



## *Resources on Creation*

### **Call to Worship: What Song?**

by Rev. Victoria Stafford

*What if there were a universe that began in shining blackness, out of nothing, out of fire, out of a single, silent breath, and into it came billions and billions of stars, stars beyond imagining, and near one of them a world, a blue-green world so beautiful that learned clergymen could not even speak about it cogently, and brilliant scientists in trying to describe it began to sound like poets. What if there were a universe in which a world was born out of a smallish star, and into that world (at some point) flew red-winged blackbirds, and into it swam sperm whales, and into it came crocuses, and wind to lift the tiniest hairs on naked arms in spring. Into that world came animals and elements and plants, and imagination, the mind and the mind's eye.*

*If such a world existed and you noticed it, what would you do? What song would come out of your mouth, what prayer, what praises, what sacred offering, what whirling dance, what religion, and what reverential gesture would you make to greet that world, every single day that you were in it?*

"In the end the universe can only be explained in terms of celebration. It is all an exuberant expression of existence itself."

-Thomas Berry

"The Hindu religion is the only one of the world's great faiths dedicated to the idea that the Cosmos itself undergoes an immense, indeed an infinite, number of deaths and rebirths. It is the only religion in which time scales correspond, no doubt by accident, to those of modern scientific cosmology. Its cycles run from our ordinary day and night to a day and night of Brahma, 8.64 billion years long, longer than the age of the Earth or the Sun and about half the time since the Big Bang."

-Carl Sagan

"This idea of a periodically expanding and contracting universe, which involves a scale of time and space of vast proportions, has arisen not only in modern cosmology, but also in ancient Indian mythology. Experiencing the universe as an organic and rhythmically moving cosmos, the Hindus were able to develop evolutionary cosmologies which come very close to our modern scientific models. One of these cosmologies is based on the Hindu myth of *lila*—the divine play—in which Brahman transforms himself into the world."

-Fritjof Capra, "Tao of Physics: An Exploration of the Parallels Between Modern Physics and Eastern Mysticism,"

"We are all at once both a composition and a composer. We have the ability not only to compose the future of our own lives, but to help compose the future of everyone around us and the communities in which we live."

-Maya Angelou



## *Resources on Creation*

### **Morning Poem**

by Mary Oliver

Every morning  
the world is created.  
Under the orange

sticks of the sun  
the heaped  
ashes of the night  
turn into leaves again

and fasten themselves to the high branches—  
and the ponds appear  
like black cloth  
on which are painted islands

of summer lilies.  
If it is your nature  
to be happy  
you will swim away along the soft trails

for hours, your imagination  
alighting everywhere.  
And if your spirit carries  
within it  
the thorn  
that is heavier than lead—  
if it's all you can do  
to keep on trudging—

there is still  
somewhere deep within you  
a beast shouting that the earth  
is exactly what is wanted—

each pond with its blazing lilies  
is a prayer heard and answered  
lavishly,  
every morning,

whether or not  
you have ever dared to be happy,  
whether or not  
you have ever dared to pray.

“God is really another artist. He invented the giraffe, the elephant and the cat. He has no real style. He just goes on trying other things.”

-Pablo Picasso

“And among his Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colors; verily in that are Signs for those who know.”

-The Quran

“There seems in most countries to be either one extreme or the other. Truly a paradise could exist wherever material progress and spiritual values could be properly balanced.”

-Malcolm X (1925-1965),

*Autobiography*, 1964

“A rock pile ceases to be a rock pile the moment a single man contemplates it, bearing within him the image of a cathedral.”

-Antoine de Saint Exupery

“Such prosperity as we have known up to the present is the consequence of rapidly spending the planet's irreplaceable capital.”

-Aldous Huxley

“Things are only impossible until they're not.”

- Jean-Luc Picard, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*

### **To make a prairie**

by Emily Dickinson

To make a prairie it takes a clover and one  
bee—

One clover and a bee,

And revery.

The revery alone will do,

If bees are few.



## *Resources on Creation*

### **The Creation**

by James Weldon Johnson

And God stepped out on space,  
And He looked around and said,  
*"I'm lonely ~ I'll make me a world."*

And far as the eye of God could see  
Darkness covered everything,  
Blacker than a hundred midnights  
Down in a cypress swamp.

Then God smiled,  
And the light broke,  
And the darkness rolled up on one side,  
And the light stood shining on the other,  
And God said, *"That's good!"*

Then God reached out and took the light in His hands,  
And God rolled the light around in His hands  
Until He made the sun;  
And He set that sun a-blazing in the heavens.  
And the light that was left from making the sun  
God gathered it up in a shining ball  
And flung it against the darkness,  
Spangling the night with the moon and stars.  
Then down between  
The darkness and the light  
He hurled the world; And God said, *"That's good!"*

Then God himself stepped down—  
And the sun was on His right hand,  
And the moon was on His left;  
The stars were clustered about His head,  
And the earth was under His feet.  
And God walked, and where He trod  
His footsteps hollowed the valleys out  
And bulged the mountains up.

Then He stopped and looked and saw  
That the earth was hot and barren.  
So God stepped over to the edge of the world  
And He spat out the seven seas;  
He batted His eyes, and the lightnings flashed;  
He clapped His hands, and the thunders rolled;  
And the waters above the earth came down,  
The cooling waters came down.

(continued on the next page)



### *Resources on Creation*

Then the green grass sprouted,  
And the little red flowers blossomed,  
The pine tree pointed his finger to the sky,  
And the oak spread out his arms,  
The lakes cuddled down in the hollows of the ground,  
And the rivers ran down to the sea;  
And God smiled again,  
And the rainbow appeared,  
And curled itself around His shoulder.

Then God raised His arm and He waved His hand  
Over the sea and over the land,  
And He said, "*Bring forth! Bring forth!*"  
And quicker than God could drop His hand.  
Fishes and fowls  
And beasts and birds  
Swam the rivers and the seas,  
Roamed the forests and the woods,  
And split the air with their wings.  
And God said, "*That's good!*"

Then God walked around,  
And God looked around  
On all that He had made.  
He looked at His sun,  
And He looked at His moon,  
And He looked at His little stars;  
He looked on His world  
With all its living things,  
And God said, "*I'm lonely still.*"

Then God sat down  
On the side of a hill where  
He could think;  
By a deep, wide river  
He sat down;  
With His head in His hands,  
God thought and thought,  
Till He thought, "*I'll make me a man!*"

Up from the bed of the river  
God scooped the clay;  
And by the bank of the river  
He kneeled Him down;  
And there the great God Almighty  
Who lit the sun and fixed it in the sky,  
Who flung the stars to the most far corner of the night,  
(continued on the next page)



*Resources on Creation*

Who rounded the earth in the middle of His hand;  
This Great God,  
Like a mammy bending over her baby,  
Kneeled down in the dust  
Toiling over a lump of clay  
Till He shaped it in His own image;  
  
Then into it He blew the breath of life,  
And man became a living soul.  
Amen. Amen.