



CARING FOR CREATION

MISSION PRIORITIES

PREPARATION

- ➔ Prepare photos of a variety of beautiful nature scenes
- ➔ Have ready photos or a PowerPoint presentation of images of the most recent climate disasters from around the world (note the dates)
- ➔ Provide a Bible for each member
- ➔ Have packets of wildflower seeds to share out

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

‘Care for creation’ is one of the five Salvation Army Mission Priorities. In this session we will consider God’s beautiful creation, the challenge of climate change and how we might be able to join in caring better for creation.

ACTIVITIES

CHALLENGE

Sometimes the challenge of climate change seems too big, so we would rather not think about it. However, if we all made some changes, the impact could be significant. Here are some ideas to consider:

1. Switch your home energy supplier to greener energy (eg Octopus).
2. Try to walk, cycle or go by public transport rather than by car as much as possible.
3. Take UK-based holidays instead of flying.
4. Try to buy only second-hand clothes whenever possible (apart from underwear!)

The next time the group meets, ask how the challenge went and if members had any insights they wish to share.

SHARE

Ask members to share what evidence they have seen/heard of changing climate. How has it affected them? Could they share with each other what they are already doing to care for creation.

Connect



PSALM SHARE

Make sure each member has access to a Bible and the book of Psalms. Ask them to find a verse in the Psalms which mentions nature and to share it.

CREATE

Provide some wildflower seeds for everyone to plant at home or to scatter in a public space.

BIBLE READING/THOUGHT

Show photos of beautiful nature scenes.

‘O Lord, my God,
When I in awesome wonder consider all the worlds thy hands have made...’
SASB 49

Share with each other a place where you have had a sense of this awesome wonder. What is it that gives you that sense? Think of all your senses that are engaged with this wonder.

📖 ‘Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

‘So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

‘God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

‘Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground - everything that has the breath of life in it - I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

‘God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning - the sixth day.’

Connect



(Genesis 1:26-31)

Our reading in Genesis follows a spectacular whirlwind description of creation, punctuated often with 'And God saw that it was good!' The light, the dark, the earth, the sky, the sun and moon, the vegetation, the seas, the animals, birds and fish - God spoke, created, and declared its goodness. Then, for his finale, God created human beings in his image. 'Let us make mankind in our image ... so that they may rule over the fish ... and the birds ... over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.'

And now, as he looks over everything he has made, he announces that it is very good. Good - *tov* is the Hebrew word - can have many meanings, including that everything is working together well. Everything is coordinated and interdependent. Seasons follow each other, the sun follows the moon, seeds produce a harvest of more seeds, everything is working in harmony and every person and every creature has enough to thrive.

Did you know that just as bumble bees come out of hibernation in the spring, so do the snowdrops. Also known as snow piercers, they pop up their heads and provide the bees with their first nectar breakfast? Then come the primroses in time for the brimstone butterflies as they wake up! Our global ecosystem is designed to be in perfect balance, each part playing a vital role in keeping the Earth alive and healthy.

Everything is delicately balanced!

The Earth is the Lord's and everything in it. And it is good.

So how was this supposed to work? Let's reflect on this one line: 'Let us make mankind in our image, so that they may rule ...' This one sentence hinges on the word 'so'. If we are made in his image, whatever we do should reflect his design. As children of God, his image is in our whole being. So as we learn to be more like him, like Jesus, we treat his world as he would treat it. And then we find that it is truly good, and everything works together. We find that we have enough of everything we need to live, and enough to share, in this our common home.

Ask if people have noticed if the weather has become more unpredictable. Give up-to-date examples of changes/floods etc in the UK and Ireland - and, for example, how some farmers are struggling.

Because of the chaotic, unpredictable weather, flowers are blooming earlier than they should; and unless the insects and birds adapt, they are going hungry, dying and risking extinction. For example, blue tits have been struggling to find enough

Connect



caterpillars to feed their young because the caterpillars are emerging too early. So blue tit chicks are dying.

The finely tuned balance seems to have gone awry. Creation is now truly groaning.

Show photos of some international floods, fires, heatwaves etc ... and explain what happened. Point out that it is the poorest and least prepared areas of the world that are likely to suffer most.

As we look at these images, imagine what this might mean for just one family. A family who, like you and me, have hopes for their futures and dreams for future generations.

Who is my neighbour? Commissioner Christine McMillan has said in answer to this question, 'The person who comes under my sphere of influence. We are in a closely interconnected world and my action influences my neighbour on the other side of the world.'

Lord, have mercy!
How can I love my neighbour?

PRAYER

Grant us, Lord God, a vision of your world as your love would have it:
A world where the weak are protected, and none goes hungry or poor;
A world where the fruits of creation are shared, and everyone can enjoy them;
A world where different races and cultures live in harmony and mutual respect;
A world where peace is built with justice, and justice is guided by love.
Give us the inspiration and courage to build it, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

SONGS

- ♪ SASB 49 'O Lord, my God, when I in awesome wonder [How great thou art]'
[Brass lyric instrumental video](#) uploaded by Pendleton Corps (4:36)

Connect



Lyric video feat Loyiso Bala and Don Moen (press cc for lyrics) by DonMoenTV (5:27)

Official lyric video by Carrie Underwood (5:22)

- ♪ SASB 64 'The splendour of a King [How great is our God]'
Official lyric video by Chris Tomlin, christomlinmusic (3:21)
Lyric video from BBC Songs of Praise feat Salvation Army uploaded by js12345 (3:06)
- ♪ SASB 237 'All Heaven declares the glory of the risen Lord' by Noel Richards
Brass instrumental lyric video played by Bristol Easton Salvation Army (1:51)
Lyric video by @Gospelshow1
- ♪ SASB 66 'This is my Father's world'
Brass instrumental lyric video by Pendleton Corps (2:23)
Official lyric video by Keith & Kristyn Getty (4:35)
Lyric video feat Sandra McCracken by David Hanson (3:12)
- ♪ 'So will I [100 Billion X]'
Live worship video (press cc for lyrics) by Hillsong Worship (7:02)
Lyric video by Hillsong Worship (7:04)
Live lyric video feat Osby Berry by Cross Worship Music (11:18)

WEBSITE AND CONTACT DETAILS

- Connect website: www.salvationarmy.org.uk/connect
- Family Ministries website: www.salvationarmy.org.uk/families
- Emails: familyministries@salvationarmy.org.uk
- Facebook: @sarmyfm
- Twitter: @ukifamily
- Instagram: safamily_ministries



Family Ministries

Having faith in the family

Providing intergenerational support, training and resources for

Children | Adults | Everyone