

**Local Worship – Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2023, 11:00 am Putnoe Heights Church  
Inspired by Nine Lessons and Carols – Creation through the Bible**

**Opening Scripture:** God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. (Genesis 1:31)

**WELCOME**

In this morning's service we will listen to the story of Creation as told through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. We will sing it in our hymns and see it on screen.

Think about over the next week and talk about over coffee:

- Which readings surprised you, moved you, spoke to you?
- Did any of them change the way you think about the Bible and Creation?

**Opening Prayer based on Psalm 19 (taken from Doxecology Study Guide, Resound Worship)**

The heavens declare the glory of God;

**the skies proclaim the work of his hands.**

Creation speaks without words,

**announcing God's glory across the world.**

We join with nature's song,

**celebrating our creator God.**

We have come to hear your word;

**refresh our souls, make us wise, bring us joy.**

Reveal our hidden faults,

**cleanse us and restore us.**

May the words of our mouths

and the thoughts of our hearts

**be pleasing in your sight,**

**our Rock and our Redeemer.**

**GENESIS 1, In the beginning**

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. 4 God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

6 And God said, "Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water." 7 So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. 8 God called the vault "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

9 And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. 10 God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good.

11 Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. 12 The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

**HYMN: StF 106 God, Whose Almighty Word**

1. God, whose almighty word  
chaos and darkness heard,  
and took their flight,  
hear us, we humbly pray,  
and where the gospel day  
sheds not its glorious ray,  
let there be light!

2. Christ, you have come to bring  
on your redeeming wing  
healing and sight,  
health to the sick in mind,  
sight to the inly blind,  
O to all humankind  
let there be light!

3. Spirit of truth and love,  
life-giving holy Dove,  
speed forth your flight;  
move on the waters' face  
bearing the lamp of grace  
and, in earth's darkest place,  
let there be light!

4. Blessed and holy Three,  
glorious Trinity,  
wisdom, love, might:  
boundless as ocean's tide  
rolling in fullest pride  
through the world far and wide,  
let there be light!

**WISDOM – JOB 38, God speaks out of the storm**

31 "Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades?

Can you loosen Orion's belt?

32 Can you bring forth the constellations in their seasons[c]  
or lead out the Bear with its cubs?

33 Do you know the laws of the heavens?

Can you set up God's dominion over the earth?

34 "Can you raise your voice to the clouds

and cover yourself with a flood of water?  
35 Do you send the lightning bolts on their way?  
Do they report to you, 'Here we are'?  
36 Who gives the ibis wisdom  
or gives the rooster understanding?  
37 Who has the wisdom to count the clouds?  
Who can tip over the water jars of the heavens  
38 when the dust becomes hard  
and the clods of earth stick together?

39 "Do you hunt the prey for the lioness  
and satisfy the hunger of the lions  
40 when they crouch in their dens  
or lie in wait in a thicket?  
41 Who provides food for the raven  
when its young cry out to God  
and wander about for lack of food?

#### **PSALMS – Psalm 96, Creation praises God**

11 Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;  
let the sea resound, and all that is in it.  
12 Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them;  
let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.  
13 Let all creation rejoice before the Lord, for he comes,  
he comes to judge the earth.  
He will judge the world in righteousness  
and the peoples in his faithfulness.

#### **HYMN: StF 82 How Great Thou Art**

1. Oh Lord, my God, when I, in awesome wonder  
Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made,  
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder  
Thy power throughout the universe displayed:  
*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art  
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee  
How great Thou art, how great Thou art*

2. When through the woods and forest glades I wander  
and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;  
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur,  
and hear the brook, and feel the gentle breeze:  
*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee*

3. And when I think that God, His Son not sparing  
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in  
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing

He bled and died to take away my sin:

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee*

4. When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation

And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart;

Then I shall bow, in humble adoration,

And then proclaim, my God, how great Thou art:

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee*

### **PROPHETS – Isaiah 43, God’s mercy and Israel’s unfaithfulness**

16 This is what the Lord says—

he who made a way through the sea,

a path through the mighty waters,

17 who drew out the chariots and horses,

the army and reinforcements together,

and they lay there, never to rise again,

extinguished, snuffed out like a wick:

18 “Forget the former things;

do not dwell on the past.

19 See, I am doing a new thing!

Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

I am making a way in the wilderness

and streams in the wasteland.

20 The wild animals honour me,

the jackals and the owls,

because I provide water in the wilderness

and streams in the wasteland,

to give drink to my people, my chosen,

21 the people I formed for myself

that they may proclaim my praise.

### **REFLECTION**

**Doxecology video – You saw that it was good <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cjfOphqiWZM>**

### **GOSPELS – Mark 4, The Parable of the mustard seed / Jesus calms the storm**

30 Again he said, “What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to

describe it? 31 It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. 32 Yet when

planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the

birds can perch in its shade.” 33 With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as

much as they could understand. 34 He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But

when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything. 35 That day when evening

came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” 36 Leaving the crowd behind, they

took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. 37 A furious

squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. 38 Jesus was in

the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care

if we drown?” 39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the

wind died down and it was completely calm. 40 He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" 41 They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

### **HYMN: StF 350 I Cannot Tell**

1. I cannot tell why he, whom angels worship,  
should set his love upon us, now or then,  
or why, as Shepherd, he should seek the wanderers,  
to bring them back, they know not how or when.  
But this I know, that he was born of Mary  
when Beth'lem's manger was his only home,  
and that he lived at Nazareth and laboured,  
and so the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is come.

2. I cannot tell how silently he suffered,  
as with his peace he graced this place of tears,  
or how his heart upon the cross was broken,  
the crown of pain to three and thirty years.  
But this I know, he heals the broken-hearted  
and stays our sin and calms our lurking fear  
and lifts the burden from the heavy laden;  
for still the Saviour, Saviour of the world is here.

3. I cannot tell how he will win the nations,  
how he will claim his earthly heritage,  
how satisfy the needs and aspirations  
of east and west, of sinner and of sage.  
But this I know, all flesh shall see his glory,  
and he shall reap the harvest he has sown,  
and some glad day his sun will shine in splendour  
when he the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is known.

4. I cannot tell how all the lands shall worship,  
when at his bidding every storm is stilled,  
or who can say how great the jubilation  
when every human heart with love is filled.  
But this I know, the skies will thrill with rapture,  
and myriad myriad human voices sing,  
and earth to heav'n, and heav'n to earth, will answer,  
'at last the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is King!'

### **GOSPELS – John 1, The Word became flesh**

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

## **EPISTLES – Romans 8, Present suffering and future glory**

18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. 19 For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? 25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

## **HYMN: StF 729 Touch The Earth Lightly**

1. Touch the earth lightly,  
use the earth gently,  
nourish the life of the world in our care:  
gift of great wonder,  
ours to surrender,  
trust for the children tomorrow will bear.

2. We who endanger,  
who create hunger,  
agents of death for all creatures that live,  
we who would foster  
clouds of disaster,  
God of our planet, forestall and forgive!

3. Let there be greening,  
birth from the burning,  
water that blesses and air that is sweet,  
health in God's garden,  
hope in God's children,  
regeneration that peace will complete.

4. God of all living,  
God of all loving,  
God of the seedling, the snow, and the sun,  
teach us, deflect us,  
Christ reconnect us,  
using us gently and making us one.

## **INTERCESSIONS followed by the Lord's Prayer**

## **EPISTLES – Colossians 1, The supremacy of the Son of God**

15 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. 19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

## **REVELATION 22, Eden Restored**

1 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. 3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. 4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

## **HYMN: StF 103 God is Love: Let Heaven Adore Him**

1. God is Love: let heaven adore him;  
God is Love: let earth rejoice;  
Let creation sing before him,  
and exalt him with one voice.  
He who laid the earth's foundation,  
he who spread the heav'ns above,  
he who breathes through all creation:  
he is Love, eternal Love.

2 God is Love: and he, enfolding,  
all the world in one embrace,  
With unfailing grasp is holding,  
every child of every race.  
And when human hearts are breaking  
under sorrow's iron rod,  
then they find that selfsame aching  
deep within the heart of God.

3 God is Love: and though with blindness  
sin afflicts each human soul,  
God's eternal loving kindness  
holds and guides and keeps them whole.  
Sin and death and hell shall never  
o'er us final triumph gain;  
God is Love, so Love for ever  
o'er the universe must reign.

**Blessing Prayer based on Romans 8:18-24 (taken from Doxecology Study Guide, Resound Worship)**

As creation waits in eager expectation  
to be liberated from its bondage to decay  
and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God,  
may we, who have the first-fruits of the spirit,  
trust in the hope of God's saving power for us,  
and for his whole creation.  
Amen.