

# CREATION CARE NEWSLETTER: EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF EAU CLAIRE

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**Sermon Excerpt**, by *Michael Schut*

**“So what is our role?”** Consider, for a moment, that it is to serve, not just other humans, but all of God’s created order.

In the second chapter of Genesis we read that we were put in the garden to till and keep or to work it and take care of it. If we take a look at the Hebrew word often translated as till or work or cultivate, we find the word *abad*. *Abad* is the Hebrew word for serve. It’s the same word that shows

up in the profound words of Joshua: ‘As for me and my house, we will *abad* the Lord’, meaning we will serve the Lord.

It’s telling to note that, by and large, we humans don’t think of serve, as appears in that second chapter of Genesis, as the best descriptor of our role in relationship to God’s Earth. Rather, it’s safe to say that more of us think of dominion, as appears in first chapter of Genesis. That’s the more famous verse.

Let’s briefly consider dominion. This verse was written within a Hebrew culture, and within that culture kings were those who had dominion. As Calvin DeWitt points out in his book *EarthWise*, a good Hebrew king exercised dominion with mercy, justice and compassion on behalf of his constituents.

Furthermore, as Christians, we proclaim Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Christ has dominion. But Jesus was always turning things on their heads including what it means to be a king with dominion. One of the places we see that most clearly is in the Gospel of Mark where Jesus says, ‘For even I came here not to be served but to serve others, and to give my life as a ransom for many.’

Our role here on God’s good earth is to be servants of creation.”