

CREATION

Carlops Parish Church Eco Service, 2012

Hymns are Church Hymnary, Fourth edition (CH4) unless indicated otherwise

Welcome

We would like to welcome you to our service.

Our theme this morning is “Creation”. We have taken some of the material for this service from a book entitled “A Heart for Creation – worship resources and reflections on the environment”, compiled by Chris Polhill and published by Wild Goose Publications in 2010.

We found it can be useful to deliver some of the material using two voices; the text indicates where this approach was adopted in Carlops.

Let us praise creation

Voice 1 The world around us is full of beauty

Voice 2 We praise your name, O God

Voice 1 For the gift of life on earth

Voice 2 We praise your name, O God

Voice 1 Open our eyes to see your artistry

Voice 2 Your image in all that you have made

Voice 1 When our praise is short or silent

Voice 2 All creation sings out with joy

Voice 1 Here we join creation’s song ;

Voice 2 We praise your name, O God

Voice 1 God our creator -

We come together to celebrate your creation, the bright beauty around us, the abundance of your providing
Accept this offering of praise as we worship you, the maker of all.

Amen

First Hymn – No 147: “All creatures of our God and King ...”, verses 1-4 and 7

Children’s address

What do we mean when we say that we are going to “create” something? It could be a model out of junk or Lego, or a picture or a poem or story.

We just mean that we are going to make a model, or paint a picture, or write a poem or a story. We could then say that these things were our own “creations”.

We had young children present, so at this stage showed some hand-made items – dolls, toys etc – and let the children handle them.

Peter was eight years old and he decided that he was going to build a garage with his Lego. He worked hard for a long time and then at last he stood back and looked at the building he had created. And he was pleased with it.

He took his box of toy cars to his garage and played happily till his friends arrived and asked him to go out to play football. Off Peter went, leaving everything lying on the floor. While he was away his little brother Andy found the garage and I’m afraid he was not very careful about how he handled the Lego bricks. By the time Peter returned, the garage that he had created was broken and spoiled.

You can imagine how upset Peter was when he looked at his creation – all wasted and destroyed. Just imagine how you would have felt if something like that happened to you!

I’m glad to say that this story had quite a happy ending because Andy was really very sorry when his Mum explained how upset Peter was and he promised to be very careful in the future when he touched any of Peter’s toys. He had learned a lesson and Peter forgave him.

Just think – the world we live in is God’s creation. He made the world and all the things in it. Imagine how God feels when he looks at the way we treat his world. We chop down forests, make poisonous gasses, and allow millions of people to starve. Even just throwing away litter spoils our world.

Wouldn’t it be good if we could live our lives in a way that would care for our world instead of spoiling it? Let’s see if we can go home and think about things we could do to show that we care for God’s creation.

Prayer

How did you make the rainbow and what is beyond the sky?
Why did you make the sun so hot and what makes the clouds race by?
You are the Lord, the Creator and you know how and why.
We wish to protect your creation – please bless us while we try.

And now, let us join together in saying the prayer which our Lord taught us:

Our father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done – in earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.

Amen

Offering

We will continue worshipping God with our offering

Prayer

Lord, we thank you for everything you have given us. Take our gifts and help us to use them wisely.

Amen

Second hymn – No 143: “Who put the colours in the rainbow ...”

Reading: A poem by Julie Carro; “The Dance of Creation”

Whispering songs in the gentle breeze,
God shares His melody amongst the trees.
Leaves gleefully dance, swirled by the wind,
Taking their bow, branches tenderly bend.

Applause of the butterflies, clapping for more
As they join in the dance, tickling the shore.
Colourful costumes, bright reds and blues,
Perfectly balanced, amidst earth’s gentle hues.

The Master’s artistry clothes the intricate flower,
With the gentlest touch of His almighty power.
Light delicate fragrances, waft through the air,
Perfumed in sweetness, so wonderfully rare.

Whistling approval, the birds join in the fun,
A concert of concerts in the light of the sun.
This glorious stage, the Dance of Creation.
The wind in the willows gives a standing ovation.

God sees it is good, and His heart is pleased.

He walks in the coolness in the midst of the trees.
Yet something is missing to finish the plan,
From the dust of the earth, He forms mortal humans.

Sudden stillness falls on this Dance of Creation
As everything that has life gasps with elation.
They can hardly believe what their eyes are seeing
As God breathes in their nostrils, giving life to their being.

The silence is broken, joy and merriment begin,
As laughter is carried on the crest of the wind.
The symphony of nature lends perfect completion,
To God's gift of life: the Dance of Creation.

Prayer

This prayer was written by Pat Bennett and is entitled "Made in God's Image"

You have given us eyes,
 But we have not always looked at creation's beauty.
You have given us ears,
 But we have not always listened to nature's speaking.
You have given us tongues,
 But we have not always joined earth's song of praise.
You have given us hands,
 But we have not always been makers and menders.
You have given us feet,
 But we have not always joined in the dance of life.
You have given us minds,
 But we have not always thought beyond ourselves.
You have given us wills,
 But we have not always chosen the good.
You have given us hearts,
 But we have not always loved without reserve.
You have made us in your image,
 Forgive us that we do not always display your likeness.

Amen

Third Hymn – No 238: " Lord, bring the day to pass ..."

Reading: Psalm 8

Lord, our sovereign,
How glorious is your name throughout the world!

Your majesty is praised as high as the heavens,
From the mouths of babes and infants at the breast
You have established a bulwark against your adversaries to restrain the enemy
and the avenger.

When I look up at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
At the moon and the stars you have set in place,
What is a frail mortal, that you should be mindful of him,
A human being, that you should take notice of him ?

Yet you have made him little less than a god,
Crowning his head with glory and honour.
You make him master over all that you have made,
Putting everything in subjection under his feet:
All sheep and oxen, all the wild beasts,
All the birds in the air, the fish in the sea,
And everything that moves along the ocean paths.

Lord our sovereign,
How glorious is your name throughout the world !

Fourth Hymn – No 240: “ God in such love for us lent us this planet ...”

“The Prodigal Civilisation”; a tale by Chris Sunderland

Parallel stories are told by two voices speaking in turn

Voice 1

There was a man who had two sons.

Voice 2

There was a God who, over thousands and millions of years, made a great creation, with a whole host of creatures upon an earth. And there came a time when one of those creatures came to understand themselves to be special in the eyes of God.

Voice 1

And the younger of them said to his father, “Father, give me my share of the inheritance that is due to me.” And he divided his living between them.

Voice 2

And the humans said to God, “Give us our inheritance”, and they plundered the earth with mines and drills and rigs, sucking out the black treasure, consuming it in their machines and spewing the gas into the air.

Voice 1

Not many days later the younger son gathered all that he had and went on a journey to a far country, and there he squandered his inheritance in loose living.

Voice 2

A great economic system arose fuelled by deep-level passions, based on conspicuous consumption and using the black treasure. The people travelled everywhere and nowhere. Forests were destroyed. It was party time. The air was filled with laughter ... But the clouds were gathering.

Voice 1

And when it had all gone, a great famine arose in the land and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed the pigs. And he would gladly have eaten from the pigs' trough, but no one gave him anything.

Voice 2

It was the climate, you see. They had not thought of that. And once they had, it was too late. The animals and plants began just to disappear. The desert spread. The wells grew deeper. Water ... anxious people ... angry people ... violent people. The rich built castles. The poor made battering rams.

Voice 1

And then he realised; he said, "Why, even my father's hired servants have bread enough to spare but I perish with hunger here. I will arise and go to my father and say 'Father, I have done wrong against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.'"

Voice 2

And a few began to dream of a home: they saw a vision of God surrounded by the creatures of the earth; they dreamt of living at peace with God and creation and they set out to make that vision real.

Voice 1

And he arose and set out for his father. And when he was a great way off his father saw him and had compassion and ran and embraced him.

Voice 2

And I will leave you to fill in the rest of this unfinished story.

Prayer

Great Spirit

Give us hearts to understand,

Never to take

From creations beauty

More than we can give.

Never to destroy wantonly

For the furtherance of greed.

Never to deny to give our hands

For the building of earth's beauty.

Nor to take from her
What we cannot use.

Give us hearts to understand
That to destroy
Earth's music
Is to create confusion.

That to wreck
Her appearance
Is to blind us to beauty.

That to callously
Pollute her fragrance
Is to make a house of stench.

That as we care for her
She will
Care for us.

Amen

Wisdom and partnership

We cannot be a “friend of the earth” on our own. We need each other as we seek to listen attentively to the increasingly distraught cries of our wounded planet. And we also need the wisdom of those who have walked through the centuries in harmonious companionship with the earth.

Here is the voice of the Yoruba people of West Africa

“Enjoy the earth gently; enjoy the earth gently; for if the earth is spoiled it cannot be repaired; enjoy the earth gently.”

And here is the voice of the Cree Indians of North America

“Only when the last tree has died, the last river has been poisoned and the last fish has been caught, will we realise that we cannot eat money.”

Fifth Hymn – No 149: “Let all creation dance ...”

Blessing

May there always be 2,000 acres of sky above us.
May there always be the story of the earth beneath us.
May there always be the song of the air between us.
And may the love that shook creation from God's hand shake us alive,

That we may walk God's way now and always.

Sung Triple Amen