

SEASON OF CREATION : CREATION TIME: CREATIONTIDE



Living Water
Season of Creation 2026

Immersion in Living Water
EZEKIEL 47:9, 12

These **Revised Common Lectionary** resources Notes , Worship material, sermon suggestions and music suggestions are offered through [EcoCongregation Scotland](http://EcoCongregationScotland.org), as participation in the global churches observance of the [Season](#), from 1st September to 4th October, and Sundays close or included.

Any questions, or for help with use: chaplain@ecocongregationscotland.org

WEEK 3

Overview

[Exodus 16] Good leaders are the 'meat in the sandwich' between their ill-informed people and the circumstances that dictate superficially unpopular measures. God is not unsupportive **[cf Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45]** of Moses under such pressure, which may include toxic nostalgia. Few churches are immune, so there's plenty to learn. **Jonah [3]** peevishly misses out on the joy when the astounding miracle occurs of a culture making changes before disaster forces their hand. Will we remember to celebrate and voice support when our communities and leaders do make some positive environmental progress? And remember like the (imprisoned) writer of **Philippians [1:21]** to share and be fed by the stories of encouragement and 'good green news', which sustains others as well as delighting our own. The Gospel parable **[Matthew 20:16]** insists that "at the end of the day", justice is the acknowledgment of need, rather than a childish and vindictive 'fairness'. There's seldom any good work which is not better set in context by our reliance on God's grace.

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Exodus 16:2-15

The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

Then the Lord said to Moses, "I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days." So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, "In the evening you shall know that it was the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and in the morning you shall see the glory of the Lord, because he has heard your complaining against the Lord. For what are we, that you complain against us?" And Moses said, "When the Lord gives you meat to eat in the evening and your fill of bread in the morning, because the Lord has heard the complaining that you utter against him—what are we? Your complaining is not against us but against the Lord."

Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, 'Draw near to the Lord, for he has heard your complaining.'" And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. The Lord spoke to Moses and said, "I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the Lord your God.'"

In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat."

ECS STAFF Exodus 16:2-15

There have been both wonderful and tragic "exoduses" in Scotland last year, when four previously captive lynx - predators who, established in the wild, bring balance to ecosystems - were set free in the Cairngorms. Neither lynx nor environment were remotely prepared for this: in their incompetence for freedom, one died and the others would have followed had they not been "rescued to captivity". In contrast to such "guerrilla rewilding", we've seen the sensitive reintroduction of Scottish wildcats, riskily schooled in what freedom means, and how radically different is such a life from dependent captivity.

Exodus is not just 'departure': it is Transition. It's a harder story than we were likely told in Sunday School, because it is the story of the 'birth' of a nation in an "evolutionary" sense. What remains, survives and thrives when a terminally immature generation, incapable of the disciplines of freedom, dies off, and change can finally come to fruition.

As legendary missionary David Livingstone wrote, in exasperation, in his diary about the refusal of different churches to co-operate ecumenically in mission: "must death clear the way?"

Or could we change and live?

This is why the overall narrative - without preacherly massaging - speaks powerfully to humanity's dangerous, fragile, and already hazardous time of transition, with the delay of obvious changes by the self-destructive clinging on to the 'fleshpots' of the deadly but dying fossil fuel era. The mentality of some - preyed upon by political opportunists - remains that of enslaved and damaged people, rather than those who have grown into the highly demanding state of freedom. We still encounter suspicion of the message that, having left the Fleshpots of Fossil Fuels, there really is a better, healthier, more just way of life a generation or two beyond the 'meanwhile'.

But this is "early days" yet, with Mount Sinai and the Ten Commandments not yet on the horizon. Let alone a happy, healthy Net Zero.

Despite the dramatically convincing visibility of "the glory of God", perhaps the depth of the Hebrews' mental enslavement means that God comes over as "just another Pharaoh, but with boring food". These people whom the suspiciously outcast Egyptian brat Moses is struggling to lead, have for generations been deprived of risk and self-determination, knowing nothing but the brutal infantilisation and abusive dependency of slavery.

Now they find themselves in a "wilderness of snakes and scorpions and hostile tribes," deprived of the certainty of slavery by what they're told is their (unfamiliar) ancestral God. Karl Marx's frustration comes to mind: that oppressed people who, despite appalling conditions, have been convinced they are sufficiently "well-fed" will have no interest in revolution as a pathway to freedom.

The deceptions of nostalgia strangle our ability to appreciate, value, and act on our current situation of 'comfortable' acceptance of global crisis. Our memories are modified and enhanced by being re-remembered.

So pray for the best of your leaders every day, when they are the 'meat in the sandwich' between circumstance and the wilful ignorance of their people.

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Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45

Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name; make known his deeds among the peoples. Sing to him, sing praises to him, and speak of all his marvellous works. Glory in his holy Name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Search for the Lord and his strength; continually seek his face. Remember the marvels he has done, his wonders and the judgments of his mouth, O offspring of Abraham his servant, O children of Jacob his chosen. He led out his people with silver and gold; in all their tribes there was not one that stumbled. Egypt was glad of their going, because they were afraid of them. He spread out a cloud for a covering and a fire to give light in the night season. They asked, and quails appeared, and he satisfied them with bread from heaven. He opened the rock, and water flowed, so the river ran in the dry places. For God remembered his holy word and Abraham his servant. So he led forth his people with gladness, his chosen with shouts of joy. He gave his people the lands of the nations, and they took the fruit of others' toil, That they might keep his statutes and observe his laws. Hallelujah!

ECS STAFF Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45

The Book of Psalms is a compilation with many sources. It's been noted how the first 15 verses of Psalm 105 are very close to 1 Chronicles 16:8–22, perhaps supporting the more traditional connection of the Psalms with King David.

It's anything other than a quiet, gentle reflective poem. The "Linked-In" spin on the Exodus... all positive.....

And maybe, sometimes, that's just what a congregation needs! The aim is the joyful encouragement and strengthening of the identity of God's people as a blessed and privileged community, completely resilient, by the grace of God to whatever challenges they faced: "in all their tribes there was not one that stumbled".

A very positive 'corporate image' song, then, for the Davidic state, with an overwhelmingly positive spin on the 'history' of God's people. Compare the description of the manna and the quails with the more ambiguous description in Exodus 16.

Even the Exodus from slavery in Egypt is positively gilded, to the extent that the Egyptians are almost let off the hook.

I'm reminded, though, of how scriptures of this exuberant mode really are used, not by the powerful, but by downtrodden Christians in today's world. It's a comforting, life-saving, edifying (and to the privileged, irritating) habit of oppressed people, or those conscious of their own material poverty, defiantly to claim and reclaim what God has done for them. God has a "face" which can be sought: a relationship to cultivate. It builds the self-esteem, related to hope, which is needed to confront despair, so that chances for liberation are not passed by. And it's defiant: 'how dare those we have oppressed not be destroyed by it!'

This psalm is one of many powerful linkages of God as Creator - and Sustainer - with the creation of justice. Is 'sustainable' also always 'just'? If not, why not? Should that be literally un-thinkable?

From verse 41, the reference to the wonderful transformation of dry landscape by water also refers back to Exodus 16. What events in the history of your own community define your identity as a people who express their love for God in their care for Creation, for neighbours, for fellow creatures?

BACK TO TOP**Jonah 3:10-4:11**

When God saw what the people of Nineveh did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do

it. But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." And the Lord said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city. The Lord God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live." But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." Then the Lord said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

ECS STAFF Jonah 3:10-4:11

This is a wonderful, subversive, and humorous story, and one in which the entertainment potential (whales, worms, and repentant animals) should be shamelessly exploited, rather than held respectfully in check. It's really worthwhile briefly summarising the rest of the Jonah story, not taking for granted that everyone even knows the outline.

The multi-faith environment of the story is also useful for us in a culture in which Christianity does not dominate, though our faith has vital things to say, as bearers of God's word of love for all.

Where these things may be stern or scary, we need look to Jesus rather than Jonah: every hard truth must be offered in love. Our expectations of being heard do not determine how worthwhile it is to speak.

Whales and worms aside, by far the most 'miraculous' aspect is that, without waiting either for the impending disaster, or for the religious conversion of the Ninevites, indiscriminate life-saving change for all creatures is embraced, to the disgust of the prophet of doom. The pagans of Nineveh get on with it.

God loves those who are messing up their world. Enough to throw them a lifeline they don't understand, but - miraculously, and to God's delight, they grab hold of it anyway.

The Book of Jonah speaks powerfully to the institutional inertia of our churches and governments in the face of continuing climate emergency. The humblest creation is on side with God, who 'ordains' the worm to do its stuff and deprive Jonah's arrogant despair of its shelter.

How often does the leadership of our churches function like that bush: offering a sanctuary or a bolt-hole from the 'tastelessness' of innovation or even, of changes which express our love for our global neighbour, as well as those close at hand.

The God presented in the Book of Jonah presides over a world in which disasters are both possible and avoidable. This is no peevish tyrant, nor should we see any such thing in 'natural' disasters. Nor in the disasters of nature caused by human injustice. Saving life - explicitly including animal life - is more vital than getting things right, or even than right belief.

So every suggested, large, or small, response of churches to climate and environmental emergency is for the good of all, seeking the will of God, which is also for the health of beloved Creation, in which our species has never played a neutral role.

And if, for now we have been Jonahs, well, the patient but firm nudging of God, assisted by maggots, for a prophet who has done their job, but can't cope with the outcome - this is for us!

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Psalm 145:1-8

I will exalt you, O God my King, and bless your Name for ever and ever. Every day will I bless you and praise your Name for ever and ever. Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; there is no end to his greatness. One generation shall praise your works to another and shall declare your power. I will ponder the glorious splendour of your majesty and all your marvellous works. They shall speak of the might of your wondrous acts, and I will tell of your greatness. They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness; they shall sing of your righteous deeds. The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and of great kindness.

ECS STAFF Psalm 145:1-8

Whilst stocking up on the awe and wonder of Creation, we also learn that the 'blame game' is not the choice of those who would ingratiate themselves with God, whose majesty is made all the more evident by his neglect of knee-jerk retributive fervour, for God is "slow to anger", and this very slowness is a sign of strength. The reading from Jonah, this week, includes a wry look at the annoyance of those who would prefer a vindictive, to a merciful God.

Healing and forgiveness are the priority, especially for followers of Christ, who should not be roped into slogans, like that of a prominent politician who once set up his soap-box in my church garden to proclaim that "punishment is primary".

In an age of climate emergency, and following on from the virus crisis, finding a culprit and taking it out on them should be one of the many luxuries we set aside. Even where we openly point out chains of responsibility.

God is referred to as 'King', which, like 'father' brings some problems, given the miserable Old Testament experience of human 'kings like those of other nations'. [Samuel Chapter 8]. Given Jesus' critique of 'the rulers of the gentiles' [Mark 10:42, Matthew 20:25] should we consider whether this form of address is one which is worthy only for God? And what might be the implications for what human rulers should aspire to? The absolute dictators of European culture in recent centuries are in any case, a travesty of the accountable, 'shepherding' ideal of biblical kingship.

The singer of the psalm clearly derives great personal benefit from the regularity of the praise they offer. They are not themselves diminished by acknowledging God's greatness, indeed the contrary seems to be the case. Claiming our place and purpose, ourselves, as word and acts of God, grants dignity.

This is enhanced as they join in the chorus of Creation (marvellous works themselves) and God's action for justice. It is noted that this is worthy not only of led and immediate praise, but also of pondering, thought, discernment.

Over and above the thrill of the beautiful words, how is their power and the benefit they bring to sink in and do its work on our lives?

God is 'big enough' to be compassionate. Jesus says we can be likewise. (Luke 6:36). The multi-generational scope of the Psalm begs the question of our responsibility for those generations to come: will we have been seen to praise God in our care of Creation?

In the 600+ registered congregations of EcoCongregation Scotland as a movement, the love of children and grandchildren has been a powerful motivator for change of lifestyle and outlook, for speaking out, and indeed, for whatever action lies within our power to care. This comes always with global justice and concern for human poverty, never separate from the Creation of which we are purposely and purposefully part.

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Philippians 1:21-30

To me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labour for me; and I do not know which I prefer. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. For he has graciously granted you the

privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well-- since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

ECS STAFF: Philippians 1:21-30

Writing from prison, Paul's apparently morbid fixation on 'getting away to a better place' is partly a ruse to express the depth and value of living your life right now in hope and in justice.

Living - the more demanding option - is "Christ". For someone who had experienced life-threatening brutality where his preaching rocked boats [Acts 16:22-23] this could also be a reflection on how far to push the 'budget' of his martyrdom. Legend - and the shackled bones preserved in an ancient church outside Rome - suggest that his project to exploit his Roman citizenship in dialogue with the Emperor cost him his life after all.

Nonetheless, the intense and relaxed consciousness of mortality adds a valuable corrective and urgency to our unwillingness to contemplate the fragility of the world - further corrected by the realisation that, within our own lifetimes, we will not be able to solve every problem. Indeed, in these days when the outlook is so clearly for a worsening of global climate, the immediate priority is the building of spiritual resilience; of faithfulness to Christ, to sustain our hope.

Back in the Garden of Eden, the most damaging lie told by the snake was "you will not die". But the point is not to live, unchanging, for ever. In whatever time is given to us, the contribution we do make, known or unknown to the world, will be valued by God. Can be comforted by that, as was Paul.

We should also be cautious about the 'privilege of suffering'. The gift is not in pain, but in solidarity: we more readily face the often unavoidable trials of our lives upheld by the prayerful support of others.

Togetherness also mitigates against intimidation, and we might reflect on the that saw us through the 'imprisonment' of lockdown as churches. We may have discovered that relationships conveyed 'virtually' are nonetheless real. As Paul's letters speak all the more to us for being addressed to people he knew. Prayer has long been a medium of relationship, supported by the letters, emails, or whatever else, that hold our communities together.

Finally, Paul is never under any illusion either of his own value or the dependence of that value on the support of others. In the EcoCongregation movement, we have had to address the problem of humility with regard to the visibility of good and encouraging church initiatives: boasting, of the sort Paul encourages, certainly has its place" letting our light shine before others "(Matthew 5:16) "so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

Do we take the risk as churches, to 'Do good stuff and shout about it!' - to the glory of God?

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Matthew 20:1-16

Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the labourers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the labourers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

ECS STAFF: Matthew 20:1-16

This story is introduced to unpack the meaning of "the Kingdom of Heaven" - or the 'Reign of the Sky' - a prescription for the way Creation can and might work....Of which human activity is a dynamic participant part.

Once more, Heaven is understood as part of the unified and interactive Creation of 'Heaven and Earth' or perhaps 'Sky and Soil', rather than anything merely abstract. Last year's 1500th anniversary of the Nicene Creed, a treasure of the World Church, newly reinstated, in January to the Church of Scotland's 'Book of Confessions' emphasised also the reality of things "unseen" by us, but integral to God's Creation nonetheless.

Heaven is never disconnected from Earth, as we might also be reminded by the Lord's Prayer. There is but one Creation of Heaven-and-Earth with which we need to be concerned. Are we praying for justice throughout Creation as we say 'on Earth as in Heaven' or do we take the second part for granted? Heaven, after all, is also the sky in Biblical languages: a damaged climate is a dysfunctional heaven.

In this understanding we can come close to a literal, or certainly experiential understanding without needing to veer into fundamentalism. The “like” (cf the Kingdom is “like”) is a powerful statement, not incidental allusion.

God “makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous”. [cf Mathew 5:45]. Our experience is that this really is truth.

Justice should not be restricted, in our understanding, to human cultures, or to such fleetingly abstract transactions as are unaffected by climate, and by natural conditions. It’s a hot day, but there’s work to be done, and people to be paid. And the conclusion of the story leaves no one in need, though some angry and perhaps ‘envious’. Dented pride is an acceptable cost for the wellbeing of neighbours. And the wellbeing of others is not necessarily at cost of our own.

One of the most challenging aspects of specifically Christian participation in environmental campaigns and actions is the priority of grace - of ‘undeserved’ ‘favour’. The levelling-up that is a sign of God’s involvement. All life is sustained by God - and, depends on mutual involvement. We shouldn’t be oblivious to the fact that this is a story of farming - of activity which nourishes and sustains beyond the lives of those directly involved.

And is the landowner God? Not easy to be definite either way.

Is it necessary to question the difference - as well as the common ground - in perceptions of ‘fairness’ and of ‘justice’? God’s justice is the acknowledgment of need, rather than the wanton disregard of handicap or the reinforcement of privilege, entitlement. The pay as promised is “whatever is just”

Perhaps the most telling phrase is the angry protest that “you have made them equal to us”. That’s what God does. Get used to it!

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SERMON SUGGESTION

“Artificial Integrity?”

Slave shackles (digitally filtered, from an original photo, Smithsonian Museum, used under 'fair use' conditions.)

Exodus 16

What keeps you on your toes? What helps you in your journeying? What sets you free?

Exodus is a story of how deep are the wounds on Creation as a whole, of exploitative intervention.

Wounds, even from careful surgery, require care, convalescence. Yes, time, cost, and care, for the whole person. It is as a doctor that Jesus styled himself when criticised for caring for those who transgressed religious law and custom. Exodus is healing as well as liberation.

Most mainstream churches in Scotland have made an initial, attempt in the direction of Net Zero. This has coincided with some form of apology for historic involvement in the enslavement of fellow human beings.

The curriculum of Exodus, like our churches' revisiting of the facts of their historic and continuing benefit, both from the slave trade and from fossil fuel, is that tough-love blessing of reacquainting damaged people with who they are and have been. In order to point us along the healing way to who we can be.

To destroy a people, amputate their history. To totally enslave them, misrepresent it. To set them free, revisit it openly, with hindsight. For truth and reconciliation.

Over many years, it's been clear that a faith commitment to care for the Earth; to recognise humanity as a party amongst parties to the rainbow covenant between God and all life, cannot be hygienically contained as an optional, expendable "issue" or marginalised, as decorative icing on the cake of a faith built on the choice of God to become flesh. In

Christ, God's hands are placed in the shackles. Pierced by the nails of every Empire which divides to rule.

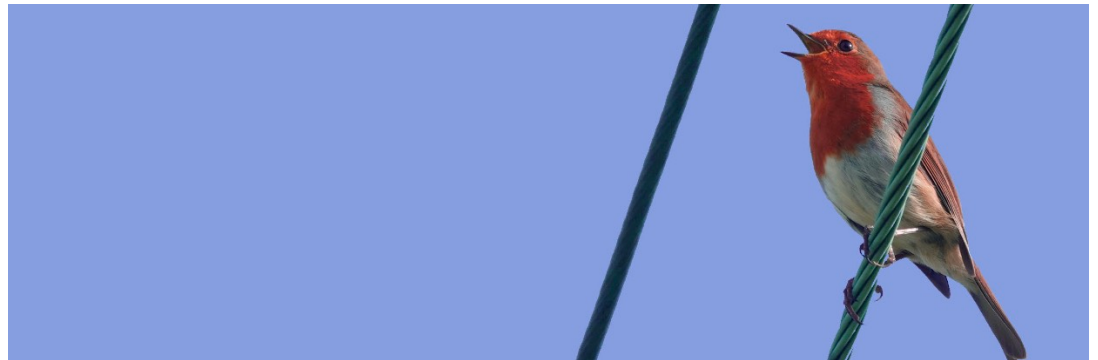
Care for the Earth means love for our neighbour, and a loving commitment to journeying to the sort of freedoms -and disciplines- which bring joy, hope and health to the life of the Earth. Human beings, who are 'Earth for the Earth' should delight in that calling.

In Exodus, God listens and responds. Not with brutally lavish gifts like those that spoil our children, and deprive them of initiative and the journey of learning; not with prefabricated digital answers which intimidate, intoxicate and undermine every possibility of our own creativity and inspiration. God listens, then responds with a very basic life support which provokes the **active** question "What's this".

The provision of Manna, according to Moses, is God's testing of the people. Jesus' own time in the wilderness, which was marked by hardship and temptations as well as the fellowship of wildlife and of angels, also has that aspect: the path to maturity and freedom, in service of our common home. AMEN

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WORSHIP MATERIAL



Opening week 3

Option 1: responses

What is it? we say!
"Bread from heaven", says God!

What's it for? we say!
"How to live," says God!

What are you? we say!
"Flesh and blood," says Christ!

Who's our neighbour,? we say!
Who isn't?" says God!

OR

Option 2: Led prayer

God who listens and hearkens
to the cries of all Creation;

Not at our whim, no,
nor even our urging

But with justice and God's compassion
you open up chances

You offer transition:
Christ brings change of mind

Where grumbling erodes
You sustain the wise leaders

Where hate rules the roost
you keep love as a option;

As, in green things and growing
through living and dying
you remake, repurpose
and call us to share
and to care.

Confession, Forgiveness.

Dear God, you are more than we deserve.
So thank God deserving has little to do with it..

We have grumbled and undermined
what was offered, costly, for our survival.

We have fallen for lies of security, prosperity
whilst fully aware of their cost to our neighbour:

our world and ourselves.

For when we saw things could be better
we criticised with impatience;
made of our words weapons
rather than tools of love.

We have thoughtlessly shared posts
of hatred and harm;
not welcoming Christ in the Stranger
nor learning that love of the neighbour
which so schools us in loving our selves.
Yet, knowing that all, and still more,
in Christ you choose to call anew:

"Those who come to me I will not turn away."
You forgive, and give freedom,
to change, try, and love.

Are we ready?

You always are!

So, like folk forgiven, and also forgiving
we join in your prayer:
hope, for all you have made.

[Our Father/Lord's Prayer]

Thanksgiving **Option 1**

Thank-you God, for the sheer relief
of being wrong and seeing it
especially just in time.

Thank- you for disagreeing
about ourselves and others:
Insisting on beauty and value
we thought we had to ignore

Thank-you for the reality of hope
beyond rational despair;
for the heady variety of life
which survives to inspire us
even as so much is lost.

Thank-you that never a tyrant succeeded
usurping the throne

where Christ washes our feet.

And thank-you, that even when all
is
too late
you defiantly rise
to sustain us.

AMEN

Thanksgiving / Gratitude **Option 2**

(cf Exodus 16)

Patient and Generous God,
whom we bother with our grumbling.

We're grateful nonetheless
that you hear Creation's worthwhile cry;
We're full of thanks for manna and quails

We're thankful that concerns can and should be raised;
Grateful that cries can be heard
from those who suffer; those who care.

Give us that most deeply discerning gratitude
even for what's discerned,
-however distorted-
from those who seem ready to stone their best allies
shoot themselves in the feet
and welcome selfish tyrants
who deny the cries are there at all.

Though desperation has a cause
-we thank you we can see it, note it,
pray and act.

For every chink of puzzling hope
thanks for the manna
For every bite that keeps us going
thanks for the quails
For those who tell the truth that sets us free.
We thank you, Patient and Generous God, Amen.

Prayer for others / Intercession**-Use a selection of sections, as appropriate**

(from 'Prayers for a church visit')

Sustaining God,
above us, beneath us, within us
by whose grace
we see your hand in all creation
and your face in all your children

We pray for peace, for justice and for joy
in the world we encounter,
the news that we hear.
That through our lives and by our prayers
your kingdom may draw near

Dear God, give peace,
give justice, give healing, give joy.

So we remember the violence and the desecration of the Earth
which is common to every war;
the peoples of
and that worldwide war which rages still
even where human beings lay claim to peace:
that self-destructive war
of burning and polluting all our common home.

Thus we pray as well, for communities,
whose harvest for now
is oil and gas,
that the transitions
that certainly must lie ahead of them
may be just and compassionate for all.

Dear God, give peace,
give justice, give healing, give joy.

Christ, embodied in the church,
both local and worldwide.
We bring to you the hopes and fears
in times of transition
asking that despite such burdens
as we may carry close to home,
we find faithfulness in the unity
for which you prayed
and share wholeheartedly
the affection and awe
of Christ for the nature which surrounded him.

Grant your church courage

to fulfil your Great Commission
of "Good News for Every Creature",
that 'they may know we are Christians'
by our love for the Earth,
and by the encouragement we offer each other
to live more sustainably.

Dear God, give peace,
give justice, give healing, give joy.

Dear God in community
We pray, as you commended us, both for those we love and care for
as also for those who choose to be our enemies.
For your prayer was that none should be lost.

We remember those who are unwell, those in hospital, or housebound.
those whose task, today and through the night, is to care for them.

We remember those facing the stress of difficult decisions, of thresholds of life, of
anniversaries, and special days.

And those things beyond the words we want to share.

[SILENCE]

Dear God, give peace,
give justice, give healing, give joy.

Amen.

Blessing / Closing prayer

We may have grumbled
but God has responded

God has responded
And we have been fed

Still we may wander,
still we need healing
**Though Christ wanders with us,
for all the world's good!**

Thus enfolded and equipped for lives of love and justice
may God, Father Son and Spirit [God, Beloved. Wild Wind]
bless us through all that lies ahead, to the End of the Age. AMEN

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MUSIC: 5 Suggestions

1) **We warmly commend** the short Creation section, **153-165** in the supplementary '**God Welcomes All**',

2) **We suggest great caution** with what may be thought of as specific 'creation' hymns written in the late twentieth century without knowledge of the crisis of nature and climate.

Simply for a hymn to **mention** creation or fellow creatures may not help deepen our spiritual understanding for this time of crisis. Look for relatedness to the Earth and fellow creatures as co-worshippers with God's people.

3) **Iain McLarty and Trinity College** created a resource of music recommendations : "Songs for Sunday"

4) **CH4**

-for Exodus 16: **167 (again)**

-for Psalm 195: **605**

-for Psalm 145: **352 (great sing!)**

-for Philippians 1: **223**

-for Matthew 20: **51, 133, 592**

238, 243, 244 198, 501 also raise good points for justice and praise.

5) New words - coming soon!