

# EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF LONG ISLAND CREATION CARE COMMUNITY

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER



ABOVE: The Rev. Canon Eddie Alleyne and participants in this year's "Fight for Earth" Day visiting the apiary at the Cathedral of the Incarnation, May 3, 2025

## IN THIS ISSUE:

**RESOURCES FOR FALL/SEASON OF CREATION - PG. 1**

**MESSAGE FROM THE MISSIONER - PG. 2**

**CHURCH GARDENS: A "GOSPEL GATEWAY" TO  
SPIRITUAL GROWTH - PG. 3**

**CREATION CARE & THE ELECTION OF OUR 9TH BISHOP  
- PG. 5**

**CELEBRATING THE SEASON OF CREATION - PG. 6**

## Resources for Fall/ Season of Creation



BY THE REV. MARK GENSZLER &  
THE REV. MAXINE BARNETT



While we focus on the Season of Creation in September, and drawing the "eye of our heart" toward our relationship with the other creatures with which we share this earth -- and the earth, itself, as the most vulnerable of the creatures of God -- as we look toward the fall, there are many other opportunities to ritualize and teach our relationship with the earth. Harvest and All Saints, for two!

**Harvest** themes, which we often ritually associate with Rogation in the spring or Thanksgiving in late fall, are rich throughout the season. Indeed, our lectionary texts, which increasingly will look toward an 'eschatology' (the story of the final things) can draw us more deeply into a relationship with God in all the earth. The Earth yields a rich harvest, a superabundance, yet many of our fellow creatures do not have enough -- both humans who starve and go without food, and also our sister creatures whose habitats we destroy.

How might we focus our understanding of 'harvest' to center on an abundant life for all -- 'all' means all, y'all. How might this sense of abundance -- and even the appropriate sense of judgement on human action contained in 'abundance for whom?' -- alter our understanding of 'the final things'? The 'final things' of God, in God's story of desire for creation, is abundant life for all -- growth into the shape of Christ, not destruction caused by our warring and competitive madness. A rich harvest awaits us, and is available to us even now - thanks be to God.

**All Saints/All Souls.** We may not often think of these observances as being linked to 'justice' or 'abundant life' for all creatures of God --yet, the themes are rich, indeed. To get very practical: how about exploring what conservation burial implies for our theological attention to what our bodies are in God's sight? Incarnational theology blesses the body: might not the body be a blessing to the earth when it is buried?



October 4, 2025

## Visit to Sisters of St. Joseph Brentwood

On October 4, St. Francis Day, to round out this year's Season of Creation, we are offering a visit to the Sisters of St. Joseph, in Brentwood. The Sisters of St. Joseph have an extensive campus (212 acres) with farms and gardens, and a ministry focus on ecology and education.

We're excited to have this guided tour to learn how to carry out more of the work of Creation Care in our parishes and homes. We will meet at the parking lot at 10:00 a.m. and the visit lasts till 12:00. You're welcome to bring your lunch for a picnic afterwards! We will learn about the Sisters of St. Joseph's ecological initiatives, their gardens, bees, wetlands, forest, meadows, and much more.

This will hopefully help us learn how to play our own part in preserving and maintaining God's good Earth. Look out for registration information in early September.



If you're interested, email us at [creationcare@dioceseli.org](mailto:creationcare@dioceseli.org).

(continued on pg. 3)



## Message from the Missioner for Environmental Justice

THE REV. MATTHEW MOORE

When activists gather, they typically preface the business portion of the meeting by giving everyone a chance to check in, to express the emotions they are bringing with them to the common task in hand. As this year has worn on, more and more have begun their check-ins by expressing an emotional exhaustion that makes it hard for them to look at the news for more than a few minutes every day.

So much that we hold dear is under sustained assault. Compassion, or even basic human decency, is in ever shorter supply in our public life. Deliberate cruelty to immigrants and transgender people, among others, is not just tolerated but applauded. Genuinely equal protection under the law is even more of a dream, and less of a reality, than it has always been. The guardrails of our constitutional order seem to be dissolving before our eyes. And for those of us with a heart for the earth, it is particularly distressing to witness the gleeful abandonment of what was already a half-hearted commitment to environmental responsibility.

And so we enter into this Season of Creation aware not just of the ever more desperate condition of the earth, but also of our own need for spiritual renewal. Unless we acknowledge and overcome our emotional exhaustion, we will find it impossible to sustain the work for ecojustice that is more urgent now than ever.

In *World as Lover, World as Self*, an indispensable classic of ecospirituality, the late Joanna Macy describes the “activist’s inner journey [as] like a spiral interconnecting four successive stages,” namely, “(1) opening to gratitude, (2) honoring our pain for the world, (3) seeing with new eyes, and (4) going forth.”

The impulse to look away from the news is an understandable defense against the pain of the world. But when we look away, we bury the pain instead of honoring it, and this bars the way to the later stages of the spiral. Only gratitude for all that we hold dear can fortify us for an unsparing look at the state of our suffering world.

Clear vision that begins in gratitude enables us to “learn the true meaning of compassion: to ‘suffer with.’ . . . What had isolated us in private anguish now opens outward and delivers us into wider contexts of belonging. . . . It shows us who we are and how we are related to each other and the universe. We begin to comprehend our own power to change and heal.”

We know that our power to change and heal is a gracious gift from the God whose generous love brought Creation into being, who did not hesitate to suffer with us and for us so that all might enjoy abundant life. If we begin with gratitude, we can journey through the spiral Macy traces for us, through compassion to new vision, to renewed energy for healing and change. We don’t traverse this spiral once and for all. We can always enter into it again when despair begins to weigh us down.

I pray that in this Season of Creation we may start with gratitude to the One who made and redeemed the world, so that our spirits might be filled with new energy for the ever more vital care of Creation.

Blessings,

Matthew+



Multifaith Mondays protest at Columbus Circle, NYC, July 2025, with Diocese of New York’s Bishop Matthew Heyd  
Photo © Episcopal Diocese of New York

### Faiths for Climate Justice: Interfaith March and Jericho Walk, Thursday 9/18, 9:30-11:30am

As part of its annual “Faiths for Climate Justice” campaign, GreenFaith is organizing an Interfaith March and Jericho Walk on September 18 from 9:30-11:30. Faith leaders, both clergy and lay, will gather for an interfaith rally and worship service before marching to Wall St. and then joining in solidarity with New Sanctuary Coalition’s weekly Jericho Walk. (Every Thursday the New Sanctuary Coalition brings people together to walk around the Federal Plaza Building seven times, to protest the abusive actions of ICE.) We will ground ourselves in our faiths before bearing prophetic witness to ongoing climate destruction and the worsening immigrant struggle.

RSVP for the march by following [this link](#) (full URL below), which will take you to a comprehensive list of the other events in this campaign. We hope you will decide lend your presence and your voice to this vitally important witness. The need grows more urgent with each passing day.

<https://bit.ly/SunDayRSVP>





The garden at St. Francis, Bellmore—which was recently featured in the Baltimore Herald—grows vegetables for pantries, community meals and other organizations. There's also a pollinator garden, complete with two beehives.



## Church Gardens: A “Gospel Gateway” to Spiritual Growth

BY IRENE ROSS

When you read the Bible, it's easy to see how gardens fit into God's plan. Gardens are mentioned throughout scripture—from Genesis to Luke, Ecclesiastes to Jeremiah and Isaiah, among others. Gardens embody faith in action and express a commitment to environmental stewardship. They connect communities with nature and with God. They also serve as a direct way to combat food insecurity, donating harvests to food pantries, community meals, food drives, and more.

But there's more: Church gardens also foster community relationships, providing opportunities for fellowship, education, and skill-building. They offer a quiet, peaceful space for prayer, reflection, and meditation.

“The Community Garden at St. Joseph's Episcopal Church in Queens Village bears witness to the Gospel by growing food and relationships side by side, through hospitality, generosity, and care for the earth,” said the Rev'd Canon Dr. Fred Vergara, Interim Priest-In-Charge at St. Joseph's Episcopal Church in Queens Village.



LEFT: Common Ground Garden, Holy Trinity Church, Greenport, NY



ABOVE: Father Fred Vergara surrounded by parishioners and community youth at recent garden picnic.

The Rev'd Juan Reyes, rector at Christ Episcopal Church in Brentwood, adds: “As our garden takes root and flourishes, Christ Church looks forward to nurturing not only the soil but also the bonds of community, faith, and compassion. Together, we cultivate hope and abundance for all.”

Church gardens come in all sizes—from less-than-500-square-foot plots to others spanning over 1,500 square feet, and even up to 5,000 square feet. Some feature ornamentation, such as a peace obelisk, as well as raised beds for easier accessibility

The Rev'd Michael Delaney, vicar at St. James of Jerusalem in Long Beach, sums it up best: **“Stewardship of the land is more than a commitment—it's a spiritual calling.”**



Children are part of the church's Team Committee at the Garden Ministry at Christ Episcopal Church, Brentwood. They plant, tend, and harvest. The Cooking Committee is made up of volunteers who devise creative ways to prepare and cook the harvested vegetables while the Distribution Team sends freshly harvested vegetables to parishioners and pantries.





LEFT: Holy Trinity Church, Greenport: This is a "Common Ground" Garden

Greenport is located on Long Island's North Shore, an area dotted with vineyards and farm stands.

Church Vicar, the Rev'd Roger Joslin, noticed that the many area farmworkers who serviced the vineyards couldn't afford the local organic produce sold at neighborhood farm stands for their own families.

"That injustice seemed very wrong to us, so we decided we would address it in whatever way we could," says Fr. Joslin, also vicar of Church of the Redeemer.

Their garden has grown to 26 beds on a 5,000-square-foot plot.



LEFT: St. Peter's-by-the-Sea: Building skills, strengthening community ties

It's not unusual to see Stephanie Campbell, garden coordinator, come in on Saturdays to donate produce to the church's food pantry at St. Peter's-by-the-Sea.

But, she says, adults and kids alike visit the garden to learn about organic gardening, mulching, pulling potatoes—or just to work on craft projects while the very youngest family members play.

RIGHT: St. John's, Huntington: Providing spiritual growth

"Ultimately, our garden is a testament to St. John's belief in the power of grace and its ability to transform lives," said Fr. Duncan Burns, rector, St. John's Episcopal Church.

He says the Garden of Grace is a place where parishioners, particularly youth, will have the opportunity to work together, deepen their connection to the natural world, and grow spiritually as they tend to the garden.

A peace obelisk is a tall, four-sided monument with a pyramidal top. It symbolizes the connection between earthly and divine realms and creates a focal point for prayer, reflection, and conversation between parishioners and the wider community.



RIGHT: Faith meets soil at Farm to Table" at St. James of Jerusalem.

This parish-based "Farm to Table" effort is very new. In fact, the first seedlings were planted just last month, but the garden is already producing peppers, eggplant, onions, and herbs. Tomatoes will be ready within weeks, and pumpkins will come during the late summer/fall harvest season.

There are hopes to eventually open "Chef's Club," a hands-on cooking class led by Vicar Fr. Michael Delaney, developed to help people learn how to prepare meals using the garden's bounty.



### Resources for Fall/Season of Creation (continued from pg. 1)

Some of the greenest places in dense parts of the human world are places where human bodies are buried -- how can we receive our practices around care for the body in death as a blessing to the earth? Embalming fluids harm soil and watersheds and the creatures of our 'sister' aquifers. To the good, a place where bodies are simply laid in earth to return to the earth (earth to earth, ashes to ashes...) can conserve land that would otherwise be 'developed' in other ways. Certainly, minimally, we can learn to work with funeral practices that honor the creation of God in the beloved human body and in the places and manner in which it is given back to God and to our sister creature, the earth.

Rather than scolding around received practices - practices that are not particularly ancient or Christian - perhaps gently offer alternatives. Many Jewish funeral directors are accustomed to practices of preparing a body for burial/disposition that do not harm the earth; many independent organizations now offer alternatives to the assumptions around embalming a body. We can still gather to mourn, even to 'view' and honor, without using terrible and unnecessary chemicals. While not all of us in the city would have access to a 'green burial' or a 'conservation burial' cemetery/graveyard, we can choose things for ourselves and for those for whom we are responsible. And better sometimes even means 'cheaper'! To the good! Perhaps take up local research to assist your congregation or community, as well as informing yourself. Make your own wishes known prior to your death. Find funeral directors who have a practice of assisting in these ways. Understand what local laws require -- and work to change them if cemeteries still 'require' harmful embalming, or massively expensive (and extractively obtained and manufactured) metal 'vaults.'



ABOVE: Eden Garden at Trinity Church, Northport

This is the ultimate example of how to find space on your church grounds for a garden.

What was once an 875-square-foot slab of concrete is now an eight-bed garden that not only addresses nutritional needs, but offers a hand-on gardening experience that fosters a spiritual connection with the earth.

Why focus on 'greener' practices around funerals and mourning in general? As in all things, we can work toward aligning our own practices with what we understand to be the ways of God's desire for us expressed in Christ Jesus -- abundant life and wholeness. Healing, and the reconciliation of all things. 'All things' includes our soil, aquifers, and streams. Our bodies return to earth in some fashion when we die -- and this is a blessing, not a curse. All Saints/All Souls tells us that those who die are still being brought to a fuller understanding of God, in God's nearer presence. May we orient our practices around death and dying so our bodies may be themselves a blessing after we die.

**Join us on October 4** for a tour of a conservation burial cemetery -- among other wonderful green choices -- at the **Community of Saint Joseph in Brentwood**. Come see what the sisters have been up to!

To subscribe to this newsletter, email us at: [creationcare@dioceseli.org](mailto:creationcare@dioceseli.org)

# Creation Care in the Diocese of Long Island & the Election of Our 9th Bishop



BY THE REV. CANON  
EDDIE ALLEYNE

From Brooklyn Bridge to Montauk Point, the Episcopal Diocese of Long Island is a tapestry of beauty in creation. With waterflows, abundant wildlife, and green forested spaces, God's presence is very evident on Long Island, with its total area of approximately 1,400 square miles. This includes the smaller islands within its political boundaries but excludes the bordering bays.

It is the longest island in the contiguous United States, stretching about 118 miles from the New York Harbor in the west to Montauk Point on the eastern seaboard. As an island, our diocese is indeed extremely vulnerable to climate change. With rising seas and changing temperatures constantly evident, we can remember the devastation of Hurricane Sandy, which caused death to scores of people and horrific destruction to our homes, farms, and churches.

It was the Rt. Rev. Lawrence Provenzano, our present diocesan bishop, who established the Creation Care Community in a formalized resolution at Diocesan Convention in the fall of 2020.

Since then, with Bishop Provenzano's unwavering support, we have encouraged and facilitated several projects including solar energy use, tree planting, the placement of commercial dishwashers in our parishes, an immediate ban on Styrofoam, and phasing out single-use plastic in five years.

Our Diocese has an active Creation Care Leadership Team that has been a vocal advocate for environmental stewardship, emphasizing the Christian responsibility to address climate change and environmental degradation. The group has committed to goals like becoming a carbon-neutral diocese by 2035 and aligning financial investments with ecojustice.

The upcoming election of a new Bishop of the Diocese of Long Island is a significant moment for the community. The issue of Creation Care must be a major part of that conversation.

Candidates for the position of Bishop of Long Island should therefore be expected to demonstrate a clear commitment to these existing initiatives and articulate a vision for how they will lead the diocese in fulfilling its call to ecojustice, which the community links to racial and economic justice.

The process of electing a new bishop involves a journey of prayer and discernment, with the community input being crucial. The diocese's Search Committee has been holding "Listening Sessions" and a survey to understand the hopes, concerns, and dreams of the clergy and lay members for the future.

It's in these forums that the importance of Creation Care must be highlighted by parishioners and clergy who are passionate about the issue. The new bishop's stance on environmental issues, and their willingness to champion the work of the Creation Care Community, must be a key factor in the discernment process, as the Diocese seeks a leader who can both spiritually and practically guide us in our mission to care for God's creation.

*The Rev. Canon Eddie Alleyne is Sub-Dean of the Cathedral of the Incarnation, and a member of the Leadership Team of the Creation Care Community of the Diocese of Long Island.*



ABOVE: The apiary at the Cathedral of the Incarnation in Garden City. This project serves as a reminder of the sacred connection between faith and nature. As bees thrive on the campus, they symbolize the interwoven relationship between creation and spiritual practice, urging us to nurture and protect the environment as an extension of our devotion.



## A PRAYER FOR OUR BISHOP SEARCH

From the Joint Oversight Committee (adapted)

*Almighty God, giver of every good gift and source of all wisdom and understanding, look graciously upon your church and guide the minds and hearts of those who will choose our next bishop. We pray that to those who offer themselves as candidates in this process you will grant wisdom and discernment, a spirit of revelation and knowledge of your will. Help us to choose a bishop who will care for all your people in this diocese and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



LEFT: The Right Reverend Lawrence C. Provenzano, eight bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Long Island.

Bishop Provenzano was consecrated in September 2009. In his letter to the Diocese of Long Island, he announced that he intends to conclude his leadership of the diocese in September 2026. He has led and supported the Creation Care ministry in the Diocese, including participating in our recent "Fight for Earth" Day celebration.



# Let's Celebrate the Season of Creation – September 1 – October 4, 2025

BY RITA ANN GRIFFITH



ABOVE: Long Island North Shore. Photo from Wikimedia Commons

The [Season of Creation](#), or "[Creationtide](#)," as the Church of England calls it, is upon us! It starts on September 1, [World Day of Prayer for Creation](#), and ends on October 4, St. Francis Day. We hope you can join in the celebration again this year.

The celebration of the Season of Creation grew from a proclamation in 1989 by Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I of Constantinople designating September 1 as a World Day of Prayer for Creation for the Orthodox Church. The day has now become a month long observance by Christians of many denominations, including our own Anglican Communion, the Roman Catholic Church, the United Church, Lutherans, Methodists, and others.

The theme for the 2025 Season of Creation is "Peace with Creation," inspired by Isaiah 32:14-18:

*"For the palace will be forsaken, the populous city deserted; the hill and the watchtower will become dens forever, the joy of wild asses, a pasture for flocks. Until a spirit from on high is poured out on us, and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is deemed a forest. Then justice will dwell in the wilderness and righteousness abide in the fruitful field. The effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness, and trust forever. My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." (NRSVUE)*

The symbol for this year's Season of Creation depicts the dove of peace hovering over the earth.



The [official site](#) says: "There is hope for a peaceful Earth. Biblically, hope is active—it involves prayer, action, and reconciling with Creation and the Creator through repentance (metanoia) and solidarity. Isaiah 32:14-18 envisions a peaceful Creation where God's people live only when justice is achieved."

## Season of Creation Resources

As noted on pg. 1, there are various resources available to help you celebrate the Season of Creation. Here are a few more:

The official [Season of Creation site](#). [Resources](#) available in **English, Spanish, French, Portuguese and Italian**.

**Bishop Provenzano** and other Episcopal bishops have approved a [special lectionary](#) and liturgies (created by the Diocese of Western Massachusetts) which can be used for the Eucharist and Daily Office during the period.

**The Episcopal Church** has curated several resources which can be found [here](#). A [Spanish](#) liturgical guide is included.

**Pope Leo XIV** has issued "[Seeds of Peace and Hope](#)," his first Season of Creation message, a follow up to Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical [Laudato Si](#) – itself an important resource for any Creation Care action. The Vatican has also recently promulgated a [Mass for the Care of Creation](#).

Resources from the **Anglican Communion** can be found [here](#).

[Creationtide](#) resources from the **Church of England** in English and Spanish.

**Green Anglicans** from **Southern Africa** has Season of Creation resources in downloadable booklet form. The 2025 version is [Peace with Creation](#). A [Year C Season of Creation](#) booklet is also available. And, for Sunday School, check out their [Ryan the Rhino](#) children's curriculum.

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### Long Island Episcopal churches celebrating Season of Creation:

- **Church of the Transfiguration of Freeport:** Creation Care Sunday, September 7, Eucharist at 9:00 a.m.
  - **Cathedral of the Incarnation:** St. Francis Day Evensong, October 5, 4:00 p.m.
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