

**For Estuary, February 2018**

**World Women's Day of Prayer 2018**

**Ecumenical service on Friday 2 March, 11.00 a.m. at Holy Cross Church**

The World Women's Day of Prayer is an annual interdenominational event, which for many years has been observed in Topsham, as it is across the world. The service is prepared by women from a different country each year. This year it has been written by women in Suriname, a small country on the north-eastern coast of South America. Suriname is defined by vast swaths of tropical rainforest, a wealth of resources, Dutch colonial architecture and a melting-pot culture.

The theme this year is 'All God's Creation is Very Good'. The women of Suriname urge us to cherish God's exquisite gift of Creation, and to commit ourselves to caring for God's world responsibly, so that we may pass it on, unspoiled, to future generations. Starting in Samoa as the sun rises, and ending as the sun sets off the coast of American Samoa, the service will be celebrated in over 95 languages and 1000 dialects, in 170 countries and islands. Here in the British Isles, some 5000 services will take place.

In Topsham last year, for want of people to organise the event here and because a service was taking place in the Cathedral in Exeter, we held a simple meditation service at Holy Cross. We are feeling bolder again this year, and plan to use a simplified version of the service as written. There is now an organ at Holy Cross again, so we will be able to accompany the hymns, which we know some people missed last year, with the organ.

It would be good to involve new people in the World Women's Day of Prayer. If you would like to take part in the service as a reader, please let me know. After the service there will be coffee at Holy Cross, followed by a Lent lunch at St Nicholas's church at 12.30 p.m.

Everyone is very welcome at the World Women's Day of Prayer service – including men!

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