

DIOCESE AND CANBERRA AND GOULBURN
CREATION SUNDAY

HOLY COMMUNION, THIRD ORDER
(A Prayer Book for Australia, page 167)

Plants in the sanctuary and other places of the building can greatly enhance the beauty of a church and also connect us more closely with nature.

Bowls of small stones, pebbles, plants, flowers, fruit or vegetables, or other symbols of God's creation could be placed at the entrance to the church and people invited to take one as they enter. Bowls of water could also be placed in the church, reminding us of the connection of baptism, living water and the centrality of water to life.

The service begins with a hymn or song.

1. Priest: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.
People: **And also with you.**

Priest: The prophet Jeremiah says: "Stand at the crossroads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls." (*Jeremiah 6:16*).

2. The minister says:

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it. You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

We who have lost our respect for your creation; we who live frantic lives with no time for rest for body or spirit; we who hurt your creation and in doing so, injure ourselves; we call a halt.

We want to rest. We need to rest. And we need to allow the earth to rest. We need to reflect and to rediscover the mystery that lives in us, the source of every unique expression of life, the source of the fascination that calls all things to communion.

We declare a Sabbath, a space of quiet and a time of rest; for simply being and letting be; for recovering the great, forgotten truths; for learning how to live again.

**Come, Lord, Creator Spirit, and worship with us,
embrace us with your spirit of life.**

**We thank you for the power of creation,
for the gift of life and for the abundant natural resources with which you
have blessed us in Australia.**

**We celebrate the diversity of life on this planet,
the oceans and lands, the people and wildlife.**

**We pray that you will open our hearts and minds
to hear the voice of creation,
to listen to the earth
and to come to know our true place in relationship with her.**

And we ask for your guidance to make us wise stewards of your creation.

Amen.

3. Kyrie Eleison.

4. Collect.
Loving, generous God, who brings all life into being,
we gather today in the mystery of your creation. *(pause)*

We gather to reflect upon our relationship with the whole of creation – our
animal and plant neighbours and all parts of your creation. *(pause)*

We thank you for all that sustains and enriches our lives -
our friends, our families, our homes;
clean air, fresh water, abundant food, and the beauty of creation. *(pause)*

We thank you for the promise of hope and renewal that Jesus Christ gives to
all creation, and we join with all of creation in praising you, our God,
whose love and faithfulness stretches out to all generations, to all people,
to every creature and to all creation.

Amen.

5. Old Testament Reading – Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28 (or we could read 11-28).
This reading warns God’s people of the invasion of their land and the
destruction of Jerusalem by foreign armies. But God is not ordering the
invasion; it is the inevitable consequence of the people’s turning away from
God. “Your own ways and deeds have brought these things on you” says
verse 16. Tragically, the threat of invasion or terrorism is still with us. But
the reading also speaks of the destruction of the land – “All the birds of the
heaven had taken wing” (verse 25) and “the fertile land was wilderness”
verse 26). The desolation of God’s creation is also a consequence of our
turning away from God.

Psalm 14. The psalm reminds us of our duty to care for the poor and needy. Too often, we in the affluent countries consume far more of the world's resources than we need, while people in other lands do not have enough even to survive.

New Testament Reading – 1 Timothy 1. An exhortation to live a righteous life, in accordance with God's teachings. God showed grace and mercy to Paul when he acted in ignorance. Will those who deliberately turn away from God be shown such mercy?

6. Hymn.
7. Gospel – Luke 15:1-10. God's mercy for those who repent.
8. The sermon is preached here or after the creed.
9. Nicene Creed.
10. Sermon (if not given earlier).
11. Hymn.
12. Prayers.
Litany of Sorrow and Litany of Healing from webofcreation?
Conclude with the Lord's Prayer.
13. Exhortation.
14. Confession (can be said here or at paragraph 21)

Heavenly Father, everything we have comes from you. You provide abundantly for our needs. Even before we speak, you know the deepest desires of our hearts. Graciousness, goodness and love are your nature.

You have created this earth and everything in it. We are your servant people, created out of the earth itself. Yet we turn our backs on your creation. We have used and abused this earth, our home. We greedily take the gifts you hold out to us and use them for our own selfish desires. We trample upon the works of your hands, leaving a trail of waste and destruction. We give too little thought to the needs of other people, or the needs of your creation. Our lives are marked by selfishness and greed. What is meant for good, we have used for evil.

We confess that too often we have thought only of ourselves and have ignored the needs of other people, of generations not yet born. And we have forgotten that everything in the world belongs to you.

Holy and righteous God, we ask your forgiveness. Help us to live more simply so others may simply live. Help us to understand that we are part of creation, that we are your stewards in it. And make us instruments of

the renewal of your creation. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

15. Absolution

The psalmist says
"Those who love me, I will deliver;
I will protect those who know my name.
When they call to me, I will answer them,
I will be with them in trouble,
I will rescue them and honour them.
With long life I will satisfy them,
and show them my salvation."

God is love and life. We are the beloved children of God, forgiven, renewed and sent out into the world to work for healing and justice, hope and wholeness, in faithfulness to God.

Amen.

16. Greeting.

17. Offertory hymn.

18. Prayer of Thanksgiving (4th or 5th form)

19. Communion sentence

20. Communion

Hand-made bread could be used.

Home-made produce could be brought forward for blessing.

People could also be invited to bring forward the stones, plants or other symbols they picked up as they entered the church.

21. Prayer

22. Prayer

23. Gloria.

24. Blessing

We acknowledge you as the only source of growth and abundance.

You provide us with food for body and spirit.

With your help we plant our crops and by your power they produce our harvest.

Guide the work of our hands, for in you we live and move and have our being.

Help us bring you glory by respecting all parts of your creation and using wisely the good things we receive from you.

May every creature abound in well-being and peace.
May the blessing of God – Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, be amongst the whole earth community, that we may live to care for all creation and know divine peace.

25. Dismissal

Suggested hymns and songs

All Creatures of our God and King (*Together in Song*, 100)

For the Beauty of the Earth (*Together in Song*, 137)

Let All Creation Dance (*Together in Song*, 187)

Enemy of Apathy (*Together in Song*, 418)

Touch the Earth Lightly (*Together in Song*, 668)

Shout to the Lord (*Together in Song*, 738)

Let All the World (*Australian Hymn Book*, 13)

Lord of Creation (*Australian Hymn Book*, 557)

I the Lord of Sea and Sky (*Together in Song*, 658)