

A close-up photograph of a blue leaf with prominent veins, serving as the background for the entire page.

IDEAS & RESOURCES

WELCOME PACK

FAITH
ACTION
FOR NATURE

WELCOME

Thank you for joining our pilot scheme.

Faith Action for Nature is passionate about protecting wildlife, and encouraging everyone to discover and enjoy nature for themselves. We think everyone has a role to play in giving nature a home, and that includes churches.

Whether you have a churchyard or garden, a plot of land, or even just a car park, we'll show how you can roll out a generous welcome to wildlife. We'll explore how to bring nature into worship, and worship into nature. Together, we can work to provide a home for all God's creatures.



**Not one
Sparrow is
forgotten by
God - Luke 12:6**

what to expect

Here's how our pilot project works: Faith Action for Nature connects your church with a local RSPB Scotland reserve. Rangers and local volunteers will be available to visit your church and get to know you and your context. They'll be able to share expert advice and practical help in creating wildlife-friendly environments.

In return, you are invited to visit your local RSPB Scotland reserve, where staff can show you around.

Working with our partners, we'll also provide seasonal resource packs, for spring, summer, autumn and winter. Each pack will contain resources for use in services and events, and ideas and information for inspiring your whole community to discover nature in their own back gardens.

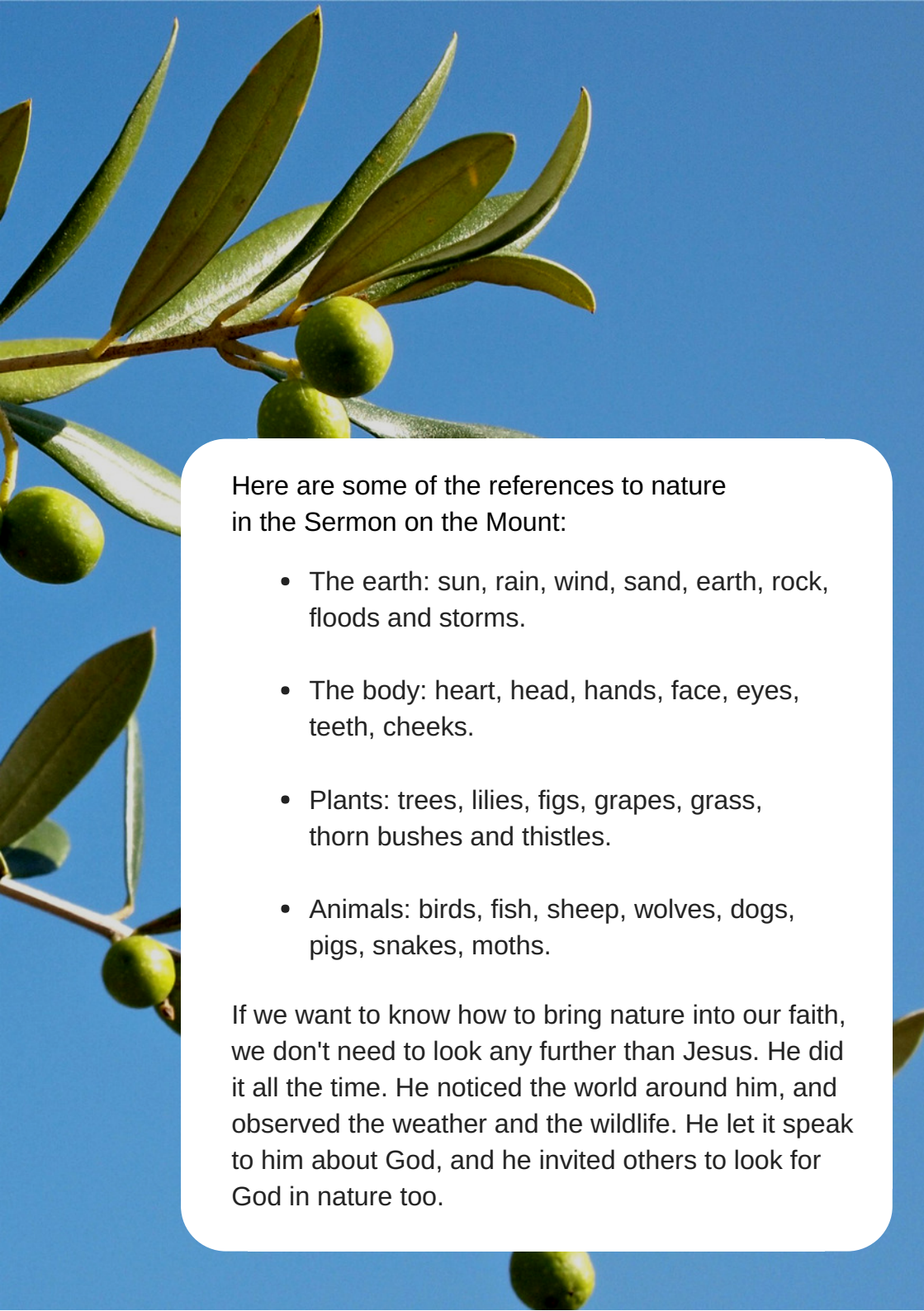
Where you take it is up to you, but here are some things you could look forward to:

- Visiting local reserves for picnics, walks, and special events
- Take church outdoors with resources for outdoor worship
- Opportunities for volunteering and practical action
- Information and activities for families and households
- Resources for celebrating creation in worship
- Expert advice on managing grounds for wildlife

A close-up photograph of an olive branch with several green olives. The leaves are elongated and dark green, while the olives are small and round. The background is a clear, bright blue sky. The text "Consider this" is overlaid in a large, white, sans-serif font.

Consider this

The Sermon on the Mount is Jesus' best known sermon. It is perhaps the best summary of his teaching. And it is full of references to nature.

A close-up photograph of an olive branch with several green olives and long, narrow, silvery-green leaves. The branch is set against a clear, bright blue sky. The lighting is natural, highlighting the texture of the leaves and the smooth surface of the olives.

Here are some of the references to nature in the Sermon on the Mount:

- The earth: sun, rain, wind, sand, earth, rock, floods and storms.
- The body: heart, head, hands, face, eyes, teeth, cheeks.
- Plants: trees, lilies, figs, grapes, grass, thorn bushes and thistles.
- Animals: birds, fish, sheep, wolves, dogs, pigs, snakes, moths.

If we want to know how to bring nature into our faith, we don't need to look any further than Jesus. He did it all the time. He noticed the world around him, and observed the weather and the wildlife. He let it speak to him about God, and he invited others to look for God in nature too.

A home for all God's creatures

Whether you've got a church garden, a graveyard or a car park, your church can make a difference to local wildlife. If your congregation catches a vision for wildlife care too, then the impact can be multiplied across dozens of back gardens too. Here are some of the things you could consider:

Pollinator plants: lay out a buffet for the bees. They are in decline, and we depend on them to pollinate many vegetable and fruits crops - so caring for the bees is safe guarding our own future too.

Room for bugs: resist the urge to tidy every last corner of the churchyard. Let the grass grow longer around the edges. A log pile will create niches for all kinds of creepy-crawlies.

Homes for birds: churches are often roosting places for birds as it is. Extend them a formal welcome by putting up birdboxes, hanging feeders, and planting shrubs that provide winter berries.

Talk to your local RSPB Scotland staff or volunteers for more ideas tailored to your site.



How to get started

We know you're busy, and the last thing you need is more things on the to-do list. So let's talk about how any of this is going to happen.

Form a team

First of all, there will be people in your church who are passionate about wildlife. Perhaps they are RSPB members or involved with a local wildlife association. They may well jump at the chance to use their interest for the wider church. Get those people together, and let them take the lead. You could find a source of energy and enthusiasm that you didn't know was there!

Start small

There's no need to draw up a big conservation programme for your church. Start with one or two little actions - maybe something that can be done on a Sunday afternoon. Use it to gauge interest and discover those in the congregation with an interest in the outdoors and nature.

Watch the seasons

Your keenest outdoors people will be out all year round, but when you're starting out, it's a lot easier to inspire people to get out into nature in the spring or summer!



Observe

Take some time to see what you already have on your grounds that you can work with. Do you have birds? Perhaps that would be a good place to start, adding plants that provide food, or installing a bird bath or boxes. Are there flower beds already? How about looking at what gets planted, and making some choices that suit butterflies and bees as well as humans. Forgotten corners are often some of the best places for wildlife, so look out for boggy patches or wild bits - those are all good habitats.

Ask for help

RSPB Scotland has an extensive network of volunteers, and they would be happy to help. It could turn out to be a good community building project, working together for wildlife in your area. Ask your local contact about this, and make sure your team know who is active where you are.

Keep in touch

We're happy to help, and answer any questions you might have. Get in touch at:
www.faithactionfornature.org

Find out more

Faith Action for Nature is a pilot project run by EcoCongregation Scotland, RSPB Scotland, the Church of Scotland, and the Scottish Episcopal Church, with support from A Rocha UK and Earthbound Ventures.

For more about the project, including our frequently asked questions, visit:
www.faithactionfornature.org

For more information, visit:
www.ecocongregationscotland.org
www.rspb.org.uk

