**CREATION SUNDAY SERVICE**

Suggested outline for an INTERGENERATIONAL service

Discussing this service with a friendly teenager (!) her view was that a Climate Sunday Service absolutely must be aimed at children and young people. Although older people are obviously concerned and can pray and act too, she felt that it is the under 20s who have most to fear about the state of the climate and the pollution of the earth. So this service is unapologetically written to include younger people and enable them to have a meaningful input.

I have provided a suggested OUTLINE – indicated in purple, with a bank of resources that can be used for different parts of the service. Churches could select from here, from the original “Liturgy for Creation Sunday” or from other sources to create an appropriate worship service for their setting.

**INTRODUCTION**

**Celebration/procession**? Art work? Flowers/plants? Etc

**Or** selection of images showing creation

**Or** live or pre-recorded clips of different ages describing their favourite part of creation

**GATHERING PRAYER**

(From “Jubilee for the Earth” Season of Creation – link below)

*We gather in the name of the Triune God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer of the Earth and all its creatures!*

*Praise be to the Holy Trinity! God is sound and life, Creator of the Universe, Source of all life, whom the angels sing; wondrous Light of all mysteries known or unknown to humankind, and life that lives in all.*

(Hildegard of Bingen 13th Century)

*We gather in the image of the Creator*

**Who is a community of love,**

*We gather in the name of the redeemer*

**Who reconciles all creation,**

*We gather in the presence of the Life Giver*

**Who inspires new life and renews it.**

**OPENING WORSHIP** – HYMN/SONG

**CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

Begin by using some images of pollution, global warming, deforestation, adverse weather etc possibly based on the images shown at the very beginning.

e.g. An extract from “Jubilee for the Earth” (perhaps 3 of the statements and responses)

OR from Common Worship **– Harvest Confession** (possibly shortened)

We confess our sin, and the sins of our society,

in the misuse of God’s creation.

God our Father, we are sorry

for the times when we have used your gifts carelessly,

and acted ungratefully.

Hear our prayer, and in your mercy:

All   **forgive us and help us.**

We enjoy the fruits of the harvest,

but sometimes forget that you have given them to us.

Father, in your mercy:

All   **forgive us and help us.**

We belong to a people who are full and satisfied,

but ignore the cry of the hungry.

Father, in your mercy:

All   **forgive us and help us.**

We are thoughtless,

and do not care enough for the world you have made.

Father, in your mercy:

All   **forgive us and help us.**

We store up goods for ourselves alone,

as if there were no God and no heaven.

Father, in your mercy:

All   **forgive us and help us.**

**ABSOLUTION**

**HYMN/SONG** – SING OR LISTEN TO?

**ALL AGE BIBLE READING AND MEDITATION/ACTIVITY** Psalm 104 – Can take place indoors or outdoors.

You will need:

* Copies of Psalm 104 divided up into sections as shown. If you are going to go outside it would be helpful for each section to be laminated or in a plastic wallet (sorry – but they can be reused!)
* Paper/pens OR Card/natural objects – you could bring extras from gardens etc if you are not sure that very much can be found.

There is no need to use every section of the psalm, or indeed the whole of the extract. You could just select one or two verses. Select a couple of sections according to the ages and groups you have. Each group should ideally have different age groups but ensure that children are always with an adult they know.

Each group has around 5/10mins to create a picture of the section of the psalm that they are given. It could be as simple as felt pens and A3 sized pieces of paper indoors, or as complex as outside using twigs, leaves, flowers etc on pieces of card.

When the creations are finished, arrange them somewhere where they can be seen – maybe the wall or even the floor. Each group selects someone to read their verses in the correct order while everyone looks at their artwork.

Perhaps use some gentle music as background

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A | **1**Praise the Lord, my soul.  O Lord my God, you are very great   you are clothed with splendour and majesty  when you open your hand,  they are satisfied with good things..  **2**The Lord wraps himself in light as with a garment;   he stretches out the heavens like a tent**3**  and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters. He makes the clouds his chariot  and rides on the wings of the wind. **4**He makes winds his messengers,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%20104&version=NIV#fen-NIV-15576a)]   flames of fire his servants. |
| B | **5**He set the earth on its foundations; it can never be moved. **6**You covered it with the watery depths as with a garment;   the waters stood above the mountains.  **7**But at your rebuke the waters fled,  at the sound of your thunder they took to flight;  **8**they flowed over the mountains,   they went down into the valleys,   to the place you assigned for them. **9**You set a boundary they cannot cross;  never again will they cover the earth  **24**How many are your works,  Lord In wisdom you made them all;  the earth is full of your creatures.  **25**There is the sea, vast and spacious,   teeming with creatures beyond number—  living things both large and small. **26**There the ships go to and fro,   and Leviathan, which you formed to frolic there.  **27**All creatures look to you  to give them their food at the proper time.  **28**When you give it to them, they gather it up; |
| C | **10**He makes springs pour water into the ravines;  it flows between the mountains. **11**They give water to all the beasts of the field;     the wild donkeys quench their thirst. **12**The birds of the sky nest by the waters;     they sing among the branches. **13**He waters the mountains from his upper chambers;     the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work. |
| D | **14**He makes grass grow for the cattle,     and plants for people to cultivate—     bringing forth food from the earth: **15**wine that gladdens human hearts,     oil to make their faces shine,     and bread that sustains their hearts. |
| E | **16**The trees of the Lord are well watered,     the cedars of Lebanon that he planted. **17**There the birds make their nests;     the stork has its home in the junipers. **18**The high mountains belong to the wild goats;     the crags are a refuge for the hyrax. |
| F | **19**He made the moon to mark the seasons,     and the sun knows when to go down. **20**You bring darkness, it becomes night,     and all the beasts of the forest prowl. **21**The lions roar for their prey     and seek their food from God. **22**The sun rises, and they steal away;     they return and lie down in their dens. |
| G | **23**Then people go out to their work,     to their labor until evening. |
| H | **29**When you hide your face,     they are terrified; when you take away their breath,     they die and return to the dust. **30**When you send your Spirit,     they are created,     and you renew the face of the ground |
| I | **31**May the glory of the Lord endure forever;     may the Lord rejoice in his works— **32**he who looks at the earth, and it trembles,     who touches the mountains, and they smoke |
| J | **33**I will sing to the Lord all my life;     I will sing praise to my God as long as I live. **34**May my meditation be pleasing to him,     as I rejoice in the Lord. **35**But may sinners vanish from the earth     and the wicked be no more.  Praise the Lord, my soul.  Praise the Lord. |

**TALK/SERMON** – This could continue from the previous activity. The preacher could walk along and drop bits of plastic, rubbish etc on the pictures (make sure these can easily be removed later to avoid tears!) Make the point about how we feel when our creation is destroyed and what God’s response is to his creation being destroyed.

Depending on the preacher – John 1:3, Romans 8:18-22 might be useful bible references. Some churches like to give children an activity during a sermon and that would work, but personally I like to give everyone the activity! Here I might give everyone (who would like one) a small piece of playdough/plasticine and set the challenge to make a model of any part of creation referred to in the talk – other activities are possible!

**HYMN/SONG**

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Different churches will have different patterns of prayer, such as:

Bidding and response will work and could be based on children or young people’s ideas

Displaying pictures from earlier and asking people to pray for the people and the world that are affected – either in groups or silently.

Some churches might have reasonably confident young people (or any age) who can ask everyone to pray about an issue that is on their heart. The prayers can be silent or led by one person.

Other models are plentiful!

**RESPONSE**

This will need to be informed by information from Climate organisations – Operation Noah <https://operationnoah.org/resource-types/video-and-audio/>could be one. There is a short video called “Salote” which explains how rising sea levels and climate change are affecting one child, her family and community.

Give time and space for all ages to decide on something they personally will aim to do from now to work for our Earth, the places and the creatures and the people who are under threat.

Use a natural product, such as these willow circles from Baker Ross to write down the promise/pledge (<https://www.bakerross.co.uk/arts-and-crafts/craft-supplies/natural-materials?p=1>)

CLOSING HYMN/SONG

BLESSING

e.g “Jubilee for the Earth” Season of Creation – link below)

May God who established the dance of creation,

Who marvelled at the lillies in the field,

Who transforms chaos to order,

Lead us to transform our lives and the church

To reflect God’s glory in creation

Resource Link:

Jubilee for the Earth <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ARDojjURVRIYzj8EHlx4tlo9eaDo-bfh/view>