

The Benefice of Bradford on Avon Holy Trinity, Westwood and Wingfield

A Time for Creation 2025



**‘O sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.’ *Psalm 96***

The season of Creation invites us to enter deeply into the mystery and wonder of God’s creative work. The Bible begins with the affirmation that God is Creator: ‘In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth’ (Genesis 1.1). This foundational truth shapes our understanding of the world as a sacred gift, entrusted to humanity’s care.

As bearers of the divine image, we are called not to dominate creation exploitatively but to steward it responsibly, caring for the earth as a sign of our love and obedience to God. Our vocation is one of service, recognising that all creation belongs ultimately to God, who sustains it by divine will.

The New Testament reveals that this creative purpose is fulfilled and restored in Christ, the Word through whom all things were made (John 1.1-3). The cross and resurrection announce the hope of reconciliation not only for humanity but for all creation, groaning and waiting for liberation (Romans 8.19-22).

In a time of environmental crisis, Creation challenges us to repentance and renewal. It calls us to reimagine our relationship with the natural world, embracing humility, gratitude, and hope. This season is both a spiritual discipline and a practical commitment to live as caretakers of God's good earth, joining with the whole of creation in praise and service to the Creator.

September often brings renewed energy and a welcome return to routine after the summer. Across the global Church, it has also become a season of focused prayer and ecological awareness, culminating in Harvest Festival celebrations. Many parishes and church schools now mark this season as a 'Time for Creation,' an *ecumenical* initiative highlighting the urgent ecological challenges of our time and calling Christians to respond faithfully. It shapes much of our worship this month. As part of the global Anglican Communion, we stand in solidarity with communities worldwide who face the devastating effects of climate change. People of all faiths and none speak increasingly of a climate emergency and environmental crisis. In one of her most well-known visions, Julian of Norwich captures the heart of Christian faith in God's all-encompassing love. We believe God created the world, sustains it, and has uniquely entrusted its care to humanity (Genesis 1.26-30). To God, and to future generations, we are accountable for our stewardship of creation.

Our usual pattern of services continues this month, but below you'll find some highlights from our Time for Creation worship.

Sunday 31 August

1100 – Benefice Service – All Creatures Great and Small at St Mary's Wingfield

Join us for our first Benefice Pet Service: a joyful, slightly chaotic celebration of God's Creation, with animal blessings, shared stories, and outdoor worship (weather permitting).

Sunday 7 September

0800 – Holy Communion at Holy Trinity, Book of Common Prayer

0930 – Earth Eucharist at Holy Trinity

0930 – Holy Communion at St Mary's Wingfield in Creation-tide

1115 – Holy Communion at St Mary the Virgin, Westwood in Creation-tide

1800 – Choral Evensong at Holy Trinity

The *Earth Eucharist* at Holy Trinity highlights our sacred vocation as stewards of God's creation. For too long, humanity has neglected the natural world. Now, faced with its fragility and escalating ecological crises, we are called to renew our commitment to faithful and reverent care for God's earth.

Sunday 14 September – Creation in the Round and The Feast of the Holy Cross

0800 – BCP Holy Communion at Holy Trinity

0930 – Creation In the Round with Baptism at Holy Trinity

0930 – Morning Prayer, Holy Cross Day at St Mary's Wingfield

1115 – The Feast of the Holy Cross at St Mary the Virgin, Westwood

1800 – Choral Evensong with the Nordic Singers at Holy Trinity

God calls each of us by name. In this season of Creation, baptism offers a profound opportunity to renew our discipleship in Christ. This morning at 9.30 at Holy Trinity, we rejoice as Poppy is welcomed into the household of faith. Please come and support Poppy and her family in prayer and presence. Baptism in this season powerfully symbolises our participation in Christ's new creation and calls us to renewed care for the whole creation. Our celebrations of the Feast of the Holy Cross draw us into the mystery of God's love revealed on the cross, holding within it both the suffering of the world and the hope of redemption. It offers a Christ-centred foundation for this season, reminding us that the reconciliation of all creation begins and ends in Christ.

Sunday 21 September – The Feast of St Matthew

0930 – Sung Eucharist at Holy Trinity

The reading from Proverbs tells us that *Wisdom is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her; those who hold her fast are called happy*. In this season, Wisdom, personified as the very tree of life calls us into the way of healing, hope, and renewal. Nature itself teaches us these truths: even in dry and barren places, life can return. The vision of rewilding depleted land, allowing soil to rest so native species may flourish again, is a powerful sign of regeneration. Yet ecological and environmental challenges can feel overwhelming. The reading from Corinthians reminds us that we do not face them alone: *It is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, and so we do not lose heart*. Even when the way ahead feels dark or uncertain, the light of Christ shines: For it is the God who said, *"Let light shine out of darkness ... who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."*

Sunday 28 September – Harvest Festival at Holy Trinity

0930 – Sung Eucharist for our Harvest Festival with a sermon given by The Revd Canon Dr Tom Clammer OC, at Holy Trinity

We're delighted to welcome The Revd Canon Dr Tom Clammer OC today. This year's Harvest Festival at Holy Trinity will also be enriched by the voices of some of the youngest in our community, who will help lead us in pledging support for many aspects of our shared life.

These include our ongoing commitment to our A Rocha Eco Church Silver Award, support for The Hub foodbank, commitment to recycling and ecological products, and even thoughtful use of things like eco-photocopying! During the service, both our pledges and produce will be joyfully offered at the altar.

Sunday 5 October – The Feast of St Francis

0930 – Sung Eucharist celebrating the Feast of St Francis

The Feast of St Francis invites us to follow his example: praising God through all creation and tenderly caring for the earth. As Pope Francis taught us in *Laudato Si'* and *Laudate Deum*, the signs of climate change are unmistakable: extreme weather events, drought, and the cries of the poorest demand our urgent response. Meaningful change begins with each of us. Every small action will matter as we deepen our stewardship. We are bound by unseen connections, a universal family, called to live with sacred, humble respect for all that God has made.

Sunday 5 October – Harvest Festivals

0930 – St Mary's, Wingfield

1115 – St Mary the Virgin, Wingfield

Our Harvest Festivals and the Service for the Feast of St Francis mark the culmination of the Time for Creation. We gather to give thanks for the abundance of the earth and honour those who labour to bring food to our tables. In urban life, we can easily forget the deep connection between the soil, the seasons, and the harvest. "For our daily food, and for those whose work and skill bring your good gifts to us, we bring our thanks, good Lord: your mercy endures for ever."

Contemplating Creation

During this *Time for Creation*, we are called not only to act but also to pause, to wonder, to pray, and to perceive the world anew through the eyes of faith. The saints and mystics of the Church have long drawn wisdom and insight from the created world, recognising in its beauty and fragility the love and sustaining presence of God.

Two such voices, *St Augustine* and *Julian of Norwich*, offer us reflections that continue to speak powerfully into our present moment:

‘Is there anyone who, contemplating the works of God by which the entire universe is governed and ordered, is not amazed and overwhelmed by a sense of the miraculous? The power and strength locked in a single grain of seed is an amazing thing, inspiring awe in its contemplation. But humanity, preoccupied with its own petty agenda, has lost the capacity to contemplate the works of God by which it should daily render praise to God as creator.’ *St Augustine*

‘And he showed me a little thing, the size of a hazelnut, on the palm of my hand, round like a ball. I looked at it thoughtfully and wondered, ‘What is this?’ And the answer came, ‘It is all that is made.’ I marvelled that it continued to exist and did not suddenly disintegrate; it was so small. And again my mind supplied the answer, ‘It exists, both now and for ever, because God loves it.’ In short, everything owes its existence to the love of God. In this ‘little thing’ I saw three truths. The first is that God made it; the second is that God loves it; and the third is that God sustains it.’ *Julian of Norwich, Revelations of Divine Love*

Please take part in our ‘Hazelnut Prayers’: a simple act of reflection and thanksgiving for all that God has made, available in the chancels of Holy Trinity, St Mary’s Wingfield, and St Mary the Virgin, Westwood.

Psalm Prayers

Psalm 8

We bless you, master of the heavens,
for the wonderful order which enfolds this world;
grant that your whole creation
may find fulfilment in the Son of Man,
Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Psalm 65

May the richness of your creation, Lord,
and the mystery of your providence
lead us to that heavenly city
where all peoples will bring their wealth,
forsake their sins and find their true joy,
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Psalm 96

Lord God, you draw us by your beauty
and transform us by your holiness;
let our worship echo all creation's praise
and declare your glory to the nations;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Psalm 98

Lord God, just and true,
you make your salvation known in the sight of the nations;
tune the song of our hearts to the music of creation
as you come among us to judge the earth;
through our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Psalm 126

Lord, as you send rain and flowers
even to the wilderness,
renew us by your Holy Spirit,
help us to sow good seed in time of adversity
and to live to rejoice in your good harvest of all creation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

