

Bible reflection on our planet

Bless the Lord, O my soul;
O Lord my God, how excellent is your greatness.
You water the mountains from your dwelling on high; the earth is fully satisfied
by the fruit of your works. *Psalms 104, verses 1 & 7*

The Psalmist is in no doubt that the energy he sees in Nature is the energy of the all-creating God. Nature at work is God at work. Giving Nature its head is a sure way to restore the world we have so grievously depleted.

A farm at Knepp in West Sussex is a living proof of Nature's restorative energy. Forced to accept that intensive farming of the heavy clay soils of their farm was driving it to bankruptcy, in 2000 Isabella Tree and her husband took a spectacular leap of faith and handed a large part of the 3,500 acres back to Nature. Today their farm is a leading light for conservation in the UK, demonstrating how letting Nature take the driving seat can restore both land and its wildlife in a short time. Biodiversity has rocketed! The farm now heaves with life – turtle doves, peregrine falcons, and purple emperor butterflies, to name but a few.

O Lord my God, how excellent is your greatness.

Prayer

Creator God,
as you made humankind according to your likeness,
so help us, like you, to see the goodness of Creation.
May we see ourselves as part of a greater whole,
remember our duty of care towards the earth,
and live in balance with the natural world. Amen

(from 'Prayer for the earth' by Rob Kelsey)

January

Daily prayer for the month

Light of the World,
we thank you for the lengthening, lightening days,
bringing to life
all that has been waiting and lain dormant;
may we be light-bearers with your energy flowing
through us individually and as a church,
to dissipate the darkness and fear that climate change
generates within us, as we seek to live in hope, caring
for the natural world.

Intercessions for the month

Week 1 In the aftermath of COP-28 we pray for a real and coordinated commitment to phase out fossil fuels completely.

Week 2 As war rages in many places and threatens elsewhere, we pray for peace negotiators working to end the utter distraction and waste of war.

Week 3 At root, governments follow their people. We pray for truth and wisdom in the media, so people across the world can grow in understanding.

Week 4 Many scientists have said they are 'terrified' and have called for civil action. We pray for grace to face the question of how we ourselves should act to restore the planet.

Dates in January

1-31 Veganuary; explore a vegan diet
8-15 Houseplant Week: the value of green indoors
17-23 Big Energy Saving Week
26-28 RSPB's Big Garden Bird Watch

February

Daily prayer for the month

Eternal God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
like a master weaver you have wonderfully and intricately woven together this creation.
May we cooperate with you,
working in creative unison
to nurture and restore harmony wherever we can
in both relationships and the environment.

Intercessions for the month

Week 1 As we are entering the 'El Niño' period, we pray for those who will be affected by changing weather patterns and all its other effects.

Week 2 As 1.5C is soon to be broken, we continue to pray that our scientific, technical and financial communities will find better ways to win this battle.

Week 3 As almost everything is down to money, we pray that, as real events tear the planet apart, we may be willing to make the sacrifices to reconcile nations and our relationship with Nature.

Week 4 We continue as always to pray for all our leaders and those with power, and to know how we can act to restore a right balance with Nature.

Dates in February

2 World Wetlands Day
20 World Day of Social Justice

March

Daily prayer for the month

Creator God, who made heaven and earth, we thank you for the first signs of Spring and new life, reminding us of your creative energy and power flowing throughout the whole of creation. Enable us to look to you to have strength and fire within us renewed, making us more determined to work and live courageously to protect all that you have made.

Intercessions for the month

Week 1 We pray for continued courage, hope and perseverance in the battle to save our planet from disaster.

Week 2 We pray for the UN. As stresses rise and the temptation is to act only for our own people, we pray somehow that we can unite to act, care and pray for the healing of Creation.

Week 3 We pray for those whose livelihoods are threatened, especially by climate change.

Week 4 We pray because all is in the hands of a God who loves us: pray for all who advise governments, especially the UK Climate Change Committee.

Week 5 We pray for the young, that their voice might be heard over climate issues

Dates in March

3 World Wildlife Day
15-30 Great British Spring Clean
18 Global Recycling Day
22 World Water Day

The Southwell Minster Creation Prayer

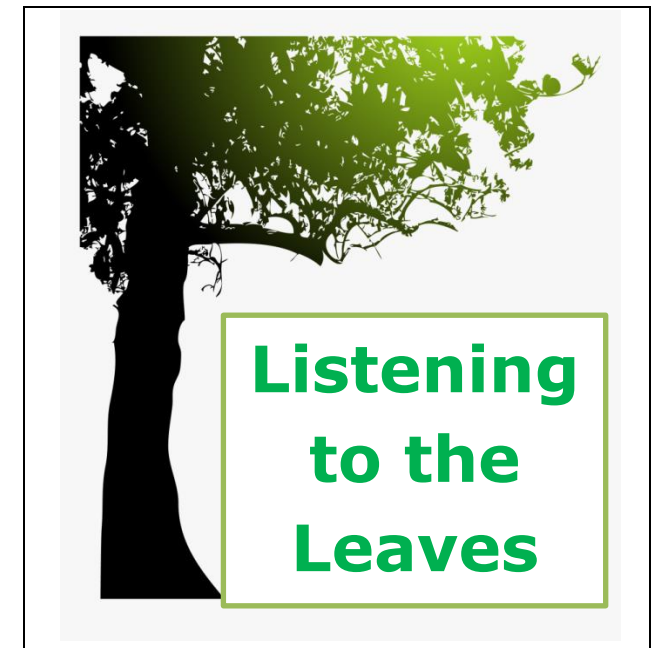
Gracious God, source of all life,
we praise you for the wonder and diversity
of the natural world, and we thank you
for the genius of the craftsmen who carved
the Chapter House leaves that speak to us still.
Open our hearts and minds to your guiding Spirit
that we may discern together
how best to cherish this good earth
and safeguard its resources.
As we listen to the leaves,
show us how to share in Creation's song
and rediscover our harmony in you,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen



Southwell Minster in partnership with A Rocha UK

Action Points

- Keep badgering MPs & other politicians, as a general election may happen in 2024
- Think about where our food comes from, and whether climate change hurts farmers
- Have one day each week when we spend a bit longer praying about climate justice



**Prayers for the
Integrity of Creation
January – March 2024**