

## **2020 LENT ACTIVITY**

In this year's environmental Lent activity, we will be looking at the 'Six Days Of Creation' and what, according to the account in Genesis 1, was created on each of those days. We will have an environmentally-based fact and prayer for the things created on each 'Day'. The idea is to look at one 'Day' in each week of Lent, taking time to read the fact and prayer and then to prayerfully reflect on what more we can do to reduce our impact on our planet.

### **Week 1: Let There be Light**

A single, non-low energy light left on for one year accounts for as much greenhouse gas as a petrol car driven from Derby to Newcastle.

*Eternal God, whose spirit moved over the face of the deep, bringing Faith, Light and Life, by that same spirit renew your creation and restore your image in your people.*

*Turn us from careless tenants to faithful stewards, that your threefold blessing of clean air, pure water and rich earth may be the inheritance of everything that has the breath of life. May one generation proclaim to another the wonder of your works.*

*Through Jesus Christ, your living Word, in whom the fullness of your glory is revealed, Amen*

*Rt Revd Libby Lane, Bishop of Derby*

What more can I do?

## **Week 2: Let the Waters be Separated**

The majority of all water pollution is caused by sewage and by rubbish which is thrown into watercourses or the sea, or discarded carelessly on land and then ending up there.

*Creator God, thank you for the waters of the earth, for the life-sustaining rains, lakes and oceans.*

*Keep us mindful of how precious these are, and how vulnerable they are also. Help us to work together for clean water, and for the sharing of it with those who have need of it today. Amen*

*Rt Revd Christine Hardman, Bishop of Newcastle*

What more can I do?

### **Week 3: Let the Land Produce Vegetation**

Forests help to mitigate climate change impacts by absorbing carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), the main greenhouse gas emitted by human activity. Rainforests are particularly good at this CO<sub>2</sub> absorption, but every year, an area the size of Scotland is cut down for things such as timber and beef cattle grazing. By reducing our use of materials such as tropical hardwoods and eating less meat, we can help to prevent this apparent 'need' for deforestation.

*God of creation, who loves all that he has made and that has evolved, open the eyes of your people that your love might be reflected in our care for the planet. Through Jesus Christ, who walked this earth and called us by name, Amen.*

*Rt Revd Nicholas Baines, Bishop of Leeds*

What more can I do?

## **Week 4: Let There be Lights in the Sky – Sun, Moon and Stars**

Light pollution not only affects our ability to see the stars; it affects wildlife, with animals being confused as to whether it's day or night. This can affect their ability to survive. And this is wasted light, illuminating the sky instead of the ground, thus increasing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions unnecessarily.

And many churches and cathedrals are illuminated at night, so contributing to light pollution.

*Be praised, my Lord,  
For all your creatures,  
And first for brother sun,  
Who makes the day bright and luminous.  
He is beautiful and radiant  
With great splendour  
He is the image of You, Most high.  
Be praised, my Lord,  
For sister moon and the stars.  
You placed them in the sky,  
So bright and twinkling.*

*(Part of the Canticle of St Francis of Assisi)*

What more can I do?

## **Week 5: Let the Waters Teem with Living Creatures and the Birds Fly**

Coral reefs are some of the most biodiverse habitats on Earth. And seeing birds in the garden and countryside is one of the easiest ways that we can appreciate the beauty of creation on our doorstep.

But large areas of coral reefs are dying due to pollution, and plastic waste in the seas is killing sea life in large numbers, including endangered sea turtles. Also, the number of UK farmland birds, such as skylarks, is less than half of what it was 50 years ago.

*Creator of our common home,  
You fill the earth and sea and sky with life  
Forgive us our neglect of your creation  
The choking waste of our pollution  
The damage done by careless habits  
And our indifference to future generations.  
Help us to amend our lives  
To refuse more plastic if we can't reuse it  
To lift our voice for lasting change  
And to live well and gently on the earth  
To the glory of your Son, the Living Word  
Through whom you made this fragile world.  
Amen.*

*Rt Revd Steven Croft, Bishop of Oxford*

What more can I do?

## **Week 6: Let the Land Produce Living Creatures and Let Us Make Humankind In Our Image.**

The Great Apes (Chimpanzees, Gorillas and Orang-Utans) are our closest relatives in the natural world – we share 99% of our DNA with them and we all evolved from a common ancestor relatively recently in Earth's history. Yet all species of Great Ape are classed as Endangered in the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List. This is mainly due to human activity, especially hunting and deforestation. We are pushing our cousins in the natural world close to extinction.

*Father, forgive us for our short-sightedness, our greed and for the part we have played, however unwittingly, in the destruction of your world. Forgive us that we have exploited the world's resources for ourselves while so many others lack the basic necessities. Create in us a new heart and a new determination, that we may adopt a lifestyle that is gentle to the earth and just to the poor.*

*[Geeenchristian.org.uk](http://Geeenchristian.org.uk)*

What more can I do?

Having prayed and reflected on humanity's affect on our planet, which has led us to the critical situation we are now in, please take some time to think about how you can make some changes to the way you live which will help to make a change for the better. You may only be able to take one small step by yourself, but if we all take one small step, then adding our steps together means we will have all travelled a significant distance!

*Let all of us with every creature sing,  
praise to our God!  
Above us in the air  
may we all be aware  
of birds and bees in flight,  
whether by day or night.  
Sing with one voice to celebrate the life  
of creatures all!*

*Let all of us with every creature sing,  
praise to our God!  
Across the tamed terrain  
farmed now for stock and grain;  
may woodland also thrive  
and wildlife too survive.  
Sing with one voice lest any be extinct,  
protect them all!*

*Let all of us with every creature sing,  
praise to our God!  
Over the oceans wide  
with rise and fall of tide  
may all the plankton bloom  
for fishes to consume.  
Sing with one voice to celebrate the life  
of creatures all!*

*Let all of us with every creature sing,  
praise to our God!  
There deep within the earth,  
in darkness comes new birth,  
beneath the tread of boots  
among the worms and roots.  
Sing with one voice lest any be extinct,  
protect them all!*

*Let all of us with every creature sing,  
praise to our God!  
May we now play our part,  
together taking heart;  
remembering all God gave,  
his creatures here to save.  
Sing with one voice to celebrate the life  
of creatures all!*

*Words: Lisle Ryder, from [greenchristian.org](http://greenchristian.org).*