

Sermon 9.1.19 Genesis 1:1-2:3 Awe and Wonder

May this time of reflection fill our hearts with holy wonder and awe,
in the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen

On this Labor Day weekend, this morning we have heard of the labors of God, our Creator. And while the story of creation as it is told in Genesis 1, while it can seem a bit methodical, maybe even tedious, we know the creation, we know the world around us, the universe, it's anything but boring. It's fascinating! It's incredible! And the first and greatest surprise – the first miracle, really, **is this**: that anything exists at all, and we get to be a part of it.

It's all a miracle, and relative to this, the first pages of the Bible and the best thinking of today's scientists are in full agreement: ***it all began in the beginning***, when space and time, energy and matter, gravity and light, they all burst or bloomed or banged into being. *It all began in the beginning*, and this morning as we have heard the Genesis story, there is a sense in which we could say that the possibility of this universe, it overflowed into actuality. It overflowed into being as God, the Creative Spirit, uttered the original joyful invitation: ***Let it be!***

Let it be! Light and Time and Seas and Stones. Fish and Sparrows. You and me – all of the creatures, all of humanity, created to enjoy the incredible gift and privilege of being here, of being alive. I mean just imagine it! In galaxy after galaxy...suns blazed, moons spun, and upon some of those worlds storms swirled, seas formed and somewhere in between the smallest of particles and the largest of cosmic structures - here we are - in this galaxy, in this solar system, on this

planet, in this story, around this table, at this moment – here we are alive together.

The Creator brought it all into being and here we find ourselves in the midst of this beautiful, mysterious choreography that expands and evolves and includes us all. How can we not celebrate this greatest of all gifts – to be alive?!?!!

To be alive - looking up at the stars of space in awe and wonder.
To be alive – looking down from a mountaintop or looking out from the beach toward the horizon. To be alive – gazing in delight at a tree, a bird, a dear friend, a beloved child and feeling that they all whisper of the Creator we share. The Creator who makes all things good. The Creator who makes all matter matter.

I wonder, what's the most beautiful place you've ever seen? Think about that for a moment...the most beautiful place...it just took your breath away. Can you picture it? Can you feel it once again? Think about it for a moment...the most beautiful place you've ever seen...Now as you have a picture of that place in your mind and your heart, I'd like you to turn to your neighbor and just share that memory – share that mental picture of the most beautiful place you've ever seen. I invite you to turn and tell your neighbor about that place and what was so very special about it. Go ahead, please, turn to your neighbor and enjoy this moment of sharing...

Well, thank you for taking that moment to share because I think these beautiful places that we hold in our mind and our heart, these

beautiful places, they affirm that creation, the whole of the universe is truly God's work of art. And the best thing we hear then in Genesis, the best thing created is not simply human beings, but the whole of creation as it is to be enjoyed together, as an integrated whole, an integrated whole of which we are a part.

You see, the poetry of Genesis describes the 'very goodness' as that which comes at the end of a long process of creation...when all the parts, including us, are working together as one, harmonious whole that is *so good* that the Creator takes a day off, as it were, just to enjoy it. And that day of restful enjoyment tells us that the purpose of existence isn't money or power or fame or security or anything *less* than to participate in the goodness and the beauty, the *aliveness* of all that is.

The purpose of existence is to let ourselves be...to let ourselves be alive in union with our Creator, joining God in good and fruitful work, and also joining God in blessed rest, as well. Trusting all the while the words of our Lord Jesus – the words that we need not worry about what we will eat or what we will drink. We need not worry about our bodies, what we will wear. For truly *in the miracle that is the creation*, we know, we can see our aliveness is in walking the road before us. Our aliveness is in beholding the wonder, the miracle of creation and savoring each of our moments in it.

Especially this moment – when together we've paused along our journey for a simple meal with Jesus and with one another. We've gathered to sing and offer our thanks. We're here to pray and praise.

Rejoicing in our just being alive in God's beautiful and good creation.

We're alive in the miracle - Thanks be to God – Amen.