



Season of Creation Liturgy
Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 22)
Feast of St. Francis and the Blessing of the Animals
October 4, 2026, 10:00 AM



Our Mission as St. James Episcopal Church; 1750 – Today

We are a welcoming community that invites all to share God's light and beauty through music, liturgy and action; to seek the sacred and to walk in love with all creation.



Service Participants

CELEBRANT:	Rev. Judy Ferguson
DEACON-IN-TRAINING:	Susannah Leighton
ORGANIST and CHOIR DIRECTOR:	Michael Mulder
LAY READER:	Philip Anderson
LECTOR:	Jen Upchurch
PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:	Katherine Daniels
USHER:	Chris Megerdichian
ACOLYTE:	Tank Schneck
SUNDAY SCHOOL:	Lizzie Morgan/Parent
COFFEE HOUR:	Michelle Stratman

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Sr. Steward: Janet Keyes (845) 269-0289 **Jr. Steward:** Josh Leicht (914) 669-6743

Vestry: Margaret Eaton Robert Herzberg Michael Mulder Susan Romanski
Tom Stratman Carolynn Young

Music Director: Michael Mulder (914) 485-1128

Pledge Recorders: Kristin Delli Carpini (845) 669-6146 Josh Leicht (914) 669-6743

Treasurer: Kipp Good (646) 641-9286

HOLY EUCHARIST: Rite II

LIVING WATER: Immersion in Living Water

Ezekiel 47:9, 12

"Wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live,
and there will be very many fish, once these waters reach there.
It will become fresh; and everything will live where the river goes.
On the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food.
Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month,
because the water for them flows from the sanctuary.
Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing."

WORD OF GOD

Prelude What a wonderful world by Weiss and Thiele **Michael Mulder**

Processional Hymn Ev'ry time I feel the spirit **LEVAS # 114**

Call to worship

Celebrant: In the beginning, the Spirit of God hovered over the waters. And God called them good.

People: Come Holy Spirit and cleanse the waters.

Celebrant: The prophet saw a river flowing from the Temple, and wherever the river flowed, everything lived.

People: Come Holy Spirit and renew the face of the Earth.

Celebrant: Jesus cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me... Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water."

People: Come, Holy Spirit and heal your people.

Thanksgiving for the Waters

Celebrant: Almighty and ever living God, we thank you for your love in all creation, and especially for your gift of water to sustain and cleanse all life. Christ is the living water, cleansing, refreshing, and making all things new. So now we offer our thanks for the waters that bring beauty to all that we enjoy, the wild places, the bush, the mountains, coast and the sea. We give thanks and praise for all good lands, for the trees and pastures, for our plentiful crops, and for the living water that quenches them.

(Adapted from Anglican Aotearoa NZ Prayer Book)

Deacon-in-training: We praise you for giving us life through water, and for all waters everywhere. We especially praise you for the waters who sustain us in this part of our common home.

[Local bodies of water are named as people bring a small container of water from their home, and pour it into the baptismal font.]

Celebrant: We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning you created us in your image and placed us in a well-watered garden. In the desert, you promised pools of water for the parched, and you gave your people water from the rock. When we did not know the way, you sent the Good Shepherd to lead us to still waters. At the cross, you washed us from Jesus' wounded side, and on this day, you shower us again with the water of life.

Deacon-in-training: You bathe us in your forgiveness, grace, and love. You satisfy all who thirst, and give us the life only you can give.

(Adapted from All Creation Sings, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America)

Salutation and Collect of the Day

Celebrant: The Creator be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Let us pray. Most present, loving, good Creator, grant your people grace to renounce gladly the vanities of the human world; that, following the way of blessed Francis, we may delight in shared life with your whole Creation in perfectness of joy; through Jesus the Wisdom of Creation, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Please be seated

First Reading *Season of Creation Theme* **A Reading from the Book of Ezekiel [47:9-12]**

Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live. Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.

Lector: May the Word, as living water

People: make everything live.

Psalms 65: 5-13 *Te decet hymnus*

- 5 God our Savior, You answer us with awesome and righteous deeds,
the hope of all the ends of the Earth and of the farthest seas,
- 6 who formed the mountains by your power,
having armed yourself with strength,
- 7 who stilled the roaring of the seas,
the roaring of their waves, and the turmoil of the nations.
- 8 The whole Earth is filled with awe at your wonders;
where morning dawns, where evening fades, you call forth songs of joy.
- 9 You care for the land and water it;
you enrich it abundantly.
The streams of God are filled with water
to provide the people with grain, for so you have ordained it.
- 10 You drench its furrows and level its ridges;
you soften it with showers and bless its crops.
- 11 You crown the year with your bounty,
and your carts overflow with abundance.
- 12 The grasslands of the wilderness overflow;
the hills are clothed with gladness.
- 13 The meadows are covered with flocks
and the valleys are mantled with grain; they shout for joy and sing.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

Second Reading

A Reading from the Revelation to John [22:1-7]

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever. And he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true, for the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place. See, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

Lay Reader: May the Word, as living water

People: make everything live.

Sequence Hymn

All creatures of our God and King

Hymnal # 400

Deacon-in-training: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John [7:37-39]

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive, for as yet there was no Spirit because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Deacon-in-training: May the Gospel, as living water

People: make everything live.

Sermon

Rev. Judy Ferguson

An Affirmation of Faith

**We believe in God, who creates all things,
who embraces all things, who celebrates all things,
who is present in every part of the fabric of creation.**

**We believe in God as the source of all life,
who baptizes this planet with living water.**

**We believe in Jesus Christ, the suffering one, the poor one,
the malnourished one, the climate refugee,
who loves and cares for this world
and who suffers with it.**

**And we believe in Jesus Christ, the seed of life,
who came to reconcile and renew this world
and everything in it.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the breath of God,
who moves with God
and who moves among and with us today.**

We believe in everlasting life in God.

And we believe in the hope that one day

God will put an end to death and all destructive forces.

(Lutheran Theological College, South India, adapted)

Prayers of the People:

Reader: God of living waters, today we pray for a wounded world where waters are exploited, polluted, and withheld.

People: We pray for places where plastics, toxins, and oil spills blacken creeks and wetlands, for communities whose fishing waters are contaminated and whose children drink from polluted streams.

(Pause for petitions, naming local creeks, wetlands or contaminated places)

Reader: Heal what has been poisoned. Bring justice where profit has silenced truth.

People: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Reader: We pray for all rivers dammed without the consent of the vulnerable; for farmers whose soil dries seasonal flood; for indigenous peoples whose sacred waters are engineered for distant cities and data centers;

People: for the suffering of communities whose livelihoods are stolen by corporate greed, and whose health is sacrificed for global consumption.

(Pause for petitions, naming local rivers, farmlands and affected peoples)

Reader: Free what has been unjustly controlled. Let rivers flow again with dignity and life.

People: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Reader: We pray for oceans burdened by plastic and chemical waste; for coral reefs bleached by warming seas; for great whales navigating through labyrinths of nylon and ghost nets;

People: for the microscopic life, the plankton and the krill, now mingling with the invisible dust of synthetic waste; for the rivers that carry our runoff — the fertilizers, the dyes, and the heavy metals.

(Pause for petitions, naming nearest oceans and those around the globe)

Reader: Turn our guilt into grace and our apathy into action. Make us a people who live justly, and bring healing to every shore and stream.

People: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Reader: We pray for communities where rising seas claim communities and ancestral lands, where saltwater invades freshwater wells, where graves are washed away with memory and belonging; for those who have contributed least to climate change, yet suffer first and most.

(Pause for petitions)

Reader: Hold them in dignity and strengthen global resolve for justice.

People: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Reader: We pray for informal settlements and rural villages where taps run dry or water is unsafe to drink;

People: for children walking miles to collect water or women burdened by scarcity; for those whose sickness is caused by contaminated supply.

(Pause for petitions)

Reader: We pray for those whose lives are closely intertwined with water coastal peoples, fisherfolk, marine biologists, water engineers—who can teach us wise ways to live with water. We pray for people to be moved to action and use their inherent or entrusted power to create change. Stir governments, corporations, and communities to protect and share water justly.

People: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Reader: Convert our hearts, O God. Where we have treated water as a commodity, teach us to receive it as a sacred gift. Where we have consumed without thought, teach us simplicity. Where we have used water without reverence, teach us to protect it as a gift entrusted to every generation and honor water as a source of life for all. Where we have been silent and tolerant of injustice make us courageous protectors of rivers, defenders of seas, and companions to those who suffer water injustice until justice and mercy flows like the river of life.

People: Where water flows, Lord, let everything live, trees for food and leaves for healing.

Reader: You who hold all of creation in your womb, and spring us forward onto the Earth at birth:

People: Spirit of Tides, remind us of the rise and fall of your rhythms so that we may discover them deep within our own being.

Reader: Spirit of Greenness, bring moistness and vigour to our life so that we might savor the experience of your energy moving through us out into the world. Blessings of water be upon us all.

People: May we be carried by the flow of the great river of life.

Reader: May we discover a hidden spring within, gushing forth.

People: May we be carried to the shores of the sacred and renewed. Amen.

(Trinity Wall Street Lenten Reflections based on St. Hildegarde of Bingen)

Reader: For the creatures and the human beings of your world who are ill, or in danger, pain, or special need, especially from our immediate prayer list: **Mary Pat, Randy, Michael, Ginny and family, Marissa, Rich, Janet, Kathy, John, Ann Marie and children, Alan, Jean, Paula, Bob and Deb, Rich, Maureen, Jeff, Bro, Susan, Sarah, Chris T., Wynne, Venezuelan and Columbian people, Haitians and Syrians affected by TPS, those who have lost their jobs; those who have been taken and put into detention centers;** and watch over those who care for them; that they may be delivered from their distress. We pray for guidance for **resolution of conflicts around the world, all those who suffer injustice and violence in the US and abroad, mitigation of the effects of climate change, those who suffer from mental illness, and our Community Ministries. May those who govern, especially Donald our President, do so for the good of their people and with the respect and gentleness you show to those who are most weak and vulnerable.** and for all who suffer from the unjust, violent, or wasteful use of the earth's resources or their devastation by war, that all may one day live in communities of justice and peace. Lord in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Lament

Celebrant: We lament that we have neglected the gift of the waters, and taken them for granted. Lamenting is a passionate expression of sorrow or grief;

People: a song, hymn or poem of mourning to express sorrow, mourning, or regret aloud; to regret strongly.

Celebrant: Often sins are confessed in the plural, as a sign that,

People: even if we personally have not committed each sin, our souls are bound up one with the other.

Celebrant: The response during our lament is, 'ashamnu', which means in Hebrew 'we have all been guilty'.

Deacon-in-training: We look upon your waters, O God, and we grieve:

People:

Rivers run polluted.

Oceans choke with plastic.

Marine life disappears from warming seas.

Coral reefs fade and fisheries collapse.

Ashamnu (we have all been guilty).

Deacon-in-training: We look upon your waters, O God, and we grieve:

People:

The seas rise and swallow coasts.

Storms grow stronger.

Floods destroy homes.

Drought cracks the Earth and children thirst.

Ashamnu (we have all been guilty).

Deacon-in-training: We look upon your waters, O God, and we grieve:

Confession (All)

We confess that we have not guarded your waters.

We have consumed water without restraint.

We have polluted what you called good.

We have forgotten that the river of life flows from your throne.

Forgive us, O God.

Hymn of Lament

When I survey the wondrous cross

Hymnal # 474

Absolution

Celebrant: God's mercy flows like living water. The love of God, incarnate in Jesus who spoke to troubled waters, forgives us and calms our hearts so that justice may flow to all the dry places in our lives. In the name of Christ, may this grace free us to follow and proclaim the good news of the healing of all creation.

People: Amen.

The Peace

Celebrant: Peace with yourself.

Peace with Creation.

Peace with one another.

The peace of Christ be always with you.

People: And also with you.

ORDER OF THE BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Celebrant: May God who is wonderful in all his works, be with you all.

People: The animals of God's creation

inhabit the skies, the earth and the sea.

They have a part in human life and

remind us of God's presence, imagination and love.

In the beginning you created the heavens and earth;

and you created birds and animals and blessed them.

**Animals were saved from the flood and are part of Noah's covenant;
a giant fish saved Jonah; ravens brought bread to Elijah and
the paschal lamb brings us out of bondage into freedom.
Animals are part of God's redemption of all creation.
We ask God's blessing upon these animals we present today
and upon us, may we care for them as they care for us.**

The Blessing of the Animals

All animals and owners receive a blessing.

Announcements

HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Make me a channel of your peace by Sebastien Temple **St. James Choir**

Offering Prayer

Celebrant: God, whose Spirit moved over the deep: We thank you for the gift of water — the waters on the Earth, and under the Earth, the waters above us, and within us. Make us mindful of the care of all the planet's waters, that it may richly sustain life for us and for those who come after us. Accept the first fruits we offer here. Bless and multiply these gifts to our nurture and the care of your creation; for the sake of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ.

(All Creation Sings, Augsburg Fortress, 2026)

Eucharistic Prayer for Creation III:

Celebrant: God is with us.

People: God is present here.

Celebrant: Rejoice! Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift our hearts to the Most High.

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Holy One.

People: It is right to offer thanks and praise.

Celebrant: We do praise you, our intimate God, the one who is with us, and with all of creation, the source of this magical, mystical, sensual, beautiful, earth. From microbes to whales you have created all of us.

People: We are privileged to be a strand in all of your creation, including this strange and wonderful home, our earth, the open sky above, the dazzling array of stars and planets, and the unfathomable galaxies beyond us.

Deacon-in-training: You have blessed us with a world of infinite variety and beauty, a land of mountains and meadows, canyons and valleys, deserts and jungles. Over and through this land you have provided oceans teeming with life, streams and rivers, crystal clear lakes, and cascading waterfalls.

People: We share this land with all of your creatures, from mosquito to mountain lion, from seal to scorpion. You have formed all of this, this land of such intense wildness and beauty.

Lay Reader: Therefore, we praise you, O Sacred One, joining our voices with the cry of your animals, the rocks, the stars, the Moon, the Sun, and all the universe as we shout with joy:

Holy, holy, holy Lord *Sanctus*

LEVAS # 254

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,
 God of pow - er and might,
 Heav - en and earth are full of your
 glo - ry Ho - san - na in the
 high - est. Bless - ed is he who
 comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na
 in the high - est.

Celebrant: We bless you and thank you Gracious God for all of these gifts, and for weaving us, the web of humanity, into this world. But instead of caring deeply for this most perfect of creations, the universe beyond our comprehension and this earth in which we live, we have rebelled against it, against ourselves, against You.

People: We disregarded the interconnected web of life in which we live. Instead of loving it as a mother loves her child, we put ourselves above it, as if it was something we could own. It became something to control rather than a part of us and a part of you.

Deacon-in-training: Each time you have called us back, called us to understand that we are not masters of the earth, but instead a part of the earth. You continually remind us that caring for you means caring for your earth and for each other.

All: Then, All-Holy God, you sent Jesus Christ to be among us. Through His incarnation, You taught us that You are always with us and all of the world. He showed us the way to grace and freedom, and how to show compassion to each other and the world. He gathered a people as your own and filled us with longing for justice and peace for all of creation. Keep us ever vigilant to follow his example so that we may bring about Your reign that He opened for us, through his life, his death, and his resurrection. It is a reign where all your creation will be one.

Lay Reader: On the night before he died, Jesus came to table with those he loved. Recalling his own actions of feeding the poor and eating with the outcast, he took bread, gave thanks to You, broke it, and gave it to them, and said: *"Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in memory of me."*

Celebrant: When supper was ended, he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to You, and passed the cup among his friends and said: *"Take this all of you and drink from it, this is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant, do this in memory of me."*

Deacon-in-training: Therefore, let us pray:

**All: Gracious God among us, help us to feel your presence,
and give us the strength to serve your creation and your people
this day and every day.**

Celebrant: Now gathered at your table, God of Creation, and remembering what Jesus Christ taught us, we offer to you this bread and this wine, a gift of your creation and work of human hands. Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts, O Sacred One. May they become for us the Body and Blood of Christ, just as we, your people, are that same Body. Breathe your Spirit upon us also and upon the entire earth. Make us one with your earth, so that all of Creation may become one with your Body.

**All: Bring all of us, from every clan, tribe, and nation together,
to feast upon your abundant banquet,
prepared from the fruits of your earth
and made possible by the redemption of your Christ.**

Lay Reader: Through Jesus Christ, in the unity of the entire Universe, all glory and honor to God and Creator, for ever and ever.

People: AMEN.

The Lord's Prayer

Deacon-in-training: Let us pray together in the way Christ taught us,
each in the language of our hearts,

**Holy One, our only Home,
hallowed be your name.
May your day dawn,
your will be done,
here as in heaven.
Feed us today,
and forgive us as we forgive each other.
Do not forsake us at the test,
but deliver us from evil.
For the glory, the power,
and the mercy are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

Fraction Anthem

Celebrant: Creator God, you fed us from the beginning

People: Happy are all, called to the Supper of Creation.

Postcommunion Prayer

Celebrant: Create in us a new heart and a new vision, O God,

**People: that the gifts of your Spirit may work in us
and renew the face of the earth.**

Deacon-in-training: May we be one with you
so that our work is yours

People: and your work is ours.

Lay Reader: Lead us to transform our lives

People: to reflect your glory in Creation;

Celebrant: through Jesus Christ our Savior

People: who is alive with you and the Holy Spirit,

Deacon-in-training: one God now and for ever. Amen.

Blessing of the Waters

Celebrant: Holy Trinity, transcendent in essence, goodness and divinity, the Almighty who
watches over all;

**People: Creator of all beings, the Light, that enlightens every being that comes into
the world.**

Celebrant: We glorify You, Master and Lover of creation.

People: We glorify You, Creator and Fashioner of all.

Celebrant: We glorify You, only-begotten Son of God.

**People: On the day of your baptism in the Jordan, the grace of the Holy Spirit descended
on the waters in the likeness of a dove.**

Deacon-in-training: The sun shines, and the world is lighted by the light of the Lord.

People: The moon shines with the world in its beams.

Deacon-in-training: The shining stars adorn the universe with their radiance.

People: The clouds from heaven nourish the Earth with showers of justice.

Deacon-in-training: The waters of the Jordan are changed to healing by the presence of
the Lord.

People: The whole creation is watered by mystical streams.

Deacon-in-training: By the light of the Wisdom of God, we have been illuminated.

People: The whole creation is lighted from on high.

Deacon-in-training: The land and the sea share the joy of the world, filled with rejoicing.

People: You are Great, Lord, and wondrous are Your works.

All: Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.

Lay Reader: By Your will you brought all things into being from nothingness.

People: With Your love and goodness You sustain creation.

Lay Reader: You framed creation out of four elements and encircled the year with
four seasons.

People: The sun and the moon praise You.

Lay Reader: The stars intercede with You.

People: The ocean currents flow before You.

Lay Reader: The water-springs serve You.

People: You spread out the heavens like a curtain.

Lay Reader: You established the Earth upon the waters.

People: With sand you walled in the sea.

Lay Reader: All creation sings praises to You,

People: who revealed Yourself in solidarity with the stuff of creation.

Celebrant: For You, God, appeared upon Earth and dwelt among us. Therefore, Creator who loves all creation, be present even now, by your Holy Spirit, and sanctify this water.
(Make the sign of the Cross over the water 3 times)

People: Amen.

Celebrant: Give it the grace of redemption, the blessing of Jordan.

People: Make it a fountain of life.

Celebrant: May it be to all who receive it a healing of souls and bodies, and a grace to protect the waters,

People: to be Living Water for the healing of all creation. Amen.

Celebrant: We praise You holy God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit;

People: both now and ever, unto ages of ages. Amen.

(Adapted from The Service for the Great Sanctification of Water at the Theophany of the Lord, by Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem—Orthodox Liturgy)

Hymn

I heard the voice of Jesus say

Hymnal #692

Using a branch from a local plant or aspergillum, the congregation may be sprinkled with water from the font, recalling our baptismal vocation to become water guardians.

Final Blessing and Sending

Celebrant: May the God who sprung water from a rock, quenching the thirst of those who wandered in fear,

People: spare us from the drought of a senseless life.

Deacon-in-training: May the God who flows from the wells of salvation, and who is Living Water to the foreigner, the stranger, and the unknown,

People: keep us in peace.

Lay Reader: May the God who rolls on like a river, changing the course of the world with streams of righteousness that guide the Church's vessel in this world,

People: empower us to work for transformation.

Celebrant: And may the blessing of our merciful God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

People: keep us and preserve us in eternal life.

All: Amen!

(Anglican Episcopal Church of Brazil)

Congregants can take the blessed water home to bless their homes, gardens etc.

Recessional Hymn

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee

Hymnal # 376

Dismissal

Deacon-in-training: Go in peace, as people of God, made Christ's own through the waters of baptism. In the power of the Holy Spirit. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

People: Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Postlude

Choral by Flor Peeters

Michael Mulder



An Ecological Reading of Ezekiel 47:9,12

Ezekiel's claim that fresh water will make salt water become fresh (Ezek 47:8–9) is deliberately shocking — it names something ecologically impossible in order to proclaim something theologically decisive. The prophet is not describing a natural process; he is announcing a divine reversal.

The Dead Sea symbolized death: no fish, no plants, no outflow — a place where life goes in and dies. Salt water represented sterility and judgment. By declaring that the fresh water heals the salt sea, Ezekiel echoes Genesis imagery, where God brings order and life out of chaotic waters.

This is a new creation. Ezekiel could have said the river bypasses the Dead Sea. Instead, it enters it. The point is theological: divine life flows into the most dead and hopeless of places. The Hebrew verb used (רָפָא *rapha'*) means to heal, restore, make whole. Life is renewed not through human management but through divine action interacting with the created world. Salt water becomes fresh not by human management but by divine healing. God does not bypass the place of death — God enters it.

The trees which bear fruit every month represent a form of life that has moved beyond scarcity and seasons of lack. Like the freshening of the Dead Sea, this image is intentionally non-ordinary — it signals restored creation, not improved agriculture.

Fruit trees are naturally seasonal and vulnerable — to drought, pests, war, and famine. Ezekiel is saying: in God's restored order, life is unbelievably abundant. The trees bear fruit "because the water flows from the sanctuary." Their productivity does not depend on rainfall patterns or soil conditions, but on continuous divine presence.

The imagery deliberately recalls Eden, yet it exceeds it. Eden had trees "pleasant to the sight and good for food" (Gen 2:9), while these future trees have twelve harvests a year! This is not nostalgia; it is amplified restoration — Eden has been reopened.

John the Apostle later echoes Ezekiel, presenting the river and the Tree of Life as the final vision of cosmic, ecological, and even political healing (cf. Revelation 22:2).

[Note: This paragraph, based on Ezekiel's vision of a river, is not meant to diminish the value of oceans and seas which are made of salt water and yet have also been created as living waters. Indeed, the oceans are home to much of the planet's biodiversity (cf. Gen 1:21). Moreover, the oceans contribute to climate regulation.]

Continuing Prayer List

Jackie, Rebecca, Teddy and Jeff, Morgan, Jeanette, Dean, Bennett, Ann, Joanne and Marie, Sue, Robert and family, Sister CG, Stephanie, Will and family, Kristin and family, Ben, Rob K., Sheryl and family, Sara, Walter and family, Eileen, Barry, Ross, Annie, Bill, Kathleen, Robert, Lee, John, Pam, Joyce and Douglas, John and Susan, Abdul and Mohammed, Nina, Ann and family, Biran, Chris, Betsy, Abu, Jeffrey



- October 11: **Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost; Proper 23:** Holy Eucharist service, 10 am
Sunday School at 9:50 am in Village Hall
- October 18: **Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost; Proper 24:** Holy Eucharist service, 10 am
Sunday School at 9:50 am in Village Hall
- October 25: **Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost; Proper 25:** Holy Eucharist service, 10 am
Sunday School at 9:50 am in Village Hall
- November 1: All Saints' Day: **Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost; Proper 26:**
Holy Eucharist service, 10 am
Sunday School at 9:50 am in Village Hall
- November 8: **Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost; Proper 27:** Holy Eucharist service, 10 am
Sunday School at 9:50 am in Village Hall
- November 15: **Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost; Proper 28:** Holy Eucharist service, 10 am
Sunday School at 9:50 am in Village Hall
- November 22: **Last Sunday after Pentecost; Proper 29:** Holy Eucharist service, 10 am
Sunday School at 9:50 am in Village Hall
- November 29: **First Sunday of Advent:** Holy Eucharist service, 10 am
Sunday School at 9:50 am in Village Hall



**JOIN US UPSTAIRS IN THE VILLAGE PARISH HALL
STARTS SUNDAY, SEPT. 13TH**

SUNDAY SCHOOL **At St. James**

Ages 4 and up
All are welcome!

9:50 AM - 11:00 AM EVERY SUNDAY

ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH
296 TITICUS ROAD NORTH SALEM
914-669-5563





Photo by Alison Hartwell