

Week 2



SEASON OF CREATION

- Read the words of Pope Francis opposite. Where do you hear 'sweet songs', and 'anguished pleas'?

- Read Genesis 9:1-17

We looked at the story of Noah in July, but this study focuses on a different section of the story.

- In what ways is the flood story a kind of de-creation? Why did the flood happen?
- Why do you think there is so much focus in the story on saving the animals?
- In what ways could you describe Noah as the first conservationist? What does his story tell us about how human beings fit into God's plans?
- What is the significance of the covenant God makes with Noah?
- What endangered species in your area need to be cherished? Where do you see signs of hope for threatened plants and animals?
- Discuss the sort of actions you could take, from lobbying the government to feeding birds in gardens ...
- End by praying for the work of conservation organisations, including Christian ones such as A Rocha, and for the part you can play in caring for God's creation.

The Biodiversity Crisis

The Season of Creation, or Creationtide (1 September to 4 October) is a season in which Christians specifically focus on giving thanks for and committing themselves to care for God's wonderful gift of Earth.

Biodiversity is declining faster than at any time in human history. Since 1970, there has been on average a 68% decline in the populations of mammals, birds, fish, reptiles and amphibians. It is thought that one million animal and plant species - almost a quarter of the global total - are threatened with extinction.

Half of Britain's butterfly species are now classed as Threatened or Near Threatened, together with many birds, including swift, cuckoo and greenfinch.

'Noah's Ark can be seen as a picture of planet earth today - a planet where all of us are squashed together, often competing for space and resources, yet also a planet where God has made enough for all if we recognise our interdependence.'

(Dave Bookless)

'If we learn how to listen to the voice of creation... on the one hand we can hear a sweet song in praise of our beloved Creator, on the other, an anguished plea, lamenting our mistreatment of this our common home.'

(Pope Francis's message for the Season of Creation)