



JAEI

September 2022 Environmental Prayer Diary

Season of Creation

The purpose of this Prayer Diary is to provide subjects for your reflection and prayer as the Spirit moves you)

<p>Thursday</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2022 Season of Creation Theme: <i>Listen to the Voice of Creation</i></p> <p>During the COVID-19 pandemic, many of us have become familiar with the concept of being muted during virtual conversations. Often, people using a platform do not have the capacity to unmute themselves. Even more do not even have access to digital platforms, and so their voices are never heard. Many voices are muted in public discourse around climate change and the ethics of Earth-keeping. These are the voices of those who suffer the impacts of climate change. These are the voices of those who hold generational wisdom about how to live gratefully within the limits of the land. These are the voices of a diminishing diversity of more-than-human species. It is the voice of the Earth. The 2022 Season of Creation theme raises awareness of our need to listen to the voice of all creation.</p> <p>The Psalmist (19: 1-4) acknowledges that hearing the voice of creation requires a kind of listening that is increasingly rare. Within the ecumenical Christian family, there is a diverse range of traditions to help us recover our capacity to hear the voice of creation. Some of the earliest Christian writings refer to the concept of creation as a book from which knowledge of God can be read. The theological tradition of the book of creation runs like a golden thread from the writings of Origen through the Patristic writers such as Tertullian, Basil of Caesarea and others. Like the Psalmist, St. Maximus reminds us that the entire cosmos praises and glorifies God ‘with silent voices’, and that praise is not heard until we give it a voice, until we praise God in and with creation. St. Augustine writes, “[Creation] is the divine page that you must listen to; it is the book of the universe that you must observe. The pages of Scripture can only be read by those who know how to read and write, while everyone, even the illiterate, can read the book of the universe.” Martin Luther wrote, “God has written [the gospel] not only in books, but also in trees and other creatures.”</p> <p>A “book” or a scroll was meant to be read aloud, and therefore, it was a spoken word that was meant to be heard. The scrolls, and books of Scripture were meant to be read aloud, breathed into a community, and heard as proclamation. The Psalmist who declares that creation proclaims God’s handiwork also knows that the book of Scripture perfectly revives the soul, makes the simple wise, rejoices the heart, and enlightens the eyes. (Psalm 19:7-8) The book of creation and the book of Scripture are meant to be “read” side by side.</p> <p>Care must be taken not to confuse the two books, nor to blur the lines between reason and revelation. But what we “hear” from creation is more than a metaphor drawn from our understanding of ecology and climate science. It is more than the biological and physical sciences that have shaped the dialogue between theology</p>
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and the natural sciences since the scientific revolution. In his encyclical on Faith and Reason, Pope John Paul II recognized that while Christ is the heart of God's revelation, creation was the first stage of that revelation. The harmonies that emerge when we contemplate the books of creation and Scripture form our cosmology about who we are, where we are, and how we are called to live in right relationships with God and our co-creatures.

Contemplation opens us to many modes of listening to the book of creation. Psalm 19 says that creatures speak to us of the Creator. The harmonious balance of biodiverse ecologies and the suffering cries of creation are both echoes of the Divine because all creatures have the same origin and ending in God. Listening to the voices of our co-creatures is like perceiving truth, goodness or beauty through the lives of a human friend and family member. Learning to listen to these voices helps us become aware of the Trinity, in which creation lives, moves and has its being. Jürgen Moltmann calls for "a discernment of the God who is present in creation, who through his Holy Spirit can bring men and women to reconciliation and peace with nature."

The Christian Tradition helps us learn to listen to the book of creation. Christian spirituality is replete with practices that move our bodies to contemplation in words and silence. Liturgical and spiritual practices are accessible from early childhood to adulthood. Cultivating a spirituality of active listening helps us to discern the voices of God and our neighbours amongst the noise of destructive narratives. Contemplation moves us from despair to hope, from anxiety to action!

For Christians, Jesus Christ holds the two "books" of creation and Scripture together. Faced with the reality of brokenness, suffering and death, Christ's incarnation and resurrection becomes the hope for reconciling and healing the Earth. The book of Scripture proclaims God's Word so that we can go into the world and read the book of creation in a way that anticipates this Gospel. In turn, the book of creation helps us to hear the book of Scripture from the perspective of all creation that waits with eager longing for the good news. Christ becomes a key to discern God's gift and promise for all creation, and particularly those who suffer or are already lost to us.

During the Season of Creation, our common prayer and action can help us listen for the voices of those who are silenced. In prayer we lament the individuals, communities, species, and ecosystems who are lost, and those whose livelihoods are threatened by habitat loss and climate change. In prayer we centre the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor. Communities of worship can amplify the voices of young people, Indigenous people, women and affected communities who are not heard in society. Through liturgies, public prayers, symbolic acts and advocacy, we can remember those who are displaced or have disappeared from public spaces and political processes.

Listening to the voice of creation offers members of the Christian family a rich entry point for interfaith and interdisciplinary dialogue and practice. Christians walk a shared path as those who hold different kinds of knowledge and wisdom in all cultures and sectors of life. By listening to the voice of all creation, humans joined in our vocation to care for our common home (*oikos*).

(Taken from the "Celebration Guide 2022")

Friday

2

1st week in September - Arbor Week

Trees offer more than aesthetic and ornamental value but play a vital role in producing the oxygen we breathe. It has become common knowledge that the climate is changing, and greening landscapes is an important defence against the effects of climate change thanks to their role in removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Indigenous plants provide a home for wildlife and a far better suited to our water-stressed environment. They also provide a barrier against soil erosion and are often used for natural remedies on which hundreds of people depend



Each year, two trees, one common and one rare, are highlighted to increase public awareness of indigenous trees.

Common Tree of the Year: *Dais Cotinifolia*,
Pompom tree

The pompon tree is one of the best known and well-loved indigenous trees, tough enough to be used as a street tree and small enough to fit into most gardens. When in flower at Christmas it looks like a giant candy floss, as the tree transforms into a cloud of soft pink balls.



Uncommon Tree of the Year: *Peltophorum Africanum*,
African Wattle

Spekboom

A semi-deciduous tree with acacia-like foliage and showy yellow flowers, it's also an excellent tree for bee-keepers.

In this the Centenary Year of the Diocese, it has been suggested that 100 Spekboom (*Portulacaria Afra*) be planted – perhaps a challenge to all Parishes to grow and plant at least 100 spekbooms and plant them in church grounds or in the community. Small cuttings can also be given to Baptism, Confirmation and Marriage candidates to grow as a reminder of their vows.



- Give thanks for the awesome beauty, variety and diversity of plants in our Country.
- Pray for forgiveness when we have taken this beauty for granted
- Pray that each one of us will utilize and care for this resource wisely.

Saturday

3

International Vulture Day

Most populations of vultures in Africa are declining rapidly, and conservationists are calling this an 'African Vulture Crisis'. There has been an increasing focus on the movements of vultures using tracking devices, but so far, there are very few continent-wide studies. To address this, a group of 35 researchers pooled



their tracking data from 163 vultures to look at how vulture movements vary across Africa and how vultures are using protected areas. The researchers found that breeding adult vultures had smaller ranges than non-breeding adults and immature vultures. The overlap of vultures' ranges with protected areas was low, which poses significant challenges for conserving African vultures,

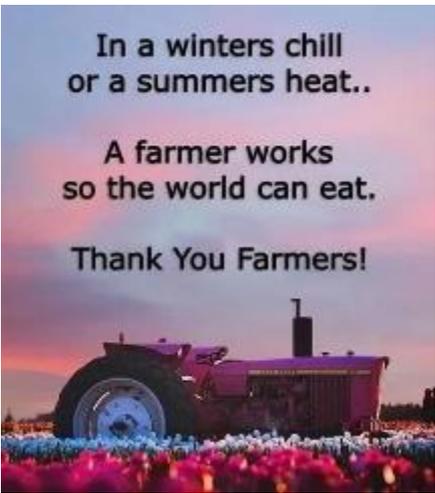


particularly since the main threat to vultures, the intentional poisoning of carcasses, is widespread, and one poisoning event can kill large numbers of vultures because most species of vultures are social feeders. Successful conservation of vultures relies on reducing wildlife poisoning over vast areas, both inside and outside of protected areas, by tackling the drivers of poisoning. These drivers include human-

wildlife conflict, trade in vulture parts, and elephant poaching. For African vultures to survive and thrive, we need better law enforcement and anti-poaching, reduced human-wildlife conflict, and prevention of the illegal trade in vulture parts. Studies using tracked vultures should help prioritise where these interventions are needed most.

- Give thanks for the beauty of these iconic birds and the important part that these majestic birds play in our eco-systems.
- Give thanks for the many people involved in vulture conservation: that may they be truly blessed
- Pray that perceptions of this magnificent, but much maligned, bird to be changed
- Pray that funding for the conservation of this iconic species be made available.
- Pray that poaching be eliminated and that those involved would find better employment options.

<p>Sunday</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>2022 Season of Creation Prayer</p> <p>Creator of All,</p> <p>From your communion of love your Word went forth to create a symphony of life that sings your praise.</p> <p>By your Holy Wisdom you made the Earth to bring forth a diversity of creatures who praise you in their being. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge.</p> <p>You called human beings to till and keep your garden. You placed us into right relationships with each creature so that we could listen to their voices, and learn how to safeguard the conditions for life. But we turn in on ourselves and away from our co-creatures.</p> <p>We close our ears to the counsel of our fellow creatures. We fail to listen to the cries of the poor and the needs of the most vulnerable. We silence the voices of those who hold the traditions that teach us to care for the Earth. We close our ears to your creative, reconciling and sustaining Word that calls to us through the Scriptures.</p> <p>We lament the loss of our fellow species and their habitats that will never speak again. We grieve the loss of human cultures, along with the lives and livelihoods that have been displaced or perished. Creation cries out as forests crackle, and animals alike flee the fires of injustice that we have lit by our unwillingness to listen.</p> <p>In this Season of Creation, we pray that you would call to us, as from the burning bush, with the sustaining fire of your Spirit. Breathe upon us. Open our ears and move our hearts. Turn us from our inward gaze. Teach us to contemplate your creation, and listen for the voice of each creature declaring your glory. For “faith comes from hearing.”</p> <p>Give us hearts to listen for the good news of your promise to renew the face of the Earth. Enlighten us with the grace to follow the Way of Christ as we learn to walk lightly upon this holy ground. Fill us with the hope to quench the fires of injustice with the light of your healing love that sustains our common home.</p> <p>In the name of the One who came to proclaim good news to all creation, Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Amen.</p>
<p>Monday</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>“The world is not a problem to be solved; it is a living being to which we belong. The world is part of our own self and we are a part of its suffering wholeness. Until we go to the root of our image of separateness, there can be no healing. And the deepest part of our separateness from creation lies in our forgetfulness of its sacred nature, which is also our own sacred nature.”</p> <p><i>Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee</i></p> 

<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Truth Is One</p> <p>Science is no longer, nor should it ever have been, our enemy; instead quantum physics, biology, and other academic disciplines are revealing that science is our new and excellent partner, much better than philosophy ever was. Truth is One. If something is spiritually true, it will also be true in the physical world, and all disciplines and all religions will somehow be looking at this “one truth” from different angles, goals, assumptions, and vocabulary. If we are really convinced that we have the Big Truth, then we should also be able to trust that others will see it from their different angles—or it is not the Big Truth.</p> <p>No one wants to be our enemy unless they assume that we ourselves have chosen to live in our own small tent and cannot or do not want to talk to them on their terms. Christians have too often assumed ill will and been far too eager to create enemies instead of realizing that others often enjoyed very similar “good news” inside of different packaging.</p> <p>As my colleague and fellow Living School teacher Cynthia Bourgeault says, “We begin to discover that our Buddhist and Jewish and Islamic and Hindu friends are not competitors. Religion is not a survival of the fittest. There is a deep understanding that we all swim together or we sink together. Each religious tradition reveals a color of the heart of God that is precious.”</p> <p>Big Truth is written in reality itself before it was ever written in books. If you say yes to Reality, to “what is,” you will recognize the same truth when it shows itself in anyone’s sacred scriptures. If you do not respond to the “good, the true, and the beautiful” (the three qualities of being) in daily reality, I doubt if you will ever see it in the best Bible translation in the world. If it is the truth, it is true all the time and everywhere, and sincere lovers of truth will take it from wherever it comes. If it is true, it is common domain, and “there for the mind to see in the things that God has made” (Romans 1:20). Or, as Aquinas was fond of saying, quoting Ambrose (another Doctor of the Church), “If it’s true, it is always from the one Holy Spirit.” The important question is not, “Who said it?” but, “Is it true?”</p> <p>Gateway to Silence: All truth is one.</p> <p><i>From Richard Rohr’s daily meditations</i> www.cac.org</p>
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>7</p>	



<p>Thursday</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>Emanating from the Lambeth Conference 2022 - Lambeth Call on Environment and Sustainable Development</p> <p>Parishes are invited to consider these Calls and how they can best implement them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support commitments to tackle urgently the triple environmental crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. • Treasure God’s marvellous creation, recognising the profound interdependence of all life on earth and repenting of actions and theologies of domination, which have caused great harm to the earth and injustices to its people. • Recognise the triple environmental crisis as a crisis of cultural and spiritual values and build on the reach and influence of the Church to challenge ourselves and humanity to transform our mindset away from exploitation of the natural world to one of relationship and stewardship, as embodied by the wisdom of the Christian tradition and by Indigenous peoples. • Equip communities to build resilience to help them withstand and recover from disasters, and promote the prophetic voice of young people and the key role of women as earth protectors, recognising that climate change impacts unequally on women and future generations. <p><i>Prayerfully consider your response in implementing these Calls.</i></p> 
<p>Friday</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>Romans 8: 18 – 25</p> <p>Present Suffering and Future Glory</p> <p>¹⁸ I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that^[a] the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.</p> <p>²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.</p>

<p>Saturday</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>Antonio Guterres the Secretary General of the United Nations addresses the Lambeth Conference community on the Environment and Sustainable Development Day at Lambeth Palace - 3 August 2022</p> <p>“To my dear friend, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dear friends,</p> <p>The Lambeth Conference is an opportunity to discuss and deliberate core and indeed universal lessons of faith and values. This year’s gathering takes place amidst a series of challenges that cloud our work. From conflicts like the war in Ukraine and climate catastrophe, to mistrust and division, to poverty, inequality and discrimination, to the ongoing effects of a global pandemic.</p> <p>These challenges resist easy solutions, but your inspiring teams summoning us to walk listen and witness together offers a blueprint for progress. It calls upon all people to bring values to life not through words, but through action and service to others and to deliver the economic, social and environmental justice that our world needs now more than ever.</p> <p>Economic justice through an equal economic recovery with all countries accessing the financing and debt relief they need to invest in their people at this critical time. Social justice by reducing inequalities, investing in the health, education, wellbeing of all people and supporting the most vulnerable including refugees, migrants and women and girls. And environmental justice by addressing the planetary emergency of climate change and supporting all countries as they decarbonise their economies and build green futures.</p> <p>Above all, there can be no justice of any kind without peace. But embracing peace, forgiveness and tolerance, and more importantly, by living these values every day we can move one step closer to the sustainable, equal and just world that every person deserves.</p> <p>Thank you for being part of this essential endeavour.”</p>
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>Creator God The good earth you created has been damaged by our actions Give us strength to work with you for the restoration of the earth that all may know your goodness through Jesus Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit One God forever and ever. Amen</p>



Monday

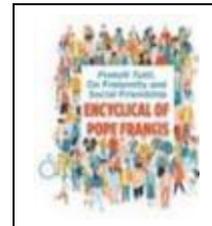
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Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti* of Pope Francis on the Fraternity and Social Friendship

Chapter Two

The context

60. In the New Testament, Hillel's precept was expressed in positive terms: "In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets" (Mt 7:12). This command is universal in scope, embracing everyone on the basis of our shared humanity, since the heavenly Father "makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good" (Mt 5:45). Hence the summons to "be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" (Lk 6:36).



61. In the oldest texts of the Bible, we find a reason why our hearts should expand to embrace the foreigner. It derives from the enduring memory of the Jewish people that they themselves had once lived as foreigners in Egypt:

"You shall not wrong or oppress a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Ex 22:21).

"You shall not oppress a stranger; you know the heart of a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Ex 23:9).

"When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the stranger as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Lev 19:33-34).

"When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not glean what is left; it shall be for the sojourner, the orphan, and the widow. Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt" (Deut 24:21-22).

The call to fraternal love echoes throughout the New Testament:

"For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself'" (Gal 5:14).

"Whoever loves a brother or sister lives in the light, and in such a person there is no cause for stumbling. But whoever hates another believer is in the darkness" (1 Jn 2:10-11).

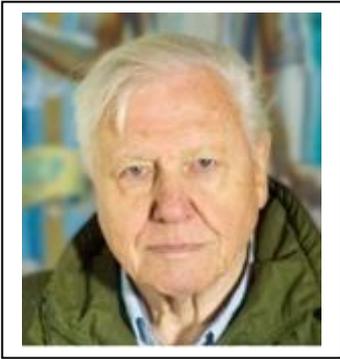
"We know that we have passed from death to life because we love one another. Whoever does not love abides in death" (1 Jn 3:14).

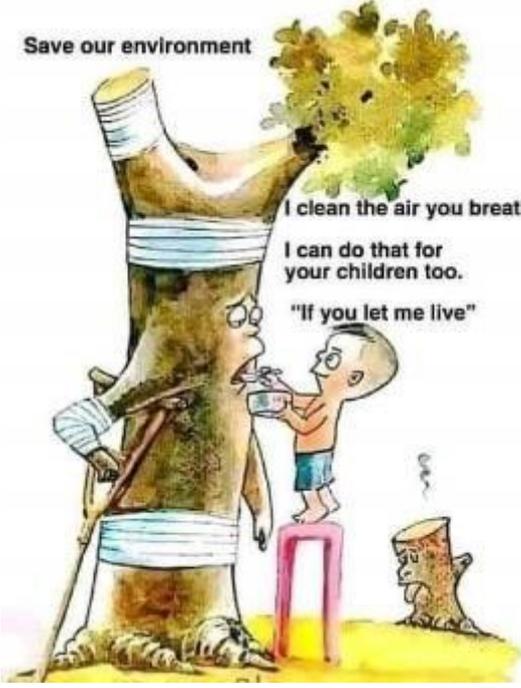
"Those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen" (1 Jn 4:20).

62. Yet this call to love could be misunderstood. Saint Paul, recognizing the temptation of the earliest Christian communities to form closed and isolated groups, urged his disciples to abound in love "for one another and for all" (1 Thess 3:12). In the Johannine community, fellow Christians were to be welcomed, "even though they are strangers to you" (3 Jn 5). In this context, we can better understand the significance of the parable of the Good

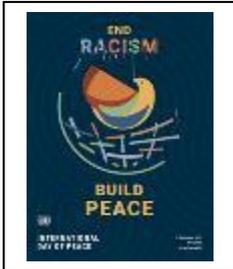
Samaritan: love does not care if a brother or sister in need comes from one place or another. For "love shatters the chains that keep us isolated and separate; in their place, it builds bridges. Love enables us to create one great family, where all of us can feel at home... Love exudes compassion and dignity".^[56]

Prayerfully consider how this is affecting our own Country

<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>“The whole of life is coming to terms with yourself and the natural world. Why are you here? How do you fit in? What’s it all about? People must feel that the natural world is important and valuable and beautiful and wonderful and an amazement and a pleasure.</p> <p>The truth is: the natural world is changing. And we are totally dependent on that world. It provides our food, water and air. It is the most precious thing we have and we need to defend it.”</p> <p>Sir David Attenborough</p>	
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>A Prayer of Peace</p> <p>This is my song, O God of all the nations, a song of peace for lands afar and mine; this is my home, the country where my heart is; here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy shrine: but other hearts in other lands are beating with hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.</p> <p>My country's skies are bluer than the ocean, and sunlight beams on cloverleaf and pine; but other lands have sunlight too, and clover, and skies are everywhere as blue as mine: O hear my song, thou God of all the nations, a song of peace for their land and for mine.</p> <p>This is my song, O God of all the nations, a prayer that peace transcends in every place; and yet I pray for my beloved country – the reassurance of continued grace: Lord, help us find our one-ness in the Saviour, in spite of differences of age and race.</p> <p>May truth and freedom come to every nation; may peace abound where strife has raged so long; that each may seek to love and build together, a world united, righting every wrong; a world united in its love for freedom, proclaiming peace together in one song.</p> <p>This is my prayer, O Lord of all earth's kingdoms, thy kingdom come, on earth, thy will be done; let Christ be lifted up 'til all shall serve him, and hearts united, learn to live as one: O hear my prayer, thou God of all the nations, myself I give thee -- let thy will be done.</p> <p><i>Stanzas 1-2 are by poet, Lloyd Stone (1912-1992/3, written in the interval between WWI and WWII when he was 22 years old. Stanza 3,4 & 5 are by Methodist theologian Georgia Harkness. This is sung to the tune of Finlandia</i></p>	

<p>Thursday</p>	<p>15</p>	
<p>Friday</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>“You don't need a diploma to plant a tree.”</p> <p>Wangari Maathai (1940-2011) <i>Founder of the Green Belt Movement and the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate</i></p> 
<p>Saturday</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>Meditation on Trees</p> <p>If you have a tree outside your window where you can see it, stand or sit and simply look or find a picture of a tree that you like in a book or on the internet, or close your eyes and imagine a tree that you know.</p> <p>Meditation</p> <p>Trees are amazing things. Their roots go down into the ground holding them upright and stable and taking precious nutrients from the soil to feed their growth. Moving up the tree the trunk and the branches become thinner and more delicate making patterns against the sky that are often very distinctive.</p> <p>And they support life. Whether there are leaves on your tree or not, there will be creatures living on or under the bark; perhaps birds nesting in the branches; even squirrels or owls hiding away.</p> <p>Something to think about</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where are you rooted? What do you need to feed your growth? What gives you life? <p>Acknowledgment: Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin and St Mary Magdalen, Tetbury</p> <p>https://tetburychurch.co.uk/through-the-window-connecting-with-creation-through-lent-even-when-you-cant-get-outside/</p> <p>(Originally written for the time of Covid restrictions).</p>

<p>Sunday</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>A prayer for the tree</p> <p>Creator God, Out of chaos you brought order. Out of nothingness you brought life. In the middle of all life stands the tree.</p> <p>Trees provide the air that nurtures all your creation. Birds make them their homes. Cats climb them for protection. Trees recycle life that has come before.</p> <p>Bless the trees of this word, loving God. Remind us to serve as their caregivers and protectors. Give them long limbs and long life. The gift of their breath is as special to us as the breath of the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>Amen</p>
<p>Monday</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>3rd Week in September – National Clean-up Week & 20 September – Recycling Day</p> <p>South Africa’s waste management service is in a dire situation and informal waste reclaimers are stepping in to fill the gap, raising the need for their services to be integrated into the mainstream economy. This is a contentious, and politically sensitive issue, but it has to be acknowledged that Informal waste reclaimers play a vital role in the recycling and management of waste. According to the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, informal waste reclaimers collect 80%-90% of all used packaging and paper that is recycled.</p> <p>The work of informal waste reclaimers has saved South Africa at least R950-million in landfill space. Yet there is little recognition for the public and environmental service that these informal waste reclaimers render, free.</p> <p>Informal waste reclaimers work hard in harsh conditions, travelling long distances, mostly by foot, to get recyclable products that only earn them small change. While, on the other hand, they continue to be side-lined by the big, already established waste reclaiming companies and most of them are being exploited as free labour.”</p> <p>Luyanda Hlatshwayo, a waste picker for 10 years and organiser of the African Reclaimers Organisation (ARO), has said “<i>Our work is very humbling. Most of the time we move around very dirty because of where we sometimes have to dig to find products. So it is easy to be invisible to the world because we are often associated with doing drugs, being foreign, criminal activities and all sorts of ugly things, but the truth is we are helping and can still do more to help South Africa and minimise a wasteful consumer-driven society while creating formal jobs that can be properly measured. Nobody knows exactly how much waste we prevent from being dumped in the ground and contaminating the</i></p> 

		<p><i>environment and no one really cares to keep track of that.”</i></p> <p>During this National Clean-up Week and Recycling Day, spare a thought for these unsung heroes. Engage with the Informal Recycler in your neighbourhood and see how you can help them in this very important activity.</p> <p>Visit the website of ARO to read their stories.</p>
Tuesday	20	<p>21 September – Zero Emissions Day</p> <p>Zero Emissions Day is annually observed by people in many countries around the world with the main message of “Giving our planet a day off a year”.</p> <p>Everyday choices made by ordinary people hold the key to our efforts to reduce emissions and find more sustainable solutions. Zero Emissions Day has been designed to give the world a break from fossil fuels and to raise awareness about the harm caused by carbon emissions. The goal is to engage people towards more climate-friendly choices in their personal life. The day is a good opportunity for each of us to think what we can do to reduce harmful carbon emissions.</p> <p><i>What is your choice going to be?</i></p> 
Wednesday	21	<p>International Peace Day</p> <p>2022 Theme: “End racism. Build peace.”</p> <p>Each year the International Day of Peace is observed around the world on 21 September. The UN General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, through observing 24 hours of non-violence and cease-fire.</p> <p>But achieving true peace entails much more than laying down arms. It requires the building of societies where all members feel that they can flourish. It involves creating a world in which people are treated equally, regardless of their race.</p> <p>As Secretary-General António Guterres has said:</p> <p><i>“Racism continues to poison institutions, social structures, and everyday life in every society. It continues to be a driver of persistent inequality. And it continues to deny people their fundamental human rights. It destabilizes societies, undermines democracies, erodes the legitimacy of governments, and... the linkages between racism and gender inequality are unmistakable.”</i></p> <p><i>As conflicts continue to erupt across the globe, causing people to flee, we have seen race-based discrimination at borders. As COVID-19 keeps attacking our communities, we have seen how certain racial groups have been hit much harder than others. As economies suffer, we have seen hate speech and violence directed at racial minorities.</i></p> <p><i>Racism, xenophobia and related discrimination and intolerance exist in all societies, everywhere. Racism harms not just the lives of those who endure it, but also society as a whole. We all lose in a society characterised by discrimination, division, distrust, intolerance, and hate. The fight against racism is everyone’s fight.</i></p> 

		<p><i>We all have a part to play in building a world beyond racism.</i></p> <p><i>We can work to dismantle the structures that entrench racism in our midst. We can support movements for equality and human rights everywhere. We can speak out against hate speech – both offline and online. We can promote anti-racism through education and reparatory justice.”</i></p>
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>World Rhino Day</p> <p>The rhino is being hunted into extinction and could disappear forever unless we act now. Fuelling this devastation is a spike in demand for rhino horns, used for bogus cancer cures, hangover remedies, and good luck charms in China and Vietnam.</p> <p>A total of 451 rhinos were poached in South Africa between January and December 2021, the Government of South Africa confirmed in a statement released on Tuesday 8 February 2022. This is a 13% increase on the number of rhinos killed by poachers in the country during 2020 when local and international travel restrictions were thought to have played a significant role in decreasing poaching. Despite the depressing rise in poaching cases last year, there were, at least, fewer rhinos poached in South Africa last year than were poached in 2019.</p> <p>While Kruger Park has seen a decrease in rhino poaching and there were zero rhino poaching cases in other national parks, poachers have moved to new areas, and now seem to be targeting smaller private reserves. Increases were seen in six of the country’s nine provinces, with significantly more rhinos poached in Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and the Free State.</p> <p>As rhinos continue to be targeted, local, national, and international collaboration must be at the heart of future action. It is heartening to note that the South African Government’s has undertaken to work closely with others to protect rhinos across the country. Only with an integrated and connected approach will we be able to turn the tide on poaching and begin to see South Africa’s rhino population grow.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for all those involved in rhino conservation – for strength and endurance. • Pray for those involved in the heinous act of poaching – that their hearts may turn to love of these creatures and away from their illicit dealings and that they would find legitimate alternate employment.
<p>Friday</p>	<p>23</p>	



<p>Saturday</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>Heritage Day</p> <p>Heritage is something that belongs to the nation - where the origins of its people are, the food eaten, the languages spoken, the beauty of the Country and wealth of our natural fauna and flora. It's a chance to think about why you're proud to be South African. It's a chance to recognise and celebrate the cultural and natural wealth of our "Rainbow Nation."</p>  <p>May we stand together and pray for God to bless our beloved country South Africa, and strengthen His people. God you show us the splendour of diversity and the beauty of unity in your own divine life. Make us, who came from many nations with many languages, a united people that delights in our many different gifts. Defend our liberties and give those who we have entrusted with authority the spirit of wisdom, that there might be justice and peace in our beloved country. I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and our Saviour, Amen!</p> <p>Monica Francis Maier <i>South African expat in Cardiff</i></p>
<p>Sunday</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>Disturb us, O Lord when we are too well-pleased with ourselves when our dreams have come true because we dreamed too little, because we sailed too close to the shore.</p> <p>Disturb us, O Lord when with the abundance of things we possess, we have lost our thirst for the water of life when, having fallen in love with time, we have ceased to dream of eternity and in our efforts to build a new earth, we have allowed our vision of Heaven to grow dim.</p> <p>Stir us, O Lord to dare more boldly, to venture into wider seas where storms show Thy mastery, where losing sight of land, we shall find the stars. In the name of Him who pushed back the horizons of our hopes and invited the brave to follow. Amen</p> <p><i>(Desmond Tutu, adapted from a prayer Sir Francis Drake) Taken from "Season of Creation – Eco Ubuntu".</i></p>

<p>Monday</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>World Environmental Health Day</p> <p>Theme 2022 – “Strengthening Environmental Health Systems for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals”.</p> <p>Environmental health is the branch of public health that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focuses on the relationships between people and their environment • promotes human health and well-being • fosters healthy and safe communities.  <p>Environmental health is a key part of any comprehensive public health system. Healthier environments could prevent almost one quarter of the global burden of disease. The COVID-19 pandemic is a further reminder of the delicate relationship between people and our planet. Clean air, stable climate, adequate water, sanitation and hygiene, safe use of chemicals, protection from radiation, healthy and safe workplaces, sound agricultural practices, health-supportive cities and built environments, and a preserved nature are all prerequisites for good health.</p> <p>The mission statement of the United Nations on SDGs (<i>Sustainable Development Goals</i>) is “A blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all people and the world by 2030.” The 17 SDGs are integrated - they recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic, and environmental sustainability, all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests. Environmental Health plays a pivotal role in the implementation of these SDGs. It is interesting to note that Environmental Health fits into 7 SDGs, 19 targets and 30 indicators of the SDGs.</p> <p>South Africa is seriously lacking in achieving many of the goals linked to Environmental Health.</p> <p>Prayerfully consider what you can do to improve the situation.</p>
<p>Tuesday</p>	<p>27</p>	 <p>HOW THE ENVIRONMENT IMPACTS OUR HEALTH</p> <p>People are exposed to risk factors in their homes, work places and communities through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AIR POLLUTION (including indoors and outdoors) INADEQUATE WATER, SANITATION and hygiene CHEMICALS and biological agents RADIATION (ionising and non-ionising) COMMUNITY NOISE OCCUPATIONAL RISKS AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (including indoor air quality, water, food safety) BUILT ENVIRONMENTS (including housing and roads) CLIMATE CHANGE <p>World Health Organization #EnvironmentalHealth</p>

<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>We say Yes To a world where all are valued for themselves where no one is exploited or abused, where all can stand proud and strong,</p> <p>We say Yes To a church where healing and love embrace all where there is acceptance of dissent and difference where conformity gives way to the spirit of freedom</p> <p>We say Yes To lives grounded in peace and justice where struggle and self-acceptance walk in joy where strength and tenderness join hands</p> <p>We say Yes! <i>(www.churches-together.org.uk/resources/leaflets)</i> Taken from “Season of Creation – Eco Ubuntu”.</p>	
<p>Thursday</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste</p> <p><i>2022 Theme – “Stop food loss and waste. For the people. For the planet.”</i></p> <p>Globally, around 14 percent of food produced is lost between harvest and retail, while an estimated 17 percent of total global food production is wasted (11 percent in households, 5 percent in the food service and 2 percent in retail).</p> <p>Food loss and waste undermine the sustainability of our food systems. When food is lost or wasted, all the resources that were used to produce this food - including water, land, energy, labour and capital - go to waste. In addition, the disposal of food loss and waste in landfills, leads to greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to climate change. Food loss and waste can also negatively impact food security and food availability and contribute to increasing the cost of food.</p> <p>Our food systems cannot be resilient if they are not sustainable. Hence the need to focus on the adoption of integrated approaches designed to reduce food loss and waste. Actions are required globally and locally to maximise the use of the food we produce. The introduction of technologies, innovative solutions (including e-commerce platforms for marketing, retractable mobile food processing systems), new ways of working and good practices to manage food quality and reduce food loss and waste are key to implementing this transformative change.</p> <p>With eight years left to reach SDG goal 12, target 12.3; there is an urgent need to accelerate action to reduce food loss and waste.</p> <p>Key messages</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is <i>never room</i> for food loss and waste! 2. Reducing food loss and waste, provides a powerful means to strengthen the sustainability of our food systems and improve planetary 	

		<p>health.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Increasing the efficiency of our food systems and reducing food loss and waste, necessitates investment in innovation, technologies and infrastructure. 4. Recovery and redistribution make good use of surplus food and contribute to improving access to food for the food insecure, preventing food waste and ensuring economic, environmental and social benefits. 5. Diverting food waste to composting is better than sending it to a landfill, but preventing food from being wasted in the first place is an even better way to lessen the impact on the environment. 6. Realising and maximising the positive impacts of reducing food loss and waste, requires good governance and human capital development, as well as collaboration and partnerships. <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine your own food choices and wastage. Consider how best you can mitigate your food wastage. • Plant a small food/herb garden.
<p>Friday</p>	<p>30</p>	 <p>The planet DOESN'T need more "successful" people. The planet desperately NEEDS: more peacemakers, healers, restorers * storytellers & lovers of ALL kinds.</p>