



Through the Window

Connecting with creation through Lent even when you can't get outside.

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At the moment, because of growing awareness of the climate crisis and biodiversity loss society is becoming much more aware of and focused on the natural world. For many people this has included getting outside more, and this is a good thing, but not everyone is able to get outside easily or even at all.

“Through the Window” is a series of ideas for connecting with creation for people who are unable to get outside easily. There is one idea for each week and although they don't actively mention Lent, they are springtime orientated, gently Christian and so hopefully could be used through Lent with people who have no specific connection with the church as well as those who do.

These can be used by people who can get outside, by those who cannot but have a window to look out of, by those who have internet access, and by those who have nothing but the sheet on which these pictures and words are printed.



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WEEK ONE: TREES

If you have a tree outside your window where you can see it, stand or sit and simply look. If there is not one where you can see it, feel free to use the picture at the top of this sheet – it is a beautiful sycamore tree at Montacute House - or find a picture of a tree that you like in a book or on the internet, or close your eyes and imagine a tree that you know.

Meditation

Trees are amazing things. Their roots go down into the ground holding them upright and stable and taking precious nutrients from the soil to feed their growth. Moving up the tree the trunk and the branches become thinner and more delicate making patterns against the sky that are often very distinctive. And they support life. Whether there are leaves on your tree or not, there will be creatures living on or under the bark; perhaps birds nesting in the branches; even squirrels or owls hiding away.

Something to think about

Where are you rooted?

What do you need to feed your growth?

What gives you life?



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WEEK TWO: FLOWERS

If you have flowers outside your window where you can see them, stand or sit and simply look. Maybe you have a bunch of flowers indoors but if there are not any where you can see them, feel free to use the picture at the top of this sheet, or find a picture of a flower that you like in a book or on the internet, or close your eyes and imagine your favourite flowers.

Meditation

Flowers are wonderful things. Tiny seeds grow into so many shapes, sizes and colours, and for most of us, they are something that makes us smile. Someone once said "every flower blooms in its own time," and there are flowers that bloom in every season, even the depths of winter. They are beautiful to look at, many are sweetly scented, and some are even good to eat. Some are so tiny that we hardly notice them, but they are all valued by God simply because he made them and he loves them - just like us.

Something to think about

What things are blooming in your life right now?

What would you like to see blooming in your life when the season is right?

What season are you in at the moment?



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WEEK THREE: BIRDS

Have a look and see if you can see any birds from your window. Perhaps on a bird feeder or flying over. If you can, stay and watch for a while. If you can't see any feel free to use the picture at the top of this sheet, or look for a picture in a book or on the internet, or simply close your eyes and imagine.

Meditation

Birds are everywhere whether you live in the country or a city. You don't usually have to watch for long before one flies over going freely wherever it pleases or drops in to look for food. And they can be noisy. Some chatter all the time: one call when they are flying, another when they are looking for a mate, and yet another when they sense danger. It is said that listening to birdsong can reduce stress - perhaps you could open your window for a minute and see what you can hear, and how it makes you feel, or find some birdsong on the internet, close your eyes, and relax.

Something to think about

How do you feel when you watch the birds?
Is there anything that you need to be free from?
What helps you to relax?



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WEEK FOUR:SKY

Look out at the sky. You won't need to use the book or the internet for this one, because if you have a window to look out of, the sky will be there. You could try this one more than once at different times of the day.

Meditation

Sky: summer sky, blue and clear with fluffy white clouds the way that children draw them. Autumn evening sky the blue of indigo ink. Eyes watch as the sparks from the bonfire shoot upwards then disappear into the darkness. Stormy winter sky: grey and heavy with rain, clouds scudding across it as if in a hurry to be somewhere else. Early morning sky: golden pink as the sun rises and floods the world with colour once again. 2am sky: almost black but on a clear night studded with stars and a silver moon: beautiful when sleep evades us. Sky: always there, often unappreciated, always changing, made by an unchanging creator.

Something to think about

What is your favourite sky mood - or does it vary?

Why do you think people have always wanted to explore the sky and beyond?

What does the sky say to you about its creator?



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WEEK FIVE: WATER

Unless you can see a river or a pond or the sea from your window, wait for a rainy day for this one. Then, sit yourself down by the window and watch the rain outside and the drips running down your window pane. You could even choose two drips and watch them to see which one gets to the bottom of the windows first.

Meditation

It rains. Farmers and gardeners rejoice as the life-giving water falls on the land. It rains too much. Rivers burst their banks, houses are flooded, people suffer. In low lying countries water levels rise and those who survive move away until it is safe to come back, because they have nowhere else to go. It rains too little, crops die, animals die, famine comes, people suffer. Someone once said "there is nothing as good as a glass of cold water on a hot day." Water, a simple thing, that we cannot do without.

Something to think about

Thirst is difficult to cope with. Is there anything that you are thirsty for right now?

Does rain say anything to you about God?

Do you think of water as powerful?



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WEEK SIX:ANIMALS

If you have a pet, sit somewhere where you can see it or even have it on your lap if it is that sort of a pet. If you can see animals outside your window, sit where you can see them. If neither of those is possible find a picture of a favourite animal in a book or on the internet, or feel free to use the picture of the cat on this sheet.

Meditation

Animals are many and varied, and sometimes we forget that we are an animal too. In more than one creation story the creator puts the human animal in charge, with the expectation that they will take care of the other animals; wanting what is best for them and being kind to them. Sometimes the human animal forgets this. Sometimes we forget to be kind to other animals, and sometimes we even forget to be kind to ourselves even though we are made in the image of a creator who shows unfailing and never ending compassion.

Something to think about

If you have a favourite animals, think about why you like them.
How do you show kindness to yourself?
When have others shown compassion to you?