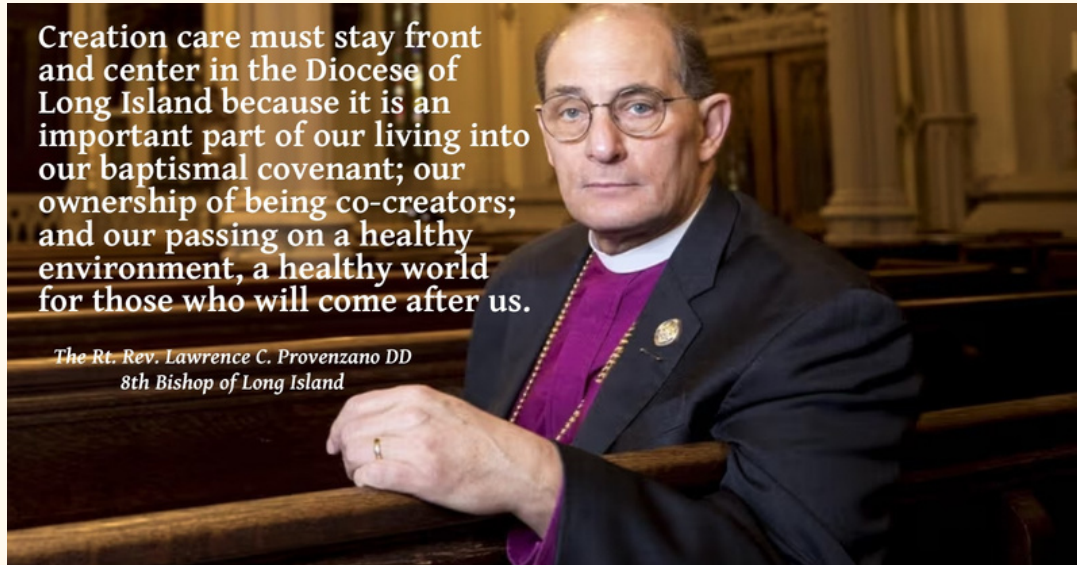


EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF LONG ISLAND CREATION CARE COMMUNITY

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER



Creation care must stay front and center in the Diocese of Long Island because it is an important part of our living into our baptismal covenant; our ownership of being co-creators; and our passing on a healthy environment, a healthy world for those who will come after us.

The Rt. Rev. Lawrence C. Provenzano DD
8th Bishop of Long Island

The Rt. Rev. Lawrence C. Provenzano, 8th Bishop of Long Island, speaks about the importance of Creation Care. The Creation Care Community of the Diocese of Long Island started under his leadership in 2019.

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Message from the Missioner for Ecojustice

BY THE REV. DR. MATTHEW MOORE

Our nation has never been more desperately in need of the spirit of Francis of Assisi, whose feast day marks the end of the Season of Creation that begins on September 1, the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. I opened my most recent message with a quote from Francis's "Canticle of the Sun," the passionate expression of his love for Creation, which continues to inspire Christian workers for ecojustice. As we enter into this Season of Creation, I find myself thinking of Francis again, this time of his account of his own conversion. "When I was in sin," he says in his Testament, "it seemed too bitter for me to see lepers. And the Lord himself led me among them, and I showed mercy to them. And when I left them, what had seemed bitter to me was turned into sweetness of soul and body."

[cont'd on pg. 2]

Valediction: Our Outgoing Bishop Speaks Creation Care



As the Right Reverend Lawrence C. Provenzano DD, Bishop of Long Island, leaves us after 17 years as head of the Diocese, we in the Creation Care Community honor and thank him for setting up and supporting this ministry since 2019. As he departs, we share some words of wisdom he has imparted to us:

Our care for Creation is an act of holy stewardship. God created us, this world (and beyond), and everything in it. As children of God, we are called to honor and show our love for God by treating God's creation, and its creatures, as precious and holy. (April 2022)

Creation Care has never been more urgent. As we've all recently witnessed, the dangers of rising sea levels and the uptick in extreme weather events are not a "future problem." It is happening now, to which our sisters and brothers in and from the Caribbean can attest. But it also hits close to home. Our diocese is a relatively narrow 120 mile-long landmass surrounded by the seas. Long ago, the seal of this diocese was inscribed with the words "I will set His Dominion in the Sea." The time has come for us to embrace the waters that surround us with love and tenderness, and treat them as holy. (April 2022)

I suspect that in our lifetime now Creation Care will be what the church does in relationship to our ministry to the rest of the world. I want to caution you that it's not going to be easy work. There will be all kinds of push back, and all kinds of questions and concerns, but I want you to know that this matters greatly. (Oct. 2022)

[cont'd on pg. 2]

Message from the Missioner [cont'd from pg. 1]

Finding—or rather, constructing—lepers to serve as lightning rods for energies that might otherwise fuel challenges to the status quo is a time-honored diversionary tactic of those who wield worldly power. In American history, the latest crop of immigrants has time and again proved to be a fecund source of politically useful lepers, never more so than in our own day. The falsity of the narrative that blames immigrants for a host of ills is bad enough. Worse still is the deliberate cruelty visited upon those who dare to take us at our word when we claim to be a safe haven for the poor, huddled masses of the world. If you follow the news you already know about the violence of ICE, the trampling on the rights of immigrants, and the horrific conditions in detention centers like Delaney Hall.

Many of our coreligionists are very keen on the sexual regulations in Leviticus 18, but gloss over verse 34 of the following chapter: “the alien who resides with you shall be as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.” Any Christian who takes these words to heart should be appalled by what is being done to immigrants in this country. But what does all this have to do with the mission of the Creation Care Community? The answer is that abuse of immigrants and abuse of the earth work hand in glove. According to the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative, 22 of the 39 countries whose citizens face fully or partly restricted entry to the United States are among the 25% of nations most vulnerable to climate change. We are going out of our way to slam the door in the faces of those who suffer the most from our reckless exploitation of the earth. Our current immigration policies are not just a sinful political ploy, though they are certainly that. They also compound the unjust distribution of the harms of climate change, which fall disproportionately on those who did little to cause them, and are least able to adapt to them.

Campaigners for climate and immigration justice are increasingly making common cause. On Friday 28 August, GreenFaith and a broad coalition of faith-based ecojustice organizations will come together for a “Multifaith Climate and Immigration Justice Pilgrimage.” The pilgrimage will begin at 10 a.m. with a vigil at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Sunset Park. We will then march to Federal Plaza in Manhattan (with a lunch break in Brooklyn Heights, courtesy of St. Ann and the Holy Trinity) for a rally from 3 to 4 p.m. This is a golden opportunity for people of faith to stand up in solidarity with immigrants and with the earth. You can sign up for the pilgrimage by following this link: <https://bit.ly/PilgrimRSVP>. I hope to see you there!

Blessings,
Matthew+

Our Outgoing Bishop Speaks Creation Care [cont'd from pg. 1]

LEFT: The Rt. Rev. Lawrence C. Provenzano, 8th Bishop of Long Island, with the native serviceberry tree planted in his honor in the grounds of the Cathedral of the Incarnation, April 25, 2026
Photo: Girl in a Camera Productions © Diocese of Long Island

I am sure that you are aware of the urgent need to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, brought home to us by the most recent assessment from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: it is now clear that global warming of at least 1.5 degrees centigrade is unavoidable. The extreme weather events and wildfires we are already experiencing will be more frequent occurrences with the level of warming, and the consequences become even more disastrous at the higher levels of warming we will face if we do not take immediate action. As Christians, who understand that God has entrusted us with the care of Creation, we are called to all we can to protect this fragile earth. (January 2022)

Be instigators. [Transition to renewables] has to happen everywhere for us to continually move toward eliminating the use of fossil fuels in all of our congregations. And the benefit to the Diocese, in fact, it not only saves energy and is more efficient for the environment, it also makes good economic sense. (Oct. 2022)

It's 'inconvenient' to some to pay attention to God's creation. It's inconvenient because it has serious economic impact on people who need to keep polluting the waters, and the air and all the rest of the environment. So recognize that this is a battle, if you will, to engage from a religious point of view, in terms of our care of God's creation. (Oct. 2022)

In the midst of all the things the Diocese of Long Island is engaged with, let's make sure that this work doesn't fall off the shelf. This must stay front and center, because it is an important part of our care of God's creation; our living into our baptismal covenant; our ownership of being co-creators; and our passing on a healthy environment, a healthy world for those who will come after us. (Oct. 2022)

I leave you with this prayer today, from The Episcopal Church's Liturgical Materials for Honoring God in Creation:

Bountiful God, you call us to labor with you in tending the earth: Where we lack love, open our hearts to the world; where we waste, give us discipline to conserve; where we neglect, awaken our minds and wills to insight and care. May we with all your creatures honor and serve you in all things, for you live and reign with Christ, Redeemer of all, and with your Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

(April 2022 & August 2026)

“I will set his dominion in the sea”
Diocese of Long Island motto

The Feast of All Creation: A New Feast Day, As Old as the Hills



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



There is a new major feast of the church that is as old as the hills. Older, actually: the Feast of Creation.

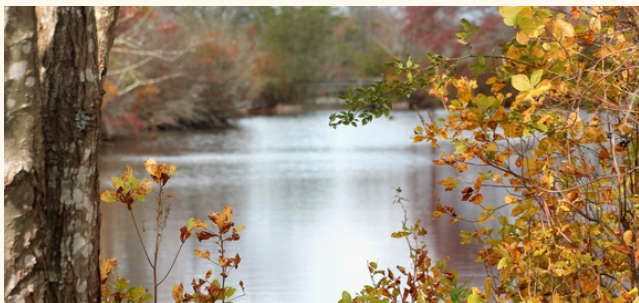
'Not one thing came into being without him,' as John writes in the prologue to his Gospel.

Our Eastern Orthodox sisters and brothers have observed some version of the feast since the 7th century, lifting up the work of God in creating the cosmos. The observance usually comes around the beginning of September (remember the various calendars being used over the centuries!), and September 1 has been an ecumenical 'World Day of Prayer for Creation' for some time, though not necessarily added to the calendars of the more liturgical traditions.

Through a series of conversations called 'The Assisi Process' - what a joy to have gathered by the relics of Francis and Clare, patrons of ecology! - an ecumenical movement has now embraced this observance as a feast of the church, with a major Christological emphasis. The Anglican Communion's many provinces have embraced this feast, and the Episcopal Church has approved propers for the feast.

Think of it like this: if Easter, aligned with the vernal equinox, is a Feast of the 'New Creation-in-Christ' ('if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation...'), then the 'Feast of (all) Creation', aligned with the autumnal equinox, reveals the enlivening presence of Christ in all and through all and for all. And, as we like to say: all means all. All creatures of God. Our human creatures just seem to need to be realigned; the birds, trees, and waters already know how to observe this feast, and give praise in their very being. Like our whole liturgical calendar, it is not for God, but for us. We need to be reminded.

So: the feast is the first of September - but, like all such feasts, it may be transferred to the first Sunday following. (Here are the propers.) This year: September 6th! Yes, it's Labor Day weekend in the United States, but consider this liturgical movement as a major reason to seriously embrace the whole month of the 'season of creation' as a mode within Ordinary Time this year. There are approved Episcopal additions to the Sunday propers, and a feast of resources for the daily office and other ways of observing.



Connetquot River, Connetquot State Park, Long Island
Photo: Wikimedia Commons

.But, why bother? There are many ways of thinking about this, and our ecumenical partners of various sorts - from the Orthodox and Catholics to the Presbyterians and Methodists - all have a particular valence. The large Anglican tent offers a variety of ways. Perhaps something as minimal as using an (approved!) extracanonical reading for the 'Epistle' on Sundays in September? Doing so reopens the creative imagination, and how better to praise God? Approved resources offer everyone from Isaac the Syrian to Wendell Berry, Hildegard of Bingen to dear Mary Oliver. Or, offer a litany of repentance for the ways our species have exploited and maimed the image of God in creation.

Or, think of this as a month to orient all your community's practices - liturgical, social, social justice - around the question posed by observing a feast of Christ-in-Creation. 'Lord, when was it that we saw you and ignored you?'

Lord, how may we align ourselves with your will for the flourishing of all creatures?



The Ecological Irony of Nitrogen

BY IRENE ROSS

Nitrogen is a double-edged sword.

On the plus side, nitrogen is important for health. It's an important element of our amino acids, the building blocks of protein. It is also crucial for plant growth and water-dwelling life forms.

Here's the downside: Pollution creates an imbalance which produces excess nitrogen and triggers a chain reaction that affects water quality.

The primary sources of nitrogen-producing pollution are Humpback whale breaching and wastewater runoff, plant discharges, animal waste and fossil fuel emissions.

The rain garden, Sisters of St. Joseph in Brentwood

Pollution usually washes into the water system from rain. The Sisters of St. Joseph created a rain garden that captures the runoff from rooftop water that washes into the parking lot and roadway storm drains. Underground filters then remove toxins to create fresh, clean water that irrigates flowers, shrubs and food produce.

Algae blooms and fleeing marine life

Algae produce oxygen and help absorb carbon dioxide. This feeds the small fish and marine animals. When there's excess nitrogen, however, it becomes a propellant for aquatic plants. These "blooms" cover the water's surface, blocking the all-important sunlight from reaching submerged aquatic vegetation. Without light, these underwater plants cannot photosynthesize and die.

[cont'd on pg. 4]

“Living Water”: Celebrating the Season of Creation September 1 – October 4, 2026



BY RITA ANN GRIFFITH

The [Season of Creation](#), or “[Creationtide](#)” in the Church of England, is almost 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 modern celebration of the Season of Creation started with 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. It 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.

This year the Church of England has instituted a new [Festival of Creation in Christ](#) on the first Sunday in September, falling on September 6 this year. The Synod said: “*The title ‘Creation in Christ’ emphasizes that creation is understood through the person and work of Jesus Christ: created through him, sustained in him and destined for renewal in him.*”

Living Water

The symbol for this year’s Season of Creation depicts water flowing from the throne of God.

The theme for the **2026 Season of Creation** is “**Living Water**”, inspired by Ezekiel 47:9,12:

“Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live. [...] Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.”

“Living Water” is particularly appropriate to the Diocese of Long Island, given our geography and our motto. In 2022, Bishop Provenzano wrote to the Diocese:

“Our Diocese is a relatively narrow 120 mile-long land mass surrounded by the seas. Long ago, the seal of this diocese was inscribed with the words ‘I will set His Dominion in the Sea.’ The time has come for us to embrace the waters that surround us with love and tenderness, and treat them as holy.”

There is no time like this present Season of Creation to reflect on where we are, decide what we can do to act for Creation and celebrate God’s gift in prayer and worship.

Season of Creation Resources

As noted on page 2, there is a lot available to help us celebrate the Season of Creation.

- The official [Season of Creation site](#). [Resources](#) are also available in various languages.
- **Bishop Provenzano** and other Episcopal bishops approved a [special lectionary](#) and liturgies for the Eucharist and Daily Office.
- **The Episcopal Church** resources are [here](#). A [Spanish](#) liturgical guide is included.
- Resources from the **Anglican Communion** are [here](#).
- See [Creationtide](#) resources from the **Church of England**
- **The Anglican Church of Canada** has approved a new [Feast of the Creator](#) on September 1, transferable to a Sunday within the Season of Creation. Trial use liturgical resources are [here](#).
- [Green Anglicans](#) from **Southern Africa** usually have Season of Creation resources in downloadable booklet form. Check out their [Ryan the Rhino](#) children’s curriculum.



Living Water
Season of Creation 2026

IMMERSION IN LIVING WATER

Ezekiel 47:9, 12

The Ecological Irony of Nitrogen

[cont’d from pg. 3]

The destruction doesn’t end there, though. Eventually the algae will die, and bacteria and decomposers, consuming enormous amounts of dissolved oxygen, break down the organic matter. This strips the water of the oxygen that fish, crabs, and other marine life need to survive. If they don’t move out, they’ll suffocate.

The human perspective

Nitrates, while not nitrogen per se, are created when nitrogen combines with oxygen—and they’re just as toxic. Nitrates reduce the body’s ability to carry oxygen. This presents risks like “blue baby syndrome” and an assortment of chronic health issues—for both humans and pets.

Who to contact

If you have concerns about nitrogen in your drinking water, contact your local public health authorities, certified testing laboratories or your water provider.

New York Giants of the Deep

BY BENJAMIN SPIER



Fin Whale. Photo: NOAA, Public Domain

Living in America's largest and most crowded metropolis, I've learned that we New Yorkers are enthralled by the wildlife around us: we can't seem to get enough of such feathered celebrities as Flaco the owl, or furry invaders like the coyotes colonizing Central Park. Yet until recently I had no idea that multitudes of city dwellers are leaving Gotham behind to encounter a different breed of visitors: the whales in our waters.

According to scientists, whales have been coming to New York for reasons understandable to humans—drawn by a cleaner and safer environment and by abundant resources, i.e., food. For most of the past two centuries, the waters off New York were as polluted and noxious as the city itself. With the passage of the Clean Water Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act in the 1970s, however, aquatic life gradually began recovering. As populations of zooplankton and fish rebounded, whales and dolphins arrived in search of food. (In August local nonprofit Gotham Whale reported the 500th sighting of a humpback whale since 2012.) Not surprisingly, the metropolitan area's burgeoning tourism industry took notice, and whale-watching vessels began plying the waves.

I decided to find out for myself on a crystal-clear day this past June when I boarded a packed American Princess vessel in Brooklyn's Sheepshead Bay for a sunset whale-watching cruise. As we steamed past the Rockaways and Breezy Point out into the Atlantic, our affable naturalist guide Mitch pointed out the sea life around us: cormorants, terns, a pod of frisky bottlenose dolphins. As the land receded in the distance, the vessel came to a halt within sight of a cargo ship and we finally glimpsed what we'd been waiting for: a fin whale breaching the surface. Mitch pointed out that fin whales are the second largest mammals on earth (after the blue whale), reaching 80-plus feet in length. For a moment I felt overcome by awe, dwarfed by the immensity of this creature.

Returning to shore after dusk, I felt tired, chilled, and elated. Yet the sight of that cargo ship in the distance reminded me that for all the progress in restoring whales' aquatic habitat, challenges remain. New York's busy waterways are as congested as our roadways, and for whales, just as dangerous. Collisions with vessels can be fatal for whales—and hazardous for humans, as the occupants of a patrolling fireboat found out on the Fourth of July when they were capsized by a surfacing whale. If only there were a way for humans to communicate with, or at least understand, our seafaring neighbors.

As it happens, scientists are working on that. Project CETI (Cetacean Translation Interface) is tapping artificial intelligence along with drones and sensors to decode the clicks of sperm whales. Already CETI has mapped out a phonetic "alphabet" for sperm whale vocalizations. Notwithstanding widespread concern about the impacts of AI, could this technology enable us to comprehend and possibly communicate with another intelligent species? Could a glimpse of whales' social, emotional, and even spiritual lives help us realize our role as part of God's creation, not as its self-appointed overlords? The next time I sail out into the ocean, I pray that I will hear what its inhabitants have to say.



Pod of bottlenose dolphins. Photo: Wikimedia Commons



Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn. Photo: Wikimedia Commons

Yonder is the great and wide sea with its living things too many to number, creatures both small and great. There move the ships and there is that Leviathan, which you have made for the sport of it.

Psalm 104:26-27