Sermons at All Saints Anglican Church of Luxembour

Preached by Rev Alison Heal on Sunday 20th September 2026

Bible passages: Genesis 1: 1-12 and Ezechiel 47: 1-12

And God saw that it was good!



Story of creation – God's passion project, orderly, created in love

Other creation stories from that area and time: violence between gods, chaos, land made of divine body parts, humans created as slaves to gods etc…

Contrast!

One loving God, creating in joyful order.

God looked at the cosmos, at our planet, and saw that it was good.

Understanding of cosmos at that time: skies as a dome over the earth. Heavens filling that dome. Heavens sometimes described as God's tent, in psalms. Implication: God choses to live inside this setting, with the rest of his creation.

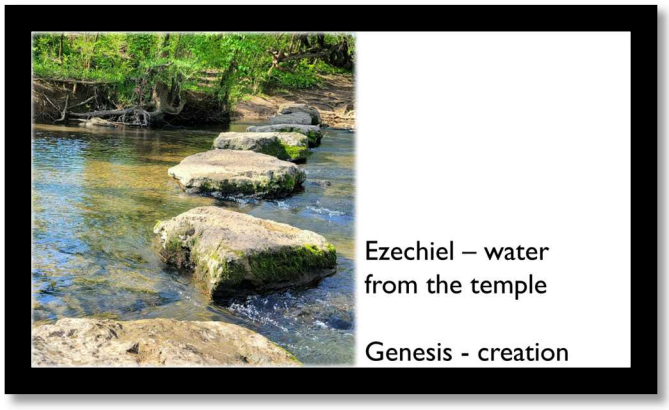
Misunderstanding when we translate 'heavens' (air all around us) as 'heaven' – a more ancient Greek idea of a far-away sphere of existence.

God is in creation, in the heavens he has made – they are his tabernacle, tent, booth. Worth remembering this word tabernacle, just means tent or dwelling.



Those with Jewish family and friends: prep for Sukkot, the feast of tabernacles, starts Sept 25th. Festival of God dwelling with his people, and of the prophecy of living water from Ezekiel.

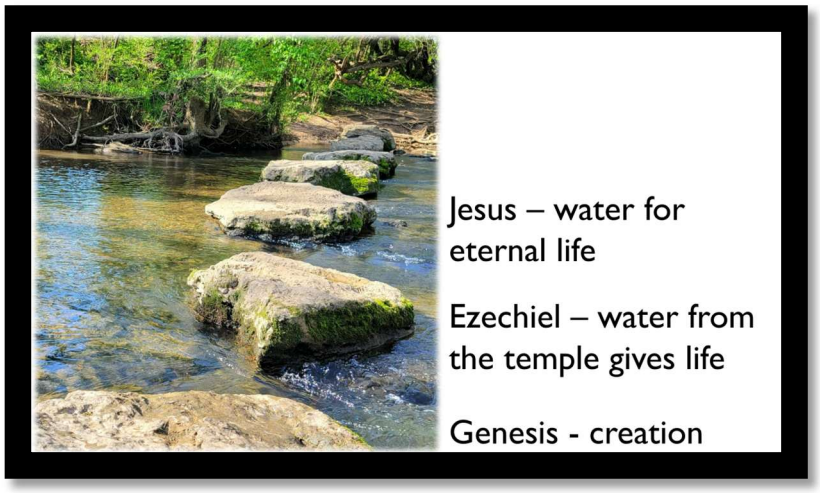
Tuck this away in your memory for next week, Gospel about Jesus' announcement about being the Living Water, on the last and greatest day of the feast of Sukkot, festival of tabernacles.



Ezechiel 47

A second stage of a good creation? We know that humans don't live well in God's creation.

God is in his heavens, all around us, now a promise for life giving water to flow from the temple



Sneak peak ahead to next Sunday, Jesus stands up during festival of tabernacles and pronounces that rivers of living water will flow from him, a change in the way that we can be resourced in living with God.

Every step of way, creation onwards, about God living with us and sharing the good that he has created with us

Each step of the story of God in the Bible is about how he is repairing the broken connections between creation and God, humanity and God, humanity and creation, humanity and humanity?

Where are we now? We can see those broken links very clearly.

Everyone has a role to play in keeping Luxembourg's water safe

Luxembourg's waterways are in poor condition, but why? And how does it affect people and nature?



Joachim Hansen from the University of Luxembourg ahead of a series of experiments on the removal of micropollutants from water. This is because Luxembourg's waterways carry unwanted nutrients, medicines, hormones and toxins. © Photo credit: Chris Karaba

This May, the Professor of Urban Water Management at Luxembourg University told the Luxembourger Wort that, although our tap water is very safe, the rest of our water here in Luxembourg is worse than in much of the rest of the EU. When you see the water in a lake or pond looking green, it's become anaerobic, basically dead, because of a buildup of algae from excess phosphates and nitrates. Hormones from contraceptive pills end up affecting the fertility of fish in our rivers and lakes. Antibiotic residues get through the waste water treatment systems and resistant bacterial strains can begin to grow. Silver in deodorants, which is antibacterial, can work well in our armpits, but causes problems in sewage treatment plants. Our population is growing so fast that relatively new wastewater treatment plants, like the one in Beggen, need to double in size to deal effectively with all the water which is flushed down our sinks and toilets.

Well, what are we going to do about that?

Awareness helps. We might shop a bit differently, now that we know. Political pressure helps. The EU has now directed producers of these products to contribute to the construction of plants which can process the products, which pushes them to produce products which are more easily biodegradable.

Prayer helps. You may just think this is the churchy talking, irrelevant to the real life out there, but let's look at what we were learning earlier. God has made this good earth, and God dwells among us here. We have our 21st century compartmentalised minds, where school stuff goes in one place, home stuff in another, God stuff in our Sunday morning box and news stuff in a

different place. But how naïve! We saw our fellow Christians in Uganda, without any difficulty, praying and singing and farming and taking action and thanking God and socialising all together, on that video last Sunday. What have we lost, that they have retained, where we think prayer is not really anything to do with real life?

So, my suggestion of what we can do, about water problems here in Luxembourg and around the world, about climate problems on a wider basis, is, start with prayer. God who is in the heavens all around us, our Lord who sends us the living water of his Holy Spirit, doesn't expect us to keep that for moments of spirituality and for Sunday mornings.

On the contrary, we can cultivate the habit of recognising God's presence with us. It's as simple as a 'chat to God' while you're on a walk or doing the housework. Or a pause for a short prayer at lunchtime. This begins to work because we stop separating practical actions and decisions from our lives with God.

We live in a broken world and, even with God's help, we're not going to turn into 100% virtuous eco-consumers. Being over-scrupulous and guilt-ridden is not the goal. But seeing God in the big picture of our lives, in the running of our country, in the ecosystems of our land and our cities, will attune us to his actions which are mending the divisions between humans and creation, and that's where we join in.

Ezechiel's prophecy describes a river teaming with life and health. If we're going to be part of that, at a spiritual, practical and day-to-day level, we need to take God's presence with us seriously. It's not environment *or* God. It's not work *or* God, family *or* God. It's God *and* all of these core parts of our lives. And I believe this is the big adventure for us at All Saints, as we walk deeper into God's living water, that our lives and our thinking will become less compartmentalised and more whole-hearted, more fulfilled, more complete, as God in his creation, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, comes to live with us.