

AN ECUMENICAL DREAM FOR THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

*The Feast of Creation celebrating the Creator God
and the mystery of Creation in Christ*

Assisi, 5-7 May 2025

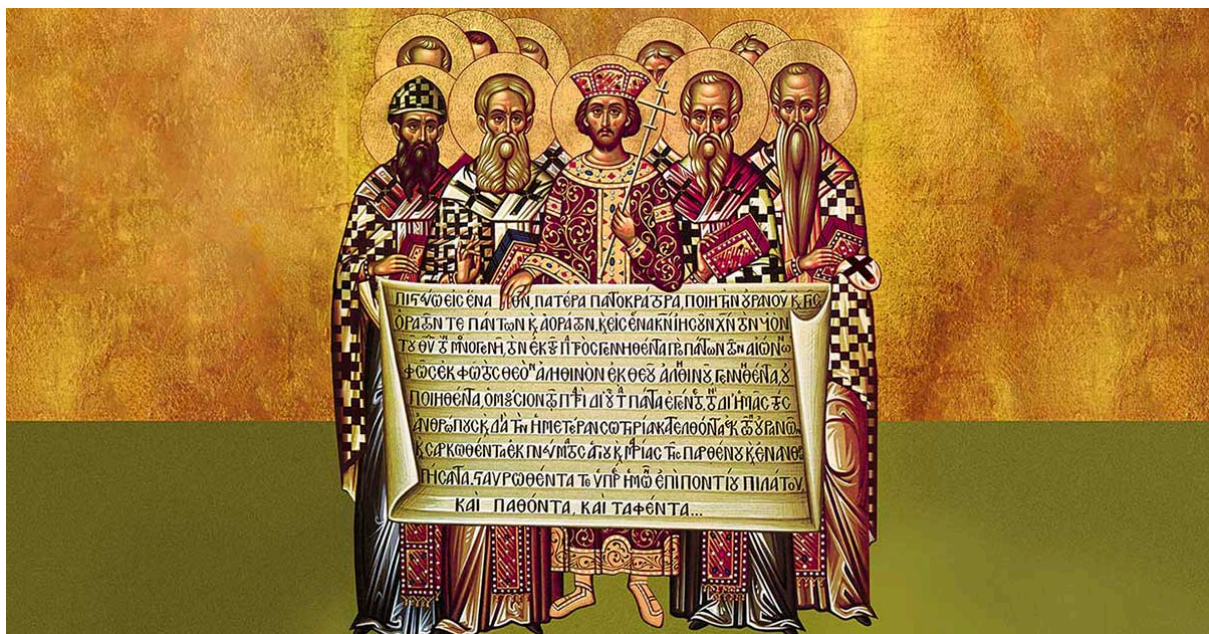
Summary of conference outcomes



1. INTRODUCTION: A NICAEA-INSPIRED “ECUMENICAL KAIROS”

A promising ecumenical process is underway, unprecedented in the long history of Christianity. It began in March 2024, when a conference in Assisi discussed the future of “Creation Day”, as **September 1st** came to be known in recent decades (also known as the “Feast of Creation” or “World Day of Prayer for Creation”). Inspired by the day’s [ancient](#) symbolism and role in the liturgical calendar of the Eastern Orthodox Church, consensus began to emerge about the elevation of **Creation Day to become a liturgical feast** or observance also in other denominations. *For context, see prior [Ecumenical report](#) and [Roman Catholic report](#).*

This new report summarizes the outcomes of a second Assisi conference held in early May 2025, marking the **1700 years of Nicaea**. In fact, the Feast exploration was grounded in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed’s proclamation of our faith in the Trinity’s role in Creation – in “the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth”, in Christ “through [whom] all things were made”, and in the Holy Spirit, “the giver of life”.



The First Council of Nicaea with the text of the Creed.

A true “ecumenical kairos” was experienced in Assisi, with the **consensus solidifying** even further about the importance of the various denominations moving forward to **embrace Creation Day** more intentionally in the different church calendars. Reading the signs of the times, while firmly grounded in our common faith and distinct traditions, there is a strong desire for a joint step. Needless to say, the journey is still incomplete – more dialogues are needed at various levels. But the **Holy Spirit is moving** and the overall direction of travel is clear.

Moreover, something that stood out was the historic nature of this process. As WCC moderator Bishop Bedford-Strohm put it in his opening [remarks](#):

“If the Assisi process continues to develop and reach its goal it might become a **landmark in the history of Christianity**. Looking back into the second millennium, there seems to be only one precedent: the Feast of the Transfiguration which was originally celebrated in the East and then adopted in the West in 1456... This ecumenical process, with Western and Eastern churches discerning together a new feast, is ‘new territory’ for our contemporary churches – and a very promising opportunity.”

2. WHO ATTENDED THE ASSISI DIALOGUE



Representatives of world communions and ecumenical bodies in the opening prayer

At the *Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions* (Nairobi, November 2024), all communions were invited to send a delegation to Assisi. The following world communions appointed delegates:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Anglican Communion | 7. Lutheran World Federation |
| 2. Baptist World Alliance | 8. Mennonite World Conference |
| 3. Catholic Church – various bodies* | 9. Moravian Church |
| 4. Coptic Orthodox Church
(Oriental Orthodox communion) | 10. Pentecostal World Fellowship |
| 5. Disciples of Christ | 11. Salvation Army |
| 6. Ecumenical Patriarchate
(Eastern Orthodox communion) | 12. World Communion of Reformed Churches |
| | 13. World Evangelical Alliance |
| | 14. World Methodist Council |

* The conference coincided with the Vatican's "Interregnum" period after the death of Pope Francis, so the temporary suspension of activities by Holy See dicasteries awaiting a new pope meant that Vatican delegates could not go to Assisi, despite attending previous conferences. Still, several bishops attended on behalf of various Catholic bodies, both from the Roman rite (continental episcopal conferences such as CELAM, SECAM and FABC) and Eastern rites (such as the Chaldean, Maronite and Ukrainian churches).

Moreover, the following **ecumenical bodies** also were conference conveners, representing a vast constituency of member churches, both Western and Eastern:

- World Council of Churches
- Middle East Council of Churches

The goal was to **broaden the scope of the conversation** to include the denominations that did not participate in the first conference, including also the newer Protestant churches whose worship traditions might not have a formal liturgical calendar but still do celebrate some key annual feasts. Nearly **100 speakers** from across the denominational spectrum and various disciplines explored the new Feast of Creation in-depth.

3. KEY OUTCOME: THE “ASSISI CONSENSUS” KEEPS SOLIDIFYING

In the opening and closing sessions, representatives from the different bodies [expressed](#) a strong desire for a joint step to celebrate the Feast of Creation more intentionally in our liturgy and worship.

ECUMENICAL BODIES¹

“The celebration of the “Day of Creation” or “Feast of Creation” on September 1st has been embraced by the WCC since 2008... We pray that this gathering serves as an important platform in discussing an ecumenical common Feast of Creation in the liturgical calendar of Christian churches, where the Feast of Creation becomes a widely received common moment to praise the Creator.”

— Rev. Dr. Jerry Pillay, **World Council of Churches**

“Through our active participation in the Assisi seminar, we are bringing rich traditions to this table... The elevation of «Creation Day» to a liturgical feast offers a unique opportunity to build unity... The Feast of Creation focuses on something foundational and universally shared: God as Creator and the sacredness of His creation.”

— Rev. Dr. Antoine Al Ahmar, **Middle East Council of Churches**

WORLD COMMUNIONS

“Introducing a new feast – theologically grounded in both Christological and Trinitarian terms – is deeply appropriate... It would be a powerful symbol of so much that we hold in common to witness a consensus on a Feast Day that can inspire the global Christian family to come together to celebrate the Mystery of Creation.”

— Bishop Anthony Ball, **Anglican Communion**

“All things in heaven and on earth have been created through Christ and for Christ... An ecumenical Feast of Creation could strengthen the whole Body of Christ—Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant—by enabling us to embrace together an incarnational ontology as a counter witness to the dominant ontology of our age.”

— Dr. Elizabeth Newman, **Baptist World Alliance**

“It doesn't happen very often that a new feast is born in the Christian family. Even less so in an ecumenical fashion... This new feast would greatly enrich our Chaldean liturgical calendar... May this dream bloom – and bloom in the most colorful and beautiful of ways.”

— Bishop Felix Dawood Al Shabi, **Catholic Church – Chaldean rite**

“The proposal to make Creation Day a liturgical feast has enormous potential. This new feast will be a profound sign of communion and a prophetic gesture... A celebration that honors the Triune God as Creator would deeply help our local Churches to rediscover the mystery of Creation.”

— Bishop Lizardo Estrada OSA, **Catholic Church – Roman rite (CELAM)**²

¹ Besides these two ecumenical bodies who were conference co-conveners, other continental ecumenical bodies participated as well.

² As mentioned (p2), due to the conference overlap with the Vatican's “Interregnum” period (after Pope Francis' death), a Vatican delegation could not attend. Out of the bishops from various Catholic bodies who attended, two (from CELAM and Chaldean Church) spoke on behalf of the Roman and Eastern perspectives in the closing session, mindful that they did not represent the universal Catholic Church.

“A common celebration of Creation Day would represent an opportunity to deepen our journey towards Christian unity... There is nothing preventing us from reciting the Nicene Creed together and to agree on a date for the Feast of Creation as a manifestation of our aspiration for and progress towards full communion... This beautiful conference exceeded our expectations.”

— Rev. Dr. Kyrillos ElMacari, **Coptic Orthodox Church** (Oriental Orthodox communion)

“I believe Disciples of Christ very much support the focus of this conference... It has been an honor to share in this event... to explore the spiritual dimensions of the ecological crisis in our world today and to develop a proposed common liturgical ‘feast of creation’ as a witness to our unity and oneness in Christ.”

— Rev. Dr. Robert Welsh, **Disciples of Christ**

“To celebrate the Day of Creation is to bring the Trinitarian dimension of the Feast to the fore... The Council of Nicaea recognized the need for the entire Christian world to celebrate the Resurrection of Christ on a single, unified day. Today’s Churches, in their ecumenical journey, may likewise reach the point—united, though not uniform—of celebrating both the Creator and creation with a shared liturgical ethos.”

— Bishop Athenagoras of Therme, **Ecumenical Patriarchate** (Eastern Orthodox communion)

“The LWF has endorsed and supported the process towards establishing a Feast of Creation because such a feast or commemoration engages the mystery of creation in all its fullness... A common celebration of the mystery of creation strengthens unity between world communions as we develop ecumenically a rich trinitarian theology that can shape our liturgies, praying, preaching, and teaching.”

— Rev. Dr. Anne Burghardt, **Lutheran World Federation**

“MWC leaders are confident that a Feast of Creation as integral to the church year would be widely welcomed among us. It would be an occasion for us to join with the whole body of Christ in joyfully giving thanks for the gift of creation... I have been impressed by the depth of theological seriousness with which this gathering engaged the dream of a Feast of Creation.”

— Dr. Thomas Yoder Neufeld, **Mennonite World Conference**

“Count Zinzendorf spoke of Jesus being ‘Mein Schöpfer, mein Heiland’ – ‘my creator, my redeemer’... This conference has made it clear how important the liturgical celebration of the Feast of Creation is for all Church Communions, the Moravian Church included.”

— Rev. Dr. Jørgen Helge Bøytler, **Moravian Church**



“The PWF CCTF has endorsed the Feast of Creation... Pentecostals have a very full pneumatological liturgical calendar given the theological emphasis on Pentecost Sunday and an openness to following the leading of the Holy Spirit. This gives Pentecostals freedom to preach about the Feast of Creation.”

— Rev. Dr. Harold Hunter, **Pentecostal World Fellowship**

“Thank you for inviting a very non-liturgical, non-lectionary following church to a very liturgical conference... As the worldwide church we need to learn to sing a new song. I will be taking this back to our congregations and will work to make sure that we embrace an annual celebration of Creation Day.”

— Major Heather Poxon, **Salvation Army**

“There is broad support for a feast day that helps the church to refocus on the glory of God as creator and visible in creation... It has the potential to offer a witness of the unity Christians have in Christ... The WCRC supports the initiative for an ecumenical high feast on creation.”

— Rev. Tara Curlewis, **World Communion of Reformed Churches**

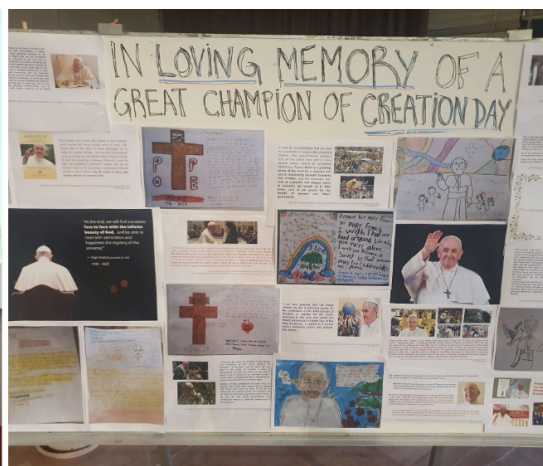
“When we consider the introduction on the Christian calendar of a Feast of Creation, our main focus should be on the Creator... Most evangelicals do not observe formal liturgical calendars in the same way as some other churches do, but they share most key annual feasts... Recognizing God’s creation provides a natural way of coming together without watering down one’s own theological identity.”

— Rev. Samuel Van der Maas, **World Evangelical Alliance**

“God’s Spirit is at work. The consensus being developed in Assisi represents an ecumenical unity and global participation that is incredibly hopeful of an emerging Kairos moment. The establishment of the Feast of Creation for the celebration of the Creator God and Creation in Christ is a promising witness to ‘visible unity in diversity’.”

— Rev. Tony Franklin-Ross, **World Methodist Council**

Moreover, a [panel](#) with representatives of **continental bodies** further affirmed the liturgical potential of the Feast of Creation across all geographies. Featured voices included both **ecumenical bodies** and **Roman Catholic bodies**: CEC (Council of European Churches), PCC (Pacific Council of Churches), MECC (Middle East Council of Churches), CELAM (Latin American Episcopal Council), FABC (Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences), and SECAM (Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar).



Reflection and prayer were blended, including a memorial service in honor of Pope Francis given his funeral just days before the conference (with a mural featuring drawings by Philippine children and excerpts from Pope Francis' [Creation Day messages](#)).

4. STRONG PROGRESS IN DISCERNING OPEN QUESTIONS

A key goal of the dialogue was to explore in more depth the proposed Feast and discern some questions that remained open from the first conference.

I. TITLE AND THEOLOGICAL CONTENT OF THE FEAST

Liturgical scholars from different traditions³ had three sessions to discuss the title and theological content of the Feast. Two main approaches were proposed:

- A. **Christological approach:** for some traditions, it is very important for the Feast to have a clear christological grounding that brings attention to Christ's role in the act of Creation, in line with the christological nature of the liturgical year.
- B. **Trinitarian approach:** yet, some calls were also made for a Trinitarian reference point, to capture the breadth of the mystery of Creation and the role of all persons of the Trinity in the creative act.

The overall **consensus leaned mostly towards the Christological approach**, as summarized by Dr. Karen Westerfield Tucker (and other presenters in the "recap" session⁴): "The group consensus seemed to be the Christological focus since for Christians everything is through Christ, it allows the maintenance of a Trinitarian interpretation, and it helps to orient the Feast within the context of the liturgical year." In short, both approaches were acknowledged as two sides of the same coin, being impossible to separate them.

Given the different titles proposed, two inputs were decisive in proposing a way forward:

“Instead of identifying a ‘minimum common denominator,’ I invite us to consider identifying a **centering concept**. This would not necessarily be seen as a minimum, or even the name of the feast, but rather as a center of gravity around which a variety of approaches orbit... I invite us to embrace **unity rather than uniformity**. This is not merely because “uniformity” is unachievable in a Free Church context, but because unity in diversity is intrinsic to this feast — Trinitarian and Christological.”

— Dr. Sarah Kathleen Johnson (Mennonite Church Canada)

“We have a very **robust consensus** on the theological content of this feast and its purposes, but our different ecclesial contexts, regions, and languages require us to use different terminology to express that theological consensus... The session ended with the desire to charge the working group to develop a set of emphases that would permit us to recognize in one another's names a genuine ecumenical consensus... Each communion would then be encouraged to develop language that accurately reflects in their own region, language and ecclesial tradition the consensus that is named above. This might be done by following the WCC example of a **simple title**, as "**Feast of Creation**", to be used with **various subtitles** and a set of theological and Scriptural notes that would be shared among the various churches adopting the Feast.”

— Dr. Kimberly Belcher (University of Notre Dame)

³ Rev. Dr. Luigi Girardi (Istituto di Liturgia Pastorale S.Giustina), Rev. Christopher Irvine (International Anglican Liturgical Consultation and Mirfield Liturgical Institute), Rev. Dr. Frank Senn (Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary), Dr. Sarah Kathleen Johnson (Mennonite Church Canada), Dr. Basilius Groen (Pontifical Oriental Institute). See recordings [one](#) and [two](#).

⁴ Rev. Dr. Karen Westerfield Tucker (World Methodist Council and Boston University), Dr. Jason McFarland (Australian Catholic University), Rev. Ingrid Noren Nilsson (WCC), and Dr. Kimberly Belcher (University of Notre Dame). See [recording](#).

Building on those rich dialogues and delegates' [preference](#) to keep "Feast of Creation" as main anchor (also in line with "popular piety" these past 35 years), process conveners proposed the following definition of what is to be celebrated in the Feast. This first draft is to be discerned further.

Draft proposal of the Feast's centering concept:

**"The FEAST OF CREATION
celebrating the Creator God
and the mystery of Creation in Christ."**

A variety of titles discerned by the different churches could orbit around that center of gravity, ranging from concise options as "**Creation Day**" or "**Feast of Creation**" all the way to more elaborate alternatives such as "**Feast of Creation in Christ**" (Catholic [inclination](#)), "**Feast of the Creator God**", or "**Feast of the Creator and the Creation in Christ**", depending on what makes most sense to each tradition.

Moreover, as [explained](#) by Dr. Nikolaos Asproulis in Assisi and then [acknowledged](#) by the WCC Central Committee, the official liturgical title will remain "**Feast of the Indiction**" in Byzantine liturgical calendars, based on its ancient history – even if informally [called](#) "Feast of Creation" by the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

II. DATE OF THE FEAST: REMAIN ANCHORED ON SEPTEMBER 1st

Scholars and churches also discerned the Feast's date. Namely, "Creation Day" has been traditionally celebrated on **September 1st – or on the subsequent Sunday** – in recent decades, in line with its symbolism as the feast that opens the Eastern Orthodox liturgical year. The conference explored the question about the date of the feast in other churches who will institute it in their liturgical calendars, i.e. if it should remain anchored on September 1st or instead on the September equinox as proposed by some in the first Assisi conference. Following rich [presentations](#) (including a Southern inculturation perspective as proposed by Equinox proponent B.Stewart), the clear [consensus](#) was to **keep the Feast's traditional date**, anchored on September 1st or the following Sunday (mostly for ecumenical solidarity with the Orthodox); some calls were made for flexibility to move it to another Sunday in September if required by local contexts. Moreover, calls were made by some to explore a potential liturgical season.

III. BIBLICAL READINGS FOR THE LECTIONARY

For traditions who use a Lectionary, biblical scholars from different traditions⁵ had ample space (three sessions) to explore the **rich treasure of Scripture texts** to be considered when pondering the mystery of Creation at the heart of the Feast. A first draft of Lectionary proposals by the Consultation on Common Texts (North American ecumenical body in charge of the Revised Common Lectionary that many Protestant churches use) was presented and juxtaposed with proposals by scholars from other regions. Given the variety of possible texts, no clear consensus was reached – but important exegetical insights surfaced to guide the ongoing discernment of Lectionary options. See [papers](#) – and recordings of [New Testament](#), [Old Testament](#), and [Recap](#) sessions.

⁵ Rev. Dr. Cheryl Lindsay and Rev. Eileen Scully (Consultation on Common Texts), Sr. Dr. Rekha Chennattu (Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences), Dr. Cheryl Hunt (University of Exeter), Dr. Emanuela Buccioni (Istituto Superiore di Scienze Religiose della Toscana), Dr. Richard Bauckham (Ridley Hall, Cambridge), Rev. Dr. Monica Jyotsna Melanchthon (Society of Asian Biblical Studies & Pilgrim Theological College), Rev. Dr. Fidel Oñoro (Latin American Episcopal Council & Universidad Minuto de Dios), Dr. Celia Deane-Drummond (Laudato Si' Research Institute).

5. OTHER EXPLORATIONS OF THE FEAST

I. THE FEAST'S ECUMENICAL & THEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- The Council of Nicaea, the Triune Creator, and Creation Day – [Recording of Keynote & Panel](#)

Speakers: Bishop Heinrich Bedford-Strohm (WCC), Bishop Anthony Ball (Anglican Communion), Bishop Athenagoras of Thermo (Ecumenical Patriarchate), Rev. Dr. Anne Burghardt (LWF), Dr. Thomas Yoder Neufeld (Mennonite World Conference), Rev. Dr. Kyrillos ElMacari (Coptic Orthodox Church), Rev. Dr. Harold Hunter (Pentecostal World Fellowship), Rev. Dora Arce Valentin (WCRC), Rev. Dr. James Puglisi (formerly Centro Pro Unione).

- Unprecedented since 1456? – Historical Lessons and Opportunities for Unity in the new Feast – [Recording](#)

Speakers: Rev. Dr. Philip Goyret (Pontificia Università della Santa Croce), Dr. Sandra Ferreiro (Focolare Movement), Rev. Dr. Simone Sinn (Societas Oecumenica), Dr. Elizabeth Newman (Baptist World Alliance), Rev. Dr. Augustinos Bairactaris (Patriarchal Ecclesiastical Academy of Crete), Rev. Garen Yosoukian (Armenian Orthodox Church & MECC),

- Creation, Incarnation, Paschal Mystery – Interconnected Mysteries, Interconnected Feasts – [Recording](#)

Speakers: Dr. Celia Deane-Drummond (Laudato Si' Research Institute, University of Oxford), Dr. Declan O'Byrne (Sophia University Institute), Dr. Elizabeth Gropp (University of Dayton), Rev. Dr. Mark Clavier (Anglican Communion).

II. THE FEAST'S ANCIENT HISTORY AND CONTEMPORARY ADOPTION

- September 1st: Its Byzantine History and Theology – [Recording](#)

Speaker: Dr. Nikolaos Asproulis (Volos Academy for Theological Studies, Greece)

- Contemporary Adoption and Future Potential of "Creation Day": Continental perspectives – [Recording](#)

Speakers: Bishop John Kobina Louis (SECAM, Symposium of African Episcopal Conferences), Bishop Lizardo Estrada (CELAM, Latin American Episcopal Council), Bishop Allwyn D'Silva (FABC, Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences), Rev. Claire des Mesnards (Conference of European Churches), Frances Namoumou (Pacific Conference of Churches), Rev. Dr. Antoine Al Ahmar (Middle East Council of Churches).

III. THE FEAST'S PASTORAL RELEVANCE TO THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

- *Lex orandi, lex credendi, lex vivendi*: The Signs of the Times challenge our Liturgical Life – [Recording](#)

Speakers: Rev. Dr. Agenor Brighenti (CELAM & Amazonian Ecclesial Conference's Liturgy Commission), Rev. Jacynthia Murphy (Anglican Indigenous Network & Anglican Church in Aotearoa-Polynesia), Rev. Dr. Kenneth Mtata (World Council of Churches), Rev. Dr. Grace Ji-Sun Kim (Earlham School of Religion), Rev. Dr. Augustinos Bairactaris (Patriarchal Ecclesiastical Academy of Crete).

- Southern Eco-theological, Indigenous, and Liturgical Perspectives about the Feast – [Recording](#)

Speakers: Dr. Ernst Conradie (University of the Western Cape), Sr. Elizabeth Carranza (Laudato Si' Movement Philippines), Rev. Dr. Stephen Burns (Pilgrim Theological College), Dr. Alirio Cáceres Aguirre (Confederación Latinoamericana de Religiosos).



IV. THE FEAST'S LITURGICAL PRAYERS, MUSIC & ART

- Liturgical Prayers to celebrate the new Feast – [Recordings](#): [Eucharistic Prayers](#) and [Other Prayers](#)

Speakers: Dr. Gail Ramshaw (formerly La Salle University), Rev. Thapelo Masemola (Anglican Church of Southern Africa), Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Smith (International Anglican Liturgical Consultation), Sr. Dr. Catherine Vincie (formerly Aquinas Institute of Theology).

- Liturgical Music to celebrate the new Feast – [Recording](#)

Speakers: Dr. Kimberley Belcher (University of Notre Dame), Dr. JJ Wright (University of Notre Dame), Dr. Timothy Brunk (Villanova University), Dr. Jason McFarland (Australian Catholic University).

- Liturgical Art for the Feast – [Recording](#)

Speakers: Laura Moffatt (Art and Christianity), Dr. Siobhán Jolley (National Gallery & University of Manchester), Dr. Charles Pickstone (Art and Christianity), Dr. Angela McCarthy (University of Notre Dame Australia).

- Beyond the Feast: Uplifting Creation in liturgy at large – [Recording](#)

Speakers: Rev. Dr. Benjamin Stewart (Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago), Dr. Lisa Dahill (Hartford University), Dr. Samuel Torvend (Pacific Lutheran University).

V. THE FEAST'S PASTORAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Preaching and Creation Day – [Recording](#)

Speakers: Dr. Harold Hunter (Pentecostal World Fellowship), Rev. Dr. Dave Bookless (Lausanne Movement), Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas (Episcopal/Anglican Church), Rev. Luca Baratto (Federation of Italian Evangelical Churches), Rev. Samuel Van Der Maas (World Evangelical Alliance).

- The 'Via Creationis', Science, and Creation Day: From Conflict to Harmony – [Recording](#)

Speakers: Rev. John Leydon and Sr. Elizabeth Carranza (Laudato Si' Movement Philippines), Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Smith (International Anglican Liturgical Consultation), Rev. Dr. Giadio De Biasio (ISSR Area Casertana).

- Considerations about Liturgical Space for the Feast – [Recording](#)

Speakers: Dr. Girolamo Pugliesi (Istituto di Liturgia Pastorale S.Giustina), Rev. Dr. Luiz Carlos Texeira Coelho (State University of Rio de Janeiro & Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil), Rev. Michael Dyer (Australian Catholic University), Dr. Angela McCarthy (University of Notre Dame Australia).

- Contemporary Christian music to celebrate the Feast – [Recording](#)

Speakers: Jason Gray (ASCAP award-winning artist), Leslie Parker (A New Heaven and A New Earth), Antonio Caschetto (Artists for Creation & Laudato Si' Center), Rev. Einar Tjelle (Church of Norway).

- Creation Day, the Season of Creation, and Ecumenical Action – [Recording](#)

Speakers: Rev. Dr. Rachel Mash (Anglican Communion Environment Network), Rev. Aksel Lund (Church of Norway), Michael Terrien (CADEIO), Aphrodite Peponis (Ecumenism Metro Chicago), Rev. David Coleman (EcoCongregation Scotland), Henrik Grape (WCC).



6. FROM DREAM TO BLOOM – NEXT STEPS

All world communions and churches present in Assisi through appointed representatives expressed a strong desire to make a joint step to embrace “Creation Day” more meaningfully in our various traditions, ideally on the occasion of the “ecumenical Kairos” of the Nicaea centenary. Namely, the consensus was to sign a **Joint Statement of Intent** through which the different communions can express their common desire to engage in a single witness and to deepen the common celebrations of this day across denominational calendars.

The idea is for the very brief Joint Statement to:

- be an **“encouragement” for member churches** to celebrate Creation Day more intentionally in their respective geographies (i.e. it would not be an “institution”), building on the fruits of the past 35 years since ecumenical celebrations began and grounded in a common theological vision of the day’s symbolism (the “centering concept” of p. 8).
- follow a **“big tent” approach**, allowing each denomination to implement it in various formats and speeds, mindful of the great diversity of liturgical and worship traditions. For example:
 - Some churches might elevate Creation Day to become an official *liturgical feast* in their calendars,
 - Others might offer liturgical texts to enable member churches to celebrate liturgically the *day of prayer*, and
 - Others – particularly in Free Church traditions without set liturgical practices – might simply encourage member churches to be more intentional in celebrating Creation Day in their worship services.

Given the brevity of the Joint Statement, communions could release their own accompanying statements, expanding what this joint step entails for their tradition and elaborating what the common theological definition of Creation Day means in their own denominational context.

PROPOSED TIMELINE:

- **1 Sept 2025** (or 7 Sept 2025) – *Creation Day celebrations*

All communions are encouraged to give extra emphasis to their Creation Day celebrations this year in its current format as “World Day of Prayer”, either on September 1st itself or on the subsequent Sunday (which this year is September 7th), to keep preparing the ground for the Joint Statement. This step would also kick off the celebrations of the larger Season of Creation flowing from Creation Day. See resources at: FeastOfCreation.com

- **4-6 Nov 2025** – *“Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions” (Istanbul)*

A first draft of the statement will tentatively be presented and discussed, leveraging the iconic symbolism of the birthplace of Creation Day.

- **Early 2026** – *High-level prayer service and signature ceremony (Assisi or Taizé)*

A prayer service would take place in an iconic ecumenical location for high-level leaders to collectively sign and announce the Joint Statement of Intent.

A process will be outlined for the drafting of the statement, chaired by Bp. Bedford-Strohm (WCC moderator).

7. FROM DREAM TO BLOOM – CONCLUSION

After such a rich dialogue and prayerful pilgrimage in Assisi, it is clear that this **Feast of Creation dream will bloom** in this third millennium, with huge potential in ecumenical, liturgical, theological, pastoral, and public witness terms. The ancient Byzantine symbolism of September 1st as the day commemorating the great mystery of the creation of heaven and earth, bringing our gaze to the Triune God as creator, is a huge gift for the worldwide Christian family. May we speak and pray with one voice – east and west, north and south.



The hope is that the elevation of Creation Day, celebrating it more intentionally in our liturgical life and worship services, will become a **tangible gesture of visible Christian unity** that might continue to bear fruit way beyond the centenary of Nicaea. The process co-sponsors very much look forward to working together with all communions to sign a Joint Statement of Intent that marks the 1700 years of Nicaea in a memorable way, planting a seed – or a sapling – that will hopefully bear abundant fruit for years, decades, and perhaps centuries to come.

Note: a longer conference report will be published in the near future, with a more comprehensive overview of the different presentations made in Assisi. The hope is that this Summary report, accompanied as needed by the materials listed below, can help all communions to socialize the Assisi outcomes with their internal stakeholders and start preparing for the Joint Statement of Intent.

SOME POST-ASSISI UPDATES – THE DREAM KEEPS BLOOMING

- **World Council of Churches:** its Central Committee of 150+ member churches [affirmed](#) the Assisi process and WCC's continued involvement – “The central committee welcomes the efforts of the church families to establish a special liturgical feast of creation in the church year, inspired by the Orthodox tradition, which will honour the Triune God as creator and the mystery of Creation in Christ. The central committee considers this effort as an important contribution to honouring 1700 years of Nicaea.”
- **Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew** received an [award](#) in Rome for his role inspiring both the Laudato Si' encyclical and Creation Day's elevation to become a liturgical feast in other churches.
- **Anglican Communion:** various Anglican churches have very recently passed resolutions to adopt the new Feast. The [Episcopal Church USA](#), the [Anglican Church of Southern Africa](#), the [Anglican Church of Canada](#) have all been very active. The [Church of England](#) voted in favour in July.
- **Roman Catholic Church:** the Vatican [announced](#) the release of a “Creation Mass”, enabling episcopal conferences and local communities to celebrate Creation Day liturgically, even if not an official feast yet. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (third most populous “Catholic country”) was the first one to issue a [nation-wide mandate](#) for liturgical celebrations of Creation Day on the first Sunday of September, with more expected to follow soon.

8. CONFERENCE MATERIALS

- [Papers](#) presented at Assisi 2025
- [Recordings](#) of Assisi 2025
- Past reports: [Ecumenical 2024 report](#) and [Roman Catholic 2024 report](#).
- Website: FeastOfCreation.com | Contact: CreationFeast@gmail.com