**Listen to the Voice of Creation**

**This year the theme for Season of Creation is ‘Listen to the Voice of Creation’. The Season of Creation, or Creationtide, it is the part of the Church Year, running from 1st September to 4th October, when churches across the diocese and around the world will celebrate and cherish God’s creation and Sunday by Sunday join with all creation in worship.

*The heavens are telling the glory of God,
    and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.* ***2****Day to day pours forth speech,
    and night to night declares knowledge.****3****There is no speech, nor are there words;
    their voice is not heard;****4****yet their voicegoes out through all the earth
    and their words to the end of the world.*

Psalm 19

Creation cries out both in glory and in pain. Our starting point is that we are all creatures living in relationship with our Creator. This influences how we relate not only to our fellow living creatures, but with everything that is created. We belong to creation as much as being stewards of it. Care for the earth is founded upon relationship.

All is not always well with creation. Romans 8 tells us of the ‘groaning of creation’; the unexpected heat waves and lack of rain have caused an outbreak of roaring fires on our parched dry land. The prevalence of unnatural fires and the destruction of the burning land can be seen as a sign of the devastating effects that climate change has on our farmland and our farmers, on us as consumers and on the most vulnerable of our planet.

Creation cries out as fields and forests crackle, animals flee, and people are forced to migrate due to the fires of injustice. The cry of creation is heard in the voices of those suffering from climate change. The parched and hardened ground is unable to receive the rain even when it comes, the land has become so hard and compacted. Drought and flood alternate.

Yet the voice from the burning bush in Exodus 3.1-12, which called to Moses as he tended the flock on Mount Horeb did not consume or destroy the bush.

This flame of the Spirit revealed God’s presence. This holy fire affirmed that God heard the cries of all who suffered and promised to be with us as we followed in faith to our deliverance from injustice. The covenant with Noah also brings hope, it will not always be like this. Rain brings both flood and new life. It is our responsibility as ‘tillers and keepers’ of the soil to work against the current prevailing destructive forces.

It is our responsibility not only to hear, the cries of the victims, but to respond and to bring the voices from various communities to the public forum of our businesses and governments, and of our own everyday lives. It is this responsibility and respect for the whole of creation under God which is at the heart of our thinking and acting as the people of God. It is the theological starting point we also share with people of other faiths.

We must respond to ‘the signs of the times; God in Christ has reconciled the world to Himself; God’s saving purpose is for the whole of creation. Saving creation was part of Christ’s sacrificial mission and as his followers is part of ours.

Christine Jack, Christ Church, High Harrogate