

+WEEKLY SERMON

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Taking in the wonders of creation

I had a wonderful experience the other day, I went to see friends who live out in the countryside.

Yes it was good to see them, but that isn't what I want to tell you about. It was one of those lovely crisp autumn days, a cold night had given way to a beautifully sunny day and as we got out of the car the first thing that hit us was the birdsong.

We heard the beautiful, melodious warbling of the wren, the rapid trills and chirps of the finches sounding just like a lively conversation, the background coo of the wood pigeon and many other birds joining in. We stood on our friends' driveway, soaking in the warmth of the sun and enjoying the rich melody around us.

This time of year is known in the church as Creationtide. It is a time when we give thanks to God for the wonders of his creation, his bountiful provision for us, and also reflect on our use of these resources and how we can be faithful stewards of what God gives us to care for.

There are well documented reasons for the benefits of being out in the countryside, it can bring a feeling of peace and calm as we focus on the wonders of nature around us, and maybe give thanks to the creator God for all that he has given us.

The theme for the current season of creation in our churches this year is Peace with Creation. This is based on words from the book of the prophet Isaiah in the Bible. Isaiah pictures a desolated creation which is without peace because there is no justice and the relationship between God and the people has broken down.

It reminds us how our behaviour can sometimes have a negative impact on the earth, and have far reaching consequences. It isn't all bad news, there is hope in Isaiah's words as he looks to the time when that relationship is restored and creation will be at peace.

During this creation season when you next get the opportunity to find peace in the natural world, take a moment to say thank you to the creator God, not only for all that you see and hear around you, but for all that you have in your lives to be thankful for; as some people may say, count your blessings.

You might want to say this prayer ...

HEALTHY CHURCHES TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

Creator God,
Let there be peace on earth
One world
Living in harmony
Caring for one another
Delighting in the wonders around us
Tending your creation. Amen
(extract from *Peace With Creation* by Rt Rev Rosie Frew)

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