

PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY GATHERING

17th August, 2022

Topic:

What is the Church doing about the environment?



ORDER FOR WORSHIP

GATHERING

Welcome and Introduction

We light the candle

This flame is warm as the companionship of friends is warm.
Let us celebrate the richness and diversity of life.

The candle is lit

Acknowledgement of Country

We recognise and give thanks that we humans are creatures of the Earth, living in an ecosystem comprising flowers, trees and insects; land, waters and mountain ranges. We honour the Kurna people who were the first peoples to be custodians of this fragile ecosystem in which we now live.

Acknowledgement of Diversity

We recognise our diversity, and in line with Church Policy, we acknowledge that this is a safe place in which all people can worship together, irrespective of race, creed, age, ability, sexuality, cultural background, or any other distinguishing feature.

CELEBRATING

Celebration of Life

One: As we approach the beginning of Spring, we give thanks for this opportunity to worship and celebrate.

All: May we be surrounded with a very real sense of the sacred as we spend this time together.

Hymn: Nature's Beauty

Tune Regent Square TIS 142

Nature knows her sounds and movements
Heard and seen each day and night;
All her life in rich abundance
Fills my heart with great delight;
Celebrate with adoration;
Thankful for the world so bright.

Fearsome winds cause trees to whimper;
Storms can force the clouds to cry;
Raindrops, snowflakes dance together;
Sun and moon wink and reply;
Celebrate with adoration
All the wonders of the sky.

Celebrate all hidden textures;
Value all the roots below;
Celebrate all covered splendour;
Value beauty not on show;
Celebrate with adoration;
Thankful for the world we know.

Creatures bold and creatures timid
Offer beauty, each unique;
Trees and flowers paint a picture
On the plain and mountain peak;
Celebrate with adoration;
All revealed for those who seek.

We are blest with such profusion;
Beauty bursts out everywhere;
If we take the time to ponder
We may find a thankful prayer;
Celebrate with adoration
Thankful for the world we share.

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EXPLORING

For Reflection

A prayer based on Psalm 104

O God, you are very great;
You are clothed with splendour and majesty.
You stretch out sky like a tent, make the clouds your chariot,
And ride on the wings of the wind.
The breezes are your messenger.
May your breath blow across our hearts,
Filling us with deep wisdom, hope, love, and the desire for justice,
As we continue our journey upon your Earth and through your sky.
Amen.

From 'Seven Songs of Creation' by Norm Habel

Wisdom from our tradition:

About creation: Psalm 24:1-2; Psalm 89:11; Genesis 1:26-31;
About greed: Jeremiah 2:7; Job 20:16-20; Luke 12:15.

Hymn: Our Mother Earth

Tune: Nun Danket TiS 106

It is our Mother Earth
To whom we owe allegiance,
For ever since our birth
S h e ' s s h a r e d f r o m h e r a b u n d a n c e ;
The air we need for breath,
The plants we need for food,
Cycles of life and death,
All have our gratitude.

From oceans, lakes and streams,
We draw much from their waters;
They are where nature dreams
Of bearing sons and daughters.
Then to the air and skies,
With energy and glee,
She moves with grace and flies
With polished artistry.

So how can we but grieve
When we observe pollution,
And not try to achieve
Some rehabilitation?
Repulsive is the sight
Of dirty, poisonous slime,
Of smog that hides the light.
We must reverse this crime!

Let us avoid the doom;
We know that nature's bleeding;
We must let flowers bloom;
We should heed all the pleading
To change what we all do,
To stop inflicting harm,
And so help to renew
All nature's fragile charm.

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Presentation

Where to from here for the church?

Speaker: David Shepherd, Convenor, Uniting Church
Environmental Action Group

Discussion

AFFIRMING

One: We bring our laments as we share our concerns for other humans.

All: We think of those around the world who have lost their homes, livelihoods or communities, due to human activities that have affected the climate.

One: We bring our laments as we share our concerns for non-humans.

All: We remember our non-human siblings whose habitats are destroyed by the effects of greed and accumulation by humans.

One: We bring our concerns for leaders and decision-makers.

All: We pray for leaders and decision-makers, that their choices might create a more beautiful, whole, resilient world.

One: We bring our concerns for the church.

All: We pray for our church, and voices such as the Environmental Action Group, that together we might be bearers of hope and resilience in our community, and inform others of how we might bring about a sustainable future. Amen.

Hymn: Stewards of Climate

Tune Finlandia TiS 123

We are the stewards of this wondrous earth
With all its teeming life of priceless worth;
In all creation God is thus revealed
In birds and beasts, in forests and each field;
We o f f e r t h a n k s f o r a l l o f n a t u r e
For God is present in each time and place.

How dare we then abuse this sacred trust
Because of comfort, pleasure, greed or lust;
Yet endless is our thirst for energy;
We burn resources quite relentlessly;
We have been warned; but madly we proceed
To try to satisfy this frantic need.

With climate warming, ocean levels rise;
Extremes in weather is a loathsome prize;
Deforestation dries the river bed;
Expanding deserts change the green to red;
We c a n ' t s t a n d b y a n d l e t t h e s e c
Stop exploitation. Yes; we must insist!

Let us resolve to change the way we live;
Instead of taking extra, let us give;
C a l l o n o u r l e a d e r s ; " T a k e u p N a t
We need sustainability in laws;
God is the one who hurts when things go wrong;
Let nature sing aloud its glorious song.

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SCATTERING

Words of Blessing

One: Walk softly.
Speak truthfully.
Love gently.
Breathe deeply.
Live wisely.
Go in peace.

All: Amen. May it be so!

The candle is extinguished

Notices

