

# As It Was in the Beginning ... Stations of Creation

Environment Network  
Diocese of Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island  
2019



Leader Booklet

© 2019. The photographs contained in this kit remain the intellectual property of the photographer. Permission is granted to the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, the Anglican Church of Canada, and their international partners, to use the photos as part of this Lenten series and for other environmental projects of the church. The photographs in this document may not be altered in any way. Permission to use the photographs in any other unrelated context may be granted only by written consent of the photographer, Donna Giles ([donnagilesphotography@gmail.com](mailto:donnagilesphotography@gmail.com)).

# About the Photographer



Photo credit: Judy Pringle Porter (<https://www.judealou.com>)

Donna Giles, a mother of two and a grandmother, is a lifelong resident of Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia, and the seventh generation of her family to live in the community. She is also a member of The Anglican Church of Saint Andrew, Cole Harbour. Growing up in a farming family, she learned to have a great appreciation for nature. She spent many hours with her dad, both fishing and learning about plants and animals. She saw how much beauty has been gifted to the world and hoped to find a way to share her vision with others.

After working for 36 years as a public servant for the province, she retired in 2016 and took up photography as a hobby. Photographing nature is one her favourite pastimes. The beauty and intricacies of nature has been an inspiration for her work. You can oftentimes find her standing in awe of creation as she observes the colours, sights, sounds, and power of Mother Nature at work before trying to capture it digitally.

Because of her love for the environment, she is happy to share some of her work with you during this Lenten season as a reminder of how beautiful the world around us is and how important it is to take good care of our planet and everything in it so that we can all live safely and harmoniously as one. She hopes you will enjoy this journey with her through the Environmental Stations of the Cross and to reflect on what you may be able to do as an individual or a member of a group to promote a greener Earth.



# As It Was in the Beginning ... Stations of Creation

## Station 1

### Meditation

(Citizens for Public Justice 2013, *Living Ecological Justice*, p. 36)

Take off your shoes.

Like Moses, take off your shoes.

This is holy ground.

Walk gently through my woods.

Tread softly on my face.

Walk reverently through my garden.

This is holy ground.

This is God's sanctuary.

I invite you to worship with your feet this day.

I invite you to walk across my landscape and sense the life within, the glory that fills my body—God's presence below.

I invite you to reach down to the holy ground beneath you.

Walk in the water. Sink in the sand. Stand on a rock.

You are walking on fire, the fire of God's glory vibrant within.

Take off your shoes. This is holy ground.

This is the sanctuary of God.

**Amen**

### Through the Eyes of the Photographer



*My Little Chickadee-dee*

These tiny chickadees are so adorable. Such a tiny creature can captivate a heart with their beauty and their sweet song.

## Station 2

**Genesis 1:** <sup>1</sup>In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup>Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

### Meditation

(Hildegard of Bingen; [https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/nature-prayers-earth-day\\_n\\_7112274](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/nature-prayers-earth-day_n_7112274))

God is the foundation for everything.

This God undertakes, God gives.

Such that nothing that is necessary for life is lacking.

Now humankind needs a body that at all times honors and praises God.

This body is supported in every way through the earth.

Thus the earth glorifies the power of God.

### Through the Eyes of the Photographer



*In the Beginning of Time*

I took this photo on a bitter cold winter evening. As I stood there in the cold watching the sun go down and listening to the waves crashing on the shore, I was reminded of the power of nature. By removing the colour from the photo, the image became even more as it might have been in the beginning of all time.

## Station 3

**Genesis 1:** <sup>3</sup> And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. <sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light “day,” and the darkness God called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

### Meditation

(Mash 2017, “First Eucharistic Prayer for the Season of Creation,” p. iv; <https://acen.anglicancommunion.org/media/309609/Season-of-Creation-Five.pdf>)

God of all of Creation ...

You spoke the Word and all that is in heaven and on the earth, all things, came to be. Your Spirit hovered over the primal elements, and you brought forth life in forms innumerable, including this our fragile earth, and we amongst its inhabitants.

As our past is in you, so our hope for the future rests with you. As we have turned from your way, so we turn again to the warmth of your love. Through you all things are brought to new life.

And now we give you thanks for the glories of your creation given into our care, and for the opportunities we have to share that richness with all your people.

### Through the Eyes of the Photographer



These campanulas were catching some rays of sunshine in the late afternoon. I was struck by the contrasting beauty of them against the setting sun. It reminded me that there is always light at the end of every tunnel and every night turns once again into day.

*Beauty in the Dark*

## Station 4

**Genesis 1:** <sup>6</sup> And God said, “Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water.” <sup>7</sup> So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. <sup>8</sup> God called the vault “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

### Meditation

(Green Anglicans, Trinity Wall Street – Lenten reflections; <http://www.greenanglicans.org/recycling>)

Spirit of Living Water,  
You hold all of creation in your womb  
And spring us forward onto the earth at birth.  
Spirit of Tides,  
Remind me of the rise and fall of your rhythms

So that I may discover them deep within my  
own being. Spirit of Greenness,  
Bring moistness and vigour to my life  
So that I might savour the experience of your energy  
Moving through me out into the world.  
Blessings of water be upon me.  
May I be carried by the flow of the great river of life.  
May I discover a hidden spring within, gushing forth.  
May I be carried to the shores of the sacred and renewed.

### Through the Eyes of the Photographer



*Nova Scotia Shoreline*

The fluffy cumulus and dark clouds descending against this rocky shoreline stood out to me as such rugged beauty on Earth. Each piece of this scenery depicted to me an aspect of life—the softness and beauty of the sky, the power of the ocean, the difficulty of walking a rocky path, and the tenacity of the trees at the shoreline as they withstand everything that is thrown at them and yet still stand tall and strong.

## Station 5

**Genesis 1:** <sup>9</sup> And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. <sup>10</sup> God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters God called “seas.” And God saw that it was good.

### Meditation

(Hindu prayer; [https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/nature-prayers-earth-day\\_n\\_7112274](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/nature-prayers-earth-day_n_7112274))

May the waters flow peacefully;  
may the herbs and plants grow peacefully;  
may all the divine powers bring unto us peace.  
May the rain come down in the proper time,  
may the earth yield plenty of corn,  
may the country be free from war.  
The supreme Lord is peace.

### Through the Eyes of the Photographer



*Ocean Bed*

As I stood here looking at the ocean bed and learning that the tide comes in to fill this void twice a day, I was completely in awe of nature. It was absolutely amazing to walk on the bed of the ocean and take in and try to capture its grandeur. The cliffs that had been carved over time by the ocean left me speechless. Another wonder of this world.

## Station 6

**Genesis 1:** <sup>11</sup> Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. <sup>12</sup> The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

### Meditation

(Citizens for Public Justice 2013, *Living Ecological Justice*, p. 76)

Creating God,

As you created the world, your Spirit moved over the water, and by your Word, you brought forth life in which you take delight. Your Word called forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on the earth with seeds in it. And it was so and it was good. This became the basis from which you called forth and created living creatures of every kind, including us.

Ever since then the plants of your creating have nourished all the living creatures of the land, giving us air to breath, homes to live in and food to eat. Help us to remember this gift of life that you have so freely given.

Send your Spirit so that we may be a people who again care for creation and nurture life. Bless our acts of planting trees, may these trees be a sign of your love, and may they be a blessing that reminds us of the joy found if we follow your life-giving ways.

In Jesus' name we pray,

**Amen**

### Through the Eyes of the Photographer



*The Seed of Life*

I am always fascinated by the intricacies of nature. When I look at an evergreen, I wonder why it has needles instead of leaves and why it doesn't shed them as its hardwood cousins do. What purpose does it serve to be created in this way? And this one simple cone can produce many more trees just like it when the tree decides it is time to drop its seed and procreate. Amazing!

## Station 7

**Genesis 1:** <sup>14</sup> And God said, “Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, <sup>15</sup> and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. <sup>16</sup> God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. <sup>17</sup> God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, <sup>18</sup> to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

## Meditation

(Catholic Online 2019. Cantic of Brother Sun and Sister Moon of St. Francis of Assisi; <https://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=183>)

Most High, all-powerful, all-good Lord, All praise is Yours, all glory, all honour and all blessings. To you alone, Most High, do they belong, and no mortal lips are worthy to pronounce Your Name.

Praised be You my Lord with all Your creatures, especially Sir Brother Sun, who is the day through whom You give us light. And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendour, of You Most High, he bears the likeness.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars. In the heavens you have made them bright, precious and fair.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air, and fair and stormy, all weather's moods, by which You cherish all that You have made.

Praised be You my Lord through Sister Water, so useful, humble, precious and pure.

Praised be You my Lord through Brother Fire, through whom You light the night and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong. Praised be You my Lord through our Sister, Mother Earth who sustains and governs us, producing varied fruits with coloured flowers and herbs. Praise be You my Lord through those who grant pardon for love of You and bear sickness and trial.

Blessed are those who endure in peace, by You Most High, they will be crowned.

Praised be You, my Lord through Sister Death, from whom no-one living can escape. Woe to those who die in mortal sin! Blessed are they She finds doing Your Will.

No second death can do them harm. Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks, and serve Him with great humility.

## Through the Eyes of the Photographer



*Ducks at Sunset*

Ahhhh, the peacefulness of the lake as the ducks took their last swim for the night. I love the fresh water lakes and the beauty that surrounds them. The setting sun simply enhanced that as I stood there taking it all in and watching the artistry of Mother Nature as she painted a beautiful portrait

## Station 8

**Genesis 1:** <sup>20</sup> And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky.” <sup>21</sup> So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup> God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.” <sup>23</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

## Meditation

(The Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston via Facebook)

“Last night they came again, the spirits of earth and sky, of wind and rain, of deep seas and tall mountains, in all shapes and sizes they came, from every tribe and nation, the deer and the elk, the bear and the wolf, broad winged eagles and crows as black as night, they all came and stood in a solemn circle, beneath the one-eyed moon, and spoke with a single voice, this message from the sacred: do not doubt what you see, the world is warming, the waters rising, the winds come stronger than before, do not turn away, do not pretend not to see, but speak the truth, and set the spirits free to heal the world, before the ice has gone, before the last tiger falls to final sleep, before only the desert remembers the ones who once walked this land.”

### Through the Eyes of the Photographer



*The Fisherman*

I find hawks and eagles to be such majestic birds. I watched this osprey as he swooped down into the lake and picked up a fish to bring to the nest to feed his family. The gracefulness with which he did so was captivating and awe-inspiring and yet those talons looked so intimidating. Mama osprey stood guard over the nest all the while. I'm sure I stood with my mouth open as I watched this loving family moment.

## Station 9

**Genesis 1:** <sup>24</sup> And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so. <sup>25</sup> God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

### Meditation

(Anon author in an anthology of Hawaiian indigenous prayers from the book *God Has No Religion*, <https://nuannaarpoq.wordpress.com/adventures-in-parenting/nature-prayers-for-families>)

Let us give thanks for the world around us.  
Thanks for all the creatures, stones and plants  
Let us learn their lessons and seek their truths,  
So that their path might be ours,  
And we might live in harmony, a better life.

May the Earth continue to live,  
May the heavens above continue to live,  
May the rains continue to dampen the land,  
May the wet forests continue to grow,  
Then the flowers shall bloom  
And we people shall live again.

### Through the Eyes of the Photographer



*A Precious Moment*

Meet Buster, my backyard squirrel. He has been a source of so much pleasure to watch and handfeed over the past few months. The day we got our first snowfall, he perched himself on this baluster cap on the deck patiently waiting for me to bring him some peanuts. This precious moment made me feel that he was clutching his heart in thanks for helping to feed him.

## Station 10

**Genesis 1:** <sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

### Meditation

(Citizens for Public Justice 2013, *Living Ecological Justice*, pp. 44, 62)

Loving God, let our care for creation be our act of worship and obedience to you. Your kingdom come and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Creator God, we commit ourselves to honour all of your creatures and to protect them from abuse and extinction for our world belongs to you.

### Through the Eyes of the Photographer



*The Sunbather*

There is an area local to me where many of these Eastern Painted Turtles live. This particular day there was close to 30 of them soaking up the warm morning sun. This little one (most likely female) seemed to ignore the fact that I was relatively close to her. Her beautiful colours were shining in the sunlight. Her prehistoric look made me wonder what life on the planet may have been like millions of years ago.

## Station 11

**Genesis 1:** <sup>27</sup> So God created humankind in God's own image, in the image of God they were created; male and female God created them.

### Meditation

(St. Alban's Church, The Anglican Church in Copenhagen, "Environmental Prayer."; <http://www.st-albans.dk/green-church/environmental-prayer/>)

Lord God,  
We thank you for the gift of life.  
We thank and praise you for the mystery of creation.  
We know that you are in us,  
And we in you.  
Guide us, therefore,  
In our efforts  
To hand on the earth to future generations,  
So that others can seek to understand  
Your will and purpose in the world,  
Bring your love to perfection  
And magnify your holy name.  
Help us overcome godlessness with love.  
Help us support and protect  
the victims of climate change everywhere;  
Those who've lost  
their homes or livelihoods  
to the ravages of famine, fire and flood.  
Teach us to live in peace  
And harmony with all creation.  
Lord, in your name,  
**Amen.**

### Through the Eyes of the Photographer



*Connecting*

On a cool fall afternoon, someone sits on the rocks and appears to be contemplating life as others walk the beach in the distance and the birds fly and swim about. As I was processing the photo, I noticed that the mid-afternoon sun created an orb of light in the centre of the photo and an aura around the subject. It seemed to me that the connection to a power greater than their own had definitely been made. Prayers do indeed transcend.

## Station 12

**Genesis 1:** <sup>28</sup> God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

### Meditation

(Citizens for Public Justice 2013, *Living Ecological Justice*, p. 44)

Creator God, we thank you for the beauty of your creation and for giving us the privilege of caring for it. Give us your Spirit to work together to restore your creation and to hand on a safe environment and climate to our children and theirs.

### Through the Eyes of the Photographer



*Generations*

Family love is generational and eternal. These precious and tender moments live on forever in our hearts.

## Station 13

**Genesis 1:** <sup>29</sup> Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. <sup>30</sup> And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

### Meditation

(Citizens for Public Justice 2013, *Living Ecological Justice*, p. 92)

Oh Lord, we come to you knowing what we are and what we have done. We can only live because you keep your promises to forgive us and restore the joy of your salvation. New mercies every morning will lift us up and restore our passion to love you, protect your creation and seek to serve. Remind us again and again whose we are and the trajectory of our lives if we follow you. Most of all pleased take our humble gift of adoration and so let us offer you something that binds our repentance to your divine grace. In your mercy, **Amen**

### Through the Eyes of the Photographer



*Sharing*

I love bumblebees. They are such large, clumsy-looking, gentle insects that should not be able to fly. Watching this one collect pollen was fascinating. Then I noticed that it was not alone. It was allowing two other entirely different insects to share in the feast. It struck me that humankind could benefit by doing the same.

# Station 14

**Genesis 1:** <sup>31</sup> God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

## Meditation

(Citizens for Public Justice 2013, *Living Ecological Justice*, p. 68)

Every part of the earth is sacred  
every shining pine needle, every sandy shore.  
every mist in the dark woods  
every clearing and humming insect is holy.  
The rocky crest, the juices of the meadow, the  
beasts and all the people  
all belong to the same family.  
Teach your children that the earth is our mother.  
Whatever befalls the earth befalls the children of  
the earth.  
The water's murmur is the voice of our father's  
father.  
We are part of the earth and the earth is part of  
us.  
The Rivers are our brothers; they quench our  
thirst.  
The perfumed flowers are our sisters.  
The air is precious,

for all share the same breath.  
The wind that gave our grandparents breath also  
received their last sigh.  
The wind that gave our children the spirit of life,  
This we know, the earth does not belong to us,  
we belong to the earth.  
This we know, all things are connected.  
Our God is the same God, whose compassion is  
equal for all.  
For we did not weave the web of life;  
we are merely a strand in it.  
Whatever we do to the web,  
we do to ourselves.  
Let us give thanks for the web and the circle that  
connects us all.  
Thanks be to God, the God of all.  
**Amen**

## Through the Eyes of the Photographer



*Enchanted Forest*

I had heard of this local spot and wanted to see it for myself. It was a bit of a treacherous walk that day, but so worth the venture when we reached the destination. I stood there for a moment in complete awe at the beauty of what stood before me. A natural pathway through the forest made by the animals that humankind now uses as a walking trail. The thick, browning undergrowth of the trees was catching the bright sunlight from above and casting a stunning golden hue to the forest. It felt like a magical place to be, and once again, I was totally enchanted by the beauty that Earth had to offer and very grateful that I had taken a moment to experience and try to capture that magic.

# Bibliography

- Bible Study Tools. 2019. *Holy Bible*, New International Version. “Genesis 1.” <https://www.biblestudytools.com/genesis/1.html> (Accessed February 3, 2019) (Adapted for gender neutrality.)
- Catholic Online. 2019. “Canticle of Brother Sun and Sister Moon of St. Francis of Assisi.” Catholic Online: Bakers Field, CA. <https://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=183>. (Accessed February 1, 2019)
- Charleston, Steven (The Rt. Rev.). Quote from Facebook post from November 27, 2018. <https://www.facebook.com/pg/bishopstevencharleston/posts/Nov-27-2018>. (Restricted access site)
- Green Anglicans, Green Anglicans Church of South Africa. 2019. “Trinity Wall Street – Lenten reflections.” Green Anglicans: Cape Town, South Africa. <http://www.greenanglicans.org/recycling>. (Accessed February 1, 2019)
- Huffpost.ca. Updated 12/06/2017. *Caring For Creation: 11 Nature Prayers For Earth Day*, [https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/nature-prayers-earth-day\\_n\\_7112274](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/nature-prayers-earth-day_n_7112274). The Huffington Post. (Accessed February 1, 2019)
- Lysack, Mishka, and Karri Munn-Venn (eds.). 2013. *Living Ecological Justice: A Biblical Response to the Environmental Crisis*, Citizens for Public Justice, Ottawa, ON.
- Mash, Rachel (Rev. Dr.). 2017. *Season of Creation 5*. Anglican Church of Southern Africa Environmental Network, “First Eucharistic Prayer for the Season of Creation”, p. iv. Anglican Church of Southern Africa Environmental Network: Cape Town, South Africa. <https://acen.anglicancommunion.org/media/309609/Season-of-Creation-Five.pdf>. (Accessed February 1, 2019)
- St. Alban’s Church, The Anglican Church in Copenhagen. 2019. “Environmental Prayer.” St. Alban’s Church: Copenhagen, Denmark. <http://www.st-albans.dk/green-church/environmental-prayer/> (Accessed February 3, 2019)
- Unknown author in an anthology of Hawaiian indigenous prayers from the book *God Has No Religion*. (Quoted in Thalassa. [n.d.]. “Bay Witch Musings.”) <https://nuannaarpoq.wordpress.com/adventures-in-parenting/nature-prayers-for-families>. (Accessed February 2, 2019)