

> Season of Creation

Spiritual Exercise
Caring for Our Common Home

LAUDATO SI'
Action Platform

Laudato Si' Goals

- 1. Am I hearing and responding to the cry of Earth?**
 - Reducing reliance on fossil fuels (coal, oil, gas).
 - Using power from renewable non-polluting sources (solar, wind).
 - Minimizing fossil fuel-based road and air travel. Reducing plastics and packaging, trying to buy in bulk.
- 2. Am I hearing and responding to the cry of the Poor?**
 - Making lifestyle changes which will care for the world's poorest.
 - Purchasing goods and using energy which support sustainable, ethical and fair production.
- 3. Am I considering and acting on Ecological Economics?**
 - Moving finances and investments from banks, superannuation and shares that fund fossil fuels or other activity harmful to the planet.
- 4. How am I faring with adopting a simpler lifestyle?**
 - Adopting the 5 Rs. Refuse what you don't need, Reduce what you do need, Recycle, Re-use and Rot (compost)
 - Eating less meat, poultry and fish and more plant-based foods.
 - Buying locally grown foods and locally made products.
 - Growing more trees and plants and my own food.
 - Walking cycling, using public transport more often.
- 5. Am I educating myself and others towards integral ecology to further my awareness and action?**
 - Learning more about climate change, biodiversity loss and the threat of extinction and teaching others.
 - Getting reputable information from independent sources (not those influenced by fossil fuel interests or other vested interests).
- 6. How am I faring in developing Ecological Spirituality?**
 - Focusing on the wonders of the natural world.
 - Praising and thanking God for creation.
 - Respecting culture and ecological spirituality of indigenous peoples.
- 7. Am I engaging in and participating in community action for care of creation?**
 - Supporting public action on climate change and environment.
 - Calling on political and industry leaders for stronger action on carbon emissions and environmental protections.

Adapted from Mary Mother of the Church Parish, Ivanhoe, Victoria, from Laudato Si' Week and ARRC - Living the Change and LSAP websites.



Ecological Spirituality

During the Season of Creation the [Laudato Si spiritual exercises](#) from Pope Francis' encyclical "on care for our common home" we a key part of our worship. Copies printed on card were available at worship, [also available to download here](#).



We focussed on Ecological Spirituality, the sixth goal, each week: *How am I faring in developing Ecological Spirituality?*



We reflected on and responded to one or two of the other six goals across the four Sundays.



Poorneet Season



Introducing the Acknowledgement of Country Ian commented: *Colonial Spring officially began this week but signs of the changing of the season have been with us for weeks. We are in the time of year that the Wurundjeri people name Poorneet season (porneet means tadpole). Over the next few weeks we will be celebrating some of the signs of this season. Senior Wurundjeri Elder Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin tells us watch out for Pied Currawongs calling loudly and often, reminding us that the gurnmil (snake) and budjing (lizard) are awake and active. We listened to the Pied Currawong calling as Ian offered the Acknowledgment.*



The cry of the earth



4/9, [Season of Creation 1](#), Isaiah 41:1,17-20; Luke 14:25-33 Ian welcomed us to worship for the first Sunday in our Season of Creation. Offering the Prayers of Adoration he explained that we will be developing an ecological spirituality by focusing on the wonders of creation. Ian shared photos of native flowers from his front garden as we prayed.



Steph Gesling, our interim Sunday Morning Program coordinator, spoke with the children about her work in the Little Sprouts program. The program invites pre-schoolers to wonder about creation. She spoke in particular about trees and what they offer - habitat for animals and giving oxygen for us to breathe. We had fun singing a 'Tree Growing song'. Steph then offered a paper making activity in the Gathering Space.



Ian's reflection '[The Family of Creation](#)' began as a Father's Day reflection and ended up as Season of Creation reflection. He began by providing contextual linguistics for the use of the words love and hate in the Gospel reading and explored what this means with respect to family, relationships and allegiance. He explained that Jesus' words then were '*shaking the foundations of his society which is built on kinship status and class patronage*'. Instead Jesus is directing his followers to embrace a new family of faith '*forged by love of God and neighbour as self*', a family where nobody and nothing is excluded. Ian then turned our attention to our opening song 'All creatures of our God and King', written by St. Francis of Assisi in 1224, mentioning it as a '*profound expression of ecological spirituality articulated using the metaphor of the day - family*'. He concluded '*We can love our immediate family and still give our primary allegiance to following Christ and the Divine family of all creatures. In fact our immediate families can find their fullest expression of love as part of the greater family of God's love for when Creations flourish our families flourish. But if you have no family or if you are hurt or rejected by your family, if your family is not a safe nurturing place for you to thrive then this is your family right here, here and wherever God's love is lived out for the healing of all creation praise be to you our God through all your creatures. Amen*'



Following Ian's reflection we shared a prayer of Lament and Confession in response to first of the Laudato Si Spiritual Exercises which asks, "*Am I hearing the cry of the Earth? Am I responding to the distress of my siblings in the family of creation?*" In response to God's renewing grace Ian invited us to take moment to reflect: '*What are you doing now to respond to the cry of the family of creation, and what more could you do?*'



We celebrated Holy Communion. Steph and the young people shared an example of their paper making.



[Read the Order of Service](#) or [watch again on Youtube](#)

The cry of the poor



11/9, [Season of Creation 2](#), Luke 15:1-10; Psalm 148 Kirsty Bennett welcomed us to worship. We focussed on questions 'Am I hearing and responding to the cry of the Poor?' and 'Am I considering and acting on Ecological Economics?' as we meditated and responded at one or more of the stations that were inside and outside.

Offering the Acknowledgement of Country Kirsty shared a childhood memory of hunting for tadpoles in the puddles after rain on dirt roads in Mt. Martha. We shared the Acknowledgement over the sound of gentle rain.



Ian shared the story of three songs beginning with Psalm 148, first inviting the children to share their favourite creatures from each of the groups identified in the psalm - land, sea and air. Ian explained that Psalm 148, written 3000 years ago was all about all the creatures just being wonderful and by being wonderful giving praise to the Creator. The second song in the story, Laudato Si was written by 900 years ago by St. Francis of Assisi. This song made all the birds and the animals and the creatures of creation including the Earth itself into brothers and sisters. And then Ian introduced a much more recent song 'Brother Sister Creatures' which continues the celebration of our relationship with creation.



In his introduction to our reflective stations '[Hearing the Cry of the Poor](#)' Ian invited us to practice ecological spirituality and respond to the cry of the poor via the parables of the Lost Sheep and Lost Coin. Ian explained that '*Jesus tells these little stories in response to those who are criticizing him for hanging out with sinners*'. He explored how Jesus turns the notion of who is a sinner around, that God comes to seek out and save the lost, to include the excluded and to give them a central place in the Divine kingdom. Introducing the reflective stations Ian noted '*how climate change accentuates the divisions between the rich and the poor of the world between insiders and outsiders*'.

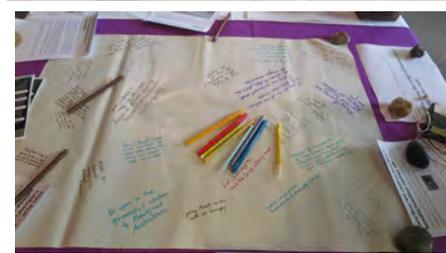




The first station was outside at our indigenous sculpture garden. We were invited to practice ecological spirituality to engage with the wonders of the natural world and simply to praise God. We brought a piece of the natural world back into to create a sculpture together.



The second station was in the Gathering Space where there was a table at which we were invited to hear and respond to the Cry of the poor by writing or drawing a prayer in response to headlines or articles displayed there. These prayers were later shaped by Ian for the Prayers of the People. [Photos of the written prayers are offered here.](#)



The third station was at the Communion Table where we invited to consider and act on ecological economics what can we do to build climate Justice and to make a difference for the poor of the world this is a place today of response and commitment reflect on what we are doing or might do or feel called to do then and into the future. This response was our offering.



[Read the Order of Service](#) or [watch again on YouTube](#)

Living a simpler life



18/9, [Season of Creation 3](#), Jeremiah 8:1-18-9:1; Matthew 5:1-12 Helen



Burnham welcomed us to worship inviting us to hold the leaf or gum nut we had collected on our way in to worship.. We focussed on goal 4 - Living a simpler life and heard from the prophet Jeremiah, an anguished of "where is our God" a cry we can all relate to in this time of climate crisis. The floral arrangements were provided by participants in Valmai Brunlow's flower arranging workshop series.



Ian invited the children and all of us into a time of remembering people who have died. Ian named the Queen, Uncle Jack Charles and Uncle Archie Roach. Ian wondered who was the most important and commented *'The Queen was one of the richest and most important people on earth. Uncle Jack and Uncle Archie were part of the stolen generation, lived on the streets, suffered addictions, Uncle Jack even went to prison*

22 times (and then became a prison mentor to young indigenous prisoners). ... But today we remember that for Jesus the most important people in the world are the poor, lowly, humble, meek, persecuted people.' Ian and Hamish placed gum leaves in remembrance at the: Cross for the pain of love, the Table for communion in suffering, the Font for the water of compassion and the Candle for the light of hope and peace.





Ian's reflection '[a saving word for our warming world](#)' was a reflection on the prophet Jeremiah's poignant divine lament. He began by describing a stand up routine by American comedian Shin Wang to help us to engage with the judgement and condemnation and violent punishment offered by Jeremiah's prophecy. He went on to remind us that there are only two sins in the Bible - justice and idolatry. He said '*Idolatry is a failure to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and injustice is a failure to love our neighbour as ourselves. And I believe both these failures of love, injustice and idolatry are driving the climate crisis.*' Ian explored the many gods that clamour for our attention. Commenting on the climate change he said there are two idolatrous impulses that are slowing down our global responses - faith in the fixer-upper God and faith in ourselves. Exploring this further Ian wondered '*What if we pray to deepen our connexion with the source of life and the fountain of love, which might then be expressed in our living?*' and concluded '*What if we prayed together to enter into communion with God and with others so that her divine love, hope and peace might inspire our communal action. What if we prayed in those ways not so that God will fix our problems but so that we can act in God's name with God's love.*'



As part of the offering Ian invited us to discuss the question 'How am I faring with adopting a simpler lifestyle?'

[Read the Order of Service](#) or [watch again on YouTube](#)



Engaging in Community Action



25/9, Season of Creation 4, Psalm 104; Jeremiah 32:1-3a,6-15 Saide Cameron welcomed us to worship. We concluded the Season of Creation with a focus on Goals 5 & 7 of the Laudato Si' exploring education and community action. We continued to listen to the prophet Jeremiah and learnt of his somewhat crazy decision to buy a piece of land during a siege and how this might be seen as a sign of hope.

During the Prayers of Adoration and Confession we sang 'All you works of God', a paraphrase of Psalm 104 which is said to be one of the finest pieces of lyric poetry in the Old Testament. Saide encouraged us to go outside and read the psalm to really appreciate it.



Steph read 'How to heal a broken wing' with the children - a simple story about the time and care needed for healing to happen.



Beginning his reflection [A cure for eco-anxiety](#) Ian shared the definition and symptoms of eco-anxiety which is anxiety rooted in uncertainty about the future. He wondered if the prophet Jeremiah might be offering us a cure for eco-anxieties through his purchase of worthless land and offered possible examples from our own time. Ian explained that Jeremiah made this purchase as a sign of hope, acting as if the future matters. He said '*And that's how we care for the eco-anxious among us in this church, by acting as if the future matters, acting as if the future is full of promise and the ground beneath our feet is a field of hope in which we are planted as a seed of new life. In other words, we address the eco-anxiety in us, among us and around us by living with resurrection faith.*' Ian affirmed all the ways we are taking and encouraging action as a congregation and shared that the children will be continuing making paper and later share a small piece with each of us as a further sign of hope. He concluded inviting us imaginatively tune into the promise of our faith.



Ian then invited us to reflect on community awareness and action for the care of creation in response to the spiritual exercise to speak with one another in response to a number of questions '*Where are you at? What have you heard? What are you feeling? What would you? What have you?*'

[Read the Order of Service](#) or [watch again on YouTube](#)



Saide Cameron

