

AYSA

Anglican Youth of Southern Africa



REDUCE, REUSE, RENEW

WORLD ENVIRONMENTAL MONTH

JUNE 2014



PRAYERS FOR WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

1. The Earth does not belong to us

This we know: the earth does not belong to us.

The earth is the Lord's and so are all its people

This we know: we did not weave the web of life.

The earth is the Lord's and so is all that breathes on it.

This we know: we are called to till and work the earth.

The earth is the Lord's and so are all who work the land.

This we know: that we are called to take care of creation.

The earth is the Lord's yet we have polluted and abused it.

This we know; that whatever befalls the earth

Befalls the sons and daughters of the earth

This we know: that the earth is the Lord's

And so we will serve Him in it

Amen

Lord God our Father

Let our walk this day be

Full of beauty and brightness

Lord, hear us

That we may know

Your presence and your peace

Lord, hear us

That we may experience

Your grace and your glory

Lord, hear us

That we may be at one

With you and your creation

Lord, hear us

That we may be aware of you

In and through and above all things.

Lord, hear us

God bless the path on which I go

God bless the earth beneath my sole

God bless the fellowship that make us whole

Amen

Source: Bishop Eric Pike, Diocese of Port Elizabeth: adapted from various sources

2. Giver of Life

L Giver of Life,
in the midst of a plundered
earth we groan with creation:

All **Have mercy on us.**

L Giver of Life,
in the midst of poisoned water
we groan with creation:

All **Have mercy on us.**

L Giver of Life,
in the midst of polluted air we
groan with creation:

All **Have mercy on us.**

L Giver of Life,
in the midst of mountains of waste
we groan with creation:

All **Have mercy on us.**

L Giver of Life,
in the midst of a world of war
we groan with creation:

All **Have mercy on us.**

L Giver of Life,
we who are made in the image of God have gone astray,
and creation groans with us:

All **Have mercy on us.**

Source: Worshipping Ecumenically, WCC Publications

3. A prayer for recycling

We thank you for the resources of the world,
and for the many goods available to us.

Grant us wisdom and restraint in our spending and consumption;
grant us inspiration in the re-use and recycling of resources.

Bless those who collect our waste and those who work to recycle it
Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer

Source: Diocese of Newcastle

4. A prayer for “reduce, reuse, recycle”

Living God

Where there is waste, let us bring recycling,
Where there is recycling, let us bring reuse,
Where there is reuse, let us bring sustainability,
Where there is sustainability, let us bring justice
Where there is justice, let us bring love

Source: John Polhill (from Eggs and Ashes published by Wildgoose,

5. Drama : The Eighth Day

Narrator Once upon a time, God decided to create the earth. On day one, God created the day and the night.
Enter 'Day', dressed in bright clothing and 'Night', dressed in dark clothing.

Narrator God was impressed...

God This is good, all good!

Narrator So the next day, day two, God created the sea and the sky.

Enter 'Sea' and 'Sky', dressed in blue. 'Sky' could also hold up cloud shapes on sticks made from white card or covered with cotton wool.

Narrator And God liked it...

God I am loving the sea and sky!

Narrator On day three, God made the plants and the trees.

Enter 'Plants' and 'Trees', dressed in green. They can be carrying cut-out shapes of leaves, flowers and fruits.

Narrator God liked these, too...

God Look at these beautiful trees! Look at all that beautiful fruit!

Narrator On day four, God made the sun, the moon and the stars. *Enter the 'Sun', 'Moon' and 'Stars' – dressed in yellow, gold and silver.*

Narrator Guess what? God liked them!

God Like them? I love them!

Narrator On day five, God made animals and fish.

Enter 'Animals' and 'Fish', dressed in different colours and textures, making appropriate animal noises or swimming like fish.

Narrator God was really impressed with all this work...

God Such variety! Such brilliant colours!

Narrator And on day six, God created human beings.

Enter 'Humans' (at least 4) dressed as normal.

Narrator God thought these were especially cool.

God Wow! Human beings! Look at all the things you can do! I'm putting you in charge of all this. But remember, take care of the earth – it's precious!

Narrator On day seven, after a busy week of creating, God was pretty tired. So they had a day of rest.

God *(Yawning)* I'm going to make this a holy day, a day of rest, a day to take time out and simply be.

Everyone kneels or sits down, yawning, and pretending to fall asleep for a few moments. The eighth day can begin with the sound of an alarm clock. Everyone stretches and stands up – small groups of children should start to act out each of the actions on cue as the narrator speaks.

Narrator Then on day eight, the earth got moving... the fish were swimming, the tigers were roaring, the dogs were barking, the stars were twinkling, the plants were growing. But then things started to go a little bit wrong...

Human 1 (*Pointing at all the other days of creation*) Hey, I could use some of this stuff!

Human 2 Yeah, so could I!

Human 3 Me, too!

Human 4 These trees look useful. I could make things with these, if I just chop down one or two.

Human 1 If I just chop down one or two, I could use them to burn so I can stay warm.

Human 2 And if I just chop down one or two, I could have more space for my family to live.

Human 3 We could use these animals and the fish.

Human 4 I could catch lots of fish for everyone to eat and if there's some left over I'll throw them away.

Human 1 Good idea. I will gather all these animals together for my huge farm.

Narrator But the trouble was, the humans didn't think about how their actions would affect other people, or other living things, or the earth that nourished them.

Human 1 We can plug things in.

Human 2 We can switch things on.

Human 3 We can use up electricity.

Human 4 We can use up as much water as we want!

All the humans stand, looking pleased with themselves. After a short pause, Human 1 scratches his or her head.

Human 1 Hmm, do you know what? I'm getting a bit bored with all this now. What should we do next?

All scratch their heads, looking puzzled.

Human 2 Well, why don't we throw it away?

Human 3 Or bury it in the ground?

Human 4 Or set fire to it?

Humans We can always get another one!

Human 1 Yes, let me throw away this cell phone and get a new one on contract

Human 2 yes let me throw away these shoes they are soooo out of style

Human 3 Yes let me throw away all these plastic bags and tins and bottles, I don't need them anymore

Human 4 Let me throw away the rest of this plate of food, I am sooo full..

God bursts in from the side...

God Hang on a minute! What are you talking about? What have you been doing? Why would you waste the gifts I have given you? Don't you remember what I said to you? I told you to take care of things! To be responsible! To be in charge!

Narrator And suddenly, it wasn't so good any more...

Everyone looks to the floor, looking sad and shuffling their feet.

Narrator So on the eighth day, God reminded the humans what they could do...

God Don't just throw things away. Recycle as much as you can!

And don't be wasteful – only use as much as you need.

Don't forget to switch things off when you've stopped using them.

Think about other people – share your money and the things you own.

Help each other out – don't just be selfish or greedy.

Think about your sisters and brothers throughout the world – and reach out to those who have less than you.

And please, look after the earth! I'm not going to make another one...

Humans We're sorry, God. We'll try to be more responsible.

God Remember, this is your earth. So love and respect it.

Prayer

Source CAFOD

6. Prayer of Confession

God our creator, we confess that we have not been good stewards of your creation. We have wasted your resources and defiled your land. We come to you for healing from our spiritual weakness and for your guidance in finding ways to heal our world. Help us to find ways to lead lives that respect and revere your creation, that provide sustainability for future generations and teach others to respect the beauty and wonder of your creation.

We ask all of this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

7. Closing Prayer

Almighty God, we thank you for reminding us of the importance of recycling as part of a new creation. We pray this day that we will go out into the world and spread the Good News about the wonders of God's creation to our friends and relatives and all that we meet. We ask all of this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

8. Sermon notes and suggestions for Scripture readings

Scripture References:

Genesis 2:7-15

1 Corinthians 5:14-17

Matthew 22:34-40

Psalms 65:9-13

Genesis 2:7-15

As a continuation of the creation story found in Genesis 1, God creates humanity from the dust of the ground and breathes life into them. He puts Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and creates life, including trees and water, as in verse 15: "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." This is a clear description of our role as stewards of God's creation. When we create piles of waste we are not being good stewards. Our waste pollutes water, the land and can kill animals, fish and birds.

- 2 Corinthians 5:14-17

Paul tells the church at Corinth that one died for all and therefore all died. Since Christ died for all, we should no longer live for ourselves, but instead live for Christ, who died for us and was raised again. Paul discusses our earthly and heavenly requirements and concludes the brief passage by telling us that "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone and the new has come." It is time for change and to live in a different way. Our environmental stewardship is part of our being with Christ and being part of the new order. Recycling is part of nature and an important part of the concept of sustainability. We cannot have a sustainable society if we use things once and throw them away. We need to adopt the old standard, "Use it up, wear it out, make it do or do without." Recycling programs mimic the recycling that goes on in nature, where nothing is wasted and everything, even things that die, serve a useful purpose.

- Matthew 22:34-40.

The Great Commandment emphasizes our dual role in both protecting God's creation (thereby loving the Lord God with all of our hearts, souls and minds) and protecting the planet for our seven billion fellow humans and for generations to come as we love our neighbors as ourselves. By creating waste we also divert funds that can

be used for health and education. For instance the City of Cape town spends R220,000 per week on waste collection that could be used for other services. It can take a plastic bottle between 500 to 1000 years to biodegrade, so when you litter you are leaving it for generations to come. Recycling is part of an overall waste management strategy that should include buying and using only what we need, reducing consumption, reusing materials, recycling, composting and buying recycled products. This is our time to protect God's creation by establishing a recycling program in our churches and encouraging our members to recycle at home and work.

Source: Richard Keller

9. Suggested Songs

- All creatures of our God and king
All things bright and beautiful
- Beauty for brokenness (God of the poor) Graham Kendrick
For the beauty of the earth
For the healing of the nations
- We are standing on holy ground.
- Who will save our Land and people (John B Gardner)
- Plea for Africa

10. Creative ideas

- Ask the congregation, youth or Sunday school to come to church wearing green.
- Prepare posters the week before that say "REDUCE REUSE RECYCLE"
- Hold a 'recycled fashion show' after church.
- Plan a clean-up day and announce it at the service.
- Launch an ongoing recycling drive at the church during world environmental week –
- Decorate the church or foyer with recycled goods (clear it with your priest first).
- Get creative!!

This resource was put together by the Green Anglicans office (ACSA Environmental Network) for more information contact us on info@greenanglicans.org like us on Facebook GREEN ANGLICANS, follow us on twitter GREEN ANGLICANS or visit our website www.greenanglicans.org

