

# Hope and Act with Creation

God said, 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.' And it was so. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

*Genesis 1:29-31*

Creation, especially our planet Earth, is one of the greatest gifts God has given us. A home that provides everything, yet like the physical homes we live in, it needs our ongoing care and attention to continue to meet our needs.

The *Season of Creation* begins on Sunday September 1<sup>st</sup>, with the World Day of Prayer for Creation, an ecumenical call to prayer around the world as Christians increasingly realise the harm humankind has done to our planet – our common home – over the last few centuries. It ends just over a month later on 4<sup>th</sup> October, the feast of St Francis.

By the time of Catherine's life, the Industrial Revolution was well underway, with newly-invented machinery being used for production of all manner of goods. Pollution of land, air and waterways was underway, often with little concern from anyone. Yet the human effects were also often damaging, with inhumane work conditions, displacement of people from their ancestral lands as they sought to find work, etc.

**In our era, our planet, as well as its people, are in need of mercy – God's and ours.**

The theme of the Season of Creation this year is *Hope and Act with Creation*.

**Move yourself away from distractions and still yourself as you become aware that God is with you – always and everywhere...**

We pray:

Blessed be the name of God, God of our ancestors, God of the generations yet to come.

Blessed be the Creating God, Redeeming Son and the Sustaining Spirit.

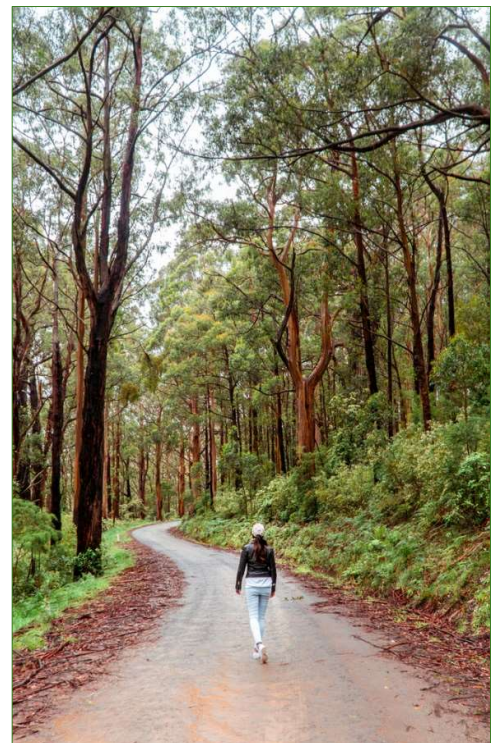
We hear the groans of Creation and the cries of our sisters and brothers. As we gather, we bring our seeds of hope, the first-fruits of the Spirit.

*(Rev Sikawu, Central Methodist Church, Cape Town)*

**To ponder:** What aspects of creation most strike you with awe and wonder? What does creation tell you about the beauty and goodness of God? About your own place in God's creation?



**SEASON OF CREATION**





### Songs of Bounty

Where did you get the idea  
for a daffodil, God –  
the splendid, deep golden  
trumpet kind?  
I would like the freedom of the bee  
to walk inside one  
surrounded by glory.

Blackbirds: how could one  
put into words  
that inimitable  
staccato furtiveness of feet,  
the astute attentiveness of head,  
the touch of gold on the shiny beak?

Mary Wickham RSM,  
<https://marywickhamrsm.org.au>

We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

*Romans 8:22-25*

There are different forms of hope. However, hope is not merely optimism. It is not a utopian illusion. It is not waiting for a magical miracle. Hope is trust that our action makes sense, even if the results of this action are not immediately seen (cf. Romans 8:24). Hope doesn't act alone. Earlier in his letter to the Romans, Paul the apostle explains the close relationship of hope as a growth process: 'endurance produces character, and character produces hope' (*Romans 5:4*).

Patience and endurance are close associates of hope. These are qualities that lead to hope.

*Celebration Guide, Season of Creation 2024, p. 15*

**To ponder:** How do you understand 'hope'? For our planet, our common home, reflect on ways you try to live responsibly, to reduce any negative impact you might leave. How do you see that HOPE and ACTION are related? Does being a person of hope guide the choices you make about how to act? Think of ways you can act 'with Creation' – enjoying its beauty, giving thanks and praise to God for this remarkable planet that we call 'home'...

God of Holy Dreaming, great Creator Spirit, from the dawn of Creation you have given your children the good things of our mothering Earth.

You spoke and the gum tree grew.

In the vast desert and the dense forest, and in the cities and at the water's edge, Creation sings your praise.

Your presence endures at the rock at the heart of our land.

When Jesus hung on the tree you heard the cries of all your people and became one with your wounded ones: the convicts, the hunted, the dispossessed.

The sunrise of your Son coloured the Earth anew and bathed it in glorious hope.

In Jesus, we have been reconciled to you, to each other and to your whole Creation.

Lead us on, Great Spirit, as we gather from the four corners of the Earth; enable us to walk together in trust from the hurt and shame of the past into the full day that has dawned in Jesus Christ. Amen.

*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Liturgical Resources*