



ST. THOMAS'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SEASON OF CREATION (YEAR B, WEEK 3): SKY SUNDAY

Liturgy of the Word

September 26, 2021 10 A.M.

Whether you are new or returning, **WELCOME!**

Please remain masked and observe social distancing throughout the service. The building remains closed, and the restrooms are available for limited use only.

ALL are invited to receive Holy Communion. Baptism is not required; church membership is not required. As a pandemic safety precaution, the People will be offered bread but not wine. Remember, the sacrament is complete and efficacious even when received in one kind only. Instructions for receiving Holy Communion are included below at the appropriate point below.

You are invited to stay after the service for socially-distanced fellowship.

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. The Season of Creation website is at www.seasonofcreation.org. Information about The Episcopal Church and Creation Care may be found at www.episcopalchurch.org/creation-care.

The 2021 Season of Creation theme is “A home for all? Renewing the *oikos* of God.” The Season of Creation website offers this: “*Oikos* is the Greek word for ‘home,’ or ‘household.’ By rooting our theme in the concept of *oikos*, we celebrate the integral web of relationships that sustain the well-being of the Earth.”

St. Thomas’s is observing the Season of Creation on the four Sundays from September 12 through October 3. liturgy includes special elements from a variety of sources. The readings are those suggested by *The Season of Creation: A Preaching Commentary*. For Year B, the readings are “the Word series,” and the four Sundays are, in order: Earth Sunday, Humanity Sunday, Sky Sunday, and Mountain Sunday.

INTROIT

The people that walked in darkness
have seen a great light:

The people that walked in darkness
and they that dwell
in the land of the shadow of death,
upon them hath the light shined.

Words: Isaiah 9:2 Music: George Frideric Handel (1685–1759), *Messiah*, 1742

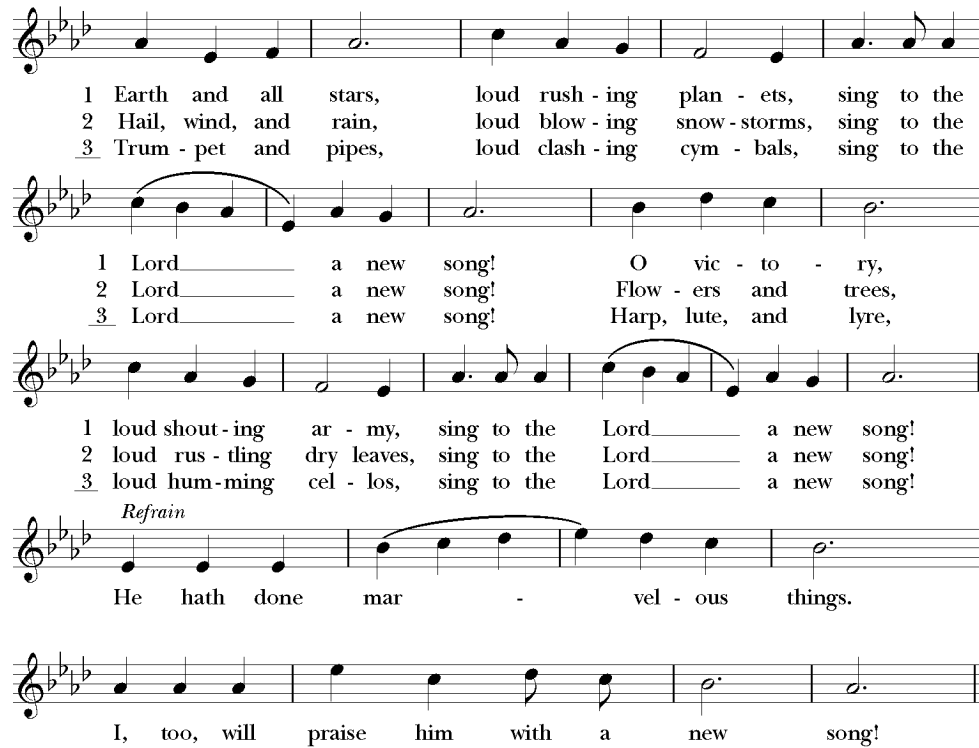
At the invitation of the Presider, all stand.

CALL TO WORSHIP [*Hildegard of Bingen, in "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

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

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,

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!

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.

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.**

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

Presider: God be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Presider: Let us pray.

O merciful Creator, your hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature: Make us always thankful for your loving providence; and grant that we, remembering the account that we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of your good gifts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.** [*Collect for Stewardship of Creation, the 1979 Book of Common Prayer*]

All are seated.

THE FIRST LESSON

JEREMIAH 4:23-28

I looked on the earth, and lo, it was waste and void;
and to the heavens, and they had no light.

I looked on the mountains, and lo, they were quaking,
and all the hills moved to and fro.

I looked, and lo, there was no one at all,
and all the birds of the air had fled.

I looked, and lo, the fruitful land was a desert,
and all its cities were laid in ruins
before the LORD, before his fierce anger.

For thus says the LORD:
The whole land shall be a desolation;
yet I will not make a full end.

Because of this the earth shall mourn,
and the heavens above grow black;
for I have spoken, I have purposed;
I have not relented nor will I turn back.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 19:1-6

Presider and People

- 1 The heavens declare the glory of God, *
and the firmament shows his handiwork.**
- 2 One day tells its tale to another, *
and one night imparts knowledge to another.**
- 3 Although they have no words or language, *
and their voices are not heard,**
- 4 Their sound has gone out into all lands, *
and their message to the ends of the world.**
- 5 In the deep has he set a pavilion for the sun; *
it comes forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber;
it rejoices like a champion to run its course.**
- 6 It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens
and runs about to the end of it again; *
nothing is hidden from its burning heat.**

THE SECOND LESSON

PHILIPPIANS 2:14-18

Do all things without murmuring and arguing, so that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, in which you shine like stars in the world. It is by your holding fast to the word of life that I

can boast on the day of Christ that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. But even if I am being poured out as a libation over the sacrifice and the offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you—and in the same way you also must be glad and rejoice with me.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

All stand.

HYMN

When morning gilds the skies (427, *The Hymnal 1982*)

1 When morn - ing gilds the skies, my heart, a - wak - ing, cries,
4 Ye na - tions of man - kind, in this your con - cord find:
5 Sing, suns and stars of space, sing, ye that see his face,

1 may Je - sus Christ be praised! When eve - ning sha - dows fall,
4 may Je - sus Christ be praised! Let all the earth a - round
5 sing, Je - sus Christ be praised! God's whole cre - a - tion o'er,

1 this rings my cur - few call, may Je - sus Christ be praised!
4 ring joy - ous with the sound: may Je - sus Christ be praised!
5 both now and ev - er - more shall Je - sus Christ be praised!

Words: German, ca. 1800; tr. Robert Seymour Bridges (1844-1930), alt. Music: *Laudes Domini*, Joseph Barnby (1838-1896)

THE GOSPEL

MARK 15:33-39

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

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah." And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now when the centurion, who

stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was God’s Son!”

Presider: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

All are seated.

THE SERMON

After the sermon, all remain seated for a period of silence. At the bidding of the Presider, all stand.

AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

[The Rev. Kay Sylvester, St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Tustin, CA]

Presider and People

**Holy One, root of all life, Spirit of Creation,
the Love that spreads the stars across the sky:
Yours is the ground on which we stand.
Yours are the hands that fashioned us.
Your Spirit is the wind that lifts us,
You are the thirst-quenching river of life.**

**In Jesus, we see a life lived in you and for you.
We affirm our desire to follow him,
to step gently in the world,
to love what you love,
to shine light in dark places
and bring your future
of justice and peace into being.**

**Through the gift of your Spirit,
empower us to love the world with your love;
to look deeply at our waste and abuse of Creation;
to repent of our divisions, harsh thoughts, and selfish actions;
to cherish each creature, every mountain, all the waters,
the shining deserts, the woods green and deep,
and to see ourselves as part of the
immense, connected web of life
that reflects your grace and love.**

**We honor you and praise you, Creator God,
today and evermore. Alleluia! Amen.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE *[“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

Let us pray for the revealing of the reign of God in the world, now and always.

In the beginning, **God was.**

Here and now, **God is.**

In the future, **God will be.**

Creator of earth, sea, and sky, kindle the fire of your Spirit within us, that we may be bold to heal and defend the earth; and pour your blessing upon all who work for the good of the planet. God, Giver of life, **Hear our prayer.**

Breath of life, receive our thanks for the beauty of our local habitat and all who dwell in it, and grant us the wisdom and will to conserve it. God, Giver of life, **Hear our prayer.**

Source of life, heal and redeem the wounds of your creation, and visit the places and people who suffer from our indifference, neglect, and greed. God, Giver of life, **Hear our prayer.**

Lover of all you have made, we thank you for the wondrous diversity of your creatures, and we pray for their well-being. God, Giver of life, **Hear our prayer.**

Author of the book of nature, receive our gratitude for places of restoration and healing, and continue to bless those places that feed our lives and spirits. God, Giver of life, **Hear our prayer.**

Wise Creator, whose works are full of mystery, give us wonder and appreciation for your creatures with whom we find ourselves in conflict. God, Giver of life, **Hear our prayer.**

Giver of all good gifts, awaken us daily to our dependence upon your bounty, and make us always thankful for the abundance of your blessings. God, Giver of life, **Hear our prayer.**

Divine Physician, heal our communities, especially those where neglect, greed, or violence inflict suffering upon people and other creatures. God, Giver of life, **Hear our prayer.**

Comforter of all the earth, sustain the people of this congregation who desire or need your presence and help. God, Giver of life, **Hear our prayer.**

Rock and refuge of all your creatures, receive into everlasting mercy all those who have died. God, Giver of life, **Hear our prayer.**

Good Shepherd of these your sheep, hear the prayers of praise, celebrations, and concern that we now offer in the stillness of our hearts. [*Silence is kept.*]

Presider

Eternal God, come and fill our hearts with your love. Help us speak when many keep silent, help us stand for what is right when many sit in indifference. Increase our faith and charity, until your kingdom comes and heaven and earth rejoice in everlasting glory; through your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. **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.**

THE PEACE

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

People: **And also with you.**

*Please remain in place while greeting your neighbors with a sign of peace. Then be seated for brief announcements and the **Offertory Anthem**, during which the altar is prepared.*

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Your ongoing financial support of St. Thomas's Church is sincerely appreciated. We will not be passing a collection plate today; one is located near the usher for use as you depart. To give online with a debit or credit card, go to the Home page of the Church website (www.stthomasnehaven.org), and click GIVE NOW. If you are viewing this document electronically, you may simply [CLICK HERE](#). Thank you!

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

Presider: Let us return to God with grateful hearts the gifts that God has given to us.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

With verdure clad

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

Here vent their fumes the fragrant herbs,
here shoots the healing plant.

By load of fruits the expanded boughs are pressed;
to shady vaults are bent the tufty groves;
the mountain's brow is crowned with closed wood.

Words: Anonymous, 1795 Music: Joseph Haydn (1732–1809), *The Creation*, 1798

THE HOLY COMMUNION
THE GREAT THANKSGIVING: SPECIAL FOR THE SEASON OF CREATION

[The Rev. Kay Sylvester, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Tustin, CA]

Presider: God dwells in you.

People: And also in you.

Presider: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift our hearts to God.

Presider: Let us give thanks to God our Creator.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Presider

Creating God, in the beginning, you spoke the world into being. You said, "let there be light," and there was light enough to illuminate every darkness. You formed galaxies of stars and the microscopic world of the atom; You ordered the universe and brought majesty and purpose from chaos. Amid the shining stars you placed the sweet green earth. At your command, the earth brought forth the multitude of living things, and you breathed your spirit into all of us.

We praise you together with every creature, small and great, to sing in joyful harmony:

Presider and People

Holy, holy, holy:

God of mercy, giver of life:

Glory to you, maker of all that is living;

Let the birds of the air sing your glory.

Let the creatures of the deep sing your glory.

Let the dwellers of the earth sing your glory.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Gracious God, when we had forgotten who we are, you sent Jesus to live among us. He spoke to us of the lilies of the field, of your care for the sparrow, of planting and harvest, of the simple life of love and service. He proclaimed your love that turns the world upside down, and brought healing to the damaged world through his life, his death, and his rising again.

On the night before he died, he sat at table with his friends. He took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This bread is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." After supper, he lifted the cup and said, "This is my blood, given for you. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." We remember him now and his promise of new life:

Dying, you destroyed our death;

Rising, you restore our life.

Let your kingdom come among us.

God of love, let your Spirit rest upon these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be for us the Body and Blood of Christ, so that we may be nourished by your grace and fed to do love's work.

Presider: We pray because of Jesus,
People: Who shows us the way;
Presider: We pray in the strength of the Holy Spirit,
People: Who binds us to one another and to you;
Presider: We pray to you, Creator of everything that is,
People: Here and everywhere, now and forever. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray:

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

Our Father in heaven,	as we forgive those
hallowed be your Name,	who sin against us.
your kingdom come,	Save us from the time of trial,
your will be done,	and deliver us from evil.
on earth as in heaven.	For the kingdom, the power,
Give us today our daily bread.	and the glory are yours,
Forgive us our sins,	now and for ever. Amen.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The Presider breaks the consecrated bread. A period of silence is kept.

Presider: The Gifts of God for the People of God.

*You may be seated. **All are invited to receive Holy Communion at God's table in this church.** Baptism is not required; church membership is not required. **Special pandemic precautions are in place for Holy Communion.** The People come forward roughly from closest to farthest, while maintaining social distancing. You will be offered bread only. Approach the priest with your hands extended, and the priest will place a wafer in them. Do not consume the wafer immediately. Instead, return to your seat and then raise your mask to consume the wafer.*

COMMUNION ANTHEM

On mighty pens

On mighty pens uplifted soars the eagle aloft,
and cleaves the sky in swiftest flight
to the blazing sun.

His welcome bids to morn the merry lark;
and cooing calls the tender dove his mate.

From every bush and grove
resound the nightingale's delightful notes.

No grief affected yet her breast,
nor to a mournful tale
were tuned her soft enchanting lays.

Words: Anonymous, 1795 Music: Joseph Haydn (1732–1809), *The Creation*, 1798

After all have received communion, the People remain seated for a period of silence. Then all stand.

Unison or harmony

1 The spa - cious fir - ma - ment on high,
2 Soon as the eve - ning shades pre - vail,

with all the blue e - ther - eal sky,
the moon takes up the won - drous tale,

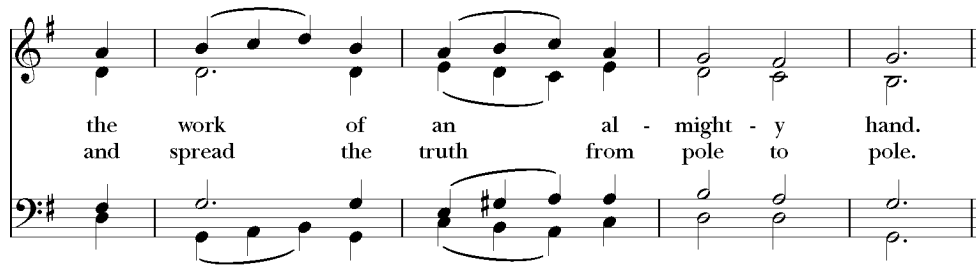
and span - gled heavens, a shin - ing frame,
and night - ly to the lis - tening earth

their great O - rig - i - nal pro - claim.
re - peats the sto - ry of her birth:

The un - wea - ried sun from day to day
whilst all the stars that round her burn,

does his Cre - a - tor's power in dis - play;
and all the plan - ets in their turn,

and pub - lish - es to ev - ery land
con - firm the ti - dings, as they roll



Words: Joseph Addison (1672-1719); para. of Psalm 19:1-6
 Music: *Creation*, Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809); adapt. *Dulcimer, or New York Collection of Sacred Music*, 1850, alt.

THE POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER [*Enriching Our Worship 2*]

Presider: Let us pray.

Presider and People

Faithful God,

in the wonder of your wisdom and love

you fed your people in the wilderness with the bread of angels,

and you sent Jesus to be the bread of life.

We thank you for feeding us with this bread.

May it strengthen us that by the power of the Holy Spirit

we may embody your desire

and be renewed for your service

through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

BLESSING [*“2021 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.

And may God’s blessing be upon you, now and always. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Presider: Go in the peace of Christ, to love and serve all of God’s creation.

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

But who may abide the day of His coming?

But who may abide the day of His coming?

For He is like a refiner’s fire.

and who shall stand when He appeareth?

Words: Malachi 3:2 Music: George Frideric Handel (1685–1759), *Messiah*, 1742

After the Anthem, you are invited to stay for socially-distanced fellowship.

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Announcements

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

Next Sunday: Blessing of the Animals! Yes, animals of all varieties are invited to our regular Sunday worship service to receive a blessing. Be prepared for a little chaos and a lot of joy!

Thanks to Emma Wright, one of our seminarian interns, for preaching today! Next Sunday our preacher will be the Rev. Nathan Empsall.

Bible Study Resumes on Thursday, September 30, at 7:30 p.m. Genesis, Week 1: Introduction (on Zoom). The Bible Study regulars have decided to resume Thursday with the Book of Genesis. Details are in the Enews.

Please Consider Helping! Please consider offering Afghan refugee assistance through IRIS and Hurricane Ida and Haiti earthquake assistance through Episcopal Relief & Development.

Serving Today

Presider & Preacher: The Rev. Keri Aubert

Music Director: Dr. Noah Horn

Lector: Bob Herdt

Intercessor: Madeleine Anderson

This Week’s Prayer Intentions

Pray for those on our Parish prayer list:

Cynthia (Sally Edwards' sister-in-law), Sally (Edwards)

Pray for those in any need or trouble, especially:

Those most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic

Pray for those who have died.

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

Christ Church, Stratford; Trinity, Tariffville; St. Peter’s/Trinity, Thomaston; Trinity, Torrington; Children and Children’s ministries; Rhythms of Grace, Grace2Go, and other ministries for children with special needs

In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, pray for:

The Episcopal Church

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

Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Peru

Leadership at St. Thomas’s

Church Vestry

Greg D’Andrea (Senior Warden)

Linda Meyer (Junior Warden)

Bill English (Treasurer)

Denise Terry (Clerk)

Valerie Garlick Claire Scully

Sara Zampierin

The Rev. Keri Aubert (Rector)

Church (Volunteer) Associate Priests

The Rev. Canon K. Dexter Cheney

The Rev. Jakki Flanagan

Seminarian Interns

Ike Harijanto

Emma Wright

Day School Board of Trustees

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Heather Tookes Alexopoulos (Treasurer)

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Jeralyn Fantarella

Robert Herdt

Ontoniel Reyes

Chris Vigilante

Linda Meyer (Church Junior Warden)

Keri Aubert (President, Day School Corp.)

Gina Panza (Head of School)

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