

December 4th

2 Peter 3:8-15a

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Fire and Hope in Madagascar

To get to Christmas, Madagascar must first get through the season of fire. Every year, especially in October and November, many thousand square km of grassland and forest burn, killing trees, impeding regeneration of natural forests, and frustrating tree-growing efforts. Madagascar faces similar challenges as Adam and Eve: how to preserve Creation while at the same time producing food to eat (Gen. 2:15). Fire combined with peoples' needs to grow food and get firewood and charcoal for cooking meals has resulted in destruction of natural forests, putting many of Madagascar's endemic plants and animals on a path towards extinction. Climate change is making the situation worse. Far too often, native forests are being replaced with forests of exotic trees, that provide products for people but contribute little to the preservation of endemic plants and animals. Astronaut John Grunsfeld, who went to space 5 times, reflected, "Looking down on Madagascar, I have watched what little forest there was shrink to several tiny reserves."



The Presbyterian Church (USA)'s partner denomination in Madagascar is the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FJKM). At its General Assembly in 2021, the FJKM decided that all of its over 7000 churches should become green churches. PC(USA) assists the FJKM's Fruits, Vegetables, and Environmental Education Program (FVEE) as it helps FJKM churches and schools become green. The FVEE provides native trees and fruit trees for planting on the grounds of FJKM schools and churches. Many of the native trees planted are endangered species. They remind people of the value and beauty of Creation and the need to preserve it.

Before the earth was destroyed by flood, God called Noah to take extraordinary action to keep species from extinction. What is God calling each of us to do in the face of fire and climate change?

Prayer: O God, who are we to turn our backs on your Creation? Please help us to know what you want each of us to do to preserve Creation and help your people have adequate food to eat.

Action: PC(USA)'s partners around the world, like the FJKM, could use your help to strengthen their efforts to address the challenges of preserving Creation and fighting hunger. Please consider ways that you can help.