



Creation Season 1: Wilderness Sunday

The 16th Sunday after Pentecost

September 20, 2020 • 10:00 AM

The Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth

*Welcome! This Sunday and the next call us to join in the hymn of all creation – with the wrens and robins, otters and owls, baboons and butterflies, elm trees and pine trees, rice and snow peas, grass and grasshoppers, lava and lake, mountains and seas – all created things everywhere. We are invited to join the communion of all creation to let heaven and nature sing and to let all creation join as one, to praise God's holy name. All together the choir of creation acknowledges God as the inexhaustible source of life and goodness.**



"Let the wilderness lift up its voice." Isaiah 42:11

The people's responses are in bold.

The Entrance Rite

The people stand as able.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

Let all things now living

Let All Things Now Living

1. Let all things now liv - ing A song of thanks - giv - ing
2. His law he en - forc - es, The stars in their cours-es,

To God our Cre - a - tor tri - um - phant - ly raise;
The sun in its or - bit o - be - dient - ly shine,

Who fash - ioned and made us, Pro - tect - ed and stayed us,
The hills and the moun-tains, The riv - ers and foun-tains,

By guid - ing us on to the end of our days.
The depths of the o - cean pro - claim God di - vine.

God's ban - ners are o'er us, Pure light goes be - fore us,
We, too, should be voic - ing Our love and re - joic - ing

A pil - lar of fire shin - ing forth in the night:
With glad ad - o - ra - tion, a song let us raise:

Till shad - ows have van - ished And dark - ness is ban - ished,
Till all things now liv - ing U - nite in thanks-giv - ing,

As for - ward we trav - el from light in - to Light.
To God in the high - est, ho - san - na and praise.

Music: Katharine K. Davis, 1893-1986, © 1956, 1986, E.C. Schirmer Music Co.
Text: ASH GRIMES, 1872-1938; Words, by Gwendolyn Kauffman, 1895-1979

THE OPENING ACCLAMATION

Blessed be the one, holy and living God.

Glory to God forever and ever. Amen.

Christ, we come into your presence today to worship in this sanctuary called Earth,

**A planet filled with your presence, sheltered in the forests, flourishing in the land,
expectant in the wilderness, flowing in the rivers.**

God, reveal yourself to us and show us your face in all creation.

Holy! Holy! Holy! Earth is filled with the Creator's presence.

HYMN OF PRAISE • 412 vss. 1-2

Earth and all stars

The Word of God

THE COLLECT FOR THE DAY

God be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

God, our Creator, whose glory fills our planet, help us to discern your waiting presence among us and our kin in creation, especially in the rocks, the deserts and the wild world of the unsettled places. Lift our spirits to rejoice with your presence nestled among the wilderness. In the name of Christ, who reconciles and renews all things in creation. **Amen.**

(letallcreationpraise.org/united states)

The people are seated.

THE FIRST LESSON: EXODUS (16:2-15)

A reading from the book of Exodus.

The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. The Israelites said to them, “If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

Then the Lord said to Moses, “I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days.” So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, “In the evening you shall know that it was the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and in the morning you shall see the glory of the Lord, because he has heard your complaining against the Lord. For what are we, that you complain against us?” And Moses said, “When the Lord gives you meat to eat in the evening and your fill of bread in the morning, because the Lord has heard the complaining that you utter against him—what are we? Your complaining is not against us but against the Lord.”

Then Moses said to Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, ‘Draw near to the Lord, for he has heard your complaining.’” And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. The Lord spoke to Moses and said, “I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the Lord your God.’”

In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky

substance, as fine as frost on the ground. When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat.

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 105:1-6, 37-45 (*Prayed in unison*)

1 Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name; *
make known his deeds among the peoples.

2 Sing to him, sing praises to him, *
and speak of all his marvelous works.

3 Glory in his holy Name; *
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.

4 Search for the Lord and his strength; *
continually seek his face.

5 Remember the marvels he has done, *
his wonders and the judgments of his mouth,

6 O offspring of Abraham his servant, *
O children of Jacob his chosen.

37 He led out his people with silver and gold; *
in all their tribes there was not one that stumbled.

38 Egypt was glad of their going, *
because they were afraid of them.

39 He spread out a cloud for a covering *
and a fire to give light in the night season.

40 They asked, and quails appeared, *
and he satisfied them with bread from heaven.

41 He opened the rock, and water flowed, *
so the river ran in the dry places.

42. For God remembered his holy word *
and Abraham his servant.

43 So he led forth his people with gladness, *
his chosen with shouts of joy.

44 He gave his people the lands of the nations, *
and they took the fruit of others' toil,

45 That they might keep his statutes *

and observe his laws.

Hallelujah!

THE SECOND READING: Romans 8:18-27

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

The people stand as able at the introduction of the hymn.

HYMN AT THE SEQUENCE • 513

Like the murmur of the dove's song

C.P. Daw, Jr.

1 Like the mur - mur of the dove's song, like the
2 To the mem - bers of Christ's Bo - dy, to the
3 With the heal - ing of di - vi - sion, with the
chal - lenge of her flight, like the vig - or of the
branch - es of the Vine, to the Church in faith as -
cease - less voice of prayer, with the power to love and
wind's rush, like the new flame's ea - ger
sem - bled, to her midst as gift and
wit - ness, with the peace be - yond com - .
might: come, Ho - ly Spi - rit, come.
sign: come, Ho - ly Spi - rit, come.
pare: come, Ho - ly Spi - rit, come.

THE HOLY GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to Matthew (3:13-4:2).

Glory to you, O Christ.

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?’ But Jesus answered him, ‘Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfil all righteousness.’ Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.’ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The people are seated at the invitation of the homilist.

THE HOMILY

A moment for silent reflection follows the homily.

The Rev. Karen A. Calafat

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe that God creates all things, renews all things and celebrates all things.

We believe Earth is a sanctuary, a sacred planet filled with God’s presence,
a home for us to share with our kin.

We believe that God became flesh and blood, became a piece of Earth,
a human being called Jesus Christ,
who lived and breathed and spoke among us,
suffered and died on a cross for all human beings
and for all creation.

We believe that the risen Jesus is the Christ at the core of creation,
reconciling all things to God,
renewing all creation and filling the cosmos.

We believe the Holy Spirit renews life in creation,
groans in empathy with a suffering creation and waits with us for the rebirth of creation.
We believe that with Christ we will rise and with Christ we will celebrate a new creation. +

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Presider 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 around us, and pour your blessing and guidance on our elected officials, and upon the people and organizations working everywhere 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 its inhabitants, and lend us the wisdom and will to conserve them.

God, Giver of life,

Hear our prayer.

Light and 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. *Silence*

God, Giver of life,

Hear our prayer.

Author of the book of nature, receive our gratitude for the places of restoration and healing, and challenge us to sustain the 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 generosity, and make us always thankful for the abundance of your blessings.

God, Giver of life,

Hear our prayer.

Joy of human hearts, heal our human communities, especially those where your word is not heard, or where neglect, violence, greed, and warfare increase the suffering and need of people and other creatures.

God, Giver of life,

Hear our prayer.

Comforter of all the earth, sustain the people worshiping together today and all who desire and need your presence and help, especially _____. (*The people may add their petitions.*)

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.

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.**

(source: *Native American/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Liturgies, prepared for the 76th General Convention of the Episcopal Church, July 2009, Anaheim, California*)

THE CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Let us pray also for the forgiveness of our sins.

Have mercy upon us, most merciful God;
in your compassion forgive us our sins,
known and unknown,
things done and left undone;
and so uphold us by your Spirit
that we may live and serve you in newness of life,
to the honor and glory of your Name;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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.**

Presider And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, together we pray,
All **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, and the power,
 and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE PEACE

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

THE BLESSING

Live without fear: your Creator has made you holy, has always protected you, and loves you as a mother.
Go in peace to follow the good road and may God's blessing be with you always. **Amen. (Saint Clare)**

THE DISMISSAL

In the name of Christ go in peace, rejoicing in the good gifts of the Creator. Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

*The Season of Creation: A Preaching Commentary (Habel, Rhoads, and Santmire, eds., Fortress Press) 2011

Wilderness Sunday: Resources and Actions

Today, about 235 million acres of land in the U.S. have been permanently protected as wilderness, parks, refuges or other protected areas. But that's only a third of our public lands. And about 100 million acres of pristine wildlands are still at risk. If we don't protect these last remaining wild places now, they could be lost forever. How can I help?

1. Educate yourself about the wilderness.

Become familiar with what “wilderness” is and where protected wilderness areas are. Information about the 758 wildernesses that make up the National Wilderness Preservation System is available in a searchable format in the Wilderness Area Database, at www.wilderness.net Use it to find wilderness areas by name, agency, state, size or year of enacting legislation. Sign up for WildAlerts to stay up to date on opportunities to help save wilderness at <http://action.wilderness.org>

2. Leave no trace of your presence in the wilderness.

Pick up your trash...and everybody else's! Use existing trails and don't take shortcuts. Even a relatively small amount of trampling caused by the footsteps of hikers and pack stock can cause substantial impact, killing plants, compacting soil, and increasing erosion. Be aware of campfire policies and use common sense. Campfires sterilize soil, making it critically important to confine fires to existing fire rings or, in some cases, to prohibit campfires. Wood collection for campfires also depletes woody debris that serves to nurture new vegetation growth in and around campsites. Wilderness visitors can directly disturb wildlife, either intentionally, through hunting, trapping, fishing or fish stocking, for example, or unintentionally. Trash (including food) and habitat modification, such as firewood collection, can affect small mammals and bird populations by changing food sources and shelter options. Off-season use of wilderness can be particularly taxing for wildlife. Several studies, for example, have documented elk disturbance in winter by cross-country skiers—something seemingly benign!

3. Be aware of invasive species and do your part to contain/eliminate them.

Invasive species are invading and destroying native species in wilderness areas all across the country. Learn what invasive species are in your area and what is being done about them. Since invasive species and plants can easily get transported in mud and dirt, always remember to clean the dirt out of your hiking boots and off of your vehicle, boat and trailer before you leave an area. Don't dump live bait into waterways. Remove invasive plants from your land. Care for aquarium fish and other pets properly so that they don't become invasive. Volunteer for organized efforts to remove invasive species from natural areas.

4. Volunteer/Get Involved

Support non-profit organizations that work with wilderness issues. Check with your local land management agency office to see what stewardship or volunteer projects you can become involved in. You can also get involved with any of the many organizations involved in wilderness preservation and stewardship. A good list of organizations can be found at <http://www.wilderness.net/> Be aware of development threats. Each day, thousands of acres of our wild places are lost to development. Find out what areas are in danger in your own community and across the country and express your concern to local officials and developers. Only Congress can designate wilderness. However, anyone can recommend wilderness to their elected representatives in Congress. Once recommended to Congress, both the House and the Senate must agree on which areas should be designated and their exact boundaries. After the House and Senate agree, the proposal is forwarded to the president to sign into

law or veto. So let your political representatives know if you think something needs to be done!

5. Remember that wilderness is vulnerable to threats from inside and outside its boundaries.

The decisions and choices you make every day affect wilderness, whether you live nearby or not. Will you use more or less energy? Will you create more or less waste? Will you protect our air and water from pollution? Small actions by individuals can make a huge difference!