



Bible Study for Local Use

# Creation: A Home for All Creatures

## *Introduction*

From the beginning, the deep listening process of the Strategic Planning Working Group (SPWG) has been rooted in scripture. Every listening group session began with Bible study.

In that same spirit, you will notice the prominence of scripture in the Transformational Aspirations video series being released over Fall 2022 and Winter 2023 on [anglican.ca/changingchurch](http://anglican.ca/changingchurch).

Each video has an accompanying Bible study for use in dioceses, parishes, and other Anglican contexts across the country.

We encourage repeated reading of the scripture passage out loud as you consider each question in turn. We also encourage open sharing, uncritical listening, and welcoming acceptance of each participant's contributions.

A new Bible study will be made available each month on [anglican.ca/changingchurch](http://anglican.ca/changingchurch), alongside the release of each video in the Transformational Aspirations series.

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### *Psalm 104: 1,5-26*

- <sup>1</sup> I praise you, Lord God,  
with all my heart.
- <sup>5</sup> You built foundations  
for the earth, and it  
will never be shaken.
- <sup>6</sup> You covered the earth  
with the ocean that rose  
above the mountains.
- <sup>7</sup> Then your voice thundered!  
And the water flowed
- <sup>8</sup> down the mountains  
and through the valleys  
to the place you prepared.
- <sup>9</sup> Now you have set boundaries,  
so that the water will never  
flood the earth again.
- <sup>10</sup> You provide streams of water  
in the hills and valleys,
- <sup>11</sup> so that the donkeys  
and other wild animals  
can satisfy their thirst.
- <sup>12</sup> Birds build their nests nearby  
and sing in the trees.
- <sup>13</sup> From your home above  
you send rain on the hills  
and water the earth.
- <sup>14</sup> You let the earth produce  
grass for cattle,  
plants for our food,
- <sup>15</sup> wine to cheer us up,  
olive oil for our skin,  
and grain for our health.
- <sup>16</sup> Our Lord, your trees  
always have water,  
and so do the cedars  
you planted in Lebanon.
- <sup>17</sup> Birds nest in those trees,  
and storks make their home  
in the fir trees.
- <sup>18</sup> Wild goats find a home  
in the tall mountains,  
and small animals can hide  
between the rocks.
- <sup>19</sup> You created the moon  
to tell us the seasons.  
The sun knows when to set,
- <sup>20</sup> and you made the darkness,  
so the animals in the forest  
could come out at night.
- <sup>21</sup> Lions roar as they hunt  
for the food you provide.
- <sup>22</sup> But when morning comes,  
they return to their dens,
- <sup>23</sup> then we go out to work  
until the end of day.
- <sup>24</sup> Our Lord, by your wisdom  
you made so many things;  
the whole earth is covered  
with your living creatures.
- <sup>25</sup> But what about the ocean  
so big and wide?  
It is alive with creatures,  
large and small.
- <sup>26</sup> And there are the ships,  
as well as Leviathan,  
the monster you created  
to splash in the sea.



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## *Questions for reflection and discussion*

**Reflection:** Imagine the psalmist, sitting high up on the side of a hill, surveying the streams and valleys, the trees and rocks, and her village, tucked into the hillside. She sees the birds flitting in and out of the trees, the mountain goats on the summit, the rock badgers peering out from behind the rocks. And she sees cattle on the grassy slopes, olive trees and vineyards around her village. And so she sings this song of praise for all of creation. Like the beginning of the biblical story, this psalm is an account of creation, and how everything fits together and has its place.

1. This psalm describes a deeply interconnected world, where every part of creation is intended to be a home for other creatures. Where do the various creatures in this psalm find their homes in creation?
2. Can you think of creatures that live near your community? What parts of creation has God made to be their homes?
3. What words best describe what we are doing when we destroy these parts of creation?
4. The psalm not only describes *places* that are specific homes for the creatures, but also *times* that are meant to be home for some creatures (vv. 19-23). What happens when human beings colonize the darkness that is meant for other creatures?
5. How does this Psalm inform the aspiration to steward and renew God's creation? How could this shape the hopes and priorities of the part of the church where you are?
6. What does your community need to help you focus and act on this aspiration?



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