



CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL GRAFTON

open doors ... open hearts ... open minds



St Francis Sunday
Blessing of the Animals
7 October 2018

We are a generous faith community—centred on Jesus, seeking wisdom for life and acting with compassion—in the heart of Grafton since 1842.

The Cathedral is open every day. You are always welcome to use the Cathedral and its grounds for prayer and reflection, and we encourage you to make this a place of pilgrimage and prayer for our City.



Welcome on this Sunday after St Francis Day when we worship with all the creatures we love. We join the Psalmists and rejoice with all living things. We sing with the all the birds and animals that make our lives richer because of their presence.

Mass Setting: *Parish Eucharist* — Michael Dudman

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

Jesus Christ, we assemble with all your creatures in this circle of life.

We ask you to join our circle and celebrate with us.

Jesus Christ, as we join in celebration with you and all creation,

**We ask for your blessing, your *shalom*,
on the creatures present here that we love,
and all creatures celebrating in the wild.**

In the name of God, who creates all life,
In the name of Jesus Christ, who redeems all life,
and the name of the Spirit, who renews all life,
we cry with all in the circle of life:

Shalom! Shalom! Shalom!

May your blessing come!

Entrance Song

Where wide sky rolls down [TIS 188]

**Where wide sky rolls down and touches red sand,
where sun turns to gold the grass of the land,
let spinifex, mulga and waterhole tell
their joy in the One who made everything well.**

**Where rain-forest calm meets reef, tide and storm,
where green things grow lush and oceans are warm,
let every sea-creature and tropical bird
exult in the light of the life-giving Word.**

**Where red gum and creek cross hillside and plain,
where cool tree-ferns rise to welcome the rain,
let bushland, farm, mountain-top, all of their days
delight in the Spirit who formed them for praise.**

**Now people of faith, come gather around
with songs to be shared, for blessings abound!
Australians, whatever your culture or race,
come, lift up your hearts to the Giver of grace.**

Elizabeth J. Smith, 1956–

Kyrie eleison

As we come home to Earth.

Christ, have mercy.

As we seek to love our home.

Christ, have mercy.

As we seek to care for our kin.

Christ, have mercy.

Thanksgiving and Confession

Lord, for all the animals in the whole wide world,

We thank you, God!

Lord, for all the fun and friendship we have with animals,

We thank you, God!

Lord, for all the times we have hurt or neglected animals,

We are sorry.

Lord, for all the times we have used poisons that have killed animals,

We are sorry.

Lord, for all the times we have destroyed

the homes of animals in the forests, oceans or fields,

We are sorry.

Absolution

I speak for Christ. For all your sins against the creatures of Earth,
I forgive you and I call upon you to honour and protect all animals. Yes, I
speak for Christ. May the animals of Earth be your companions in life and lead
you to celebrate your place in the circle of life.

Amen! Amen

Shalom! Shalom!

The Hymn of Praise, *Gloria in excelsis*.

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.**

Lord God, heavenly King,

Almighty God and Father,

we worship you, we give you thanks,

we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,

Lord God, Lamb of God,

you take away the sin of the world:

have mercy on us;

you are seated at the right hand of the Father:

receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,

you alone are the Lord,

you alone are the Most High

Jesus Christ,

with the Holy Spirit,

in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Collect of the Day.

God, our Creator, help us to love
all creatures as kin,
all animals as partners on Earth,
all birds as messengers of praise,
all minute beings as expressions of your mysterious design
and all frogs as voices of hope. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

First Reading

[Genesis 2:18–25]

Animals created as partners: God creates the animals and birds from the same ground that the first human is created. Animals and humans are kin and partners. Like children, the first human names the animals as part of a living family in Eden.

Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the Earthling should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.” So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the Earthling to see what he would call them; and whatever the Earthling called every living creature, that was its name. The Earthling gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the Earthling there was not found a helper as his partner. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the Earthling, and he slept; then God took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the Earthling he made into a woman and brought her to the Earthling. Then the Earthling said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken.” Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. And the Earthling and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

Hear the word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

¹ Praise the Lord, praise the Lord from heaven:
O praise him in the heights.

² Praise him, all his angels:
O praise him, all his host.

³ Praise him, sun and moon:
praise him, all you stars of light.

⁴ Praise him, you highest heaven:
and you waters that are above the heavens.

⁵ Let them praise the name of the Lord:
for he commanded and they were made.

⁶ He established them for ever and ever:
he made an ordinance which shall not pass away.

⁷ O praise the Lord from the earth:
praise him, you sea-monsters and all deeps;

⁸ Fire and hail, mist and snow:
and storm-wind fulfilling his command;

⁹ Mountains and all hills:
fruit trees and all cedars;

¹⁰ Beasts of the wild, and all cattle:
creeping things and winged birds;

¹¹ Kings of the earth, and all peoples:
princes, and all rulers of the world;

¹² Young men and maidens:
old folk and children together.

¹³ Let them praise the name of the Lord:
for his name alone is exalted.

¹⁴ His glory is above earth and heaven:
and he has lifted high the horn of his people.

¹⁵ Therefore he is the praise of all his servants:
of the children of Israel, a people that is near him. Praise the Lord.

Second Reading

[Revelation 5:11–14]

Animals around the throne: In this vision of the future, it is not only angels that praise Christ on the throne, but also the living creatures of Earth and sky. They are an integral part of our hope and our future.

Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels surrounding the throne and the living creatures and the elders; they numbered myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, singing with full voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, singing, “To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the elders fell down and worshiped.

Hear the word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn

Mother Earth, Our Mother Birthing

**Mother Earth, our mother birthing
Ev’ry creature from the ground.
Jesus too was flesh and breathing,
Kin to all that’s green and brown.
Celebrate with all creation:
God has joined the web of life.**

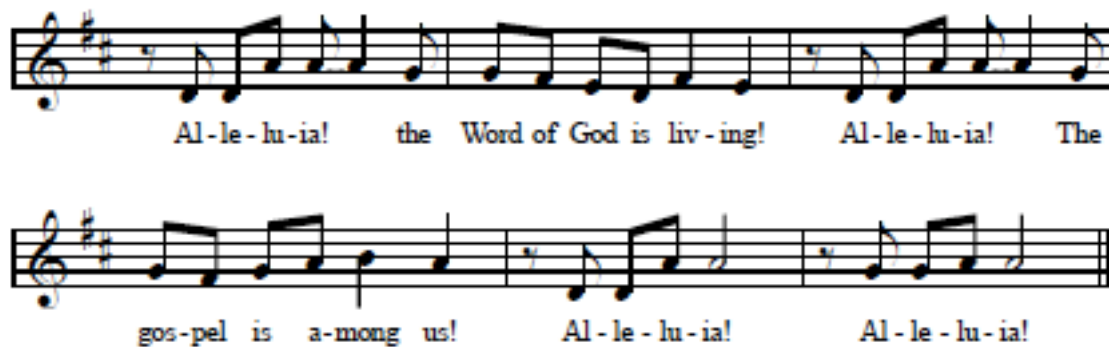
**Sister Air, our sister lifting
Ev’ry creature born with wing;
Jesus shared the breath of forests,
Breath that makes our spirits sing.
Celebrate with all creation:
God has joined the web of life.**

**Brother Water, brother pulsing
Deep through ev’ry vein and sea,
Jesus drank the very raindrops
For our wine and in our tea.
Celebrate with all creation:
God has joined the web of life.**

**Father Fire, our father burning
With the sacred urge to live.
Jesus' death completes the cycle,
Bringing life beyond the grave.
Celebrate with all creation:
God has joined the web of life.**

Words: © Norman Habel 1999

Gospel



[©Richard Bruxvoort, 2004. Used with permission of the composer.]

How God has made creation beautiful: Solomon is all his royal splendour cannot match the brilliance of the creatures of land and sky that God creates and feeds.

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew [Matthew 6:25–29]
Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.

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

The Sermon

AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

God creates all things,
renews all things and celebrates all things.

This we believe.

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

This we believe.

God became flesh and blood,
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.

This we believe.

The risen Jesus
is the Christ at the centre of creation,
reconciling all things to God,
renewing all creation and filling the cosmos.

This 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.

This we believe.

**We believe that with Christ we will rise
and with Christ we will celebrate a new creation.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us pray for the world and the Church.

Loving God, creator of the Universe, you know every creature and its needs. With great trust we pray in the name of all creation. Creator God, **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for the beauty and abundance of the earth, our home, which you created for us to enjoy and sustain. We pray for Murray our Bishop and all people of faith. As people called into a covenant relationship with you, we pray for grace to live in harmony with your creation, and for wisdom and generosity in our use of its bounty. Creator God, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the leaders of nations that they may speak out against exploitation of the resources of the earth. In an environmental catastrophe we pray for those living in poverty, silenced by the realities of global life but suffering the devastating effects of flood, drought, fire and climate change. Creator God, **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for the rich web of life within which our own lives are enmeshed, and especially for the animals with whom we share this beautiful planet. As they enrich our lives may we protect theirs, so that together we reflect your glory and your generosity. Creator God, **hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for the City of Grafton, the fellowship of the community in which we live and for the Clarence Valley Council and all who care for our parks, gardens and trees. We pray for the health of the Clarence River and the land of the valley, which gives abundant life to creatures of water, land and air. Creator God, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those in need. We give thanks that you are the God who brings mercy and wholeness. Give us strength and courage to change our ways, so this Earth may flourish under our care. Comfort and heal, we pray, all who are in sorrow, need, sickness, or any other trouble, especially those who have asked for prayer: Cheryl Cook, Gladys Gray, Doris Lee, Eileen Rogan and Keith Zietsch. Give to those who care for them wisdom, patience and gentleness and, to us all, your peace. Creator God, **hear our prayer.**

All creation lives and dies according to the cycle of life and returns to the dust from which we are made, but at the end of all things you will raise us to life to the community of your eternal kingdom. Fill us with your Spirit in our days on this Earth, so we may be fit and ready for the new heaven and new Earth you promise.

Almighty God, you have promised to hear our prayers.

**Through Jesus Christ, teach us to be at one with Earth.
Make our spirits sensitive to the cries of creation,
cries for justice from the seas, the skies and the land.
Make our souls sensitive to the songs of our kin,
songs of celebration from the sea, the land and the air.
Teach us to care for our planet home. Amen.**

THE GREETING OF PEACE

The Greeting of Peace is introduced with these or other suitable words.

Christ has reconciled us to God in one body by the cross.
We meet in Christ's name and share God's peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

All may exchange a sign of peace.

THE OFFERTORY

Offertory hymn

Sing a new song [TIS 166]

***Sing a new song, sing a new song,
and wait on the promise of the Lord.***

**Creation sings a new song to the Lord,
the universal energies rejoice,
through all the magnitudes of space and time
creatures proclaim the grandeur of Christ.**

**The mountains and the valleys and the plains,
the cattle and the wild beasts and birds,
the shadows and the clouds, the rain and snow,
praise and reflect the bounty of Christ.**

**The ocean deeps, the currents and the tides,
the diatoms, the fishes, and the whale,
the storm, the reef, the waterspout, the calm,
praise and reflect the wonder of Christ's stop**

**The fruit trees in their seasons and the vine,
the eucalypt, the cedar, and the palm,
the lotus and the orchid and the rose,
praise and reflect the beauty of Christ.**

**The human eye, the shaping hand, the mind
with number and with symbol and design,
in work and play and artistry and prayer,
praise and reflect the wisdom of Christ.**

**The love of all God's people clear as dawn,
the will for truth and justice broad as day,
the wisdom of the heart profound as night,
praise and reflect the glory of Christ.**

James Phillip McAuley 1917–76. *alt.*

The gifts of the people are brought to the Lord's Table.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.
Through your goodness we have this bread to offer,
which earth has given and human hands have made.
It will become for us the bread of life
Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.
Through your goodness we have this wine to offer.
Fruit of the vine and work of human hands,
it will become our spiritual drink
Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.
Through your love you have given us these gifts to share.
Accept our offerings as an expression of our deep thanks
for all the animals and other creatures that have enriched our lives.
With all animals around the throne, we bless the Lamb of God.

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right to give you thanks, loving Creator.

Lord our God,

we give you thanks and praise.

Your eternal Word called forth all things to be: for space, stars and stardust to appear, for Earth to emerge from the deep, for life to be born of Earth and for humans to be born of Earth and the Spirit.

Lord our God,

we give you thanks and praise.

Your Spirit is the life impulse in all things, renewing the barren and healing the wounded, groaning in anticipation of a new creation, stirring a new life born of water and the Spirit.

Lord our God,

we give you thanks and praise.

You chose to be born a human being, to become a part of Earth, to suffer, die and rise from death to redeem humankind, to renew creation and to affirm all born of Earth and the Spirit.

Lord our God,

we give you thanks and praise.

Your presence is the living impulse in all things, the Christ deep among us, filling Earth—land, sea and air—filling every element and place, filling the grain and the grape we share with you this day.

Lord our God,

we give you thanks and praise.

Therefore with angels and archangels, ancient voices in the forest, high voices from the sky, deep voices from the sea and the whole company of creation we proclaim your presence among us, for ever praising you and saying:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

And now we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine;
may we who receive them,
as Jesus said,
share his body and his blood.

On the night he was betrayed, he took bread,
and gave you thanks.
He broke the bread and gave it to his friends, and said,
“Take and eat. This is my body given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.”

After supper he took the cup
and gave you thanks.
He shared the cup with them and said,
“This is my blood poured out
so that sins may be forgiven.
Do this in remembrance of me.”

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

You have gathered us together
to feed on Christ
and to remember all he has done for us.

Fill us with your Spirit
that we may follow Jesus
in all we do and say,
working for justice and bringing your peace
to this world that you have made.

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Blessing and honour and glory and power
are yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray,

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND COMMUNION

The priest breaks the bread.

As this broken bread was once many grains,
which have been gathered together and made one bread:
**so may your Church be gathered
from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.**

The priest says

The gifts of God for the people of God.
Holy things for holy people.
Broken things for broken people.

Anyone who would normally receive Holy Communion in their own Christian tradition is welcome to receive the Sacrament with us here today. Those who prefer to receive a personal blessing from the priest rather than Holy Communion are invited to come to the Altar and simply cross their arms in front of them so the priest knows their desire.

Gluten-free wafers are available on request.

Music during Holy Communion

Lied to the Flowers (excerpt) — Flor Peeters

THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

The priest says

Bountiful God,
at this table you graciously feed us
with the bread of life and the cup of salvation.
May we who have reached out our hands to receive this sacrament
be strengthened in your service;
we who have sung your praises
tell of your glory and truth in our lives;
we who have seen the greatness of your love
see you face to face in your kingdom
and come to worship you with all your saints for ever.

Most loving God,
you send us into the world you love.
Give us grace to go thankfully and with courage
in the power of your Spirit.

Community notices and personal celebrations

Mission hymn

Let all creation dance [TIS 187]

**Let all creation dance
in energies sublime,
as order turns with chance,
unfolding space and time,
for nature's art
in glory grows,
and newly shows
God's mind and heart.**

**God's breath each force unfurls,
igniting from a spark
expanding starry swirls,
with whirlpool dense and dark.
Though moon and sun
seem mindless things,
each orbit sings:
'Your will be done.'**

**Our amazing earth,
with sunlight, cloud and storms
and life's abundant growth
in lovely shapes and forms,
is made for praise,
a fragile whole,
and from its soul
heaven's music plays.**

**Lift heart and soul and voice:
in Christ all praises meet
and nature shall rejoice
as all is made complete.
In hope be strong,
all life befriend
and kindly tend
creation's song.**

Brian Arthur Wren 1936 – based on Psalm 148

Circle of Blessing

All present who have brought an animal, or a picture of one, form a circle around the worshipping community, with space between the various animals. From there they join in this Psalm and cry loudly: Praise the Lord. It adds to the celebration if some animals bark or cry out during this time.

All dogs and dingoes, large and small:

Praise the Lord!

All rabbits, hamsters and guinea pigs:

Praise the Lord!

All goldfish, guppies and swimming creatures:

Praise the Lord!

All kookaburras, budgies and singing birds:

Praise the Lord!

All wombats, koalas and wallabies:

Praise the Lord!

All horses, cows and sheep:

Praise the Lord!

All lizards, skinks and crawling creatures:

Praise the Lord!

Every animal in the sky, the sea and the forest:

Praise the Lord!

The Priest then moves to each animal, asking its name, holding a hand over it and blessing it in the name of the Cosmic Christ who fills and heals creation.

N, the power of this blessing from Christ fill you with life,
bind you to your human partners and lead you to praise your Creator. **Amen.**

Sending Out

Christ calls you to be his disciples,
to serve him with love and compassion,
to serve Earth by caring for her creatures.

Will you care for creation?

We will care for creation!

We will nurture our animals!

We will celebrate the circle of life with them!

The priest blesses the congregation.

May the Spirit of God, who is above all and in all and through all,
fill you with the knowledge of God's presence in Earth
and the pulsing of Christ in creation,
through whom all things are reconciled and renewed;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

A minister may say

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

Organ Postlude

Paderborn — Paul Bryan

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