

# Planning



Sunday, September 22 – Saturday, September 28 • 2019

SUN 22

15th Sunday after Pentecost  
25th Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Proper 20 (25)  
Season of Creation 4

MON 23

TUES 24

WED 25

THUR 26

FRI 27

SAT 28

## Things to keep in mind this week...

## Planning ahead...

## Season of Creation (Year C)

### Proverbs 8:22–31

The focus for age-level materials

Psalm 148

Colossians 1:15–20

John 6:41–51



Resources based on  
semi-continuous

readings of the Revised Common  
Lectionary can be found in the RCL  
folder.

## Liturgical colour:

aqua

*Lection Connection* links  
current events with this  
week's scriptures. Go to [www.seasonsonline.ca](http://www.seasonsonline.ca) and click on  
the link.

## Ecumenical Prayer Calendar

Belarus, Moldova,  
Russia, Ukraine

Based on *In God's Hands:  
Common Prayer for the World*,  
ed. By Hugh McCullum and  
Terry MacArthur (Geneva:  
World Council of Churches,  
2006).

## September 2019

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

August 2019							October 2019						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
4	5	6	7	1	2	3	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	27	28	29	30	31		



**Proverbs 8:22–31**

The focus in the age-level materials

**Psalms 148****Colossians 1:15–20****John 6:41–51**

Resources based on semi-continuous readings of the Revised Common Lectionary can be found in the RCL folder.

# Cosmos Sunday

To have a Sunday for recognizing God's presence in the cosmos may seem a bit redundant. After all, isn't God everywhere? Yet too often we want to confine God to simple places, to place God in a box, or leave God in a church building, or assume that God is only present on mountaintops. This day invites us to stretch all our understandings beyond the wildest of imaginings, and find God present in the tiniest insect and the greatest of mountains, and all things in between.

**Proverbs 8:22–31** At times, the creation stories in Genesis 1 and 2 are amalgamated into one Creation story, even though these are entirely different stories from different writers with different agendas. Yet these are not the only Creation stories. Proverbs 8 is different again, with Wisdom herself proudly declaring that she is the very first of all of God's created order; pre-dating the clouds and the oceans, the hills and the fields.

Wisdom then goes on to point out that she was working beside God as – and here the Hebrew is delightfully vague – perhaps an artisan, or a little child, or even a teacher. The specifics of that definition will never be truly known for the word in verse 30, *'amon*, is ambiguous at best. But what may be most surprising of all is Wisdom's declaration that she was having fun, frolicking before God throughout the entire creative process, and delighting in the human race.

Given that too much of Christian history has taken as its starting point a sense that humanity is depraved from the beginning, this is an astonishing declaration, directly from scripture: Wisdom, one of God's greatest of all creations, delights in humankind. How different our sense of the entire cosmos could be if we truly grasped this, and recognized that God undoubtedly delights in us all, too.

Similar feelings come to play in **Psalms 148**, in which all the cosmos is called upon to praise God. All creatures, all people – king and commoner, young and old, men and women. Beyond that, we are told that God holds humanity close, which strongly suggests an undying, everlasting love

for the crown of divine creation.

The hymn in **Colossians 1:15–20** is generally considered to have originated outside of the letter itself, and may – in its original form – have been non-Christian. But here it is used for the single purpose of glorifying Jesus Christ and declaring unequivocally that Christ is the head of the church, the firstborn of all creation, the overarching being that surpasses all things. Bits of John 1 come into the hymn as we are told that all things were created by Christ, and this, in turn, takes us back to Proverbs – leaving us with the notion that Christ has somehow managed to embody the wonders of the Wisdom of God.

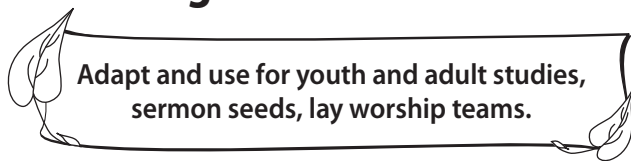
Just as the previous reading sought to declare that the human Jesus was also the Cosmic Christ, so in **John 6:41–51** similar truths are proclaimed. Jesus, whose parents the locals all know, is also the bread of life, the food that sustains all people. Made of matter to give eternal life, John's gospel describes how Jesus the Christ is both the substance and the way of Wisdom and her reconciling nature in creation.

• • • • •

Our simple human minds are brutally limited in their ability to comprehend, to grasp fully, things that are beyond our day to day existence. We want to praise God as Creator of all things, and yet we have a rather limited comprehension of how God might be the actual Creator. Having heard the Genesis 1 story over and over again, our minds are challenged when we read a completely different story from scripture. Some may want to leap to reasons as to why this is not a "real" creation story. Yet the fact remains that it is in our scriptures, as is Colossians 1, and John 6, and all remind us that God is present and accessible, and vast and incomprehensible. God is someone who works side-by-side with Wisdom in a collaborative, creative process, and is also the one who offers eternal life – something we readily want to grasp, but which is, after all, quite incomprehensible. Such is the nature of a cosmic God!



## Reflecting on the Word



### Connecting with life

- How do you understand the cosmos?
- What makes something “cosmic”?

### Scripture

#### Proverbs 8:22–31

Before you read this passage, try to imagine you have never encountered another biblical story of creation, and thus that this is the only one.

- What does this story tell us about Creation?
- What happens to your understanding of Creation if you imagine God working side-by-side?
- How do you understand “Wisdom” – as an aspect of God, as another name for the Christ, or as something different altogether?

Wisdom – *Hochmah* in Hebrew or *Sophia* in Greek – is always feminine in the Bible.

- Woman Wisdom claims that before anything, before the creation of the cosmos, she was there side-by-side with God. What type of character do you imagine Wisdom to be, based on this passage?

Read “Wisdom: a vibrant, living, driving presence.” The mystery called Wisdom at the core of the cosmos is a voice inviting all who would be wise to explore her facets, discover her presence, and celebrate her codes.

- Where and in what ways do you see Wisdom present in Creation?

Psalms 148 invites every part of the cosmos to praise God.

- Imagine different aspects of creation praising God. How might they do that? What sounds do you hear? Where do you see/hear this rejoicing?
- What does it mean to praise God?

#### Colossians 1:15–20

It can be said that Jesus was but a moment of the eternal Christ, a reminder that both Christ and Wisdom existed be-

### Materials

article “Wisdom: a vibrant, living, driving presence” (page 69)

fore creation and participated in creation. We see this from the Proverbs 8 passage (above) and from John 1, a creation story in which Christ (the Word) is present from the very beginning.

- What does it mean that Christ is the “head” of all things? Theologian Matthew Fox has stated that “religion would become an instrument of social awakening and deep social change for and by the masses if it let go of the quest for the historical Jesus and moved on to the quest for the Cosmic Christ.”
- How would you understand the “Cosmic Christ” as opposed to the historical Jesus?
- What might it mean to declare the presence of the cosmic Christ in our world today?

#### John 6:41–51

Opponents of Jesus seek to discredit him by writing him off, saying “we know his mother and father, so what does he mean by saying he has come down from heaven?”

- Does this discredit what Jesus is saying? When and how might we disregard or discredit the worth of another?
- What might it have meant to people who were perpetually hungry, to think of Jesus as being “bread of eternal life”?
- What does it look like for us to be life for another?

### Connecting scripture and life

We often look at life in very practical terms, in the context of what we know and what relates to our daily living. Yet sometimes we are called to soar above the clouds, above the trees, above day to day life, and become more aware of the cosmos of which it is all a part.

- When is it helpful to think of God as cosmic?
- When is it helpful to think of God as being present, down to earth, more human in nature?
- How do the two come together?
- How shall we live as creatures among creatures, praising God, being the embodiment of love and wisdom of God being Christ to one another, the bread of life through service to one another?
- How might we reflect the Cosmic Christ today?

## Focus for Worship, Learning, and Serving

God is a cosmic concept when we step back for a moment. We speak of an invisible, spiritual being that created all that is, and that is somehow present in the midst of that creation.

We want to recognize God’s presence, and yet we struggle with the extent to which God is involved in our daily living. Similarly, we believe that we can speak to this invisible being through the act of prayer, and further believe – in varying degrees – that we can influence the

ways of this being *through* prayer. It is all very cosmic, a reminder that God is present in, and far beyond, the world at the very same moment. Conveying this sense can be difficult in that we seek more often to demonstrate and celebrate the aspects of God that make God present in our world and in our lives. How can we experience a personal God in the midst of the vast cosmos? How can we celebrate God as Creator of the cosmos?

# Cosmos Sunday

## Prepare

**NOTE:** All of these suggestions are mere starting points; adapt, delete, and add according to your local needs.

- ❑ Recruit volunteers needed for worship.
- ❑ Choose an option for hearing Proverbs 8:22–31. For the Bible story, arrange for a storyteller, to present “[Wisdom Remembers](#)” on p. 70, or the story “[The Night Sky](#)” that is on the children’s activity leaflet at the end of this week’s material. For the dramatic reading, arrange for a woman to present “[Wisdom](#)” which paraphrases the scripture passage.
- ❑ Bring items for setting the worship space.
- ❑ Arrange for some “cosmic” music for before the call to worship.
- ❑ Option: project a variety of images of “cosmic” things such as scenes from the Hubble space telescope. Slides are available in the Images to Project and Print folder.
- ❑ You might choose to print [Milford Sound, New Zealand](#) on or in your bulletin (in the Images to Project and Print folder). For background to the art and artist, see “[Connecting with the Art](#)” on p. 8.
- ❑ Bring song such as “[The Earth Is Our Cradle](#)” (p. 7).
- ❑ Set [stations](#) as described on p. 71–72.



## Music Suggestions

### [The Earth Is Our Cradle](#)

Christopher New; *page 7*

### [Cosmic Hymn of Praise](#)

Michael Mangan; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 9*

### [Each Blade of Grass \(Circle of God\)](#)

Keri Wehlander; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 9*

### [You Are Holy/Hamba Nathi](#)

Traditional, South Africa; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 8*

### [Come and Seek the Ways of Wisdom](#)

Ruth Duck, Donna Kasbohm; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 7*

### [Glory to God/Gloria a Dios](#)

Traditional; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 2*

### [Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee/You](#)

Van Dyke, Hodges, Beethoven/*Ode To Joy*

### [Praise the Spirit in Creation](#)

Michael Hewlett, David Hurd

### [Stars and Planets Flung in Orbit](#)

Herman Stuempfle, Jr.

### [The Spacious Firmament on High](#)

Addison, Haydn

### [The Works of the Lord Are Created in Wisdom](#)

Christopher Idle, Edward Kremser



A chart that shows the licence holder(s) for each song in each of the 9 *Seasons of the Spirit* Music Volumes can be found at [www.seasonsonline.ca](http://www.seasonsonline.ca). Click on Library; Seasons Music Information. Please contact a licence holder for permission to duplicate.

## Gather

*In preparation for the call to worship, arrange to play some “cosmic” music. This could be a variety of things; a simple recording, which is readily available on the Internet, is the opening fanfare from Richard Strauss’ “Also Sprach Zarathustra,” used as the theme of the movie 2001: a Space Odyssey. (Note that this piece begins with several seconds of silence, or at least of inaudible music.)*

*Option: project a variety of images of “cosmic” things such as scenes from the Hubble space telescope (see PowerPoint® in the Images to Project and Print folder). Such images are available (at no charge) from <https://images.nasa.gov/>. The piece should be short – about a minute or so in length.*

### Call to worship

We have gathered in the presence of God, Creator of all things. Let us celebrate the cosmos that God has made, and of which we are a part.

*Play music, including the slideshow of images if you have chosen to do so.*

Come, let us worship the God of the cosmos.

### Opening prayer

Great galaxies and tiny insects;  
giant gum trees and redwoods  
and tiny plants growing in tundra and desert;  
a speck of sand, and planets beyond our comprehension –  
all of this is the stuff of your making, O God.

We can feel so very small in the context of all you have made,  
and yet you care for us – you love each of us  
as if we were your favourite.

Help us to acknowledge you in the world around us,  
to celebrate your presence,  
and to honour you in all we do. Amen.



## Worship Outline • September 22, 2019

### Prayer of confession

We try to limit you, O God.

We claim you are male and human, and that you look like us and think like us.

Forgive us.

Sometimes, too, we limit your creation, not wanting to think beyond ourselves, or our own circles. We challenge beliefs that threaten us, not wanting to accept worlds beyond our own, and life in other forms.

Yet you are the Cosmic One, Creator of things beyond our imaginations.

Help us to set free our understanding, that we might experience you as the Cosmic Being that you are. Amen.

### Words of affirmation

**ONE:** Scripture tells us that Jesus Christ is the way that we see God. We can look at the Christ and see God's original design and purpose in all things. In Christ, all the broken and dislocated pieces of all creation – people and things, animals and atoms – get properly fixed and fit together in wondrous harmony.

**ALL:** Thanks be to God. Amen.

## Engage

### Opening the word

#### Colossians 1:15–20

*This paraphrase of Colossians 1:15–20 brings a fresh perspective to the text.*

Yes, Jesus is like a portrait of God come to life, showing us God's character for the first time. Jesus is the model of what we shall all become. What we see in Jesus is the life force that brought everything into being, both in our world and in worlds unknown to us. Jesus is the clue to what it's all about.

There is nothing that does not relate to him, including world politics. Jesus comes first and everything else falls into place around him. He is the head of the Christian community. He was the first to turn death into life. He is number one in every sense. He expressed God completely through his human personality, and that was God's way of making friends with all living things, in this world and worlds beyond time and space.

*John Henson, ed., Good as New: a Radical Retelling of the Scriptures. New Alresford, Hampshire (UK): O Books (Imprint of John Hunt Publishing), 2004. All rights reserved.*

### Psalms 148

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Bm7 A D E(sus4) E A Dmaj7 C#m Dmaj7 Bm7 E(sus4) E E6 A

We join the whole world to praise the Ho - ly One.

**ALL:** Hallelujah!

**ONE:** Praise the Holy One from the heavens!  
Sing praises in the heights above!

**ALL:** Sing praises, all holy angels; all the heavenly host,  
praise the holy name. *Refrain.*

**ONE:** Sun and moon, sing praises;

**ALL:** sing praises all bright stars.

**ONE:** Sing praises, you heaven of heavens

**ALL:** and you waters above the heavens.

**ONE:** Praise the Holy One's name,

**ALL:** the One whose command created them all  
and fixed their orbits for ever and ever  
by a law which shall never be broken. *Refrain.*

**ONE:** Praise the Holy One from the earth,  
sea monsters and ocean depths,

**ALL:** fire and hail, snow and smoke,

**ONE:** mountains and all hills,

**ALL:** fruit trees and cedars,

**ONE:** wild beasts and cattle,

**ALL:** reptiles and winged birds. *Refrain.*

**ONE:** Praise the Holy One,  
world rulers and all peoples,

**ALL:** leaders and judges,

**ONE:** young men, young women,

**ALL:** old and young together. *Refrain.*

**ONE:** Let them praise your name, O Holy One,  
for your name alone is exalted.  
Your majesty covers heaven and earth.

**ALL:** You have lifted up your people's horn  
with praise from all your faithful ones,  
from Israel, those close to your heart.

**ALL:** Hallelujah! *Refrain.*





**Moving into Proverbs 8:22–31** *the focus scripture for age-level materials in ENCORE*

Choose from the following.

**Bible story** Have a storyteller present the story “Wisdom Remembers” (p. 70). Alternatively, for younger children, arrange for a storyteller to present the story “The Night Sky” (on the children’s activity leaflet at the end of this week’s materials).

**Dramatic reading: Wisdom** *Arrange for a woman to present the following, which paraphrases the scripture reading.*

Hello, my name is Hochmah (HOKE-ma), although you may know me as Sophia, or Wisdom – or you might not even know me at all. Many people never quite know what to make of me, so sometimes they just ignore me. But I’m not going anywhere!

You see, I’ve been here since the beginning – the very beginning, the first instant of creation. Before anything else, God created me. Before there was Earth, before there was water, before there were mountains, before God made the fields or the very first dry land, God made me.

I watched God establish the heavens and Earth, the deepest ocean, the horizon. When God brought water together in the sky to form clouds when God set limits

on the ocean – do you know how difficult that can be? – so that there would be boundaries between the sea and the dry land. When God made everything, I was there.

And you know what? I would play! Yes, it was a sheer and utter delight to be there when God made things. Sometimes, I would be like a skilled artisan, advising God. It was wonderful – we would have long conversations about just how to do things. And we had fun! A lot of people don’t imagine that – they don’t even *want* to imagine that – but God had fun creating the cosmos.

There were other times, too, when God got a little too wrapped up in the work of creating, and how to figure things out, and seemed to get overwhelmed. So, at those moments, I took the form of a little child, and I would tug at God’s side until God would have to stop whatever was being created – whatever was being worried over – and spend time with me, playing. It’s through the playing that the world became just the amazing place that it is.

When you go about the cosmos – the earth, and the sea, and the sky. When you look at the stars and the planets. When you swim beneath the ocean and look at the fishes, remember that I was there – God’s Wisdom was there, making all things work together, and giving everything purpose.

Invite children, young people, and all who wish to move to the stations. Others will remain seated for proclaiming the word.

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## Respond

After proclaiming the word, you might invite those who have not already done so to move to and around the stations, taking ten minutes or so with a chosen practice.

**Sing** or listen to the song “The Earth Is Our Cradle” (p. 7).

### Prayers of the people

Cosmic Creator,  
you have made an awesome world:  
a place of rocks and minerals,  
trees and grasses,  
plants that feed us and flowers that please us.

We pray now for those who are unable to experience the fullness of Earth’s beauty and majesty.

We pray, too, that we might find ways to preserve the dignity, value, and beauty of this fragile planet.

Cosmic Creator,  
you have made oceans,  
brimming with life in so many exotic forms.  
We discard plastic and oil and human waste in the sea,  
and we pray now that you will move deep within us  
to change us.  
Let us turn from destroying to preserving,

that the oceans,  
the coral reefs,  
the precious islands threatened by rising sea levels,  
might live without fear,  
and know that they have a future.

Cosmic Creator,  
you made the sky beyond us.  
Let it be a reminder to us of the need to dream,  
to stretch our minds to think and hope  
far beyond the day-to-day.

As we gaze tomorrow at stars as yet unknown today,  
remind us that you are always revealing  
new worlds in our very midst.

May we not be scared of them,  
and want to run and hide, and deny them,  
but open us to praise you for the ongoing work of creation,  
and inspire us to join you in it, always. Amen.

### Prayer of dedication or offering prayer

All that exists is yours, great God. Now we give a portion to your church, to continue doing your work in the world. Take these gifts, and use them, we pray in Christ’s name. Amen.

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## Bless

The Creator Spirit, the Cosmic Christ,  
and Sophia, holy Wisdom,  
are present all around us.  
Feel them.

Know them.  
Let them in.  
And take them with you  
as you go out into the world. Amen.



# Wisdom: a vibrant, living, driving presence

The famous wisdom poem of Proverbs 8:22–31 has wisdom presenting herself as a companion of God at the time of creation.

YHWH acquired me first,  
his way before his works.  
From of old, from antiquity I was established,  
from the first, from the beginnings of Earth.

*(Proverbs 8:22–23, Norman Habel translation)*

The verb here translated “acquired” (*qana*) is the standard term employed in Proverbs for acquiring wisdom... It is also evident from verses 24 and 25 of Proverbs 8 that wisdom “emerges” prior to creation. She is not created by God, but embraced by God... Wisdom claims to be the “way” that precedes the work, the creative activity of God... Wisdom is not a “work” of God, but a prior presence and force.

What then is the function of wisdom as the “way” that precedes and accompanies God at creation?... Wisdom seems to be the dynamic design that inspires God and determines the various codes of creation. As the “way,” wisdom is the blueprint providing the codes for creating the various do-

maines of creation. The design precedes the act of creation; the way precedes the works of the Creator.

The personification of this “way” indicates that wisdom has a dynamic personal relationship with God. Wisdom inspires and informs God in the creation process.

It is not insignificant that the closing announcement of wisdom is one of celebration. Wisdom rejoices in creation and with humanity. The living design that integrates the codes of the cosmos is not viewed as a passive, lifeless blueprint, but a vibrant, living, driving presence. The mystery called wisdom at the core of the cosmos is a voice inviting all who would be wise to explore her facets, discover her presence, and celebrate her codes.

On one memorable occasion, I sat on the shore of a bay in Auckland, New Zealand. Around me hundreds of bar-tailed godwits had gathered from points all around the island. All day they raced around in a frenzy of feeding. Suddenly, as if a signal were given and received from within each of them, they all began to circle and form a spiral of spinning life. Slowly the spiral swirled out to sea, and the godwits were on their way to Alaska to feed, breed, and nurture.

## Flight Wisdom

At that moment  
I could sense Wisdom.  
The wisdom of flight  
and the wisdom of memory  
encoded in their spirit.  
I was conscious of the amazing intelligence of fellow Earth-beings  
guiding themselves non-stop  
across the vast ocean to a place  
more than ten thousand kilometres away!  
And I was humbled.

*By Norman Habel from Rainbow of Mysteries: Meeting the Sacred in Nature.  
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# Wisdom Remembers

Based on Proverbs 8:22–31

The book of Proverbs in the Bible is filled with wisdom, wise ideas about how to live in God's ways. Long, long ago, people thought wisdom was like a person, and they gave her a name Woman Wisdom. This is a story of Woman Wisdom.

When God began creating, Wisdom was by God's side. Wisdom came before springs of water, settled mountains, hills, and fields. Wisdom was there before God formed the world, and got to watch, and be close as creation was born.

Wisdom, too, remembered what it was like as God formed the sky and the land. She had delighted when God set limits on the wild waters, giving them beaches to hold them off

the land. Wisdom was with God all of the time, celebrating and cheering God on.

When God created humankind, Wisdom was delighted. And, God was happy to see Wisdom's delight.

When God shared the world with Wisdom, perhaps God hoped that the world and Wisdom would embrace each other with as much love as God had for both. Maybe God hoped that Wisdom would share her gifts with humankind and that humankind would accept those gifts.

I wonder what is God's hope for Wisdom and the world?

A recording of this story is available in MP3 format in the Audio Stories folder.



## Bible Story

**Materials** recording of today's story "[Wisdom Remembers](#)," player, paper, crayons, pencils, a copy of [directions](#) displayed where all can see; alternatively, arrange for a storyteller to present the story

## The practice of storytelling

### Directions

1. Listen to the story "Wisdom Remembers"
2. Reflect on the question: What is God's hope for Wisdom and the world? Make a list of all the things in God's creation in which you delight





## Living, Learning, Growing as Disciples

The following stations might be set up around your worship space or in other places around the church. Choose one or more practices, depending on your space and numbers. Display the [directions](#).

For your convenience, instructions are formatted for printing and available in the Stations folder.

The article "[Connecting with the Art](#)" on page 8 provides some background to the two posters for Season of Creation, Pentecost 2 and some art engagement ideas for individuals and groups. You might choose to add an Art Engagement station each week, using one of the art engagement ideas.

### Cosmic jelly

**Materials** packets of jelly powder (gelatin) – blue is recommended, although another colour could work; a variety of candy – sprinkles, stars, jelly beans; jars with lids; spoons, a copy of the [directions](#) displayed where all can see

**In advance**, premix the jelly powder according to the package directions, pour into the jars, and allow to chill in a refrigerator for about an hour – until it is the consistency of raw egg whites. Make enough for everyone to get a jar.



Suitable for all ages  
working together

### The practice of tactile exploration

#### Directions

God has created an amazing world – not just here on Earth, but in outer space as well. As we gaze at the universe, we can imagine what is out there.

1. Add candies to the jars of jelly, and mix them with the spoons. It works best to add the smallest items first and stir them in, and then to add larger ones – going from smallest to largest until everything is added.
2. Put the lids on the jars, and put them back in the refrigerator. Ideally, they should cool another 3 hours which means you will need to take the jars home to set before they are eaten.
3. While making these, or after they are done, and you are admiring them, talk about outer space using prompts as such as:

- What is out there?
- What might God have had in mind when creating the world?
- Do you think there is life out there? What might it be like?

### Cosmic play dough

**Materials** batches of black or dark blue play dough (see recipe in Virtual Resource Booklet at [www.seasonsonline.ca](http://www.seasonsonline.ca), click on Library), glitter, small metallic stars (confetti) which could be added to the glitter, boards for kneading, a copy of the [directions](#) displayed where all can see



Suitable for  
all ages

### The practice of wonder

#### Directions

God has created an amazing world – not just here on earth, but in outer space as well. As we gaze at the universe, we can imagine what is out there.

1. Take some play dough and add some glitter and stars.
2. Carefully knead the play dough on the cutting board until the glitter is well mixed.
3. Play with the play dough, simply working it in your hands and noticing how the glitter and stars make it look like the deep night sky.
4. While working with the play dough, talk about outer space, using questions such as: What is out there? What might God have had in mind when creating the world? Do you think there is life out there? What might it be like? Do you think God loves them, too? (Of course!)



## Telescope/star chart

**Materials** star charts, and or some of the awesome pictures available from <https://images.nasa.gov/> or other amazing space images. If possible, also bring a microscope with a few slides showing things very close up – for example, a drop of blood, a leaf, a grain of sand, a drop of water, etc.



**Suitable for  
all ages**

## The practice of wonder

### Directions

God has created an amazing world – not just here on earth, but in outer space as well. As we gaze at the universe, we can imagine what is out there.

1. Look at the star charts and/or images.
2. Next, look through the microscope and notice things about something very tiny. What surprises you? What is fascinating?
3. Talk about the vastness of God's creation. In times gone by, people tended to think that the world was limited to what we could see and experience here on earth but over time we have come to realize we are but a tiny speck in a much bigger world. Things great and tiny – and all things in between – are made by God, and we are called to care for them.

## Sand drawing

**Materials** Bibles or copies of Proverbs 8:22–31, newspapers or newsprint to cover table, large paper plates for each person at the station, sand in various colours (available from craft or home stores or florist supplies), bowls, small paper bags (snack or sandwich size), scissors, small stones or pebbles, optional: white glue, paper towels for cleanup, copy of the [directions](#) displayed where all can see



**Suitable for  
all ages**

## The practice of creativity

### Directions

1. Read Proverbs 8:22–31 Pay particular attention to verse 27.
2. Draw a picture on your paper plate using the sand and stones/pebbles on the table. You might use your fingers to drizzle the sand on the paper plate or place the sand in a plastic bag and cut a small hole in one corner of the bag – dispensing the sand like icing in a piping bag. You might also draw in the sand with your fingers.
3. When finished, take a look at what each has created.
4. Then wipe your plate clean and begin again.

**Younger children** Invite younger children to draw with sand. When they have finished, encourage them to wipe their plate clean and start again on another sand drawing.

**Option** You could also create sand art using glue to hold the sand to the paper plate or card stock/heavy paper.

## Caring for creation

**Materials** several dark-coloured fabric pieces; pieces of white or yellow-coloured fabric, or stars cut from fabric or paper; images of Earth, planets, sun, stars, clouds, sky cut from magazines and/or recycled calendars, and/or sourced from the Internet; paper; pens, pencils, and markers; copy of [directions](#) displayed where all can see; personal journals



**Suitable for  
ages 9–adult**

## The practice of delighting in creation

### Directions

1. Take a few moments to look at the images. Recall images of the cosmos that you might have seen in movies or television. Recall images of God's creation that you have seen in church, or at these stations throughout the Season of Creation.
2. What steps might your congregation take to express its delight in God's creation – actions related to fellowship, education, and conservation/creation care? Think of activities or actions that might be done by the congregation as a community. Make a list of these.
3. Write a short prayer that includes praise for God's creation and a prayer of encouragement for your congregation to take part in the many ways you can show your delight for God's creation. Decorate and leave for all to read.



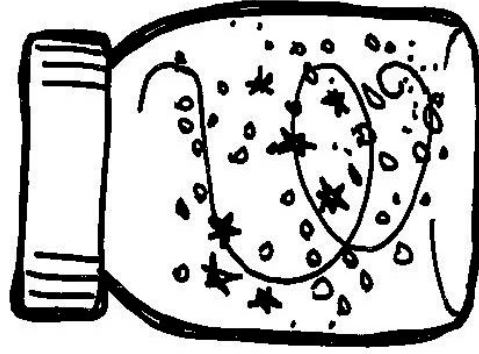
## Wonder jars

### Materials

- small non-breakable, clear storage containers with screw top lids (size of baby food jars)
- baby oil
- water
- glitter
- metallic stars
- blue food colouring
- waterproof tape
- thick towel or large bowl/basin

### Instructions

1. Pour baby oil into the jar until about 1/3 full.
2. Add some glitter and metallic stars, not a lot but enough to create sparkle and wonder.
3. Add a few drops of food colouring.
4. Sit the jar on a thick towel or in a large bowl to catch any spills as the jar is filled with water.
5. Screw the lid on tightly and seal with waterproof tape.
6. Twist the jars slightly to see the movement of the elements inside.
7. Wonder about the cosmos that is filled with beautiful and mysterious things – the moon and the stars, and the planets and galaxies



## The Night Sky

It was very quiet. The sun had set and it was getting dark. David and Julie were waiting for their mother and father. They were so excited! They were going to go for a walk to look at the night sky. Their father was going to bring a telescope so they could look at the stars and planets.

It was time to go! They followed their mother and father through the door and stood outside for a few moments.

"It's so beautiful!" said Julie. "Look at all the stars!"

"Do you think you can count them all?" asked her mother.

"No way!" said Julie at the same time.

Everyone laughed and then they started to walk towards the empty field where they were going to set up the telescope. David and Julie waited while their father got the telescope ready. When it was all set up their father said, "Let's take turns looking at the stars."

Julie went first. "They look so big and close!" she said.

Then it was David's turn. "They look so big and bright!" he said.

"There are so many things we can see in the night sky," their mother said. "There is the moon and all the stars, and the planets and galaxies."

Their father said, "There is a special name for all these things: the cosmos. The sun and earth are part of the cosmos too. The cosmos is filled with beautiful and mysterious things. We are so lucky to see some of them with our telescope."

The family watched the night sky for a while. All the stars were twinkling and the moon was shining brightly.

Suddenly David and Julie both yawned. "Time for home and bed I think!" said their father.

As they walked home, they thought about everything they had seen. Maybe they would go outside tomorrow night and look again.



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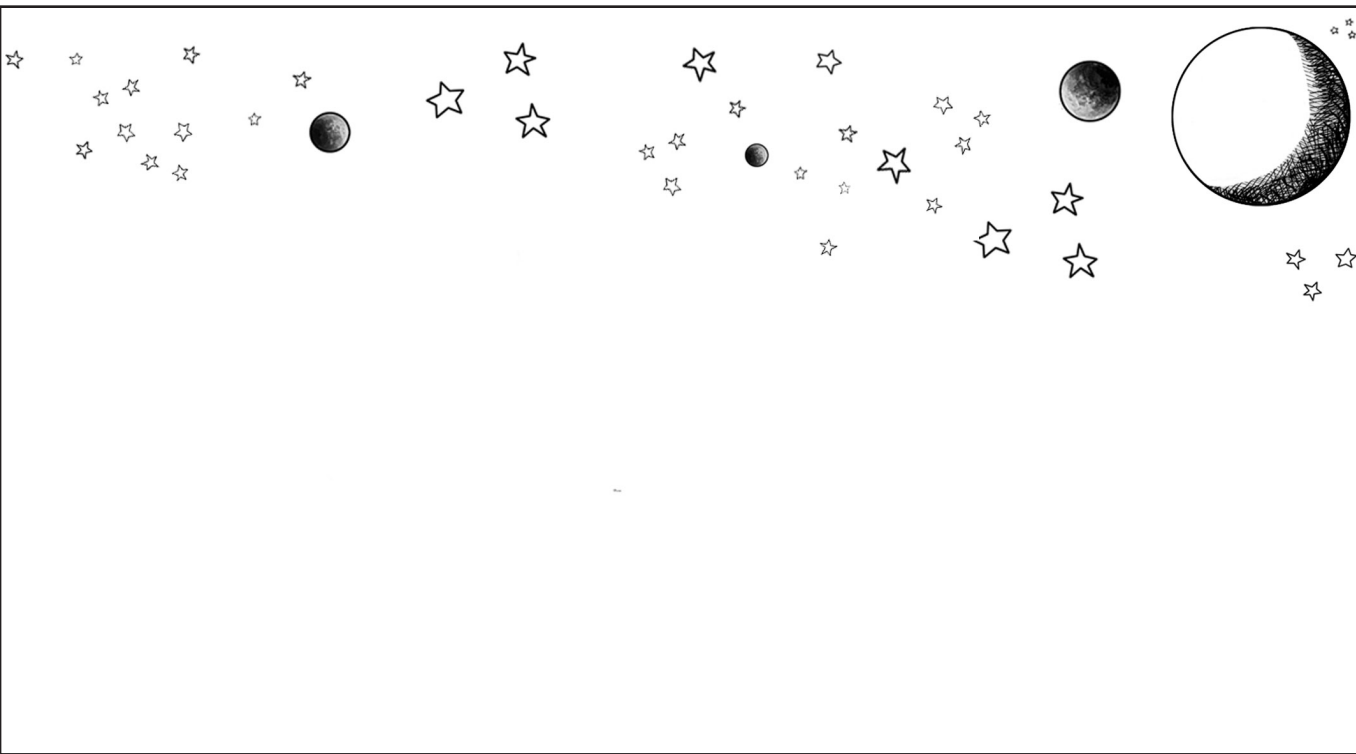
# God created the skies, sun, and moon

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Add to these scenes of day and night. Draw a picture on each of what you do when the sun is in the sky during the day and when the moon comes out at night.

## ACTIVITY



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