

Reflection on our Planet

Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." *Genesis 1:26 (Revised NIV)*

The Hebrew word for 'rule' in this verse is '*radah*' and in a later verse (v.28) it is used alongside '*kabash*', which means 'subdue'. They are striking words with a military overtone, and some interpreters have used them to justify subserving the natural creation to the will of humanity. To do so, however, is to ignore the context in which they are used. The opening words of the verse say, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness". Genesis chapter 2 unfurls the 'likeness' of God. We meet God walking in the garden in the cool of the evening, living in harmony with humankind and all that lives and thrives in the garden. Human beings are placed in the garden to 'work at it and take care of it' (*Genesis 2:15*) The language turns from military dominance to priestly care. The Hebrew words are '*abad*' and '*shabar*', religious language emphasizing the sacred nature of the human task. To be created in the image of God means to imitate Him in His creativity and care for all that He has made.

This theme is explored by Prof Iain Provan in Grove Booklet E.148, '*Tenants in God's Land*'.

Prayer

Creator God of compassion and hope,
open our hearts to the leading of the Holy Spirit,
that we may be renewed
and have that mind in us which was in Christ Jesus,
cherishing the work of your hands
with gratitude and grace.
In His name we ask it. Amen

April

Daily prayer

Creator God, let creation be our teacher,
giving us insight into all your ways,
reminding us of who you are, and the nature of the
relationship we can have with you.
May the greening of Spring in all its fecundity and
glory, open us up to your greening in our own lives
through the work of your Holy Spirit.

Daily response:

The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom then shall I fear?

Intercessions for the month.

Week beginning Easter Day, 5 April We pray this Easter week that we will know ever more deeply that God is almighty, and so react with love and hope, not with fear, as we face the future of God's earth.

Week beginning 12 April We pray for world peace in this troubled time of war deepening in the Middle East, with human, animal and botanical life threatened by poisonous emissions and air polluted by fires.

Week beginning 19 April We pray for wisdom to know how to pray for the world at war in Ukraine, Iran, Palestine, Israel and the Persian Gulf, where the innocent, the powerless and the environment suffer more than the rich and powerful nations.

Week beginning 26 April In the Minster we pray for the new gardener who begins soon, and for Miles the groundsman. Also for Diocesan Environment Officer Robert Cleave. And for the work of SMEAG (the Minster's Environmental Action Group) and all who work to make a difference in God's Creation.

May

Daily prayer

Creator God, let us learn from the constant cycles of change in nature that we witness, reminding us of the cycles and changes in our own lives.
Keep us and all creation safe, and sustain us in the knowledge that you are constant and faithful, so that we live in hope.

Daily response:

All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voice and with us sing. Alleluia, alleluia!

Intercessions for the month

Week beginning 3 May We pray for next Sunday's Minster Rogation Service & procession to Brackenhurst. We pray for research into sustainable farming, including hydroponics, at NTU and other universities.

Week beginning 10 May We ask God's blessing on Christian Aid Week, as church people deliver donation envelopes to millions of households. For CA's work on debt justice and other ways to alleviate poverty.

Week beginning 17 May We continue to pray for peace in the Middle East and Ukraine, as climate action cannot move forward when the world focuses on war. Also for people worldwide affected by fertiliser shortages; & farmers in Gaza and the West Bank whose lands have been degraded in the conflict.

Week beginning 24 May We pray that the interruption to world oil and gas supplies caused by closure of the Strait of Hormuz might galvanise nations to produce more clean energy.

June

Daily prayer:

Creator God, in these stretched out days,
as summer reaches its height and fullness,
teach us about the abundance,
beauty and generosity of your character.
May we be truly grateful for all the rich variety of gifts,
both large and small, that you bestow upon us,
so that we sing to you like the rest of creation.

Daily response:

O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you
have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

Intercessions for the month

Week 31 May / 1 June June is Re-wilding Month; we
pray for government initiatives to encourage the
biodiversity that enables the planet to flourish and to
sustain itself more effectively.

Week beginning 7 June This 'Great Big Green Week'
we pray that the publicity given to environmental
issues will make people think about their lifestyles.

Week beginning 14 June As some world leaders (e.g.
the USA) remove climate-relevant data from their
websites, we pray that truth may prevail, and that the
world will honestly face up to the long-term damage
caused by climate change.

Week beginning 21 June We pray for a fair distribution
of water in desert countries, especially the Middle East.

Week beginning 28 June We pray for a good rebuilding
of countries hammered by war. For Israel's nation and
leadership; for President Trump; for leaders of Iran,
Palestine and the Lebanon. For justice and humanity, so
all may live sustainably and the planet may flourish.

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

Signposts for Action

April 22 International Earth Day

April 29 Stop Food Waste Day

NO MOW MAY

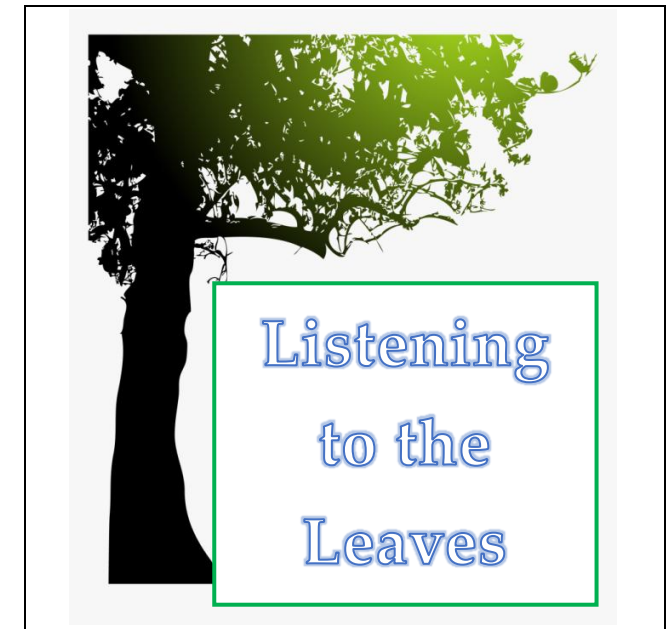
May 10-16 Christian Aid week

May 15 Endangered Species Day

June THIRTY DAYS WILD – Re-wild parts of the garden

June 3 World Bike Day

June 6–14 The Great Big Green Week



**Prayers for the
Integrity of Creation**

April - June 2026