



31 County Street, Ipswich, MA

September 25, 2022

ASCENSION MEMORIAL CHURCH  
A Parish of the  
Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

**Flourishing - Family - Community**

*To bear witness to the Spirit of God*

*we see in Jesus as an Episcopal community open to all,  
centered in worship, Christian education, table fellowship,  
care for the environment, and compassion for neighbors local and global.*

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*Acolytes - Ushers - Readers*  
Charlie Ackley, Malcolm, Margaret & Peter Joss-Green,  
Emmett Lees-Rolfe, John Quimby, Charles Quimby,  
Anja & Soren Suomi,  
Vicki Hughes, Paul Philpy

## **Prelude**

## **The Tower Bell**

## **Gathering Invocation**

*As we gather here in this harbor of safety,  
we give thanks for fellowship and family.*

*We ask for strength in all adversity  
and the inspiration to love and care for one another.*

*Let our hearts be filled with peace and understanding  
so that as we journey onwards,  
we pour out love and grace to others.*

*We ask that our souls catch the wind of the Spirit  
so that we may carry the promise of peace and joy  
to all the earth.*

## **Welcome**

## **Prayer Cards**

*You are invited to write on your card what concerns you most about  
Earth and its environment and what you can do to help take care of it.  
The ushers will collect the cards and they will be read aloud during the Prayers  
unless you indicate that you wish them to remain private.*

## **Responsive Reading: Cantic 12 - A Song of Creation**

### **II The Earth and Its Creatures**

Let the earth glorify the Lord,  
*praise him and highly exalt him for ever.*

Glorify the Lord, O mountains and hills,  
and all that grows upon the earth,  
*praise him and highly exalt him for ever.*

Glorify the Lord, O springs of water, seas, and streams,  
*O whales and all that move in the waters.*

All birds of the air, glorify the Lord,  
*praise him and highly exalt him for ever.*

Glorify the Lord, O beasts of the wild,  
*and all you flocks and herds.*

O men and women everywhere, glorify the Lord,  
*praise him and highly exalt him for ever.*

### Dramatic Reading: The Story of Turtle Island by Vicki Hughes



*Narrator:* Long ago, after the Great Spirit Kitchi-Manitou created human kind, the Anishinabe wandered away from their peaceful ways and began to fight amongst themselves. Brother fought against brother and sister fought against sister. Gone were the peoples' harmonious ways. Discord, jealousy and bitterness ruled the people. Seeing that the people had lost their peaceful ways and there was no longer respect for all living beings, Kitchi-Mantiou decided to cleanse the Earth by bringing about a flood.

After the flood some of the animals and humans survived and floated on a log. But there was no land on which to live and grow. A kind human raised her voice:



*Woman:* I am going to dive to the bottom of the water and grab a handful of earth. With this earth, we could make a new land on which to live.



*Narrator:* The woman dove into the water and disappeared for a long time. The humans and all the other species waited and waited. They thought that she had drowned. Finally, she surfaced, gasping for air



*Woman:* The water is too deep for me to reach the bottom.



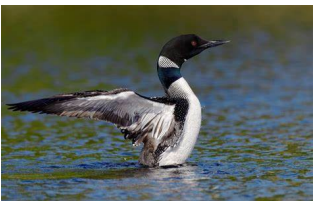
*Narrator:* Then the loon spoke up:



*Loon:* I can dive deep into the water as that is how I catch my food. I will try to make it to the bottom and return with some earth in my beak.



*Narrator:* Loon then dove into the water. Finally after what seemed like the longest time, the Loon returned to the surface weakened and out of breath.



*Loon:* I could not make it; there must be no bottom to the water.



*Narrator:* After that, many more animals dove off the log and tried to reach the bottom to bring much needed earth to the surface. No one succeeded.

Finally the little muskrat spoke up.



*Muskrat:* I'll try!



*Narrator:* Many of the larger and stronger animals laughed saying that the little rodent was too small and weak. But then the wise raven said:



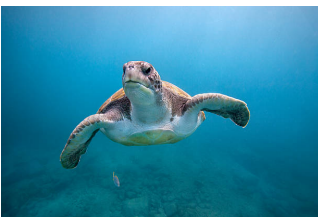
*Raven:* Only Kitchi-Manitou can judge others. Let the brave muskrat try.



*Narrator:* Off into the water went the muskrat. He stayed underwater for what was the longest time. However, underneath the water, the muskrat had indeed reached the bottom. Feeling exhausted and with his lungs screaming for air, he grabbed some Earth in his paw and used all his remaining might and strength to return to the surface.

Finally, when he returned he was unconscious, but he held a clump of earth in his paw.

All the others were humbled by his bravery. But none knew what to do next. Then Kitchi-Manitou took the earth and asked which soul would make a place for a new home to grow. Slow turtle swam up and said in a gentle voice:



*Turtle:* Use my back to take the earth, and bear the weight of a new place for all the land creatures to live.



*Narrator:* Kitchi-Manitou put the small piece of earth on the turtle's back. Suddenly, the wind blew from the four directions: North, South, East and West. The tiny ball of earth started to grow. It grew and grew until it formed an island in the water. The island grew larger and larger, heavier and heavier, but still the turtle bore the weight of the earth on his back.

Everyone danced in a widening circle and sang songs of praise on the growing island. After a while, the Four Winds ceased to blow and the water became still. A huge island sat in the middle of the water and that island today is known to us as North America

*Let there be peace on earth  
And let it begin with me;  
Let there be peace on earth,  
The peace that was meant to be.*

*With Earth as our Mother  
Family all are we,  
Let us walk with each other  
In perfect harmony.*

*Let peace begin with me,  
Let this be the moment now;  
With every step I take,  
Let this be my solemn vow:*

*To take each moment and live each moment  
In peace eternally.  
Let there be peace on earth  
And let it begin with me.*

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## **Prayers**

### **Blessing Over the Bread**

*Just as rain and snow fall from the heavens and return not again, but water the earth,  
Bringing forth life and giving growth, seed for sowing and bread for eating;*

*So is the love that flows through you and flows through me, bringing us life and giving us growth;*

*It will not return empty, but will break open your life and my life as a gift for feeding others, just as we now  
break open this loaf of bread as a gift for feeding one another.*

### **Blessing & Dismissal**

*Life is short, and we do not have too much time  
to gladden the hearts of those who walk the way with us;  
so be swift to love, make haste to be kind,  
and may the Blessing of the One who created you,  
redeemed you, and who walks always with you,  
be with you and all those you love, this day and always. Amen*

### **Food Collection For The Four-Footed**

As we celebrate the Feast of St. Francis with the blessing of our furred, feathered, and finned companions (2 Oct), and as the diocese designates October as a month to honour creation, we remember that those in our community experiencing food insecurity may also have cats and dogs in their families.

To help and share our bounty and affection, we will be collecting donations of pet food at all liturgies on Sunday, October 2nd and taking them to the food pantry.