

Season of Creation

CELEBRATING THE FOREST



28 August – 3 September 2017

This week we celebrate the forest as a part of God's Creation.

They are an integral part of our ecosystem and we depend on forests for our survival, from the air we breathe to the wood we use. Besides providing habitats for animals and livelihoods for humans, forests also prevent soil erosion and mitigate climate change.¹



About **30%** of the world's
land surface is forest



Over 2 billion people
rely on forests for shelter,
livelihoods, water, food and
fuel security

300 million people live in forests



Including **60 million** indigenous people

Daily Prayer

Here is a prayer that you can pray together with one another every day this week...

Dear Jesus,

Teach us to care for your world. Help us to listen to the cries of creation, cries of suffering from the hills and the trees and the animals who live in them. We are sorry for taking the forests for granted. Help us to treasure the forests of your world, and to do our best to care for them.

Thank you, Jesus. Amen.

¹ http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/deforestation/importance_forests/

Family Activity

The forest and the bush are ideal places to feel immersed in the mysteries of creation. This activity focuses on listening in a forest or bush area. Enter a cluster of trees or dense vegetation and remain silent. Listen! Perhaps close your eyes. Progressively become conscious of more and more sounds, especially the soft sounds arising in the forest. Name them in your mind and heart. There may be sounds of breezes, birds, insects or the place itself-perhaps even the sounds of silence. Become aware that these are the sounds of life from a myriad of living things around you. You are immersed in life and life sounds. There are also sounds that are too soft for you to hear-the fluttering wings of moths, the beating of hearts in tiny animals and the breathing of trees as they emit oxygen. Imagine them in your mind's ear. Yet all these sounds together combine in a chorus of praise-not like a human choir but a symphony of living sounds from creation. Listen to the forest as the psalm writer once did when he/she wrote: 'All the trees of the forest sing for joy' (Psalm 96:12). As you grow in awareness you may wish to join in the chorus of the forest and add a human voice. Beyond all the sounds, the songs and music of the forest there is another voice, the silent word of God. For God's Spirit is the deep impulse that created diverse life forms in the beginning and continues to create in the forest. Listen, like Elijah at Mt Horeb, to the word of God stirring life through the forest. Be still and hear the voice of God, the spiritual impulse behind all the sounds of life.²

Some places where you can go to do the activity are...

- Close by... Wolston Creek Bushland Reserve, Riverpoint Blvd, Riverhills
- Further away... J.C. Slaughter Falls, Sir Samuel Griffith Drive, Mt Coot-Tha
- A day trip... Lake Manchester Reserve, Lake Manchester Road, Lake Manchester

Weekly Photo Challenge

Take a photograph of a tree or a forest of trees and post it to the Centenary Uniting Church's facebook page (www.facebook.com/centenaryUC/) or to Twitter or to Instagram with the hashtag #CentenarySOC & #Forest – We will display the photos in the worship service on the following Sunday. If you don't have facebook, Twitter or Instagram, you can mail them to minister@centenaryuca.org.au



² <http://seasonofcreation.com/worship-resources/ideas-for-spiritual-reflection/ideas-for-spiritual-reflection-%E2%80%93-forest%C2%A0sunday/>