

Week 1: Creation and Its Restoration.

Exploring the connection between the first creation and the new creation

Warm Up Activity:

How would you tell the story?

Notes:

Summary: How would you tell the story?

This week

Read:

- Pages 1-6 in the Short version of Together With All Creatures
- Pages 1-29 in the large version of Together With All Creatures

For Your Devotions:

Monday: Read Romans 8:18–25.

- How does this text describe the future that humans and nature will share?
- What do you think it means that creation will also be set free from its bondage to corruption?
- What are examples of creation's bondage to corruption today?

Tuesday: Read Hosea 2:16–20.

- Why do you think that God makes a covenant with every living creature?
- What are the characteristics of God's covenant ?
- How might God's covenant with every living creature challenge the way in which you view nonhuman living creatures?

Wednesday: Read Colossians 1:15–20.

- What might it mean to say that Christ is the "firstborn" of creation and the "firstborn" of the new creation?
- How is Christ the key to both creation and redemption?
- Take some time to look at the creation around you. What do you think it means that Christ reconciled all things, including the creation surrounding you now, to himself?

Thursday: Read Ezekiel 36:33–36.

- Describe the relationship between the forgiveness and the restoration of creation.
- How does the picture of Eden provide the basis for the picture of the new creation?
- How are we a part of the promise of God in verse 36?

Friday: Read Isaiah 11:1–9.

- What are the chief characteristics of the Messiah?
- What is the defining characteristic of the creation that the Messiah will usher in?
- What place on earth today is your ideal of what the new creation will be like?

Saturday: Read Revelation 21–22:5

- What characteristics of the new Jerusalem are similar to Eden and different from Eden?
- Why might it be appropriate to describe the new Jerusalem as a garden city (both similar to and different than the original Eden)?
- What does this mean for creation?