

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Weekly Update

September 10- September 16



276 Church Street, Montrose, PA 18801


Office 570-278-2954, Monday-Thursday 8:15am-3:00pm

Click on link to email St. Paul's: stpaulsmontrose@epix.net

Click on link to go to our Website: <http://stpaulschurchmontrose.org>

Click on link to go to our Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/stpaulsmontrose>

To proclaim God's love by word and example and to seek Christ in one another.

In person worship or you can watch live streamed on YouTube. Go to St. Paul's website <http://stpaulschurchmontrose.org> and click this red button  on the front page, which takes you to our YouTube page.



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Church Closures

Please turn your radio dial to WPEL 96.5 FM. We will announce any closure of our church service on that station.

View from the Pulpit:

This past July, I participated in the Episcopal Church's "It's All About Love" Revival. There were three themes for the event: Evangelism, Racial Justice, and Climate Care. Participants could focus on one area or participate in all three. I wish that we had more time so that I could have been able to attend more Climate Care sessions. We in the church need to consider and practice all three because they are all important.

Last week, Hurricane Idalia landed in southwestern Florida making her way to Georgia and the Carolina coastal region. Two weeks ago, after nearly a century of the absence of hurricanes, Hurricane Hilary hit the California Baja in Mexico and a year's worth of rain fell on Los Angeles in one day. The week prior, we watched in horror as fire devastated Hawai'i. July 2023 was clocked by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) as the hottest month on record ever since 1880. "Global climate change is not a future problem. Changes to Earth's climate driven by increased human emissions of heat-trapping greenhouse gases are already having widespread effects on the environment: glaciers and ice sheets are shrinking, river and lake ice is breaking up earlier, plant and animal geographic ranges are shifting, and plants and trees are blooming sooner." (1)

With each passing year, we see more changes, and the evidence becomes clearer and clearer that our planet is in crisis. I believe that climate change is the most important issue of our time. Climate change affects us all. As climate changes other problems will still exist, and they will be impacted by it.

At the 80th General Convention of the Episcopal Church in 2022, climate change was recognized as "an all-encompassing social crisis and moral emergency that impacts and interconnects every aspect of pastoral concern including health, poverty, employment, racism, social justice, and family life and that can only be addressed by a Great Work involving every sector of society, including the Church."

In seminary, I studied Pope Francis's 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si*. In it he says, "the human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together; we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to the causes related to human and social degradation" (LS 48). Pope Francis recently announced that he is writing a second part to *Laudato Si*. The Holy See Press Office director, Matteo Bruni, confirmed to the Catholic News Agency on Aug. 21 that "the pope is working on a letter updating *Laudato Si*' with regard to the recent environmental crises." The update is due for release on October 4, 2023, in correlation with the conclusion of The Season of Creation.

The Season of Creation, began on Sept. 1. During this time we are to reflect on God's act of creation and be intentional about how we think about and act on the issues of climate change and caring for others. The Season of Creation is an ecumenical observance is bookended by two important dates – it begins on the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation and concludes on the feast of St. Francis, who is revered for his love of all creation.

Delia Heck, a member of The Episcopal Church's Task Force on Care of Creation and Environmental Racism has said that people increasingly are aware of the damaging effects of climate change, including the recent deadly fire on Maui, and those events point to how actions affect others. "When we look at issues of sustainability, what does loving your neighbor look like?" she said. "How is that lived out in a world with increasing disasters from extreme weather?" (2)

<https://climate.nasa.gov/effects/#:~:text=Changes%20to%20Earth's%20climate%20driven,plants%20and%20trees%20are%20blooming> (1)

We as Christians are called by virtue of our baptism to care for God’s creation and by observing the Season of Creation, we may become more mindful of how we embody Jesus as his hands and feet in the world God so loves, caring for all of God’s creatures.

If we are serious about this work, young people will notice. They are passionate about this, and our demonstration of caring for the future of the planet and our willingness to be honest about it and work with their concerns in a framework of love and mercy and grace will be an inspiration to them.

(2) <https://www.episcopalnewsservice.org/2023/08/30/season-of-creation-emphasizes-creation-care-as-a-way-for-episcopalians-to-care-for-neighbors/>

The Season of Creation is a time to renew our relationship with our Creator and all creation through celebration, conversion, and commitment together. Throughout the month-long celebration, the world’s 2.2 billion Christians come together to care for our common home.

Each year, the Season of Creation has a different theme. The theme for 2023 is Let Justice and Peace Flow.

This year’s resources for the Episcopal Church teach us:

“The Prophet Amos cries out: “But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!” (Amos 5:24) and so we are called to join the river of justice and peace, to take up climate and ecological justice, and to speak out with and for communities most impacted by climate injustice and the loss of biodiversity. As the people of God, we must work together on behalf of all Creation, as part of that mighty river of peace and justice. The symbol for 2023 is a mighty river. Biodiversity is being lost at a rate not seen since the last mass extinction. The futures of young people are threatened by the cascading impacts of the loss of biodiversity and a changing climate. The urgency grows and we must make visible peace with Earth and on Earth, at the same time that justice calls us to repentance and a change of attitude and actions. As we join the river of justice and peace with others then hope is created instead of despair.”

Listen carefully, I am about to do a new thing, now it will spring forth; will you not be aware of it? I will even put a road in the wilderness, rivers in the desert. Isaiah 43:19

During this season, Christians are urged to recognize the theological centrality of God the Creator, Creation itself, the human vocation of caring for Creation, and doing justice on behalf of the Earth and all of her inhabitants. Included in this year’s resources is a “Creation Care Theology Primer” adapted from Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, “Preaching When Life Depends on It: Climate Crisis and Gospel Hope,” Anglican Theological Review (Spring, 2021, Vol. 103, 2), 208–219. This primer gives an excellent overview of how we as Christians can (and must) better understand the theological implications of creation care and why it is important to observe the Season of Creation this month.

A Creation Care Theology Primer

Why is it important to mark the Season of Creation?

- Because of the urgency of climate and ecological crisis and the need for a bold, prophetic response.
- Because of our Gospel call to grow in faith as we affirm that God in Christ loves, redeems, and sustains the whole of Creation, not only human beings.

What is the urgency of climate and ecological crisis?

“We’ve changed the planet, changed it in large and fundamental ways. Our old familiar globe is suddenly melting, drying, acidifying, flooding, and burning in ways that no human has ever seen.” — Bill McKibben
Because of the relentless burning of fossil fuels and deforestation, the world’s climate has become disrupted and unstable. The web of life is unraveling before our eyes. Human society is at risk of collapse within decades along with mass extinctions of species and forced migrations.

- Over the last fifty years, 60% of the planet’s mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, and fish have been wiped out by human land development and habitat destruction.
- More than 1 million species are on the way to extinction. Oceans are acidifying and warming, and living fish are being displaced with dead plastic.
- Sea levels are rising, coral reefs dying, and ecosystems collapsing.
- Record-breaking and intensifying weather patterns are increasing deadly droughts, floods, storms, and heat.
- Food supply disruption due to weather events, water shortages, and unpredictable seasons will increase, leading to mass starvation events.

What is our Gospel call to grow in faith? What does Christianity have to do with ecology?

- God the Creator pronounced the world “very good” (Gen. 1:31), and gave humans the task to “till and keep” the Earth (Gen. 2:15) as stewards and caregivers rather than owners (Ps. 24:1).
- Christian saints, including the prophets, Jesus, and many of our mystics, including the Desert Fathers and Saint Francis, lived in close relationship with Creation. As Saint Paul wrote (Rom. 1:20), humanity encounters and dwells with God through the natural world.
- Destruction of nature is a sign of estrangement from God: “There is no knowledge of God in the land. Therefore the land mourns, and all who live in it languish; together with the wild animals and the birds of the air, even the fish of the sea are perishing,” Hos. 4:1b, 3; “Hurt not the earth, neither the sea nor the trees,” Rev. 7:3.
- The Paschal mystery includes all of Creation: everything has been redeemed in the work of Jesus Christ, the Word through whom all things were made (Jhn. 1:3). 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, making peace by the blood of his cross” (Col. 1:19-20; c.f. Eph. 1:10, 2 Cor. 5:19). Creation is thus made new (Rev. 21:5).
- Jesus said that loving our neighbors is like unto loving God. Our neighbors include people of the Third World who now face the worst effects of the crisis built by the First World; climate refugees; low-wealth and minority communities, which are hurt first and hardest by the changing climate as social justice is inextricably linked to ecological justice; and future generations who depend on us to leave them a habitable world. God’s “everlasting covenant” is with “every living creature” (Gen. 9:8-17)— they, too, are the neighbors we are summoned to love.
- We proclaim a Gospel of salvation that includes all of Creation, not only human beings. Jesus commissioned his disciples, saying, “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation” (Mark 16:15). As disciples of Jesus, our mission is to bring good news in word and deed to the whole Creation.
- Our discipleship bears witness to a love that transcends death. In baptism, we die to ourselves and live in Christ, and are delivered from undue fear of death (c.f. Rom. 8:38-39, 2 Tim. 1:7, Heb. 2:14-15). This experience empowered the early Christians to resist the unjust powers-that-be: they “turned the world upside down” (Act. 17:6) and “acted contrary to the decrees of the emperor” (Act. 17:7), obeying God rather than any human authority (Act. 5:29) in resisting the forces of death and destruction to the point of suffering and martyrdom.

·Christian hope is in the renewal (Mat. 19:28) and restoration (Act. 3:21) of all things. Our participation with God in creating a more just and habitable world and living more gently on Earth is how we share in what Archbishop Desmond Tutu calls the “supreme work”⁴ of Jesus Christ, who reconciles us to God, one another, and God’s whole Creation. The good news of God in Christ is for all creatures and the whole Earth.

What must be done?

The U.N.’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns we have only a short amount of time to limit the worst of the effects of the crisis by:

- Reversing deforestation. Keeping and rebuilding our forests and wetlands is one third of the solution alone.
- Stop burning fossil fuels entirely by switching to renewable energy sources and dramatically reducing the demand from developed societies, especially the wealthy (top 1% use 30% of energy) and military forces.
- Developing and using better agricultural practices.
- Adapting to a changed world, especially by redirecting resources to the Third World and climate refugees.

This month I encourage you to make a devotional commitment to praying for this “our fragile island home” and learn more about what you can do to take action. To learn more and take action, please visit the Creation Care ministries of the Anglican Communion at: The Anglican Communion Environmental Network <https://acen.anglicancommunion.org/> or The Episcopal Church Ministry of Creation Care www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/creation-care

Living God, you call us to be good stewards of this earthly home, strengthen us to care for your creation; forgive us when, through our greed and indifference we abuse its beauty and damage its potential. Empower us, through your Spirit to so nurture and love the world, that all creation sings to your glory. — The Church of England

[1] <https://seasonofcreation.org/about/>

[1] https://acen.anglicancommunion.org/media/503311/ACEN_Season-Of-Creation-Episcopal-Liturgical-Guide-2023.pdf

[1] ibid



A Mighty River
Amos 5: 24

**Let Justice
and Peace Flow**
Season of Creation 2023

Sundays Service

Sept.
10



Readings for this Week:

First Reading: Exodus 12:1-14

Psalm: 149

The Epistle: 13:8-14

Gospel: Matthew 18:15-20

This Week's Ministers:

Celebrant: The Rev. Elizabeth Grohowski

Altar Guild: Gaby W. & Barb U.

Announcements: Lynne Graham

Lector: John Warriner

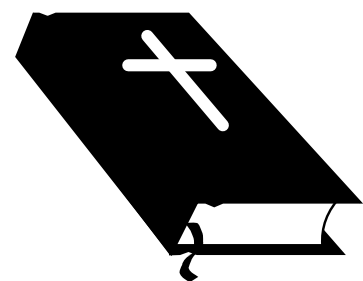
This week's Hymns:

All creatures of our God and King

Praise my soul

At the Lamb's high feast we sing

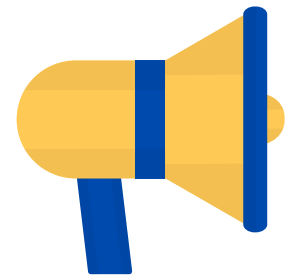
Joyful, joyful, we adore thee



This week's Gospel according to: Matthew

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."

Happenings and Announcements



Back to Basics at Coffee Hour

After church on Sunday, Sept. 10th & 24th at Coffee Hour, join us for a discussion about our faith using the study guide 'Transforming Questions'.



Karen Says 'Hi' From Florida

Karen sends a shout out from Florida and thanks everyone who asked about her safety. She says she survived Hurricane Idalia but that it was scary. Lots of wind and rain but no house damage.



For those who are ill or have requested our prayers:

Margaret Burgh, Naomi Bennett, Rita Leigh, Nancy Finlon, Carol Marker, Ellen Ely, Rev. Janet Watrous, The Maginley Family

Pastoral Emergency or Non-Emergency Contact:

You can call the parish office during office hours. After hours, call Mother Liz 212-222-8109.



This Months Birthdays:

Sandy Nagy 9/6, Nancy Dooling 9/11, Sandy Seeger 9/15, Esther Welden 9/19, Sean Eckert 9/28



This Months Anniversaries:

Harry & Wanda Peirce: 9/4/1981

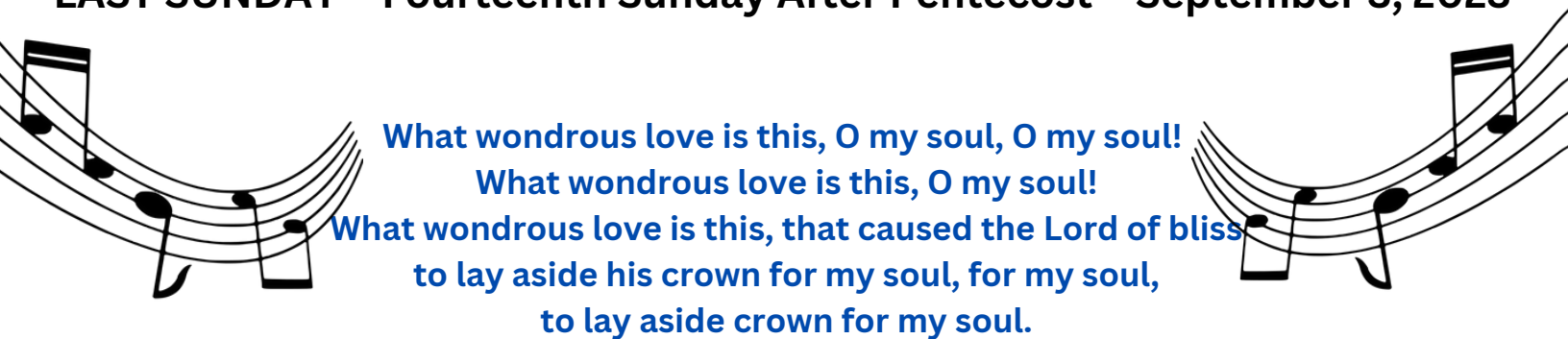
Our thanksgivings:

We give thanks for those who celebrate their birthdays this week. O God, our times are in your hand: look with favor, we pray, on your servants as they begin another year. Grant that they may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen their trust in your goodness all the days of their lives. Amen.

We give thanks for those celebrating wedding anniversaries this week. Grant o God, in your compassion, that those celebrating wedding anniversaries this week may live out the covenant they have made. May they grow in forgiveness, loyalty and love, and come at last to the eternal joys, which you have promised through Jesus Christ our Lord; and may the blessing of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with them this day and forever. Amen.

Last Week's Service and Events

LAST SUNDAY – Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost – September 3, 2023



The live-streamed September 3rd 10:00 Holy Eucharist Service was led by Mother Liz. Announcements were by Lynne Graham, Richard Marker read as lector, and Cathy Hammons played the organ. The service included four hymns. As you know, our live-streamed services can be watched live or any time on YouTube. Just go to our webpage and hit the red button.



Filling a Big Hole

We lost our big tree in front of church last year on July 24 during a storm. Mike, John and Patrick were able to cut up and remove the wood but the stump was more problematic. It had to be ground down which left a hole that we filled. During the year, the hole settled so we got a load of dirt this week and leveled it.



Soup Night

Yes, it's the first Wednesday of the month and that means soup was cooking on our stove. This month's soup was stuffed pepper and crème of broccoli. As you can see, we accept help from anyone and everyone, young and old! Miss Tilly and her mom Kristina came to help. October 4th is the next distribution.



Wild Black Cherries

While the apples, grapes, walnuts and pears had a bad season this year, wild black cherries are as heavy as the old folks remember. They are eaten by so many critters and birds that it was a good thing they were the one that made it.



Old Picture of Springville

See if you can figure out where this is. It's what became 29 south. Hint, the house on the right is now a gas station.



Supermoon

On Wednesday, August 30, The full Moon was also a "Supermoon." It was huge. It rose in the eastern sky and was a marvel to see. Pretty cool.



Susquehanna County Tomatoes

It's hard to believe that when you put those 4-inch tall plants in the ground in late May that you are going to get lots of tomatoes in August. Unfortunately, they always are ready to can on the hottest days of the year. It's a lot of work to go from tomatoes to canned sauce, a lot of cooking down and a lot of heat. But in the winter, the quarts of sauce are used for St. Paul's soup, pasta and all kinds of creations. It's all worth it.



EARLY SEPTEMBER IN SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY

“But now in September the garden has cooled, and with it my possessiveness. The sun warms my back instead of beating on my head.” It was really hot this week and no rain for a change. The sunsets keep coming -- stunning! That’s Sophie chilling out. There are a lot of fungi around with many colors, size, and shapes . Appears there are several kinds of amphibians in our Memorial Garden. Here is an Eastern Red-Spotted newt who had been hiding under some leaves to keep cool. Dogs came across a young porcupine who had its quills up and happy to share them. It’s late summer in Susquehanna County.

