

“God came to join us outside Eden’s gates. Now, as we turn to Christ and offer our lives for his service, God enables us to become stewards of Creation.”

Christians and Ecology

How can people of faith engage and confront issues that feel so huge – pollution, climate change, food sustainability, and more? The good news is that the Christian tradition provides lenses for seeing and understanding our place in God’s creation.

The following article is an excerpt from [*Resurrection Matters: Church Renewal for Creation’s Sake*](#), a forthcoming book by Nurya Love Parish (Church Publishing 2018). The subtitles have been added by Building Faith.

1. Humans have gone too far... like we’ve been doing since the beginning

When it became clear that extracting fossil fuels from the depths of the earth was leading to the destruction of Creation, Christians could have recalled the story of the apple in Eden. We could have remembered that we tend to reach for that which makes us more like God but is actually out of bounds. We could have called for research into the consequences of fossil fuel use. We could have demanded public policy that would steward Creation as witness to God’s glory and a home for future generations. We could have made the health of God’s world our first priority. If we had done so, we would have witnessed to the importance of remembering scripture as a source of wisdom, while also turning to science as a source of fact...

Our loss of wisdom means we see Creation as a natural resource to be plundered. The rise of technology provides us the means to plunder it. Our generally accepted accounting counts Creation’s loss as humanity’s gain. We tend to think of ourselves as gods and God as absent. This aspect of humanity goes back to the beginning. It may very well be our end.

2. The church has power to tell a different story

It is unfashionable in an era of pluralism to claim that the church holds unique power to save. But it is certain that the church exists to connect humanity to our Creator. The church holds language, story, tradition, and ritual that can be effective against idolatry. The church is far from perfect. Many, many times in our past we have fallen prey to idolatry ourselves. We have failed to be an obedient church; we have not loved God with our whole heart.

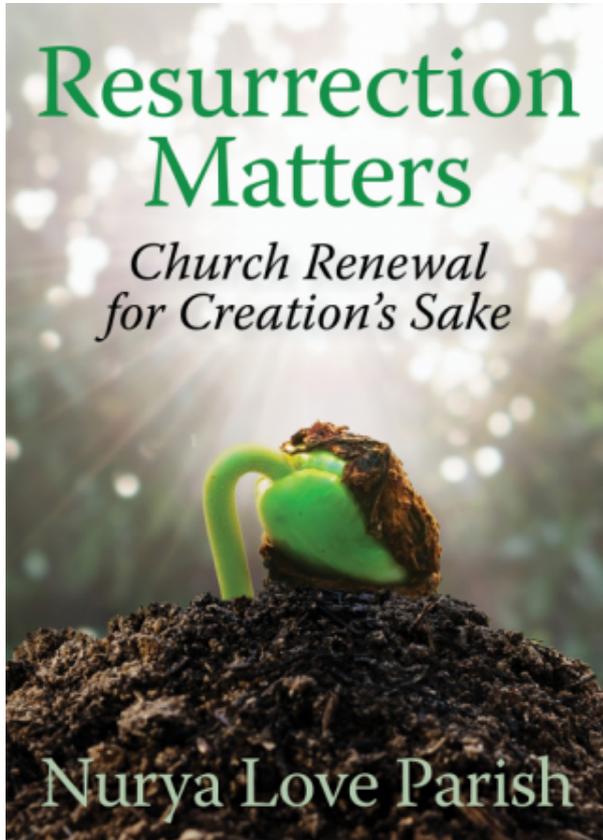
But inherent to our core purpose is the language of sin, confession, redemption, absolution, and grace. This language is a gift both the church and the world desperately need to make sense of our current predicament.

3. Yes, climate degradation is sin, but God's grace offers a new way

We have sinned and fallen short of the grace of God. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. As a result, our planet is in peril. The good news is that God, in God's mercy, knows our sinfulness and has provided us a means of salvation in Jesus Christ. We left Eden a long time ago. God came to join us outside its gates. Now, as we turn to Christ and offer our lives for his service, God enables us to become stewards of Creation.

4. Our planet deserves *reverence*

The stewardship of Creation begins with a renewal of religion. Science exists to teach us facts. Religion provides a language of reverence. A language of reverence leads to a practice of reverence. And the practice of reverence—the recognition that each day we walk on holy ground—is what our planet needs.



[Learn more about Resurrection Matters: Church Renewal for Creation's Sake](#)

The Rev. Nurya Love Parish is the co-founder of [Plainsong Farm](#). She created and curates the [Christian food movement guide](#), resources families practicing faith at home through the [Grow Christians](#) blog, and speaks both locally and nationally on food and faith. In 2016 she spoke at Harvard Divinity School (her alma mater) at the [Spirit of Sustainable Agriculture](#) conference on "Next Steps for the Christian food movement." When Nurya is not in front of a computer or at a meeting, she can often be found in the kitchen =)