

Mud, Mess and Mystery:
Outdoor worship and Forest Church resources

This is a combined list from Cate Williams' and Petra Crofton's recommendations, created for the outdoor worship webinar/zooms in July 2020. There may be some overlap between the lists!

Cate's list

Church of England guidance on worship outdoors:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/church-resources/churchcare/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings/outdoor-worship>

Books on Forest Church:

Cate Williams *Forest Church* (Grove booklet 2019) <https://grovebooks.co.uk/products/mev-127-forest-church-earthed-perspectives-on-the-gospel> a short introduction for only £4. There are theological chapters or you can dive straight into the practical 'how to' chapter.

Bruce Stanley *Forest Church* (Mystic Christ Press 2013) The first Forest Church book written, still a great guide for anyone starting out.

Liturgy and resources

(web links for purchase in the C of E outdoors worship link at the top)

Annie Heppenstall, *The Book of Uncommon Prayer* (Kevin Mayhew 2015)

Tess Ward, *The Celtic Wheel of the Year* (O Books 2007)

Rachel Summers *Wild Lent* (Buxhall: Kevin Mayhew 2017) and Rachel Summers *Wild Advent* (Buxhall: Kevin Mayhew 2018) and Rachel Summers *Wild Worship* 2019

Steven Shakespeare, *The Earth cries glory* (Norwich: Canterbury Press 2019)

Church of England liturgies for the Agricultural year

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/churchs-year/times-and-seasons/agricultural-year>

Liturgies for Creationtide 2019 (2020 resources to follow). These links may move but should remain available through the environment tab on the website.

<https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/2019/creationtide-2019-resources-for-clergy-and-readers/>

Gloucester Diocese link to various environmental liturgies

<https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/2020/environmental-liturgy/>

Celtic liturgies such as Northumbria and Iona

The seasons of the year section from John Birch's www.faithandworship.com

Wider reading

James Jones, *Jesus and the Earth* (London: SPCK 2013) A great short introduction to Christian perspectives on environmental concerns.

Richard Louv *Last Child in the Woods* (Algonquin 2005) Fabulous book on how connection with nature is important for wellbeing.

Paul Cudby *The Shaken Path* (Christian Alternative 2017) An excellent resource for connecting with people with a background in various strands of Paganism.

Elizabeth Johnson, *Ask the Beasts* (Bloomsbury 2004) For those wanting to go deeper theologically.

Walter Brueggemann *The Land revised edition* (Fortress 2002) Another theological resource, focussing on Old Testament theology of the land.

Forest Church online

http://www.mysticchrist.co.uk/forest_church Some useful articles and blogs about Forest Church

https://www.facebook.com/groups/forestchurch/?ref=br_rs Forest Church facebook group

Wildlife websites

<https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/activities> Wildlife watch has been developed by the Wildlife Trusts for children and families. Loads of downloadable resources such as spotter sheets, or instructions to make a bug hotel.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2020/03/kids-nature-activities-self-isolation/> Ideas from the Woodland Trust

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/support-us/act/your-school/> This one is mostly for teachers and schools.

<https://ww2.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-kids/games-and-activities/activities> Activities for children and families from the RSPB

<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/resources> Various resources from the EcoChurch section of the Arocha UK website

Outdoor stuff to do with kids – books

Fiona Danks and Jo Schofield, *The Stick Book* (London: Frances Lincoln 2011.) Also *The Wild Weather book*; *The Wild City book*.

Dawn Isaac, *101 things for kids to do outside* (London: Kyle 2014)

National Trust, *50 things to do before you are 11 3/4*

Annual nature events and ‘citizen science’

January – the Big Garden Birdwatch <https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/>

Spring/summer – Plantlife wild flower survey <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/wildflowerhunt/>

July/August - The Big Butterfly Count: <https://bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org/about>

Radio Gloucestershire’s ‘Ourboretum’

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/3gSC23y0kmPRhzSVCH3ShH6/ourboretum>

Information here and clips in the second link about this local tree planting programme that gets everyone involved with growing trees from nuts/acorns in Autumn 2020.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p07q12n5>

Petra’s list

Resource list used to develop and lead ‘Explore Creation’, ‘Awesome Science’ and ‘Explore the Story’ series for churches and primary schools

1-Explore Creation:

Children and nature (incl mental health):

Dr Sarah-Anne Munoz, *Children in the Outdoors Report* (Sustainable Development Research Centre)

<https://www.ltl.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/children-in-the-outdoors.pdf>

Stephen Moss, *Natural childhood Report* (National Trust) (Moss is a naturalist and wildlife writer)

<https://nt.global.ssl.fastly.net/documents/read-our-natural-childhood-report.pdf>

Richard Louv: ‘Why children need to get outside and engage with nature’ (Guardian, 16 August 2010) <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2010/aug/16/childre-nature-outside-play-health>

Children’s guides and books on wildlife:

Maria Ana Peixe Dias, *Outside* (brilliant tips for star gazing, plant ID, birdwatching, insects etc)

FSC (Field Studies Council) Identification guides. We have used: bats, mammals, butterflies, pond life... Excellent.

<https://www.wildcare.co.uk/monitoring-surveys/publications/field-studies-council-charts-and-guides.html>

RSPB and the National Trust sell good spotter guides as well.

Story/non-fiction books for 4+ (both these are by Nicola Davies – anything by her is good)

- Nicola Davies, *A first book of nature*
- Nicola Davies, *The diversity of Life on Earth*

Creation care:

Dave Bookless, *Planetwise* (creation care theology and practical applications),

Ruth Valerio, *L is for Lifestyle* (practical tips on how to live more planet-friendly),

Ruth Valerio, *Saying Yes to Life* (Lent book for the archbishop of Canterbury),

Dave Bookless, *God doesn't do waste* (personal testimony about creation care with A Rocha),

Peter Harris, *Kingfisher's fire* (about the story of A Rocha and the different projects worldwide)

www.arocha.org (Christian creation care and conservation charity)

<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/> (how to 'green' your church)

Ecology and natural history writing – these are all excellent:

Isabella Tree, *Wilding* (about the transformation of the Knepp estate in Sussex, from a lifeless farm into a stunning biodiversity hotspot combining organic farming with conservation)

John Lewis-Stempel (any of his many titles, especially: *Meadowland; Still Water; The Wood; The Running Hare*)

Understanding the climate crisis and other ecological issues:

Anything by Naomi Klein or Greta Thunberg, including podcasts ('Summer with Greta Thunberg' BBC 4, 11th of July 8 pm most recently)

The Explorer, Katherine Rundell (a fantastic novel for 9-12 year olds that uncovers how important ecosystems are)

2- Awesome Science:

Cees Dekker and Corien Oranje, *Science Geek Sam and his secret logbook*, (explains very well how Bible and science complement each other; this is a fast-paced children's novel at the same time)

Francis Collins, *The language of God* (Christian scientist and director of the Human Genome Project – this book explains clearly how we can take both the Bible and scientific findings seriously)

Hannah Holwerda, *Crackle and Pop* (out in October 2020) This covers the Bible with simple science experiments to complement each story.

For more resources, please visit: <https://www.faraday.cam.ac.uk/>

Pinterest: for activities (experiments and crafts)

Other (secular) resources: various books on evolution (all for kids):

- Martin Jenkins, *Darwin and the Big Bang*
- Sabina Radeva, *The origin of species*
- Catherine Barr, *The story of life*
- Anna Claybourne, *Amazing evolution*

3- Explore the Story:

This series is about the 'big story' of the Bible, journeying from Genesis to Revelation. I have used the books by:

- Tom Wright (New Testament commentaries and books explaining Wright's kingdom theology, e.g. *Surprised by Hope*)
- Chris Wright, *The mission of God's people*
- Richard Middleton, *A new heaven and a new earth*
- Eugene Peterson and Paula Gooder (various) write very clearly and helpfully.
- Faith matters (daily reflections by Henri Nouwen and others) have also helped to grasp the Bible.
- Various Bible translations (incl The Message, the NIV and the Good News Bible) when I wrote this series.