



The Season of Creation

In the United Church of Canada, September is primarily marked by the observance of Creation Time.

2026 Season of Creation theme is “Living Water” with the foundational scripture being Ezekiel 47: 1-12

Water Flowing from the Temple

47 Then he brought me back to the door of the temple; and behold, water was issuing from below the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east); and the water was flowing down from below the south end of the threshold of the temple, south of the altar. ² Then he brought me out by way of the north gate, and led me round on the outside to the outer gate, that faces toward the east;^[a] and the water was coming out on the south side.

³ Going on eastward with a line in his hand, the man measured a thousand cubits, and then led me through the water; and it was ankle-deep. ⁴ Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water; and it was knee-deep. Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water; and it was up to the loins. ⁵ Again he measured a thousand, and it was a river that I could not pass through, for the water had risen; it was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be passed through. ⁶ And he said to me, “Son of man, have you seen this?”

Then he led me back along the bank of the river. ⁷ As I went back, I saw upon the bank of the river very many trees on the one side and on the other. ⁸ And he said to me, “This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah; and when it enters the stagnant waters of the sea,^[b] the water will become fresh. ⁹ And wherever the river^[c] goes every living creature which swarms will live, and there will be very many fish; for this water goes there, that the waters of the sea^[d] may become fresh; so everything will live where the river goes. ¹⁰ Fishermen will stand beside the sea; from En-ge’di to En-eg’laim it will be a place for the

spreading of nets; its fish will be of very many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea. ¹¹ But its swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they are to be left for salt. ¹² And on the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.”

Instead of interpreting this text solely as a metaphor for personal salvation, the season treats it as a literal and profound blueprint for **ecological restoration, biodiversity protection, and water stewardship**. The theme emphasizes the deep interdependence of humanity and the natural world, moving from environmental grief to active, hopeful restoration.

United Church communities often follow a "four-week cycle" during the Sundays of September, utilizing the global Season of Creation Lectionary or specific United Church Gathering Worship Resources to address different aspects of our ecosystems.

Week 1: Ocean & River Sunday

The Source of Life: Celebrating the gift of water, naming the crises of pollution and melting icecaps, and finding safe harbour from the climate crisis.

- **Ezekiel 47:1–12** (The River of Life)
- **Amos 5:24** (Justice rolling like waters)
- **John 4:7–15** (Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well)

Week 2: Land & Soil Sunday

Repentance and Right Relationship: Challenging the false idol of "land ownership" and reflecting on human culpability in environmental degradation.

- **Genesis 3:14–19** (The groaning of the ground)
- **Romans 8:18–25** (Creation waiting with eager longing)
- **Matthew 12:38–40** (The sign of Jonah / heart of the earth)

Week 3: Wilderness Sunday

Finding Shade and Sanctuary: Appreciating how God's presence shields us (like shade on a scorching day) and protecting fragile, uncultivated habitats.

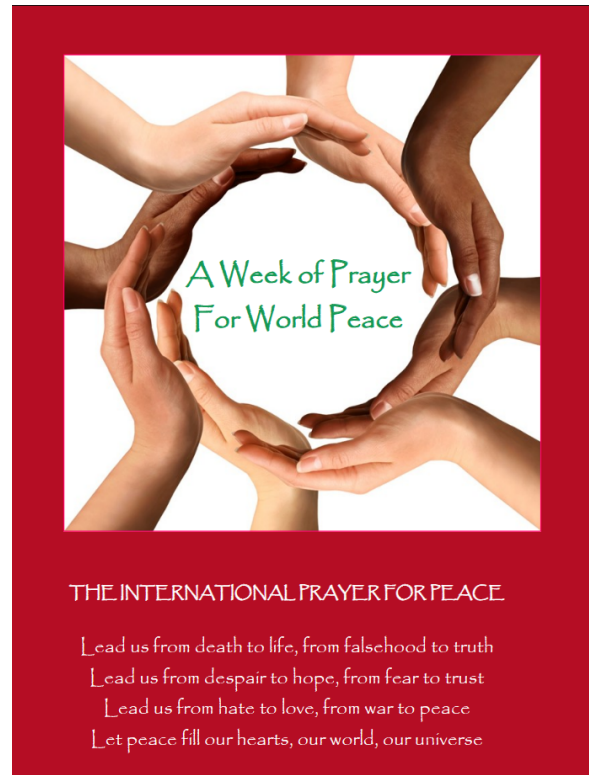
- **Joel 1:8–10, 17–20** (The wilderness pastures dry up)
- **Psalms 121** (The Lord is your shade at your right hand)
- **Mark 1:9–13** (Jesus driven into the wilderness)

Week 4: Eco-Justice Sunday

Peace with the Earth: Aligning human economics with ecological limits; praying for global communities facing rising sea levels or water scarcity (e.g., global island nations).

- **Isaiah 11:6–9** (The wolf and the lamb living in peace)
- **Psalms 65** (God watering the ridges and settling the furrows)
- **Luke 6:12–16** (Seeking divine wisdom in the hills)

The third week of September (20th to 26th) is the annual **World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel** (WWPPI). This week is a time for people of faith to join together in worship and prayer in support of an end to the occupation of Palestine. WWPPI calls on its participants to work for an end to the occupation, so that Palestinians and Israelis can finally live in peace.



In September, the church also celebrates Orange Shirt Sunday on September 27th when everyone is encouraged to wear orange, to pray, and to honouring residential school survivors.



September 30th marks National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day – Every Child Matters

Orange Shirt Day – Every Child Matters began in Williams Lake, British Columbia, on September 30, 2013. Established to honour Residential School Survivors, their families, and those who never returned home, it serves as a powerful reminder of the lasting impacts of the Residential School system. What began as a grassroots initiative has since evolved into a nationally recognized movement, with individuals, organizations, and communities across Canada participating in acts of remembrance, reflection, and reconciliation each year.

The orange shirt symbolizes the loss of culture, freedom, and self-esteem that many Indigenous children experienced. This day reminds us that “**Every Child Matters**”. Public commemoration of this tragic chapter in Canada’s history, and its lasting effects, plays an essential role in advancing truth and reconciliation.

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation was established in response to **Call to Action 80** of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which called on the federal government, in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples, to create a statutory holiday recognizing Survivors, their families, and communities while ensuring the history and legacy of residential schools are publicly remembered. **Bill C-5**, which established the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation as a federal statutory holiday, received Royal Assent on June 3, 2021.

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day are both observed annually on **September 30th**, and they are dedicated to honouring Residential School Survivors, their families, and communities, and to recognize the lasting impacts of Canada’s Residential School system. These commemorations provide an opportunity to deepen Canada’s understanding of the intergenerational effects of residential schools and to reflect on their enduring legacy as part of the ongoing journey toward truth, healing, and reconciliation.

On September 30, Canadians are encouraged to wear orange in honour of Residential School Survivors and their families, and in remembrance of the children who never returned home.

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation 2026:

Advancing Reconciliation
Through Meaningful
Engagement and
Indigenous-Led Wellness

