

# ST CROSS NEWSLETTER

September 2026

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*The Vicar writes.....*

*Dear Friends*

September is here, the days become shorter, the coolness of Autumn arrives, and I expect, given the extraordinary heat of the summer, that the autumnal colours that the fall often produces may not be quite so spectacular this year.

Whilst the Sundays of Trinity continue through September and October there is a growing emphasis in the Church's liturgical year on the theme of Creation. Creationtide, now more commonly known as the Season of Creation, is a concept introduced by the spiritual leader of Eastern Orthodox Christians, the late Ecumenical Patriarch, Demetrios I, in 1989. Since then, September 1st (chosen because it is the first day of the Orthodox ecclesiastical year) has been adopted as the start of Creationtide. This is the season, running to St Francis Day on October 4th, when churches and congregations are called to pay special attention to the responsibility of humanity for the Earth and for all that lives upon it. Its start and end dates reflect that it is a shared idea between Western and Eastern Christianity.

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland adopted the concept in 2008. In 2016, Pope Francis declared September 1st an annual World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creationtide. While its adoption was in part driven by the complex environmental crises humanity faces, the Season of Creation draws on much deeper roots in

Scripture and in older Christian traditions of the relationship between God, humanity and the created order. The timing of the Season of Creation means it is an excellent way of rooting traditional harvest festivals in wider issues and firm theological ground. Our Harvest Festival takes place on Sunday October 4<sup>th</sup>.

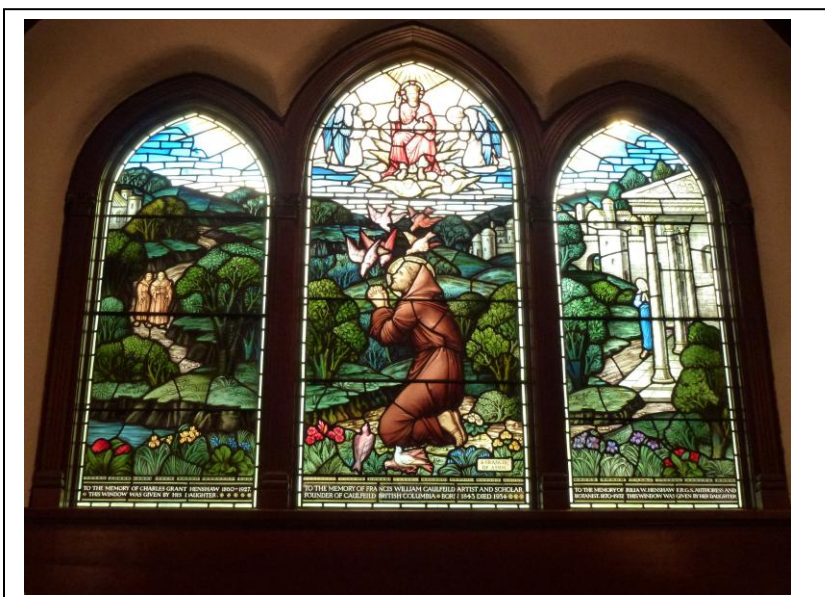
While some churches may observe the whole season of Creationtide, the direction from General Synod has been to adopt a single day festival known as 'Creation in Christ' which some churches may also use to launch a seasonal observance. Given we always have 'Holy Cross Day' in September, which this year we celebrate on the 13<sup>th</sup>, and our own Harvest Festival in October, it seems appropriate to me that we observe the Festival of Creation in Christ. We are an ECO-Church.

The theme for the Season of Creation 2026 is living water, based on Ezekiel 47:1-12. God's life-giving water flows from the temple of God, growing deeper, restoring barren land, reviving waters, and sustaining flourishing ecosystems.

The vision invites us to recognise our responsibility, the ecological damage caused by humans, embrace our inter-connectedness with all creation, and to immerse ourselves in the living water of God's Holy Spirit, and actively to play our part in the environmental healing of the world so that all may flourish together.

Yours, in Christ

*Paul*



**The East Window at St Francis in the Wood Church – West Vancouver**

## ***PROPOSAL TO UPGRADE THE LIGHTING IN THE PARISH HALL***

The PCC in May agreed that Steven Benson should investigate improving the lighting in the Parish Hall and that we would hold back on implementing major changes in the church by using existing lighting units that we have in stock.

### **Why change the hall lighting?**

- 1) Health and Safety: Installing more modern LED lights will reduce the need for changing lights, climbing ladders etc.
- 2) LED lights are more efficient thus less costly to use and are more 'green'; as an ECO Church we should aim to use LED lights wherever possible.
- 3) The experience in worship: From October 2025 to April 2026 we had six 'special' services in the Parish Hall using lighting set up by Steven. Steven, with input from myself to support him, had to set up and dismantle Steven's personal lighting equipment on three occasions. Apart from the time taken there were the usual Health and Safety concerns, climbing up and down high ladders to achieve this. For those who attended these services the ambience of the hall proved to be really pleasing on the eye and facilitated a more prayerful and spiritual atmosphere in the hall. Having a more permanent installation will also enable more worshippers at regular services - such as the Celtic Eucharist and the Midweek Service - to benefit from this improvement.
- 4) Cost saving: There is no doubt that our church family - in line with the national trend - is ageing. Attendances through this summer at our 10am service have rarely exceeded 30. When cold weather comes in the winter, I expect numbers may well drop to nearer 20 at the 10am service. Whilst we cannot turn the Church heating off in wintry conditions, we could certainly reduce the usage of gas and electricity if services were to move into the hall. I think it is also a pragmatic and compassionate response to move such services when temperatures dictate, and having a hall that really feels like a Church worship space would make that move a more welcoming experience. (I should add that one drawback of moving into the hall is that there is no dedicated corner for any young family attending.)

5) Insurance for the future: our boiler is getting older too and we cannot be certain how much life is left in this. Currently, replacing a gas fired boiler with a like for like replacement is a long, arduous, if not impossible, process. Implementing a green heating solution in the Church would be a very expensive project and way beyond our means at this present time. Having a fully refurbished hall with soft lighting will future-proof St Cross for holding services at any time of the year.

6) The Open Gardens event stated that funds raised were for 'St Cross Restoration.' I did ask at the PCC if the hall project was an appropriate use of the £1100 approximate profit and the PCC were of one mind that this was the correct thing to do. The PCC did not want the £1100 to contribute to paying the general running costs.

7) Financial responsibility: following the stewardship campaign I am aware - without knowing specifics - that there has been a good number of positive responses. I suppose we have to ask ourselves how we feel about giving solely to pay the Parish Share, the gas bill and all the other boring, but essential costs that we have to cover. The £2000 for this project represents 2.5% of the Parish Share payment alone (1.1% if you disregard the Open Gardens contribution) and to my mind enables the givers to the Church an opportunity to enjoy something visible and tangible that they have contributed to on a relatively small scale.



*The setting for the Taizé service  
in Holy Week*

*Music for the Taizé Service*



*The meal during the service on  
Maundy Thursday*

## *Occasional Offices in July & August*

### **Wedding**

**August 8<sup>th</sup>      Sian Louise Johnson and Paul Robert Whittaker**

### **Baptisms**

**July 26<sup>th</sup>      Remiayah-Rae Ravae Edwards-Deeley  
Rennayah-Renae Aalayah Edwards Deeley**

**August 1<sup>st</sup>      Sienna Philippa Chappell**

**August 23<sup>rd</sup>      Alba Rayne Pounder-Joynson**

**August 29<sup>th</sup>      Aurora-Rose Helsby Carrington-Yates  
Harlowe Isobella Skidmore  
Nova Beau Skidmore**

### **Funerals**

**July 3<sup>rd</sup>      Jean Gibbons**

**July 27<sup>th</sup>      Sylvia Ann Falkner**



## Calendar for September

### **Mondays**

**2-4pm Monday Together in the Parish Room**

Fellowship, refreshments and activities supporting the work of the church.

### **Thursdays**

**2.30pm Prayer Group in the Parish Room**

### **Tuesday 8 September**

**7.30pm Lectio Divina (on Teams)**

### **Wednesday 9 September**

**7pm PCC meeting in Parish Room**

### **Sunday 13 September HOLY CROSS DAY**

**10am Parish Sung Eucharist**

### **Wednesday 16 September**

**11am-3pm Church open as part of Knutsford Heritage Week**

### **Saturday 19 September**

**11am-3pm Church open as part of Knutsford Heritage Week**

### **Sunday 20 September**

**6.30pm Choral Evensong with Knutsford Deanery Choir**

*Additional notices appear weekly on Sundays and on the Parish Room notice board.*

*To access the Audio Online Services from St Cross*

**<http://www.stcrossknutsford.org.uk/media/>**