



# The Season of Creation

A Presbyterians for Earth Care webinar

Presented by the Rev. Dr. Susan Gilbert Zencka

# What is the Season of Creation?

- It is a liturgical season
- Usually 4-6 weeks long
- Usually in September
- Usually follows a 3-year cycle with its own lectionary
- But it can have local variations

# Why celebrate the Season of Creation?

Most of the liturgical year follows the life of Jesus

There is a day and season of Pentecost, celebrating the Holy Spirit

There is no season celebrating God as Creator

The Bible is a book full of nature images.

Creation is increasingly under threat





"A must-read if we're serious about enacting positive change from the ground up, in communities, and through human connections and human emotions."

—MARGARET ATWOOD ON TWITTER

# SAVING US

A CLIMATE SCIENTIST'S  
CASE FOR HOPE AND HEALING  
IN A DIVIDED WORLD

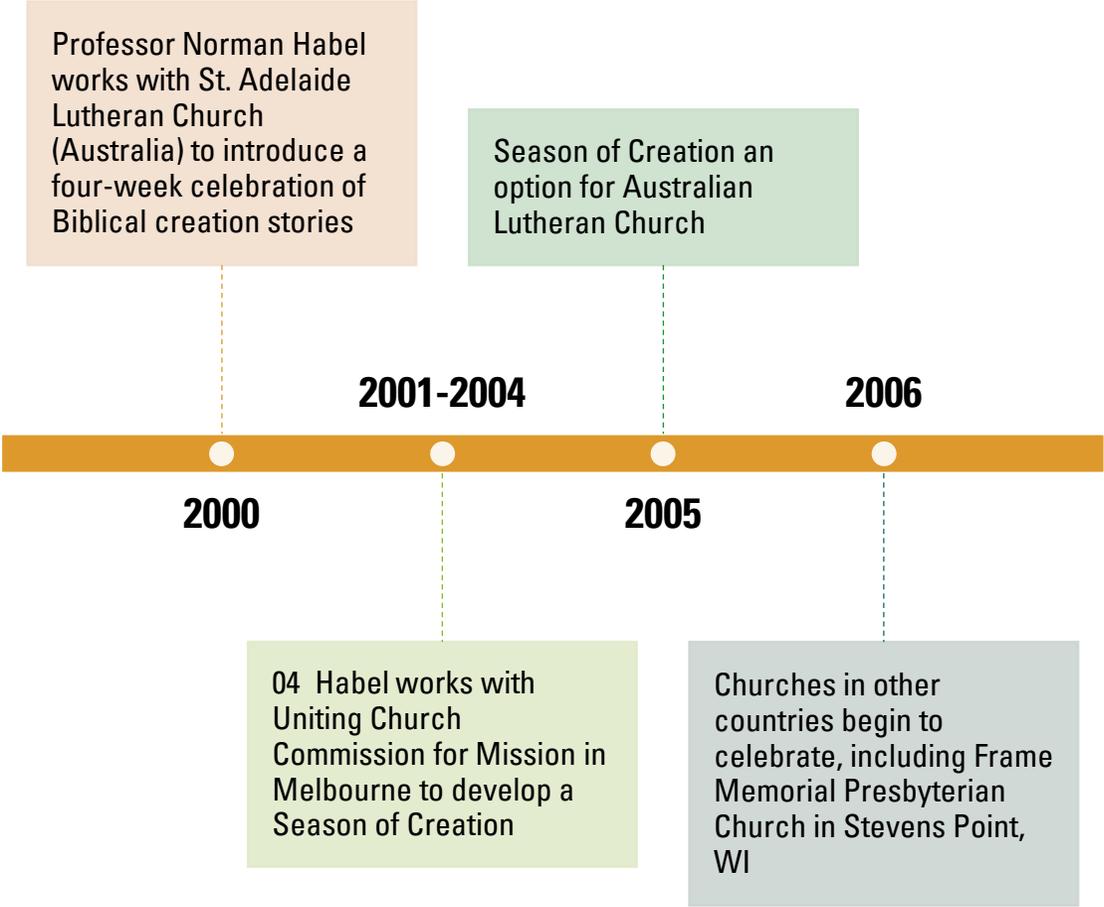
KATHARINE HAYHOE

**Facts don't  
change minds.**

"When you find out what people care about and connect climate impacts directly to the values people have, they can see that caring about climate change is already integral to who they are."

*Saving Us*, by Katherine Hayhoe, 2021,  
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# History of the Season of Creation





**First Sunday in Creation: Forest Sunday**

Genesis 2:4b-22; Psalm 139:13-16; Acts 17:22-28; John 3:1-16

**Second Sunday in Creation: Land Sunday**

Genesis 3:14-19, 4:8-16; Psalm 139:7-12; Romans 5:12-17;  
Matthew 12:38-40

**Third Sunday in Creation: Outback/Wilderness Sunday**

Joel 1:8-10, 17-20; Ps. 18:6-19; Romans 8:18-27; Matthew 3:13-  
4:2 or Mark 1:9-13

**Fourth Sunday in Creation: River Sunday**

Genesis 8:20-22, 9:12-17; Psalm 104:27-33; Revelation 22:1-5;  
Matthew 28:1-10

**Season of  
Creation  
lectionary  
Year A**

# Season of Creation lectionary Year B

## **First Sunday in Creation: Earth Sunday**

Genesis 1:1-25; Psalm 33:1-9; Romans 1:18-23;  
John 1:1-14

## **Second Sunday in Creation: Humanity Sunday**

Genesis 1:26-28; Psalm 8; Philippians 2:1-8;  
Mark 10:41-45

## **Third Sunday in Creation: Sky Sunday**

Jeremiah 4:23-28; Psalm 19:1-6; Philippians  
2:14-18; Mark 15:33-39

## **Fourth Sunday in Creation: Mountain Sunday**

Isaiah 65:17-25; Psalm 48:1-11; Romans 8:28-39;  
Mark 16:14-18

**First Sunday in Creation: Ocean Sunday**

Job 38:1-18; Psalm 104:1-9, 24-26; Ephesians 1:3-10; Luke 5:1-11

**Second Sunday in Creation: Fauna Sunday**

Job 39:1-8, 26-30; Psalm 104:14-23; 1 Corinthians 1:10-19; Luke 12:22-31

**Third Sunday in Creation: Storm Sunday**

Job 28:20-27; Psalm 29; 1 Corinthians 1:20-31; Luke 8:22-25

**Fourth Sunday in Creation: Cosmos Sunday**

Proverbs 8:22-31; Psalm 148; Colossians 1:15-20; John 6:41-51

**Season of  
Creation  
lectionary  
Year C**

# Frame Presbyterian extra themes

Trees (2006)

4 Compass Points (2006, 2011)

Grasses (2007)

Wetlands (2007)

Ecojustice (2007)

Lake (2008)

Sun & Moon (2008, 2011)

Symbiotic Relationships (2008)

Desert (2009)

Chaos (2009, 2012)

Flora – Prairie (2010)

Generations (2010, 2013)

Land (2011, 2017)

Water (2012)

Flora and Fauna (2016)

Indigenous Peoples (2019)

Mushrooms-Forest (2020)

Watershed-River (2020)

Series on wellness (2014) – personal wellness, social wellness, mental health



# Creation reveals God.

Heaven is declaring God's glory;  
the sky is proclaiming his handiwork.  
One day gushes the news to the next,  
and one night informs another what needs to be known.  
Of course, there's no speech, no words—  
their voices can't be heard—  
but their sound extends throughout the world;  
their words reach the ends of the earth.

Psalm 19:1-4 Common English Bible

# Creation is a holy text.

“Ever since the creation of the world, God’s invisible qualities—God’s eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, because they are understood through the things God has made. So humans are without excuse.” [Romans 1:20 CEB]

# Creation begets theology

“A couple of weeks ago, before I began work on this sermon, I contacted ... Eric Singaas, ... [then a] professor in the University’s Biology Department, is an expert on tree physiology. And he shared an insight that has proven very important to me. Eric said, ‘As far as I am concerned, the #1 cool thing about trees is that they are literally made from air. Invisible CO<sub>2</sub> enters the leaves, is made into sugars, and woven into cellulose (another type of sugar). Invisible “air” turns into something as massive as a white pine or redwood tree. They are useful for food and shelter for us as well as lots of other creatures.’

“This is amazing to me. And it is really helping me understand the importance of biology in understanding theology. Trees are made of air. Trees take in the air and God transforms them in this process – bringing into being what didn’t exist before: sugars, cellulose, leaves. God makes them out of something else into what they are supposed to be. And coolest of all – relationships are fundamental to creation, because as Rabbi Arthur Waskow wrote in our Call to Worship today: ‘we breathe out what the trees breathe in, we breathe in what the trees breathe out. Together we breathe each other into life.’ ...we begin to learn from trees that *transformation is integral to the way God’s world works*. And we begin to learn that the miraculous is part of the ordinary in God’s world. So perhaps God really can change human hearts.” [“Out of Thin Air” Tree Sunday Sermon, September 17, 2006]

# Tree Sunday, 2006

**CALL TO WORSHIP** by Rabbi Arthur Waskow (2006)

In the beginning, darkness covered the face of the deep.

Then the rushing-breath of life hovered over the waters.

**Let us breathe together.**

**Let us catch our breaths from the need to *make*, to *do*.**

Let us be conscious of the Breath of Life.

We breathe out what the trees breathe in.

**We breathe in what the trees breathe out.**

**Together we breathe each other into life.**

Blessed is the One within the many.

**Blessed are the Many who make one.**

# Wetlands Sunday, 2007

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Great God, Creator of all and Lover of the earth – we have failed to value the breadth of your creation. We have valued what and who seemed useful to us, and viewed as disposable other parts of your creation. We have assumed that what we could take, we should take. We have seen the earth as ours, never really believing that it, and we, are yours. We call you God, but we act as if we ourselves are the gods of our own little worlds. Forgive us, and help us to yearn for the largeness of your love, the openness of your world, the possibilities of your kingdom. Amen.

[Frame Memorial Presbyterian Church, September 30, 2007]

# Chaos Sunday, 2009

**CALL TO WORSHIP** [Each line, both parts, at the same time]

Leader: In the beginning

**People: God**

Leader: When God began creating

**Men: It was formless**

***Women: It was empty***

**Men: It was void**

***Women: It was dark***

**Men: Waste**

***Women: Wild***

**Men: Unsightly**

***Women: Confused***

Leader: In the beginning

**People: God**

Leader: When God began creating

**People: It was chaos.**

Leader: As we begin,

**All: God, begin in us.**



# Everyone experiences creation

This photo was taken by Frame member Joe Larson from the top of Mt. Fuji in Japan. The Season of Creation provides opportunities to connect with everyone's experiences—through word images in the sermon, through liturgy, and through visual images provided by others.



HE WAS KNOWN

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A blue banner hanging from the pulpit features a central image of Earth from space, a crescent moon, and a bright sun or planet in the lower right corner.

My Peace Be Still On Earth

HE W



THEM IN THE BREAKING OF BREAD +

# Resources for the Season of Creation

- Dr. David Rhoads, emeritus professor from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, has been one of the leaders in promoting and interpreting the Season of Creation in the United States. He has developed two websites, each full of resources for the Season of Creation.
- [webofcreation.org](http://webofcreation.org) has many resources for liturgy.
- website <http://www.letallcreationpraise.org> which is devoted to providing worship resources for the Season of Creation. This website also includes many hymns.
- Norman C. Habel, David Rhoads, H. Paul Santmire, co-editors, *The Season of Creation: A Preaching Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011). Biblical commentary for each Sunday of all three years in the Season of Creation.
- Carolyn Winfrey Gillette creation care hymns at [https://www.carolynshymns.com/topical\\_index.html](https://www.carolynshymns.com/topical_index.html)
- And the original [www.seasonofcreation.com](http://www.seasonofcreation.com) website has suggestions, commentary, and liturgies.