

Season of Creation

CELEBRATING THE OUTBACK AND WILDERNESS



11 September – 17 September 2017

This week we celebrate the outback wilderness as a part of God's Creation

The Australian outback wilderness covers most of the Australian mainland. It spans thousands of kilometres from north to south and east to west.

Temperatures in the deserts can reach as high as 50°C during the day and fall to as low as -10°C during the night.

Most Australia's live near the coasts, with not as many people living in the outback.

Many people visit the outback, especially the Red Centre, located in the middle of Australia. This is where Uluru can be found.



Daily Prayer

Here is this week's daily prayer

Dear Jesus,

We celebrate your vibrant presence among us and everything you have made, especially in the outback. Help us to recognise your presence in the deserts, scrub land and salt plains. Help us to hear you voice amongst the wind, the animals and the plants that call the outback home.

Thank you, Jesus. Amen.

Connecting with Creation: Hearing the Groans

When we think of the outback wilderness we tend to connect with the desert - wild and exotic land far from where we live here in Brisbane; vast areas of red sand or rugged landscape with only a few obvious forms of life. But the outback is just as alive with dynamic creatures as the forests or rivers. And the outback is just as vulnerable to the forces of nature at work in other parts of our world. Especially damaging are the long-term effects of climate change. Yet, even though the world is being damaged, some countries have found it difficult to act to reduce pollution and slow down or stop climate change. We need to act now and change the way we use energy and resources to stop the damage being caused to the climate and the world.

It is difficult to visit the outback as it would be a long journey to get there from Brisbane. However, one way to connect with the outback and hear our world groaning from the pressure we human beings are placing on it is to stop and listen – listen to the sounds that people are making. You might want to go to a place where you cannot see any signs of people, like an open space or a park away from homes and roads. When you get there, stand or sit still. You may even want to lie down. Close your eyes and listen. Listen to the sound people are making; you might hear cars and trucks driving along a road, planes flying overhead, lawn mowers or power tools, people talking or music playing. All these sounds can remind us that we are having an effect on our world, even in places we cannot easily see or visit, like the outback. The Apostle Paul wrote that all creation is groaning under the pressure of decay as it waits for God to set it free and make it whole. (Romans 8:21-22) Sadly, people are causing some of this decay.

It is not easy to stop and listen to the groaning of our world, especially amongst all the noises that people make. But if we stop and listen long enough, we might also hear God whispering amongst all the noise, for God is also present in the world. God created the world and everything in it. God is in the cities and the forests and the land and the outback and wilderness.

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

- Your backyard, a park or any large open space near to your home.

Weekly Photo Challenge

Take a photograph or draw / paint a picture of some wilderness or outback places 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 & #Outback – We will display the photos or artwork 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

