

World Day of Prayer 2018

Dramatised Bible Reading: Genesis 1 (NRSV) with interruptions

Written for 5 voices, for best effect.

If necessary, could be done by 4 (C & D by same person) or 3 (A & B by same person; C & D by same person) or 2 (A, B & God by same person; C & D by same person)

A: In the beginning
when God created the heavens and the earth,
the earth was a formless void
and darkness covered the face of the deep,
while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.

Then God said,

God: Let there be light!

A: And there was light.
And God saw that the light was good;
and God separated the light from the darkness.
God called the light 'Day',
and the darkness 'Night'.

B: And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

God: Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters,
and let it separate the waters from the waters.

A: So God made the dome
and separated the waters that were under the dome
from the waters that were above the dome.
And it was so.
God called the dome 'Sky'.

B: And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

God: Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place,
and let the dry land appear.

A: And it was so.
God called the dry land 'Earth',
and the waters that were gathered together God called 'Seas'.

And God saw that it was good.

D: But God's good seas are being polluted.

C: There are five trillion pieces of microplastic
in the world's oceans,
with one rubbish truck load added every minute.

D: A single cruise ship of average size with 3000 guests on a one-week voyage empties 210,000 gallons of sewage in to the ocean.
In 2016, 24 million guests holidayed with the cruise ship industry worldwide.

C: And God's good earth is being polluted.

D: In 2016, Scotland sent 4 million tonnes of waste to landfills.

C: Every year in recent times,
the United States sends over 100 million tonnes of waste to landfills –
including 1.8 billion disposable nappies,
30 billion foam cups and
220 million vehicle tyres.

A: And God said,

God: Let the earth put forth vegetation:
plants yielding seed,
and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.

A: And it was so.
The earth brought forth vegetation:
plants yielding seed of every kind,
and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it.

And God saw that it was good.

C: But God's good plants and trees are being lost and poisoned.

D: The world loses 24 billion tonnes of topsoil each year because of land pollution.

C: Some 50,000 square miles of forest are lost every year –
equivalent to 46 football fields every minute.

D: In China, 3.3 million hectares of arable land is contaminated.
12 million tonnes of grain are polluted by heavy metals every year.

C: One recent estimate said China had 21,000 square miles more desert
than it had in 1975 —
an increase about the size of Croatia.

B: And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

God: Let there be lights in the dome of the sky
to separate the day from the night;
and let them be for signs and for seasons
and for days and years,
and let them be lights in the dome of the sky
to give light upon the earth.

A: And it was so. God made the two great lights—
the greater light to rule the day
and the lesser light to rule the night—
and the stars.
God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth,
to rule over the day and over the night,
and to separate the light from the darkness.

And God saw that it was good.

C: But God's good night and day are being polluted by artificial light.

D: In the United States alone,
up to a billion birds migrating at night are killed each year
by becoming disoriented by city lights and flying into buildings.

C: More than 99% of the population of Europe lives under light polluted skies.
Being deprived of real darkness greatly reduces the quality of our sleep.

D: Exposure to artificial light at night disrupts our natural body clock,
increasing our risks of cancers and other diseases.
Blue light at night is particularly harmful.
Most computer screens, TVs, and other electronic displays emit abundant blue light.

B: And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

God: Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures,
and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.

A: So God created the great sea monsters
and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm,
and every winged bird of every kind.

And God saw that it was good.

God blessed them, saying,

God: Be fruitful and multiply
and fill the waters in the seas,
and let birds multiply on the earth.

B: And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

C: But God's good creatures of the air and sea are being polluted.

D: Over 1 million seabirds and 100,000 sea mammals
are killed by physical and chemical water pollution every year.

C: Sound travels faster and further in water than in air.
Sea creatures use noise to communicate
but their sounds are being drowned out by noise pollution
from commercial shipping, military sonar, drilling and seismic testing.

In the Arctic, the sounds of oil and gas explorations are so loud
that belugas, bowhead whales and other sea life have had difficulty feeding and breeding.

D: Baby corals, in their first days as free-swimming larvae in the ocean, find home by listening to the noise of animals on the reef. But increasing noise pollution is masking the sounds that guide them, threatening the rich but vulnerable existence of coral reefs.

God: Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind:
cattle and creeping things
and wild animals of the earth of every kind.

A: And it was so.
God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind,
and the cattle of every kind,
and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind.

And God saw that it was good.

C: But God's good insects and wild animals are victims of pollution.

D: In 2016, over 69,000 animals were killed or injured by litter in Britain.

C: Today, about 23% of all mammals and 12% of all birds are considered under threat of extinction. One of the compounding factors causing species loss is the increasing production of waste and pollutants.

A: And God said...

God: Let us make humankind in our image,
according to our likeness;
and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea,
and over the birds of the air,
and over the cattle,
and over all the wild animals of the earth,
and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."

A: So God created humankind in God's own image;
in the image of God's own self, God created them.
Male and female God created them.

God blessed them, and said to them,

God: Be fruitful and multiply,
and fill the earth and subdue it;
and have dominion over the fish of the sea
and over the birds of the air
and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.

See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth,
and every tree with seed in its fruit;
you shall have them for food.

And to every beast of the earth,
and to every bird of the air,
and to everything that creeps on the earth,
everything that has the breath of life,
I have given every green plant for food.

A: And it was so.
God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

C: But are God's very good people listening?

D: Look at the land and the seas,
the trees and the animals,
the birds and the fish,
the seas and the fields,
the night and the day,
the people,
all so beautiful and so good,
but being poisoned and polluted,
damaged and destroyed.

(pause)

B: And there was evening...
and there was morning...

the sixth day...

*Arranged by Jo Love, Wild Goose Resource Group
Facts and statistics from a variety of sources.*