

## Proposal 9

**Title:** *Proposal to Celebrate “Season of Creation”*

**Originating Body:** *Church in Action Committee of Maritime Conference*

### **That the 40<sup>th</sup> General Council (2009):**

1. ~~Recommend~~ **Designate** an annual “Season of Creation” to be observed in the Lectionary / Liturgical Year ~~during the 4 Sundays of September~~ from the Sunday after Labour Day until the Sunday of Thanksgiving weekend;
2. Direct the General Secretary, General Council to gather, disseminate and augment as needed, worship, Christian education, ~~Theology and Faith Committee or its equivalent to develop worship, Christian education,~~ eco-justice / social action, liturgical and other resources from the Canadian context and encourage congregations to make use of these and other educational resources available for use in the Season of Creation. ~~(e.g.: from an Australian and U. S. contexts for 2006, 2007, and 2008 for Lectionary Year A, B and C) ([www.seasonofcreation.com](http://www.seasonofcreation.com))~~

### **Background**

*“The Earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it.”*

*(Psalm 24)*

**Whereas:** We believe that life and creation are gifts from God that elicit our respect, awe and reverence; that we are one Earth community, one human family and share one destiny; that we recognize God’s call to live in harmony with this total community and to care for it that all may benefit equitably now and in the future; and

**Whereas:** The United Church of Canada has developed the policy statement, One Earth Community based on 12 ethical principles including social and economic justice and personal, corporate and governance responsibilities in environment and development issues; and has added to its creed, “called...to live with respect in creation”; and

**Whereas:** The life of the Earth community is threatened with destruction - pollution of air, land and water, unprecedented loss of species, and global warming - related to human impact on the earth; and we are at a major turning point at which we can either continue along the path of self-destruction, or turn toward restoration and renewal; and

**Whereas:** It is urgent for us to reconnect with the deep roots of our faith. There is growing concern in Christian communities about the ecological crisis, the way human beings are treating God’s Earth, and a growing awareness that an effective way to focus these concerns is through worship - concentrating our worship on God’s creation and our relationship with it including rituals that remind people of the importance and ethic of ecological care and that lead them to act differently in order to practice their faith; and

**Whereas:** Several major Christian denominations in Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Europe have designated and include a “Season of Creation” in the liturgical year – some for 4 Sundays of September culminating with October 1<sup>st</sup> (St. Francis of Assisi Day) and some for 8 weeks between October 1<sup>st</sup> and Advent – which has become a meaningful time of worship and inspiration for action for all ages; and

**Whereas:** “Church leaders in the United Kingdom have called upon Christians to use the period from September 1 until October 4 as an opportunity to put the environment at the heart of their worship. The 'Time For God's Creation' initiative, which would run annually, follows a resolution made at the Third European Ecumenical Assembly in 2007, which was attended by representatives of Europe’s Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant churches, ‘that the period be dedicated to prayer for the protection of Creation and the promotion of sustainable lifestyles that reverse our contribution to climate change.’”

**Whereas:** In the seasons of Advent, Epiphany, Lent and Easter we celebrate the life of Christ. In the season of Pentecost we celebrate the Holy Spirit. Now, in the Season of Creation, we have an opportunity to celebrate God, the Creator. For four Sundays in September we can join with others in celebrating with Christ the wonders of creation. In the liturgy, we follow the lead of the psalm writers and celebrate with creation — with the forests, the rivers and the fields, which praise the Creator in their own way. Bible readings focus especially on the story of Earth, which complements the story of God and the story of humanity in the Scriptures. We commit ourselves to a ministry of healing Earth, with Christ and creation as our partners.

**Financial Implications:** Costs should not be significant. Resources could be sold at cost

Nigel Weaver / Jim Webber-Cook moved that in number 1 remove the word “Designate” to be replaced with “Recommend” and remove “during the 4 Sundays of September” to be replaced with “from the Sunday after Labour Day until the Sunday of Thanksgiving weekend”. In number 2 remove “Theology and Faith Committee or its equivalent to develop worship, Christian education,” to be replaced with “the General Secretary, General Council to gather, disseminate and augment as needed, worship, Christian education,”, add “liturgical” after “eco-justice / social action,”, add the word “educational” after “to make use of these and other” and remove the words “(e.g.: from an Australian and U. S. contexts for 2006, 2007, and 2008 for Lectionary Year A, B and C) ([www.seasonofcreation.com](http://www.seasonofcreation.com))”.

**AMENDMENT CARRIED**

It is moved by Bob Johnson, seconded by Graham Powell that the 84<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Maritime Conference concur with Proposal #9 entitled “Proposal to Celebrate ‘Season of Creation’” and transmit to the 40<sup>th</sup> General Council.

**MOTION CARRIED**