

Creation in Christ
Isaiah 55: 12-end; Colossians 1: 15-20; John 1: 1-14
St James Church, Shirley. Eucharist.

Sermon: Creation in Christ

Creationtide

For many years in the Anglican tradition, the weeks from early September to early October have been known as Creationtide — a season in which the Church gives thanks for God’s creation, reflects on our place within it, and renews our commitment to care for the world God has made. It isn’t a new idea, but it hasn’t been fully embraced by all churches.

Creationtide a season that invites us to see creation not simply as nice scenery, but as a celebration of God’s glory — a world spoken into being by God’s Word, sustained by God’s love, and destined for renewal in God’s kingdom. Around the Anglican Communion, many churches worship in a way that Encourages us to think deeper about God as creator, and what that means for us.

The festival we celebrate today — Creation in Christ — is itself new in the Church of England’s calendar. It is born out of the conviction that creation is not only God’s gift, but Christ’s work: that all things were made through him, all things are held in him, and all things will be renewed in him. Today we begin Creationtide by placing Christ at the centre of creation, and creation at the heart of Christ.

Creation....

In the ancient world, creation stories were everywhere. Most of them imagined the world beginning in conflict — a punch up between rival gods, or a victorious deity making the earth out of the remains of a vanquished enemy. Others told of creation as the accidental result of divine chaos, or as something made from scraps and leftover material. The world was often seen as fragile, unintended, or as the product of violence.

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But the Jewish and Christian story is very different. From the opening words of Genesis, we hear of one God, creating not out of conflict or debris, but out of freedom, joy, and love. Creation is not an accident or an afterthought. It is the deliberate act of a God who desires relationship — who speaks, and life comes into being; who blesses, and goodness appears; and who then delights in what he has made. Creation and life as an explosion of joy and love

This is the foundation of our faith: the world is not a mistake, nor a battleground of competing powers. It is the work of a God who creates in love, and who calls creation “very good.”

In Christ....

When we turn to our readings today, we discover something even deeper. St John begins his Gospel with the same words as Genesis: “In the beginning....” He wants us to see that the story of creation and the story of Christ are not two separate stories, but one.

John tells us **that** the Word — the Logos — through whom all things were made, is the very Word who becomes flesh and dwells among us. This is the Creator stepping into creation.

John chooses that particular word, *Logos*, very deliberately. We usually translate it as *Word*, but it carries far more meaning than our English word suggests. In the ancient world, *Logos* meant the deep reason, the ordering principle, the intelligence, the meaning behind everything. Philosophers used it to describe the thing that makes the world coherent rather than chaotic. Einstein used the phrase – the mind behind the universe to describe something like Logos.

John takes that word and says something astonishing:

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The Logos is not an idea, not a force but a person — Jesus Christ.

The One through whom all things were made is not a distant god or abstract idea but the One who becomes flesh and dwells among us. The Creator steps into creation. The meaning behind the universe becomes human. The One who holds all things together chooses to live within the world he made.

John is telling us that the same Christ we meet in the Gospels is the Christ who spoke creation into being. The Christ who walks the roads of Galilee is the Christ who shaped the stars. The Christ who heals the sick is the Christ who called light out of darkness.

This is the heart of Creation in Christ: the Creator is also the Redeemer, and the Redeemer is also the Creator.

St Paul takes this even further in Colossians. He gives us one of the most astonishing visions in the New Testament: Christ is the image of the invisible God. All things were created through him and for him. In him all things hold together.

This is not a God who creates the world and then leaves us to get on with it – a popular thought in the 1st Century.

No, this is a God who holds creation together, who sustains it, accompanies it, and ultimately redeems it. Christ is not only the builder or the architect; Christ is its centre, its meaning, and its future.

And yet, we know that this comes with challenges. When creation goes horribly wrong — when natural disasters strike, when suffering comes not from human cruelty but from the sheer force of the natural world — we struggle. We ask how creation can be held in Christ when it feels so fragile and dangerous.

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How can the people of Nepal consider the world good? And before we pin, with some justification, everything on climate change – natural disaster is as old as the earth: earthquakes and tsunamis occurring way before humans were damaging the earth.

But Scripture insists on this: creation is still held, still loved, and still destined for renewal.

The New Testament also challenges the old Greek idea that the earth is rubbish and only the heavens matter. Instead, it echoes and deepens Genesis: creation is good — good enough to save, good enough to redeem, good enough that God himself enters it.

And one day, it is not that earth will vanish and heaven will replace it. It is that heaven will come to earth, and creation will be made whole.

Our response

So how do we respond to this new festival in light of all of this?

Isaiah gives us the first part of our response: joy. Creation rejoices in God's creative and saving work — mountains singing, trees clapping their hands. Joy is the natural response to a world made in love and held in Christ.

But joy must be directed rightly. We worship **not** the creation, but the Creator. There are many spiritualities today that treat creation itself as divine, or imagine that nature alone is enough. But Christian worship keeps the order clear: creation is good, but Christ is Lord. We honour creation best when we honour the One who made it.

Our response also includes humility. We are *part of* creation — creatures among creatures — albeit entrusted with a particular responsibility. How we treat the world affects everything else God

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has made. And Scripture is clear: we will be judged for how we exercise that responsibility.

When we fail to care for creation, we do not simply damage the earth; we distort the image of Christ in whom creation was made. If we destroy what Christ has created and holds together, then all we succeed in doing is placing him back on the cross.

So our response is joy, humility, worship, and responsibility — all rooted in Christ.

Epilogue

So as we begin Creationtide and celebrate this new festival, we do so with assurance. We belong to a faith that follows the Word who was there at the beginning of all things, who will be there at the end of all things, and who walks with us in the middle of all things. The Christ who called creation into being is the Christ who accompanies us now — through beauty and through brokenness, through joy and through sorrow, through all that these middle times bring.

Christ is the Logos, the Creator, the Redeemer. And in him, all things — including us — hold together. Amen

Rev'd Richard Haynes Creation in Christ 6 September 2026