

## Appendix—Historical Background to the Day and the Season<sup>27</sup>

1 September was proclaimed as a ‘day of prayer for the care of creation’ by Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I for the Orthodox in 1989, and the idea was embraced by other major Christian European churches in 2001, and by Pope Francis for the Roman Catholic Church in 2015.

The earliest recorded ‘season of creation’ was in 1991, when the Rev’d Philip Wilson, rector of the Church of Redeemer in Morristown, New Jersey, had the inspiration to initiate a season in the Christian annual cycle dedicated to God the Creator, and to the creation itself. This season was to stretch for eight weeks, beginning with St Francis’ Day in early October.

In a neighbouring parish, St Paul’s Church in Chatham, the season was celebrated for the decade beginning in 1992, and members of that church began spreading word about the season to other churches in the United States and abroad. During the decade of the 1990’s, many Episcopal, Methodist and Lutheran congregations in the United States received information on Philip Wilson’s inspiration via St Paul’s. Material was also sent to Australia and to England.

In Australia, the Lutheran Church developed a four-week season, beginning with 1 September and ending with 4 October, and this became a national ecumenical practice, with material promoted on the internet. The Catholic Bishops of the Philippines endorsed the idea in 2003.

The Third European Ecumenical Assembly commended the season in 2007, resolving that the period ‘be dedicated to prayer for the protection of Creation and the promotion of sustainable lifestyles that reverse our contribution to climate change.’ The World Council of Churches affirmed the concept in 2008, and the Anglican Consultative Council in 2012.

# Notes

- 1 'Laudato si': On Care for our Common Home'—online at [w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/it/encyclicals.index.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/it/encyclicals/index.html)
- 2 [ecochurch.arocha.org.uk](http://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk)
- 3 [www.licc.org.uk/resources/whole-life-worship](http://www.licc.org.uk/resources/whole-life-worship)
- 4 Exod 16.12f; Num 22.28; 1 Kgs 17.6; Jonah 4.6f.
- 5 F Spufford, *Unapologetic* (London: Faber, 2013).
- 6 T Torrance, *Divine and Contingent Order* (London: Continuum, 1981).
- 7 N T Wright, *New Heavens, New Earth: The Biblical Picture of Christian Hope* (Grove Biblical booklet B11).
- 8 The work of Swedish academic Hans Rosling helps us to have a global perspective on the battle against poverty. Watch his videos online, or see his book, *Factfulness* (New York: Flatiron, 2018).
- 9 C Voke, *Creation at Worship* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2009).
- 10 Richard Bauckham in his *Bible and Ecology* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2010).
- 11 Exod 23.12; 'Laudato si': On Care for our Common Home,' paragraph 68.
- 12 Christopher Voke, *op cit*. I am grateful to Colin Randall for introducing me to Voke's book, and drafting part of this chapter.
- 13 *op cit*, p 68.
- 14 *op cit*, p 84.
- 15 The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity.
- 16 For reflection on this, see Christopher Irvine, *The Cross and Creation in Christian Liturgy and Art* (London: SPCK, 2013).
- 17 A de Lange, T Lloyd, T Stratford and I Tarrant (eds), *Reimagining Worship* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2017) brings together insights from twenty members of the Group for the Renewal of Worship (GROW).
- 18 Learn about 'forest church' at [www.mysticchrist.co.uk](http://www.mysticchrist.co.uk)
- 19 Space precludes analysis of the creation themes in the *Alternative Service Book* (1980) and other late twentieth-century liturgical material. Suffice to say that what we see in *Common Worship* was the culmination of a process; and to note that 'Creation' was the ASB lectionary theme for the ninth Sunday before Christmas.
- 20 For a more thorough analysis of the *Common Worship* material in general, with some reference to the ASB and other twentieth-century material, see the unpublished 2011 PhD thesis of Jeremy Clines, currently chaplain at the University of Sheffield: [etheses.bham.ac.uk/2838/](http://etheses.bham.ac.uk/2838/). Jeremy has rewritten many of the *Common Worship* collects and post-communions, aiming, among other goals, to increase the prominence of creation themes. See [latequartet.blogspot.com](http://latequartet.blogspot.com)

- 21 This includes a version of the *Benedicite* localized for New Zealand.
- 22 Chris Polhill, *A Heart for Creation* (Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 2010).
- 23 I am grateful to Colin Randall for a first draft of this section.
- 24 *Hymns of Glory, Songs of Praise* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2008).
- 25 A&M: *Hymns Ancient & Modern, New Standard* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1983); CP: *Common Praise* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2000); HGSP: *Hymns of Glory, Songs of Praise* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2008); HTC: *Hymns for Today's Church* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1987); JP: *Junior Praise* (London: Collins, 2008); MP: *Mission Praise* (London: Collins, 2014); OCOFOL: *One Church, One Faith, One Lord: Hymns Old and New* (Stowmarket: Kevin Mayhew, 2007).
- 26 For deeper reflection on these issues see John Root's *Worship in a Multi-Ethnic Society* (Grove Worship booklet W236).
- 27 Sources: [seasonofcreation.org/about](http://seasonofcreation.org/about); [www.letallcreationpraise.org/united-states-ecumenical/episcopal-creation-season](http://www.letallcreationpraise.org/united-states-ecumenical/episcopal-creation-season); Anglican Communion News Service (ACNS) article 19 October 2017—'Season of Creation endorsed.'