



Weekly Resources for Schools

PHASE: PRIMARY

How do we Flourish Together?

THEME: Climate Emergency



KEY CONCEPT/MESSAGE:

The climate emergency faced by us as a planet cannot be ignored: children are well aware of the impact that we as human beings have had – and are continuing to have – on our future. What is perhaps less emphasised is the reality that this is already having a greater impact on the majority world – and that, conversely, they are often leading the way in combatting climate change. However, we must also remember that rather than scare children with what might happen, we need to empower them to feel that even small actions can make a difference: who can fail to remember the impact that the global pandemic had on the waterways in Venice in a relatively short time, for example? Ahead of the G7 climate conference in Cornwall (11th-13th June), and the COP26 conference in Glasgow in November, these resources are designed to get school communities thinking, talking, praying and taking action!

Although Greta Thunberg has done much to raise awareness of global issues and the passion that many young people feel, we have attempted here to focus on the actions of others less in the public eye. We hope that this may encourage pupils that they too can be agents of change.

BIBLE STORY OF THE WEEK:



God gives Adam and Eve a job to do – Genesis 1 & 2

The version of the story used today amalgamates several different parts of these chapters. It is a story that also appears in the Torah and the Qur'an.

Gathering

You may wish to use these words of Psalm 24 together:



**The earth and everything in
it belong to the Lord.
The world and all its people
belong to him.**

Psalm 24:1 (ICB)

Engagement

Start by watching together the compilation video linked here: [Louis Armstrong - What a Wonderful World \(Attenboroughs - Wonderful World BBC Video\) - YouTube](#) which shows images from the natural world over the Louis Armstrong classic **'What a wonderful world.'**

Use think-pair-share to give children the opportunity to talk together about what they think is wonderful about our world.

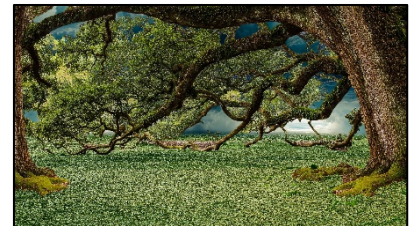
We're going to continue our time together with a story that is shared by Christians, Muslims and Jews, found in the Bible, the Holy Qur'an and the Torah – a story which presents a challenge for us all, and gives us as humankind a job to do. [The pictures used are all copyright-free from Pixabay, so can be copied into a PowerPoint if you wish]

I wonder if you can spot what this challenge is?



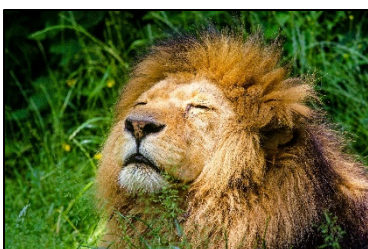
When God made the world, it was very beautiful and filled with life of all different sorts – like the most wonderful garden you could ever imagine: Paradise, in fact!

Into the very centre of the garden God placed two special trees – the tree of life and the tree-of-knowledge-of-good-and-bad (which is a very long – and strange – name!).



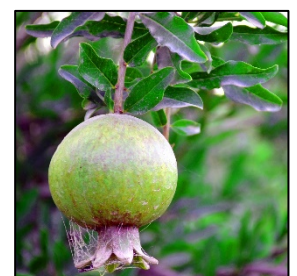
He called the man and woman he had made 'Adam and Eve' and he thought they were the most wonderful things he had ever made. God loved them with all of his heart.

He gave to them the garden and asked them to take care of it and help it to grow. **'It's your job to look after it, and everything in it!'** he told them.



One by one, God brought all the animals to Adam to see what names he would give them.... I wonder what you might've thought of if you'd been given *that* task to do?!....

Then, he gave Adam and Eve some rules to keep them safe – well, just the one really: 'You can eat from any tree in the garden,' God said. 'Any tree you like – **except** for the tree-of-knowledge-of-good-and-bad. This fruit will not be good for you, so leave it alone!'





It was God's favourite thing in all the world to spend time with Adam and Eve and walk with them through the garden, like the very best of friends. But one day, something happened that would change all that forever.... and would break God's heart of love....

But that's another story for another day!.....

I wonder if you spotted the challenge?

I wonder what you think about this?

I wonder what God might say when he looks at the world now?

I wonder if this is something that we are all responsible for?



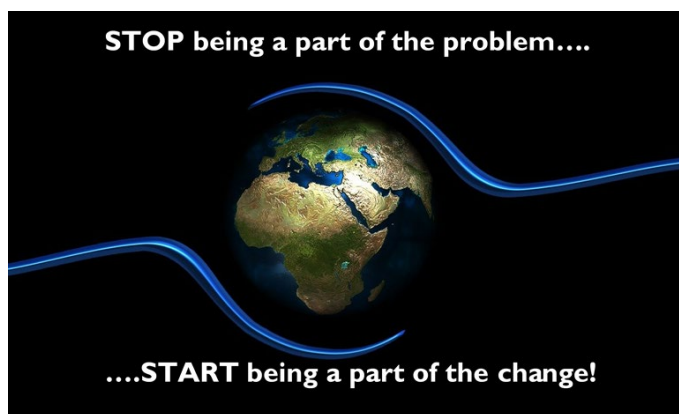
[NB Children are probably all too aware that there are many ways in which we as human beings have not taken this responsibility seriously. You may wish to talk about this sensitively together.]

The job that Adam and Eve was given in the story is something that people all around the world believe we should still be doing now: caring for our world. There are many different beliefs about how the world came to be, but whatever you believe, there is no doubt that even despite the many things that humankind has done to harm it, sometimes without thinking, it is still very beautiful. But we know that it won't always be that way unless we act now. **We can – and must – do something to slow climate change.**

It's not just about keeping our planet beautiful though – the earth is our home, and we share it with billions of other human beings. Climate change is having the biggest impact on the poorest people of our world. Most of them already face significant challenges, but it is their daily lives that are being impacted the most. **Many people would say that God cares about the effect of climate change on the poor as much as the effect on the natural world....and that we should too.**



I wonder what you think about this idea?



It's easy to think that the little bit that we can do is so small compared to the challenge, or that it's someone else's job, but it would be true to say that if everyone did something, then no-one is doing nothing!

A young climate campaigner, Jessica, said: 'Stop being a part of the problem and start being a part of the change.' [source: [BBC Newsround article](#)]

Talk together about her words – and what we can do to turn words into actions.

There are lots of suggestions and links in these resources. Choose one each that is something achievable e.g. using a refillable water bottle, or picking up litter.

Response

Make that change!

Create a paper chain from newspaper (or other recycled paper source).

Give each child a strip of paper for them to write on their chosen action. You might want to pray/reflect before you staple them into a chain and display somewhere in your classroom as a pledge and a reminder to take action this week, and beyond.



A simple prayer:

Creator God,

Help us to live as you have asked us to, loving and serving other people, and caring for the animals and the earth that you have entrusted to us.

Amen

[adapted from the #LiveLent 2020 resources, Care for God's Creation]

People from all over the world will be coming to the UK later on this year to make some important decisions about the future of our planet. Here is a more grown-up prayer, written by Rev. Dave Bookless (from A Rocha), for these forthcoming events:

Creator God, giver of life,

You sustain the earth and direct the nations.

In this time of climate crisis grant us clarity

to hear the groaning of creation and the cries of the poor;

challenge us to change our lifestyles;

guide our leaders to take courageous action;

enable your church to be a beacon of hope;

and foster within us a renewed vision of your purposes for your world;

through Jesus Christ our Lord,

by and for whom all things were made.

Amen

Sending

Say these words to each other:

As we leave this place and go into the day ahead,

Tread gently on the earth. Care for our shared home.

You might want to use one of these videos, featuring music from a couple of rock legends: Sting – [Fragile](#) or Queen – [Is this the world that we created?](#) Or how about this short piece of music, illustrating through music how global warming is increasing the temperature of our planet: it stops at 2016, but it's a good way of 'hearing' climate change! [This one-minute climate change symphony shows the terrifying impact of global... - Classic FM](#)

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

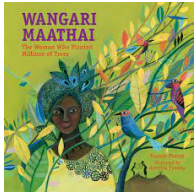
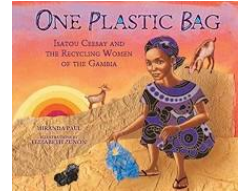
(practical ways to help us explore faith and develop spiritually at home together)

EXPERIENCES that can help us ENCOUNTER:

Look at some stories of people who have acted to improve the climate situation. Do an internet search to find out more about these people and their work.

One Plastic Bag – Isatou Ceesay and the recycling women of the Gambia book by Miranda Paul; there is a video of the book [here](#).

You can find out more on her website, oneplasticbag.com [here](#). There are resources for teachers, information about The Gambia, and the opportunity to ask Isatou Ceesay questions.

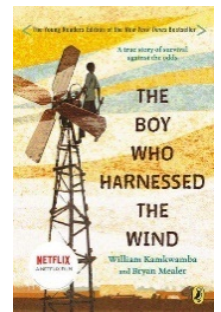


Wangari Maathai – The woman who planted trees is a book by Frank Prevot for Key Stage 2 children.

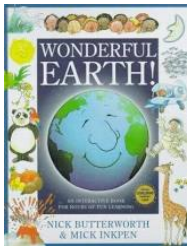
Wangari's Trees of Peace – a book by Jeanette Winter. For younger children. There is a lovely video [here](#).

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind by William Kamkwamba. There is a video [here](#).

The story of William Kamkwamba who invented a wind generator to bring power to his village in Malawi.



There is also a book and a film version for the grown-ups.



Wonderful Earth book by Nick Butterworth and Mick Inkpen
A lift the flap book about creation and the environment.

There are many others that retell this part of the Bible! Also try '*In the beginning*', a poem by Steve Turner and '*This is the earth that God made*' by Lynn Downey.

[Where will the Children Play?](#) New animation video of the song by Yusuf Islam / Cat Stevens.

SingG7 – recorded with Truro Cathedral choristers, encouraging involvement from across the world: [\(47\)](#)
'Gee Seven' by Sir Tim Rice and Peter Hobbs for 'Sing2G7' with Truro Cathedral Choristers - YouTube
News article here: [10,000 children across the world to sing new song for G7 summit in Cornwall | West Country | ITV News](#), with lots of smaller videos featuring children's views.

ACTIVITIES that can develop PRACTICES-HABITS:

Use the EXAMEN prayer to reflect on our climate emergency. It has 5 steps, so you might like to count them on your fingers.

1. GIVE THANKS for your favourite parts of creation. These might be animals, birds, insects, or places.
2. ASK FOR HELP to make choices that are good for the creation.
3. REFLECT on your day and think about times when you have enjoyed using, or eating, a natural resource.
4. SAY SORRY for the times that you have wasted natural resources.
5. DECIDE on one change that you will make tomorrow that is better for the planet. Perhaps you will make sure that you turn off the tap or play a game that doesn't use batteries or electricity!

Prayer Spaces in Schools have several ideas for reflective prayers that fit with this theme.

Go to the [website](#) and put these titles into the search:

Plastic Planet; Christian Aid Rising Sea; Forest Rubbish; Forest Hope; Climate Change Windmills.

CONVERSATIONS which CONNECT COMMUNITIES

Global Neighbours Accreditation Scheme [here](#)

Global Neighbours is run by Christian Aid and the Church of England: it's a way of supporting, recognising and celebrating all that primary, middle and special schools in England are doing to provide good global education. There are three level of accreditation: bronze, silver, and gold.

The Global Neighbours handbook is a treasure trove of good ideas and tools to audit your school's provision and practice. Schools can access the handbook without being required to apply for the award.

Global Neighbours provides a framework for thinking about global citizenship education in primary schools. In the handbook are ideas for curriculum and collective worship activities to equip you to weave a global perspective into your current curriculum provision, which will support you in helping young people to become active global citizens.

Raise awareness of the local litter problem

The pandemic has led to an increase of litter in our local area. Our regular litter picks now include face masks and hand sanitiser as well as the usual water bottles and sweet wrappers. The area around local schools, secondary and primary is always the worst for litter.

Perhaps pupils could run a campaign encouraging one another to be aware of what they drop and to safely pick up litter in their local area.

Burning the House Down [here](#)

Research from Tearfund and Youthscape into young people's attitudes towards the church and climate change. Young people saw the link between poverty, climate change and faith, this contains some interesting data and links to further materials. The videos made by young people may inspire your pupils to make their own videos.

Christian Aid – Letters to Creation [here](#)

These materials were created for Christian Aid week May 2021. They could be used at any time.

Letters to Creation is a project that invites children to tell the people in charge what they think about climate change and how they need to look after our world. Christian Aid will share these letters with some leaders and make sure that children's voices are heard. Letters could be in any form: written word, art, song, rap, poetry or prayer. So just think, if you could say something to the people in charge about looking after our planet, what would you say? The plan is to display these letters in cathedrals as part of the Lambeth Conference and hopefully at the UN Climate Change Conference COP26 in November 2021.

A Rocha – Caring for God's Earth [here](#)

A Christian charity working for the protection and restoration of the natural world and committed to equipping Christians and churches in the UK to care for the environment.

Costa Rica Might be Tiny but it's a Global Leader in Conservation [here](#)

Costa Rica is a beacon of hope and stability. It has led the world in eco-tourism and aims to become the first carbon neutral country in 2021.

How to Save the Planet – A Kids' Guide is useful [here](#)

Read about 7 young people from around the world, and what they are doing to combat climate change: [Climate change: 7 young climate activists from around the world - CBBC Newsround](#)



NATRE run a competition every year called Spirited Arts, designed to help children & young people express their ideas in RE through the creative arts. This year (2021), themes include 'God's good earth?', so why not get creative and submit an entry? Details here: [Spirited Arts 2021 \(natre.org.uk\)](https://natre.org.uk)

Some more items of global interest:



This is a startling piece of data showing which countries across the world have the best track record for banning plastic bags.

What might children say about this?

Links to global climate summit information:

G7: Cornwall, June 2021 [2021 G7 Summit – UK Presidency \(g7uk.org\)](https://www.g7uk.org/)

COP26: [HOME - UN Climate Change Conference \(COP26\) at the SEC – Glasgow 2021 \(ukcop26.org\)](https://www.ukcop26.org/)



Lent 2020 resources: Care for God's creation: You may have these resources in your school or parish church. There are some good questions, reflections and action points in these booklets, for children / families & for adults.

If you feel like having a look at some worldwide projects that are combatting climate change, then use these links to explore:

www.afford-able.com A company creating sustainable buildings made from a crop called Kenaf

www.sanergy.com + [Video](#) A Kenyan project 'recycling' human waste

www.komaza.com An African project combatting deforestation

www.greenhope.co A company working to make plastics completely green

www.greenpathfood.com Creating a better future for smallholding farmers in Ethiopia

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP – OUR APPROACH

INVITATIONAL

Everyone is welcome to take part in collective worship, as much or as little as they or their parents and carers are comfortable with. This means we use invitational language and consider carefully our choice of words and songs. Children are invited to pray but are not compelled or expected to do so; they always have a choice. We invite them to pray or reflect in whatever way they would usually as a family, if that is part of their home experience.

INCLUSIVE

Acts of worship need to be inclusive of all. Therefore, we choose topics and ideas that are shared by different faiths and worldviews. When we present Christian teaching, we make it clear that this is ‘what Christians believe’, saying things like:

‘I wonder why this story might be important to Christians?’

‘The story today comes from the Bible (the holy book of Christians), which teaches that ...’

Our worship should be accessible for children and young people with a range of different backgrounds, and so we take care that activities do not require expensive resources. We also offer a variety of activities, so that children and young people with differing needs can all find something they can engage with.

INSPIRING

We aim for our acts of worship to inspire those engaging with them. How might it engage their emotions, enabling a sense of peace, comfort, hope or motivation? How might it inspire them into action, into thinking differently and considering their behaviour or actions? How might it inspire them to reflect on their faith or beliefs, and on the faith or beliefs of others?