

ACTinG Bulletin #22

Acting for Creation Together in Gippsland
June 2026

Save the date!

Season of Creation Launch

at the Anglican Schools Evensong
23 August at 5pm
St Paul's Anglican Cathedral, Sale

Speaker: Jo Knight, CEO of Anglican Overseas Aid and author of
Called to Care – for people and planet

Followed by light refreshments

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This month's bulletin from Bishop Richard addresses another ACTinG aim: to '**study the theology of creation and incorporate it into our worship**':

<https://www.gippslandanglicans.org.au/acting/about-us>

Bishop Richard writes:

'It was a joy to be at The Abbey for a 'Hush Day' on Creation Care and the Hebrew Bible / Old Testament in June. On St Barnabas' Day, we reflected on Bruce Hutton's gorgeous stained glass windows in the Chapel of St Barnabas, which artistically render the first creation story in Genesis (Gen 1:1 – 2:3).

As we listened to that great poem / hymn again – trying to hear it on its own terms through the commentary of Australian biblical scholar Norman Habel – we heard the 'jarring' note struck by the appearance of humankind on the sixth day.

And as we gazed through the clear glass east window behind the altar-table out to Lake Victoria we pondered the goal of creation in this story as God's sabbath rest on the seventh day.

Of course, as the Hebrew Bible narrates in many and various ways, this rest is not for God to enjoy in 'splendid isolation'. It is that peace – that great 'shalom' – into which all creatures are invited to share equally. And it is so much more than simply a 'day off' each week.

The sabbath ordinance is one of the earliest commands given to Biblical Israel in the wilderness in connection with the gathering of manna (see Exod 16:4-30),

and it is a weekly reminder of God's will for the flourishing of all, which governs all time.

Sabbath is about giving rest – to labourers, animals, the earth itself – as much as taking rest. It is the great leveller, which mitigates against exploitation and the accumulation of wealth (see Exod 16:27). Sabbath has more to do with justice than with leisure.

Recovering a theology of sabbath has profound ecological and economic implications, as well as some ecclesial ones!

G.P. Wagenfuhr and Amy J. Erickson (who teaches at St Mark's National Theological Centre in Canberra) put it this way in their recently published book *Sabbath Gospel* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2026):

'Insofar as Sabbath is God's enthronement, we could say that Sabbath is the shape of God's sovereignty. It is a sovereignty that does not dominate by force but by lavish capaciousness. God's Sabbath rest is also the ground for humanity's freedom to rest from its own aspirations and plans – and in this to respect the freedom of others [Exod 20:8-11]. Human freedom and rest is established by God's freedom to rest. And as with God's rest, this is not a freedom *from* others but a freedom *for* and *with* others ...' (page 61, original emphases.)

How might we better model this as individuals, as households and communities, and as a church?

This bulletin comes to you from Acting for Creation Together in Gippsland

ACTinG seeks to encourage and equip Gippsland Anglicans to study the theology of creation; and to pray and act to safeguard, sustain and renew the life of the Earth.

Email us: acting@gippslandanglicans.org.au We would love to hear from you. Please forward this email to anyone you think would appreciate it.