



Valley Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Dear Friend in Christ,

It is a blessing for me to introduce you to our autumn sermon series, which will take us from here all the way to the Sunday before Thanksgiving. “The Whatabouts: Responding to Questions with Faithfulness” are a product of my experience as a Christian and a pastor for years on the West Coast and fielding folks’ sometimes skeptical questions about faith. We begin this series with a look at how the creation story of Genesis 1 ends, and what it can tell us about God the Creator.

If you have not had the opportunity to join us for worship, I encourage you to do so this Sunday. The following phone numbers and links are the ones to dial between 10:15am and 10:30am. You can join in one of two ways:

By telephone (audio only)

1 (312) 626 6799

Meeting ID: 867 5713 3623

By video with computer, tablet, or smartphone – click the link below

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86757133623>

(if you need a live link you can go to the homepage of our website at www.vccbhm.org)

I look forward to seeing you there!

Christ’s and yours,
Pastor Eric

Valley Christian Church

Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost

September 13, 2020

*Mine is the sunlight, mine is the morning
Born of the one light Eden saw play
Praise with elation, praise every morning
God's recreation of the new day*

PRELUDE

"This Is My Father's World"

CALL TO WORSHIP

How clearly the sky reveals God's glory!
HOW PLAINLY IT SHOWS WHAT HE
HAS DONE!
Each day announces it to the following day;
EACH NIGHT REPEATS IT TO THE NEXT.

No speech or words are used,
NO SOUND IS HEARD;
Yet their voice goes out to all the world,
THEIR MESSAGE REACHES THE ENDS
OF THE EARTH.

God set up a tent in the sky for the sun;
IT COMES OUT LIKE A BRIDEGROOM
STRIDING FROM HIS HOUSE,
LIKE AN ATHLETE, EAGER TO RUN A
RACE.

It starts at one end of the sky and goes around to the
other.

Nothing can hide from its heat.
HOW CLEARLY THE SKY REVEALS
GOD'S GLORY!
HOW PLAINLY IT SHOWS WHAT HE
HAS DONE!

Psalms 19

Morning Has Broken

HYMN OF PRAISE

*Morning has broken, like the first morning
Blackbird has spoken, like the first bird
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning
Praise for them springing, fresh from the Word*

*Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from heaven
Like the first dewfall on the first grass
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden
Sprung in completeness where God's feet pass*

INVOCATION

Creator God, "In the beginning" was a long time ago in Genesis 1 and in the long history of humankind. We often think long ago in our lives with memories that bring us joy and sorrow. O God, help us today, this morning, this hour, to feel a new beginning in your love and mercy. Create in us a new Spirit, today and always, in the words and ministry of Jesus. We come in worship for new beginnings in our faith and Christian action. Hear us and speak to us with the gift of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 1:26 – 2:4

MEDITATION

"The Whatabouts: What About the Literal 24-Hour Days?"

See Insert for Meditation

HYMN

For the Beauty of the Earth

*For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies
For the love which from our birth over and around us
lies*

*Lord of all to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful
praise*

*For the beauty of each hour of the day and of the night
Hill and vale and tree and flower, sun and moon and
stars of light*

*Lord of all to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful
praise*

*For thy church that evermore lifeth holy hands above
Offering up on every shore one pure sacrifice of love
Lord of all to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful
praise*

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS

up to you in prayer today. May you whose voice made the heavens and the earth hear the voices of us, your children, as we offer up to you in prayer today the names of those who are on our hearts in this moment...

**CALL TO
COMMUNION**

May we remember how God gave us not only a world for us to call our home, but a Messiah for us to call our Savior, whom we are called to remember here.

**COMMUNION
HYMN**

Seed, Scattered and Sown

*Seed, scattered and sown, wheat, gathered and grown
Bread, broken and shared as one, the Living Bread
of God*

*Vine, fruit of the land, wine, work of our hands
One cup that is shared by all, the Living Cup, the
Living Bread of God*

**COMMUNION
PRAYER**

Pray together the Lord's Prayer

**HOLY
COMMUNION**

Partake of the holy communion (bread, juice, or whatever is available to you)

**WORDS OF
INSTITUTION**

Hear the words of Jesus when He said, "Take and eat, this is my body, broken for you. Take and drink, this is the cup of the covenant poured out for you."

**SHARING OUR
OFFERING
WITH GOD**

Share your financial offering with the church by mail or bring it by the church office. Thank you for your love gifts.

**OFFERTORY
PRAYER**

Take my soul, and body's powers; take my memory, mind, and will. All my goods, and all my hours, all I know, and all I feel; all I think, and speak, and do: take my heart – but make it new. Amen (Charles Wesley)

BENEDICTION

Now may the God who brought forth creation with only the power of the divine voice send you forth with that same voice in your ears, calling you to love and serve the people in the name of God's Son Jesus Christ. Amen.



Christ...

**BORE OUR SINS IN HIS
OWN BODY ON THE TREE.**

1 PETER 2:21, 24 (NKJV)

MEDITATION

Sunday, September 13, 2020

“The Whatabouts: What About the Literal 24-Hour Days?”

In that same living room where I told you last week I had learned of Chadwick Boseman’s untimely death, Carrie and I spent one evening recently watching the movie *Footloose* after Sadie went to sleep. Even though the movie came out before I was born, it still really took me back. My high school put on the stage musical version of it my senior year, and that came in the wake of my classmates and I likewise feeling a bit like putty in the hands of the adults in charge of our education.

It was just a few years earlier when the Kansas State Board of Education decided that we were getting a little too much science in our public schools and stopped requiring the teaching of the theory of evolution in our science classes. I didn’t end up reading anything from Charles Darwin until I was a junior in college, and it was for modern European history, not biology.

But just because I wasn’t fully taught science doesn’t mean I don’t believe in or appreciate science. Indeed, I think in the middle of a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic especially, scientific and medical expertise are genuine blessings from God because that know-how acts to save life, and God is the author of life. So it serves to preserve that which God has written, or, more accurately in the Genesis creation story, what God has spoken into existence. And that is the real beauty for me in this text, not whether or not God spoke all of creation into being in six literal twenty-four hour days.

This sermon series is my first as your new minister here at Valley, and I arrived at it after multiple conversations with the search committee about how and why evangelism came to be noted as so important a trait in the congregation’s search and call profile. And specifically, what I heard was a need to be equipped to talk to people about faith in a way that could answer their questions—questions to which we may or may not have all the answers.

(over)

The way I experienced evangelism on the West Coast would sometimes come in the form of fielding questions from folks skeptical of the nature of my faith in God as revealed in Jesus Christ, and I came to think of those questions as “the whatabouts,” as in, “Well, what about...?” As a way of sharing with you what evangelism has looked to me, in my ministry, by trying to answer those whatabout questions, and as a way to let you into my own theology and faith, I crafted this sermon series to tackle a different question each Sunday. And today’s question, “What about the literal 24-hour days?” can act as a bit of a stand-in for the sentiment of “Well, what about science and medicine, do you even believe in that?” And, again, I think that as we experience a pandemic together, this seems a timely topic for which we could consider the following points:

-God speaks our world into being. The act of communication is the act of creation. When we communicate knowledge, whether scientific or otherwise, we are mimicking that divine act of creation, and make creation into an ongoing endeavor.

-God uses the first-person plural “our” in self-reference in this passage. Why might that be? God is far bigger than any word we could invent or assign, and taking on the (potentially infinite) plural instead of the singular is a reflection of that reality.

-The seventh day does not end in the Genesis text. Imagine Genesis 1 as a call-and-response, with the response being “There was morning and there was evening, the Xth day,” signifying the end of that day of creation. That response is not in the text for the seventh day. What if the seventh day, too, is an ongoing endeavor? How might that fit in with what we discussed together last week about laboring for love?