

Key Concept/Message

The first act of collective worship within this instalment invited reflection upon the 'awesomeness' of birdlife. In this second plan, we continue this thinking whilst being mindful of the threats that many birds currently face. Loss of safe places to nest, disappearing food sources and climate change are a few of the factors having a detrimental effect on the flourishing of birds.

This plan draws upon the 'heads', 'hearts' and 'hands' framework used within the Heart for the Earth resources.[1] After considering some factors impacting birdlife ('heads') and considering the 'awesomeness' of birds through a video ('hearts'), the school community is invited to champion and care for birdlife through completing the RSPB's Wild Challenge ('hands'). This award can be achieved both at home and in school:
<http://tinyurl.com/m8jb6t7d>.

We are grateful for the RSPB for their generous partnership in the creation of this plan.

Gather

If you'd like to, you might like to show the 'Birds of the World' video used in the previous worship plan for pupils to watch as they are arriving:
<http://tinyurl.com/4nrka223>

Follow the school's normal gathering routines, using words of liturgy which are familiar to students and adults

or

Light a candle and offer the following prayer: 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you'.
Response: and also with you. (To support pupil understanding of the Christian belief in God as Trinity here, why not light a single candle which has three wicks, lighting them in turn as each 'person' is acknowledged?)

[1] Overviewed on pages 1-2 of the Heart for the Earth overview:
<http://tinyurl.com/mwme5j6b>

Engage

In our previous 'Heart for the Earth' worship, we thought about the 'awesomeness' of birds. We considered a creation narrative in Genesis 1 (the first book of the bible), which describes how God created birdlife and was delighted by them. We then thought about some amazing bird facts. I wonder how birds have delighted you since? (responses to be invited momentarily)

Many people get so much joy from birds. Their colours, their habitats, their song. Would anyone be willing to share what delights them about birds?

Many people support the flourishing of birds. Perhaps you've seen things like bird feeders where birds can eat, bird boxes where they can nest, bird baths where they can wash and drink.



A large proportion of the country are members of the charity RSPB (1.2 million).[2] The RSPB is a charity which works hard to protect habitats, save species and end the nature and climate crisis. Sadly, it is the case that due to human actions and climate change, not all birds are flourishing. There are 38 million less birds in the UK than there were 60 years ago.

*I wonder what you think might be preventing some birds from flourishing?
What might be some of the reasons why the bird population is decreasing?*

A big question is how might we each play a part in championing for and caring for birds? If we were to take the worldview that we are a 'community' of life on earth, it matters that other species can thrive. Jamie Wyver from the RSPB gives some of his own reflections about the 'awesomeness' of birds, and how we can help them to thrive.

<https://youtu.be/iNwb3BPnkqs>

[2] The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

Respond

As Jamie said, 'birds face many threats now, including the loss of safe places to nest, disappearing food sources, and the climate crisis'. So what can we do?



'Being aware of the needs of birds and wildlife is an important first step' (heads)



'The second step of course is to take action' (hands)

I wonder how we might use our 'heads', 'hearts' and 'hands' to ensure birds flourish? How might we all play our part to help 'save nature, together'?

One way is to complete the RSPB Wild Challenge Award. This is a free award you and your family can achieve through completing a number of tasks which help birdlife. If this is of interest to you, why not ask if you can do this at home?

Offer a time of prayer using the prayer below^[3]. Invite the school community, to say 'Amen' at the end if they'd like to make the prayer their own. Alternatively, why not offer the opportunity for a pupil to offer a spontaneous, from the heart prayer based on what we have been thinking about in this act of collective worship?

^[3] <http://tinyurl.com/4khyjjfv> 'Blessing of Animals' by Fr. Declan Timmons

Eternal God,
in Your love You create all things,
and within Your great purpose
provide for every kind of animal.
May the whole of creation rejoice in You,
and every creature experience the joy and wonder
of the life for which You have made it.
Give to all Your people
an attitude of care and consideration for animals,
that we may honour You, the creator,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Send

As we go into the rest of our week, let's keep delighting in birds and doing what we can, whenever we can, to support them.