

Creation: The Best Rock Concert of all Time!

by Sylvia C. Keesmaat

Imagine hearing an amazing concert. The band is poetry in motion, playing and singing all the joy and sorrow of your life. You are more alive than you have ever been.

Then the drummer clutches his stomach and staggers off. The band keeps playing. The guitar player then jumps off the stage. The bass player walks off next. And while the lead singer is a good soloist, the concert has lost its depth, its complexity, its powerful beauty.

Now imagine creation on that first day. There are trees teeming with life: fruit trees and nut trees. Birds are twittering; insects chirping. Wild animals stalk around calmly. You see meadows of wildflowers, brooks gurgling, rocks, solid and steady. The Bible tells us that all of creation—trees, mountains, stars, seas and rivers, wild animals and birds, insects and fish—all of creation sings praise to God. Imagine the sound of that chorus in glad celebration singing to the God of life. A concert couldn't touch it.

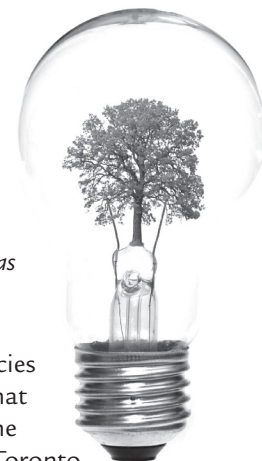
As human beings, we are part of that concert. Sometimes, however, we stop singing. Not only that, we also sabotage the other players. We silence the rivers and the rocks, the animals and the insects, the birds and the sea creatures. Imagine God's sorrow as the harmonies disappear.

Now for the Good News: no matter how we mess up, God brings healing. The Bible begins with a vision of a wonderful creation, and it ends with a vision of a wonderful creation: a river, fruit trees for food, all of creation praising God. And because we know that God will make all things new, we can give up our anxiety and carry on with our passion to bring healing for creation.

We know that God forgives us again and again, gives us music, bids us sing. But it will only sound great if creation is singing along.

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Learning to Sing with Creation —Take Your Part!



Just as music works best in community, so learning to sing with creation works best with the support of others. Consider these ideas with your family or church community.

Learn the other parts of the song: Find ten trees or ten species of wildlife in your neighbourhood. Learn their names. What would it look like if they were gone? As well, check out the Eco Retreat Centre's events at St. Andrew's by the Lake, Toronto www.standrewbythelake.com/.

Take a look at the whole musical score: Read Psalm 104 while sitting outside. The psalmist is describing God's intricate renewal of all of creation. If you were to write something similar from where you stand, what would it say?

Draw young voices into the song: *Kids in Creation*, a 5-part curriculum with lots of fun activities for Vacation Bible School or Sunday School, is available for free at <http://goodseedsunday.com/resources>.

Let the voice of creation be heard in your worship: Many fine liturgical resources exist, including these ones: <http://www.montreal.anglican.ca/en/Serve/Volunteers/Stewardship-of-the-Environment> and http://goodseedsunday.com/resources/wr_sunday-service-resource-pack.pdf.

Add to the harmony: Look for ways for your parish to become a centre of creation care in your community. Start a community garden or become a drop-off hub for Community Supported Agriculture deliveries. Join in a neighbourhood clean-up or organize one if none exists.

Get in tune: A green audit is a great way for a parish to examine its impact on creation and discover ways to lighten both its carbon footprint and costs. The national Anglican Creation Matters Network invites parishes to apply for partial funding of a green audit through its Green Audit Competition. Find out more: www.anglican.ca/relationships/programs/creationmatters.

Give voice to a silent singer: Learn about one way that creation's voice has been silenced in your city or country. What can you do to give voice to this silence? Include political advocacy along with personal actions. Call, write, or visit your city councillor, MPP and MP. Consider supporting campaigns such as the Climate Action Network or 350.org.

Don't forget to complete the Parish Green Survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DG77FNC>.