



Come Grow Serve

**ST PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2025
SEASON OF CREATION: ANIMAL SUNDAY**

Welcome to St. Paul's Lutheran Church!

Today we acknowledge the special connection animals have in our lives, whether it be as pets or living in the wild. We give thanks for the example of St. Francis of Assisi and his reverence for all creation.

*Words printed in **bold** are spoken by all. Visitors are invited to sign the guest registry in the Narthex or fill out a pew card and place it in the offering plate.*

GATHERING

WELCOME

P: Welcome to those who are joining us online. Welcome to worship at St. Paul's!

PRELUDE

"The Swan" from Carnival of the Animals

Camille Saint-Saens

Diane Mues, viola

The assembly is invited to stand

GATHERING

P: Praise the Lord all the animals of the earth, the creatures in the sea, the birds of the air.
Praise the Lord all peoples and nations of the world.
All Creation gathers this day to worship God the creator, Jesus our savior and the Holy Spirit our guide and advocate.

All: Amen

P: Let us pray:
Good and gracious God, grant your people grace to gladly renounce the vanities of this world; that, following the way of blessed Francis, may your love help us to delight in your whole creation with pure joy. O God, you have made us and all living things. You are even more wonderful than what you have made. We thank you for giving us these pets who bring us joy. As you take care of us, we also ask your help so that we will take care of those who trust us to look after them. By doing this, we share in your own love for all creation.
We ask this in your holy name.

All: Amen

**GATHERING HYMN &
PET BLESSING**

All God's Critters Got A Place in the Choir

Bill Staines

Liana German, vocals and ukulele

As the hymn is sung, please bring your pet forward for a blessing.

P: Our dearest pets, may you be blessed in the Name of God who created you, and may you and your people enjoy life together with our God. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: 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.

All: Amen.

WORD

FIRST READING: Excerpt from a Sermon of St Francis

My brother and sister birds, you should greatly praise your Creator and love him always. He gave you feathers to wear, and wings to fly, and whatever you need. God made you noble among his creatures and gave you a home in the purity of the air, so that, though you do not sow nor reap, he nevertheless protects and governs you without your least care.

SECOND READING: Revelation 5:11-14

A Reading from Revelation.

¹¹Then 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, ¹²singing 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!"

¹³Then 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!"

¹⁴And the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the elders fell down and worshiped.

Word of God. Word of Life.

All: Thanks be to God.

The assembly is invited to stand.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW 172



GOSPEL: Matthew 6:25-29

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁵"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? ²⁶Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them.

²⁷Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of

life? ²⁸And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Matt Holmes

HYMN OF THE DAY

Earth Is Full

ACS 1064

The assembly is invited to stand.

1064 Earth Is Full of Wit and Wisdom [H]

F Dm C Gm⁷ Am Dm C F

1 Earth is full of wit and wis - dom, sound-ing God's de - light - ed laugh,
2 Earth is full of wit and wis - dom, wo - ven in - to har - mo - ny.
3 Earth is full of wit and wis - dom: pen - guin, pla - ty - pus, and snail,

Dm C Gm⁷ Am Dm C F

from the ti - ny ro - ly - po - ly to the tree - top - tall gi - raffe.
Ev - 'ry crea-ture has a pur - pose, ev - 'ry flow'r and bum - ble - bee.
cac - tus, sea slug, oak, and al - gae, from the mi - crobe to the whale.

C F Dm Am F Dm C

All cre - a - tion sings in won - der; e - ven rocks and trees re - joice
Spi - der, hu - man, red - wood, geck - o, mon - key, chick - en, mouse, and snake
In this great and strange cre - a - tion, with a breath God gives us birth:

F Dm C Gm⁷ Am Dm C F

as they join the ring - ing cho - rus: ech - oes of our Mak - er's voice.
live with - in a sin - gle fab - ric: cloth that on - ly God could make.
born of soil to live as stew - ards, called to love and serve the earth.

A: Renewed in God's everlasting grace, let us pray for the church, the world, and all creation.

A brief silence.

A: O God of the church, you give the church a treasure in Jesus Christ. Draw us into the gift of faith passed down from generation to generation. Remind your people that faith the size of a mustard seed is enough. God of grace,

All: receive our prayer.

A: O God of creation, you nourish the earth with grace and mercy. Bring favorable weather during the harvest season and sustain all creation along with all who labor in the field. Ensure the welfare of animal companions whose presence offers comfort, safety, and joy. God of grace,

All: receive our prayer.

A: O God of nations and communities, you govern and guard the world. Give leaders and people in authority a spirit of making just and righteous laws. Bring peace to countries affected by war and violence. God of grace,

All: receive our prayer.

P: O God of those in need, you care for those who are sick, oppressed, bereaved, lonely, and poor. Come to the help of all in need, especially those on our prayer list or those we pray for either silently or aloud (*pause*). Help us to trust that you will come to us at the right time. God of grace,

All: receive our prayer.

A: O God of this congregation, you nurture our faith. Thank you for those of all ages who teach, lead, and learn in this congregation and beyond. Give growth to the seeds of faith watered by faithful examples of baptismal living. God of grace,

All: receive our prayer.

A: O God of ages past, thank you for the witness of those who have died in faith. May the faith of those who now rest in your merciful arms, like Lois and Eunice, shape our faith in your Son, Jesus Christ. God of grace,

All: receive our prayer.

A: We offer our prayers, O God, trusting in your everlasting grace and mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

PEACE

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All: And also with you.

The assembly may be seated.

MEAL

THE OFFERING

MUSICAL OFFERING

The Friendly Beasts

13th century
arr. Kurt Westerberg

Liana German and Nicholas Marotta, mezzo-sopranos

THE OFFERING PRAYER

P: God, our Creator, 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.

All: Amen.

The assembly is invited to stand.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.

Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.

Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.

Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.

Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness
to the land of milk and honey.

Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.

Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.

Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

O God of resurrection and new life:

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine.

Bless this feast.

Grace our table with your presence.

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.
Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.
Breathe new life into us.
Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

All: Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: Together as one body, we pray the prayer Jesus taught us:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: The gifts of God for the People of God.

All: Thanks be to God!

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

All are welcome at Christ's Table. We believe Jesus is the host and the gifts of God are for everyone. Children will be offered communion unless otherwise indicated by parents. Specific instructions will be given by the pastor at the time of communion. The wine is red and the grape juice is white. Gluten free wafers are available.

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have

mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the

world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -

way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

TABLE BLESSING

P: Now may the power of Christ's body and blood reach deep into your heart, your mind and your body to heal your wounds and through you to bring healing to Earth. In Jesus' name.

All: Amen

SENDING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The assembly is invited to stand.

PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS

P: Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

All: Amen

SENDING BLESSING

P: Christ calls us to be his disciples, to serve him with love and compassion, to serve Earth by caring for her creatures.
The God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another and all creation, in accordance with Christ Jesus.

All: Amen

SENDING SONG

Let All Things Now Living

ELW 881

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace! Serving Christ and loving all creatures!

All: Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

March of the Grasshoppers

Serge Prokofieff



Pastor Matt Holmes

We are delighted to have Pastor Matt, our Pastor of Care & Engagement, serve as our pastor for the month of October!

We look forward to the messages he will share and the insights he will bring each week. Join us as we welcome him and prepare our hearts for a meaningful month of worship and teaching.

For those who don't know Pastor Matt, here is a little bit about him:

Pr. Matt serves as an Emergency Department Chaplain at Loyola University Hospital, and, until recently, he served as a Chaplain and Grief Support Specialist with Advocate Hospice. Pr. Matt is a 2010 graduate of The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and is ordained to Word & Sacrament in the ELCA. Though he's spent most of his clerical career serving as a chaplain in the healthcare ministry setting, Pr. Matt loves to preach and lead worship, and he's frequently invited to be a guest pastor at ELCA congregations around the Chicago area.

Matt is married to Rachel Wind, a former St. Paul's MIC student and another graduate of LSTC who works in development for the ELCA. They have two children, Hugh (12) and Louisa (9). In his free time, Matt is a paid-on-call Firefighter/EMT for the village of LaGrange Park, and a prolific if rarely published writer. Matt is the author of two published books *Breath: 52 Reflections for those who Care for the Dying* (Avenida Books, 2017).and coauthor with Rev. Thomas Gaulke of *Everyday Armageddons: Stories and Reflections on Death, Dying, God and Waste* (Cascade Books, 2023).

Formerly, Matt has worked as a commercial fisherman, nervous bouncer, short order cook, carny and plenty more.

THANK YOU...

- ♦ To our musicians, Diane Mues, viola; Liana German and Nicholas Marotta, mezzo-sopranos.
- ♦ To Linda Nagatani for donating altar flowers to beautify our sanctuary.
- ♦ To Caroline Foster for hosting coffee fellowship.

PRAYER REQUESTS

For David Foster as he recovers from heart surgery.

Send your prayer requests to Debbie via email (office@stpaulvanston.org), voice mail (847-475-3403).