

September 25, 2025

Dear Ones,

I shared this story at the end of the service on Sunday morning, but wanted to spread it more broadly.

On the train to New York last week, I was sitting in my seat, reading quietly, when I heard the woman in the seat behind me say something to her partner about needing to record something and trying to decide if she had enough time before the next station stop. I made a mental note to sit very quietly, and went back to my book. But soon I heard phrases drifting over the top of the seat..."in the baptismal covenant of my Episcopal tradition....seek and serve Christ....respect the dignity of every human being...." I smiled to myself and quietly said, "I will, with God's help!" When I could no longer hear her speaking, I popped up, turned around and said, "You just did this priest's heart a world of good." Her face lit up, she said, "You're an Episcopal priest!?" Then we had a lovely conversation about the class she was taking for which she needed to make that recording, about my ministry here in Oxford County, about what it means to have our particular theological lens through which to see the world, especially right now.

Later I noticed that I had a beloved hymn running through my head. "I sing a song of the saints of God..." Specifically the third verse, which I have always found so quaint and Victorian:

*They lived not only in ages past, there are hundreds of thousands still,
the world is bright with the joyous saints who love to do Jesus' will.
You can meet them in school, or in lanes, or at sea, in church, **or in trains**, or in shops, or at tea,
for the saints of God are just folk like me, and I mean to be one too.*

In the midst of all the chaos of the world right now, it was a lovely reminder that the saints of God persist. And I mean to be one, too.

In the meantime....*keep the faith*,

Nancy+

THIS SUNDAY'S READINGS

Amos 6:1a, 4-7 * Psalm 146 * 1 Timothy 6:6-19 * Luke 16:19-31

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Brandon Susemihl 10/3

CREATION CARE TIPS

The purple headed mountain, the river running by, the sunset and the morning, that brightened up the sky.
– Cecil Francis Alexander

"... The river running by..."

River of dreams, river of life, it just seems rivers are important.

And here's some more good news about them. I've written of the improvement in the water quality of the Androscoggin River, how it was so polluted that it peeled paint off buildings and smelled terrible. And that that very same river has improved, partly because of the Clean Water Act of 1972, and partly because of corporations' concerns about their public image.

The Seine, on the other hand, isn't there yet. Last year's Summer Olympics swimming events were scheduled to take place in the famous river running through the heart of Paris. Those races were moved to the Olympic Swim Center after a great and loud hullabaloo about water quality. Perhaps the next time France hosts the Summer Olympics the Seine will be clean enough to ensure the health and safety of the swimmers. (But last week it didn't look inviting!)

There's a river not as far away as Paris, but not as close to us as Lewiston and Auburn that hit the news recently. The Chicago River is now cleaner than it has been at any time in the last hundred years! In fact, over 300 people decided to celebrate that milestone on a recent Sunday by jumping in and swimming in a mile-long race, all at once to demonstrate their trust in the quality of the water running by.

Now, to encourage all of us to go, explore, revere, and protect our beautiful world, I give you a prayer for joy in God's creation:

O heavenly Father, who has filled the world with beauty: Open our eyes to behold your gracious hand in all your works; that, rejoicing in your whole creation, we may learn to serve you with gladness; for the sake of him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen (BCP, p 814)

– Patty Watts, Christ Church Earth Keeper

Hurt not the earth—neither the sea—nor the trees. Revelation 7:3

CALENDAR

SUN:	9:30 AM	Sunday School
	10:15 AM	Eucharist
WED:	9:00 AM	Eucharist/Bible Study
THU:	9:00 AM	Christ Church Book Group/Zoom
	7:15 PM	Zoom Compline

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our new preaching rota begins Sunday! We welcome Br. Matthias Tanner as our first month's guest preacher.

Animal Blessing St. Francis Day, October 4 will be here before we know it! Past attempts to do a sort of "open house" animal blessing have had minimal response. We have had some interest in gathering at one of the farms in our congregation, but before I ask someone to make their space available to us, I need to know how many people would show up. I am also always willing to have us bring our pets to church on Sunday for a blessing—that's how Pippin first started coming to church! Let me know. Nancy+

School Supplies In past years we have collected school supplies in the late summer, to be given to one of the local schools. We can do that again, but I suggest we extend our collection time into the fall so that they have a 'second harvest' just as the things donated for beginning of the year have run out.

MINISTRIES LIST

	<u>This week:</u>	<u>Next week:</u>
Lector 1:	Jenna Mulandi	Peter Bickford
Psalmist:	Kyalo Mulandi	Mary Bickford
Lector 2:	Jill Cunningham	Jill Cunningham
Acolyte:	Evie Lehr	Doug Wall
Euch. Minister:	Peter Bickford	Tom Knight
Shepherd:	Jen Lehr	Susan Glines
Usher:	Tom Knight	Jen Lehr
Altar Guild:	Mary Bickford	Patty Watts
Coffee Hour:	Fran M & Kathy L	Bruce & Patty Watts
Counter:	Tom Knight	Mary Bickford
Closer:	Nancy Mering	Peter Bickford