

Season of Creation: Creation in Christ
September 13, 2026

Call to Worship

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
He existed in the beginning with God
and God created everything through him. (John 1:1-3a)

Christ is the visible expression of the invisible God.
He existed before creation began,
for it was through him that everything was made,
whether spiritual or material, seen or unseen. (Colossians 1:15-16a)

Nothing was created except through him.
The Word gave life to everything that was created,
and his life brought light to everyone. (John 1:3b-4)

Every detail was crafted through his design,
by his own hands and for his purposes.
He existed before anything else began,
and he holds all creation together. (Colossians 1:16b-17)

O Lord, what a variety of things you have made!
In your wisdom you have made them all.
The earth is full of your creatures.
Every one of them is dependent on you
to give them what they need to survive.
When you send out your breath, life is created,
and the face of the earth is made beautiful and is renewed. (Psalm 104:24, 27, 30)

May your glory endure forever, O God,
and may you find joy in the splendor of your own creation. (Psalm 104:31)

~ from *New Heaven, New Earth*, an Easter/Earth Day worship resource put out by the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. <http://www.foodgrainsbank.ca/>

Hymn

I sing the almighty power of God

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1. I sing the almighty power of God
that made the mountains rise,
that spread the flowing seas abroad
and built the lofty skies.
I sing the wisdom that ordained
the sun to rule the day;
the moon shines full at God's command,
and all the stars obey.

2. I sing the goodness of the Lord,
that filled the earth with food;
God formed the creatures with a word,
and then pronounced them good.
Lord, how thy wonders are displayed,
where'er I turn my eyes,
if I survey the ground I tread,
or gaze upon the skies.

3. There's not a plant or flower below
but makes thy glories known,
and clouds arise and tempests blow
by order from thy throne,
while all that borrows life from thee
is ever in thy care,
and everywhere that I could be,
thou, God, art present there.

Words by Isaac Watts. Arrangement by Ralph Vaughan Williams. Public Domain

Prayer of Adoration and Confession

The warmth of the sun's embrace
the gentle breeze swept in by incoming tide
the rhythm of seasons of new birth, death and recreation
All these speak so clearly of your love, your power, and your beauty
All are expressions of your creativity
and more importantly of yourself
As an artist might share his personality within each brushstroke
so within the myriad colours of a butterfly's wing
you share the exuberance of your love

That we can glimpse you within creation is a beautiful thought
but also tells us that you desire to be seen, to be found and known
Open our eyes, Lord as we walk through this world,
feel the wind and sunshine
see the majesty of creation unfolding before our eyes
Help us to see you. —Copyright © John Birch, posted on Faith and Worship - Prayers and Resources <http://www.faithandworship.com/>

**Holy One, you have given us
a world of beauty, and we have spoiled it.
A world to feed us, and so many go hungry.
A world of riches, and we are unwilling to share.
A world to care for, and we think only of ourselves.
Forgive us, gracious God, every time your heart is saddened
by our selfishness, every time we have no thought
for others, no cares but ours.
Enable us to see this world as a gift from you that can be shared,
and those who live on it, as our neighbours.
We ask this that your name may be glorified,
through the beauty of this world, and the service of our lives. Amen**

~ written by John Birch, and posted on Faith and Worship. <http://www.faithandworship.com/>

Assurance of Forgiveness

The One who brought into being everything that is,
desires the health and wholeness of all creation.

Toward that end, we are granted forgiveness,
supplied with hope, and renewed for the following of God's will.
Glory be to God.

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Prayer for Understanding

God of wisdom, prepare our hearts and minds to receive your Word. Where it challenges us, lead us by your Spirit to respond in faithfulness for the sake of Christ who gives us both courage and compassion. Amen.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Worship Planner. 16th Sunday after Pentecost. September 13, 2026. Year A.

Scripture Readings Creation in Christ (Selected verses from the Three Beginnings)

❖ Genesis 1:1-2:3

When God began to create the heavens and the earth, the earth was complete chaos, and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. [...]

And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind and the cattle of every kind and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good. [...]

And God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. [...]

And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind and the cattle of every kind and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good. [...]

Then God said, "Let us make humans in our image, according to our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over the cattle and over all the wild animals of the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." So God created humans in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food [...]"

❖ Genesis 2:4-25

In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no vegetation of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground ...then the Lord God formed a human from the dust of the ground and breathed into their nostrils the breath of life, and the human became a living being. ...

The Lord God took the human and put them in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

...

Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the human should be alone; I will make them a helper as their 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 human to see what they would call them, and whatever the human called every living creature, that was its name. The human gave names to all cattle and to the birds of the air and to every animal of the field, but for the human there was not found a helper as his partner. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the human, and he slept; then he took part of their side and closed up its place with flesh. And the side that the Lord God had taken from the human he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man 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.”

❖ John 1:1-5

In 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 overtake it.

www.FeastOfCreation.com

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Message Beginnings

In the beginning...

That is where any good story starts...at the beginning.

Many of us grew up with the traditional “In the beginning God created...” The Bible...scripture...is a love story. It started with God. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The love of the God poured out of that triune relationship into creation. God spoke into the chaos that was the earth and things started to happen. God began to create the heavens and the earth, light and dark, day and night, evening and morning.

A creation story is told to explain how things came into being. Each one is unique to the culture and the people that are trying to understand their existence and the world. The

Biblical story of creation is unique in that it sees the Creator and Creation as intertwined. Both intrinsically important. Both with responsibility. All in a valued and loving relationship with each other. The Creator creates, but as Walter Brueggemann writes, "The creator loves and respects the creation. The freedom of creation is taken seriously by the creator. Therefore, his sovereign rule is expressed in terms of faithfulness, patience, and anguish [...]" "Creation...has freedom to respond to the creator in various ways."¹ As we are well aware, those various ways can be faithful and loving, or rebellious and harmful.

What is also interesting is that we often forget that there are two creation accounts in the Book of Genesis. There is the one that we hear first. The "in the beginning" one, that is found in chapter one, but there is another in chapter two. This is the one where God creates a partner for the human by taking a part from the human to create another one. These two stories are to be taken together to give us more complete understanding of what God was undertaking as creation came into being.

God called everything into being. This is a creation story, so not to be taken literally. God spoke, but a day for God was not likely the twenty-four hours we like to think of as a day. God spoke and more shape was given to creation. God spoke and the earth brought forth living creatures of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

God spoke and there were stars, the sun, and the moon, and God saw that it was good.

God spoke, and said, "Let us make humans in our image, according to our likeness." Did you happen to notice the plurality in this? God did not say, "I will make humans in *my* image, according to *my* likeness" but rather *let us* make humans in *our* image, according to *our* likeness.

There are two points to make here. The first is that unlike the other living creatures that were brought forth from the earth, humans are made in the image and likeness of God. However, the second creation account also reminds us that "the Lord God formed a human from the dust of the ground and breathed into their nostrils the breath of life, and the human became a living being."

So, we are made in the image and likeness of God, but just as the living creatures came from the earth, we too come from the earth. At an Ash Wednesday service you may hear the words, "you are dust and to dust you will return" or at a burial you might hear, "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." It is a reminder that though we are made in the

¹ Brueggemann, Walter. *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching - Genesis*. Series Editor, James L. Mays. Old Testament Editor Patrick D. Miller. John Knox Press. Louisville. 1982. P13.

likeness and image of God were are not God, our lives are finite. It means that we have a connection not only to God but to all living things. It also means that we are vulnerable.

We are created. From the beginning we were created. We were created to be in relationship with one another, with the rest of creation, and with God. Which brings us to point number two. The “let us” part of the statement where God spoke and said, “Let us make humans in our image, according to our likeness.” The “let us” is about the relationship of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We are made in their likeness. In part, their likeness, their image, was love and relationship. Take that in as you ponder the ways people treat each other. We were made for love.

Scripture is filled with stories of how we fall short of that love. Remember we can respond to love with faithfulness or we may choose to rebel. When we rebel, we call it sin. The sin is that we don’t live into the image of God, the image and likeness of love that we were created for.

And this is only part of the story. We were and are given responsibility for the well-being of creation. Which means we should be attuned to the world around us. We are connected to creation. All is formed from the earth. We are given life, given a place, and we are given a vocation to care for the life and lives that surround us, even in a global sense, because this planet, this creation is our place and it is a gift.

Put that into today’s context and one has to wonder if we have been the good stewards of the earth we were called into existence to be. When we extract oil, pollute the waters, have overflowing landfills, species that are threatened or extinct, when we see the effects of climate change with more and more severe weather, are we understanding our responsibility, our vocations as the ones called to care for the life and lives that surround us?

We are pointed to Genesis chapter one where it says, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” We have taken that to mean that we get to take and use whatever we want, but that is not what the earliest theologians of the Israelites understood. This was about care, about serving creation, and preserving creation.

Our creation story is about care and relationship. It is not about exploitation of people or planet. And this is what makes the Hebrew and Christian faith so unique. This is relationship about love for and the well-being of life. This is about a God who created, but hasn’t stopped creating or interacting with creation. This is a story of beginnings. Throughout the Old Testament you can read stories of God’s faithfulness, patience, and anguish as humans turned their backs on the relationship, and then God beginning again and again to find ways to build and restore the relationship.

This story of beginnings culminates with Jesus becoming the very flesh that the Son was a part of when the Holy Spirit first swept over the face of the waters as the heavens and the earth were created. John 1:1-4 starts with those very words, “In the beginning.” “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.”

Jesus was the Word that was there right from the first beginning and Jesus was the Word made flesh that we rejoice in every Christmas, every Easter, every Sunday, and if we are paying attention, we are rejoicing in Jesus everyday. Our God is a God of beginnings. Jesus was there from the beginning. These beginnings have a past, a present, and a future.

This beginning from John 1 assures us that God’s love continues. As many of us learned in our first Sunday school lessons, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.” (John 3:16-17)

God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world.

Jesus coming in the flesh was about a new beginning, one that would demonstrate God’s eternal, and unyielding love for humanity and all of creation. The gives us the hope that we can have multiple beginnings. Our past continues to shape and mold us, but we can start again with new understanding, new experiences, and new hope for ourselves, those we love, and for this planet. It does mean that we can’t continue to lives as we are. Beginnings signal a change. It may be change from one good thing to another. It may mean leaving behind parts of us, our life story, that we will grieve or that we needed to leave in order to be and do better.

As a global story, it may mean that we need to look for solutions to global problems, political, environmental, and social. If we truly are made in the image and likeness of God, it means that we have the capacity to figure it out while at the same time remembering our connection to the earth.

God is not done with us yet. God’s love still flows for the created and creation. May we live into our calling as those who take responsibility for the wellbeing of the lives and life entrusted to our care.

We ask it in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit who have been there since the beginning. Amen.

Invitation to the Offering

God is ever-creating and ever-renewing. We know that God's love, as a resource cannot be depleted. Grounding our faith in that knowledge, and relying upon the companionship of Christ and the sustenance of your Spirit, we give freely, generously, and gladly.

Adapted from © Glen E. Rainsley. *Hear Our Prayer: Resource for Worship and Devotions*. United Church Press. Cleveland, Ohio. 1996. P148.

May you be encouraged to visit our website at [St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Thunder Bay, ON – Part of the PCCWeb network of churches](#) and give a financial gift to support the work of this ministry.

Prayers of the People

God, you have created the universe by your eternal Word,
and have blessed humankind in making us stewards of the earth.

We pray for your world,
that we may share and conserve its resources,
and live in reverence for the creation
and in harmony with one another.

Lord of creation, in your mercy, hear us.

You have given the human race a rich land,
a land of streams and springs, wheat and barley, vines and oil and honey.

We have made, by sin, a world of suffering and sorrow.

We pray for those who bear the weight of affliction,
that they may come to share the life of wholeness and plenty..

In Christ you call us to a new way of life,
loving our neighbours before ourselves.

Christ our Companion,
make our community one that lives out your grace and mercy.

Today we pray for those among us and around us
who are struggling to live wisely and well,
who seek a way of integrity for the future.

We pray for those who are confronting addictions
or trying to change old habits that are harmful to health:
give them persistence and support

We pray for those who want to end violence and anger in their lives:
give them courage and wisdom to walk a new way

We pray for those who are seeking new work,
learning new skills, or changing employment:
open new opportunities for them.

And we lift up all the children, students, teachers, professors and staff as
they head into a new school year or semester.

We pray for all of us who seek new ways to live out our faith

in this church and in this community:
help us communicate God's love in fresh ways
so others catch the vision of your love.

Help us to treat with care and respect the world as it is
as we live in hope and anticipation of the world as it will be
when your kingdom comes and your will is done.

Thank you for those, living and departed,
who have shown a true respect for your creation ...

Help us to follow in their footsteps,
until, with them, we see you face to face,
where all is made new in Christ our Lord.

Merciful Creator, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son
our Saviour Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray...

— from **New Patterns for Worship**, copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2002. From the Church of England's [Common Worship](#) website. Posted on the [Canadian Foodgrains Bank](#) website and The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Worship Planner. 16th Sunday after Pentecost. September 13, 2026. Year A.

Lord's Prayer

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 forever. Amen

Hymn

Praise the lord, ye heavens, adore him

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(Sung to the tune of 483 Glorious things of thee are spoken)

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|---|--|
| 1. Praise the Lord,
ye heavens, adore him;
praise him, angels in the height;
sun and moon, rejoice before him;
praise him, all ye stars and light.
Praise the Lord, for he hath spoken;
worlds his mighty voice obeyed;
laws which never shall be broken
for their guidance hath he made. | 2. Praise the Lord,
for he is glorious;
never shall his promise fail;
God hath made his saints victorious;
sin and death shall not prevail.
Praise the God of our salvation;
hosts on high, his power proclaim;
heaven and earth and all creation
laud and magnify his name. |
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"Praise the lord, ye heavens, adore him." Words: Anonymous. Public domain.

Benediction (inspired by Psalm 66: 1-12)

Go forth singing God's praises,
remembering God's promises and blessings.
Joyfully give back to the world
the love you have received
believing that God loves all creation
and abides with us.

~ written by Henrietta Stith Andrews, and posted on the United Church of Christ's
Worship Ways website. <http://www.ucc.org/worship/worship-ways/year-c/p/pentecost-ordinary-time-23.html>