

Week One: God the Creator



Scripture Text: Genesis 1:1–2:3

Focus Statement

All of creation is God's gift. After creating the earth and its creatures, God blessed and called all parts of creation good. Humankind is made in God's image.

Song Suggestions

HWB 46	<i>I Sing the Mighty Power of God</i>	STJ 5	<i>Come, and Be Light for Our Eyes</i>
HWB 64	Asithi: Amen ("Sing Amen")	STJ 25	<i>When Long before Time</i>
HWB 76	Je Louerai l'Éternel ("Praise, I Will Praise You, Lord")	STJ 40	<i>As Rain from the Clouds</i>
HWB 78	Ehane He'ama ("Father God, You Are Holy")	STS 10	<i>Come! Walk in the Light</i>
HWB 414	<i>God, Who Stretched</i>	STS 122	<i>Let All Creation Dance</i>

"Generous God" by Bryan Moyer Suderman (*My Money Talks* CD)

GATHERING

Call to Worship

Leader: All-seeing God,

Side 1: who delights in the diversity of creation,

ALL: open the eyes of our heart as we worship

Side 2: that we may find ourselves renewed and refreshed,

ready to share your goodness with the world around us.

ALL: In the name of Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit we pray. Amen.

Theme Psalm

PRAYING

Prayer of Confession

Creating God, we come with thankfulness for the many places
you have walked with us this week:

In the grocery store and on the soccer field,
at the computer and at table with family and friends.

We confess there are many times we did not see you.

We ignored your efforts to turn our eyes heavenward.

We justified time spent on useless activities;

We worked at breakneck speed and missed opportunities
to see and interact with the person next to us.

Lord, we confess our blindness and ask for your unfailing love to forgive us
and set us again on the path to seeing each other and the world through your eyes.

In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Creator of Light,
thank you for gathering us
to this place of worship in the light of this day.
Scatter the darkness from our hearts and minds.
May your light comfort the hearts and minds
of all who grieve this day . . .
(Supply specifics from context.)
May your light heal the minds and bodies
of all who struggle with illness . . .
(Supply specifics from context.)
May your light illumine the hearts and minds
of all who serve devotedly in the name of Christ . . .
(Supply specifics from context.)
Send forth your light of healing and peace
into all the world, we pray,
in the name of Jesus, the light of the world. Amen.

LISTENING

Children's Worship

Sermon Seeds

This text lends itself to the “four-page sermon.” The first page explores the trouble in the text. It comes in the form of a break in the poetic rhythm in verses 11-13. Early readers of this text would have noticed how this view of creation was opposite to the popular view that the fertility gods activated the seeds and created fruitfulness.

The second page explores the problem in the world. What would it mean for us to stop and observe, taking our hands off the controls and witnessing the beauty and power of creation? What spiritual gain might we receive by stopping our words and using other senses to engage with creation? What needs to change in order for us to engage with creation without measuring how to acquire the thing we are looking at? When we say yes to God we are saying no to something. What are the things we have trouble letting go of?

The third page explores the grace in the text. God perceives the goodness of creation. This is not just noticing God's *act* in creating colors and shapes, but we hear God's internal response.

The fourth page explores the grace in the world. The good news is that God continues to act and be present in all creation. There was a point when God stopped and rested. In our culture we have trouble knowing when enough is enough, when we need to stop. What are the things we need to stop doing/ acquiring/ consuming in order to rest? How does Sabbath-keeping help us with our need to control?

RESPONDING

Benediction

May the Lord, who created the world with love and attention to detail, bless us and keep us. May the eyes of God watch over us and continue calling us to see the world with delight and wonder. May God's presence embrace you and give you peace.
