

## **"Woven in a Relationship with Creation"**

Sermon by Lisa Crismore

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Genesis 1:1-28

Narrator: In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said,

God: "Let there be light";

Narrator: and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. And God said,

God: "Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters."

Narrator: So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day. And God said,

God: "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear."

Narrator: And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. Then God said,

God: "Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it."

Narrator: And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day. And God said,

God: "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth."

Narrator: And it was so. God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day. And God said,

God: "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky."

Narrator: So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying,

God: "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth."

Narrator: And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day. And God said,

God: "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind."

Narrator: And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good. Then God said,

God: "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."

Narrator: So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them,

God: "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

We find ourselves today at the very beginning of the Bible. It is when it all began. God decided to create everything. In this beautiful poem and perhaps from our childhood Sunday School lessons, we know that it didn't happen all at once. It started with light. There was this harmonious order. The light needed to be separated into day and night. The earth receives water, land and sky. Vegetation comes with seeds for reproduction. In fact, most everything is given the ability to reproduce. The sea is blessed with fish and birds take flight in the sky. Animals are added. And God saves the best for last, human beings! Everything that God created was good!

In this sermon series, we are looking at the ties that bind us together. Today's word is woven. The story of creation is written as though it was a symphony woven together by notes. God creates each part at just the time as though a composer writes the music adding various musical instruments at just the right time. Or perhaps, we can picture vibrant colored threads being woven in and out to create a beautiful tapestry.

We can't overlook the fact that God creates us in God's image – male and female. I always wondered what this meant. Does Michelangelo have it right in the Sistine Chapel? When you look up and see what he interprets as God reaching out as the white bearded old man with wisdom in his eyes to touch Adam's finger. This is one of those mysteries that hopefully one day we will know exactly what this means. Not only are we humans created in God's image but we were also called to subdue creation and have dominion over it.

I love what The Message version says, "God created human beings; he created them godlike, Reflecting God's nature. He created them male and female. God blessed them: "Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth! Take charge! **Be responsible** for fish in the sea and birds in the air, for every living thing that moves on the face of Earth."

I don't know about you but this is a pretty tall order. It is one thing to take control and dominate something using it for my purpose and only for my best interest. But, when I am called to be responsible for something especially creation that belongs to everybody, I really want to turn it back over to God. It is downright difficult! When we mess up creation because we weren't taking responsibility, the symphony sounds terribly out of tune and the beautiful tapestry has major flaws in it.

As the children, youth and adults met this weekend at Pyoca for all church retreat, we explored being drawn in. So much of our lives are driven by the demands of our life, we don't always stop and give space for creativity. This can renew your soul and help you to see the world around you in a different way.

The time with the children was a little bit different than with the adults as we used God's creation of the animals to help us explore and be creative. We traveled to various continents in our imaginations. We first talked about the kangaroo from Australia. God gave its mothers this amazing pouch that carries, protects and nurtures its babies. Only God could **dream** up something like this! We talked about how God protects us with an invisible pouch. For our creative time, we took ink pads and made all kinds of things with our fingerprints. The boys were very into snakes!

Our next stop was in Africa, which Ochneil and Emanuel knew about because they are from Cameroon. We discussed the giraffe which can grow up to twenty feet. With the giraffe's long neck, it can see far off into the distance. Our group talked about the need to try and see other's perspectives so we can get a sense of the BIG picture. We can be hindered if we get caught up in the small details. It is important for us to ask God to show us all that we need to see. Emanuel took painters tape and made a hidden picture on a big piece of paper. We then took big dot markers

and stamped all over the area. When we lifted up the tape, we could see the big-hidden picture was revealed.

Our global adventure took us next to Asia where we learned about the skink. It is a little lizard that has a blue tail. When a predator tries to catch the skink by its tail, it will detach allowing the skink to get away. This is a big risk. God has created the skink with the ability to grow its tail back. We talked about how important it is to take **risk** especially as we try to care and seek justice for God's creation. For our craft project, we took model magic which is wonderful clay that dries when left out. The kids had a ball making all kinds of creations. They loved taking risks.

Our last stop was to Europe where we learned about the pipistrelle bat. You have heard the phrase "blind as a bat!" Well bats can't see very well but they have an amazing ability to hear. So our time was spent talking about listening especially when it comes to listening to God. Life can get pretty crazy and many times we start going off in our own direction. This was a good reminder to stop and **listen** for God's direction for our lives. We did another group project where the kids put tissue paper squares all over a sticky contact paper heart. It turned out fabulous!

We did not get to all the projects. So, I am going to ask you to help me with one. It is re-integrate. This is a project that will focus on us all working together as a community. We are actually going to take from the spider because we are going to create a web.

We have this ball of yarn. You will be calling someone's name and then you will toss it to them. It is important that you hold one end as we create our woven web. Once you get the yarn ball. I will bring the microphone over and please share one way that you connected with creation (sun, moon, nature, people, etc.) this week.

There is something very fascinating about a spider web. They are 7 times stronger than steel and 50 times as light. The golden orb spider's spun silk web is stronger than the material used in making bullet proof vests. Do you see the amazing things we can do when we work together as a community. God weaves us together and gives us resilient strength to do amazing things. John Knox has been strong in the past, we are strong in the present and we will be strong in the future. Thanks be to God for the gift of creation. Amen.