

Creation Care in Worship

IMAGINE THAT... The worship experiences of the congregation recognize God's love for all things. God is worshipped as Creator, Sustainer and Redeemer of all creation. Caring for creation is addressed in sermons and appears in visual elements, in sharing times, in confessions, in song.

Don't forget to invite: The pastor in charge of worship, the worship commission, people who frequently lead worship or music.

Worship services include at least some of these elements:

Scripture	Music
Sermon	Visual elements
Children's Time	Offering
Confession	Sharing & Announcements

Step 1: Review the list of worship elements above. Can you think of an example of a time in the last year when God's broader creation or its care appeared in each of these?

Step 2: Rate the inclusion of creation care in your congregation's worship from zero to five. A zero indicates complete silence or teachings that discourage investing in our present world. A five indicates that you thought of multiple examples in many of the categories above and have worship planners who routinely discuss how worship might reflect God's love for all of creation.

Step 3: How might greater connection to creation enrich your worship? Here are some examples of ways creation care might be integrated into worship:

- A pastor offers a sermon series on creation Psalms or on a Christian perspective on an environmental problem.
- A sermon on a text such as the parable of the mustard seed reflects an awareness of the plant involved and its role in Middle Eastern ecosystems.
- An environmental professional who sees his/her work as a calling is invited to share a message or story.
- An outdoor service, Earth Day event or other special service is part of the church year.
- Church architecture connects worshippers to the natural world through windows and natural lighting.
- Locally grown flowers, fruits, vegetables are included on a worship table as a focal point.
- Environmental sins are named in a litany of confession, or people are invited to confess their own in silence.
- An offering includes the opportunity to offer garden vegetables to be given to a food pantry.
- Members are involved in environmental activities and these come up in announcements or sharing time.
- During communion, the plants that the elements were made of are acknowledged and are visually present.