**JUSTICE COALITION OF RELIGIOUS MARCH 8, 2024**

**OPENING REFLECTION**

Images on slides opening silently via embedded timings.

Reader One begins as images begin

Compilation text of Genesis 1 and Genesis II- CREATION STORIES

**Reader One:** 1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

3And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. 4And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. 5God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

6And God said, “Let there be an expanse[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%201&version=ESV#fen-ESV-6a)] in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” 7And God made[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%201&version=ESV#fen-ESV-7b)] the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. 8And God called the expanse Heaven.[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%201&version=ESV#fen-ESV-8c)] And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

9And God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. 10God called the dry land Earth,[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%201&version=ESV#fen-ESV-10d)] and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

11And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%201&version=ESV#fen-ESV-11e)] yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.” And it was so. 12The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 13And there was evening and there was morning, the third day. **Pause (count to 20)**

**Reader Two:** 14And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons,[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%201&version=ESV#fen-ESV-14f)] and for days and years, 15and let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. 16And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. 17And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, 18to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

20And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%201&version=ESV#fen-ESV-20g)] fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” 21So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 22And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” 23And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

24And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. 25And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. **Pause (count to 20)**

**Reader One:** Now no shrub had yet appeared on the earth and no plant had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no one to work the ground,

But streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground. Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.” **Pause (count to 20)**

**Reader Two:** But for Adam[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%202-3&version=NIV#fen-NIV-51f)] no suitable helper was found. 21So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%202-3&version=NIV#fen-NIV-52g)] and then closed up the place with flesh. 22Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib[[h](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis%202-3&version=NIV#fen-NIV-53h)] he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.’ And it was so. God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.”

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.’ Then God said, ‘I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.

2By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. 3Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. **Pause (count to THIRTY)**

**Reader One: Psalm 19**

1 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

2 Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.

3 There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard.

4 Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun,

5 Which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion, like a champion rejoicing to run his course.

6 It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is hidden from its heat.

7 The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple.

8 The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.

9 The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous.

10 They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb.

11 By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

12 Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

13 Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then will I be blameless, innocent of great transgression.

14 May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

CODA

*“The most difficult transition to make is from an anthropocentric to a biocentric norm of progress. If there is to be any true progress, then the entire life community must progress. Any progress of the human at the expense of the larger life community must ultimately lead to a diminishment of human life itself.”* (Thomas Berry)

* Br. Kevin Cawley, Edmund Rice International