**Nativity Worships Season of Creation**

**September 16, 2024**

**The Very Rev. Kirsten Snow Spalding, Presiding**

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| Prelude | *Mary Alexandra* | by John L. Hooker |
| Entrance Hymn | The spacious firmament on high | H 409 |
| Offertory Hymn | Strengthen for service, Lord | H 312 |
| Communion | Will you come and follow me  [vv 1,2,4,5] | W.L.P. 757 |
| Closing Hymn | Glorious things of thee are spoken | H 522 |
| Postlude | *Ah, lovely meadows* | Czech marching tune |

**The Creation Collect for the Day**

O God, because in our ignorance and selfishness we so often fail to care rightly for your Creation, mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may soften and unite our

hearts with all living beings who suffer; through Jesus Christ the Wisdom of Creation, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. *Amen.*

**Old Testament: Isaiah 50:4-9a**

The Lord God has given me  
the tongue of a teacher,

that I may know how to sustain  
the weary with a word.

Morning by morning he wakens--  
wakens my ear   
to listen as those who are taught.

The Lord God has opened my ear,  
and I was not rebellious,   
I did not turn backward.

I gave my back to those who struck me,  
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;

I did not hide my face  
from insult and spitting.

The Lord God helps me;  
therefore I have not been disgraced;

therefore I have set my face like flint,  
and I know that I shall not be put to shame;   
he who vindicates me is near.

Who will contend with me?  
Let us stand up together.

Who are my adversaries?  
Let them confront me.

It is the Lord God who helps me;  
who will declare me guilty?

**The Psalm 116:1-8 *Dilexi, quoniam***

1 I love the Lord, because he has heard the voice of my supplication, \*  
because he has inclined his ear to me whenever I called upon him.

2 The cords of death entangled me;  
the grip of the grave took hold of me; \*  
I came to grief and sorrow.

3 Then I called upon the Name of the Lord: \*  
"O Lord, I pray you, save my life."

4 Gracious is the Lord and righteous; \*  
our God is full of compassion.

5 The Lord watches over the innocent; \*  
I was brought very low, and he helped me.

6 Turn again to your rest, O my soul, \*  
for the Lord has treated you well.

7 For you have rescued my life from death, \*  
my eyes from tears, and my feet from stumbling.

8 I will walk in the presence of the Lord \*  
in the land of the living.

**The Epistle: James 3:1-12**

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. Or look at ships: though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits.

How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature, and is itself set on fire by hell. For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, but no one can tame the tongue-- a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so. Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

**The Gospel: Mark 8:27-38**

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” And they answered him, “John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” He asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Messiah.” And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

**Prayers of the People**

We pray for our parish members: Jamie, Nancy B., Nina A., Marian, Norma, Amanda, Duane, Ruth, Barbara and Steve and our family and friends, Miles, Bill L, Debbie K, Justin W, Georgia, David, John, Jay, Sarah, Violet, Aaron, Hudson, Kyle and the people of Palestine and Israel who are living in fear.

We pray for those who have died and those who mourn remembering especially those who have died in the wars in Israel, Palestine, Ukraine and Sudan.

**Announcements**

Join us in this month’s **Charity of the Month**, supporting [the Sanctuary Forest](https://sanctuaryforest.org/donate/). You can donate online or by putting a check to Nativity or cash in our Charity of the Month box at the back of the church. The Sanctuary Forest is a non-profit committed to preserving 15000 acres of temperate rainforest in the Mattole River watershed in Northern California.

The Labyrinth is done! Come **finish our parking lot project** with us the weekend of October 11th and 12th (either Friday afternoon or Saturday morning). We would like to paint the green path, do a little weed whacking and produce some labyrinth instructions for community use. This is a great project for teens who need service hours, or energetic grown ups who would like to contribute to our campus. Call Kim if you can help.

Please put **St. Francis Day** and blessing of the animals on your calendar for October 6th at 9 a.m. Looking forward to the conclusion of our Season of Creation with this special worship.

We will with thanksgiving receive offerings of **Nativity pledges and plate** today. You can contribute by sending a check to the church or by using the “Give” button on our website, [www.nativityonthehill.org](http://www.nativityonthehill.org).

All who participate in this Holy Eucharist virtually receive the full benefits of the sacrament by coming with the intention of being united with Christ and one another.