

St Edmundsbury
Cathedral



Celebrating our Care for Creation



Saturday 5 September 2026
3.30 pm

Welcome to St Edmundsbury Cathedral

St Edmundsbury Cathedral is Suffolk's Cathedral. It is a place of worship and mission; a place of welcome and hospitality, serving the Diocese, County and beyond. Rooted in the foundation of the ancient Abbey of St Edmund, we hold our Benedictine principles close. Built on that heritage, the Cathedral today continues to proclaim the Christian faith through our work in worship, mission, hospitality and sustainability, underpinned by our values of faith, welcome, compassion and confidence.

St Edmundsbury Cathedral is part of the **Inclusive Church** Network. As such, we believe in a church which celebrates and affirms every person and does not discriminate on grounds of age, disability, economic power, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality.

St Edmundsbury Cathedral is committed to **environmental action** and is a 'Fairtrade Cathedral'. This order of service is printed on recycled paper.

St Edmundsbury Cathedral is committed to the **safeguarding**, care and nurture of everyone within our community. If you have any concerns about your own or another's welfare, please contact our Cathedral Safeguarding Officer, Tanya Dawson, at tanyadawson@stedscathedral.org or on 07736 994036. Alternatively, you can speak to any of the clergy or wardens on duty here today.

To assist you at today's service, please take note of the following information.

Accessibility

- An induction loop system is in operation.
- The order of service indicates whether to sit, stand or kneel. However, please feel free to do whichever is most comfortable for you.
- **Large-print orders of service are available.**

Photography, Filming and Live-streaming

- For safeguarding reasons, members of the public are not permitted to take photographs or video recordings during the service.
- Please note that this service will be livestreamed on YouTube. If you do not want to appear in this please inform a warden or vergers.
- Photographs, video or livestream footage in which you may appear could be used by the Cathedral at any time and appear in the public domain including social media.
- Please ensure your mobile phones are turned to silent.

A Message from Bishop Joanne

This summer has been a time when we have experienced first-hand the impact of climate change on our daily lives. Repeated heatwaves and a prolonged period of drought have led to early and reduced harvests, a devastating wildfire on Dunwich Heath, hosepipe bans and extremely uncomfortable living and working conditions for many people, especially in urban areas. At the same time, the Church of England has published 'Hope for All Creation: a theological response to the environmental crises'. This document demonstrates that living as a Christian today means recognising and celebrating the gift of creation, its beauty and the interconnectedness of the natural world. It also means acknowledging the many ways humanity is harming and exploiting God's creation, and tackling the suffering this is causing, particularly to the most vulnerable.

In the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, we are proud that many of our churches are working with their communities to protect nature and live more sustainably. Many of our churches have used the A Rocha Eco Church scheme to enable them to integrate their environmental mission and ministry into their church life. Just over 30% of our churches have achieved an Eco Church award, with 4 churches having achieved their Gold Eco Church awards, 37 churches achieving their Silver award and 106 churches with Bronze awards. St Edmundsbury Cathedral is making good progress towards its Gold award, and the Diocese is working towards its Silver Diocese award.

To mark the start of Creationtide and the 10th anniversary of A Rocha UK's award scheme, St Edmundsbury Cathedral is hosting this service today to celebrate the many ways our churches in Suffolk care for creation. The service includes stories from around the Diocese, including projects from two of our church schools. Whether your church is actively involved in Creation Care or is keen to get started, I hope you find this special service to be thought-provoking and inspiring. Instead of becoming overwhelmed by the scale and complexity of the climate crisis, this service is an opportunity to come together to encourage each other that through faith and action we can bring hope to all who are anxious and despairing.

+ Joanne

A Message from Dean Joe

*'The Heavens are telling the glory of God,
the wonder of his work displays the firmament.'*

So, after Psalm 19, *The Creation* by Haydn links the beauty of the created order with the beauty and wonder of God. Creationtide celebrates the wonders of God's works, seen throughout the cosmos, and experienced in the quiet beauty of our own county, quietly rolling hills, bleakly beautiful coast, big skies, quiet streams, woods and fields, filled once with an immense variety of vegetation and creatures.

But we have not just taken creation for granted, we have squandered its resources and depleted its bounty. Species are in decline, a monoculture too often replacing diversity, rivers, land and seas becoming devoid of the life that once teemed so abundantly. So the celebration of Creationtide both acknowledges the beauty that surrounds us, and asks us urgently to address the ways in which we ravage it.

So, the warmest of welcomes to this important, challenging and celebratory service.



A Statement from our Archbishops

Restoring our relationship to the rest of creation is part and parcel of God's saving work and of his coming kingdom. To care for creation in partnership with others, to show solidarity with the vulnerable, to be prophetic in speech and action on these issues – locally, nationally and globally – is to live out (our Christian) faith and hope. It is an essential part of following Jesus and sharing the Gospel today).

+ Sarah Cantaur and + Stephen Ebor
From the Foreward to 'Hope for All Creation'

The Order of Service

¶ Gathering

After the welcome, all are invited to stand for

The Processional Hymn

**The God who set the stars in space
and gave the planets birth
created for our dwelling place
a green and fruitful earth;
a world with wealth and beauty crowned
of sky and sea and land,
where life should flourish and abound
beneath its Maker's hand.**

**A world of order and delight
God gave for us to tend,
to hold as precious in his sight,
to nurture and defend;
but yet on ocean, earth and air
the marks of sin are seen,
with all that God created fair
polluted and unclean.**

**Renew the wastes of earth again,
redeem, restore, repair;
with us, your children, still maintain
your covenant of care.
May we, who move from dust to dust
and on your grace depend,
no longer, Lord, betray our trust
but prove creation's friend.**

**Our God, who set the stars in space
and gave the planets birth,
look down from heaven, your dwelling place,
and heal the wounds of earth;
till pain, decay and bondage done,
when death itself has died,
creation's songs shall rise as one
and God be glorified!**

Words: T. Dudley-Smith, 1926-2024

Music: Ellacombe, Mainz Gesangbuch, 1833

All sit as The Reverend Canon Alison Alder, Diocesan Environment Officer, gives

The Introduction

We gather in the presence of God to give thanks for God's gift of creation and to celebrate our shared calling to cherish and protect it. We recognise that the earth and all that is in it belong to God and we rejoice in the abundance of creation that sustains our communities. Yet we also gather with humility, conscious of the pressures facing the natural world and mindful of our responsibility to future generations. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are called not only to delight in creation, but to serve it, protect it and help it flourish.

As we worship, may we hear afresh God's voice in the beauty of the world around us. May we be renewed in gratitude, strengthened in hope, and inspired in our commitment to the stewardship of creation. And may all that we do contribute to the coming of God's kingdom, where all creation is reconciled and renewed in Christ.

Prayers of Penitence

But first, mindful of the fact that we have so often fallen short of this, let us confess our failure to receive with gratitude God's gift of creation, and repent of the ways in which we have caused it harm.

Silence is kept.

You laid the foundations of the earth,
but we have claimed your world as our own.
Lord, have mercy.

All Lord, have mercy.

All things were created through you and for you,
but we have not lived as those who belong to you.
Christ, have mercy.

All Christ, have mercy.

You make all things new,
but our hope has grown dim.
Lord, have mercy.

All Lord, have mercy.

Almighty God, who in Jesus Christ
has given us a kingdom that cannot be destroyed:
forgive us our sin,
open our eyes to God's truth,
strengthen us to do God's will
and give us the joy of his kingdom
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Worship and Teaching

Creation declares the glory of God.
All We rejoice in the beauty of the Lord's world.
Through prayer, preaching, learning and song,
All God teaches us to cherish creation.
As we celebrate faithful worship and teaching,
All we give thanks for churches growing in wonder and wisdom.

All remain seated to hear how a church from within the Diocese is engaging with the Worship and Teaching part of Eco-Church.

At the end

Creator God,
you reveal your glory in the heavens,
the earth and all living things.
Bless all who teach, preach, pray and sing
of your love for creation.
Open our eyes to wonder, our minds to understanding,
and our hearts to faithful action;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
All Amen.

All remain seated to sing

**We have a common calling,
O God of love and grace —
to care for your creation,
to tend what you embrace.
We have one home, one future;
we're not in this alone.
We're called to work together
for this our common home.**

Words: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, b. 1961

Music: Aurelia, Samuel Sebastian Wesley, 1810-1876

Land and Nature

- The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it.
- All Every creature belongs to God.**
The fields, gardens, woodlands and churchyards
sing God's praise.
- All We join their song with thanksgiving.**
As we celebrate the flourishing of habitats and wildlife,
- All we praise God for the abundance of creation.**

All remain seated to hear how a church from within the Diocese is engaging with the Land and Nature part of Eco-Church.

At the end

- Lord of all creation,
we thank you for every tree and flower,
every bird and insect, every river, field and woodland.
Help us protect what is threatened,
restore what is damaged,
and celebrate the rich diversity of life
with which you have blessed the earth.
May our church grounds become places
of refuge, beauty and praise;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- All Amen.**

All remain seated to sing

**You call us to be partners —
to notice and to care;
you make us loving stewards
of land and sea and air.
We see our climate changing;
God, show us what to do
to care for your creation,
to heal the earth with you.**

Words: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, b. 1961

Music: Aurelia, Samuel Sebastian Wesley, 1810-1876

Buildings and Energy

God has entrusted us with many gifts.

All Teach us to use them wisely.

Church buildings stand as signs of God's presence.

All May they also reflect God's care for creation.

As we celebrate faithful stewardship of resources,

**All we give thanks for imagination, perseverance
and hope.**

*All remain seated to hear how a church from within the Diocese is engaging with
the Buildings and Energy part of Eco-Church.*

At the end

God of abundance,

we thank you for the buildings and resources
entrusted to your Church.

Grant wisdom to those who care for sacred spaces,
courage to make changes for the common good,
and generosity in the use of all that we possess.
May our buildings proclaim both your presence
and our responsibility for your creation;
through Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

All remain seated to sing

**We'll work to build strong leaders;
we'll listen to our youth.**

**We'll strengthen congregations
to help them speak the truth.**

**We'll work with other partners
in our communities —
for moral, wise perspectives
must shine in times like these.**

Words: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, b. 1961

Music: Aurelia, Samuel Sebastian Wesley, 1810-1876

Community and Global Engagement

All We are one human family,
bound together in God's love.
When creation suffers, communities suffer.
All **When justice grows, hope grows.**
As we celebrate partnership and witness,
All **we commit ourselves to love our neighbours**
near and far.

All remain seated to hear how some of the church schools within the Diocese are engaging with the Community and Global Engagement part of Eco-Church.

At the end

God of justice and peace,
we pray for all whose lives are affected
by environmental degradation and climate change.
Strengthen your Church to speak with courage,
to act with compassion,
and to seek the wellbeing of all people.
Make us faithful neighbours,
working for a world where all may flourish;
in the name of Christ.
All **Amen.**

All remain seated to sing

**We see our neighbours suffering —
especially the poor —
and so we'll work for justice
and for an earth restored.
We'll work as loving neighbours
to plan and to prepare.
We'll allocate for climate;
the earth deserves its share.**

Words: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, b. 1961

Music: Aurelia, Samuel Sebastian Wesley, 1810-1876

Lifestyle

All God calls us to lives of thankfulness and simplicity.
Teach us to treasure your gifts.
Every choice can reflect love of God and neighbour.

All **Guide us in the way of Christ.**
As we celebrate everyday acts of stewardship,

All **we offer ourselves anew to God's service.**

All remain seated to hear how a church from within the Diocese is engaging with the Lifestyle part of Eco-Church.

At the end

Faithful God,
you have given us all that we need for life.
Save us from wastefulness and indifference.
Teach us gratitude instead of excess,
generosity instead of greed,
and contentment instead of endless consumption.
May our daily choices honour you, bless our neighbours,
and safeguard your creation for generations to come;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

All remain seated to sing

**O God, as Christian people,
we don't act out of fear;
our moral obligations
will motivate us here.
We seek a blest tomorrow;
our voices rise above.
May we, today, be faithful
in this great work of love.**

Words: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, b. 1961

Music: Aurelia, Samuel Sebastian Wesley, 1810-1876

¶ Reflecting

All remain seated as James Rolls, Net Zero Carbon Officer, reads

The Scripture Reading

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew.

Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: 'Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!'

Matthew 13.1-9

All For the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

All remain seated as The Venerable Dr David Jenkins, Archdeacon of Sudbury, gives

The Homily

After the homily, a short time of quiet is kept for reflection.

¶ Responding

All stand to sing

The Hymn

**Beauty for brokenness, hope for despair,
Lord, in your suffering, this is our prayer.
Bread for the children, justice, joy, peace,
sunrise to sunset your kingdom increase!**

**Shelter for fragile lives, cures for their ills,
work for the craftsmen, trade for their skills.
Land for the dispossessed, rights for the weak,
voices to plead the cause of those who can't speak.**

*God of the poor, friend of the weak,
give us compassion, we pray:
melt our cold hearts, let tears fall like rain.
Come, change our love from a spark to a flame.*

**Refuge from cruel wars, havens from fear,
cities for sanctuary, freedoms to share.
Peace to the killing fields, scorched earth to green,
Christ for the bitterness, his cross for the pain.**

**Rest for the ravaged earth, oceans and streams,
plundered and poisoned: our future, our dreams.
Lord, end our madness, carelessness, greed;
make us content with the things that we need.**

God of the poor ...

**Lighten our darkness, breathe on this flame,
until your justice burns brightly again;
until the nations learn of your ways,
seek your salvation and bring you their praise.**

God of the poor ...

*Words: Graham Kendrick, b. 1950
Music: Graham Kendrick, b. 1950,
arr. John Barnard, b. 1948*

All sit or kneel as Reverend Judy Miller and Charles Croydon lead

The Prayers

Let us ask the God of creation to send a blessing upon us.

Upon the rich earth send a blessing, O Lord.

Let the earth be fruitful and its resources be hallowed.

We ask in faith:

All **hear us, good Lord.**

Upon human labour send a blessing, O Lord.

Prosper the work of our hands;

may all find dignity and just reward in their work;

free the exploited and oppressed.

We ask in faith:

All **hear us, good Lord.**

Upon the produce of the earth send a blessing, O Lord.

Guide us into a sustainable future,

and give us the will to share the fruits of the world.

We ask in faith:

All **hear us, good Lord.**

Upon the seas and waters send a blessing, O Lord.

Teach us to cherish the water of the earth,

and to conserve the seas, lakes and rivers.

We ask in faith:

All **hear us, good Lord.**

Upon aid agencies send a blessing, O Lord.

Where the earth is parched and the well has run dry;

where war brings want, and children go hungry;

where the poor cry out for bread and for justice,

give hands to care and heal, and compel us to be generous.

We ask in faith:

All **hear us, good Lord.**

Gathering our prayers into one, and trusting in your kingdom of justice, peace and plenty, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

All **Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done,
in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Sending

All stand as Archdeacon David leads

The Act of Commitment

As we celebrate the achievements of our Eco Churches, let us renew our commitment to the care of God's creation.

Will you seek to deepen your understanding of God's creation through worship, prayer, teaching and learning?

All **We will.**

Will you use the buildings and resources entrusted to us wisely and responsibly?

All **We will.**

Will you cherish the land, protect nature, and nurture the rich diversity of life that God has made?

All

We will.

Will you work with others for the flourishing of communities and the wellbeing of the earth?

All

We will.

Will you strive to live simply, sustainably and generously, for the sake of creation and future generations?

All

We will.

Will you continue to seek God's kingdom through prayer, action and hope, caring for creation as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ?

All

We will.

Creator God,
we thank you for the beauty and abundance of your world.
Forgive us when we fail to care for your gifts.
Renew us by your Spirit,
that in worship and learning,
in our buildings and land,
in our communities and daily lives,
we may honour you and safeguard creation.
May all that we do give glory to you
and contribute to the flourishing of the earth
and all its people;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All

Amen.

The Hymn

**Let all creation dance
in energies sublime
as order turns with chance,
unfolding space and time;
for nature's art
in glory grows,
and newly shows
God's mind and heart.**

**God's breath each force unfurls,
igniting from a spark
expanding starry swirls,
with whirlpools dense and dark.
Though moon and sun
seem mindless things,
each orbit sings:
'your will be done.'**

**Our own amazing earth,
with sunlight, cloud and storms,
and life's abundant growth
in lovely shapes and forms
is made for praise,
a fragile whole,
and from its soul
heaven's music plays.**

**Lift heart and soul and voice:
in Christ all praises meet,
and nature shall rejoice
as all is made complete.
In hope be strong,
all life befriend,
and kindly tend
creation's song.**

Words: Brian Wren, b. 1936

Music: Darwall's 148th, John Darwall, 1731-1789

All remain standing as the Canon Precentor gives

The Blessing

May God the Father, whose glory is proclaimed in the heavens, awaken in you a delight and wonder in this good creation.

All **Amen.**

May God the Son, the Word made flesh, through whom all things were made, fill you with his risen life.

All **Amen.**

May God the Holy Spirit, who hovered over the waters of creation and formed the world from chaos, form you in the likeness of Christ and renew the face of the earth.

All **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, ✠ the Son and the Holy Spirit
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

All remain standing as the procession departs and the organist plays

The Organ Voluntary

Giving

St Edmundsbury Cathedral is a charitable organisation, dependent on your donations for our ongoing work of worship, service and hospitality.

Please give as generously as you can.

If you do not carry cash you can donate using one of the contactless giving points or by scanning the QR code below.

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