

# Getting to the Big Picture

## Stewardship and the Natural World

Caring for and Appreciating God's Gifts

Woe unto them that join house to house, [that] lay field to field, till [there be] no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!

Isaiah 5:8 (CJV)

On any Sunday we are blessed with beautiful views of nature, and it's ever changing character, right out of the windows of St. Francis. It is a part of the service-and us. The care our members take of these grounds is a symbol of the care we all must take of the greater world. We need reflect on conservation and care of the natural world as we approach everyday decisions. We ask, do I need this, is there an option which is friendlier to the environment, and what will I do when I no longer need this? In some ways, it comes back to us being in control, rather than letting outside forces control us.

As a parish, and as individuals, we have the ability to impact the world around us. We harness our garden to feed those with less. We conserve our resources and dispose of them properly. We control our consumption and seek out those who might find useful, that which we no longer need. In the words of Dr. Seuss in the Lorax, let us, "speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues". Let us also, speak for the animals. Let us, speak for our children and grandchildren we love, and those to come. True instruments of peace, together, we become.

We can take direct action by leaving the places we go better than we found them and taking direct action to encourage others to do so. This is all related to Stewardship of the gifts of God, which are bountiful.

Our world makes much, good and bad, freely available to us. Our faithfulness and presence in decision making helps to temper our choices to make the world a better place.

Our Prayers of the People include two passages which remind us of these gifts and our obligation to care for them.

### *1. For Joy in God's Creation*

*O heavenly Father, who hast filled the world with beauty:  
Open our eyes to behold thy gracious hand in all thy works;  
that, rejoicing in thy whole creation, we may learn to serve  
thee with gladness; for the sake of him through whom all  
things were made, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Almighty God, in giving us dominion over things on earth,  
you made us fellow workers in your creation: Give us wisdom  
and reverence so to use the resources of nature, that no one  
may suffer from our abuse of them, and that generations yet  
to come may continue to praise you for your bounty; through  
Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

BCP, Prayers of the People

Let us take these ideas to heart as we consider our lives and our impact on the greater world around us.