

Let everything that hath breath...

By Judy Taylor



As this season of Creation Tide draws to a close, we are approaching autumn when the leaves begin to fall, the evenings draw in and there is a change in temperature especially first thing in the morning. It is a season I love, it always reminds me of my childhood when we would collect conkers and shuffle through deep piles of dried leaves making a lovely crunching sound. In the woods there was a scent of autumn, hard to describe but it was a woody, nutty, cool smell which indicated that in a sense, everything was now closing down and looking as though it was dying but it was only going to sleep, come the spring....new life joyfully bursts through once again.

Creation Tide invites us to pause, breathe, and remember that the world is not ours to possess but God's gift to us. It is a season that calls us back to the first pages of Scripture, where creation is not merely scenery but revelation — a living testimony to the Creator's wisdom, generosity, and delight. When we look closely at the forest, the land, the wilderness, and the river, we discover four movements of God's ongoing song of life, each one whispering a truth about who God is and who we are meant to be.

The Forest: God's Cathedral of Communion

A forest is never silent. Even in stillness, it hums with life — leaves trembling, birdsong through the branches, unseen creatures rustling beneath the undergrowth. The forest is a kind of cathedral, not built by human hands but grown by God's imagination. Its towering trees remind us of the great cloud of witnesses, those who have stood firm in faith across generations. Its canopy shelters life, just as God's grace shelters us.

In Scripture, trees mark holy encounters: Abraham at the oaks of Mamre, Moses before the burning bush, Zacchaeus climbing the sycamore to glimpse Jesus. Forests teach us that God often speaks through what grows slowly. They invite us to resist the hurried pace of modern life and rediscover communion — with God, with one another, and with creation itself. To walk among trees is to remember that we are part of a story far older and wider than our own.

The Land: God's Gift of Belonging and Responsibility

Land is one of the most powerful biblical images. It is promise, inheritance, home, and calling. Yet Scripture never allows us to forget that the land belongs to God. “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it” is not a poetic flourish but a theological anchor. We are tenants, stewards, guests.

Creation Tide reminds us that land is not a commodity but a covenant. It is the ground from which we were formed and the ground into which we will one day return. It sustains us with food, beauty, and stability, but it also asks something of us: humility, gratitude, and care.

In a world where land is often exploited, polluted, or hoarded, Christians are called to model a different way — one shaped by justice, generosity, and reverence. To honour the land is to honour the God who shaped it and declared it good.

The Wilderness: God's Classroom of Dependence

The wilderness is a place of stripping away. It is where Israel learned to trust God for manna, where Elijah heard the still small voice, where Jesus confronted temptation. Wilderness is not comfortable, but it is holy. It teaches us what we cannot learn in places of abundance.

In our own lives, wilderness seasons come uninvited — times of uncertainty, loss, or disorientation. Yet Scripture insists that God is present there, perhaps more clearly than anywhere else. The wilderness reveals our dependence, our vulnerability, and our need for God’s guidance. It also reveals God’s faithfulness: water from the rock, bread from heaven, angels in the desert.

Creation Tide invites us to see the physical wilderness not as a threat but as a teacher. It is a reminder that God’s world includes places that resist control, places that humble us, places that call us to trust.

The River: God's Stream of Renewal

Rivers run through the Bible like veins of grace. From the river in Eden to the river of life in Revelation, water is a sign of God’s renewing presence. Jesus begins his ministry in the Jordan, and the psalmist sings of streams that make glad the city of God.

A river is always moving, always reshaping the land around it. It reminds us that God's Spirit is not static but flowing, cleansing, refreshing, and transforming. Rivers sustain life, connect communities, and carve paths where none existed. They teach us that renewal is not a one-time event but a continual gift.

In Creation Tide, the river becomes a symbol of baptismal identity — we are people formed by water, called to carry God's life-giving flow into dry places of the world.

Living the Season

Forest, land, wilderness, and river are not just natural features; they are spiritual invitations. Together they form a kind of liturgy:

- **The forest calls us to communion.**
- **The land calls us to stewardship.**
- **The wilderness calls us to trust.**
- **The river calls us to renewal.**

Creation Tide is not merely about appreciating nature; it is about recognising creation as a sacrament — a visible sign of God's invisible grace. As we honour the earth, we honour its Maker. As we care for creation, we participate in God's ongoing work of healing and hope.

May this season open our eyes to the beauty around us, soften our hearts to the suffering of the earth, and strengthen our resolve to live as faithful stewards of God's world. And may the forest, land, wilderness, and river lead us deeper into the mystery of the God who created, sustains, and redeems all things.

Let everything that hath breath... praise the Lord (Psalm 150)