SEASON OF CREATION

CELEBRATION GUIDE 2026

LIVING WATER

Immersion in Living Water

Ezekiel 47:9, 12



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Released by the Ecumenical Season of Creation Steering Committee.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome!

Welcome to this year's Season of Creation. Thank you for bringing your community together for this special season of ecumenical solidarity.

Each year from **September 1 to October 4**, the Christian family unites for this worldwide celebration of prayer and action to protect our common home. It is a special season where we celebrate God as Creator, and acknowledge Creation as the divine continuing act that summons us as collaborators to love and care for the gift of all that is created. As followers of Christ from around the globe, we share a common call to care for Creation. We are co-creatures and part of all that God has made. Our well-being is interwoven with the well-being of the Earth.

We rejoice in this opportunity to safeguard our common home and all beings who share it with us. This year, the theme for the Season is **"Living Water."**

This guide will help you learn about and plan for this season. It includes ideas for prayer, including an ecumenical prayer service (page 19) and ways to incorporate and reflect on this year's theme and symbol.

More resources, including webinars and prayer services, sample promotional materials, and the official Season of Creation social media channels, are available online. Please visit SeasonOfCreation.org to access all the materials.

We look forward to praying, celebrating, and advocating together in hope and action with Creation this Season!

In Christ,

Season of Creation Ecumenical Steering Committee Members


ANGLICAN
COMMUNION
IN OVER 165 COUNTRIES


DICASTERY FOR PROMOTING
INTEGRAL
HUMAN
DEVELOPMENT


A ROCHA
INTERNATIONAL


actalliance


christian
aid


Don Bosco
GREEN
ALLIANCE


european christian environmental network


Lausanne/WEA
Creation Care Network


LAUDATO SI'
MOVEMENT
Catholics for Our Common Home


THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION


World Communion
of Reformed Churches


oikoumene
World Council
of Churches


مجلس كنائس الشرق الأوسط
The Middle East Council of Churches


WORLD METHODIST
COUNCIL

ECUMENICAL FAITH LEADERS INVITATION

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The Season of Creation is the annual Christian celebration to pray and respond together to the cry of Creation: the ecumenical family around the world unites to contemplate and care for our common home, the *Oikos* of God.

The Season's "Celebration" begins on September 1, the day that several Christian denominations celebrate as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, and others celebrate as the Feast of Creation. It ends on October 4, the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, who is beloved by many Christian denominations.

This year, we will unite around the theme "Living Water", with the symbol "Immersion in Living Water", inspired by Ezekiel 47: 9 and 12.

Ecumenical faith leaders from across the world have prepared a special invitation for you and your community to take part in this season which you can watch here.

As a powerful statement to the importance of this ecumenical season of prayer and action for Creation, here are words from faith leaders of our Christian family, summoning us to this special season:



"Season of Creation [is] an ecumenical initiative to be celebrated from 1 September to 4 October (...). Environmental justice – implicitly proclaimed by the prophets – can no longer be regarded as an abstract concept or a distant goal. It is an urgent need that involves much more than simply protecting the environment. For it is a matter of justice – social, economic and human. For believers it is also a duty born of faith, since the universe reflects the face of Jesus Christ, in whom all things were created and redeemed." *(Taken from his Message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation 2025)*

His Holiness Pope Leo XIV,
Bishop of Rome, Roman Catholic Church
Photo credits: Vatican Media



“We cannot and should not hope to address climate change without working closely with one another. As we have repeatedly stated, ‘we are all in the same boat.’ Creation care is a collective mandate and responsibility.”

His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew,
Holy Orthodox Church
Photo credits: Nicholas Papachristou



“In the Season of Creation, we turn again to Christ, through whom all things were made and in whom all things hold together. In his incarnation, death, and resurrection, God’s love is revealed not only for humanity but for the whole created order. To care for creation is therefore an essential expression of Christian discipleship and an integral mark of the Church’s mission: to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and to sustain and renew the life of the earth. As we follow Christ, we are called to share in his reconciling work, seeking justice, healing, and hope for the earth and for all who dwell within it.”

The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Dame Sarah Mullally,
Archbishop of Canterbury
Photo credits: Lambeth Palace Comms team



“Let's clean up every river and finally the seas. Let's campaign to uncover every stream and river in our cities. Let's integrate the rivers back into the urban space and plant trees beside them. Let's enjoy the peace, healing and tranquility they will bring. God made them all to be living waters.”

Rev. Dr. Reynaldo Ferreira Leão Neto (Léo),
General Secretary of the World Methodist Council



“Ezekiel's vision of 'Living Water' invites us to see God's life-giving grace and sacramental presence flowing into places of desolation, renewing both creation and human community. In a world facing a severe ecological crisis, this river becomes a call to repent from systems that exploit land, water, and vulnerable peoples. Creation is not a commodity but a communion of interdependent life entrusted to our care. The witness of women theologians and faith actors on the frontlines of ecological crisis deepens this vision by naming how environmental destruction is intertwined with harm that falls hardest on women and girls. We recognize the unjust burdens many still carry in their daily struggle for water, health and survival. At the same time, we honour women’s wisdom, agency, and resilience in protecting water and life. The Lutheran World Federation affirms that justice for creation cannot be separated from justice for people, especially those most impacted by climate change.
The Season of Creation invites us to let God's living water reshape our communities into spaces of healing, equity, and hope, both tangible and eternal.”

Rev. Dr. Anne Burghardt,
General Secretary of The Lutheran World Federation
Photo credits: Albin Hillert



“We must shift away from fossil fuels and move towards renewable energy in a fair and organised way. Our faith calls us to support vulnerable communities who are most affected by the climate crisis.”

Rudelmar Bueno de Faria,
ACT Alliance General Secretary
Photo credits: ACT Alliance



“Ezekiel’s vision of Living Water, chosen as the Season of Creation theme this year, is not one of despair but of hope for all creation. Even the Dead Sea — a symbol of a devastated ecosystem such as we see today – is healed by the Living Water. This prophetic hope resonates deeply with a key goal of the Ecumenical Decade of Climate Justice Action which has a thematic focus on climate and biodiversity in 2026: to inspire ecological metanoia and faith-rooted actions for ecological restoration as part of our common Pilgrimage of Justice, Reconciliation, and Unity.”

Rev. Prof. Jerry Pillay,
World Council of Churches General Secretary
Photo credits: Albin Hillert



“The Good Friday hymn proclaims, "Today He who hung the earth upon the waters was hung upon the cross," alluding to the primacy of water over all other elements of nature during creation. Furthermore, the incarnate Lord declared, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." He was baptized in the Jordan River, an act we consider foundational to the doctrine of salvation. Modern science doesn't adequately address water, its importance, and its critical role in life. Consequently, we find people treating water with alarming and boundless negligence. Water, the essential element of life, must be preserved, protected, and used wisely, as global warming could render it scarce. Water-related topics must be integrated into school curricula and public awareness campaigns to cultivate citizens who are concerned about the future of humanity through their concern for water.”

Prof. Michel Abs,
Middle East Council of Churches General Secretary
Photo credits: MECC



"The Season of Creation offers a vital invitation to the global Church to rightly apprehend, and faithfully respond to, God's lovingly and intricately fashioned gift of creation—upon which all creatures, including humanity, depend for life. As Evangelicals, we affirm that "the earth is the Lord's," entrusted to our care, and that faithful discipleship includes receiving and enjoying the fruit of creation without diminishing its fruitfulness—relating to creation with wisdom, humility, and other Christian virtues. The Season of Creation, therefore, offers an opportunity to participate personally in the full reality of the Gospel and to become agents of God's renewing work—embracing both personal salvation and the restoration of all creation under the lordship of Christ."

Rev. Botrus Mansour,
World Evangelical Alliance General Secretary
Photo credits: WEA



"In the prophetic vision of Ezekiel, where living water flows from the sanctuary to renew the earth, we encounter God's enduring promise of healing, justice, and the restoration of all creation. This vision speaks powerfully into our present reality marked by ecological devastation, extractive economies, and the deepening suffering of vulnerable communities, particularly in the Global South. Yet, even in contexts where death-dealing systems seem to prevail, the river of God's life continues to flow, bringing renewal to the land, restoring dignity to peoples, and awakening hope for a transformed future. This is a missional calling to all to participate in God's work of nurturing life-flourishing communities grounded in justice, shared abundance, and ecological integrity. In this Season of Creation, the church is called to join the life-giving movement of God to resist all forces that deny life, to protect the sacred gift of creation, and to nurture a just and sustainable future where all may live in dignity and fullness."

Rev. Dr Jooseop Keum,
Council of World Mission (Reformed Church)
General Secretary
Photo credits: Dileep Kumar Kandula

SEASON OF CREATION 2026
THEME AND SYMBOL



Living Water
Season of Creation 2026

IMMERSION IN LIVING WATER

Ezekiel 47:9, 12

1. Text, Theme and Symbol

"Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live. [...] Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing." (Ezek 47:9,12)

This year's **theme**, "Living Water", explores Ezekiel 47:9 and 12 as a powerful biblical vision of hope and ecological healing. Set amid exile and loss, the image of living water flowing from God's sanctuary reveals divine healing that renews land, water, biodiversity, and human responsibility towards the whole creation.

The **symbol** depicts water flowing from the Temple of God - at first a tiny stream that grows deeper, and deeper and as it does so, it brings life to dead areas and restores fertility to damaged or barren ecosystems. Through living water comes healing; but in order to receive new life, we too must step into the water and also become part of God's river of life, taking part in the healing of creation.

2. Historical Context of Ezekiel 47:9,12

The context of this text is one of political, social, theological and national catastrophe. Jerusalem has been destroyed by the armies of Babylon. The Temple of Solomon has been razed to the ground. Many of the people of Israel have been taken into exile in Babylon, carried far from their homeland. By the rivers of Babylon, they weep and lament (cf. Ps 137).

The Book of Ezekiel is set during the Babylonian exile (Ezekiel 1:1), after the fall of Jerusalem at the beginning of the sixth century BCE. Ezekiel, a priest, is among those exiled and is commissioned by God as a prophet (Ezek 3; 33:1-9).

His message initially centres on God's judgment against Israel's idolatry and injustice, interpreting the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple as divine judgment carried out through the Babylonian armies (Ezek 7-10; 21). Yet Ezekiel's message does not end in judgment: God has not abandoned his people. Ezekiel proclaims that God's sovereignty is not confined to the Temple, God remains present with the exiles, and restoration is promised. Significantly, the Temple is at the center of Ezekiel's vision of renewal (Ezek 40-47). Although it had been profaned and destroyed, it is now transformed into a symbol of blessing, healing, and God's presence through the whole of creation. The wondrous river described in Ezekiel 47 embodies this future renewal: when the Lord dwells again among his people, the land itself will be restored.

3.Theological Overview: Ezekiel 47:1-12

Ezekiel has been describing the building of a new temple in the desert from chapter 40 through chapter 46. This new temple is impressive but empty and lifeless. It is only in chapter 47 that life finally appears.

In this passage, the prophet is brought in a vision to the entrance of a future, idealized temple. From beneath its threshold flows water that begins as a trickle and becomes an ever-deepening river - too deep to cross. This river courses through lands once barren, transforming deserts into fertile deltas, restoring fish, vegetation, and even healing the salt-laden waters of the Dead Sea. The Hebrew verb šûb ("to return") may be imagined spatially as a turning point, comparable to a place along the Jordan River where fish could turn back before being carried into the lifeless waters of the Dead Sea. This notion also has a deep theological meaning of conversion. The imagery is vibrant and dynamic, and yet its ecological significance often gets overshadowed by purely metaphorical readings.

In many Christian traditions, Ezekiel 47 has been read primarily as a future eschatological promise — a depiction of the messianic age when God dwells fully with his people and renews all things. The prophet's vision, however, also speaks of healing now, as well as anticipating a broader cosmic restoration. The River of Life represents a renewal that extends beyond human salvation to include the healing of creation itself. The trees whose leaves are "for healing" suggest not only physical sustenance but holistic flourishing, encompassing both humanity and creation. Ezekiel 47:1–12 thus conveys a distinct environmental message: one of global healing, renewal and transformation of life. It highlights the interdependence between humanity and the natural world, and offers a vision of hope expressed through active care for the earth, our common home.

3.1 Living Water: Water as Life

Ezekiel's vision reframes water — the most basic element of life — as a divine agent of renewal, justice, and hope, a life-giving force flowing from God's sanctuary. In Ezekiel's time, water was a symbol of divine presence and blessing. Great civilizations depended on mighty rivers such as the Nile, as well as the Euphrates and the Tigris which were two of the rivers that watered the Garden of Eden (cf. Gen 2:10). The water of the oceans too is teeming with life!

The vision begins with a small trickle — droplets of water flowing from the place of prayer and sacrifice. From a tiny stream it grows to an unstoppable river — the first marvel. The river grows as it flows from the Temple, nourished by the worship and prayers of God's people.

But the second marvel is greater still. The river does not merely sustain life, it restores entire ecosystems. The prophet saw *"on the bank of the river a great many trees on one side and on the other.... This water flows towards the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, and when it enters the sea, the sea of stagnant waters, the water will become fresh."* (Ezek 47:7,8) While describing how the river flows into the "sea of stagnant waters" the prophet is referring to the Dead Sea, one of the most lifeless places in his region. So powerful is this river's water that the salt waters will become fresh and teem with life.

3.2 From Sacrifice in the Temple towards God's Water of Life

Ezekiel's vision decisively reconfigures the meaning of the Temple. In Israel's cultic tradition, the sanctuary was the place of sacrifice, where blood — the bearer of life — was shed for reconciliation. Blood signified both judgement and mercy, reminding the people that life was both costly and fragile.

In Ezekiel 47, however, the dominant image is no longer blood flowing toward the altar but water flowing outward from the Temple threshold. Holiness is expressed primarily through generative abundance. Divine presence does not consume life; it releases it.

This shift from blood to water is both theologically and ecologically significant. Blood belongs to the logic of survival within brokenness; water belongs to the logic of renewal and flourishing. Ezekiel does not reject sacrificial theology, but situates it within a wider horizon. Reconciliation with God results not only in restored worship but in renewed land, healed ecosystems, and abundant life. Ethical implications follow naturally: if God's presence manifests itself as life-giving water, authentic worship cannot be confined only within ritual observance. Faithfulness must be measured by its impact on all conditions that sustain life. Care for creation thus emerges as a direct consequence of a restored relationship with God.

Hope for renewal and healing starts in the place of prayer, worship, and sacrifice. The tiny drop of hope begins in our own lives, in our repentance and transformation.

4. An Ecological Reading of Ezekiel 47:9,12

Ezekiel's claim that fresh water will make salt water become fresh (Ezek 47:8–9) is deliberately shocking — it names something *ecologically impossible in order to proclaim something theologically decisive*. The prophet is not describing a natural process; he is announcing a divine reversal.

The Dead Sea symbolised death: no fish, no plants, no outflow — a place where life goes in and dies. Salt water represented sterility and judgment. By declaring that the fresh water *heals* the salt sea, Ezekiel echoes Genesis imagery, where God brings order and life out of chaotic waters.

This is a new creation. Ezekiel could have said the river *bypasses* the Dead Sea. Instead, it enters it. The point is theological: divine life flows *into* the most dead and hopeless of places. The Hebrew verb used (רָפָא *rapha*ʾ) means to *heal, restore, make whole*. Life is renewed not through human management but through divine action interacting with the created world. Salt water becomes fresh not by human management but by divine healing. God does not bypass the place of death — God enters it.

The trees which bear fruit every month represent a form of life that has moved beyond scarcity and seasons of lack. Like the freshening of the Dead Sea, this image is intentionally *non-ordinary* — it signals restored creation, not improved agriculture.

Fruit trees are naturally seasonal and vulnerable — to drought, pests, war, and famine. Ezekiel is saying: in God's restored order, life is unbelievably abundant. The trees bear fruit "because the water flows from the sanctuary." Their productivity does not depend on rainfall patterns or soil conditions, but on continuous divine presence.

The imagery deliberately recalls Eden, yet it exceeds it. Eden had trees "pleasant to the sight and good for food" (Gen 2:9), while these future trees have twelve harvests a year! This is not nostalgia; it is amplified restoration — Eden has been reopened.

John the Apostle later echoes Ezekiel, presenting the river and the Tree of Life as the final vision of cosmic, ecological, and even political healing (cf. Revelation 22:2).

Note:This paragraph, based on Ezekiel's vision of a river, is not meant to diminish the value of oceans and seas which are made of salt water and yet have also been created as living waters. Indeed, the oceans are home to much of the planet's biodiversity (cf. Gen 1:21). Moreover, the oceans contribute to climate regulation.

5. Water between Crisis and Hope

5.1 The current Water Crisis

Ezekiel's vision stands in sharp contrast to the reality of the water crisis we face. According to the United Nations UN News, 1.7 billion people lack basic hygiene services at home, and 2.1 billion people still lack access to safe drinking water - that is 1 in 4 people on the globe!

As climate change intensifies, and groundwater extraction increases, several countries are now reaching a so-called "point of water bankruptcy" (UNU), that is a condition marked by irreversible losses of natural water capital.

Although access to drinking water is a human right for all, the multifaceted water crisis disproportionately affects vulnerable communities, future generations, and non-human life that has no voice in political or economic systems. These are some of the many challenges:

- Water becomes unaffordable for the poor.
- Impact on health of water borne diseases.
- Impact of industrial discharge of chemicals and other pollutants into rivers.
- Increasing water consumption fueled by the datacentres and energy production required by our digital activities, including for use of artificial intelligence.
- Poor governance and corruption by companies and governments.
- Impact on food security of droughts, floods, storms and desertification.
- Salination of the soil due to sea level rise or overexploitation of aquifers.
- Violence over competition over scarce water supplies.

These many issues are leading to migration, pushing people into exile, with loss of homes and culture.

The impact on ecosystems and biodiversity is devastating: according to the World Wide Fund for Nature, we are facing catastrophic declines in aquatic wildlife, with freshwater populations dropping by a staggering 85 % and marine populations by 56 % in the last 50 years (WWF).

From a theological perspective, this crisis reflects broken relationships — between humankind and God, within the human family itself, and between human beings and other living beings. Furthermore, it is of paramount importance to stress that water pollution has implications related to social justice and equity.

5.2 Hope from Faith and Action

Ezekiel's vision is ultimately one of hope. As co-workers with the Creator, Christians' relationship with non-human creation should be grounded in the biblical vision of creation as an interconnected community of life (cf. Gen 9:8–17; Hos 2:18; Ps 24:1). This relationship is one of sacred partnership and mutual custodianship rather than domination. Pope Francis describes it as "a relationship of mutual responsibility between human beings and nature" rejecting excessive or tyrannical anthropocentrism (Laudato si' 67, 68, 116).

Christians are called to confront the aforementioned injustices and to reject a worldview that treats water as a disposable resource. For instance, in the last 20 years, the WCC Ecumenical Water Network (EWN) has promoted the preservation, responsible management and equitable distribution of water for all, based on the understanding that water is a gift from God, and access to drinking water as a fundamental human right.

On every continent, inspired by our faith, Christians are acting: rivers are being restored, water sources are being protected from pollution and extractive industries - and arid lands are becoming green again. Wells are being dug and water provided for parishes, villages, and health care centres.

6. Immersion in Living Water : Repentance and Healing

Scripture repeatedly associates water with divine healing and renewal: Naaman dipping himself in the Jordan River (cf. 2 Kings 5), and the healing of the person with disabilities waiting by the pool (cf. John 5). Ezekiel himself is immersed progressively deeper into the river, echoing baptismal imagery and symbolising transformation.

Stepping into the river reminds us of baptism. In the early Church, large baptism fonts were often used for immersion, and they were entered by steps - reflecting the progressivity of Ezekiel's vision (Ezek 47:3-6).

Earlier in the book of Ezekiel, God promises cleansing, a new heart, and a new spirit precisely through water (Ezek 36:25–27). We are reminded of the water and blood that flowed for healing from Jesus' side (John 19:34). As believers, we are promised that if we receive and accept the water from the Temple - that is, God's healing - then "rivers of living water" will also flow from our hearts (or bellies, as the Greek says!) (John 7:38). As we are healed and renewed - living water will also flow from us for the healing of others and of creation.

Season of Creation 2026 Symbol



Our symbol for 2026 - Immersion in Living Water - is a symbol of renewal and birth: water flowing from the Temple as a sign of God's caring and healing for us. We are called to step into the water, until we are so deep that we must depend on God's grace to sustain us. Those who receive this water are invited to become sources of life for others, allowing God's love to flow through them into the world. And thus the water of God will become in us "a spring of water welling up to eternal life", as Jesus promised (John 4:14).

The Symbol invites Christians to a spiritual immersion - praying together while contemplating water from rivers, sources, fountains, baptismal fonts, lakes and sea, inspired by the Spirit of God, working together for the renewal of Creation.

This Symbol also urges us to dive into the "tears" of creation (Romans 8:22-23), by allowing our hearts to be touched by the suffering of our brothers and sisters. Indeed, the Season of Creation is also an appropriate time for fraternal closeness and solidarity with the vulnerable and the poor, chiefly those who suffer from environmental degradation. We can learn from their stories, from their resilience, from their commitment, and together keep hope alive.

You can access the symbol here.

7. Call to Action

Our Father calls us to accept His love (1 John 4:19). Welcoming that love as daughters and sons, through a continual conversion of mind and heart, is our lifelong calling. If we choose to step into the true living water, we can contribute to a more just and life-giving world for the entire human family as well as for non-human creation.

Food security: Ezekiel's prophecy speaks of trees that "bear fresh fruit every month" (Ezek 47:12). We are called to shape and influence our policies and practices so that all people have access to nourishing and safe food, so that the fruits of biodiversity are shared equitably. Churches can also promote greening projects which reflect Christian values on their own land, and/or equip their members with skills to grow some of their own food.

Water pollution: We are called both to refrain from and to denounce harmful pollution, while at the same time urging governments, local authorities, industry, and agriculture to act responsibly and protect water sources.

Water and sanitation: Many of our brothers and sisters still lack regular access to safe drinking water and sanitation. Therefore, we must act so that households, schools, healthcare facilities, and places of worship — including churches and parishes — have access to clean water and proper sanitation.

Environmental education: Parents, catechists, clergy, and faith communities are thus called to foster a holistic care for creation — human and non-human alike — drawing not only on technical knowledge, but also on relationships, ethics, and spiritual formation.

Drawing spiritual inspiration from Creation: Through contemplation of the natural world created by God (Job 7–12), we are invited to move from domination to humility, from exploitation to care, and from short-term profit to long-term flourishing. This transformation is both spiritual and practical, requiring a rethinking of values, economic systems, and educational priorities.

Tree growing: Many churches now link tree planting to key moments of faith such as baptism, confirmation, and funerals. Let tree growing become an integral part of our spiritual lives. Trees absorb carbon pollution, prevent erosion, reduce flooding, provide food and medicine, and cool urban environments — they truly bring healing to the nations.

Caring for our oceans — our “Blue Lung” — which face rising threats from waste discharge, overfishing, pollution, and deep-sea mining. Life and biodiversity beneath the waves must not be treated as out of sight and out of mind. May educators help our communities see and value these marine worlds. May government leaders act with courage to protect marine biomes and livelihoods. And may we choose guardianship that keeps the Blue Lung breathing for generations.

Ecosystem and biodiversity restoration and protection: We are called to restore land in our churches, homes, and communities. There are many initiatives which we can engage with : a Decade of Climate justice has been declared by both the World Council of Churches and the World Council of Reformed Churches ; there are online platforms such as Laudato si’ Action Platform, Anglican Communion Forest and national programmes such as Green Church - Eglise Verte or Eco Church - A Rocha International

Let us overcome our fear and step into the water of God’s love - to be part of the River of Transformation for the world, to see the literal healing and renewal of creation and the blessing of the Earth.

SEASON OF CREATION 2026
PRAYER

Living Water

Holy God, whose Spirit hovered over the waters at the beginning, we gather as part of your community of all creation, thirsty for your grace. We give thanks for the gift of water, the veins of our common home, that sustains the cedar and the whale, the pasture and the city. We are grateful for the local waters that nourish our homelands and our fellow creatures. We give thanks that in your well-watered garden, every drop is a sacred testament to your love.

Yet, we confess that we have treated this gift as a mere commodity. We have choked the seas with our waste and watched the warming tides rise in judgment. We lament the cracked earth of the drought-stricken and the salty tears of the climate refugee. Melt our frozen hearts, O God, and let the waters of repentance flow.

Lord of all Life, you promised that wherever the river flows, everything shall live. Stir in us a calling to care for the waters — to protect the watershed, defend the rights of water, and honor the dignity of the thirsty. May your Word be a spring within us, gushing forth for the healing of the nations.

May God our Father who brought water from the rock sustain us in the desert. May Christ our Lord who is Living Water refresh us for the work of restoration. And may the Holy Spirit carry us on currents of grace until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Amen.



Photo credit: Johanan Celine Valeriano

ECUMENICAL PRAYER SERVICE

Introduction

We encourage you to use this prayer service to mark the start of the Season of Creation. The Season starts on the 1st of September, which is celebrated by some Christian denominations as the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation and celebrated by some as the Feast of Creation. It ends on October 4th, the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi. You can also use it at events and services that you hold during the Season.

In planning your service, you may wish to invite participants to bring a small bottle of water (avoiding plastic!) from their homes. During the "Thanksgiving for Water", a small portion of each person's water may be poured into the font or into a large bowl prepared for the "Blessing of the Waters."

The water gathered in the bowl is then blessed. In some traditions, it can be used to sprinkle the congregation, recalling our baptism and our shared calling to care for the gift of water. After the service, participants may take home the remaining water in bottles (preferably made of glass or renewable materials) as a sign of renewal and a reminder of their commitment to protect and cherish water as a sacred gift of God. *(See the proposal of "Commissioning blessing with the Living Water" in the Celebration Guide under, Ideas for Celebrating the Season of Creation and Ways to Live out the Symbol)*

You can also consider a creative moment of lament when you bring visual images or examples of the tears of creation.

Portions of the service read by one person (or leader) are in regular font, congregational responses are in bold.

Scripture passages are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition (NRSVUE).

Welcome and opening word

We hold our prayer service today as part of the ecumenical Season of Creation, a season of prayer and action for our common home that takes place every year from September 1 to October 4. The theme for the Season of Creation this year is " Living Water," which is taken from Ezekiel 47:9 and 12.

Call to worship

Leader: In the beginning, the Spirit of God hovered over the waters. And God called them good.
All: Come Holy Spirit and cleanse the waters.

Leader: The prophet saw a river flowing from the Temple,
and wherever the river flowed, everything lived.
All: Come Holy Spirit and renew the face of the Earth.

Leader: Jesus cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me… Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water."
All: Come, Holy Spirit and heal your people.

Thanksgiving for the Waters

Almighty and ever living God, we thank you for your love in all creation, and especially for your gift of water to sustain and cleanse all life. Christ is the living water, cleansing, refreshing, and making all things new. So now we offer our thanks for the waters that bring beauty to all that we enjoy, the wild places, the bush, the mountains, coast and the sea. We give thanks and praise for all good lands, for the trees and pastures, for our plentiful crops, and for the living water that quenches them.

(Adapted from Anglican Aotearoa NZ Prayer Book)

We praise you for giving us life through water, and for all waters everywhere. We especially praise you for the waters who sustain us in this part of our common home.

Here local bodies of water may be named, as people from different churches or areas bring a bottle of water (avoiding plastic) from their context (river, ocean, lake) and pour it into the baptismal font or bowl.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning you created us in your image and placed us in a well-watered garden. In the desert, you promised pools of water for the parched, and you gave your people water from the rock. When we did not know the way, you sent the Good Shepherd to lead us to still waters. At the cross, you washed us from Jesus' wounded side, and on this day, you shower us again with the water of life.

You bathe us in your forgiveness, grace, and love. You satisfy all who thirst, and give us the life only you can give.

(Adapted from All Creation Sings,
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America)

But we lament that we have neglected this gift, and taken the waters for granted.

Lament

Lamenting is a passionate expression of sorrow or grief; a song, hymn or poem of mourning to express sorrow, mourning, or regret aloud; to regret strongly. Often sins are confessed in the plural, as a sign that, even if we personally have not committed each sin, our souls are bound up one with the other. The response in this service is, 'ashamnu', which means in Hebrew 'we have all been guilty'.

Leader:
We look upon your waters, O God, and we grieve:

Rivers run polluted.
Oceans choke with plastic.
Marine life disappears from warming seas.
Coral reefs fade and fisheries collapse.

All: Ashamnu *(we have all been guilty)*

Leader:
The seas rise and swallow coasts.
Storms grow stronger.
Floods destroy homes.
Drought cracks the Earth and children thirst.

All: Ashamnu *(we have all been guilty)*

Include other laments referring to the impacts on water from your own context.

Leader:
We confess that we have not guarded your waters.
We have consumed water without restraint.
We have polluted what you called good.
We have forgotten that the river of life flows from your throne.

All: Forgive us, O God.

During a hymn of lament a creative moment may take place (suggestions: - bring up photos or pictures drawn by children of polluted water - or a liturgical dance - a silent protest, etc.) A bowl to reflect the salty tears of creation and hurting humanity.

Absolution

God's mercy flows like living water. The love of God, incarnate in Jesus who spoke to troubled waters, forgives us and calms our hearts so that justice may flow to all the dry places in our lives. In the name of Christ, may this grace free us to follow and proclaim the good news of the healing of all creation.

All: Amen.

Responsive Psalm 65: 5-13

5 God our Savior, You answer us
with awesome and righteous deeds,
the hope of all the ends of the Earth
and of the farthest seas,

6 who formed the mountains by your power,
having armed yourself with strength,

7 who stilled the roaring of the seas,
the roaring of their waves,
and the turmoil of the nations.

8 The whole Earth is filled
with awe at your wonders;
where morning dawns, where evening fades,
you call forth songs of joy.

9 You care for the land and water it;
you enrich it abundantly.

The streams of God are filled with water
to provide the people with grain,
for so you have ordained it.

10 You drench its furrows and level its ridges;
you soften it with showers and bless its crops.

11 You crown the year with your bounty,
and your carts overflow with abundance.

12 The grasslands of the wilderness overflow;
the hills are clothed with gladness.

13 The meadows are covered with flocks
and the valleys are mantled with grain;
they shout for joy and sing.

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

Scripture Readings

First Reading: Ezekiel 47:9-12
(The Season of Creation Theme text)

Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live [...]

Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.

Leader: May the Word, as living water,
All: make everything live.

Second Reading: Revelation 22:1-7
(Or another of your choosing)

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever. And he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true, for the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place." "See, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

Leader: May the Word, as living water,
All: make everything live.

A creation themed song/hymn or Alleluia before the reading of the Gospel.

Third Reading – John 7:37-39
(Or another of your choosing)

On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.' " Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive, for as yet there was no Spirit because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Leader: May the Word, as living water,
All: make everything live.

Preaching or Participatory Reflection

(Focusing on the Ezekiel passage,
Season of Creation theme and symbol)

A creation-themed hymn can be included after the reflection.

An Affirmation of Faith
(Alternatively, the Nicene Creed can be used)

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, seen in the suffering one,
the poor one, the malnourished one,
the climate refugee - who loves and cares for this world
and suffers with it.
And we believe in Jesus Christ, the seed of life,
who came to reconcile and renew this world
and everything in it.

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.

(Lutheran Theological College, South India,adapted)

Offering Prayer

You might like to collect an offering of money, signs or intentions for a particular project or ministry that contributes to ecological restoration, or an aspect of climate justice that is meaningful for your context.

A Creation-themed hymn or song can be included during the collection of the offering.

God, whose Spirit moved over the deep: We thank you for the gift of water — the waters on the Earth, and under the Earth, the waters above us, and within us. Make us mindful of the care of all the planet's waters, that it may richly sustain life for us and for those who come after us. Accept the first fruits we offer here. Bless and multiply these gifts to our nurture and the care of your creation; for the sake of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ.

(All Creation Sings, Augsburg Fortress, 2026)

Intercessory Prayers

Reader: *God of living waters, today we pray for a wounded world where waters are exploited, polluted, and withheld.*

(Pause)

Reader: We pray for places where plastics, toxins, and oil spills blacken creeks and wetlands, for communities whose fishing waters are contaminated and whose children drink from polluted streams.

(Pause for petitions, naming local creeks, wetlands or contaminated places)

Heal what has been poisoned. Bring justice where profit has silenced truth.

All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Reader: We pray for all rivers dammed without the consent of the vulnerable; for farmers whose soil dries seasonal flood; for indigenous peoples whose sacred waters are engineered for distant cities and data centers; for the suffering of communities whose livelihoods are stolen by corporate greed, and whose health is sacrificed for global consumption.

(Pause for petitions naming local rivers, farmlands and affected peoples)

Free what has been unjustly controlled. Let rivers flow again with dignity and life.

All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Reader: We pray for oceans burdened by plastic and chemical waste; for coral reefs bleached by warming seas; for great whales navigating through labyrinths of nylon and ghost nets; for the microscopic life, the plankton and the krill, now mingling with the invisible dust of synthetic waste; for the rivers that carry our runoff — the fertilizers, the dyes, and the heavy metals.

(Pause for petitions naming nearest oceans and those around the globe)

Turn our guilt into grace and our apathy into action. Make us a people who live justly and bring healing to every shore and stream.

All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Reader: We pray for communities where rising seas claim communities and ancestral lands, where saltwater invades freshwater wells, where graves are washed away with memory and belonging; for those who have contributed least to climate change, yet suffer first and most.

(Pause for petitions)

Hold them in dignity and strengthen global resolve for justice.

All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Reader: We pray for informal settlements and rural villages where taps run dry or water is unsafe to drink; for children walking miles to collect water or women burdened by scarcity; for those whose sickness is caused by contaminated supply.

(Pause for petitions)

We pray for those whose lives are closely intertwined with water - coastal peoples, fisherfolk, marine biologists, water engineers - who can teach us wise ways to live with water. We pray for people to be moved to action and use their inherent or entrusted power to create change. Stir governments, corporations, and communities to protect and share water justly.

All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

(Methodist Church of Southern Africa)

Leader: Convert our hearts, O God.

Where we have treated water as a commodity, teach us to receive it as a sacred gift.

Where we have consumed without thought, teach us simplicity.

Where we have used water without reverence, teach us to protect it as a gift entrusted to every generation and honour water as a source of life for all.

Where we have been silent and tolerant of injustice make us courageous protectors of rivers, defenders of seas, and companions to those who suffer water injustice until justice and mercy flows like the river of life.

All: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Alternative or additional prayer

You who hold all of creation in your womb and spring us forward onto the Earth at birth. Spirit of Tides, remind us of the rise and fall of your rhythms so that I may discover them deep within my own being. Spirit of Greenness, bring moistness and vigour to my life so that I might savour the experience of your energy moving through me out into the world. Blessings of water be upon me.

May [we] be carried by the flow of the great river of life.
May [we] discover a hidden spring within, gushing forth.
May [we] be carried to the shores of the sacred and renewed.

(Trinity wall street Lenten reflections based on St Hildegarde of Bingen)

All: Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Leader: Let us pray together in the way Christ taught us, each in the language of our hearts…

Blessing of the Waters

The worship leaders and, if appropriate, the congregation, proceed to the font into which the waters have been poured. The blessing texts may be shared by the leaders present, according to local custom.

Holy Trinity, transcendent in essence, goodness and divinity, the Almighty who watches over all; Creator of all beings, the Light, that enlightens every being that comes into the world.

We glorify You, Master and Lover of creation. We glorify You, Creator and Fashioner of all. We glorify You, only-begotten Son of God.

On the day of your baptism in the Jordan, the grace of the Holy Spirit descended on the waters in the likeness of a dove.

The sun shines, and the world is lighted by the light of the Lord.
The moon shines with the world in its beams.
The shining stars adorn the universe with their radiance.
The clouds from heaven nourish the Earth with showers of justice.
The waters of the Jordan are changed to healing by the presence of the Lord.
The whole creation is watered by mystical streams.
By the light of the Wisdom of God, we have been illuminated.
The whole creation is lighted from on high.
The land and the sea share the joy of the world, and the world is filled with rejoicing.
You are Great, Lord, and wondrous are Your works.

All: Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.

By Your will you brought all things into being from nothingness. With Your love and goodness You sustain creation. You framed creation out of four elements and encircled the year with four seasons. The sun and the moon praise You. The stars intercede with You. The ocean currents flow before You. The water-springs serve You. You spread out the heavens like a curtain. You established the Earth upon the waters. With sand you walled in the sea.

All creation sings praises to You, who revealed Yourself in solidarity with the stuff of creation. For You, God, appeared upon Earth and dwelt among us.

(Make the sign of the Cross over the water 3 times)

Therefore, Creator who loves all creation, be present even now, by your Holy Spirit, and sanctify this water.
All: Amen.

Give it the grace of redemption, the blessing of Jordan. Make it a fountain of life. May it be to all who receive it a healing of souls and bodies, and a grace to protect the waters, to be Living Water for the healing of all creation.
All: Amen.

We praise You holy God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; both now and ever, unto ages of ages.
All: Amen.

(Adapted from The Service for the Great Sanctification of Water at the Theophany of the Lord, by Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem (Orthodox Liturgy))

We sing a song or hymn of water.

Using a branch from a local plant or aspergillum, the congregation may be sprinkled with water from the font, recalling our baptismal vocation to become water guardians.

Final Blessing and Sending

May the God who sprung water from a rock, quenching the thirst of those who wandered in fear, spare us from the drought of a senseless life. May the God who flows from the wells of salvation, and who is Living Water to the foreigner, the stranger, and the unknown, keep us in peace. May the God who rolls on like a river, changing the course of the world with streams of righteousness that guide the Church's vessel in this world, empower us to work for transformation. And may the blessing of our merciful God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, keep us and preserve us in eternal life.
All: Amen.

(Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil)

Go in peace, as people of God made Christ's own through the waters of baptism. In the power of the Holy Spirit. Alleluia! Alleluia!
All: Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

(Congregants can take the blessed water home to bless their homes, gardens etc. You may want to provide extra containers for the gathered)

IDEAS FOR CELEBRATING THE SEASON OF CREATION AND WAYS TO LIVE OUT THE SYMBOL

The Season of Creation is a time to renew our relationship with God and all Creation through celebration, conversion, and commitment. This annual ecumenical season invites Christians to pray and act together for our common home.

Planning early in the year helps prepare initiatives for the period from September 1 to October 4 and encourages wider participation from local groups and organizations. Events are not ends in themselves. The focus should be on meaningful encounters, ongoing processes, and deep listening. This approach strengthens our shared commitment to care for Creation and live out our calling as its caretakers.

As you plan, consider how your community can celebrate the Season of Creation as a time of renewal and mission:

• A space where Christians and people of goodwill engage in contemplation and care for Creation, reaching especially those celebrating for the first time;

• A space for action toward a more just and life-giving world for both the human family and the wider community of life, with faith leaders offering public witness;

• A space for solidarity and unity, renewing our communities in communion with the ecumenical family at local and global levels.

Special Moments to Celebrate the Season

Two deeply symbolic dates open and close the Season of Creation: the 1st of September and the 4th of October. We particularly encourage you to celebrate these ecumenically! There will also be two global events taking place online:

- September 1: Season of Creation Opening Prayer Service with global faith leaders (3.00 pm CEST). September 1 is the Day which several Christian denominations celebrate as a World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation and some celebrate as the Feast of Creation.
- October 4: Season of Creation Closing Event with youth voices from around the globe (3:00 pm CEST). October 4 is the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi, beloved by many Christian denominations.

Community screening: You might like to plan a community screening to experience these events together from anywhere in the world.

It would be wonderful if you could host multiple initiatives throughout the Season.The entire season is a good moment to host an event, so do not feel limited by September 1 or October 4!

Find below some ideas to consider.

Planning Meeting to introduce the Theme and Symbol

Here are some suggestions, and you can also visit Seasonofcreation.org

Start with an explanation of the text from Ezekiel, and present the symbol. Then facilitate an open dialogue or small-group discussion. Encourage participants to share their reflections on the theme and symbol, as well as their ideas for activities they would like to organize during the Season.

Activities

For this Season of Creation 2026, we suggest three main areas of activities to incorporate the Symbol in your events and celebrations, representing three steps in personal and community transformation:

1. **Contemplation**
2. **Immersion**
3. **Sending out**

CONTEMPLATION - Spiritual Reflection Receiving Living Water

"Immersion in Living Water" is a symbol of renewal and birth. The water flowing from the Temple is a sign of God's caring and healing for us. We are called to step into the water until we are so deep that we must depend on God's Spirit to sustain us.

Contemplation along a body of water

Organize a pilgrimage by a river, beach or lake praying together while contemplating how the water flows and all the life that is sustained by the water. Let us remember that God speaks to us both through Scripture and through nature - if we take time to listen! (Rom 1:20).

There are beautiful passages from the Psalms that can enrich your reflection - as well as powerful poems - here is an example.

«Mother, today I sat inside the river and let the water name me, not with words, but with erosion, the slowest kind of touch. A pebble isn't born smooth; it gets that way from staying. Once, I thought softness was a kind of failure. Now I know it is what remains after all the sharpness has been loved away. The current does not ask me to change; it asks me to stay and keep becoming.»

(From Tendrils; Ecopoetics of community and justice published by Spiral House, 2026)

We suggest this Taizé song "(Lord, You Are Living Source) (Only in Italian) for your spiritual reflections.

- Prayer service along a river *(see above the Celebration Guide Prayer service)*

IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES with the Vulnerable and Poor, the Human Face of the Climate Crisis

Here are some ways to live the symbol "Immersion in Living Water" through different levels of experience: listening to the stories of those impacted, as well as encountering witnesses of hope engaged with them. We can also honour the memories of martyrs. These "encounters" can help us experience Christ's love as a continuous flow and the renewal that is possible.

- **Immersive experiences with a community**

The 2026 symbol invites your community to engage deeply with those facing environmental and social challenges caused by the climate crisis. It encourages shared, immersive experiences with vulnerable and poor communities — the human face of this crisis. Like Francis of Assisi embracing the leper, encountering, "touching" their wounds can renew our hearts and reshape our story.

By truly seeing the suffering within each story, we move beyond indifference toward conversion and active responsibility, both personally and collectively. These encounters also reveal "facts of hope" — meeting witnesses who embody a possible future, where living water flows and the Spirit of God is at work.

We invite you to visit, for example:
- Organizations that support migrants who have suffered the impact of climate change;
- Rural areas to meet farmers affected by floods, desertification, and any other effects of the climate crisis;
- Communities affected by extreme weather (such as typhoons, drought, fires, floods);
- Indigenous communities defending their lands from extractivism.

The visits should be carried out with full respect for the communities involved With the support of organizations or social movements promoting these initiatives, you will be able to:
- Be prepared and introduced to the issues being addressed;
- Meet people and listen to their stories;
- Learn about the social issues and the projects or actions being implemented to address them;
- Understand the structural causes of climate change and environmental exploitation at the root of these situations, and reflect on your own contribution;

- Offer a symbolic gift to the communities you visit as a sign of closeness and gratitude for sharing their stories, so that they may feel the warmth of your presence and participation.

In case it is not feasible to organise an immersion experience, you can invite members of frontline communities, as well as migrants and refugees from countries affected by the climate crisis to visit your community. Organize a **"Conversation in the Spirit"** with faith leaders and young people, focusing on particular questions about the crisis and their personal stories.

- **Bowl of Water**

Include a bowl of water at your events. Inspired by the Scripture passage, you might consider placing objects or images around the bowl that reflect the life flowing from "living waters" such as fruit, images of animals, or symbols that reflect the gift of faith. The bowl can also be incorporated into a ritual, such as the powerful "**Bowl of Tears**" exercise, in which participants are invited to immerse their hands into the water while naming, in their hearts, the tears of the poor and the earth.

Optionally, you can invite different members of your community, as well as members of vulnerable communities affected by the climate crisis, to bring some water from their "homes/contexts" and pour it in the bowl.



First Ecumenical Prayer Service for Creation, Assisi Aug 31, 2018 (Photo credit: Maria Consuelo Alvarado)

You can place a strip of blue cloth under the bowl of tears to represent the river of hope.

(This moment could also be the final "mandate" of your celebration. Alternatively, you might consider including a living water handcrafted described below under "Crafts").

- **Commemorating witnesses of faith and justice with most vulnerable**

As you use the Season of Creation Celebration Guide, organize a prayer moment to honour those who have defended our common home and the most vulnerable. This could include remembering the ancestors of the faith and the martyrs.

- **Let your heart be touched by documentaries and stories**

If you can't make a community visit, there are very powerful movies that can be screened:

- "The Letter", tells the powerful story of Arouna Kande, a young man from Senegal, a country facing desertification and sea level raising.
- A Pacific Prayer for the Moana - Archbishop Emeritus Winston Halapua.
- Spoiled : a video about oil drilling in the ocean.

SENDING OUT : Blessing with the Living Water

We invite you to conclude your celebrations with a blessing from a faith leader. Using living water from the baptismal font or another symbolic place, participants can be commissioned to become sources of life in their own contexts of commitment.

We ask the Lord to pour out rivers of living water to heal the harm we have caused, to strengthen our love and service, and to inspire us to walk together toward a just and fraternal world.

Crafts

The Living Water flowing

People of all ages, in particular children, can be provided with art materials to create their own interpretation of "Immersion in Living Water", to be placed at the foot of the baptismal font. These interpretations can incorporate the font as the source of living water that restores our hearts and shows the places where life can be brought, through the grace of the Lord, starting from your neighborhood.



The River of Living Water growing during the Season of Creation

(Inspired by Carol Marples, artist and creative liturgist for the Soul Marks Trust: www.soulmarks.co.uk)

During the Sundays of the Season of Creation you might like to consider decorating the altar in this way:

Week One (The tears of creation): Craft - prepare a brown cloth and decorations of dead plants for the altar. During the service the 'bowl of tears' exercise is held - either people write on small pieces of paper environmental issues that break their hearts and place them in the bowl - or they put their hands into the bowl of water - the tears of creation.

Week Two (Small drops of hope): Craft - Small strips of blue cloth or paper are prepared - they are laid onto the brown cloth as a symbol of hope. Our hopes can be written on other strips like prayer ribbons and hung up.





Week three (Stepping into the water). The altar is now covered with a plain blue cloth: Craft - to prepare small bowls in blue - they can be made from papier mache. These should be all different sizes to show that each one of us can step into the water.



Week four (Sending out). Jugs of water are placed on the altar - clear or blue pottery. A long blue cloth covers the altar extending into the aisle - the preacher or readers could stand in the 'water' as they preach or read. Craft - Jugs or pots can be crafted from papier mache or dough.



Week five (Biodiversity). Saint Francis day, the blue cloth covers the altar and falls down onto the ground. Craft: Preparing fish and marine creatures that will be pinned to the blue altar cloth. Potplants can be placed next to the 'river'.

Bring the Living Water flowing in the Community Garden

If you identified or began a "Garden of Peace" during last Season of Creation, we invite you this year to connect it with the symbol of "Immersion in Living Water" by bringing the living water in the garden, for instance by installing a fountain or holding a special blessing with water. You might also place a wooden sign engraved with a verse from Ezekiel to commemorate the 2026 symbol.

Additional Ideas to celebrate the Season

- **Suggestions for the Liturgy**

Penitence: during the Penitential Act (Prayer of Confession), express lament for the environmental damages and repentance for our sins against God's Creation. Images or pictures can be shown; **Silence:** if outdoors, include moments of silence to listen to the "hymns of praise" of other creatures; **Offertory:** bring Creation into the celebration by including symbols from nature to be taken to the altar alongside bread and wine (e.g. branches, fruit); **Sermon:** encourage your priest or pastor to include references to the care for Creation in the homily; sermon notes in English based on the Revised Common Lectionary can be found here; **Prayers:** during the intercessory prayers (Prayers of the Faithful), refer to the care for Creation; **Nature sounds:** play sounds of nature (e.g. bird song) instead of singing as you come to receive communion; **Drama and dance:** the young people could prepare a drama or liturgical dance on the theme. Catholics can use the "Mass for the Care of Creation" which was approved by Pope Leo XIV.

- **Hold Some of Your Activities Outdoors**

Mountains, rivers, trees, and all creatures glorify the Lord simply by living as they were created to. Worshipping amidst nature allows us to join in this continuous praise.

- **Scripture and Prayer Walks**
  - Form a group to study ecologically-themed Scriptures or pray creation-centered prayers while walking in nature.
- **Outdoor Worship**
  - Consider holding a prayer service or outdoor Eucharist.
- **Via Creationis**
  - Pray the ecumenical *Via Creationis* ("Way of Creation"), a communal prayer that blends the mystery of Genesis with insights from science, echoing the form of the Via Crucis.

(See link 2023 Ecumenical Prayer Vigil with Faith Leaders in Saint Peter's Square)

- **Coordinate Local Education and Sustainability Activities**

Promote sustainable lifestyles and meaningful change through education, awareness, and practical action. Examples of action: clean-ups; tree planting for reforestation and biodiversity; recycling initiatives; community/parish gardens for sustainable food practices. Organize environmental marches or campaigns; run essay or drawing competitions for children and youth particularly; organize concerts or art performances; Bible studies; community walk-throughs with reflections on greening efforts.

- **Youth and Children's Activities**

Create drawings on Via Creationis (see above); plan "Ecumenical Friday Night Youth Gatherings" focused on Creation Care; organize an eco-camp with eco-education sessions.

Visit the **Season of Creation** website for spiritual and liturgical materials, including resources tailored to various denominations as well as youth and children's activities.

Liturgical Resources

You are encouraged to download:

- The official **Season of Creation logo**



- This year's **symbol**



Share your experience

Photos and Videos

Capture moments of your community in action to inspire others worldwide to pray and act for Creation.

📸 **Guidelines for Sharing:**

- Obtain consent before sharing photos of individuals.
- Avoid close-ups of children unless you have parental/guardian permission.
- Use the hashtag #SeasonOfCreation and your photos will appear on SeasonOfCreation.org

Social Media and Blogs

- Post images and stories during planning and celebrations, tagging them with #SeasonOfCreation to feature on the official website.
- Follow & interact with the official Season of Creation channels on Instagram, Facebook, and share your experiences. Don't forget to also subscribe to the Season of Creation YouTube channel.
- Write a blog post about your community's celebration and include #SeasonOfCreation to make it easily discoverable.

By sharing your experiences, you inspire others to care for our common home! 🌍✨

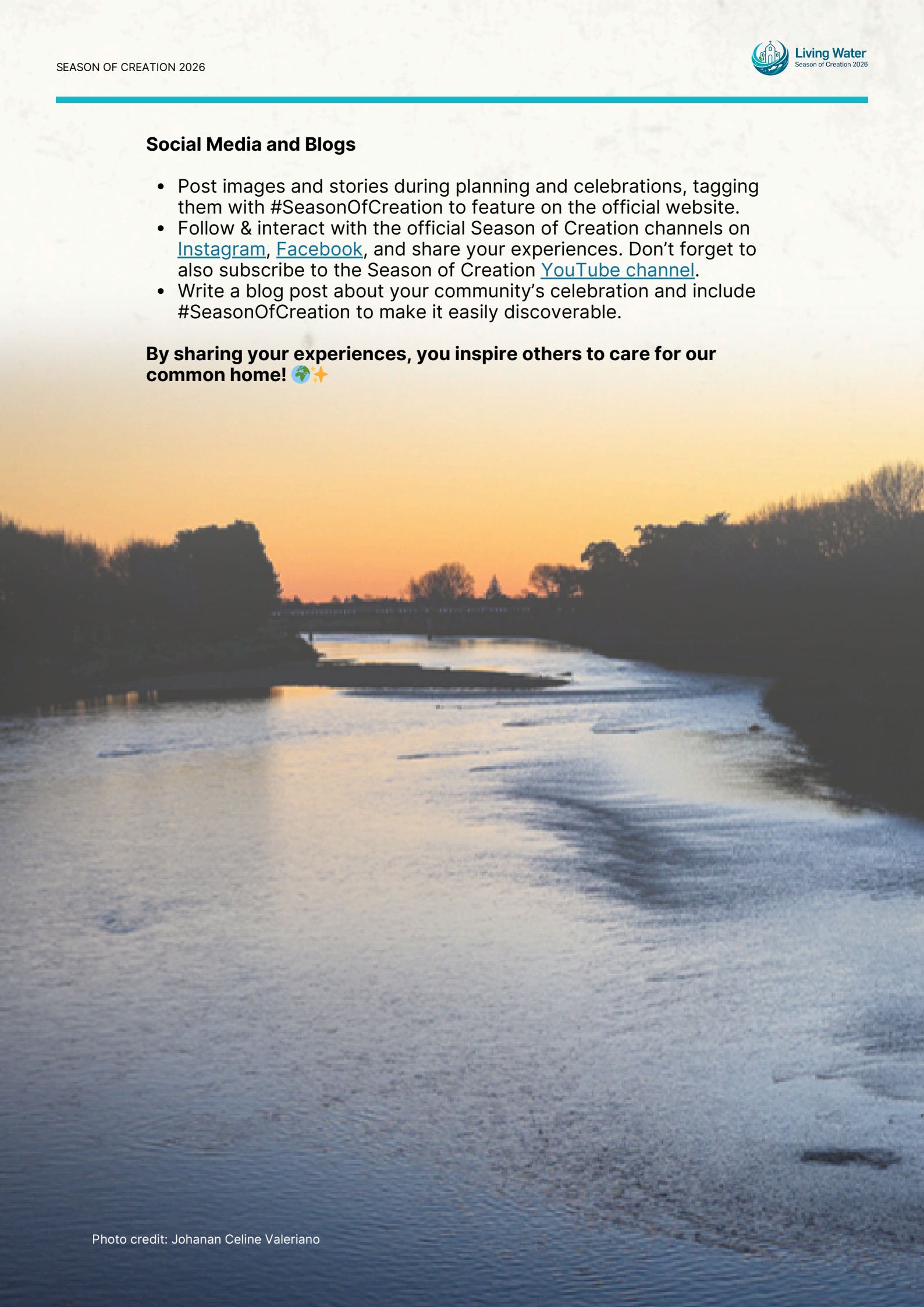


Photo credit: Johanan Celine Valeriano

ADVOCACY

“Water is Life”

Ezekiel’s vision describes waters flowing from God’s sanctuary, bringing life, healing, renewal, and abundance to all. Churches can reflect this message by advocating for the issues impacting our human and physical water cycles: caring for catchments, rivers, drinking water resources, wetlands and seas, and all life in them, loving our neighbours who depend on them, directly and indirectly. We are calling for Christians around the world to step into God's vision of fullness of life and abundance for all creation through living lives that glorify Him and reflect His heart for restoration and flourishing.

Here are some suggestions that you might like to consider:

1. **Local Community Advocacy**

Bring together Christians and other faith groups to discuss urgent local issues. You could invite different speakers such as water officials, scientists, NGOs, fishermen, farmers, women’s groups, youth activists. Invite theologians, Bible scholars, and members from your Church who have studied environmental issues in the light of the Gospel values. Issues to be discussed might include:

- Inadequate access to water, sanitation, and hygiene in rural villages, poor districts, and informal settlements, as well as in critical locations such as prisons, healthcare facilities, schools, and refugee camps.
- Protection of the aquatic ecosystem, i.e. wetlands, rivers, oceans, etc.
- Protection of water infrastructure for civilians during conflicts.
- Caring for, using wisely and replenishing underground water resources.
- Watershed management, through inclusive processes and integrated water resources management.
- Unaffordable water tariffs.
- Frequent water rationing.
- Pollution from industries, crude oil extraction, farms, or sewage systems.
- Unsustainable sand harvesting and riparian encroachment.

A simple petition or letter to a newspaper can be prepared addressing these issues.

Deliver the petition during the Season of Creation to:

- Member of Parliament / Government.
- The Water Departments.
- Local water service providers.
- Ward administrators or community environment committees.
- The business that is causing the pollution.

2. **Dialogue on National or Global Water Justice**

Organise a Water Justice Dialogue. This might be in the form of webinars or a Sunday of Reflection (sermon/prayers with a discussion forum after church).

Involve a mix of scientists, activists and Bible scholars on a topic such as:

- Inequality in water access for example: impact on gender, education, the elderly or people living with disabilities.
- Water and conflicts, water and peace.
- Causes and impacts of pollution, as well as possible solutions.
- Over-extraction from rivers and aquifers.
- Climate-related droughts and floods.

These meetings can result in statements or a joint action plan.

3. **Campaign to protect local Rivers, Wetlands, Oceans**

Advocate for:

- Lobbying to stop water pollution.

Organise:

- Church led eco-system restoration efforts.
- A community clean up - this could coincide with the Coastal Clean up on the 19th of September.

4. **Digital advocacy campaign #SeasonofCreation**

Use newspapers and local radio stations to:

- Highlight polluted or dying rivers, lakes or wetland areas.
- Share stories of communities affected by water scarcity.
- Celebrate positive steps by governments and communities.
- Publicly call for urgent action.

Offer faith perspectives that link Scripture, justice, and environmental stewardship:

- Weekly educational posts or podcasts.
- Short testimonies from farmers, women, and youth.
- Infographics on pollution impacts.
- Calls to sign petitions or attend town halls.
- Stories of local rivers and springs.

This will amplify the voices of faith communities beyond the walls of the church.

5. **Biblical Resources on Water Justice**

You could have a Bible study or sermon series on Water Justice, considering some of these resources:

- World Council of Churches Ecumenical Water network site
- The Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development released in 2020 the orientations on water Aqua fons vitae as well as a collection of tools, statements, and initiatives on water.
- A Rocha Resource Hub

ABOUT THE SEASON OF CREATION

The Season of Creation unites the global Christian family around one shared purpose. It also provides flexibility in celebrating prayer services and engaging in a variety of actions to care for Creation.

History

September 1 was proclaimed as a Day of Prayer for Creation for the Eastern Orthodox Church by Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I in 1989 since it symbolizes the day of God's creation of the world according to an ancient Byzantine liturgical tradition. It was embraced by the World Council of Churches in 2002 and the European Christian Environmental Network in 2006. Pope Francis established the **World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation** in the Roman Catholic Church in 2015. Several denominations are now celebrating the 1st of September as the Feast of Creation or the Feast of Creation in Christ.

In recent years, many Christian churches have begun celebrating the **"Season of Creation"** (also known as Creation Time) between September 1 and October 4. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines adopted the Season in 2003. In 2005 the Uniting Church's Commission for Mission in Melbourne, Australia prepared materials for the Season. In 2008, the World Council of Churches (WCC) officially invited its member Churches to observe the Season (known as Time for Creation). The Anglican Communion passed a resolution in 2012 to endorse the Season. In 2019 Pope Francis encouraged the faithful to celebrate the ecumenical Season of Creation. The world's 2.2 billion Christians are invited to pray and care for Creation during this time.

The Season of Creation ends on the 4th of October, the **Feast of Saint Francis.** Saint Francis is the author of the *Canticle of the Creatures*, and Pope John Paul II declared him, in 1979, the Catholic patron saint of those who cultivate ecology. A global ecumenical Steering Committee was established in 2016.

The Season of Creation Advisory and Steering Committees

The Steering Committee provides the resources to celebrate the season and it is comprised of the World Council of Churches, Lutheran World Federation, the Holy See's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, Laudato Si' Movement, Anglican Communion Environmental Network, the Lausanne World Evangelical Alliance Creation Care Network (LWCCN), the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the Middle East Council of Churches, the European Christian Environmental Network, ACT Alliance, A Rocha International, the World Methodist Council, Don Bosco Green Alliance and Christian Aid.

As an ecumenical network, we are inspired by the urgent call from Pope Francis' Laudato Si', "for a new dialogue on how we are shaping the future of our planet" and "we require a new and universal solidarity" where the most vulnerable are supported and to enable them to live in dignity. We invite you to join us in these efforts.

We are also extremely grateful for the work of the Season of Creation Advisory Committee who provide invaluable guidance.

Members of the Season of Creation Advisory Committee

Rev. Dr. Dave Bookless	A Rocha International
Rev. James Baghwan.	General Secretary, Pacific Council of Churches
Rev. David J.M.Coleman	EcoCongregation Scotland
Dr. Séverine Deneulin	Laudato Si' Research Institute, Campion Hall, University of Oxford
Tony Franklin Ross	Ecumenical Relations, World Methodist Council
Bishop Graham Usher	Church of England lead Bishop on the Environment
Rev. Prof. Dr. Harold D Hunter	Chair, Pentecostal World Fellowship Creation Care Task Force
Dr. Hefin Jones	Executive Committee, World Communion of Reformed Churches
Most Reverend Serafim Kykotis	Greek Orthodox Archbishopric of Zimbabwe and Angola
Br. Richard	Taizé Community
Fr. Luis Okulik	Secretary of the "Pastoral Social Work" Commission, Consilium Conferentiarum Episcoporum Europae
Rev. Dr. Peter Pavlovic	Study Secretary, Conference of European Churches
Rev. Dr. Chad Rimmer	Rector, Lutheran Southern Seminary
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Members of the Season of Creation Steering Committee

Rev. Prof. Antoine Al Ahmar	Middle East Council of Churches
Dr. Louk Andrianos	World Council of Churches
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Rev. Daimon Mkandawire	Council for World Mission (Reformed)
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Shawna Nemesia Rebello	Don Bosco Green Alliance
John Paul Roberts	Green Anglicans
Kuki Lalbiakhlui Rokhum	A Rocha International / Lausanne WEA Creation Care Network
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Contributors to the 2026 Celebration Guide

This Celebration Guide has been drafted and compiled by several members of the Steering Committee who are also grateful to the following people who contributed to its development, review, and editing.

- Rev. Dr. Chad Rimmer, Rector of Lutheran Southern Seminary for Liturgies.
- Carol Marples, artist and creative liturgist for the Soul Marks Trust.
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SEASON OF
CREATION