

A Mission Congregation of the ELCA
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
P. O. Box 64 - 8520 Oakes Rd - Pittsburg, Ohio 45358



Genesis 1:1 - 2:4a
September 12, 2021



Scan with your Smartphone and link to our web page, our Facebook page, and our YouTube Channel.



* HYMN OF PRAISE

“Morning Has Broken”

ELW 556



1 Morn - ing has bro - ken like the first morn - ing;
2 Sweet the rain's new fall, sun - lit from heav - en,
3 Mine is the sun - light! Mine is the morn - ing,



black-bird has spo - ken like the first bird.
like the first dew - fall on the first grass.
born of the one light E - den saw play!



Praise for the sing - ing! Praise for the morn - ing!
Praise for the sweet - ness of the wet gar - den,
Praise with e - la - tion, praise ev - 'ry morn - ing,



Praise for them, spring - ing fresh from the Word!
sprung in com - plete - ness where God's feet pass.
God's re - cre - a - tion of the new day!

* APOSTOLIC GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

* PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray... Creator God, You have created us in your image. Teach us to create, build up, and contribute to this beautiful world you have made,

C: **Amen.**

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

- **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

Theme: Created In God's Image

Scripture: Genesis 1:1-2:4a

Items Needed: N/A

Good morning! I'm so happy to see all of you today! This morning we're going to do something a little different. Are you up for something different? I hope so! I usually tell children and sometimes adults too that we don't yell in Church. Today I'm going to give you permission to yell. What do you think about that? Now, this is just a onetime permission and we're not going to go around yelling every time we come to Church. Do you all understand that? I hope so...

So, here's what we're going to do. It's called a Shout Out. I'll say the words first, then you repeat them as loudly or as softly as you like. After you do it once, we'll invite the rest of the congregation to join us. Before we get started I want you to know that God created you in God's image. This shout out will help remind all of us of this fact... So, here we go.

Repeat after me:

- † I am God's beloved child!
- † I bring God great joy!
- † I am accepted!
- † I am forgiven!
- † I am enough!
- † Thanks be to God!"

Now let's all try it!

- † I am God's beloved child!
- † I bring God great joy!
- † I am accepted!
- † I am forgiven!
- † I am enough!

Let's pray... Thank you God for creating me and for loving me. You are so wonderful and your love is so amazing. We love you and are so happy to be your children. Amen.

- **SCRIPTURE READING: Genesis 1:1-2:4a**

P: Our scripture reading is from the Book of Genesis, Chapters 1 & 2.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

1 In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the 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.

³Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. ⁶And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” ⁷So 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. ⁸God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

⁹And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

¹¹Then God said, “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.” And it was so. ¹²The 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. ¹³And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

¹⁴And God said, “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, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. ¹⁷God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

²⁰And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” ²¹So 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. ²²God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.”²³ And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

²⁴And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. ²⁵God 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.

²⁶Then God said, “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.” ²⁷So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

²⁸God blessed them, and God said to them, “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.”

²⁹God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food.

³⁰And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so.

³¹God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. ²And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. ³So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation. ⁴These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ (*Spoken*)

- **SERMON**

Pastor Mel Musser

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from our Savior Jesus Christ, amen.

All my life I've wrestled with what to do with this story of creation. As a biology major in college many years ago, I studied things like evolution and learned about fossils and carbon dating. I believe the earth is billions of years old. I believe the creation stories in the Bible are meant to reveal God to humankind, not a scientific account of how God created the universe. So, if we're not supposed to take this story of the creation of the world literally, what are we to make of it?

First and foremost, this is a story about relationship. It's the story about how God fell in love with what he created and moved in to be among His creation. In order to understand the kind of literature this creation story is, we have to forget everything we know as 21st century Christians and enter into the ancient near eastern mindset. If you're thinking of a comfortable place to ponder the origins of the universe, the South Pole would probably be pretty far down on your list. The warmest temperature ever recorded there was just 9.9 degrees Fahrenheit, and the lowest was -117 degrees -- not exactly the kind of place to put one in a garden-of-Eden frame of mind. Yet, the South Pole is the perfect place for cosmic

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

contemplation because it's the one place on Earth where you can get closest to space and still be on the ground. So, science people love the South Pole. People of faith, not so much... Ever since the Enlightenment, science and religion have often been at odds over the origins of life and the universe and there's a lot at stake in the debate. This is a stumbling block for so many who just can't get past some Christians' insistence that they must believe the creation story, literally. They're afraid if creation didn't happen exactly how and when the Bible says, then maybe the other 1,187 chapters of the Bible aren't true either. I believe there's a way to understand the stories in Genesis 1-3 as authoritative while still making room for discoveries like those happening at the South Pole and the cosmic things we can observe through powerful telescopes like the ones located at the South Pole.

(SLIDE)

Old Testament scholar and Wheaton College professor John Walton thinks so too. In his intriguing book *The Lost World of Adam and Eve*, Walton says science and Scriptures observe the same universe through two different but equally valid lenses -- like the difference between viewing Van Gogh's painting "Starry Night" **(SLIDE)** and looking at a picture of deep space from the Hubble Space Telescope. They are both true in the sense that they describe an actual thing: the night sky. **(SLIDE)** Van Gogh wasn't trying to describe the night sky

-
- * Please stand if able
 - Please be seated

scientifically; that's a function of the telescope. Van Gogh painted an artistic rendering of the reality he saw. It's a picture made to tell a story in ways beyond scientific description. There is, in other words, a way to tell a story that transcends our post-Enlightenment categories of true versus false, science versus myth. The writers and first readers of Genesis would not have recognized those categories. They would instantly know this is a story less about “cosmic creation” and more about “cosmic elation” -- the joy of a creating God who creates all things “good.”

So, what does the text mean when it says that God “created”? Walton concludes that Genesis 1 is not describing the *material* origins of the universe as we have assumed, but rather the *functional* origins of the world. In other words, Genesis is less about how God made the world than about how God made it to function. When it is functioning well, it is “good”, and God delights in it! Just look at how our text begins: “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 waters”. It's important to note God is, in fact, starting with raw materials. If this were a text concerned with material origins like, the “Big Bang” theory, we would expect the text to start with nothing, but here we have this formless void, the darkness and “the deep.” We miss this, but an ancient person would have understood what's going on here: these are all indicators

* Please stand if able
● Please be seated

of chaos and non-order. The Hebrew word for “formless” is *tohu* -- it means to lack worth or purpose. So, what is God's response to this lack of worth and purpose? God “creates” worth and purpose in bringing order out of chaos. The Hebrew word for “create” is *bara*. “Create” can refer to a lot of things, so to understand its meaning, we look at the way the writer uses it. *Bara* is used some 50 times throughout the Old Testament, and in most of those cases, it has to do with creating something for a specific role or function. God doesn't just create something; *God creates stuff for a specific purpose.*

When God creates “light” and calls it “day” God is not merely creating light, but rather the function of *time*. On the second day, God “separates” the waters, creating the function of *weather*. On the third day God creates vegetation in order to *provide food*. In other words, God begins by creating the functions of time, weather and food -- all the things necessary for human existence. The function of the animals is to be fruitful and multiply. Finally, on the sixth day, God creates humankind, whose function is to care for the creation, have dominion over it and reflect the image of God within it. Everything is created for a purpose, and at the end of the sixth day, God looks at it all and calls it “very good” -- it's all functioning as he intended.

The seventh day is different. There's this curious description: "And on the seventh day, God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work he had done." Why does God need to rest? It makes me think of a weary God, kicking his feet up, and sitting back in a Lazy Boy Recliner with a tall glass of God's favorite adult beverage. Why would our all powerful God need a nap? This description of the seventh day *is actually the key to understanding all of Genesis 1* and, in fact, the whole biblical narrative. The ancient people would have instantly understood this to be a temple-building story. In the ancient pagan world, people believed gods only "rested" in temples. In fact, temples were constructed for this purpose. Temples weren't merely residences for the gods, they were also the places from which the gods controlled the cosmos. When a god is at rest, it means there is security and stability within an ordered system because that particular god is in control. This is not rest in the sense of relaxation, but rest in the sense of all is right in the world. In reading this text, those ancient Hebrews would have known this was the whole point of the first six days of creation. God sets things in their proper order and function. Creation was now prepared and ready as a temple in which God will dwell with his people, it's the first "Emmanuel moment," -- when God comes to dwell with us! The first six days are really about God building a house. The seventh day, it becomes God's

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

home. The creation account is not merely an itemization of the material things that were scientifically or supernaturally formed at such and such a time and in such and such a manner. No, creation is the place where God lives and in which God delights.

At the end of the Bible, as we heard last week from Revelation, Chapter 21 and 22 the theme is the same, God will dwell with his people again. This is the stunning glory of the creation story. It's not so much about the *how*, but about the *who*. Our God is revealed as one who creates for the purpose of relationship.

When we understand creation in this way, we better understand our place within it.

- † We're not merely the product of cosmic dust and eons of evolution.
- † We're beloved by the God who created us in his image.
- † The earth is not merely a happy accident, but God's dwelling place.
- † We're priests in God's temple - our vocation is to care for it in God's name.
- † We're not just animals who die, but people made in the image of God.
- † We're humans about whom God cared enough to send Jesus Christ to redeem us from our sin and brokenness.

Sabbath reminds us of this reality. Sabbath isn't just for us to take a break and go to the lake or go golfing or whatever people do who choose not to attend worship services. Instead, we gather to stop our daily routine and marvel at the God who started it all and is still in control. We enjoy God's dwelling with us.

We're reminded again, "God is in his holy temple..." We gather to hear the

promise of Scripture -- that God will rest and abide with us forever. Where creation has been gives way to the glory of God who makes all things new.

The South Pole might be the one place on Earth which is closest to space and the expanse of the universe, but Genesis 1 tells us we don't have to go that far to touch the face of God. May this story of creation bring us to understand we were created for a purpose, to love and worship our God and to care for the creation God loved enough to dwell within. May God never leave us, but stay and rest with us forever. Amen.

Silence may be kept for meditation...

- **SPECIAL MUSIC**

- * **APOSTLES' CREED**

C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

➤ *Or, He descended to the dead.*

*** PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

L: We pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

L: O Lord, you said, “Let it be,” and it was so. And it was good. Remind us of the power of words to create, to build up, and to break down. May your good always be our guide. Creator God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Light and dark, oceans and land, fish and creeping creatures—all owe their existence to you. May we never forget that we also were brought forth by your creative hand, as we carry out our duty to care for all that lives and relies on our faithful stewardship for its continuance.
Creator God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Comfort, O Lord, those who still bear the inner and outer wounds of the September 11 tragedy. When events too great to comprehend threaten to overwhelm us, remind us that you are still great enough and compassionate enough to hold this entire world in the palm of your hand. Creator God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: Just as your spirit first brought our clay to life, so now breathe your healing into all who crave wholeness, especially... Creator God,

C: Hear our prayer.

L: All creation sings your praise, O Lord: that which has gone before and that which has yet to be. Join us eternally with our sisters and brothers living in your light perpetual, that we may one day join hands again as your heavenly family.
Creator God,

C: Hear our prayer.

Here other petitions may be offered.

P: You speak the word, and it is so. Receive our prayers and give us such hope in your promises that we never hesitate to ask, knowing that you hear us when we say, Amen!

C: Amen.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

*** SHARING OF THE PEACE**

(The Sharing of the Peace that began when the congregation arrived is now shared with the Pastor at this time...)

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

*** OFFERING PRAYER**

While the congregation is still standing say:

P: Instead of passing the offering plate, we ask you to please place your offering in the Offering Plates conveniently located on your way out of worship. For those worshipping with us from their vehicles, there is an offering basket located near the back door of the church and for those worshipping online if you go to www.pitsburgtlc.org you can make your offering online.

P: So, let's pray for the offerings we receive this day. We bring to you, Lord, gifts out of the abundance you have created for us. Receive our gifts, and use them to continue making this world all that it can be. We thank you for your creativity and your endless love, in the name of Christ.

C: Amen.

*** THE LORD'S PRAYER**

P: Jesus is the "tie that Binds us together", let us pray as Jesus taught...

C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

• ANNOUNCEMENTS

*** SENDING BLESSING**

P: People of God, you are Christ's body, bringing new life to a suffering world. The holy Trinity, † one God, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

* SENDING HYMN

“Let All Things Now Living”

ELW 881



1 Let all things now liv - ing a song of thanks - giv - ing to
2 God rules all the forc - es: the stars in their cours-es and



God the cre - a - tor tri - um - phant - ly raise,
sun in its or - bit o - be - dient - ly shine;



who fash - ioned and made us, pro - tect - ed and stayed us, who
the hills and the moun - tains, the riv - ers and foun - tains, the



still guides us on to the end of our days.
deeps of the o - cean pro - claim God di - vine.



God's ban - ners are o'er us, God's light goes be -
We too should be voic - ing our love and re -



fore us, a pil - lar of fire shin - ing forth in the night,
joic - ing; with glad ad - o - ra - tion a song let us raise



till shad - ows have van - ished and dark - ness is ban - ished, as
till all things now liv - ing u - nite in thanks - giv - ing: “To



for - ward we trav - el from light in - to light.
God in the high - est, ho - san - na and praise!”

* Please stand if able

• Please be seated

September 12, 2021

Page 16 of 18

* **DISMISSAL**

P: Until the next time we gather together as God’s people to offer our worship and praise, depart in Christ’s Love.

C: Seeking, welcoming, and serving all. Amen!

* **POSTLUDE**

“Thou Art Worthy”

Roxanne Groff

Copyright © 2021 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS023830. New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission.



Scripture readings for next Sunday, September 19th
Genesis 21:1-3; 22:1-14

Health Tips for the Week

BODY: Put a first aid box together

MIND: Take a first aid class

SPIRIT: Pray for first responders

Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

Ministers	All the People of Trinity
Organist	Roxanne Groff
Lector	Rob Arling
Acolyte	
Parrish Nurse	PJ Musser
Custodian	Mark Groff
Secretary	Sharon Fourman
Facebook Live Recorder	PJ Musser
Altar Flowers	

* Please stand if able

● Please be seated

September 12, 2021

Page 17 of 18



Trinity is on the Air at FM 88.3

If you are near the Church on Sunday morning, you can tune in to FM 88.3 at 10:30 AM and hear the sermon from your car.

SAVE THE DATE!

Trinity Fall Festival: October 24th from 4:00 to 6:30 pm

AROUND THE PARISH

Holy Communion Delivery Available to ALL:

If you or anyone you know would like to have Holy Communion delivered to a home or place of business, please call Pastor Mel at 937-626-7100. He will bring a prefilled communion chalice including both sanctified wine and a morsel of bread all prepackaged from the Concordia True Vine company. This is a safe way to stay connected to your brothers and sisters in Christ.

This Week @ Trinity – September 12 thru September 19, 2021

Sun, September 12	10:30 am	Worship Service
Tue, September 14	3:30 pm	Christian Education Meeting
Wed, September 15	8:30 am	GGMA Meeting
	9:30 am	GRCC Soup Kitchen
	6:00 pm	Finance Team Meeting
	7:00 pm	Trinity Council Meeting
Thurs, September 16	11:30 am	Ladies Luncheon @ Do Good Restaurant, Osgood, OH
Fri, September 17	3:30 pm	FISH Choice Food Pantry
Sun, September 19	10:30 am	Worship Service

October Newsletter Deadline: Tuesday, September 21.

Trinity Contact Info

Pastor:	Mel Musser
Email:	pastor@pitsburgtlc.org
Cell Phone:	937-626-7100
Secretary:	Sharon Fourman
Email:	secretary@pitsburgtlc.org
Office Hours:	By Appointment
Office Phone:	937-692-5670
Website:	www.pitsburgtlc.org

- * Please stand if able
- Please be seated