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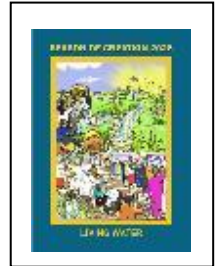
September 2026 Environmental Prayer Diary

• Season of Creation

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

Season of Creation 2026 – “Living Water”

The Season of Creation is an annual, global ecumenical observance running from September 1 to October 4. During this month-long period, Christians worldwide unite to pray, reflect, and take hands-on action to protect the natural environment and care for the Earth as their shared home. The Anglican Church takes care for creation seriously. Our fifth mark of mission is “To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth”.

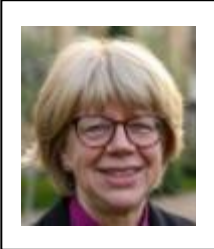


The theme for the 2026 Season of Creation is **"Living Water"** with the symbol and call to **"Immersion in Living Water"** – [Download the Resource Guide](#).

"Living Water" is based on Ezekiel 47:9,12, where water flowing from God's Temple transforms barren land into a place of abundant life: "Where the river flows everything will live." This vision offers a message of hope, healing, and ecological renewal. Water flowing from God's presence restores ecosystems, nourishes biodiversity, and symbolizes God's desire for the flourishing of all creation. This year's symbol shows a small stream flowing from the Temple which grows into a mighty river, bringing life wherever it goes and inviting believers to enter the water and become participants in God's work of healing the world.

Tuesday	1	1 September is the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, encouraging the communities around the world to pray for our common home. It is an opportunity for us to connect with our creator God and allow the Lord to redefine our relationship with the environment: from one of consumption and control to one of care and protection. Father, Lord of all creation, we praise you with all your creatures and the whole universe that comes forth from the work of Your hands. We acknowledge the privilege and responsibility that You give us as stewards of Your creation. In our ignorance we have done damage to our common home and our brothers and sisters are suffering. Through faithfully following your Son guide and direct us to prepare for a better future. Teach us to contemplate You in the beauty of the universe, for all things speak of You. Give us the grace to recognise, respect and protect all You have created, using wisely all that you have entrusted to us. Holy Spirit, who first hovered over the dawn of creation and drew order out of the chaos help us to build your kingdom of justice, love, peace and beauty where the poor of the earth are crying out. You, who live and reign, world without end, Amen.
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Wednesday	2	National Arbor Month South Africa has extended from Arbor Day to Arbor Week and now to Arbor Month every September! The primary goals and benefits of this observance are multi-focused in tackling the country's socio-economic and environmental challenges, specifically combating climate change, promoting household food security through fruit-bearing trees, and rehabilitating historically disadvantaged, treeless townships. Historically, many South African townships and informal settlements were disadvantaged in terms of urban planning, lacking public parks and street trees. Arbor initiatives aim to rectify this by greening these areas, adding aesthetic value, and improving the quality of life. Many trees hold deep cultural heritage and provide traditional medicines. Arbor Month protects these natural resources from depletion. Planting indigenous trees helps offset carbon emissions, mitigate global warming, and protect the soil from erosion as well as preserving and promoting biodiversity. This also highlights the richness and diversity of indigenous tree species. The campaign highlights specific trees each year to educate the public on preserving the nation's rich, native biodiversity. 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. In previous years one common tree and one rare tree were highlighted. However, from 2026, an extended list of trees of the year has been implemented and now has a <i>Common Tree</i>, a <i>Tree for Promotion</i>, and a <i>Tree for Appreciation</i>. The <i>Common Tree</i> is a species or genus occurring widely, and/or easy to grow. The <i>Tree for Promotion</i> is a species or genus that may be less widely adapted but is not uncommon. The <i>Tree for Appreciation</i> would be a tree species or genus that is generally more restricted in its distribution range or suitable habitat  Common Tree for 2026 <i>Olea europaea subsp. africana</i>, Wild Olive, Olienhout. This is species occurs widely and is easily grown  Tree for Promotion 2026 A species or genus that may be less widely adapted but is not uncommon <i>Phyllogeiton zeyheri</i> , Red ivory, rooi ivoor,  Tree for Appreciation 2026 A tree species or genus with a more restricted distribution range or suitable habitat <i>Azelia quanzensis</i>. Pod-mahogany, Peulmahonie 
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		Since the event falls at the start of spring, it is the ideal time to ensure newly planted trees take root and thrive <i>Why not plant a tree to mark a special celebration/commemoration – Confirmations, Baptisms, Birthdays, Memorium etc and encourage others to do the same.</i>
Thursday	3	"Caring for the earth is deeply theological in order to honour the God who made the earth" <i>Sarah Mullally, Archbishop of Canterbury</i> 
Friday	4	
Saturday	5	International Vulture Day <i>International Vulture Awareness Day</i> aims to highlight the critical conservation needs of vultures and celebrate their vital role as nature's clean-up crew. Often misunderstood, vultures are the silent sentinels of our natural world. These remarkable creatures are nature's cleaners, ecosystem guardians, flying giants, and devoted parents. Vultures are among the most important, yet tragically misunderstood and underappreciated birds on our planet. Forget the myths and misconceptions – far from the underserving caricatures of media portrayals, these remarkable birds play a vital role in maintaining sustainable and healthy ecosystems. Vultures have highly acidic stomachs that allow them to digest meat that may have harmful bacteria. By efficiently consuming carcasses and organic waste, vultures likely prevent the spread of deadly diseases that could devastate wildlife, livestock, and even people. In fact, vultures benefit our world in so many ways, from economic benefits to potentially reducing carbon emissions. By implementing effective conservation 

measures, we can give vultures a chance to recover and restore the numerous benefits they provide.

Internationally, vultures are facing a global crisis – populations worldwide are experiencing catastrophic declines due to various threats, including direct and indirect poisoning, illegal killing, and electrocutions or collisions with power lines. Without these sentinels of the sky, the consequences for our environment could be severe.

Vulture populations in South Africa remain critically threatened, with all six resident species listed as Vulnerable, Endangered, or Critically Endangered.

Conservationists are fighting to halt rapid population crashes driven by intentional mass poisonings, powerline electrocutions, and habitat loss.

For our local vultures, the conservation landscape is dire:

- *African White-backed Vulture*: Critically Endangered. This once-prolific species continues to experience severe population crashes in strongholds like the Kruger National Park.
- *White-headed Vulture*: (Critically Endangered.) They are functionally extinct as a breeding species in KwaZulu-Natal and nearly extinct in the broader region.
- *Hooded Vulture*: (Critically Endangered.) Extremely rare, with estimates suggesting only 100–200 mature birds left in South Africa.
- *Lappet-faced Vulture*: (Endangered.) The largest African vulture, with only a handful of nesting pairs remaining in specific provinces like KZN.
- *Bearded Vulture*: (Critically Endangered.) Confined strictly to the Maloti-Drakensberg mountain range, with an estimated 50 to 100 breeding pairs remaining.
- *Cape Vulture*: (Vulnerable.) While some colonies have seen slight population growth, they remain highly susceptible to poisoning and energy infrastructure.
- The *Egyptian Vulture* is considered *regionally extinct* in South Africa as a breeding species. The last wild breeding pair nested in the 1920s, and today, they are only spotted as extremely rare vagrants. Despite their absence in the wild, targeted conservation and captive-breeding initiatives are underway to establish insurance populations.
- The *Palm-nut Vulture* is a scarce, highly localized vagrant, with an extremely small local population of only around 40 individual birds primarily found in the coastal forests and mangrove swamps of northern KwaZulu-Natal.



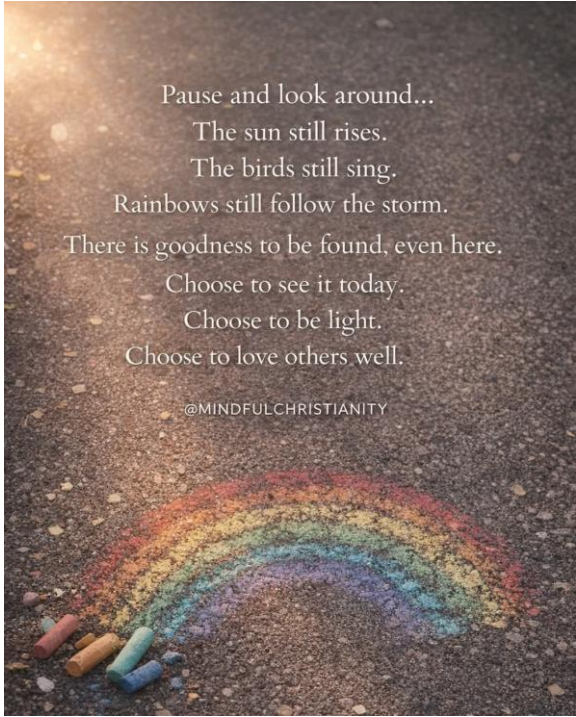
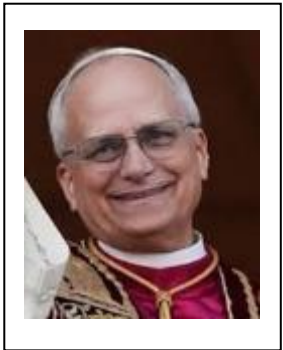
Hooded Vulture

Major threats to this iconic birds remain:

- *Poisoning*: The leading cause of mortality. Carcasses are often laced with poisons by poachers to avoid detection or used in retaliatory killings around farmlands.
- *Energy Infrastructure*: Electrocutions on powerlines and collisions with wind turbines continue to cause catastrophic losses for these wide-ranging birds.
- *Traditional Medicine*: Harvesting for traditional, belief-based use heavily impacts several species.
- To pull these crucial clean-up crews back from the brink, several large-scale initiatives are underway:

		• SADC Vulture Strategy: The government has joined the broader Southern African Development Community (SADC) strategy to unify cross-border conservation efforts and mitigate landscape threats. • Habitat Relocation & "Safe Zones": Organizations like VulPro have spearheaded massive relocation projects—moving hundreds of birds to protected reserves (e.g., Shamwari Game Reserve in the Eastern Cape). • Safe Feeding Sites: Non-profits and landowners are setting up safe feeding zones to ensure vultures have access to poison-free food and to assist in tracking and rehabilitation efforts <i>What is your attitude to these magnificent birds? Change your perception and realise that these magnificent icons of the African skies are amazing! Help vultures by raising awareness of their importance in Creation!</i>
Sunday	6	Eternal God, who led your people from oppression to freedom, and marked time by your saving acts, teach us to honour the seasons of creation. As the blood on the doorposts spoke of life preserved, may we mark our lives with care for the earth. Deliver us from habits that destroy your world, that we may walk in freedom, justice, and renewal; through Jesus Christ our Passover Lamb. Amen
Monday	7	International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies 2026 theme: "Clean Air, Healthy Choices: Acting Together for People and Planet". This year's theme focuses on how individual and collective policy decisions directly impacts global air quality and atmospheric health. Air pollution knows no national borders and is all pervasive. Moreover, it is strongly correlated to other global crisis such as climate change, biodiversity loss, other forms of pollution, social and gender parity as well as economic development. By all acting together on the same day, Clean Air Day helps to improve public understanding and increase levels of air pollution busting behaviours. Everyone can do at least one thing to help reduce outdoor air pollution thus contributing to mitigating both the health and climate impacts of air pollution. Of course, there is not much we can do about the wind blowing polluted air to the City from our very polluted industrial neighbours, but we can all significantly contribute to reducing air pollution by adopting practices that minimize harmful emissions and support cleaner energy options in our homes. This includes reducing car usage, using public transport where possible, carpooling, and keeping our vehicles well-maintained. Additionally, conserving energy at home, reducing the use of wood-burning and anthracite appliances, and supporting initiatives like expanding renewable energy sources are crucial steps. <i>Decide on ways you can contribute to reducing air pollution in your immediate environment.</i>



Tuesday	8	God of creation and Lord of life, you entrusted us to care for our environment, but in many parts of the world we have failed. Help us to realise how fragile and unstable our surroundings are, because we are not looking after creation. We need to be true stewards and to understand how the most insignificant little flowers, and the tiniest insects, each creature and individual people are all part of a wondrous whole. Amen
Wednesday	9	
Thursday	10	Spirit of God, You established the dance of Creation; Bring life out of death Bring order out of chaos. Call us to radical action: To care for the web of Creation To share our resources justly And to work for the renewal of our Mother, Earth. We commit ourselves to action for climate justice. <i>Most Revd Dr Thabo Makgoba,</i> <i>Archbishop of Cape Town</i>
Friday	11	“Tending the garden of creation is not a solitary task but a lifelong commitment that unfolds within a larger context of communion and shared responsibility - an entire ecosystem made up of continuity, fidelity, cooperation and love, especially if that love mirrors the Lord’s own self-sacrificing Love.” <i>Pope Leo XIV</i> 

Saturday	12	The Lord's my Shepherd (Tune: Lord's my Shepherd) Norman Habel The Lord's my shepherd I'll not want, He gives me all I need In plastic bags in super stores, To satisfy my greed. The Lord's my shepherd I'll not want The food I like to taste, But plastic bags that save my food Are simply worthless waste. The Lord's my shepherd, does he know We're waging war on stuff That now pollutes both land and sea; Enough stuff is enough. Now my good shepherd raise your staff And lift your golden rod To help us what's good for Earth, The real gift of our God. https://seasonofcreation.com/creation-songs/
Sunday	13	Almighty God, you parted the sea and made a path to freedom, commanding wind and water to serve your purpose. Teach us to see your power in earth, sky, and sea. As we face rising waters and a changing climate, guide us with your light and grace. Deliver us from fear and lead us to action, that we may honour you by protecting your creation; through Jesus Christ our Liberator. Amen
Monday	14	God of life, God of love, God of Creation, thank You for all the wonderful creatures You have made. We thank You for the gift to inhabit and enjoy this world. Thank You for forests that provide our air and shade on hot days. Thank You for the sun's shining energy, and the rains that refresh the earth with their fragrance. Thank You for fertile soil that feeds us and sustains many creatures. Help us recognize the earth's community as a democracy of life, rooted in the local economies of those who tend the land. Give us strength to defend biodiversity and cultural diversity, putting the common good first, honouring all beings' right to sustenance. Help us value every species, every person, every culture, knowing each has intrinsic worth. Help us walk this world with faith and hope, to be good caretakers of Your creation—to protect it, respect its resources, and heed its limits. Give us courage to fight for life, resilience in the face of destruction, and resolve to resist those who exploit creation for profit. Thank You for each life we offer back to You, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit. Amen. Source: United Evangelical Lutheran Church, Argentina



Tuesday	15	Proclaiming Gods Word - Confession of Faith We believe in God, who creates all things, who embraces all things, who celebrates all things, who is present in every part of the fabric of creation. We believe in God as the source of all life, who baptizes this planet with living water. We believe in Jesus Christ, the suffering one, the poor one, the malnourished one, the climate refugee, We believe in the Holy Spirit, the breath of God, who moves with God and who moves among and with us today. We believe in everlasting life in God. And we believe in the hope that one day God will put an end to death and all destructive forces Gurukkul Theological College India	
Wednesday	16	International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer 2026 Theme: <i>Global Action for a Cooler Planet: Celebrating 10 years of sustainable cooling under the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol</i> But what is the Ozone Layer? The ozone layer, a fragile shield of gas, protects the Earth from the harmful portion of the rays of the sun, thus helping preserve life on the planet. Life on Earth would not be possible without sunlight. But the energy emanating from the sun would be too much for life on Earth to thrive were it not for the ozone layer. This stratospheric layer shields Earth from most of the sun's harmful ultraviolet radiation. Sunlight makes life possible, but the ozone layer makes life as we know it possible. The Montreal Protocol is a landmark global environmental treaty adopted in 1987 designed to protect Earth's ozone layer. It mandates the phase-out of man-made chemicals that deplete the ozone, such as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) , Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs – less damaging but a harmful greenhouse gas which contributes to climate change) and halons. It is the first and only UN treaty to achieve universal ratification by all countries worldwide. This year's theme "<i>Global action for a cooler planet</i>" celebrates the Montreal Protocol and the transformative impact of its Kigali Amendment ten years after adoption. The Montreal Protocol has demonstrated that science based policy, universal participation, strong compliance, dedicated financing, and effective partnerships can deliver real and measurable results. Through these elements, the treaty has not only protected the ozone layer but also enabled countries and	

		industries to transition to safer, more sustainable alternatives while supporting economic development. Together, the Montreal Protocol and the Kigali Amendment demonstrate that cooling the planet is not only possible, but achievable when countries act collectively, industries innovate responsibly, and international partnerships turn commitments into action - delivering benefits for the climate, economies, and people worldwide. Remember: An Earth without Ozone, Is Like A House without A Roof! <i>Give thanks for the advances in the protection of the ozone layer, and pray that all governments will continue work together to find ways to protect our earth.</i>
Thursday	17	Psalm 104 (The Message) ¹⁴⁻²³ Oh yes, God brings grain from the land, wine to make people happy, Their faces glowing with health, a people well-fed and hearty. God's trees are well-watered—the Lebanon cedars he planted. Birds build their nests in those trees; look—the stork at home in the treetop. Mountain goats climb about the cliffs; badgers burrow among the rocks. The moon keeps track of the seasons, the sun is in charge of each day. When it's dark and night takes over, all the forest creatures come out. The young lions roar for their prey, clamouring to God for their supper. When the sun comes up, they vanish, lazily stretched out in their dens. Meanwhile, men and women go out to work, busy at their jobs until evening. ²⁴⁻³⁰ What a wildly wonderful world, God! You made it all, with Wisdom at your side, made earth overflow with your wonderful creations. Oh, look—the deep, wide sea, brimming with fish past counting, sardines and sharks and salmon. Ships plough those waters, and Leviathan, your pet dragon, romps in them. All the creatures look expectantly to you to give them their meals on time. You come, and they gather around; you open your hand and they eat from it. If you turned your back, they'd die in a minute—Take back your Spirit and they die, revert to original mud; Send out your Spirit and they spring to life—the whole countryside in bloom and blossom.
Friday	18	3rd Week in September – National Clean-up Week & 20 September – Recycling Day <i>World Cleanup Day 2026 theme: “Addressing Food Waste”</i> This year, World Cleanup Day focuses on food waste, drawing attention to the billions of tons of global food loss and waste, emphasising the overarching problem of reducing organic waste, improving sustainable food management, and supporting the informal workers who collect it. Clearly, this is a monumental problem as the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste (29 September) highlights this exact same problem! When food decomposes in a landfill without oxygen, it creates <i>methane</i> - a greenhouse gas up to 28 times more potent than carbon dioxide (CO₂) over a 100-



		year timescale. Methane accelerates climate change drastically, and landfill sites are some of the largest contributors to these emissions. Furthermore, rotting organic matter produces toxic runoff and leachate that can contaminate local groundwater supplies. Food waste decomposes on the streets, t creates another problem of attracting vermin and disease – not to mention the gross smell!
		Of course, food waste is not the only waste problem that we are facing! Litter and illegal dumping remain significant challenges, driven by poor waste management, unregulated street trading, and illegal dumping syndicates. Although there are clean-up operation launched periodically, chronic waste accumulation continues to be an ongoing issue for people. Tackling the litter problem requires a mix of personal accountability, community action, and improved local infrastructure. The most effective solutions combine immediate cleanup efforts with long-term prevention strategies to stop waste at its source. As individuals, we can all do our bit to mitigate this huge problem by implementing the many “R’s” – Rethink (Question your consumption habits); Reducing (what we buy); Repairing (what is broken) , Refusing (single use plastics); Reuse (Find new ways to use items rather than throwing them away); Repurpose (Give old items a completely new function); and when all else fails ... Recycle (to keep them out of landfills) and by the way ... make sure you're not contributing to food waste!
Saturday	19	Zero Emissions Day (21 September) 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”. 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. On this one day - World Zero Emissions Day (ZeeDay), - try to have a one-day moratorium on the use of fossil fuels. Or simply put, a day to turn off all your lights, stay at home (no driving anywhere) and use minimal electrical appliances, and just give the planet a day off. Possibly easier said than done – but it’s worth a try for our Planets sake! <i>What is your choice going to be?</i>

Sunday	20	Gracious God, you fed your people with manna from heaven, teaching them to trust your daily provision. Help us to live simply, that all may simply live. Curb our greed and awaken gratitude, that we may receive your gifts with reverence and care. Sustain us with your bounty and guide us in justice, as we walk gently upon your earth; through Christ, the Bread of Life. Amen
Monday	21	International Day of Peace 2026 Theme: “Invest in Peace - For Everyone, Everywhere, Every Day” With a world torn apart by war, conflict, violence, xenophobia and hatred, the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples is a united prayer across all borders. Established by the United Nations, the annual International Day of Peace is marked globally by a call for a 24-hour global ceasefire and non-violence, encouraging individuals and organizations to promote compassion and global cooperation. Today, amidst staggering volatility, the search for peace feels overwhelming - but it has never been more urgent. Peace is more than the absence of war; it is the foundation necessary to collectively tackle humanity’s challenges. It is the lived experience of safety, dignity, opportunities and cooperation in our daily lives. Under the theme <i>Invest in Peace: For Everyone, Everywhere, Every Day</i>, this year’s International Day of Peace honours the 'everyday architects of peace' - people driving local action, laying the groundwork for stability, and building a lasting peace from the ground up. Peace isn’t just built in conference rooms - it is shaped by everyone, everywhere, every day. Everyone everywhere can do their part for peace. Take one small step for peace every day: • <i>Give your time:</i> Volunteer or help someone in need in your local community. • <i>Lend your voice:</i> Use your platform to share stories of hope and advocate for positive change. • <i>Practice Active Listening:</i> In conversations, focus completely on understanding the other person rather than just planning your reply. • <i>Release Judgment:</i> Make a conscious effort to stop gossiping or judging people, which helps reduce internal anxiety. • <i>Random Acts of Kindness:</i> Perform a small, selfless service for a coworker, family member, or neighbour without expecting anything in return. • <i>Spend Time in Nature:</i> Spend time in your garden enjoying the plants, watching the birds and busy insects. Visit local natural areas .



Tuesday

22

World Rhino Day

2026 Theme: **"Five Rhino Species Forever"**

The theme for World Rhino Day continues to champion. This core message highlights the urgent, ongoing need to protect all remaining rhino species - Black, White, Greater One-Horned, Sumatran, and Javan and to raise global awareness about the threats of poaching and habitat loss.



South Africa's rhino populations are experiencing cautious recovery. Poaching rates have dropped by 16%, but major conservation changes have shifted policy towards rewilding, private ownership integration, and controversial legalised trophy hunting and export.

The government has enacted the *National Biodiversity Plan for Black and White Rhinoceros (2025–2035)* to standardise conservation, security, and the integration of private rhino populations into national recovery efforts. This strategy sets a coordinated course for conservation, population expansion, and security.

South Africa is pushing to develop frameworks for a regulated domestic trade in rhino parts and derivatives by 2027, with the ultimate goal of reopening international trade. This move has sparked significant debate between private rhino ranchers (who argue regulated offtakes provide essential financial incentives to breed and protect rhinos) and animal welfare/conservation groups. Conservation charities are heavily contesting this, warning that legitimizing the trade could spike market demand and poaching rates.



There has also been significant strides in active rewilding. The pioneering meta-population initiatives, such as translocating rhinos to Mozambique's Zinave National Park, continue with immense success, helping to secure the species across safe southern African habitats.

Many sanctuaries and reserves are facilitating regenerative travel and volunteer veterinary safaris where guests participate directly in monitoring, horn trimming, and anti-poaching operations. These conservation initiatives also rely on advanced anti-poaching units, active wildlife management, and guest-inclusive experiences. Rhino darting, dehorning & chipping, air surveillance, canine units and continuous monitoring are also used by these reserves. All these initiatives are privately funded.



Veterinary technicians prepare a rhino for dehorning on an Eastern Cape Reserve

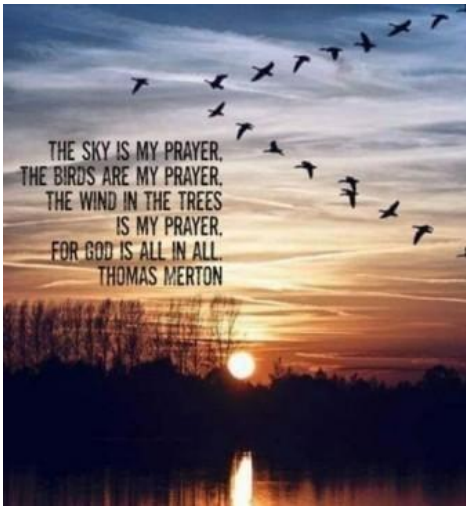
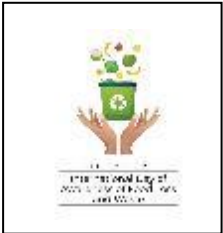
		Ways we can help in the fight for rhino protection: • Pray for all involved in rhino protection • Fund Anti-Poaching Units (APUs): You can directly support the rangers on the frontline who track poachers, operate thermal camera systems, and deploy detection dogs. Donate or raise funds through trusted local non-profits like Stop Rhino Poaching, Peace Parks Foundation, Timbavati Foundation or other ethical organisations, • Contribute to Dehorning: Research confirms that intentional, safe dehorning reduces the financial reward for poachers by roughly 78%. You can help reserves cover the high veterinary and chemical costs involved in this procedure. [• Support Local Communities: Poaching syndicates often exploit local, impoverished communities to track and guide them through parks. Supporting conservation-led community upliftment (such as building schools or creating jobs) diminishes the socio-economic vulnerabilities that poachers exploit. • Awareness Campaigns: Use your voice and social media to dispel the myth that rhino horn has medical value. Decreasing the end-user demand is the only permanent way to end the illegal trade. • Adopt a Rhino: You can symbolically adopt a rhino or a tracking dog through conservation charities like Helping Rhinos, with proceeds directly funding boots-on-the-ground protection.
Wednesday	23	International Peace Day Prayer May the oppressed people and those who oppress them, free each other May those who are handicapped, and those who think they are not, help each other May those who need someone to listen touch the hearts of those who are too busy May the homeless bring joy to those who open their doors reluctantly May the lonely heal those who think they are self-sufficient May the poor melt the hearts of the rich May seekers for truth give life to those who are satisfied that they have found it May the dying who do not wish to die be comforted by those who find it hard to live May the unloved be allowed to unlock the hearts of those who cannot love May prisoners find true freedom and liberate others from fear May those who sleep on the streets share their gentleness with those who cannot understand them May the hungry tear the veil from the eyes of those who do not hunger after justice May those who live without hope cleanse the hearts of their brothers and sisters who are afraid to live May the weak confound the strong and save them May violence be overcome by compassion May violence be absorbed by men and women of peace May violence succumb to those who are totally vulnerable That we may be healed Amen

Thursday	24	Heritage Day 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." South Africa's natural heritage is made up of World Heritage Sites as well as its spectacular mountains, wildlife including the 'Big Five', plants, birds and all the natural wonders of this country, on the southernmost point of Africa. South Africa is home to 12 official UNESCO World Heritage Sites. These are divided into <i>cultural, natural, and mixed</i> categories, spanning breathtaking biodiversity, ancient geological formations, and crucial milestones in human and political history The Natural Sites include: • <i>Barberton Makhonjwa Mountains</i> (Mpumalanga): Often called the "Genesis of Life," this area contains some of the oldest and best-preserved volcanic and sedimentary rocks on the planet. • <i>Cape Floristic Region Protected Areas</i> (Western Cape/Eastern Cape): A globally renowned biodiversity hotspot containing the smallest but richest of the world's six floral kingdoms. • <i>iSimangaliso Wetland Park</i> (KwaZulu-Natal): A diverse coastal ecosystem featuring Africa's largest estuary system, coastal dunes, swamp forests, and the continent's southernmost coral reefs. • <i>Maloti-Drakensberg Park</i> (KwaZulu-Natal/Lesotho): A transboundary site shared with Lesotho, known for its soaring basalt peaks and the largest, most concentrated series of San rock art in Africa. • <i>Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape</i> (Northern Cape): A dramatic, mountainous desert communally owned and managed by the local Nama people • <i>Vredefort Dome</i> (Free State/Northwest): The oldest (over 2 billion years) and largest visible meteorite impact crater on Earth. The Heritage sites need to be appreciated and respected, and we can do this by: • <i>Focus on low-impact travel</i>, supporting indigenous custodianship, and engaging directly with the unique, ancient ecosystems these sites protect. • <i>Opt for Guided, Community-Led Tourism</i> - Direct interaction with local communities and site custodians fosters a deeper cultural and environmental understanding. Local guides can interpret the area for you without damaging the fragile environment. <i>A UNESCO World Heritage Site is a landmark or area selected by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as having "Outstanding Universal Value". These sites are legally protected and represent unique cultural, historical, scientific, or natural heritage that belongs to all of humanity.</i>
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		• <i>Follow Strict "Leave No Trace" Principles</i> - Stick exclusively to designated trails in natural areas and don't disturb or feed wildlife. Avoid single-use plastics during your excursions and take your rubbish with you when you leave. "Leave only footprints" and take everything else with you! • <i>Respect "Sacred Natural Sites"</i> - Many UNESCO sites in South Africa contain profound spiritual, historical, and geological significance.
Friday	25	World Rivers Day (28 September) World Rivers Day is a global observance, to promote river conservation and highlight the environmental threats facing waterways worldwide. Rivers are an integral part of our planet's ecosystem. Without rivers, the existence of living kinds would be in peril. There are more than 150,000 rivers in the world. Rivers play a central role in sustaining and nurturing human life in the land, and the world of rivers is fascinating. It is easy to picture rivers as peaceful and meandering, but that is only one side of the coin! During a catastrophic flood, a river undergoes massive, violent physical and ecological transformations. Water velocities and volumes violently carve out new channels, uproot trees, and strip away riverbanks. This massive influx of eroded soil degrades water quality and smothers riverbeds and aquatic life downstream as the sediments settle. Fast-moving currents destroy aquatic habitats and dislodge livestock and wildlife. In some cases, flooded habitats allow invasive species to migrate past natural barriers. In 2026, we in South Africa have seen this catastrophic side of rivers – angry, powerful and destructive resulting in disaster! South African authorities have declared a natural disaster for the catastrophic flooding of rivers that have affected parts of the Western Cape, Northwest, Free State, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and Mpumalanga provinces. Recovery times for flood-damaged areas vary by location, ranging from weeks for initial clean-ups to up to five years for major infrastructure. Over 230,000 people were affected, nearly 23,000 homes were damaged, and 11 lives were lost in the recent floods. Over 230 transport routes, farming infrastructure, and numerous homes were heavily impacted by storms and heavy rainfall. The rebuilding of private and agricultural infrastructure will take extensive time and at heavy cost. The agricultural sector and transport infrastructure have suffered the most significant financial blows, exacerbating economic instability in affected provinces. Over 1,400 hectares of farmland were lost, and agricultural infrastructure critically disrupting the citrus export season and negatively affecting farmers and farm workers. The estimated cost of the flooding has already surpassed R13 billion. The extensive damage has triggered a massive, urgent need for relief and ongoing recovery efforts. If you are looking for ways to get involved, support trusted organisations that are leading the response. Will we see this again? Probably! Scientists warn that the recent devastating floods were likely intensified by the impacts of climate change, and intensified storms will happen more frequently.

		Devastation caused by floods in South Africa – 2026 Prayer for all affected!      
Saturday	26	World Environmental Health Day 2026 theme: <i>"Environmental Health: Standing with Science to Protect Communities"</i>. Established by the International Federation of Environmental Health (IFEH), this year's narrative focuses on the vital role of environmental health professionals as applied public health scientists who translate research into community protection. Standing with science in environmental health means grounding local policies in robust data to protect communities from interconnected human, animal, and environmental hazards. By translating research into action, communities can proactively mitigate risks like poor air quality, contaminated water, and climate-driven health emergencies. Environmental health protects communities by using scientific evidence to manage air, water, and food safety. In South Africa, policies are guided by frameworks like the National Environmental Health Strategy, which works to combat localized hazards, mitigate climate risks, and ensure sustainable development for all. The intersection of science and community protection in South Africa covers several critical areas • <i>Air Quality & Pollution:</i> Localized initiatives and global campaigns (like World Environmental Health Day) advocate for clean air policies to reduce exposure to pollutants. • <i>Climate Resilience:</i> Government efforts focus on early warning systems, restoring wetlands, and improving disaster preparedness to protect vulnerable communities. • <i>Food & Public Safety:</i> Environmental Health Professionals carry out compliance inspections in food premises, schools, and funeral homes to prevent disease outbreaks. • <i>Community Greening:</i> Non-profits like the Food & Trees for Africa (FTFA) partner with the state to support urban greening and food security in underserved areas. 

		Our role in this endeavour is to minimise our eco-footprint in every way we can by: • Disposing of waste correctly (recycling, composting etc where possible) to reduce the amount being sent to landfill. • Adopting sustainable lifestyles in practical ways to save water, reduce electricity, and cut down on single-use plastics. • Use brands that use sustainable, biodegradable, or ethically sourced packaging.
Sunday	27	God of mercy, You heard your people's cry in the wilderness and brought forth water from the rock. Quench our thirst with your justice and peace. Forgive our grumbling and teach us to trust your care, that we may protect the earth's precious resources. Let streams of compassion flow from our lives, as we honour your creation with wisdom and love, through Christ, the Living Water. Amen
Monday	28	World Tourism Day (27 September) Did you know that only 37% of the captive wildlife tourism facilities in South Africa demonstrate sound ethics and good practice? Simon Espley, AG CEO, has this to say: "Our safari experts are often asked to include some form of animal sanctuary or encounter in our hand-made itineraries for guests. Our default response is to direct our guests towards trusted facilities such as the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust. When guests insist on facilities that have shady reputations, we politely refuse to assist them in that regard. There are a handful of ethical facilities with demonstrable benefits for conserving wild animals or easing the plight of previously abused animals. But there are also a plethora of shady, opportunistic facilities that abuse animals for commercial gain – shrewdly shrouded in green-speak and comforting catchphrases for those whose desire to pet wild animals ranks above their moral fortitude. Here are some activities recognised by the South African Tourism Services Association and WildChoices as being ethically unacceptable and therefore should be boycotted. • if you can touch or play with the infants (lion or cheetah cub petting for example); • if you are allowed to touch any predators or cetaceans (dolphins, whales or porpoises); • if the facility has performing animals or if you can ride the animals (such as elephants); • if the facility breeds lions or tigers. Your choices make a difference." 

Tuesday	29	
Wednesday	30	International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste (29 Sept.) 2026 Theme: “Stop Food Waste! For the People and the Planet” The ongoing campaign urges individuals, businesses, and governments to adopt circular economy approaches to secure sustainable agrifood systems. Led by the UN, this observance highlights the urgent need to reduce surplus food, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and move closer to halving per capita food waste by 2030. Globally, around 13.2 percent of food produced is lost between harvest and retail, while an estimated 19 percent of total global food production is wasted in households, in the food service and in retail all together. These figures make us stop and exclaim how bad it is! But, here in South Africa, we are not doing any better, in fact, probably a lot worse!   South Africa wastes approximately 10.3 million metric tons annually, accounting for roughly a third of the country's total production. This widespread loss poses severe ethical, economic, and environmental concerns, particularly given the nation's struggle with widespread food insecurity. Food waste on landfills costs the South African economy an estimated R8.7 billion annually. As it decays, it generates significant greenhouse gas emissions, exacerbating climate change.] The vast majority (68%) of food loss happens early in the supply chain during production and post-harvest handling. Another 14% is lost during processing and packaging, while consumption accounts for 18%. Cereals contribute to about half of the total waste, followed by fruits and vegetables. Wasted food means wasted water, land, energy, and labour used to produce it. South Africa is committed to the UN's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12.3, aiming to halve per capita food waste by 2030 and although there are both

	government and private initiatives to deal with the problem, success is far from being achieved. While commercial action should be taking place, we , as individuals, can certainly do our bit to help solve the problem by taking action in our homes! • <i>Shop Smart:</i> Plan meals, make exact shopping lists, and avoid bulk-buying perishables you won't consume in time. Buy only what you need and freeze surplus fresh produce where possible. • <i>Store Food Correctly:</i> Maximize the shelf-life of produce by adjusting your fridge temperature and utilizing freezers and rotating your “stock”. • <i>Examine your own food choices and wastage:</i> Consider how best you can mitigate your food wastage. Take restaurant leftovers home. • <i>Compost:</i> Instead of discarding scraps, set up a home composting system to enrich your garden soil. • <i>Grow Greens:</i> Plant a small food/herb garden • <i>Support Local Initiatives:</i> Donate surplus, non-perishable goods to organisations that recover and redistribute food to vulnerable communities. <i>Examine your own food choices and wastage. Consider how best you can mitigate your food wastage. Put some strategies in place to ensure that you're not guilty of wasting precious food!</i>
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Imagine a machine that uses solar energy to remove carbon from the air and turns it into a beautiful, strong and sustainable building material.

Oh wait...that's what trees are.

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