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As winter releases its snowy hold, it is difficult *not* to care about creation. Last week, my lenten rose bloomed for the first time. I'd found it dying on a path at my dad's retirement home last June after a landscaping crew had uprooted it while weeding. My father was in the hospital at the time and facing a move from assisted living care to nursing care, so the parallels between his situation and the drooping plant were hard to miss. I soaked the roots and took them home to my yard in a plastic bag. Today, I went out to photograph the delicate pink and cream blossoms this keepsake has given me in return. How wonderful that resurrection happens all around us every spring! - Jennifer Halteman Schrock

Easter Sermons Explore Creation Themes

If you are a pastor following the lectionary and preparing to preach on John 20 April 4, you might want to ask yourself this question: What is the significance of Jesus being mistaken for a gardener? Below is one sermon that explores the Jesus-as-gardener theme. It also emerges at various points in British New Testament scholar N.T. Wright's writing.

“What makes creation care different from environmentalism?” asks Don Bosch, Managing Editor of *The Evangelical Ecologist*. “One way to answer this is to understand that among the different ways God reveals himself to mankind - Creator, Yahweh, Elohim, Adonai, Father, Lord, Master, Savior, Rabbi, Holy Spirit - he is also the Gardener...” Read more of [Knowing the Gardener](#)

If your congregants are prone to a “rapture and retreat” theology, this sermon might interest you: Brandon Rhodes’ [Resurrection and Creation Care: How Plato Has Hoodwinked Hope and Eviscerated Easter](#). Rhodes is part of Springwater, a new-monastic Mennonite church plant in Portland, OR,

For Creation Care Liaisons: What Does Green Worship Look Like?

A few months ago, the Worship Commission at Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship, Goshen, IN, met to review MCCN’s [Green Congregation Stewardship Score Sheet](#). “How does creation care touch the work of our committee?” the group asked themselves. Here are a couple of observations that came out of their time together:

- Worship is one of the few places in our society where confession takes place.

If this includes confessing our environmental sins, our worship can help us realize the scope of our impact.

- The incarnation is a “creation theme.” The fact that God became flesh and participated in an earthly existence is a foundation for our care of creation.
 - The current environmental crises and our inability to solve them deepen our dependence on God and our need for salvation. We need God to save us from ourselves.
 - Worship commission members are stewards of all of these resources: heat, lighting, flooring, song sheets, bulletins, hymnals, communion elements, candles and other visuals.
- * In most North American settings, the ability to worship together is dependent on fossil fuel transportation.

What you’re talking about at your church?

Interactive Corner

How will your commitment to creation care shape your summer vacation plans or weekend activities this year? Tell us your idea and how you plan to live it out.

Responses to Last Month’s Newsletter:

Several readers commented on [Forget Shorter Showers](#), regarding the merits of simple living versus wielding political power:

“To me, the question is WHO we put our trust in for revolutionary change. If it is God (and I hope it is for Christians), then change MUST begin with the individual, for that is how God moves - by transforming hearts and minds into reflecting the ways and character of God. To believe that individual choices have no influence on the world is to believe that God is powerless. Of course, God also seeks to influence the powers, and the identity of institutions can also be transformed through spiritual, social, communal renewal where disciples seek to do so.”

- *Darren Kropf, Creation Care Program Coordinator, Mennonite Central Committee, Ontario*

“...[C]onfronting unjust systems is definitely something we need to discuss and participate in. There is nothing wrong with living simply--it is necessary--but I agree with Jensen that living simply will not change the world. Isaiah 58:6 says, "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?" - *Stephan Warner, Harrah, OK*

Nekeisha Alexis-Baker, Elkhart, IN, who is a vegan, couldn’t reconcile our opening prayer with a lifestyle tip involving roast chicken:

“I’m not sure how The Prayer of St. Basil with nonhuman animals ‘loving the sweetness of life’ is congruent with roasting the bodies of slaughtered chickens,” she remarked, sparking a discussion among Creation Care Council members. §