

Did you ever want to live in a tent alongside grizzly bears and cougars? No? Neither did my wife. Which is why a trip to the Canadian Rockies had me digging deep into my pockets for hotels... Nonetheless, it is a truly magnificent area: mountains, glaciers, rivers, lakes, forests, with marvellous things living in them. A wilderness that is mostly uncompromised by humankind although the Canadians have made some significant parts of it accessible to visit - and in an extremely eco-sensitive way.

Pondering how it all fits together in one enormous cycle of life has reinforced my theological leaning towards the intelligent design theory of creation. That is, things can work out very well for life on this planet if we work with it, not putting profit before sustainability or politics ahead of judicious decision making. It **is** God's creation and it **does** work because it was designed to do so.

By the time I get back - and you get this Newsletter - we will be noticing the harvest of spring and summer and the changes starting for the move into autumn. Let's enjoy this part of the round - even if the shops might be urging us to start buying for Christmas!

This will be marked in our usual way with a harvest festival service (see elsewhere for the notice). That is, we will be acknowledging God's creation as wonderful and expressing our gratitude for it. Prayer, too, for greater neighbourliness towards those places which have had their sustainability squandered for short-term profit or through imbalance of nature.

Thousands of years ago, Scripture recorded God's expectations of us in this "garden of Eden," which was to till it and keep it. To me that means we are custodians of this biosphere in which we all live. In the old story, Adam gets this wrong (which is the story of us all); in a new creation Jesus gives us the chance to try and try and try to get it right.

The Canadians are seemingly getting a lot of things right. It does however reflect in the taxes here - both for residents and visitors - a small price to pay to fulfil our Divinely directed duty. I think there will be success; the younger generations of today understand all this. So next month I am going to be writing specifically to them about their place here on Earth. Make sure they read October's edition!