

Welcome to  
your Parish Church  
in the Diocese of Birmingham



ALL SAINTS  
KINGS HEATH



Going for silver



**Let Justice  
and Peace Flow**

Season of Creation 2023

A Mighty River  
Amos 5: 24

Holy Communion Trinity 16, Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2023

We gather

*For those worshipping at home, have ready in an honoured place a portion of food and something to drink. It may be bread and wine or something else. Set your Bible alongside. You might light a candle.*

*Music as we gather:*

*Through the wind and waves and the rising tides, Jesus is Lord of all.  
Through the raging fires and the storms that come, Jesus still is Lord of all.*

1. Look around Lord! Look our way. Be the thunder in our day.  
Echo loud, echo silent, through the storms and our dismay.  
Change is coming, earth is warming, our common home in disarray.
2. Wake up people! Look around! Change is coming on the ground.  
Fires are raging, floods are surging, waters rising, creatures drowned.  
Change is coming, earth is warming, our common home where fear abounds.
3. Holy Spirit wake us up! Rouse your people, build us up.  
He says be still! and winds obey. He says Shalom! our fears allay.  
Faith is growing, courage standing, Holy Spirit stay! we pray.

*(words: Silvia Purdie; music: Cyril Murphy)*

*When the song finishes we stand in silence.*

*We sing:* [He who would valiant be](#)

1. He who would valiant be 'gainst all disaster,  
let him in constancy follow the Master.  
There's no discouragement shall make him once relent  
his first avowed intent to be a pilgrim.

2. Who so beset him round with dismal stories,  
do but themselves confound – his strength the more is.  
No foes shall stay his might, though he with giants fight:  
he will make good his right to be a pilgrim.

3. Since, Lord, thou dost defend us with thy Spirit,  
we know we at the end shall life inherit.  
Then fancies flee away! I'll fear not what men say,  
I'll labour night and day to be a pilgrim.

*(words: Percy Dearmer, after John Bunyan;  
music: Traditional English melody, coll & arr Ralph Vaughan Williams)*

Priest Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ  
be with you all.

**All: And also with you.**

WELCOME and NOTICES

*We pray:* **Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known  
and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of  
our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may  
perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## We seek forgiveness

CONFESSION

Deacon Anticipating our Old Testament reading, we confess humanity's sins of  
greed, ingratitude and impatience. (Exodus 16)

When God sent Manna to feed the people of Israel they were  
commanded to collect enough for each day.  
When we hoard and plunder the earth's resources, Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

When God sent Manna to the people of Israel they soon complained it  
was boring. When we forget the wonder of the ordinary, Christ, have  
mercy.  
**Christ, have mercy.**

When they collected Manna on Friday, they collected enough for the Sabbath. When we give no rest to each other, nor to the land, Lord, have mercy.

**Lord, have mercy.**

FORGIVENESS *is declared:*

*[May]* The God of love bring us back to himself, forgive us our sins and assure us of his eternal love in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*We stand to give thanks for forgiveness, singing* THE GLORIA

*Glory! Glory! Glory to God!*

*Glory! Glory! Glory to God!*

1. Glory to God in the heights of the heavens.  
Peace to God's people, all people on earth.

2. Son of the Father, all glory and worship;  
praise and thanksgiving to you, Lamb of God.

3. You take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us, receive our prayer.

4. Seated in pow'r at the right of the Father,  
Jesus alone is the Lord, the Most High.

5. And with the Spirit of love everlasting,  
reigning in glory for ever. Amen.

(George Salazaar)

THE COLLECT for the sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

O Lord, we beseech you mercifully to hear the prayers of your people who call upon you; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have the grace and power faithfully to fulfil them, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

READINGS Exodus 16:2-15 <https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=562288755> and [Philippians 1:21-end](#)

HYMN [For the fruits of his creation](#)

1. For the fruits of his creation,  
thanks be to God;  
for his gifts to ev'ry nation,  
thanks be to God;

for the ploughing, sowing, reaping,  
silent growth while we are sleeping,  
future needs in earth's safe-keeping,  
thanks be to God.

2. In the just reward of labour,  
God's will is done;  
in the help we give our neighbour,  
God's will is done;  
in our world-wide task of caring  
for the hungry and despairing,  
in the harvests we are sharing,  
God's will is done.

3. For the harvests of his Spirit,  
thanks be to God;  
for the good we all inherit,  
thanks be to God;  
for the wonders that astound us,  
for the truths that still confound us,  
most of all, that love has found us,  
thanks be to God.

*(words: Fred Pratt Green; music: Traditional Welsh melody, arr Colin Hand)*

*We remain standing for the* GOSPEL READING [Matthew 20:1-16](#)

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew  
**All: Glory to you, O Lord.**

*At the end* This is the Gospel of the Lord  
**All: Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON *in Church is offered by Margaret Healey Pollett.*

In our reading from Paul's letter this morning we see him instructing the Philippians to

*'live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ'*

For each generation there is a task to discern what characterises a 'life worthy'. That was our prayer at the opening of this service as we asked God to grant that we 'both perceive and know what things we ought to do', and that we will have the 'grace and power' to do them.

Ever since the Council of Jerusalem described in Acts 15, the Church has drawn up the agenda of 'things we ought to do' through a process of prayer and democratic debate. For the first Christians the debate was informed by the prompting of the Spirit and the reading of the words of the prophets. In Acts 15 it was the 'Gentile Question'. Today we have local and national synods, whose democratic decision making is built on the foundations of the whole of Scripture, reason, and tradition, prompted by the Spirit and rooted in prayer.

The pressing issue of our times is ecological breakdown. In 2020, the General Synod voted for the whole of the Church of England to achieve net zero carbon by 2030. Let us hope that the Synod sticks to its targets and doesn't follow the lead of the government.....

A routemap to achieving net zero has been drawn up. The one for churches can be found at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about/environment-and-climate-change/net-zero-carbon-routemap/reducing-emissions-churches> We, as one of the high energy users in the diocese, are asked to draw up our own routemap, using the targets on this website for guidance.

Also the whole Church, under the World Council of Churches, has united to keep the Season of Creation throughout September until St Francis Day on 4<sup>th</sup> October. During this season we

*'Join our sisters and brothers in the ecumenical family in prayer and action for our common home'*

The reading from the words of the prophets chosen for this year is from Amos ch. 5.

*Let justice roll on like a river  
And righteousness like an ever-flowing stream*

## **What does justice look like?**

I am going to read out from the invitation to join in with the Season of Creation from the website<sup>ii</sup>. These words have been composed as a result of the prayer and debate of the advisory committee for the Season:

'The world humans have known, enjoyed and celebrated is changing rapidly beyond repair. Biodiversity is being lost at a rate not seen since the last mass extinction. The hope of keeping average temperature increases to 1.5 degrees Celsius is fading. The futures of young people are threatened by the cascading impacts of the loss of biodiversity and a changing climate. Industrialisation, colonisation and the extraction and consumption of resources have created great wealth, unequally distributed. We are presently more aware than ever of the link between fossil fuels, and violence and war.

The urgency grows and we must make visible peace with Earth and on Earth, at the same time that justice calls us to repentance and a change of attitude and actions. Instead of despair, hope can be created if we work together as the People of God. By the Creator's infinite love and mercy, streams can rise in the desert. An economy of peace can be built instead of an economy based on conflict. Our prayers, sermons and liturgies must call for justice not only for humans but for all Creation. Justice, allied with peace, calls us to repent of our ecological sins and to change our attitudes and actions. Righteousness demands that we live in peace, not conflict with our human neighbours, and building right relationships with all of Creation. Our individual actions during the Season of Creation are important. We must also recognise that, for a mighty movement of justice, individual actions are not enough. Justice also includes paying historic debts. At a global level, nations with power and wealth have a duty to deal justly and honestly with communities that suffer most from the climate and ecological crises.

Global South nations, working together for more than 30 years, have just managed to win a victory at COP27 in making wealthier nations realise their moral duty to provide for financing for loss and damage. The recent decisions at COP15 to preserve biodiversity are also hopeful and required similar perseverance. These victories have been achieved by those with less power working together. Together we can be a mighty river of justice and peace, that brings new life to Earth and future generations, a river that can move the mountains of injustice.

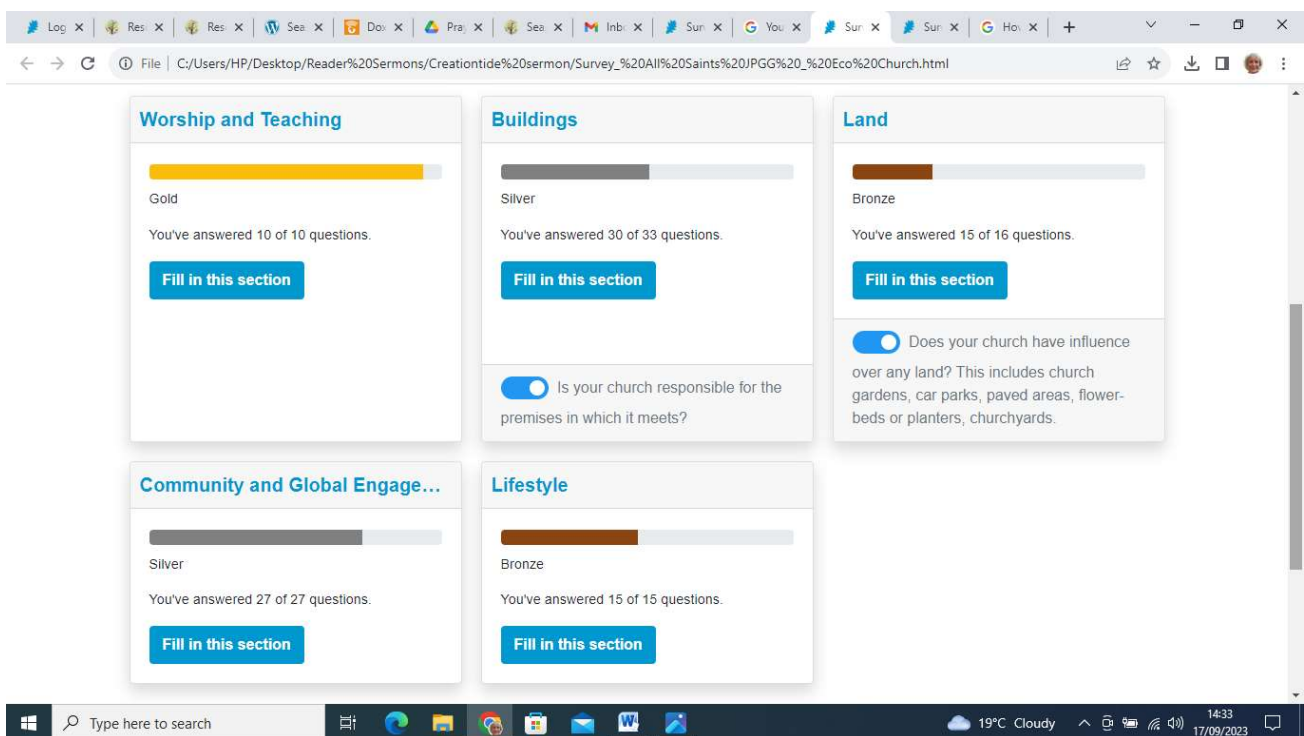
As an ecumenical family, we can engage in these actions and contribute to ensure that the web of life is preserved and cared for. Through prayer, practical advocacy and sustainable actions, this 2023 Season of Creation can prophetically renew our ecumenical unity and care for our common home. May we journey together in communion as the people of God to let justice and peace flow!

## **The Family of All Saints**

How can we here at All Saints collectively join in this journey to let justice and peace flow? Firstly we can draw up our routemap to 2030, the PCC are aware of this requirement.

Other guidance has been created by an organisation called A Rocha (which means 'the rock'). They have created an award called Eco Church (formerly Eco-congregation)<sup>iii</sup>, which can act as a check list of things we might be doing already, or might aim to do in the future. There are three levels of award: bronze, silver and gold. All Saints fulfilled the criteria for the bronze award in 2017, and you can see our plaque on the pillar by the welcome desk. By achieving this, we have already met one of the 2023 milestones in the routemap for churches. The Birmingham diocese was also awarded bronze about the same time, and is hoping to get silver soon. If we get to silver, that will help the diocese.

Our Silver survey was last updated by the Justice, Peace and Green group in March 2020, and this is how it all looked then. There are five sections. As you will see, we are already operating at the gold level with Worship and Teaching. We have reached silver in the Buildings, and Community and Global Engagement sections, but we are still on bronze for the Land and Lifestyle sections, and actually all the sections need revisiting, as it is some time since they were completed.



Let's drill down into the Lifestyle section a bit more. Please have a look at the Lifestyle sheet you were given when you arrived. As with all the sections there are a number of questions to respond to. We are given a choice of responses, and in order that the survey is representative of the whole of All Saints, it would be great if you would each have a go at this section before next week.

You will see that question 1 asks if we have an individual or group to champion the cause of our environmental sustainability. The answer to that is a tentative 'yes'. Our Justice, Peace and Green group is depleted due initially to Covid, followed by bereavement and illness, so if any of you would like to join us to add to our collective energy, please let Daniel Wilson, Ruth Tetlow, John Parkin, or myself know.

With question 4, there's no time like the present! This means that the 'never' option will not be applicable, but you might still need to think about the other response options given. There are a number of surveys available for auditing your lifestyle, if you would like to. One recommended by

A Rocha may be found at <https://creationcare.org.uk> I've done the household section and found some thought-provoking questions that could prompt effective changes. So I would like to encourage you to do it if you can. If you are unable to get online, I would be happy to meet up with you in the café, next week to work through it with you – so please have a word with me after the service. I am available on Thursday and Friday.

This means you are going to be leaving today's service with some homework to do! We hope you will want to do it, and will feel the benefit of it, but it's entirely optional, and there won't be any detentions given out to those who have been unable to do it.....

Next week is our Harvest celebration, when we hope you will bring your harvest gifts, including your completed Lifestyle form and Creation Care certificate if you have them.

The real value of the Eco-church awards is that the questions serve as prompts for what we might do to improve our church's environmental sustainability. So, if you find yourself responding with 'no's' or 'nevers', or 'need-to-find-outs', please do add any comments or suggestions you would like to make at the end of the sheet, or attach an additional sheet onto it for longer comment, and bring them with you as your Harvest gift. If you would like us to respond to your comments personally, please give your name and contact details.

### **Today's Gospel Reading**

Is there justice in the reading we heard from Matthew's Gospel this morning?

It doesn't seem very fair that the labourers who turned up at the end of the day should get paid the same amount as those who were there from the beginning. In the context of the ecology and economy of this world, I think a key to understanding the passage might be found at the end of Acts ch. 4 where we see the new Christians selling their possessions and pooling their money so that no-one was left needy. Some of them will clearly have given more money than others, just as some of the labourers in the parable worked for longer than others. Some people have greater capability, strength, or skills than others, depending on their stage in life, but justice requires that everyone has their needs met. Mahatma Gandhi famously said:

*'The world has enough for everyone's needs, but not everyone's greed'*

If the vineyard in today's parable is seen as planet Earth, our common home, then, in worldly terms, all our needs are met in it if we 'till it and care for it'<sup>iv</sup>. Even if some bear more of the burden than others, if everyone's needs are met, then no wrong is done.

This is justice rolling on like a river, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

## **We affirm our faith**

*We stand and at home, if able, we turn to look in the direction of Church, to affirm our faith in God, revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (At home, simply begin each paragraph "I believe..." as statement rather than question.)*

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Deacon: Do you believe and trust in God the Father,  
source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

**All: I believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,  
who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

**I believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the  
people of God and makes Christ known in the world?

**I believe and trust in him/her.**

This is the Faith of the Church.

**This is our faith.**

**We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

## INTERCESSIONS

*At home, pray for the pay disputes in healthcare and transport that still drag on.  
Pray for any who feel under-appreciated at work. Pray for agriculture around the  
world and shaping of policy through this week's UN Climate Summit which our Prime  
Minister chose not to go to. Pray for all who are on the move and are unsure where  
their next meal will come from.*

*Among those who are unwell we pray for Wendy Turner, Gill Parkin, Martina  
Osborne, Mary Cushnie and Mary O'Regan, and for Sara Packer entering end of life  
care.*

*Remembering those who have died, we pray for the family of Steven Jarratt.*

*We stand for THE PEACE for Creationtide*

Deacon: With the Prophet Amos we cry out:

**All: "let justice roll on like a river,  
righteousness like a never-failing stream!"** *Amos 5:24*

We look outwards and say to creation:

**All: The Peace of the Lord be with you.**

We look around us and say to each other:

**All: The peace of the Lord be always with you**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

HYMN [From heaven you came](#)

1. From heav'n you came, helpless babe,  
entered our world, your glory veiled;  
not to be served but to serve,  
and give your life that we might live.

*This is our God, the Servant King,  
he calls us now to follow him,  
to bring our lives as a daily offering  
of worship to the Servant King.*

2. There in the garden of tears,  
my heavy load he chose to bear;  
his heart with sorrow was torn.  
"Yet not my will but yours," he said.

3. Come see his hands and his feet,  
the scars that speak of sacrifice,  
hands that flung stars into space,  
to cruel nails surrendered.

4. So let us learn how to serve,  
and in our lives enthrone him;  
each other's needs to prefer,  
for it is Christ we're serving.

*(words & music: Graham Kendrick)*

*The Table is prepared in Church. At home, now is the time to say the Lord's Prayer  
(below) and consume the food and drink you have prepared.*

## We tell the story of salvation

Priest: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give thanks and praise.**

We lift our hearts to you, gracious God, because you made the dazzling creation out of nothing yet made us to share eternity with you. In covenant love you called your chosen people to an imagination as plentiful as the stars in the sky and the sands of the desert. Your Son Jesus transformed our hearts from the scarcity of mammon to the wondrous abundance of manna, and through the church you gather us to share in the holy feast where your grace abounds for all, for ever. His cross and resurrection turn the emptiness of sin into the fullness of everlasting life. And so we join with angels and archangels singing the hymn of your unending praise:

**All: [Holy, holy, holy Lord,](#)**

**God of power and might,**

**heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

We give you thanks and praise, Lord God, for in your Son Jesus you became the true bread from heaven, the manna sustaining us in every wilderness, the bread of abundant life that never runs out. Send down your Holy Spirit upon us now, that we might become living bread for your hungry world. Give us your very self in these gifts of bread and wine and make them for us the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Who, at supper with his disciples, took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread and gave it to them saying, "Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

*A bell is rung*

After supper he took the cup. Again he gave you thanks, and gave it to his disciples saying, "Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

*A bell is rung*

Deacon: Great is the mystery of faith:

**All: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

Ever-bountiful God, listen to the hunger of your children and nourish their true life in you. Draw near to those who toil for daily wages and all who wonder where they will find daily bread. Bless any whose days are spent looking for work and waiting for hire. Give each of your sons and daughters a place in your kingdom and fruitful work in your vineyard, not only for a passing day but for eternity. By your Holy Spirit in your Holy Church, make the labours of our hands tell the good news of your harvest of plenty and hasten the day when in one great sharing around your table we shall taste and see that you are good. Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ all honour and glory are yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **Amen.**

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

Deacon: As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

Priest: We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All: Though we are many, we are one body.  
For we all share in one bread.**

Draw near with faith. Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ which he gave for you and his blood which he shed for you. Eat and drink in remembrance that he died and now lives for you, and feed on him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving.

*We sing:* [Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,](#)  
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,  
grant us peace.

*We pause to remember all who pray at home, then share the bread and wine, now for us the body and blood of Christ.*

### SONGS *during Communion*

1. Take me, Lord, use my life in the way you wish to do.  
Fill me, Lord, touch my heart till it always thinks of you.  
Take me now, as I am, this is all I can offer.  
*Here today I, the clay, will be moulded by my Lord.*

2. Lord, I pray that each day I will listen to your will.  
Many times I have failed but I know you love me still.  
Teach me now, guide me, Lord, keep me close to you always.

3. I am weak, fill me now with your strength and set me free.  
Make me whole, fashion me so that you will live in me.  
Hold me now in your hands, form me now with your Spirit.

*(words & music: Francesca Leftley, arr Andrew Moore)*

### [Such love](#)

1. Such love, pure as the whitest snow;  
such love weeps for the shame I know;  
such love, paying the debt I owe;  
O Jesus, such love.

2. Such love, stilling my restlessness;  
such love, filling my emptiness;  
such love, showing me holiness;  
O Jesus, such love.

3. Such love springs from eternity;  
such love, streaming through history;  
such love, fountain of life to me;  
O Jesus, such love.

*(Words & music: Graham Kendrick)*

# We are sent out

*We pray* **Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us with your Word [and with the body and blood of Christ]. Strengthen us in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.**

## THE BLESSING

*[Let us] Live [y]our life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among us and remain with us always. Amen.*

## HYMN [Fill your hearts with joy and gladness](#)

1. Fill your hearts with joy and gladness,  
sing and praise your God and mine!  
Great the Lord in love and wisdom,  
might and majesty divine!  
He who framed the starry heavens  
knows and names them as they shine.

2. Praise the Lord, his people, praise  
him!  
Wounded souls his comfort know.  
Those who fear him find his mercies,  
peace for pain and joy for woe;  
humble hearts are high exalted,  
human pride and pow'r laid low.

3. Praise the Lord for times and seasons,  
cloud and sunshine, wind and rain;  
spring to melt the snows of winter  
till the waters flow again;  
grass upon the mountain pastures,  
golden valleys thick with grain.

4. Fill your hearts with joy and gladness,  
peace and plenty crown your days!  
Love his law, declare his judgements,  
walk in all his words and ways;  
he the Lord and we his children,  
praise the Lord, all people, praise!

*(words: Timothy Dudley-Smith; music: Henry Smart)*

Priest: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**In the name of Christ, Amen.**

*This evening, 6.30pm **Making Room for God***

*A time of worship, rich in song, with Lectio Divina reflection on Matthew 20:1-16*



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Eucharistic Prayer from *Joining the Angels' Song*, Samuel Wells and Abigail Kocher, Canterbury Press 2016

<sup>i</sup> <https://seasonofcreation.org/about/> [accessed 18.9.23]

<sup>ii</sup> <https://seasonofcreation.org/resources/> [accessed 18.9.23]

<sup>iii</sup> <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/> [accessed 18.9.23]

<sup>iv</sup> Genesis 2:15