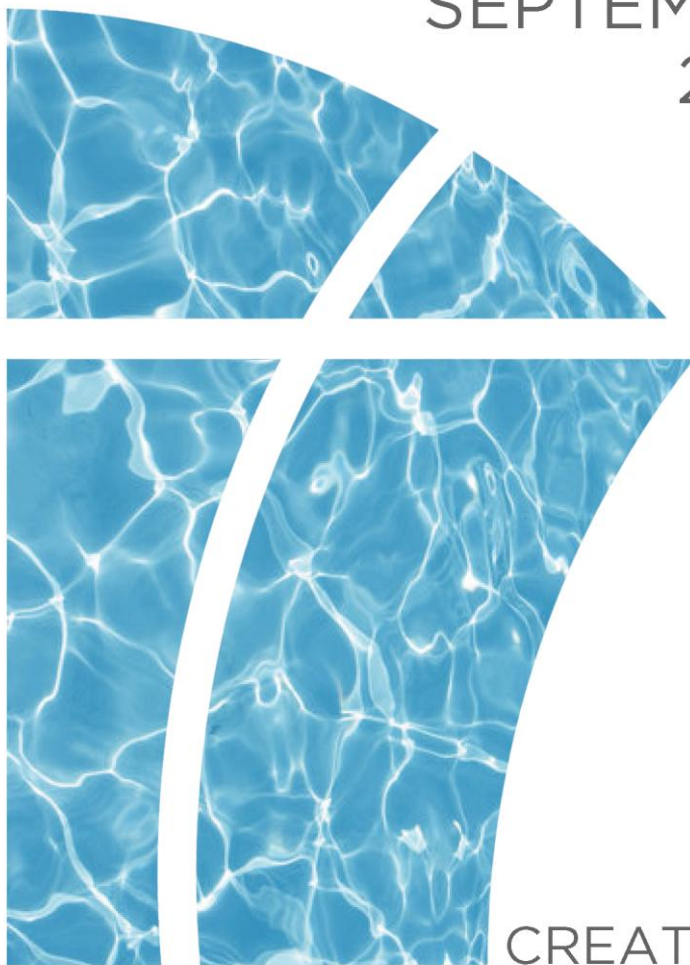




A spirited place where people stand,
connect and seek common ground

SUNDAY
20

SEPTEMBER
2026



CREATION 3

*At any time in the service when we invite you to stand
you are welcome to remain seated if you need to.*

INTROIT

Rejoice in the Lord alway

John Redford (1486–1547)

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

**All creation sings a story
of great splendours to declare.
When we contemplate its beauty
we are called forth into prayer.
We, enchanted, stand in silence;
God discovered everywhere.**

**When we stumble on new knowledge,
when new insights help us grow,
we are quick to re-discover
just how much we do not know.
But the Universe smiles gently,
as our theories come and go.**

**Outer space and inner being
both have secrets they conceal.
Galaxies so grimly awesome,
deep emotions that we feel –
all in God are judged as sacred;
it is God they all reveal.**

**Ageless mysteries still excite us;
time and space we must explore.
God the 'Presence' and 'Surrounding',
God the ever wondrous 'More'
is not found by science labours,
but in praise when we adore.**

Text: G. Stuart. Tune: Praise, my soul. John Goss (1800-1880). Tis 179

WELCOME

Priest:

Grace to you and peace from God our Creator,
the love at our beginning and without end,
in our midst and with us.

God is with us; here we find new life.

Liturgist:

God, our Creator,
who rolled back the waters of chaos to reveal the earth,
Jesus Christ,
who became fully human to reveal Divine love on earth.
Holy Spirit,
who opens our eyes to creation
to reveal God's presence on earth.

**Open our eyes and our hearts
to discover the wonders of the earth,
the mysteries of creation,
and your presence deep within. Amen.¹**

GLORIA

ALL:



Sing prais - es to God, Cre -
at - ing Pres-ence, Spin - ner of star -dust bril - liant with light,
Paint - er of dark-ness, deep-er than night. All glo - ry to God.

¹ Norman C. Habel, *Seven songs of Creation: liturgies for Celebrating and Healing Earth*, adapted

Sing prais - es to God,
 born of com-pas-sion, Heal - ing re - la-tion-ship, bless-ing the poor,
 Spurned as a reb - el by peo-ple in power. All glo - ry to God.
 Sing prais - es to God,
 Flame of the Spir-it, Dream-ing new vi-sions, sing-ing new songs,
 Bring - er of good news for which the heart longs.
 All glo - ry to God. All glo - ry to God

Words: Jenny Blood. Music: Michael Bell

Please be seated.

FORGIVENESS

Liturgist:

As those who know the generosity of God,
 let us confess our sins, especially the ways
 in which we take creation and God's gifts for granted. ²

² Church of England, *A time for creation: Liturgical resources for Creation and the Environment*, Adapted

1st time CANTOR, 2nd time ALL



E te A - ri - ki kia_ a - ro - ha mai.



E - te - Ka - rai - ti kia_ a - ro - ha mai.



E te A - ri - ki kia_ a - ro - ha mai.

[Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy]

Ian Render. Tune: Newlands Road. FFS 13

Silence

**Creator God,
maker of heaven and earth:
we confess that we have not lived as good neighbours
to the earth or to one another.
We have taken what we want
without considering the consequences;
we have wasted and discarded
without thought for the future;
we have failed to see your presence in the things
you have given us to share.
Open our hearts and minds to the signs of our times,
to the groaning of creation,
so that we may turn from our greed and lack of vision,
and see a world being made anew. Amen.³**

Priest:

May the God of all mercy,
forgive you, restore you and renew you,
to share in God's work of love and reconciliation.

Amen.³

³ Church of England, *A time for creation: Liturgical resources for Creation and the Environment*, Adapted

SENTENCE AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.

John 3:8

**Loving God,
as the air sings with songs of glory,
as the water flashes with the silver of creation,
as the forests bloom with leaves
for the healing of the nations,
so may God's light and love
fill our hearts and souls and minds.
Amen.**⁴

FIRST READING

A reading from the Book of Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 47:1-12

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL HYMN

**Imagine now our world renewed
with colours rich and rare;
imagine too the earth newborn,
and cradled close with care.**

**Imagine too this earth enriched
with forests evergreen,
with sunlit streams and dancing light,
and perfumed air so clean.**

⁴ CTBI Eco-congregation Programme

**Consider now this galaxy
and earth our home in space;
a fragile planet, in our hands
sustained by caring grace.**

**Imagine now a sacred quest
to heal earth's brokenness;
a pledge to walk in wisdom's way
and live with hopefulness.**

*Text: H. Wiltshire
Tune: St Peter, Alexander Robert Reinagle 1799-1877. TiS 485*

THE GOSPEL

Hear the Gospel of Christ according to John,
chapter four, beginning at verse five.



John 4:5-42

This is the Gospel of Christ.



SERMON

SILENCE

ANTHEM

Sicut cervus

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525-1594)

THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Liturgist:

We stand to affirm the faith we share and seek to follow.

**We believe in God,
who gives us this world as a gift,
who creates all things,
who embraces all things,
who celebrates all things,
who is present in every part of the fabric of creation.**

**We believe in God as the source of all life,
who baptises this planet with living water.**

**We believe in Jesus Christ,
seen in the suffering one,
the poor one, the malnourished one,
the climate refugee -
who loves and cares for this world and suffers with it.
And we believe in Jesus Christ,
the seed of life,
who came to reconcile and renew this world
and everything in it.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the breath of God,
who moves with God
and who moves among and with us today.
And we believe in the hope
that one day God will put an end to injustice
and all destructive forces.⁵**

Please be seated.

⁵ *Luthern Theological College, South India, Season of Creation 2026, Adapted.*

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Liturgist:

Let us pray for those far and near, people and places,
powerful and powerless, all for whom we are concerned.

THE PEACE

Please stand for the Greeting of Peace.

Kia tau tonu te rangimarie o te Ariki ki a koutou.

A ki a koe ano hoki.

[The peace of Christ be always with you. And also with you.]

Please turn and greet those around you with peace.

OFFERTORY HYMN *

**Arahina, e lhowā,
Tō pononga i te ao:
Whakakitea mai tōu kaha,
Puritia rā au e koe
A whāngainga, A whāngainga
Ki te kai e ora ai,
Ki te kai e ora ai.**

**Whakahekea mai te puna
Hei horoi mō te hara.
Tukua ko te kapua mura,
Hei ārahi i ahau;
Tēnei hoki, Tēnei hoki,
Whakakahangia e koe,
Whakakahangia e koe.**

* During this hymn there is a collection to support St Matthew's.

For electronic giving options:

1. to make a fast one-off, or ongoing, donation to St Matthew-in-the-City text **stmatthew** to **818**, or scan this QR code:
2. use the Tap-n-Go terminal on top of the donation box.



Whakamāmākia e koe
Tō te mate takiwā;
Whakawhitia tō pononga
I ngā wai o Horano;
Whakauria, Whakauria
Ki te wā o Kenana;
Ki te wā o Kenana!⁶

Text: Traditional Maori Version
Tune: Cwm Rhondda, John Hughes (1873-1932). Tis 569

THE PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

Cantor: Glory be to God who flows through all creation, blessing us with gifts to share.



THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Cantor *All*

Musical notation for the phrase "The Spirit is here God's hope is in us". The melody is written on a single staff in G major. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F#4 (quarter), E4 (half). There is a triplet marked above the last three notes. The lyrics "The Spirit is here God's hope is in us" are written below the staff.

Cantor *All*

Musical notation for the phrase "Lift up your hearts We lift them up to God". The melody is written on a single staff in G major. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F#4 (quarter), E4 (half). There is a triplet marked above the last three notes. The lyrics "Lift up your hearts We lift them up to God" are written below the staff.

Cantor

Musical notation for the phrase "Let us give thanks to the God of peace". The melody is written on a single staff in G major. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F#4 (quarter), E4 (half). The lyrics "Let us give thanks to the God of peace" are written below the staff.

All

Musical notation for the phrase "It is right to offer thanks and praise." The melody is written on a single staff in G major. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F#4 (quarter), E4 (half). The lyrics "It is right to offer thanks and praise." are written below the staff.

⁶ *Guide me as a pilgrim and feed me; wash me and lead me, strengthen me; ally my fears and bring me safe to Canaan across the Jordan.*

It is right to worship you, creator God
for in the fullness of time
you laid the foundations of the earth.
You were the architect of our creation,
determining the dimensions of all things.
You laid the cornerstone of the earth
as the morning stars sang
and the heavenly beings shouted for joy.
You contained the ocean
when it burst forth from the womb.
You clothed the earth in a garment of cloud
and commanded the morning
to shed light on the world.

When the time came,
you created us to inhabit your world.
You gave us bodies to journey in,
souls to animate us
and minds with which to question and learn.

Through the centuries you walked with us,
encouraging us to explore our universe.
You imparted your knowledge to us
through the gift of discovery.
Language, mathematics, science and art,
all these gifts have helped us
to learn of your greatness.

When Job questioned your intentions for us, you listened.
When Julian questioned suffering,
you revealed that all shall be held in your love.
When Hildegard sang of the living greenness of creation,
you showed us that your Spirit resides in all that lives.
When we turn from you
and forget that we are part of your creation,
you call us back to yourself and continue to love us.

For this reason we join with all the people
throughout time and space
who have rejoiced in your greatness by singing:



When the time came for us
to learn of your unfailing love,
you became part of our world in the person of Jesus.
As Jesus lived among us
he taught us of your desire to be close to us.
A desire even greater than the power of death.
When we turned away from all that Jesus tried to teach us,
and crucified him,
he broke the bounds of death
to show us that your love for us cannot die.
In Jesus we have seen your goodness.

On the night before he died,
your son, Jesus Christ, took bread;
when he had given you thanks,
he broke it, gave it to his disciples and said:
Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you;
do this to remember me.

After supper he took the cup;
when he had given you thanks,
he gave it to them and said:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood poured out for you;
do this as often as you drink it to remember me.

Break the bread for free-dom. Pour the wine for jus-tice. Ce-le-brate this
meal for all the world, a meal of faith and hope, God's love, shared among us. 7

As we remember our journey with you through history
we are aware of your living presence here with us now.
As we share this meal
we ask that you send your Holy Spirit
upon this bread and wine,
that it may be for us,
the body and blood of Christ.

As we share this meal,
prepare us for the challenges of the future.
Enable us to live in harmony
with all you have created.
When we overstep our limits
remind us of our place in creation,
and work with us to improve
all aspects of our existence. 8

Blessing and hon-our and glo-ry be Yours, here and
ev-ry-where now and for-ev-er, A-men.

Please be seated.

⁷ Words by Jenny Blood (1932-2022)

⁸ Words by Richard Bonifant

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Kua akona nei tātou e to tātou Ariki, ka inoi tātou:

E tō mātou Matua i te rangi, kia tapu tōu Ingoa.

Kia tae mai tōu rangatiratanga.

**Kia meatia tāu e pai ai ki runga ki te whenua,
kia rite anō ki tō te rangi.**

Hōmai ki a mātou āianeī he taro mā mātou mō tēnei rā.

**Murua ō mātou hara, me mātou hoki e muru nei,
i ō te hunga e hara ana ki a mātou.**

**Aua hoki mātou e kawea kia whakawaia;
engari whakaorangia mātou i te kino:**

**Nōu hoki te rangatiratanga, te kaha, me te korōria,
Āke, ake, ake. Āmine.**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The bread we break is a sharing in the body of Christ.

**We who are many are one body,
for we all share the one bread.**

We sing three times:

A-do-ra-mus te Chris-te, be-ne-di-ci-mus ti-bi,
qui-a per cru-cem tu-am re-de-mi-sti mun-dum
qui-a per cru-cem tu-am re-de-mi-sti mun-dum.

9

⁹ *We adore you, Jesus Christ, and we bless your holy name;
truly your cross and passion bring us life and healing.*

THE INVITATION

Haere mai e te kāhui a te Atua,
tangohia ēnei kai rangatira a te Karaiti.

Come, bringing your varied faiths and backgrounds,
for all are welcome to share in this act of communion.

*All are welcome to come and receive the bread and wine;
there are gluten free wafers, just ask the serving priest.*

*There is a chalice for dipping -
simply hold the bread in front of you to signify your choice.*

*If you do not wish to take communion
you may come forward for a blessing.*

*If the stairs are a barrier please sit in the front pews
and communion will be brought to you.*

Te Taro o te Ora. The bread of life.

Te Kapu o te Ora. The cup of salvation.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

All creatures of our God

William H. Harris (1883-1973)

Pure river of water of life

James Whitbourn

Canticle of Brother Sun

Paul Winter

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Korihi ake ngā manu

The birds call

Tākiri mai te ata

The day begins

Ka ao, ka ao, ka awatea!

And I am alive.

Tihei mauri ora! ¹⁰

BLESSING

May the soil beneath your feet connect you to the earth;
may flowers in bloom connect your senses to the earth;
may butterflies in flight connect your soul to the earth;
and may God, the Creator,
Christ, the Cosmic One,
and the Spirit, the Sustainer,
bless you and connect you deeply to the earth.

Amen. ¹¹

NOTICES

¹⁰ *Patricia and Waiariki Grace, Earth, Sea, Sky: Images and Māori Proverbs from the Natural World of Aotearoa New Zealand*

¹¹ *Norman C. Habel, Seven songs of Creation: liturgies for Celebrating and Healing Earth, adapted*

FINAL HYMN

God of ages, times and seasons,
light that shines through all that lives,
yours the spirit which empowers,
yours the caring heart that gives
confidence to face the future,
strengthens faith when courage wanes,
challenges to new endeavours,
when we doubt, our hope sustains.

God of galaxies and planets
far beyond all human thought,
centuries, like pages turning,
are within your keeping brought.
You, the past that makes our present,
you the future still concealed,
yours the sacrificial giving,
boundless love through Christ revealed.

God, Creator, Holy Spirit,
Word made flesh in Christ, your Son
whose example we would follow
so that all might be as one –
ever loving, ever hopeful
of a world redeemed, restored;
people, by their faith united,
dedicated to their Lord.

God, the Alpha and Omega,
source of wisdom, life and breath,
you our highest motivation,
you the love that conquers death.
In past ages people sought you;
you are with us now as then.
In your hands we leave the future,
God, our ultimate Amen.

Text: Jocelyn Marshall

Tune: Hyfrydol, melody by Rowland Huw Prichard (1811-1887). TiS 217(i)

Deacon from the rear of the Church:

Go now for the Spirit of God is alive in the land.

Amen. We go in the power of love.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

Power of Life

Mons Leidvin Takle

MUSIC NOTES

The anonymous sixteenth-century anthem *Rejoice in the Lord* (formerly attributed to John Redford) is a setting of the fourth chapter of St Paul's letter to the Philippians which forms the Epistle reading for the Fourth Sunday in Advent in the Church of England Book of Common Prayer. The only known source of this anthem is in the Mulliner Book which is held in the British Library. The rhythms in the music make it apparent that the words originally set were from the 1594 Prayer Book. The music - a restrained setting of the words - varies between imitative passages and homophonic sections as, for example, at the words 'Let your softness be known unto all'.

Sicut Cervus, one of the most beloved and perfect of all of Palestrina's motets, sets words from the opening of Psalm 42: "As the deer desires the fountains, so my soul desires You, O God." At the word "desiderat", Palestrina subtly expresses longing through rising, faster paced melismas. *Super flumina Babylonis* is a perfect example of Palestrina's ability to produce a completely unified and well proportioned whole; a series of clearly defined sections each characterizing and expressing the text, gently propelling the words with musical expression. Within Palestrina's calm unfolding there is an enormous confidence and a feeling of strength. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept when we remembered you, Zion: in the willows, in the midst of it, we hung up our harps."

James Whitbourn's anthem *Pure river of life* was composed for the Central Bucks High School-West Chamber Choir, and premiered at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in New Jersey. Whitbourn sets text from Revelation 2, employing a modal language that places overlapping choral textures in antiphonal dialogue. This creates a contrapuntal layering that mirrors flowing water, transitioning from a sparse, homophonic stillness into a more complex polyphony.

We invite you to **keep** this copy of the Service and take it home with you
to share with another member of your family, or with a friend
OR put in a recycling bin provided at the back of the church.

Music for Liturgical responses is by Michael CW Bell.

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