

WorshipChris Murphy

May 31<sup>st</sup> 2026

Scripture Genesis 1-2:4

Sermon Title: Trinity and Creation

Genesis 1:1-2:4

New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

Six Days of Creation and the Sabbath

1 When God began to create[a] the heavens and the earth, 2 the earth was complete chaos, and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God[b] swept over the face of the waters. 3 Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good, and God 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 dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” 7 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. 8 God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

9 And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. 10 God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. 11 Then 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. 12 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. 13 And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

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

20 And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” 21 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. 22

God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” 23 And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

24 And 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. 25 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.

26 Then God said, “Let us make humans[c] 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[d] and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

27 So God created humans[e] in his image,

in the image of God he created them;[f]

male and female he created them.

28 God 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.” 29 God 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. 30 And 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. 31 God 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. 2 On the sixth[g] day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. 3 So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

4 These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created. (This is the Word of the Lord)

Prayer...

Introduction:

As I was preparing the sermon for today, I chose to look at the Lectionary passage for Trinity Sunday. One option was the Creation story we read. I think it was chosen as a selection for Trinity Sunday because in the Creation story of Genesis, we see different members

of the Trinity present. The presence of the Holy Spirit is hovering over the waters and we also have an image of God as Creator. In John's Gospel chapter 1, which we will explore next Sunday, it says that in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, which suggests that before God became God the Son in Jesus, God the Word- Logos pre-existed at the Creation of the World. What this means is that the Trinity as we Christians talk about God has always been three in one. God as Trinity created the world together.

As Christians, we are monotheists. We believe God is one God, but we also teach that God is three persons and one essence. Let us take a couple minutes to remind us of who the Trinity represents according to Christian tradition:

The First member of the Trinity according to Christian tradition is God the Father. I want to remind us that imaging God as Father can be a good thing when we understand that God is the best Father we could ever imagine. However, I know it can be hard at times for

people to relate to God as Father, if they struggle with imaging Fathers in positive ways.

Another good way to talk about this first part of the Trinity is God as Mother. As a reminder, a Maternal metaphor of God exists in Scripture. In the book of Isaiah God is compared to a mother giving birth, laboring, and nursing her children. Jesus even images himself as a Mother Hen gathering her chicks under her wings. And in our passage today chapter 1 verse 27, the creation of humanity in the image of the divine includes both male and female. If men and women are created in the image of God, then to be Biblically faithful we need to remember that God is best understood with the metaphors of both Mother and Father. Also the whole story of Creation, is about birthing the world, which is why we sometimes image God as Creator, like a Mother giving birth.

The second image of the Trinity is usually the most popular for Christians. We love Jesus, the Son of God. We love him because he embodies in human form who God is on earth. I always tell people that if you need to know what God is like, look at the life of Jesus. In seminary I learned that Jesus is the fullest revelation of God. This means that you can learn about God in many parts of the Bible, but if you want the best description of what God is like, look at the life of Jesus. This also means if you have questions about what God is like, make sure your image of God lines up with the love of Jesus of revealed in the Scriptures. Too often I find that people image God in a violent or punitive way that actually does not line up with Jesus at all. Jesus is all loving and compassionate. Jesus cares for the widow and the orphan and heals the sick. Jesus casts out demons but does not demonize others. Jesus loves his enemies and forgives from the cross. Jesus did turn over the tables of the money changers but he never physically injured another human being. He did not lead an armed rebellion. He chose instead to preach peace and

nonviolence. Therefore, may I suggest that God is love and not violent in nature. God is good and safe. Like a good parent God can be firm, but God is also kind, just like Jesus was with his followers.

And yes I understand Jesus called out the Pharisees and the hypocrites, but even there he was hoping that the Pharisees might humble themselves. And some did, such as Joseph of Arimathea, who offered his family tomb to hold Jesus after the crucifixion.

Now let us talk about the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the third member of the Trinity and sometimes Christians forget about how important the Holy Spirit is as a member of the Trinity. Sometimes the Spirit is described as feminine in the Bible, such as during the Creation of the world. Our guest preacher from last week, Mark McIlraith reminded us that the Holy Spirit that came as a mighty wind on Pentecost is the same Holy Spirit that was a mighty wind hovering over the waters at Creation. This Holy Spirit at Creation is given the name Ruach, and the noun Ruach in the Hebrew is a

feminine form of the noun. The Spirit is also feminine in the book of Proverbs. Lady Wisdom in Proverbs 9 is a feminine image of God and Wisdom is one name of the Holy Spirit in Scripture. In the Gospel the Spirit is a male pronoun in the Koine Greek and is describes as a comforter and the one that leads us into truth. The Holy Spirit also bring us gifts.

I should remind us that Jesus is a big fan of the Holy Spirit and even shares that we will do greater things than he did because after his resurrection, he sent the Holy Spirit to us.

The Holy Spirit, just like Jesus and God our Creator, Mother, and Father, is described in Scripture as a person. We are invited to relate to God, the three in one in a personal way. God is not generally described in Scripture in an abstract way. God can be described as a force or source of energy in the world, but the Christian understanding is to see God as a loving personal presence who meets us relationally. This is why we can hear God's voice and

direction. God is not just an energy of love, although is God is described as love. God is a person who wishes to be in conversation with us. God wants to talk to us through our prayers.

The story of Creation that we read today reminds us that we can commune with God in a personal way through connecting to God as Creator.

In the Celtic Christian tradition, we learn that God is revealed in Holy Scripture, which we can call the Book of Scripture. God is also known through the Book of Creation. As followers of Jesus who live in the Pacific Northwest, we are blessed with beautiful nature around us at all times. I encourage you to meet God in God's creation. Enjoy nature and you will experience more fully God's presence.

My wife Karen grew up at a Christian camp where she could walk out in the woods every day and pray. She found comfort from God in the beauty of pine trees. Karen also loves gardening and she helps me

slow down and pay attention to the beauty of roses, jasmine, hydrangeas, camelias, and other beautiful flowers. Karen has a little saying. She says the closer we are to nature, the closer we are to God.

And I think she is right. In my own life, the more I slow down and walk in nature with an intention to connect to God in a personal way in prayer, the closer my relationship with God.

On this Trinity Sunday, I want to encourage you to get outside in nature. The weather is usually pretty nice as we enter summer season. As you are in nature, connect to God in a relational way as Father/Mother, Creator, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Build a friendship with all members of the Trinity. Sometimes, I imagine dancing with God. God is a community, three in one. We can enter the dance with God. We can relax and be free in God's presence in nature.

My daughters Cate and Chiara model to me love of nature all the time. Whenever we go to the beach on the Oregon Coast, they enjoy the ocean and the beach. Cate just got back from Maui and she experience meaningful mission projects, but she also spent one day at the beach, where she enjoyed swimming in the ocean.

We need to enjoy the beauty of Creation like my daughters. We need to meet God in nature, similar to how Adam and Eve hung out with God in the Garden of Eden.

On this Trinity Sunday, remember that God, the three in one was with humans, the plants, animals and ocean life during the time of Creation. This same loving God is with us, but we need to be reminded to meet God in the beauty of nature and the beauty of our family, friends, and all we encounter.

Friends, God is everywhere. There is no place we can go, where God does not exist. The presence of God is within Creation. The presence of God is within each stranger you meet, because every person is

created in the image of God. God is in the air we breathe. God is in us because the light of Christ is in each of us.

The Holy Trinity wants us to know that we are not alone. We are loved and we are known by God. God sees us and wants us to join the dance of the Holy Trinity. God is one but God is also a Holy Community that we get to join and the Church is also the Body of Christ, a Holy Community where we can find friendship and belonging.

In this Church, we never want to neglect any part of the Holy Trinity. We want to relate to God as Mother/Father/ Creator, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We want the diversity of God to be known intimately. May the God of love enfold us and may we share the fullness of God's Trinitarian love with our world, where many walk around feeling alone. May we also experience God's Trinitarian love fully when we feel alone. May we experience love from one another and may we share God's love with others and with all of creation.