

Service of the Word for Proper 24 in Creation Time

Introduction

Grace and peace to you from God our Creator and the Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Welcome

Opening Responses

In the beginning, before time,
before people, before the world began
God was.

Here and now, among us and beside us,
enlisting the people of earth for the purposes of heaven,
God is.

In the future, when we have turned to dust
and all we know has found its fulfilment,
God will be.

Not denying the world, but delighting in it;
not condemning the world, but redeeming it,
through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit,
God was, God is, God will be.

Hymn

Almighty Father of all things that be

**Almighty Father of all things that be,
our life, our work we consecrate to thee,
whose heavens declare thy glory from above,
whose earth below is witness to thy love.**

**For well we know this weary, fallen earth
is yet thine own by right of its new birth,
since that great cross upreared on Calvary
redeemed it from its fault and shame to thee.**

**Thine still the changeful beauty of the hills,
the purple valleys flecked with silver rills,
the ocean glistening 'neath the golden rays:
they all are thine, and voiceless speak thy praise.**

**Thou dost the strength to worker's arms impart;
from thee the skilled musician's reasoned art,
the grace of poet's pen or painter's hand
to teach the loveliness of sea and land.**

**Then grant us, Lord, in all things thee to own,
to dwell within the shadow of thy throne,
to speak and work, to think and live, and move,
reflecting thine own nature, which is love:**

**That so, by Christ redeemed from sin and shame,
and hallowed by thy Spirit's cleansing flame,
ourselves, our work, and all our powers may be
a sacrifice acceptable to thee.**

*Tune: Farley Castle
Words: E. E. Dugmore*

Confession & Absolution

We give you thanks and praise, O God, for your good creation.
For all that nourishes and sustains life.
We confess that we have fallen short of your glory.

For our waste and pollution of your creation,
and our lack of concern for those who come after us,
Lord, have mercy.

For the wrongs we have done: for our blindness to human need and suffering,
and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,
Christ, have mercy.

For not loving you with our whole heart, mind and strength;
nor loving our neighbours as ourselves,
Lord, have mercy.

Silence

God, who is both power and love,
forgive us and free us from our sins,
heal and strengthen us by his Spirit,
and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Anthem *Parry Long since in Egypt's pleasant land*

Collect

Almighty God, you call your Church to witness that in Christ we are reconciled to you.
Help us so to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may turn to you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Reading Exodus 14.19-31

The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night. Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. At the morning watch the Lord in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, 'Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt.'

Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers.' So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Psalm 114

Alleluia! When Israel came out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange speech, **Judah became God's sanctuary and Israel his dominion.**

The sea beheld it and fled; Jordan turned and went back.

The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like young sheep.

What ailed you, O sea, that you fled? O Jordan, that you turned back?

You mountains, that you skipped like rams? you little hills like young sheep?

Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob.

Who turned the hard rock into a pool of water and flint-stone into a flowing spring.

Reading Romans 14.1-12

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarrelling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgement on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgement on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honour of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honour of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honour of the Lord and give thanks to God.

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

Why do you pass judgement on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgement seat of God. For it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.'

So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Hymn **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 sacrifice 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:**

**For the joy of ear and eye,
For the heart and brain's delight,
For the mystic harmony
Linking sense to sound and sight:**

**For the joy of human love,
Brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth and friends above,
For all gentle thoughts and mild:**

**For each perfect gift of thine,
To our race so freely given,
Graces human and divine,
Flowers of earth and buds of heaven:**

Tune: England's Lane; Words: F. S. Pierpont

Gospel **Matthew 18.21-35**

When it is announced: **Glory to Christ our Saviour.**

Peter came and said to Jesus, 'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.'

'For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything." And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, "Pay what you owe." Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you." But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, "You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?" And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'

At the end: Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious Gospel.
Praise to Christ our Lord.

Sermon The Revd Canon Marion Chatterley, Vice Provost

Anthem Elgar *Sabbath Morning at Sea*

Affirmation of faith

Father, we praise you with all your creatures.
They came forth from your all-powerful hand;
they are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love.

Son of God, Jesus, through you all things were made.
You were formed in the womb of Mary,
You became part of this earth,
and you gazed upon this world with human eyes.
Today you are alive in every creature in your risen glory.

Holy Spirit, by your light you guide this world
towards the Father's love
and accompany creation as it groans in travail.
You dwell in our hearts and inspire us toward what is good.

Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love,
teach us to contemplate you in the beauty of the universe,
for all things speak of you.
Awaken our praise and thankfulness
for every being that you have made.
Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined to everything that is. Amen.

*Adapted from 'A Christian prayer for union with creation'
published in Pope Francis' encyclical, Laudato Si.*

Intercessions

*Prayer is offered for the world and all its people,
particularly for those who suffer and those in need,
and for the Church and its calling.*

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour Christ has commanded and taught us,
we are bold to say:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen

Closing Prayer

May God, who gives seed to the sower and bread for the eater,
give to us all that we need to make us fruitful in mind, body and spirit
that we may produce a rich harvest in faith, love and justice,
to the glory of God's name. **Amen.**

Hymn King of glory, King of Peace

**King of glory, King of peace,
I will love thee;
And that love may never cease,
I will move thee.
Thou hast granted my request,
Thou hast heard me;
Thou didst note my working breast,
Thou hast spared me.**

**Wherefore with my utmost art
I will sing thee,
And the cream of all my heart
I will bring thee.
Though my sins against me cried,
Thou didst clear me;
And alone, when they replied,
Thou didst hear me.**

**Seven whole days, not one in seven,
I will praise thee;
In my heart, though not in heaven,
I can raise thee.
Small it is, in this poor sort
To enrol thee:
E'en eternity's too short
To extol thee.**

Tune: Gwalchmai; Words: G. Herbert

Dismissal

The love of the faithful Creator,
The peace of the wounded Healer,
The joy of the transforming Spirit,
The hope of the Three-in-One
surround, encourage and bless you,
this day and for evermore. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Voluntary