

“When I look at your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
I marvel at the majesty of your name.” AMEN!

The astronomer spent forty years mapping the galaxy,
yet the night sky never once
felt finished to her.

Long after the world went to sleep
she'd climb the long steps in the observatory
to peer through the brass telescope -

gazing into the darkness that earlier
generations dismissed as empty,
but she knew better.

She'd learned through experience that
what appeared empty or void was only
something waiting.

Waiting for light, waiting for vibration, for “magic.”

Waiting for eyes to see.

One evening a young student joined her and
he asked what it was that drove her
to keep looking for so many years.

She smiled while adjusting the lens and said,

“Because creation is not a closed book.
It is still being written.”

She called the student over to take a look.

There, faint and trembling, was a galaxy
not yet catalogued, for its light was just
now reaching them after traveling for
millions of years.

“What you are seeing,” she whispered,
“is not just the past alone, but a
testimony of God’s creation never ceasing.

The student was quiet for a while, then said,

“But isn’t God finished creating?

Isn’t that what Genesis says?”

The astronomer paused and said gently,
“God rested, yes, but the waves of creation
never stopped.

God never halted the sustaining, the shaping,
nor the work of bringing forth new wonders.”

The student gazed again into the scope,
then softly said, "God still creating."

Then looked into the woman's eyes, he said,
"And not only out there."

The astronomer said, "Every act of redemption,
every heart that softens, every life made new
is God's new creation - even today." (Pause)

This little story felt important to share today
because of the translation most Bibles have,

at the start of Genesis, is

"In the beginning God created the heavens
and the earth."

I love, instead of that translation, this one:
When God began to create.

This clearly puts forth the understanding that
what God began still continues.

There was a beginning, yes, but it still goes on.

Order is still able to be brought out of chaos,
sustainability delivered from the unlivable,

and purpose out of inactivity.

It helps, I think to see that one is not good
and the other bad.

Most of us would say,

“But I prefer order, sustainability, and purpose,”

but one cannot exist without the other.

The chaos, the unlivable, the inactivity has its place,
though difficult, they have their place.

For God these are not wasted, but in fact,
the very places where we find God
continuing to create. (Pause)

Take chaos, and think of it like a room
that is scattered with what looks
like broken pieces and tools.

Like unwrapping a piece of furniture from IKEA. :-)

Everything laying there looks useless and
we struggle to see how it can come to anything,
but to God it's a building site.

Raw materials laying about for something new.

When we learn to not fear chaos, like God,
then we come to see how God creates through it
and perhaps become a part of that
creative change. (Pause)

When making sustainable from unlivable,
we might see that God does not merely
rescue people, but teaches them how to live.

I find this point a clear purpose of Jesus'
Great Commission at the end of
the Matthew reading.

“Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father, and
of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

The church has confused this command
with the need to convert, at all costs.

“We gotta make everyone Christian!” Some say.

But, Jesus never spoke of such things prior,
why would he suddenly say “do that now?”

He's not.

Jesus wanted the disciples to

continue what he'd begun, and what Jesus began was formation.

Formation in the way of changing hearts,
teaching values, and showing new habits.

These all have to do with stewardship practices.

Stewardship is that fancy word that asks us,
“What do you do when you know
what God has done?”

Our answer to that question will transform
the way we care for the environment,
one another, along with the ways
we use our money and time.

It is learning to tend with what we have
rather than consume everything we want,
destructively. (Pause)

Finally we come to purpose out of inactivity.

How many of us can't sit still?
How many of us have to be “at work”
on something all the time?

These are not bad qualities, but when
we never find rest, when we do not leave time

for inactivity - we limit our own growth.

We violate the Sabbath, the time of quiet renewal
needed to ready us for what comes next.

(Pause)

You might be thinking, this is one strange
Holy Trinity sermon!

Where's the teaching about Trinitarian doctrine or
the explanation of God in three parts? :-)

Okay, here goes... using your imagination...
imagine I am God. It's a big stretch, I know. :-)

This mirror, when looked into, shows a reflection.

That reflection is Jesus.

The mirror is the Holy Spirit.

There is no way to clearly describe, define,
nor explain an infinite God, but we can
have fun trying, even if it's heresy.

Creation is not a closed book and life
is still being written and, being open to that,
is enough.

You are enough. (Pause)

How fantastic it is to read the conclusion of
Matthew's gospel this morning and find
that the eleven disciples went to Galilee
to see Jesus as they were directed.

“They saw him, they worshipped him;
but some doubted.”

Even still some doubted, but Jesus apparently
had no problem with that.

Might I suggest that we not have
a problem with doubt, either.

In our worship and in our doubting we too are sent
to love one another and love God
with Jesus always with us.

AMEN!