

**The Rectorial Benefice of the East Vale  
Morning Prayer  
Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2021 | Creation Sunday**

**Hymn**

**Thou, whose almighty word  
chaos and darkness heard,  
and took their flight;  
hear us, we humbly pray,  
and, where the Gospel day  
sheds not its glorious ray,  
let there be light!**

**Thou who didst come to bring  
on thy redeeming wing  
healing and sight,  
health to the sick in mind,  
sight to the in-ly blind,  
now to all mankind,  
let there be light!**

**Spirit of truth and love,  
life-giving holy Dove,  
speed forth thy flight!  
Move o'er the waters' face  
bearing the lamp of grace,  
and, in earth's darkest place,  
let there be light!**

**Blessed and Holy Three,  
glorious Trinity,  
Wisdom, Love, Might;  
boundless as ocean's tide,  
rolling in fullest pride,  
through the world far and wide,  
let there be light!**

**The Collect**

Almighty God, you have created the heavens and the earth and made us in your own image: teach us to discern your hand in all your works and your likeness in all your children; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

*First Reading* (Proverbs 8: 1, 22-31)

A reading from the book of the Book of Proverbs.

Does not wisdom call, and does not understanding raise her voice?

The Lord created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of long ago. Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. When there were

no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth – when he had not yet made earth and fields, or the world's first bits of soil. When he established the heavens, I was there, when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him, like a master worker; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the human race

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Responsorial Psalm* (104: 24-35)

**R:/ I will sing to the Lord as long as I live.**

O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. There is the sea, spread far and wide, and there move creatures beyond number, both small and great. There go the ships, and there is that Leviathan which you have made to play in the deep. **R:/**

All of these look to you to give them their food in due season. When you give it them, they gather it; you open your hand, and they are filled with good. **R:/**

When you hide your face, they are troubled; when you take away their breath, they die and return again to the dust. When you send forth your spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth. **R:/**

May the glory of the Lord endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in his works; he looks on the earth and it trembles; he touches the mountains, and they smoke. **R:/**

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will make music to my God while I have my being. So shall my song please him while I rejoice in the Lord. Let sinners be consumed out of the earth and the wicked be no more. **R:/**

*Second Reading* (Colossians 1.15-20)

A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Colossians

Christ Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers – all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to

reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

This is the word of the Lord  
**Thanks be to God**

*The Gospel*

*(John 1: 1-14)*

**Alleluia! Alleluia!**  
**Give thanks to the risen Lord.**  
**Alleluia! Alleluia!**  
**Give praise to his name.**

**God has proclaimed the just reward:**  
**‘Life for all men, alleluia!’**  
**Alleluia! Alleluia!...**

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

Listen to the gospel of Christ according to St John.  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Come, let us praise the living God,**  
**joyfully sing to our Saviour.**  
**Alleluia! Alleluia!...**

**The Homily**

**Rev Angela**

This Sunday is designated Creation Sunday in the Church in Wales Lectionary; a time when we think about and give thanks for God's creation and recognise that all people are made in God's image.

You may, like me, think why we are not reading the creation story today; maybe you raised your eyebrows, that so soon after Christmas we are reading again the famous start of John's gospel. However, if we put John's prologue together with the reading from Colossians, we get the message that Jesus is the person and revelation of the one true God and through him the creator made all things. Then if we turn to the text from Proverbs, we read about Wisdom, the down to earth character who is said to be Yahweh's handmaid and personal agent in creation; "*The Lord created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts long ago*" All these texts take us back to the beginning of creation, or even a little before that, they take us to the point when the breath of God breathed life and light into the darkness of the void. For me on Creation Sunday there are two aspects to consider; firstly, our care and stewardship for God's creation and secondly our care for other human beings, recognising that we are all made in God image.

The bible account of Creation is like God painting a picture, creating an image of a perfect world. It seems like God finishes one part and stands back like an artist would and looks at the picture and nods to himself and say that's good 6 times and on the 7<sup>th</sup> time he says the words 'indeed it was very good'. God was not just generous with his gifts of creation, but he was also very pleased with the end result. Then God gave humankind dominion over all creation and I think there lies the problem because the word dominion can translate to some as power, selfishness and greed. This brings us to current times when our planet is changing and not in a good way; the reason for this is because of the human need for power and greed and we are not being responsible but using creation for our own gain. We do today find ourselves actually experiencing and feeling the effects of Climate Change, causing unusual and terrible weather situations - storms, flooding, destructive winds; sea-levels rising because of melting ice caps; temperature rises in seas and air because of greenhouse gases; countries suffering from droughts and others with wildfires – it's difficult to ignore this lack of respect for all aspects of creation. We started to take responsibility for our world for future generations, in small ways, like stopping using single use plastics or trying to conserve energy by thinking of electric cars or using more public transport. I hope that the focus will soon go back to these issues after the pandemic.

The world pandemic, I believe, has changed our focus, making our world a smaller place; bringing our focus on ourselves, our family, and our local community. A friend said to me the other day that she had just pulled the shutters down and was just focusing on getting her own family through this time. I think that is a very natural thing to do, to move our focus to our closer situation and a great many good works have been done within our communities. Even the news we hear seems narrow at the moment, it only seems to include the CoVid statistics and situation in the UK, the US elections and the EU deal, our focus has become narrowed. However, I feel that these readings ask us just for a moment to look further afield to widen our gaze to the whole of creation. It is calling us to see how our fellow human beings are getting on across the world. In these last 12 months we have seen injustice around the world, we have seen violence, we have seen poverty and social injustice in our own country. We have also seen people standing up for what is right, campaigns for Real Living Wages in the UK, Black Lives Matter protests and campaign against racial injustice across the world and Climate Change protests. Sometimes we may feel that protests are not the right way to bring about change but these people are desperate to make change and like us are made in God's image. Every human being deserves love and respect, whatever their race, age, social standings, sexuality, ability or religion; we are called by the word made flesh to love one another as God loved us. All these things work together for the bringing in of God's Kingdom in this world.

So, what can we do on this Creation Sunday what is our call as Christians?

I'd like to end today with quote from Amanda Gorman the American poet laureate who spoke so eloquently at the inauguration of Joe Biden. If you didn't hear her spoken word poem called 'The Hill to Climb' please, try to watch it on YouTube. It was significant for me and I have listened to it many times. I'd like to just end with one quote from the very end on the poem.

“There is always light,  
if only we're brave enough to see it.  
If only we're brave enough to be it.”

**Amanda Gorman**

### ***For the Beauty of the Earth***

*John Rutter, The Cambridge Singers, Sinfonia  
(Requested by Julie Davies)*

### **Hymn**

**Breathe on me, Breath of God  
fill me with life anew,  
that I may love what thou dost love,  
and do what thou wouldst do.**

**Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
until my heart is pure;  
until with thee I will one will,  
to do and to endure.**

**Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
till I am wholly thine;  
until this earthly part of me  
glows with thy fire divine.**

**Breathe on me, Breath of God:  
so shall I never die,  
but live with thee the perfect life  
of thine eternity.**

### **The Intercessions**

Creator God, you made our world and created us in your image to show your love to all creation. Sure, in the promise that you hear us when we pray in faith, we offer our prayers today.

In the beginning, your creating will, O God brought all that there is into being. In your gift we find our purpose and hope. We pray for June our Bishop, for Carin the Bishop of Uppsala and for all who minister within the dioceses. We pray that we all maybe guided by your spirit to proclaim the joyful story of your gospel We Swedish cycle of prayer we pray for all community shops and businesses both in Lagunda parish and our own Ministry Area.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Creator God, we pray for our world that you may strength us to be true stewards of your creation and that we may act with honesty and justice in all our relationships. We pray for world leaders that they may work to promote and alleviate the effects of climate change. We pray for those organisations that work in the areas of climate change and all relief agencies that work in areas of war and natural disaster.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Father, grant us a glimpse of your glory in our homes, let us see a reflection of your love in the love in our families. As we are loved and cared for, help us to care

for all who are in need. May we see your image in all that we meet.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Creator God, strength us in times of frailty. Give courage to all who are ill, whose sickness finds no cure and all who are afraid or anxious this day. We remember before you all those known to us who need our prayers..... We pray for all who care for them at home or in hospital.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Creator God, we give thanks for those who are now where sorrow and pain are no more; we rejoice in the fellowship of your saints and commend to your almighty all who have died this week..... our loved ones departed and all whose anniversary occurs at this time. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Creator God, in a moment of silence we offer our own personal prayers and petitions.

**Merciful Father accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

### **Hymn**

**You shall go out with joy  
and be led forth with peace,  
and the mountains and the hills  
shall break forth before you.  
There'll be shouts of joy,  
and the trees of the field shall clap,  
shall clap their hands.  
And the trees of the field  
shall clap their hands,  
the trees of the field  
shall clap their hands,  
the trees of the field  
shall clap their hands  
and you'll go out with joy.  
(repeat 3x)**



### **Prayers for the sick this week**

Elizabeth Thomas  
Kath Loughor  
Eunice Wood  
Catherine Brynach  
Margaret Price  
Stephen Gray  
Brendan  
Barbara Goodway  
Shirley Gwilliam

Betty Hicks  
Colin Bailey  
Sophie Sabit  
Helen  
Kevin Hurst  
Orla Elizabeth O'Grady  
Lorna Powell

### **Hymn Requests**

If you have any hymn requests for our Zoom worship please send them to one of the clergy team. We will do our best to put requests into our services over the next few weeks.

### **Bible Study Group**

If you would like a link to our Bible Study Group which meets on Wednesdays 6-7pm the next session will be on the 17<sup>th</sup> February, please email Rev Angela at [angelacooper03@gmail.com](mailto:angelacooper03@gmail.com).

It is a very friendly informal group and is open to all.

### **Children's Saturday Club**

Just a reminder that we are still running a Children's club on Zoom every Saturday at 10am during term time. If you would like to join or know a family that might want to join, please email Rev Angela at [angelacooper03@gmail.com](mailto:angelacooper03@gmail.com)