealand Prayer Book - He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa, there are resources for prayer that draw attention to our relationship to creation, such as the Benedict Aotearoa on pg 63 and the Eucharistic Liturgy - Thanksgiving for Creation and Redemption pg 456 - 475.

## Inspirations for Sunday Services

The global ecumenical steering committee for Season of Creation chooses a theme for season of creation each year and provide an ecumenical **celebration guide** with lots of prayer and ideas at [seasonofcreation.org](http://seasonofcreation.org).

For **liturgical inspiration** from across the Anglican communion, see [Creationtide resources](#) from the Church of England and [Season of Creation resource](#) from the Scottish Episcopal Church.

For **children's church** resources, see A Rocha Aotearoa NZ's [Creation Connection](#) series and the STRANDZ [Care of Creation resources](#).

**Sermon notes** following the common lectionary relating to sustainability and creation care can be found at [Sustainable Preaching](#) and [Preaching for God's World](#).

For worship songs relating to creation care, [Doxecology](#) offers accessible hymns for any service. Sheet music for these songs can be found [here](#). A Rocha Aotearoa NZ has also combined a wide range of creation focused worship songs [here](#).

Consider inviting a guest speaker to share about creation care or climate justice at your church, you can email [sustainability.fieldworker@aucklandanglican.org.nz](mailto:sustainability.fieldworker@aucklandanglican.org.nz) for recommendations.



# A SEASON TO BE CREATIVE!

Season of creation is a great opportunity to try something new for the Sunday worship space which deepens our relationship with our Creator and creates an opportunity to invite all generations to join in.

## OUTDOOR CHURCH

Have a church service outdoors! We remember that all of creation is God's sanctuary and we join with creation to worship. You may consider organising a simple service outside on the lawns of the church or at a public location such as a park or the beach. Keep in mind the accessibility needs of your community as you organise.



*ADJust and Karakia for our Climate organises an outdoor prayer vigil for Kohimarama Forest outdoors followed by a forest walk.*

Forest church or wild church is a contemporary movement, with roots in the long Christian tradition of engagement in nature, such as the Celtic and Franciscan traditions. Much is about noticing and appreciating our creator God through creation. We can notice how nature lives out on a seasonal basis the death and resurrection that is at the heart of our Christian faith.

See resources from the Diocese of Gloucester:

<https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/2018/discovering-forest-church/>

# INTERGENERATIONAL SERVICE

Season of Creation is a great opportunity to invite all generations to worship God together in a creative and interactive way. Involve the children and grandchildren in all aspects of the service and create roles and interactive elements around celebrating creation. See the [Season of Creation Intergenerational Service](#) resource for ideas.



*Henderson parish hosts a Zero Waste Sunday where everyone formed groups to do an activity around waste and creative ways to reclaim the earth's resources.*

Consider changing the format of the service towards the younger generation while being accessible for all generations. For example:

- Include interactive elements where members of the congregation bring something to the front, or hold an element of nature, plant a seed, etc.
- Instead of a sermon, gather children to the front and tell a simple story. Ask members of the congregations to share with the person sitting next to them: e.g. what is your favourite place outside and why?
- Explain different aspects of the liturgy and why it's important. Keep the liturgy simple and encourage children to read scripture and/or prayer as part of the service.



# BRING CREATION INTO CHURCH

## ALTAR FRONTAL DECORATIONS

Consider creating a centrepiece in front of the altar with elements of God's creation to remind us of the way creation cares for us, and our role as caretakers of creation.

It might be interactive - people can take something from the centrepiece or contribute something to it.



*Above is a centrepiece created by St Stephens Onerahi around the theme of streams and rivers.*

## ENGAGING THE SENSES

Give people a fragrant sprig of rosemary, or mint and/or play birdsong or flowing water in the background as people arrive as a reminder that the earth is God's garden.

## INTERACTIVE PRAYER STATION

Photo below is from St George's Epsom who set up drop in interactive prayer stations during Season of Creation. This is a prayer tree where people can decorate a leaf with their prayers to add to the tree.





# SEASON FOR ACTION!

The Auckland Anglican Response to the Climate Crisis (AARCC) framework outlines four key areas of action we want to focus on together - **Liturgy and Worship, Education, Mitigation, and Advocacy and Outreach.**

Below are some ideas to build our understanding our environmental issues and take practical steps to care for creation and safeguard it's integrity.

## AFTER CHURCH ON A SUNDAY

- Host a **workshop** looking at a particular sustainability issue and practical steps we can take as families and individuals to make a difference - e.g. waste, food, transport, consumption. Get in touch with the Sustainability Fieldworker if you'd like some support or connection to guest speakers.
- Organise a **working bee** on the church grounds to create a veggie garden, food forest, reflection garden, bee-friendly garden etc. Members of church can bring an appropriate plant to contribute. You may like to plant some native trees or fruit trees as appropriate and space allows.
- Organise a **pilgrimage/prayer walk or bike ride** at a beach/park/forest/mountain close by to the church. Consider pausing at different locations to create space for prayers of gratitude, lamentation, repentance and intercession for our relationship with the Creator and creation. End with a celebratory shared picnic or a drink together at a local café/restaurant.
- Host a **letter writing workshop** during/after morning tea, where everyone writes to the local MP/supermarket/council member about an issue that is on the hearts of the local community. You may wish to involve an organisation already working in this area.



# REDUCING OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

During Season of Creation, churches may like to have conversations with their leadership and governance about how to reduce the church carbon footprint.

There is a simple and easy to use **Church Carbon Footprint Calculator** which can give churches a base indicator of their footprint: [tinyurl.com/churchcarbon](https://tinyurl.com/churchcarbon)

Simple actions to reduce church carbon footprint:

- Switch all church lighting to LED and energy saving light bulbs
- Switch from LPG/fossil fuel heating and cooking systems to electric systems
- Redistribute leftover items from church fairs and sales
- Reduce waste emissions by recycling, and composting (at church or offsite)
- Avoid the use of disposable cups, plates, and utensils at church gatherings
- Provide a safe and sheltered bike rack for anyone cycling to church
- Offset carbon footprint by gifting and planting native trees



*Diocesan staff participating in a planting day at Matuku Link, Bethells*

# REACHING OUT



Season of Creation is a great opportunity to connect and engage with our wider community. Search up the suggested organisations below to find out more information.

Join in with a local community planting day, river or beach clean up  
**(Conservation Volunteers, A Rocha Aotearoa New Zealand, Sustainable Coastlines)**

Connect with the local cycling organisations and host a cycling event or workshop  
**(Cycling Action Network, Bike Auckland, Bike! Whangarei)**

Host a community event/church fair and include some aspect of sustainability and climate action, e.g. a clothes swap, seedling swap, repair cafe, DIY beeswax wraps, zero waste, composting workshop  
**(Para Kore,**

Be a prayerful presence at Climate Strikes and Climate Action Campaigns.

**(Karakia for our Climate, Pacific Climate Warriors, Generation Zero, All Aboard Aotearoa!, 350.org Aotearoa)**

## OTHER RESOURCES

**Rich Living Series** - Small group study booklets around the theme of Climate Change, Food, Water, Waste and Transport.

<https://www.arocha.org.nz/resources/rich-living-series/>

**Prophetic Indigenous Voices on the Planetary Crisis webinar** - contribution from Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia. <https://youtu.be/pkijdqwnsjg>

**Anglican Climate Emergency Centre** - find out how the global Anglican Communion has been engaging with the climate crisis and the impact climate change is having around our community.

<https://anglicanalliance.org/the-climate-emergency/>

## JOIN ECO CHURCH NZ!

The Eco Church NZ Project is an initiative of A Rocha Aotearoa New Zealand to support churches to actively care for God's earth as an integral part of their mission.

The Anglican Diocese of Auckland is a denominational partner of A Rocha NZ's Eco Church network. Ministry units are encouraged to consider becoming an Eco Church and joining the network. Becoming an Eco Church is a statement of intent and connects ministry units to New Zealand relevant resources, and opportunities to be involved in upcoming sustainability initiatives and online workshops.

Consider doing the Eco Church Self Assessment Worksheet to see where your church is at: <https://www.ecochurch.org.nz/self-assessment-worksheet>