

## INVITATION TO JOIN SEASON OF CREATION 2023

*The Season of Creation is the annual Christian celebration to pray and respond together to the cry of Creation: the ecumenical family around the world unites to listen and care for our common home, the Oikos of God.*

The Season “Celebration” begins 1 September, the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, and ends 4 October, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology beloved by many Christian denominations.

Following the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity celebrated in the Northern Hemisphere, we begin in February the Season of Creation “Preparation” to reach local leaders and call our communities to participate actively by raising awareness of the theme, and how to respond to the cry of creation where the Lord calls us in our diverse contexts. The stage of “Preparation” is key to prepare together for the Season of Creation, creating bonds and relationships as the People of God caring for our common home.

### 2023 THEME

This year we will unite around the theme, “**Let Justice and Peace Flow.**”

The world humans have known, enjoyed and celebrated is changing rapidly beyond repair. Biodiversity is being lost at a rate not seen since the last mass extinction. The hope of keeping average temperature increases to 1.5 degrees Celsius is fading. The futures of young people are threatened by the cascading impacts of the loss of biodiversity and a changing climate. Industrialization, colonization and the extraction and consumption of resources have created great wealth, unequally distributed. We are presently more aware than ever of the link between fossil fuels, and violence and war.

*The urgency grows and we must make visible peace with Earth and on Earth, at the same time that justice calls us to repentance and a change of attitude and actions. Instead of despair, hope can be created if we work together as the People of God. By the Creator’s infinite love and mercy, streams can rise in the desert. An economy of peace can be built instead of an economy based on conflict.*

Our prayers, sermons and liturgies must call for justice not only for humans but for all Creation. Justice, allied with peace, calls us to repent of our ecological sins and to change our attitudes and actions. Righteousness demands that we live in peace, not conflict with our human neighbors, and building right relationships with all of Creation.

Our individual actions during the Season of Creation are important. We must also recognise that, for a mighty movement of justice, individual actions are not enough. Justice also includes paying historic debts. At a global level, nations with power and wealth have a duty to deal justly and honestly with communities that suffer most from the climate and ecological crises.



Global South nations, working together for more than 30 years, have just managed to win a victory at COP27 in making wealthier nations realize their moral duty to provide for financing for loss and damage. The recent decisions at COP15 to preserve biodiversity are also hopeful and required similar perseverance. These victories have been achieved by those with less power *working together*. Together we can be a mighty river of justice and peace, that brings new life to Earth and future generations, a river that can move the mountains of injustice.

As an ecumenical family, we can engage in these actions and contribute to ensure that the web of life is preserved and cared for. Through prayer, practical advocacy and sustainable actions, this 2023 Season of Creation can prophetically renew our ecumenical unity and care for our common home. May we journey together in communion as the people of God to let justice and peace flow!

## THE 2023 SYMBOL: A MIGHTY RIVER



### JOIN SEASON OF CREATION:



A mighty river is the symbol for the Season of Creation 2023. We invite you to use the symbol of a mighty river during your events. Prophet Amos cries out “But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!” (Amos 5: 24) and so we are called to join the river of justice and peace, to take up climate and ecological justice, and to speak out with and for communities most impacted by climate injustice and the loss of biodiversity.

Prophet Isaiah proclaims “Listen carefully, I am about to do a new thing, now it will spring forth; will you not be aware of it? I will even put a road in the wilderness, rivers in the desert.” (Isaiah 43: 19) We are invited to join the river of justice and peace on behalf of all Creation and to converge our individual identities, of name, family or faith community, in this greater movement for justice, just like tributaries come together to form a mighty river. As the People of God, we must work together on behalf of all Creation, as part of that mighty river of peace and justice.

We hope that this Season of Creation renews and unites us by the one Baptism and call to care for our common home.

We invite you to plan and prepare your own participation in the Season. As a first step, go to [SeasonOfCreation.org](https://SeasonOfCreation.org) where you will find the [Theme presentation](#). Soon you will also find there the **Faith Leaders' Invitation** calling us to join the Season, and later in May the official **Season of Creation Celebration Guide** with a wide range of resources (to be translated into various languages). On the website you are also invited to register your events to show how the global ecumenical family is working together to let justice and peace flow.

[Join the mighty river of justice and peace](#) by making sure to include in your calendar:

- **June 5:** Webinar on the launch of the Season of Creation Celebration Guide
- **September 1:** Season of Creation Opening Prayer Service by the SoC Steering and Advisory Committee
- **October 4:** Season of Creation Closing event by the SoC Ecumenical Youth Committee

We also invite the whole ecumenical family to be part of [“Together - Gathering of the People of God”](#), a vigil prayer on September 30 being organized by the Taizé community in collaboration with numerous other Christian churches and ecclesial and ecumenical associations. Stay tuned to our website and social media for the details of each event!

You will find *concrete proposals* to live the Season intentionally through *prayer*, *sustainability initiatives*, and *advocacy* in the Season of Creation Celebration Guide and website.

As an unstoppable mighty river, Christians from all over the world will witness the power of working together to let justice and peace flow as we care for our common home (oikos). [Each initiative will be an essential portion of the mighty river that only together we could create.](#)