

Creation is Our Story

Bishop Jane Alexander

*Ash Wednesday to Saturday
Wednesday March 2*

Scripture

Genesis 1:26; 2:15 (paraphrased)

You made us in your image to reflect your love in our care for your creation, and we realm our calling to be your stewards of the Earth, whose bounty provides us life.

Reflection

There is simply no getting around it the love story of God and humanity starts in creation. There is no way to distance ourselves from being part of, and responsible to, God's wonderful creation. Human beings have a role in Creation Care whether we think we signed up for it or not. It's simply in our DNA.

As Canadian Anglicans through the work of PWRDF we are familiar with the third Mark of Mission to tend to human need by loving service. Now more and more we see the connection between the third and fifth Marks of Mission that human needs are exacerbated by the current climate crisis. It is time for us to be bold and face this present time in a spirit of lament and repentance that pushes us to hope and to action. Perhaps you gave the gift of climate action through the PWRDF World of Gifts catalogue. Now in this Lenten season the time has come to take on Creation Care. To be a person of hope, prayer and action for the world, in the name of Jesus.

At the 2016 meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council, the whole Anglican Communion was reminded that care for creation is part of intentional discipleship for Christians. The Anglican Communion Environmental Network asked us to "love the world as much as God does." As we begin these Lenten reflections on Creation Care let's take a good look around us and really see this world and begin to love it anew. In that love may we find hope, not just for the future of the natural world but also for ourselves who were given the task of caring for all God's creation. Let us prepare to give up those parts of our former lives that degrade or misuse creation and commit to change. Each day the PWRDF partner stories will inspire us and reconnect us to God's creation.

"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."

Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, New York Times, November 2017

Prayer

Receive this cross of ash upon your brow,
Brought from the burning of Palm Sunday's cross.
The forests of the world are burning now
And you make late repentance for the loss.
But all the trees of God would clap their hands
The very stones themselves would shout and sing
If you could covenant to love these lands
And recognise in Christ their Lord and king.

He sees the slow destruction of those trees,
He weeps to see the ancient places burn,
And still you make what purchases you please,
And still to dust and ashes you return.

But Hope could rise from ashes even now
Beginning with this sign upon your brow.

Malcolm Guite (from Word in the Wilderness, Canterbury Press used by permission of the author)

PWRDF and climate change

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) calls climate change the defining issue of our time. From shifting weather patterns that threaten food production, to rising sea levels that increase the risk of catastrophic flooding, the impacts of climate change are global in scope and unprecedented in scale. Without drastic and immediate action, scientists warn that changes to major ecosystems, the planetary climate system and food supplies are irreversible. Perhaps nowhere are these changes more brutally felt than in many of the vulnerable communities where PWRDF partners work with people who do not yet have the knowledge or infrastructure to cope. Small holder farmers struggle to feed their families. Soil degradation and expanding deserts decrease food security, increase poverty and drive migration. Climate-related disasters, such as drought, floods, cyclones and tropical storms, increase food insecurity, both in the immediate aftermath of a disaster and in the long term. In 2018, climate and natural disasters so-called climate shocks jolted 29 million people into acute food insecurity. Nearly 23 million people in 20 African countries and 3.8 million people in Central America and the Caribbean (mainly in El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras and Nicaragua) were affected. As scientists sound the alarm over climate change, there is also reason to see hope. There are small changes afoot. As part of PWRDF's 2019-2024 Strategic Plan and our commitment to Sustainable Development Goal #13 (Climate Action), we are working with partners in Tanzania, Bangladesh, Cuba, Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Colombia on strategies to mitigate the impact of climate change.

Read the whole story on our website at
<https://pwrdf.org/climateaction/>