



**The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost:
The First Sunday in the Season of Creation**

September 6, 2026

10:30 a.m.

The Holy Eucharist

**A Reading from *Environment as the Responsibility of All*,
Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew**

Bartholomew (b. 1940) is the 270th Archbishop of Constantinople and Ecumenical Patriarch, regarded as first among equals in the Eastern Orthodox Church. His efforts to promote religious freedom and human rights, his initiatives to advance religious tolerance among the world's religions, as well as his efforts to promote ecology and the protection of the environment, have earned him the title "The Green Patriarch".

"Unfortunately, humanity has lost the liturgical relationship between the Creator God and the Creation; instead of priests and stewards, human beings have been reduced to tyrants and abusers of nature.

"It is crucial, then, that we recognize and respond to the interconnection and interdependence between caring for the poor and caring for the earth. They are two sides of one and the same coin. Indeed, the way that we treat those who are suffering is reflected in the way that we approach the ecological crisis. And both of these in turn mirror the way that we perceive the divine mystery in all people and things, the way that we kneel in prayer before the living God."

For Reflection:

How are caring for the earth and caring for the poor "two sides of the same coin"?

Visiting today? Turn to page 1 for helpful information.

Welcome to St. John's Episcopal Church

We are glad you are here. If you are seeking a place to explore your faith, we invite you to make St. John's your spiritual home. Please complete a visitor card, found in your pew, and place it in the offering plate to receive our weekly email. You may also provide your information to our greeter as you exit the church. We hope that you will join us in the Parish Hall immediately following the service for coffee hour. We are eager to get to know you and to tell you about the life of our community.

If you are new to us today and have questions about our worship, please ask our ushers or one of our members in the pews. Here is some information to assist you:

The Book of Common Prayer is red.

The Hymnal is blue. Numbers preceded by "S" are in the front of the hymnal.

Food and Beverage We thank you for not eating or drinking in the church.

Nursery care is available in the Parish Hall. Your infants and toddlers are welcome to stay in the nursery during the church service.

Children's Chapel is available in the Parish Hall for school-aged children during the first half of the service. Participants will join us during the announcements so that they can participate in the Eucharist.

Restrooms are located in the Parish Hall.

Prayers at the East Altar For individual prayers, meet Deacon Peggy Newman at the East Altar after the service. You may also submit your prayers in writing by filling out the prayer request form at the back of your bulletin and putting it in the offering plate. Peggy will offer these prayers before she leaves the church each Sunday.

Food and Fellowship Please join us for fellowship in the Parish Hall after the service. We especially welcome those of you who are visiting today. We are eager to get to know you and would love to tell you more about the St. John's community.

We livestream worship on YouTube for our online community. We hope that by offering an option for online worship, those who are not able to come to church will feel connected.

Please Remember to Wear a Name Tag

Name tags are available from an usher; please wear one so that we can warmly welcome visitors and newcomers.

Make a Gift to St. John's Church



The Word of God

Silent Reflection *This is a holy time and place. Please prepare for worship before and during the prelude in silence so others may do the same.*

Ring of Church Bell and Welcome

Prelude

Processional "Morning has broken"

Hymnal 8

Opening Acclamation

Celebrant Blessed be the One who creates all things.

People *The Holy One's love is new every morning.*

Collect for Purity

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Gloria

Hymnal S 280

Salutation

Celebrant The Creator be with you.

People *And also with you.*

Celebrant Let us pray.

The Creation Collect of the Day (Proper 18)

Grant us, O Lord, to trust in you with all our hearts; for, as you always resist the powerful who oppress and dominate Creation, so you never forsake your creatures who live in harmony with nature's order; through Jesus Christ the Wisdom of Creation, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The First Reading

Exodus 12:1-14

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbor in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. This is how

you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the passover of the LORD. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

Lector Hear what the Spirit is saying to all God's Creation.

People ***Thanks be to God.***

The Response

We will read the passage responsively by half verse.

Psalm 149

Cantate Domino

1 Hallelujah!

Sing to the LORD a new song; *

sing his praise in the congregation of the faithful.

2 Let Israel rejoice in his Maker; *

let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

3 Let them praise his Name in the dance; *

let them sing praise to him with timbrel and harp.

4 For the LORD takes pleasure in his people *

and adorns the poor with victory.

5 Let the faithful rejoice in triumph; *

let them be joyful on their beds.

6 Let the praises of God be in their throat *

and a two-edged sword in their hand;

7 To wreak vengeance on the nations *

and punishment on the peoples;

8 To bind their kings in chains *

and their nobles with links of iron;

9 To inflict on them the judgment decreed; *

this is glory for all his faithful people.

Hallelujah!

The Second Reading

Romans 13:8-14

Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in

debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Lector Hear what the Spirit is saying to all God's Creation.

People Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are able.

Sequence Hymn "Blessed Jesus, at thy word"

Hymnal 440

Remain standing.

The Holy Gospel

Matthew 18:15-20

Minister The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus said, "If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

Minister The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Sermon

The Rev. Anthony Gaboton, Jr.

The Nicene Creed *Please stand.*

BCP 358

The Prayers of the People

from *Honoring God in Creation*

Blessed God, whose love calls the whole Creation into covenant with you, and who puts in our hands responsibility for the care of the earth and its creatures: we pray for all to whom you have given life and being, saying, "Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace."

For the well-being of the earth; for its resources of water, air, light, and soil, that they may be tended for the good of all creatures, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the waters of the earth; for their careful use and conservation, that we may have the will and the ability to keep them clean and pure, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the mineral and energy resources of the planet, that we may learn sustainable consumption and sound care of the environment from which they come, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the animals of the earth, wild and domestic, large and very small, that they may know the

harmony of relationship that sustains all life, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the creatures of the earth who do us harm and those whose place in your Creation we do not understand or welcome, that we may see them as beloved creatures of God, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For all who shape public policies affecting the planet and its creatures, that they may consider wisely the well-being of all who come after us, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For all those engaged in conservation, in agriculture and ranching, in aquaculture and fishing, in mining and industry, and in forestry and timber-harvesting, that the health, fruitfulness, and beauty of the natural world may be sustained alongside human activity, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the creatures and the human beings of your world who are ill, or in danger, pain, or special need, especially Samantha, Stuart and Noa, Brett, Ellen, Theresa, Jane, Louise, Sandi, Peggy, Claudia, Sherry, Bill, Eileen, Phinella, Amelie, and for all who suffer from the unjust, violent, or wasteful use of the earth's resources or their devastation by war, that all may one day live in communities of justice and peace, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the gifts of science and technology and for those who practice these skills, that they may be wise, visionary, and compassionate in their work, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

For the creatures and the people of the earth whose lives and deaths have contributed to the fruitful abundance of this planet, especially for Dolly Parton and Wendell Berry, who died recently, we pray:

Merciful God, keep your planet and people in peace.

The Celebrant concludes the Prayers with the following collect:

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 remembering the account that we must give one day, grant that we may be faithful stewards of your good gifts; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Confession of Sin

The Celebrant says

Let us confess our sins against God and God's Creation.

*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.*

Absolution

The Peace

All stand.

Celebrant The God of heaven has made a home on earth.

People *Christ dwells among us and is one with us.*

Announcements

The Offertory Sentence

Offertory Music

The Presentation Hymn "All creatures of our God and King" (verse 7)

Hymnal 400

The Eucharistic Prayer

*The liturgy is adapted from Season of Creation: A Celebration Guide for Episcopal Parishes (Perennial Edition, 2025)
and from Enriching Our Worship 1.*

The Sursum Corda

Celebrant The Creator be with you.

People *And also with you.*

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People *We lift them to the Creator.*

Celebrant Let us give thanks to our loving God.

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

Celebrant

We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious God,
source of life abundant.

From before time you made ready the Creation.

Your Spirit moved over the deep
and brought all things into being:

sun, moon, and stars;

earth, winds, and waters;

and every living thing.

You made us in your image,

and taught us to walk in your ways.

But we rebelled against you, and wandered far away;
and yet, as a mother cares for her children,

you would not forget us.
Time and again you called us
to live in the fullness of your love.

And so this day we join with Saints and Angels
in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity,
lifting our voices to magnify you as we sing:

The Sanctus *All sing.*

Hymnal S 128

The musical score for 'The Sanctus' is written on five staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is composed of eighth and quarter notes, with some measures containing rests. The lyrics 'Ho - ly, ho - ly,' are placed below the first staff. The second staff continues the melody with the lyrics 'ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,'. The third staff has the lyrics 'heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho-san-na in the'. The fourth staff has the lyrics 'high - est. Bless - ed is he who'. The fifth staff concludes the piece with the lyrics 'comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high-est.' and ends with a double bar line.

Ho - ly, ho - ly,
ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho-san-na in the
high - est. Bless - ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high-est.

Music: William Mathias (1934-1992). Copyright © 1976 Oxford University Press.

The Celebrant continues

Glory and honor and praise to you, holy and living God.
To deliver us from the power of sin and death
and to reveal the riches of your grace,
you looked with favor upon Mary, your willing servant,
that she might conceive and bear a son,
Jesus the holy child of God.
Living among us, Jesus loved us.
He broke bread with outcasts and sinners,
healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor.
He yearned to draw all the world to himself
yet we were heedless of his call to walk in love.
Then, the time came for him to complete upon the cross
the sacrifice of his life,
and to be glorified by you.

On the night before he died for us,
Jesus was at table with his friends.
He took bread, gave thanks to you,
broke it, and gave it to them, and said:
“Take, eat:
This is my Body, which is given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.”

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine.
Again, he gave thanks to you,
gave it to them, and said:
“Drink this, all of you:
This is my Blood of the new Covenant,
which is poured out for you and for all
for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it,
do this for the remembrance of me.”

Now gathered at your table, O God of all Creation,
and remembering Christ, crucified and risen,
who was and is and is to come,
we offer to you our gifts of bread and wine,
and ourselves, a living sacrifice.

Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts
that they may be the Body and Blood of Christ.
Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth
and make us your new creation,
the Body of Christ given for the world you have made.

In the fullness of time bring us,
with St. John and all your saints,
from every tribe and language and people and nation,
to feast at the banquet prepared
from the foundation of the world.
Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
to you be honor, glory, and praise,
for ever and ever.

The Great Amen

Hymnal S 146



Music: McNeil Robinson II (b. 1943). Copyright © 1984 Theodore Presser Co. Used by permission.

The Lord's Prayer

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

People and Celebrant

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 Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated bread.

Fraction Anthem

Hymnal S 164

The musical score for the Fraction Anthem is written for voice and piano. It consists of four systems of music, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#), indicating G major. The tempo and meter are not explicitly stated, but the notation suggests a moderate, steady pace. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

Je - sus, Lamb of God: have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, bear - er of our sins: have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, re - deem - er, re - deem - er of the world:

give us your peace, give us your peace.

Celebrant This is Living Bread, given for all Creation.
People *All who eat this bread share in Christ's Body.*

Please sit or kneel. All are welcome at Christ's table. *To receive wine from the chalice, please go to the right at the communion rail. To receive wine through intinction, go to the left; a member of the clergy will dip your wafer in the intinction cup and hand it to you.* To take just the wafer or to receive only a blessing, please go to the right. To receive a blessing, cross your arms over your chest. *Gluten free wafers are available upon request.* If you prefer communion be brought to you in your pew, let the usher know.

Communion Hymn "Lord, make us servants of your peace"

Hymnal 593

Postcommunion Prayer

People and Celebrant

*Loving God,
we give you thanks
for restoring us in your image
and nourishing us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood.
Now send us forth
a people, forgiven, healed, renewed;
that we may proclaim your love to the world
and continue in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.*

Blessing

Go forth now to care for God's world.
Use resources wisely. Share your knowledge. Sacrifice where necessary.
Live in harmony with all Creation.
Go out into all the world as prophets of a new way of living and preach the good news to all.
And the blessing of the Creator God, the Risen Son, and the Promised Holy Spirit bless you
that you might be a blessing to others today and always. *Amen.*

Recessional "Joyful, joyful, we adore thee"

Hymnal 376

Dismissal

Minister Tend the earth,
care for God's good Creation;
as you have received freely,
so give freely.
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People *Thanks be to God.*

Postlude

Our Mission

We are a caring, spiritual community, joyfully embracing and nurturing all;
serving God, each other, and the community.

Land Acknowledgment

Please join us in acknowledging and honoring the Indigenous peoples who are the original inhabitants of the land on which St. John's Church now stands: the Chickahominy, Eastern Chickahominy, Mattaponi, Monacan, Nansemond, Nottoway, Pamunkey, Patawomeck, Powhatan, Upper Mattaponi, and Rappahannock tribes. We give thanks for them and express our gratitude for their witness on how to live a life that is honorable and humble. May we always remember that the Earth does not belong us: that we belong the Earth and that we are all relatives in life. Help us to learn from our past mistakes and to be instruments of justice and peace for all people in today's world, particularly the original Indigenous inhabitants.

Prayer for St. John's Church

O God, creator of life and giver of gladness, let us be your Beacon on the Hill, shining your light so brightly that others may come to know you, to love, and to be loved. Help us to reach out to those around us, bearing fruit through acts of kindness, welcome, and fellowship. Amen.

Serving this Morning

Celebrant	The Rev. Gregory Bezilla
Preacher	The Rev. Anthony Gaboton, Jr.
Pianist	Natan Berenshteyn
LEM	Reeves McCune
Acolyte	Bert Hillier
Lectors	Chad Doeblor, Vevlyn Wright, and Raymond Elmore
Ushers	Kathleen Burden and Cheryl DePodesta
Greeter	Kathleen Burden
Tellers	Reeves McCune and Chad Doeblor
Videographer	Grace Downard
Sound Tech	John King
Altar Guild	Kathy Dixon, Lisa Wood, and Marsha Little
Children's Minister	The Rev. Deacon Maureen-Elizabeth Hagen
Nursery Attendants	Quanta Barnes and Katy Miles

*Thank you for disposing of your bulletin and insert in the recycling receptacle
if you do not intend to take them with you.*

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The Rt. Rev. Gayle Harris, *Assistant Bishop*

The Rt. Rev. Mark A. Bourlakas, *Assistant Bishop*

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