



ST. THOMAS'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SEASON OF CREATION (YEAR A, WEEK 1): FOREST SUNDAY

Liturgy of the Word

September 13, 2020 10 A.M.

SEASON OF CREATION

Christians around the world have begun to recognize the period from September 1 (the Global Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation) to October 4 (St. Francis of Assisi Day) annually as Creationtide or the Season of Creation. Anglican, Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox Christians observe this time as one for prayer and action on behalf of the natural environment. Among the leaders in the movement are the Anglican Communion Environmental Network and the World Council of Churches. Information about The Episcopal Church and Creation Care may be found at www.episcopalchurch.org/creation-care.

According to the Season of Creation website (www.seasonofcreation.org/), “The Season of Creation is a time to renew our relationship with our Creator and all creation through repenting, repairing, and rejoicing together. During the Season of Creation, we join our sisters and brothers in the ecumenical family in prayer and action for our common home. This year, amid crises that have shaken our world, we’re awakened to the urgent need to heal our relationships with creation and each other. During the season this year, we enter a time of restoration and hope, a jubilee for our Earth, that requires radically new ways of living with creation. The Season of Creation unites the world’s 2.2 billion Christians around one shared purpose. With so much injustice all around us, now is the time for Christians everywhere to come together and show the world how to love each other and creation.”

St. Thomas’s is recognizing the Season of Creation on the four Sundays from September 13 through October 4. As noted, our liturgy includes special elements from a variety of sources. Rather than the Revised Common Lectionary, it includes readings suggested by *The Season of Creation: A Preaching Commentary*. For Year A, the readings are “the Spirit series,” and the four Sundays are designated as, in order: Forest Sunday, Land Sunday, Wilderness Sunday, and River Sunday.

INTROIT

With verdure clad

And God said:
Let the earth bring forth grass,
the herb yielding seed
and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind,
whose seed is in itself upon the earth;
and it was so.

With verdure clad
the fields appear delightful to the ravished sense;
by flowers sweet and gay
enhanced is the charming sight.

Here fragrant herbs their odors shed;
here shoots the healing plant.

With copious fruit the expanded boughs are hung;
in leafy arches twine the shady groves;
over lofty hills majestic forests wave.

Words: Genesis 1:11; Anonymous, 1795 Music: Joseph Haydn (1732–1809), *Die Schöpfung (The Creation)*, 1798

INVITATION TO WORSHIP [*Hildegard of Bingen, from the “2020 Celebration Guide,” a Season of Creation resource*]

We gather in the Name of the one Triune God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of the Earth and all its creatures! Praise be to the Holy Trinity! God is sound and life, Creator of the Universe, Source of all life, whom the angels sing; wondrous light of all mysteries known or unknown to humankind, and life that lives in us all.

HYMN

How Great Thou Art (60, Lift Every Voice and Sing II)

1. O Lord my God, when I in awe - some won - der Con - sid - er
 2. When through the woods and for - est glades I wan - der And hear the
 3. And when I think that God, his Son not spar - ing, Sent him to
 4. When Christ shall come with shout of ac - cla - ma - tion And take me

1. all the worlds* thy hands have made, — I see the stars I hear the roll - ing*
 2. birds sing sweet - ly in the trees, — When I look down from loft - y moun - tain
 3. die, I scarce can take it in, — That on the cross, my bur - den glad - ly
 4. home, what joy shall fill my heart! — Then I shall bow in hum - ble ad - o -

1. thun - der, Thy pow'r through - out the u - ni - verse dis - played. —
 2. gran - deur, And hear the brook and feel the gen - tle breeze. —
 3. bear - ing, He bled and died to take a - way my sin. —
 4. ra - tion, And there pro - claim, my God how great thou art. —

Then sings my soul, my Sav - ior, God, to Thee: — How great Thou

*The translator's original words are "works" and "mighty."

art, how great Thou art! Then sings my soul, my Sav - ior, God, to
Thee: How great Thou art, how great Thou art!

OPENING ACCLAMATION [*“Liturgical Materials Honoring God in Creation and Various Rites and Prayer for Animals,” the Episcopal Church Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music*]

Presider: Blessed be the God of all creation.

People: **And blessed be God’s Holy Name for ever and ever. Amen.**

THE CONFESSION OF SIN [*“Liturgical Materials Honoring God in Creation and Various Rites and Prayer for Animals,” the Episcopal Church Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music*]

Presider

Let us confess our sin against God and God’s creation. [*Silence is kept.*]

Presider and People

**Holy and merciful God,
we confess that we have failed to honor you
by rightly claiming our kinship with all your creatures.
We have walked heavily on your earth,
overused and wasted its resources,
taken for granted its beauty and abundance,
and treated its inhabitants unjustly,
holding future generations hostage to our greed.
Have mercy on us and forgive us our sin.
Renew in us the resolve to keep and conserve your earth
as you desire and intend,
with grateful and compassionate hearts,
through your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Presider

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

Presider: God be with you.

People: And also with you.

Presider: Let us pray.

Almighty God our heavenly Father, you declare your glory and show forth your handiwork in the heavens and in the earth: Deliver us in our various occupations from the service of self alone, that we may do the work you give us to do in truth and beauty and for the common good; for the sake of him who came among us as one who serves, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.** [*Collect for Vocation in Daily Work, the 1979 Book of Common Prayer*]

THE FIRST LESSON

GENESIS 2:4-22

In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground— then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being.

And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush. The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

And the LORD God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.”

Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.” So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner.

So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 139:13-16

Ivor Keys

13 I will thank you because I am marvelously made; *
your works are wonderful, and I know it well.

14 My body was not hidden from you, *
while I was being made in secret and woven in the depths of the earth.

15 Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet unfinished in the womb;
all of them were written in your book; *
they were fashioned day by day, when as yet there was none of them.

16 How deep I find your thoughts, O God! *
how great is the sum of them!

THE SECOND LESSON

ACTS 17:22-28

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, “Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we too are his offspring.’”

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ALLELUIA

Norah Duncan IV

The Cantor sings the Gospel Alleluia once through, then the People join in singing.

The image shows a musical score for the Gospel Alleluia. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/8. Above the treble staff, there are eight chords: D, A/C#, G2/B, D/A, G, D/F#, A, and D. The melody in the treble staff is a simple line of notes corresponding to the lyrics 'Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!'. The bass staff provides a simple accompaniment with notes and rests.



Cantor: The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree;
and shall spread abroad like a cedar in Libanus:
such as are planted in the house of the Lord,
shall flourish in the courts of the house of our God.

The People sing the Alleluia again.

THE GOSPEL

JOHN 3:1-16

Presider: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.” Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? “Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ‘For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.’”

Presider: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

THE SERMON

A LITURGICAL AFFIRMATION OF FAITH [A New Zealand Prayer Book]

Presider and People

**You, O God, are supreme and holy.
You create our world and give us life.
Your purpose overarches everything we do.
You have always been with us.
You are God.**

**You, O God, are infinitely generous,
good beyond all measure.
You came to us before we came to you.
You have revealed and proved
your love for us in Jesus Christ,
who lived and died and rose again.
You are with us now.
You are God.**

**You, O God, are Holy Spirit.
You empower us to be your gospel in the world.
You reconcile and heal; you overcome death.
You are our God. We worship you.**

A LITANY FOR THE PLANET [*Liturgical Materials Honoring God in Creation and Various Rites and Prayer for Animals,* the Episcopal Church Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music]

Intercessor and People

With all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Creator, saying, “Creator, have mercy.”

On your earth, the garden of life, **Creator, have mercy.**

On soil, that it may be fruitful in all seasons, **Creator, have mercy.**

On rocks and minerals that form the foundations for life, **Creator, have mercy.**

On volcanoes and lava flows that reveal the power of earth’s core, **Creator, have mercy.**

On hills and great mountains; on cliffs, caves, and valleys, **Creator, have mercy.**

On deserts and their hardy creatures, **Creator, have mercy.**

On your waters, which sustain a diverse community of life, **Creator, have mercy.**

On coral reefs, and on the animals, plants, and fish that inhabit them, **Creator, have mercy.**

On ocean deeps, teeming with life; on the open seas and all that travel upon them, **Creator, have mercy.**

On rivers, bringing water to thirsty places, **Creator, have mercy.**

On lakes and streams, home to a diversity of life, **Creator, have mercy.**

On ponds and marshes, cradles of life, **Creator, have mercy.**

On wetlands and estuaries; on rocky coasts and beaches, **Creator, have mercy.**

On islands, atolls, oases, and all harsh outposts of life, **Creator, have mercy.**

On glaciers and ice fields, holding the delicate balance of waters, **Creator, have mercy.**

On storms, floods, tempests, and all fearsome forces of weather, **Creator, have mercy.**

On rains that water the earth, causing plants to sprout and grow, **Creator, have mercy.**

On snow, hail, sleet, and winter cold, and on the dormant things that wait for spring, **Creator, have mercy.**

On mists and fog silently watering the ground, **Creator, have mercy.**

On the atmosphere of your planet earth, that it may sustain all that breathes, **Creator, have mercy.**

On winds that carry seeds and spores; on breezes that warm and cool the earth, **Creator, have mercy.**

On lightnings and fires that cleanse and destroy, and on all that lies in their path, **Creator, have mercy.**

On all the ecosystems of your earth and their intricate communities, **Creator, have mercy.**

On forests of many kinds; on trees and shrubs and vines, **Creator, have mercy.**

On grasslands, tundras, and plains, and on their varied plants, **Creator, have mercy.**

On ferns and fungi; on spore-bearing and seed-bearing plants, **Creator, have mercy.**

On micro-organisms of endless variety, the complex and the simple, **Creator, have mercy.**

On reptiles and amphibians, **Creator, have mercy.**

On four-legged creatures, **Creator, have mercy.**

On two-legged and winged creatures, **Creator, have mercy.**

On many-legged creatures and insects, **Creator, have mercy.**

On mysterious creatures and places unknown to humankind, **Creator, have mercy.**

On the human family across the globe, of many colors and communities, in kinship with all creation, **Creator, have mercy.**

On all who live and work and play in our cities and neighborhoods, **Creator, have mercy.**

On those who work around us, whose labor builds up our community and our world, **Creator, have mercy.**

On all businesses and industries, that they may profit all citizens, **Creator, have mercy.**

On the parks and green spaces, and on those who maintain them and those who enjoy them, **Creator, have mercy.**

On the plants and animals of our ecosystem, **Creator, have mercy.**

On those who produce food and energy for people and pets, **Creator, have mercy.**

On schools and all places of learning, and on all who care for and teach children and adults, **Creator, have mercy.**

On the poor and homeless residents of our towns, that there may be shelter and sustenance for them, **Creator, have mercy.**

On visitors and immigrants, and on all who offer welcome and shelter here, **Creator, have mercy.**

On all places of reverence and prayer, and on those who worship you, **Creator, have mercy.**

On our ancestors, and on those who will come after us, **Creator, have mercy.**

On those stricken with the novel coronavirus, and on those who suffer from any disease, **Creator, have mercy.**

On those who care for loved ones who are ill, **Creator, have mercy.**

On doctors, nurses, and all who render help and healing skill, **Creator, have mercy.**

On scientists, researchers, and all who search for treatments and cures, **Creator, have mercy.**

On all who work for public health, safety, and well-being, **Creator, have mercy.**

On all who are fearful for their health and life, and on those who are alone and in great need, **Creator, have mercy.**

On those who are dying, those who have died, and those who mourn, **Creator, have mercy.**

Presider

Great Spirit God, we give you thanks for another day on this earth. We give you thanks for this day to enjoy the compassionate goodness of you, our Creator. We acknowledge with one mind our respect and gratefulness to all the sacred cycle of life. Bind us together in the circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and one another. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

Presider: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Your ongoing financial support of St. Thomas's Church is especially appreciated at this time. To give online with a debit or credit card, go to the Home page of the Church website (www.stthomasnewhaven.org), and click GIVE NOW. If you are viewing this document electronically, you can simply [CLICK HERE](#). Know also that the Church office is able to process checks that have been mailed. Thank you!

OFFERTORY HYMN

Earth and all stars (412, *The Hymnal* 1982)



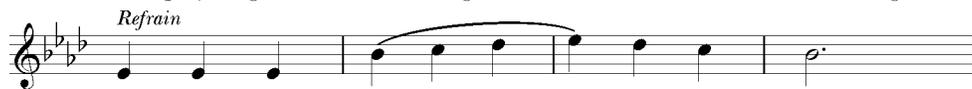
1 Earth and all stars, loud rush - ing plan - ets, sing to the
2 Hail, wind, and rain, loud blow - ing snow - storms, sing to the
3 Trum - pet and pipes, loud clash - ing cym - bals, sing to the
4 En - gines and steel, loud pound - ing ham - mers, sing to the
5 Class - rooms and labs, loud boil - ing test - tubes, sing to the
6 Know - ledge and truth, loud sound - ing wis - dom, sing to the



1 Lord _____ a new song! O vic - to - ry,
2 Lord _____ a new song! Flow - ers and trees,
3 Lord _____ a new song! Harp, lute, and lyre,
4 Lord _____ a new song! Lime - stone and beams,
5 Lord _____ a new song! Ath - lete and band,
6 Lord _____ a new song! Daugh - ter and son,



1 loud shout - ing ar - my, sing to the Lord _____ a new song!
2 loud rus - tling dry leaves, sing to the Lord _____ a new song!
3 loud hum - ming cel - los, sing to the Lord _____ a new song!
4 loud build - ing work - ers, sing to the Lord _____ a new song!
5 loud cheer - ing peo - ple, sing to the Lord _____ a new song!
6 loud pray - ing mem - bers, sing to the Lord _____ a new song!



Refrain
He hath done mar - vel - ous things.



I, too, will praise him with a new song!

Words: Herbert F. Brokering (b. 1926) Music: *Earth and All Stars*, David N. Johnson (b. 1922) Words, Music: Copyright © Augsburg Publishing House. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

You are invited to say the Lord's Prayer in the language of your choice.

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,**

**as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and ever. Amen.**

A PRAYER OF COMMUNION

Presider and People

Almighty God, you promised through our Lord Jesus Christ that where two or three are gathered together in his name, you will be in the midst of them. We ask you to be in the midst of us now, though we are far apart, and to bind us to one another, and to you, through the power of your Holy Spirit. Just as you, Father, are in the Son, and he in you, so may we also be in you, and Christ in us, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

BLESSING AND DISMISSAL [*“2020 Celebration Guide,” a Season of Creation resource*]

Presider

May God who established the dance of creation,
Who marvelled at the lilies of the field,
Who transforms chaos to order,
Lead us to transform our lives and the Church
To reflect God’s glory in creation. **Amen.**

Presider: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

For the beauty of the earth

For the beauty of the earth,
For the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies:
Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our joyful hymn of praise.

For the beauty of each hour
Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale and tree and flower,
Sun and moon and stars of light:
Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our joyful hymn of praise.

For the joy of human love,
Brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth, and friends above,
For all gentle thoughts and mild:
Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our joyful hymn of praise.

For each perfect gift of thine
To our race so freely given,
Graces human and divine,
Flowers of earth and buds of heaven:
Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our joyful hymn of praise.

Words: Foliott Sandford Pierpoint (1835–1917), 1864 Music: John Rutter (b. 1945), 1980

After the Anthem, you are invited to stay online for virtual Coffee Hour. Please see the Parish Enews for the latest announcements and information.



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Announcements

Stay in touch! Subscribe to the Weekly Parish Enews and “like” St. Thomas’s on Facebook.

It’s Start-Up Sunday! We welcome back three of our section leaders: Maggie Lieberman, Joy Wang, and Hannah Goodwillie. In addition, Sherezade Panthaki will return frequently as artist-in-residence and vocal soloist. This fall, we hope to feature a new opportunity for our congregation: joining a virtual choir for our hymns! Today, after several weeks of Morning Prayer, we return to Ante-Communion (the Liturgy of the Word). For the Season of Creation (more on that below), we’ll be using an Affirmation of Faith from A New Zealand Prayer Book, and we’ll be trying out the contemporary-language Lord’s Prayer.

Back-to School Continues. Congrats to our Day School for a successful start last week! The back-to-school process continues for many of you - our prayers continue to be with those who are still in transition.

Serving Today

Presider & Preacher: The Rev. Keri Aubert
Musician: Dr. Noah Horn
Lectors: Bill English, Greg D’Andrea
Intercessor: Don Edwards

This Week’s Prayer Intentions

Pray for those in any need or trouble, especially:
all who are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, especially those who work in healthcare and those who have lost their livelihood

Pray for those who have died.

In the Episcopal Church in Connecticut Cycle of Prayer, pray for:

St. John’s, Stamford; Calvary, Stonington; St. Mark’s, Storrs; The Province of New England: the Dioceses of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Western Massachusetts; their bishops, clergy, parish and diocesan staff, and congregations; Provincial Synod; all Provincial Networks

In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, pray for:
the Anglican Church of South America

In the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, pray for:
Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay

Leadership at St. Thomas’s

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Kyle Holton (Senior Warden)
Denise Terry (Junior Warden)
Ricardo Chavira (Treasurer)
Linda Meyer (Clerk)
Greg D’Andrea
Bill English
Chris Martinez
Alexandria Robison
Catherine Stricklan
The Rev. Keri Aubert (Rector)

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The Rev. Canon K. Dexter Cheney
The Rev. Jakki Flanagan

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ST. THOMAS’S EPISCOPAL CHURCH & DAY SCHOOL

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