**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:**


**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*


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


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


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**


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.


**Forest Church online**

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

[https://www.facebook.com/groups/forestchurch/?ref=br_rs](https://www.facebook.com/groups/forestchurch/?ref=br_rs) Forest Church Facebook group

**Wildlife websites**

[https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk/activities](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/](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/](https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/support-us/act/your-school/) This one is mostly for teachers and schools.


[https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/resources](https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/resources) Various resources from the EcoChurch section of the Arocha UK website

**Outdoor stuff to do with kids – books**

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)

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


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 scientists 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/](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.