



May 18 • 2008

Focus Scripture

Genesis 1:1—2:4a

Additional Scriptures

Psalm 8

2 Corinthians 13:11–13

Matthew 28:16–20

Faithful Creator,
we give thanks
for your forming,
saving, and
empowering
work in our lives.
Shape us for closer
relationship with
you and meaningful
life among our
neighbours in your
reign. Amen.

Creation Continues

In Genesis 1, God speaks and new life emerges. On this Trinity Sunday, we celebrate the many ways that God continues such life-giving work among us. We rejoice in the gift of living each day in relationship with God as Christ's disciples – formed in the Creator's image and empowered by the Spirit – and commit to caring for what God has made.

Focus Scripture: Genesis 1:1—2:4a

Many scholars believe this narrative, at least in its present form, took shape during the time that the people of Judah were in exile in Babylon (586–539 BCE). In response to their captors, who insisted that their rulers held all power, these exiles told a story about their God and God's relationship with humankind that insisted otherwise. Genesis 1–2 did not originate as a scientific explanation of how all things came to be. Rather, it emerged as an assertion of the power of God, from whom all things came to be – and in whose hands the past and the future remained.

In Jewish tradition, retelling scripture's story enables listeners to enter that story as if it were ongoing. God's creative activity did not just happen "in the beginning." Creation continues. God remains involved in the world. Our fashioning in the image of God is more than a story of long ago. God has not finished with us or with creation. We are empowered by our identity as made in the image of God and entrusted with the responsibility to be in a caring relationship with all creation.

God blesses both creatures (1:22) and humans (1:28). A key issue in 1:28 involves the meaning of the "dominion" bestowed upon human beings. Many associate dominion exclusively with control. Dominion, however, has a different meaning when heard in the context of "image of God." God's dominion does not exhibit itself in exploitation, but in compassion and responsible care. God entrusts dominion to us as a responsibility, not as a licence to abuse.

This narrative of creation concludes with God blessing the seventh day. We call this blessing *Sabbath*. Sabbath reminds us that work does not completely or finally define life. It does not for God. It does not

for us. Sabbath bears the gift of rest. Remembering Sabbath celebrates the grace of God.

The narrative forms a liturgy of creating word and faithful response that includes all that God created. Imagine this account coming to life. Use your senses to see, hear, smell, touch, and taste life bursting all around you. Proclaim that everything, in the word of God, is good.

Psalm 8 is another liturgical celebration of praise for God's creation. The psalmist reflects on the meaning of human beings made in God's image, evoking with Genesis a consideration of the relationship between dominion and caretaking.

The apostle Paul appeals to the disciples in Corinth to create a faith community grounded in God's order and peace. The concluding blessing in **2 Corinthians 13:11–13** invites connections to today's observance of Trinity Sunday.

In Matthew 28:16–20, Jesus teaches the disciples about their mission and purpose as a faith community – taking the good news of God's creating, saving, and sustaining power to all nations. The baptismal "formula" Matthew records in verse 20 ("in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit") invites a connection with the celebration of Trinity Sunday.



As a community shaped by ongoing relationship with God, we celebrate the mystery of the many ways God is revealed to us as we live and grow together. What does it mean to you, as an individual and as a church, to be created in God's image? In what ways does this understanding shape your lives as caring and compassionate disciples?

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