

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 5

Overview

If you've held on until week 5, some a garden of challenging delights is in store: the depths of the Ten Commandments in the Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20 version (you might like to compare the differing nuances of Deuteronomy 5] . Background reading - of Exodus 19 and of the omitted verses will help to grasp the awe-inspiring breath of the drama unfolding . Psalm 19's expansive hymn of praise alongside the personalities of Creation, in which reading a variety of versions brings valuable insight.

The disappointment of a constant and attentive gardener dramatises God's sorrow at the chosen injustice of God's people in Isaiah 5:1-7, echoed in the similar image of Psalm 80:7-14, though with added involvement of encroaching wildlife! The gardening theme continues in passing as Paul describes his previous proud claims to integrity and superiority as 'compost' for the repurposed life in Christ. .Who returns in Matthew 21:33-46 with one of the darkest of all his parables, that of the wicked tenants, whose horror needs both to hit home, and also to be handled with more care than previous centuries, when this story, valuable as Scripture for every society, has been abused with racist intent.

Bookmarked links:

[Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20](#)

[Psalm 19](#)

[Isaiah 5:1-7](#)

[Psalm 80:7-14](#)

[Philippians 3:4b-14](#)

[Matthew 21:33-46](#)

[Worship Material](#)

[Sermon Suggestion](#)

Worship material**Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20**

Then God spoke all these words: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name. Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. For six days you shall labour and do all your work. Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour. You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour. When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid and trembled and stood at a distance, and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die." Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin."

ECS STAFF Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20

What more can be said of the Ten Commandments, adorning church walls throughout Scotland; notorious for "thou shalt not's" yet the subject of rapturous devotion in Scripture itself. (cf Psalm 119!!)? It's striking that, despite contraventions aplenty of moral law in the Old Testament, you'd struggle in vain to find specific resentment of this 'code'.

Why?- because of the context given here, of guidance to safeguard the wellbeing and integrity of God's Free People, saved from slavery. Human dignity belongs with faithfulness in economic and intimate relationships. Over generations, care for the elderly benefits us all.

Yet for those who wrote this down, their own enslavement of others (verse 17) was a commonplace. That's a stern reminder , prayerfully to discern guidance for today, rather than receive 'commandments' narrowly at face value. Thank God most mainstream churches (RC, URC, SEC, CofS, Methodists,) have made dignified apologies for historic involvement in the African slave trade.

In the text: Perhaps inevitably, since it's 'Yahweh' [the LORD] speaking, the gift of Law is accompanied by the supporting chorus of Creation's scariest voices: "thunder, lightning, trumpet, and smoking mountain", and yet Moses, (like the Mouse with the Gruffalo behind him?) insists terror is not the way to receive God's guidance.

The Munro clan motto is 'Dread God'. There is ferocious wisdom here: dread ONLY God, and you will not be hamstrung by fear of anyone else. This word used for "fear" is not "paralysing anxiety", but the inspiring respect appropriate to a worthy parent or leader - taken, for God, to the ultimate.

But the people stand well off. They tremble with the wrong sort of fear. They talk to Moses, their human intermediary, but God is altogether too demanding, too scary.

Is it, that they/we realise that unlike our idols, God cannot be deceived or manipulated? And that, beyond thunder, lightning and climate crisis, the possibility that God will see through even the things about which we deceive ourselves - that is the most frightening of all?

After the association of God with liberative justice, comes that warning about idolatry, perhaps the source of much remnant nervousness about affection and awe for the wonders of Creation, which I've witnessed in international church conversations about Creation. In the Assisi conference of 2024, a prominent church leader reassured the ecumenical gathering that "When we admire the greatness of a mountain, the admiration is passed on to God".

The danger is surely far greater that we disconnect from our listening and our relatedness to fellow creatures. Idolatry in an ecumenical, multicultural setting, is far less, simply "someone else's view of God" than the loyalty, and worship we express in our most crucial decisions, to money, power, national pride, and, on a global level, "oil", in ways which are proper only for the divine. As Pope Leo put it this year : "Enough of the idolatry of self and money!

Enough of the display of power! Enough of war! True strength is shown in serving life..."

BACK TO TOP

Psalm 19

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handiwork. One day tells its tale to another, and one night imparts knowledge to another. Although they have no words or language, and their voices are not heard. Their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends of the world. In the deep has he set a pavilion for the sun; it comes forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber; it rejoices like a champion to run its course. It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs about to the end of it again; nothing is hidden from its burning heat. The law of the Lord is perfect and revives the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure and gives wisdom to the innocent. The statutes of the Lord are just and rejoice the heart; the commandment of the Lord is clear and gives light to the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean and endures for ever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, more than much fine gold, sweeter far than honey, than honey in the comb. By them also is your servant enlightened, and in keeping them there is great reward. Who can tell how often he offends? cleanse me from my secret faults. Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion over me; then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a great offence. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

ECS STAFF: PSALM 19

VIDEO READINGS of Psalm 19[Video reading \[Downloadable\]](#) [Assisi Hermitage](#)[Video reading with brief commentary Scottish Highlands](#)[Video reading \[More visual\]](#)**ECS STAFF PSALM 19**

Read with care and feeling, Psalm 19 is one of the most glorious highlights of the Season of Creation this year. Try to make sure it is sung in some way!

The differing traditions, agendas and cultures of various translations may help or hinder our appreciation of this Psalm which brings together the liveliest personalities of Creation, with a deep song of admiration for the Law of the Lord -who of course, is also the Creator - and of the benefits of walking that path. By all means look up the various parallels with Bible Hub Bible Gateway or something similar.

The experience or the memory of a wonderful sunset or sunrise - or even of the Northern Lights will perhaps be evoked by the opening declaration that the heavens - the skies - are continually 'telling the glory of God', engaging, after their kind, and not necessarily after ours, in their meaningful conversation, day to day, night to night.

The King James Version gives us most pastoral coherence in verse 3 here: "There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard".. placing us in a bustling neighbourhood of the living 'common home' of the Earth and the Skies. Even the more personal use of pronouns, ('he' rather than 'it') makes more sense than the twentieth century compulsion to make of our fellow creatures "things" . St Francis' terms of address to 'Brother Sun and Sister Moon' in his Canticle of the Creatures makes sense in the world of this Psalm.

In this Psalm, the worshipper of God is reaching for relationship, rather than mere observation, whilst acknowledging that these fellow creatures do what they do, without needing to do it as we do.

There is both wonder and humour in the description of the sprinting sun who races for the dawn, and all of it based on the terrestrial, pedestrian experience we can share without difficulty with the ancient writers.

Poetry here has power to unify the experiences and personalities God has made, including our own, and in letting go of the inner need to dominate, or to force on Creation our own ways and languages, the singer comes to an even more profound love of a God whose intimate care makes a difference day by day.

There is no substitute, financial or otherwise, for the guidance of "God's law", lived into and ingrained in the lives of those who are content to be God's 'servants'.

[BACK TO TOP](#)

Isaiah 5:1-7

Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his pleasant planting; he expected justice, but saw bloodshed; righteousness, but heard a cry!

ECS STAFF ISAIAH 5:1-7

This terrifying poem, begins as a sad rustic folk-song song - as sung by a woman - to their “beloved” farmer.

Perhaps consider playing/singing some folk-songs, or ensure some songs for your Sunday strike that deceptively powerful storytelling tone.

The poem makes little sense unless the “vineyard” is something with more self-determination, than a mere soul-less object, who actively chooses to reject and frustrate every loving attention lavished upon them by the hard labour of the “beloved” .

Isaiah recognises that disaster of this sort doesn’t “just happen”.

Yes, the ‘vineyard’ is a ‘metaphor’ for God’s people, but the strength of the imagery is based on the reasonable responsiveness of familiar plants to care and tending. ‘tilling and keeping’.

Have we ever considered the success of our cultivations as a gracious **concession**, by nature, to our needs, rather than an eradication of the inconvenient? But we are placed in the Garden (Genesis 2) to ‘serve and protect’: to enable fruitfulness, rather than to preside over wasted opportunities.

In the classic mode of the great prophets, injustice belongs together with (non-human) dysfunction. Things fall avoidably apart within this otherwise meticulously cared-for landscape, whose fate is then to be returned to the robust care of nature. A Nature, who is not "defeated" by cultivation, but waiting in the wings to carry out the sentence, which the 'gardener/farmer' has called for. Nature's own 'rewilding' is not in rebellion against God.

Non-human nature, within the poem is rather fully in partnership with divine wrath; the clouds who would otherwise bless the land with rain (*see Isaiah 55:10-11, albeit likely by a different writer from "this Isaiah" in chapter 5*) are commanded to take a detour, and awe is expressed in the power of the encroaching undergrowth beyond any human comfort zone. You can almost see the tendrils of the thorns reaching across the cleared ground.

There remains - within the poem - no further reason to invest great effort in the cultivation and preservation of a society which, though given every opportunity to blossom with justice, nonetheless chooses an underlying barbarism of violence and corruption.

Both scientists and philosophers have noted that the crisis of nature and climate is spiritual, even more than technological.

We can be encouraged by the fruitful and explosive spread of sustainable energy in **almost** every nation on Earth. But even as the economics of transition gather pace, the scope for new injustices will require constant vigilance. Where 'green shoots' are expected, could there still be the 'red' of bloodshed?

And yes, this speaks to us, in the global North, where, though blessed with wealth and knowledge -over and above the inequalities of our own societies - we embrace our just transition with a fragile hesitancy, even as the impacts of climate crisis affect our own agriculture alongside the 'vineyards' of global neighbours.

Do you vote, do you act, as well as pray, to ensure that your society will be fruitful with justice, rather than overgrown with hatred and violence?

BONUS:

If you care to read a few verses on, there's another wonderful linkage of science and justice, in the critique in verse 12 of those who "regard not the

work of the Lord, nor have they considered the operation of his hands(Isaiah 5:12)

BACK TO TOP

Psalm 80:7-14

7 Restore us, O God of hosts; show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved. You have brought a vine out of Egypt; *you cast out the nations and planted it. 9 You prepared the ground for it; it took root and filled the land.10 The mountains were covered by its shadow and the towering cedar trees by its boughs.

11 You stretched out its tendrils to the Sea and its branches to the River.

12 Why have you broken down its wall, *so that all who pass by pluck off its grapes?

13 The wild boar of the forest has ravaged it, * and the beasts of the field have grazed upon it.

14 Turn now, O God of hosts, look down from heaven;

behold and tend this vine; *

preserve what your right hand has planted.

ECS STAFF PSALM 80:7-14

Another take on the image of "Israel" as God's broken vineyard, though, peculiarly, without exploring in such painful depth, the rationale of Isaiah 5, that injustice leads to trouble.

There's with some picturesque surreal exaggeration - as in the "vine who overshadows mountains", but little dissent from a narrative of nationalist favour. The overshadowed cedar might refer to a rival nation, (Lebanon?) though cedars may represent those who live justly (Psalm 92:12), or indeed the wealth/majesty of God's creation more generally. (Psalm 104:16). Has prosperity overshadowed such considerations?

Perhaps this is one of the psalms whose value is in their uncensored, almost disingenuous nature. Noting the effects, but resisting the cause, - if, by comparison, Isaiah 5 can be seen as reflecting on a similar situation.

I've seen patients in a cancer ward who nip out for a quick cigarette, or those who complain about taxes without grasping what blessings flow from taxation.

For this iteration of the Psalmist, the nation has prospered. The conventional wisdom of Israel was that this was indeed a sign of God's favour, though their all-embracing concept of God also attributes hard times to God's intervention.

This poem also does represent a more oppositional approach to nature, first to be dominated, then marauding, like the wild boar. Is this a text from which we learn in our disagreement, rather than taking it as prescriptive?

Except perhaps, in turning to God in puzzling times of trouble?

[BACK TO TOP](#)**Philippians 3:4b-14**

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

ECS STAFF Philippians 3:4b-14

Paul's boasting again: boasting about what he's been through and left behind. Can Christians boast? Folk-song probably gives us the closest mode to this sort of supportive-challenging speech, where the singer boldly lists their ups and especially their downs and what they've learned from it all. Translators have been a wee bit hesitant to highlight the horticultural logic, that the advantages whose *loss* Paul is content to describe as "dung" (King James Version) have "fertilised" "his progress towards life in Christ. Nothing is wasted, nothing is single-use!

But has Paul really changed, or merely switched his intense commitment to Christ? Bringing the gifts of dogged determination and hope?

And yet, like a good folk-song, the boasting is primarily an encouragement to the hearer. This is all the more evident in that the boasting of where he's come from is tempered with caution about his destination, and his incapability to approach it unaided.

What stories might you have which can do this job? Or a local church who's taken just and green action on board as a defining part of their identity? Shared stories are a gift not selfishly to be hoarded! What do you think of the evangelical tradition of a sinner's testimony as an inspiration to a church, in which the 'distance travelled' adds to the inspiration of the audience?

So the detached hearer, drawn in by a story which seems to be told at a safe distance, eventually finds Paul encouragingly in solidarity with them. As with every story of an endangered Earth in the age we share, we're all in it together, bringing what we can of our experience and commitment, for the good of all.

In this context, faith truly makes a difference: the humility to be part of God's task of healing, rather than misguidedly shoulder - and fail - at doing it alone. For Paul, the example of Jesus has become more than inspiring, and gives his life - and perhaps even his death - purpose.

Initial responses to talk of 'net-zero' led many organisations to announce ambitions and time-related targets which they discovered, in due course, they were not able to meet. It's easy to over-reach, and the danger is that the first fall unduly discourages.

Does the humility and faith in Paul's aspiration help us more deeply to value and maintain a direction of travel in our faith journey with Creation, less vulnerable to despair, should those targets not be met? Underlying all Paul's total commitment is still his reliance on God's grace. That's where faith builds resilience, come what may!

BACK TO TOP

Matthew 21:33-46

Jesus said, "Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.' So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time."

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes'? Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls."

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realised that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

ECS STAFF: Matthew 21:33-3

We can't read this passage, containing one of the darkest of Jesus' parables, without some consideration of the utterly extreme tension of the context in which it is presented. Jesus is speaking, as a pious and observant Jew, consciously in the hearing of those who will call for his death as an expedient for public order and security. At this station of the Way of the Cross, only the fickle support of the crowds holds them back from 'taking him out'. Perversely, Jesus' risky practice of letting hearers provide the punchline, has been historically weaponised with anti-semitic intent; it's for you to be wary of this, without blunting the sharpness of the images.

Our own immediate social and political context in 2026 is one in which it is tragically no longer an option, piously to wish away the danger of abusive interpretation, even and especially if it appears in traditional

interpretations we may have encountered, which gave rise to 'replacement' theories of Church as an exclusive 'New Israel', rather than as Christ's community of inclusion for all. Thus vigilance and caution are an essential part of every faithful attempt to deal with such passages.

Let the people know the danger and the history. As well as what opportunity for challenge and insight would be missed if we simply 'cancelled' or 'de-platformed' every dangerous Scripture, abandoning it to misuse.

Only when safeguards are in place can this passage powerfully be opened up to help us reflect on the conflicts and tensions which threaten both ourselves and sisters and brothers in Christ around the world.

But what would we lose if we also evaded Jesus' stern provocation - "Have you never read in the scriptures:..." to those who arrogantly present their own speculations as definitive and exclusive.

We note that the response of violent retribution to the scenario of the parable is advocated not by Jesus, but by his opponents. Its logic is brutally unremarkable: not at all transcendent or creative. Not "amazing in our eyes". All they have to offer in response to violence is more violence.

Jesus continues the argument when he therefore quotes back at them Psalm 118:22: "The stone that the builders rejected..."

John's Gospel, perhaps by contrast with Matthew, insists on the global scope of Christ's coming into the world. That helps us -fruitfully- identify similar conflicts within very different cultures.

There are also grim "environmental" perspectives which tend to see humanity as a whole in the role of the wicked tenants - who have acted with callousness and greed through centuries of persecution and oppression, i) of 'prophets' - the champions of justice ii) of marginalised peoples, especially in the actual and cultural genocide of indigenous cultures; and iii) of the biodiversity we glimpsed as the expression of God's creative, collaborative love in the two Genesis Creation stories with which we began the Season.

And yet this same species also acts with costly commitment for justice, peace and the integrity of Creation.

Perhaps in conclusion, I can suggest the further caution, that sometimes we should not insist, completely, on 'sorting out' Bible passages with such a difficult history.

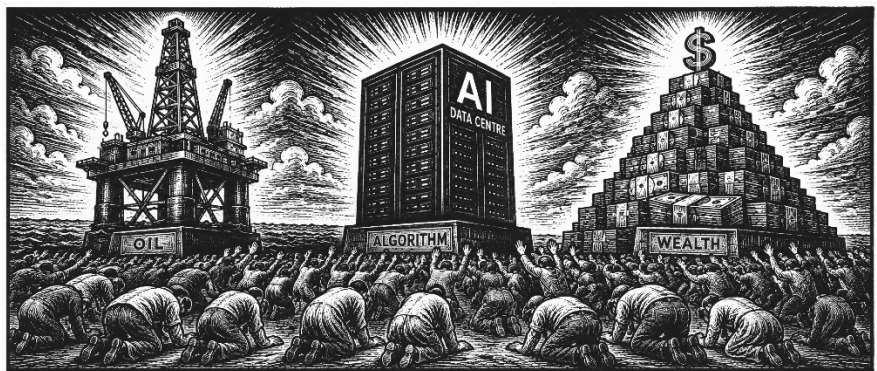
For me, the parable of the 'Wicked Tenants' also shows the flaws of the tendency to cast human beings as 'stewards' of God's property rather than participants in the community/communion of Creation, with choices and challenges.

As also that God's response to violence, injustice, and the theft/desecration of Creation, is not more of the same, but resurrection.

[BACK TO TOP](#)

SERMON SUGGESTION

"Artificial Idolatry?"



Exodus 20: Ten Commandments

What more can be said of the Ten Commandments, adorning church walls throughout Scotland; notorious for "thou shalt not's" yet the subject of rapturous devotion in Scripture itself?

Nothing we choose is neutral 'business'. It's as firm a "new commandment" as any from the lips of Christ to seek first the Kingdom of God and their justice.

Adjustments to stairs, doors and toilets for inclusive access, acknowledge that commandment, as well as the installation of solar panels, and even turbines; care for the grounds of the a building, their impact on wildlife, and on venerable trees, comes into that category too.

These openings of doors to Christ in the stranger are themselves both an outreach and an obedience to the laws of love: to the New, repurposed, 'commandment' of Christ, that we aspire to love one another as Christ loves us.

Human dignity belongs with faithfulness in economic and intimate relationships. With integrity in the judiciary, and in the conduct of trials. Over generations, care for the elderly benefits us all.

In this gift of commandments, following on from the association of God with liberative justice, also comes that warning about **idolatry**.

Idolatry in an ecumenical, multicultural setting, is less, simply "someone else's view of God" than the loyalty, and worship we express, to money, power, national pride -and, on a global level, "oil"- in ways which are proper only for the divine.

Care for nature is totally necessary to care for the human species whom God, -in Genesis 2 -placed here for that purpose.

The commandments are presented as a guide to responsible living over many generations. As we ourselves move from youth through middle age to the blessing of the generations who should be there to impart wisdom. Honouring God with the dignity and discipline of free people, who value relationships and even, in its proper context, property, where that impacts on human dignity.

Yet we cannot overlook that for those who wrote this down, with a heritage of liberation from slavery, their own enslavement of others (verse 17) was a continuing commonplace. That's a stern reminder, prayerfully to discern guidance for today, rather than receive 'commandments' narrowly at face value.

The short and basic code of the law has value because it builds resilient identity. Even on a small scale, like membership in our movement. Churches find they have permission to say "because we are an EcoCongregation, therefore we won't invest in fossil fuels, we will use fairtrade goods, we won't use single-use plastic, we will attend to waste"..., or whatever expression folk choose in their very varying local contexts.

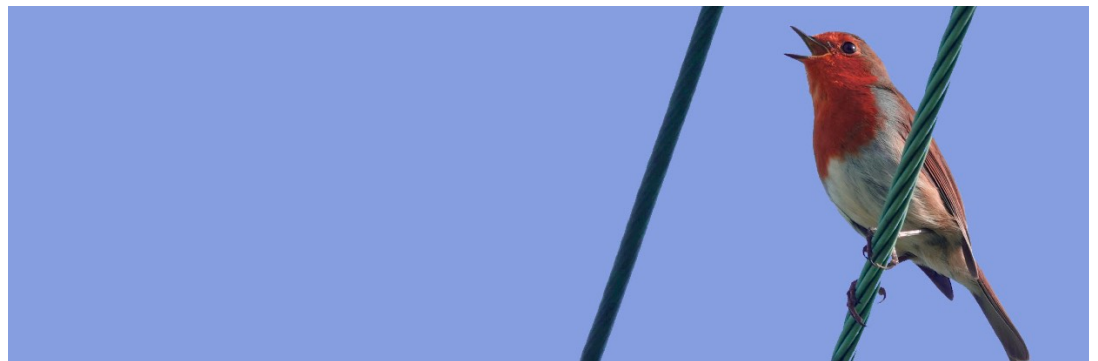
The Commandments are presented as for the good of the people. Who act hesitant, wavering. Vulnerable,

Perhaps this is still part of the damage done by slavery; that irrespective of the value of the guidance offered, the people stand back in fear of what looks like costly change.

In our day, might this also come out as contempt for the science which might help us to “live long in the land” and the Earth we share with all the life God cares for in the Rainbow Covenant.

[BACK TO TOP](#)

WORSHIP MATERIAL



OPENING

Option 1: responses

Sustainer and teacher of all who have breath
Guide us, that love be our law

God worthy of worship, of loyalty and listening
Guide us, that love be our law

Christ, sent for our flourishing, nailed to the tree
Guide us, that love be our law

Wild wind, blowing for freedom, shaking the branches
Guide us, that love be our law

OR

Option 2: Gathering Prayer

Sustaining God, who doesn't stand back
yet builds and endows
your college of Creation;
enrol us as learners,
mentor our struggles:
encourage, evaluate:
and as the the foundation of all our worship
train us to care
for those who share
this Common Home of Earth.

CONFESSION/FORGIVENESS

Sustaining God, by whose love
is made fearfully and marvellously
this myriad world of fragile life
in which our kind has grown to be :
with feet that can choose to trample
hands that can choose to tend
and hearts that, well-informed
can choose indeed
a loving, listening change.

But for the sin that truly harms the Earth...

What can we bring you
but the truth of no excuse?

You do not abandon
whom we have neglected;
You hear every anguished cry;
attend every fallen sparrow;
you weep over every species
vanished before the time you set

But for the greed that truly harms the Earth...

What can we bring you
but the truth of inequality
of homelands flooded, droughts which kill.

What **do** we bring you
but crass denial in face of facts

pretended wisdom, wily waiting
when causes are as clear as day.

How do we act when action's urgent?

-postponing just transitions
blocking paths of global healing
buying bombs with gifts reserved for aid
and blaming the poorest
hit first and worst
whilst overflowing wealth grows on regardless
right here, right now, as we collude
as if our prayers were pointless.

Dear Christ,
God's last-ditch sending of Godself:
make what you can
of what we have been;
empower us with forgiveness,
and encourage us with hope and joy.

Stand up to what we thought we had to do
and shine your healing light
on open roads of justice
danced by folk forgiven

Praying all the way for all Creation
as you taught the world...

[Lord's Prayer /Our Father]

Thanksgiving / Gratitude

Beloved God, you have so kept us going
(choose just 1 paragraph, or use all 3)

1) Beloved God,
you have so kept us going;
brought us to this day;
through all the stumbles, mishaps, losses;
nourished nonetheless
by morning light, by birdsong,
by the grass and mountains
by the breath of trees.

2) Beloved God,
you have so kept us going;
in company with those whose servitude

you traded in for friendship
and the rainbow Covenant renewed
showing your good news
when neighbours care
and leaders choose what's right.

3) Beloved God,
you have so kept us going;
as turbines turn, and water powers
where trade is fair, and prayers are green
and growth gives back,
and peace is possible.
and children have cause to laugh.

Give us this day,
even just a little
of these rewards of knowing
that we do your will
And always;
Guide us, that love be our law!
AMEN

Intercessions. Prayers of Concern

[appropriate for the day; informed by local, world, and congregational events] including prayer led, where appropriate:

*-For the non-human world
-For justice in human societies
-For the unity of the Church, both locally and globally
in response to the crisis of nature & climate
-For our own encouragement and resilience.
-Acknowledging the 'communion of saints' (the church through time and space)
and the 'communion of creation' (the praise of all who have breath)*

Sustaining God
As we gather in this place of Good News,
strengthened by prayer, by praise,
by stories of injustice confronted
creation included,
and your Word spoken from below
by those whom tyranny entitled
had classed of no account....

So too we consider in fellowship with Christ crucified
yet risen...

Christ, God's Word made Flesh, we pray, powered by your Wild Wind; your Holy Spirit....

God, community of giving living and receiving, we pray in the company of all who have
gone before and of your friends in such diverse lands and societies....

Dear God of loving, listening and protection;
hear our prayers, change our lives,

heal and encourage
from birth, through death and beyond
for of such is your glory. AMEN.

Blessing / Closing prayer

Bless us, God, who parts the seas for freedom!
Lead us, teach us, feed us!

Bless us, Christ, with powerful stories!
Lead us, teach us, feed us!

Bless us, Breath of Life unbounded!
teach, inspire, empower us!

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

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**

Not many direct connections, but try **680 706 622, 536**

As general hymns: 470, 181, 153 147, 127

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

5) New words - coming soon!