

Creation is Our Story

Bishop Jane Alexander

*Ash Wednesday to Saturday
Saturday March 5*

Scripture

Psalm 65:9-13

You visit the earth and water it,
you greatly enrich it;
the river of God is full of water;
you provide the people with grain,
for so you have prepared it.
You water its furrows abundantly,
settling its ridges,
softening it with showers,
and blessing its growth.
You crown the year with your bounty;
your wagon tracks overflow with richness.
The pastures of the wilderness overflow,
the hills gird themselves with joy,
the meadows clothe themselves with flocks,
the valleys deck themselves with grain,
they shout and sing together for joy

Reflection

Today we travel in our imaginations through this country of Canada. We think of journeys we have made, or hope to make. In this beautiful part of God's creation what have we seen and what do we hope the children of 2121 will still be able to see? Because the world is changing and we know it. Try just a few of the reflection questions from *Living Ecological Justice: A Biblical Response to the Environmental Crisis* (Citizens for Public Justice).

Imagine:

1. Travelling to Banff National Park in Alberta and not finding any glaciers
2. Visiting the wetlands on the shores of Hudson Bay in northern Ontario and finding no vegetation or wildlife
3. Sitting outside your house during the summer with temperatures over 40 degrees C, plus humidity
4. Receiving more than 350 cm of snow next winter, setting a world record for the most snowfall in a season
5. Planting a garden and experiencing the driest growing season on record
6. Moving to a new home in southern B.C. and experiencing one of the worst wildfires in 50 years. The fire destroys your home and 200 other homes around you, as well as the surrounding forest.

Consider

1. Scientists predict the glaciers in Banff that are less than 100 metres thick could disappear in the next 20 years.
2. Environment Canada reports that climate-induced rises in sea levels are contributing to declining plant and animal life in the wetlands.
3. Global warming is resulting in more frequent, hotter and longer heat waves that already impact poor people disproportionately.
4. Climate change is resulting in heavier than normal snowfalls.
5. In Atlantic Canada and Southern Ontario and Quebec, the Spring of 2012 was the driest ever recorded.
6. The Canadian Forestry Association reports that climate change leads to an increase in the number of forest fires due to warm and dry weather

Prayer

Lord, make us people who recognise, nurture and act towards a more sustainable world for the benefit of all who draw life from this planet. Raise up campaigners who will speak out for wisdom, restraint and compassion. And teach us to partner with you in protecting this precious world and the lives of our most vulnerable global neighbours. Amen
– Tearfund “Hope for Creation” prayer

PWRDF supports water project in Kenya

In Manueni County, located in the southeast of Kenya, there is very little rain, and it falls in just two short rainy seasons per year. As climate change pushes average temperatures higher and precipitation lower, drought and water scarcity are common.

Here, as in many parts of Kenya, much of the population gets its drinking water from unsafe sources such as ponds, streams or unprotected wells. Water from these sources is often contaminated with dangerous bacteria that can cause serious illness.

According to cultural practice, it is typically women’s and girls’ responsibility to gather clean water, usually far away. This means long walks to collection points and hours lined up in scorching heat, leaving them vulnerable to sexual assault and other dangers.

To make it easier for people to get safe water, PWRDF has partnered with Utooni Development Organization (UDO) in a project to install shallow water wells with hand pumps in nine communities in Makueni County, Kenya.

UDO has already been involved in constructing sand dams, which are reinforced concrete walls built across a river to collect water. Now with more than \$30,000 in funding from PWRDF, sealed pump wells are being installed in order to make the water from these sand dams easier to collect, and safer to drink.

Thanks to a sealed concrete slab on the surface and underground filtration chambers, these wells will also minimize contamination, protecting the community from water-borne illnesses such as cholera and typhoid fever, which are prevalent in the area.

The wells will also drastically cut down the distance and wait time for women and girls to collect clean water, keeping them safe and freeing up time allowing them to focus on other priorities.

The project will provide the community with training on how to properly conserve and protect sources of water as well as how to store and treat water within households. Priority will be given to the most vulnerable communities with a plan to directly benefit 1,620 people, including 1,080 women and girls.

UDO has been active in helping Kenya achieve sustainable development since its inception in 2005. The organization was awarded with the United Nations Development Program Equator Initiative Award in 2014 for its outstanding work promoting local sustainable development and PWRDF looks forward to a strong partnership with UDO.

Read the whole story on our website at
<https://pwrdf.org/pwrdf-supports-water-project-in-kenya/>

Tomorrow:
*The First Sunday in Lent, take a Sabbath rest
and reflect on last week's readings*