

The symbol for the Season of Creation 2024 is the firstfruits of hope

Hope is an instrument enabling us to overcome the natural law of decay. Hope is given to us by God as a protection and guard against futility. Only through hope

we may realize the gift of freedom in fullness. Freedom to act not only to achieve enjoyment and prosperity, but to reach the stage in which we are free and responsible. Freedom and responsibility enable us to make the world a better place. Only when we work together with Creation can the firstfruits of hope emerge.

To delve deeper into the theological reflection that guides the 2024 theme and symbol, find more information

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YIM_2FAhqpLcnbX86Xn31_xKQ Ts5GoHwT160jERHKeA/edit#bookmark=id.9fp7gmxnlta9



The firstfruits of hope
(Rom 8:19-25)



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TO HOPE AND ACT WITH CREATION

SEASON OF CREATION 2024

In the letter of Paul the apostle to the Romans, the biblical image pictures the Earth as a Mother, groaning as in childbirth (Rom 8:22). Francis of Assisi understood this when he referred to the Earth as our sister and our mother in his *Canticle of Creatures*. The times we live in show that we are not relating to the Earth as a gift from our Creator, but rather as a resource to be used.

And yet, there is hope and the expectation for a better future. To hope in a biblical context does not mean to stand still and quiet, but rather groaning, crying, and actively striving for new life amidst the struggles. Just as in childbirth, we go through a period of intense pain, but new life springs forth.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SEASON OF CREATION (contd)

On 4 October, Roman Catholics and other churches from the Western traditions commemorate Francis of Assisi, known to many as the author of the [Canticle of the Creatures](#).

The proposal to celebrate a "Time for Creation" during these five weeks was made by the [Third European Ecumenical Assembly](#) in Sibiu in 2007. The following year, the [WCC Central Committee](#) invited churches to observe "Time for Creation" through prayers and actions. In 2015, Pope Francis has designated September 1st as a World Day of Prayer for Care of Creation for the worldwide Roman Catholic Church as well.

Throughout the years, major Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, and Anglican organizations have joined to encourage the 2.2 billion Christians worldwide to pray and act on ecological issues.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SEASON OF CREATION

From September 1 to October 4, Christians around the world are praying and caring for creation. It's the "Season of Creation". The beginning and the end date of Season of Creation are linked with the concern for creation in the Eastern and the Western traditions of Christianity, respectively.

September 1st was proclaimed as a day of prayer for the environment by the late Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I in 1989. The Orthodox church year starts that day with a commemoration of how God created the world. *(cont on back page)*

GLOBAL PROGRAMME for the SEASON OF CREATION 2024

- 1st September 2pm - 3pm in the UK **Prayer Service for Creation Day** On this Day of Creation, also known as Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation or Feast of Creation, opens the Season of Creation 2024. Faith leaders from around the globe will lead this time of prayer and reflection as we celebrate the start of the Season of Creation, on this year's theme, "To hope and act with Creation".
- 10th September 2pm - 3pm in the UK **A conversation on the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty**. High-Level Webinar Concept The role of Faith Actors and Governments in ensuring a just energy transition and mitigating climate change through a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. Despite the evidence, governments worldwide still plan to produce more than twice the amount of coal, oil, and gas, consistent with a 1.5°C world, according to the Production Gaps Report. The Fossil Fuels Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative (FFNPT) strives for an international regime that complements the Paris Agreement by addressing the supply side of fossil fuels.
- 21st September **Global Day of Action for a Fossil Fuel Treaty**: An opportunity to join Christians around the world to understand better the situation around fossil fuels, and to advocate for change to renewable energy.
- 4th October 2pm -3pm in the UK: **Closing prayer service for Feast of St. Francis**, led by the Ecumenical Youth Committee. Join the service at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRHWHTOFdow>

PARISH PROGRAMME for the SEASON OF CREATION 2024

- Weekly: inserts in the newsletter related to different aspects of Care for our Common Home
- Monday 2nd Sept: Parish meeting to review current practice in Care for our Common Home and draft future action
- Friday 27th Sept: Spiritual Formation session (venue to be confirmed) – on Creation and Healing of our Common Home
- Friday 13th Sept: Start of Novena for Creation, ending on 21st Sept, Global Day of Action
- Sunday 29th Sept: Presentation (in newsletter) of review of current parish action on Care for our Common Home, and ideas for future action
- Tuesday 1st October: Introduction and start of month's daily Rosary focused on Creation and our role in it.

OPEN INVITATION 2nd September at 10.45am

(after 10am Mass at OLSE)

During this Season of Creation, the Steering Group will dedicate its monthly meeting to issues around creation and prayer and action for our common home, in living more simply, sustainably and in solidarity with people who are poor.

You are warmly invited to join this meeting to share what is already being done in the parish and to bring ideas on what more can be done.

We hope the meeting will bring together the wealth of experience and wisdom that exists within the parish.