

## **The Power of Words**

### **Genesis 1 and Psalm 8**

**June 4, 2023 – Trinity Sunday**

**Rev. Laurie Crelly – East Church Grand Rapids**

One of the great blessings travelling with my family to Australia was reconnecting with Oliver, Amy's son who lives near St. Louis. He is not much for calling on the phone or even texting. So I cherished our time together to catch up a bit and to learn more about his job as assistant manager at the Old bakery Beer Company in Alton IL. Oliver has no formal training in the culinary arts, but he has worked his way up at the company and is now one of the head cooks and assistant manager. Working there has sparked his joy of cooking.

Early in our trip we went to a local City market in Adelaide where you can find all kinds of wonderful specialty foods. Oliver had planned to make a special meal from the Old Bakery Menu when we went to see his god mother Anne a few days later. It was great to see him get excited about creating this meal. He scurried off to different food stands in search of the perfect ingredients, returning to me several times with his finds to put into the insulated bag we brought. Special mushrooms, fresh herbs and spices for the sauce, and veggies he would prepare as a side item. Finally, he returned gleeful as he shared with me that he had decided not to get the very expensive skirt steak meat because beef is very expensive in Australia and opted for the economical Kangaroo meat instead. For the next two days he commented often his ideas about how to prepare the Roo meat to make sure it was tender and wonderfully cooked.

If you have someone in your life that gets excited about cooking, you can imagine the way Oliver was acting those few days in anticipation of working in Ann's kitchen to make us dinner. When someone's experience mingles with their imagination to create something new, the energy and happiness is contagious. All through the process they are tasting and considering how to make it better until they come to that satisfying

conclusion it is good, it is very good. Let me tell you, that Kangaroo steak sandwich was excellent.

On this Trinity Sunday we have returned to the Genesis story to savor a bit in the creative work of God that spoke all that is into being. As we feel the wind of the spirit of God moving or brooding over the waters of creation, the word of God speak the elements into creative order and God command the human species to reflect the divine with the words, "Let us create humankind in our image." As Christians we hear within us the echo of these images of God in Genesis reflected in John's prologue where it says, "In the beginning was the word. The word was with God and the word was God. The word became flesh and dwelt among us" In those poetic and imaginative words we affirm an innate awareness that we, as children of God, carry within us an imprint of the Divine upon us and we hear God say, "it is good, it is very good."

We look at this utopic image of creation and God's good intention to create all things in harmony and goodness and abundant provision, and we give glory to God. Rightly so as we hear again in the psalmist words. Oh Lord, our Sovereign how majestic is your name in all the earth."

The Psalmist is humbled at the vast responsibility the has been entrusted to humans to have dominion over God's creation. From the beginning, God entrusted humanity to share in the creation and care of all that is. God invites us to be co-creators and to care for God's creation. God shares with us and all created beings to see this world as our domain, our responsibility as underlings following God's example to provide abundantly for creation as God intended.

While in Australia I heard many stories about how the early British colonists brought with them their European farming practices and many domesticated animals to try and recreate European living on this new continent. The introduction of foxes, domesticated rabbits and cats soon began to decimate to local wildlife and land, expanding the

desert we know as the outback or bush. Without their natural predators to control their spread their populations got out of control and became a serious problem.

It has taken decades of concerted effort by conservationists and society to try and save several native species like the bush tailed bettongs. These are tiny marsupials that look like a cross between a kangaroo and a mouse. They are less than three pounds and are finally making a comeback in parts of Adelaide and the York Peninsula by conservation practices that restrict the local cat and fox population.

The Bettong play a critical role in transforming the landscape. Its prolific burrowing into the soil creates pockets that can retain water in this arid environment helping to return some of the land lost to the bush that is not fit for crops. Just this spring, scientists estimated that 40% of the Bettong captured were born after the last tagging and many of them were carrying young in their pouches showing great signs of a comeback.

The more we lean into the concept of domination rather than stewardship, we make ourselves as superior over creation instead of part of it. We idolize our position, displacing God even. But if we see our role as stewards over this earthly domain then God is superior and has invited us to share in the Co-creator work of earthly realm we were created to inhabit. Stewardship seeks to maintain and flourish the whole domain for the benefit of all that has been created.

Today I am grateful that science has helped us realize the error of our ways and we continue to seek to be true stewards rather than dominators of our world. Apprentices in understanding the master creator's work so that we may care for all of creation.