

OCTOBER 2022

# CREATION KEEPERS

NEWSLETTER FROM CREATION KEEPERS @  
ST. THOMAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH, COLUMBUS GEORGIA



## A PSYCHOLOGIST'S VIEW OF GLOBAL WARMING

BY ART FRANCE

Due to global warming, the climate around the world is rapidly changing. The impact of climate change is becoming clear with chaotic weather patterns disrupting peoples lives across the globe. Unsurprisingly, this is impacting peoples mental well being. Studies are clearly indicating that the majority of people in this country are becoming more worried about the effect of global warming on their future. Other studies indicate that as temperatures get hotter, people become more prone to anxiety, depression and violent outbursts. A positive result is that the denial about climate change is weakening which makes it easier to mobilize and take effective action to diminish the emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

The anxiety about climate change permeates the background to everything. The knowledge, either consciously or unconsciously experienced, that the planet is rapidly changing and most of the impacts of this will negatively effect our lives adds a layer of anxiety to the normal worries of life.

It is inevitable to feel fear over the crisis that is coming and grief over what is lost and what will be lost. I won't catalogue all that we stand to lose here. This would make a long and mind numbing list.

Feeling afraid is not mental illness. Expressing grief over losses is not mental illness nor is outrage over the continued destruction of the ecosystems that sustain us. Efforts to avoid these reactions can lead to mental illness in the form of self destructive behaviors that in the end only increase our suffering.

Facing the reality of what is happening can be profoundly painful and disturbing. Ultimately coming to terms with anxiety , fear and grief over ours and our children's future can free us to take more effective steps to change our lives that will help us live more harmoniously with nature and who knows even with each other. We will be able to see what is newly emerging and to embrace it willingly. The hope lies in the adapting of a new vision of our relationship to the earth which will guide our future decisions in greener directions.

My hope lies in my belief that people are capable of changing. We are able to give up certain destructive expectations, accept limitations and live meaningful lives within those limitations. Yet, even with hope we must understand that the road ahead points us on a hard journey.

**Mission:** Creation Keepers commit as faithful stewards to reduce climate disruption. As we REAP our Lord's bounty, we will safeguard God's good Earth when we champion the interdependent web of life.

**To reduce climate disruptions we must:**

**R4:** Harness our creation care commitment into action with interfaith and community partners to **REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE, and REFUSE.**

**E:** Expand our own **EDUCATIONAL** currency to recognize the interdependence of life, locally in the Chattahoochee Valley, while also recognizing that our neighbors extend out to include the rest of the world.

**A:** Recognize the relationship between ecological injustice and racism, and **ADVOCATE** for policy and accountability to dismantle its devastating injustice.

**P:** Commune together in the sacred spaces of our natural environment and **PRIZE** God's good gifts of beauty and wonder.

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# Hot and Not Too Bothered

FROM THE ECONOMIST, SEPTEMBER 3, 2022

In 2021 extreme heat killed more Americans than any other weather-related disaster. People seek shelter after tornado warnings, and leave coastal areas before a hurricane. Yet many ignore extreme-heat advice. The Economist reported that in July, over 150 million Americans, nearly one in two, were in parts of the country issuing such alerts.

Our cities are struggling to deal with heat. Miami, Los Angeles, and Phoenix have all appointed a “chief heat officer”. Their job is to raise public awareness of the dangers of high temperatures. People get used to routine risks, whether it is driving a car, breathing toxic air, or living in high temperatures. But heat can be a surprise killer.

Heatstroke, aggravated medical problems, respiratory illness result from extreme heat, but heat is rarely cited as the cause. The Environmental Protection Agency reports as many as 1,300 deaths a year fall into this category.

Las Vegas, the second-fastest-warming city in America, behind only Reno, has taken steps to protect residents. Cooling stations were set up in August when extreme heat engulfed the city. Poorer districts tend to be the hottest. Residents also suffer most as many do not own air conditioners or cannot afford to run them continuously. Homeless are even less able to find relief. Cities suffer in other ways, workers, especially those that work outdoors, are less productive. Tourism takes a hit.

Water shortages exacerbate the problem. Some local governments still struggle just to provide clean water. Residents in Flint, Michigan had none for nearly three years: their tap water contained dangerously high levels of lead. In August 1 m people in the wider Detroit area were advised to boil their water to kill bacteria. On August 29th residents of Jackson, Mississippi’s largest city, lost safe running water “indefinitely” after a storm took out the local water-treatment facility. The heat index that day was 102 degrees Fahrenheit

The Las Vegas valley depends on Lake Mead, our largest reservoir, for 90% of its water. Its levels have reached record lows after a 23-year megadrought. In early August the UN warned that the reservoir was on the brink of reaching “dead pool” levels, the point at which water stops flowing downstream from dams.

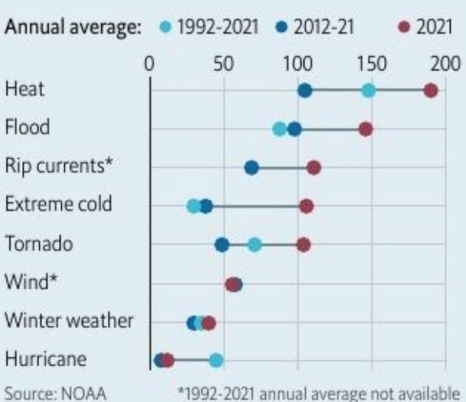
To provide relief while preserving water, Las Vegas has begun to plant drought-tolerant trees. It aims for 60,000 by 2050. Nevada banned ornamental grass from places such as office parks and median strips in southern parts of the state last year. The Southern Nevada Water Authority is offering residents \$3 per square foot to rip up their own turf and plant desert-friendly species instead.

Much more could be done to protect urbanites from extreme weather. A study published in 2016 found that only 13% of

an “extreme heat belt” will settle across America in about 30 years, from Louisiana to Wisconsin. It will affect over 100m people.

ECONOMIST

## Something new under the sun United States, weather-related fatalities by cause



New York’s counties had cooling centers that could be reached by public transport. For cities with adequate water supplies, greenery is useful: trees, grassy rooftops and parks all help to lower temperatures. Using less concrete, brick, and asphalt, which trap heat, helps too. Denver requires some buildings to install “cool roofs”, a white membrane that reflects heat. In Phoenix, asphalt is sprayed with a coating that lowers temperatures.

A study from First Street Foundation, a non-profit group, predicts that an “extreme heat belt” will settle across America in about 30 years, from Louisiana to Wisconsin. It will affect over 100m people.

People can live and adapt in these areas, but the fear is that policymakers will wait until an extreme event occurs—when Lake Mead reaches dead-pool levels, say—to act. We know what’s coming. The closer it gets, the harder the task will become.





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MICK ETCHISON

## Recovery and Resurrection

OPINION BY MICK ETCHISON

Something that has always fascinated me is the idea of recovery and resurrection. From the recovery of a piece of film, music, or art that was lost in the grainy cracks of time or the resurrection of a project that was all but destined to obscurity, those pieces of humanity have always intrigued me. Everything becomes lost in one way or another, with a scant few withstanding Father Time's feverish march. Culture, along with anything else created by the hands of man is destined to that fate, the same is true for God's bountiful and wondrous creations. That fact makes me appreciate even more the efforts of the specialists trained to search for and recover the once thought lost. Anything can be found with the right skills and manpower, even creatures once thought lost forever due to extinction.

With the world careening towards a human-caused mass extinction event, there is hope to be found in the rediscovery of species once thought lost to time. Named after the man Jesus revived in the Gospel of John, Lazarus species are various members of the biological kingdoms once believed to be extinct but were later discovered by chance. From a subspecies of the western gorillas, large flightless

peacock-esque birds, even large birch trees, all of which have been found by chance or through precise exploration and research. While most Lazarus species are still endangered or even on the verge of extinction, they have defied the odds and remained in earth's ecosystem. Many of these species have stood the test of time, with a few rediscovered species existing on the planet for millions of years. One such instance of this is the Coelacanth. First discovered in fossil form in the eighteen hundreds, living specimens were found in nineteen thirty-eight swimming along the Eastern coast of Africa. This ocean dweller is a medium sized, low ocean lying creature that has been on the planet for over sixty-five million years. Its age presumed lack of changes in its appearance, and its taxonomic relation to other ancient and extinct species, have biologists dubbing it a living fossil. As of now the species is thriving in its habitat, a grand sight for a species once thought gone, something that cannot be said for many others. Lazarus species, while they have escaped from obscurity, are hard pressed to have safety in repopulation, not without human assistance.

The Bermuda Petrel is an unassuming bird. A small white and black gull that circles shores for food and rests on hilly cliffs, where they live, mate, and rear their young. The nocturnal bird was once abundant in their habitats, but centuries of human hunting, development, and the introduction of nonnative animals such as boar and cats had decimated the population. By the sixteen hundreds, they were considered extinct but, by the nineteen hundreds, it was determined the species still existed but in small populations. In nineteen fifty-one, with only eighteen breeding pairs remaining on earth, the species laid squarely on death's door. Of the researchers who cataloged the impressive find, fifteen-year-old David Wingate decided to dedicate his life to protecting and revitalizing the species. Through his decades and decades of service, the species has grown to a population of one hundred ninety-six and is expected to grow throughout the years if all the proper measures he and his team installed are performed. Through Wingate's methods of efficient and sustainable land management, the removal of nonnative animals and plants, and the installation of synthetic nesting sites, the Petrel has escaped extinction. Although retiring officially in 2000, he has remained an important leader in the conservation of the avian species and the island they inhabit.

The conservation of species is a necessity in modern times and can be performed on an individual level. The story of the Bermuda Petrel is a prime example of one person stepping up and protecting God's creations from extinction, something that anyone can do provided they put in a little time. A few ideas to help in small ways include: 1) planting milkweeds for migrating monarch butterflies, 2) creating small water basins for bees and other thirsty pollinators to drink from, and 3) planting native wildflowers to help restore some of their original range. These actions, while requiring some planning, can benefit your local ecosystem and help prevent the extinction of flora and fauna. The impacts you make today create the stories and myths cherished by many soon.

<https://www.yachtmollymawk.com/2010/12/bermuda-david-wingate/>



MICK ETCHISON SHARED THIS PHOTO OF BERMUDA PETRELS IN FLIGHT



ART FRANCE SHARED THIS PHOTO OF HIS NEIGHBOR ON THE MOUNTAIN

## Books for Children & Youth

**RECOMMENDED BY GIPL FOR USING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CONVERSATIONS ABOUT CREATION CARE**

**SEEDS OF CHANGE: WANGARI'S GIFT TO THE WORLD, JEN CULLERTON JOHNSON**  
This book tells the story of the famous Kenyan environmental activist Wangari Maathi.

**MY FRIEND EARTH, PATRICIA MACLACHLAN**  
This book celebrates everything Earth does for us and reminds us to be a good friend in return.

**WHAT IS A RIVER?, MONIKA VAIGENAVICIENE**  
"What is a river?" The answer to this question will get children thinking and talking about the natural world in new ways. After reading this book, you can invite students to write their own "What is..." story.

**CITY GREEN, DYANNE DISALVO-RYAN**  
This is a book about a girl's efforts to plant a garden in her urban community.

**LET THE WHOLE EARTH SING PRAISE, TOMIE DEPAOLA**  
This book sings thanks and praise for everything in the land.

**Sammy Spider's First Tu B'Shevat, Sylvia A. Rouss**  
THIS BOOK TELLS THE STORY OF A SPIDER WHO JOINS IN THE JEWISH FESTIVAL OF TREES.

**WHEN GOD MADE THE WORLD, MATTHEW PAUL TURNER**  
This story focuses on the complex way that God created our vast universe, including the biodiversity of life and the intricacies of our solar system.

**ONE EARTH: PEOPLE OF COLOR PROTECTING OUR PLANET, ANURADHA RAO**  
This book for teenagers contains 12 short biographies of environmental activists around the world. It hopes to inspire the next generation of activists.

**YOUTH TO POWER: YOUR VOICE AND HOW TO USE IT, JAMIE MARGOLIN**  
In this book, Jamie Margolin, one of the country's most engaging youth activists and cofounder of Zero Hour, shares her advice, experience, and expertise on being a young climate leader.



#VOTE

Millions of Americans of faith and conscience care about climate change and justice, but too many of them are unlikely to vote in November. We know that if we can connect those voters to their values, and use proven voter outreach strategies, we turn many of them out to vote. Participate in GIPL's eco-challenge to learn more about how to take action on this topic!

**ECO-CHALLENGE**

<b>LEARN</b>	<b>ACT</b>	<b>ADVOCATE</b>
<i>Research the Faith Climate Justice Campaign - a non-partisan campaign focused on mobilizing faith voters to care for our common home and love our neighbors through voting.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>1. Pledge to be a Faith Climate Justice Voter. Text FAITHVOTER to 72572</i></li><li><i>2. Share the pledge with your family, friends, and faith community.</i></li></ol>	<i>Volunteer for a text banking event. At these events, volunteers will text registered voters and ask them to pledge to be a faith climate justice voter and to turn out to the polls in November.</i>

**Georgia Interfaith Power and Light (GIPL) invites our congregation to participate in their eco-challenge!**

The quarterly challenge focuses on various environmental topics and encourages individuals to take action. The Q4 eco-challenge will be modified slightly to run from September - November. The theme is Faith Climate Justice Voter. As people of faith and conscience, our values call us to be good stewards of God's Creation, our Sacred Earth, and ensure that everyone is cared for. The Faith Climate Justice Campaign is a non-partisan campaign focused on engaging and mobilizing faith voters to communicate their values of caring for our common home and loving our neighbors through voting. As part of the eco-challenge, GIPL offers a few concrete action and advocacy steps that you can take related to this topic. If you participate in the eco-challenge, please let your Green Team leader, Christine DiFelicianantonio, know. You can contact her at: [keepourcreation@gmail.com](mailto:keepourcreation@gmail.com). The Green Team will report our congregation's participation to GIPL at the end of the quarter for a chance to win a prize! Let's go green together!

### **Key Election Dates**

- October 10-11: First day vote-by-mail ballots mailed**
  - October 11: Last day to register to vote or check your voter registration**
  - October 17: First day to vote early in person**
  - October 22-29: Saturday early vote in person**
  - November 4: Last day to vote early in person**
  - November 8: Election Day! Vote-by-mail ballots must be received by 7pm.**
- Questions about voting? Call the Georgia Voter Protection Hotline at 888-730-5816**



## News & Events

### Science Gallery Atlanta

October 16 @ 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm, Emory University

Faith communities play a crucial role in the work for ecological justice. On October 16th 2022, civil and environmental rights leader, the Rev. Dr. Gerald Durley will deliver a keynote address about the intersections between faith, climate, and justice at Science Gallery Atlanta. Rev. Durley is the chair of the National Interfaith Power and Light board and the former Pastor of the historic Providence Missionary Baptist Church of Atlanta, where he served for nearly 25 years. In 2011, Rev. Durley was inducted into the International Civil Rights Walk of Fame for his contributions during the civil rights movement in the 1960s. Rev. Durley's address will be followed by a panel discussion composed of local interfaith leaders and scientists from Emory University, who will respond to Rev. Durley and explore how concerned citizens of faith can mobilize their communities to address the environmental realities and policies requiring our action in the state of Georgia.

Co-hosted by Climate Talks at Emory University, Georgia Interfaith Power and Light, Interfaith Atlanta, Interfaith Children's Movement, The Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta, The Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, The Ismaili Council for the Southeastern USA, and The Temple.

More info at [episcopalatlanta.org/events](http://episcopalatlanta.org/events)



### Important Dates

October 8, 9-1pm: **Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day** at Columbus Recycling and Sustainability Center, 8001 Pine Grove Way

October 22, 2-4 pm: **Floating Classroom** on West Point Lake

October 23, 9:30 am: Sunday Adult Formation, **Creation Keepers' Brian Schwartz presents Lambeth Calls on Environmental Justice**

October 30, 9:30 am: Sunday Adult Formation, **Creation Keepers' Partner, Georgia Interfaith Power & Light presents the Climate Justice Voter Campaign**

### PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light; and  
where there is sadness, joy.

O, God, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;  
to be understood as to understand;  
to be loved as to love;  
for it is in giving that we receive;  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
and it is in dying  
that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

The Feast of St. Francis is celebrated on October 4. St. Francis is the patron saint of animals and the environment and worship inspired by this Feast typically include pet blessings, prayers for environmental protection and conservation, and a call to a lifestyle based in simplicity and service of others.

### A note from Art France

On a sad note, I read recently that the firefly population world wide is rapidly diminishing. I have noticed fewer and fewer fireflies over recent years. This is caused by global warming, loss of habitat, light pollution and the pesticides that we use in our yards. I hope we can find a way to keep them a viable species. The summers are long, hot and humid here and they are one of the pleasures of that season.