

SEASON OF CREATION PAGEANT

May Day Pageant 2022, Written by Ken Proctor

Adapted for St. Thomas's Episcopal Church, New Haven, CT by Denise Ann Terry

Cast:

Narrator: Lucy Sheehan; Flower: Caroline Sheehan; Animal: River Cicero, Adam and Eve as Children, Young Adults, and Adults: Luca and London D'Andrea

Act One

NARRATOR

In the beginning, there was only God. No earth. No flowers. No elephants. No internet.

And God created the earth, and the heavens above. And God created plants. All kinds of plants. In all colors, shapes, and sizes. God created grass and moss and seaweed and thorn bushes. And God created flowers. Beautiful flowers. And God created trees.

In the heavens, God created stars and the moon. The stars and the moon shone for half of each turn of the earth. To shine the other half, God created the sun. The sun shone warm and strong on the plants and made them grow. And the earth became a beautiful garden.

God created animals. All kinds of animals. In all colors, shapes, and sizes. In the oceans, God created fish of every kind. And crabs. And oysters. And strange creatures to swim the inky depths, where the light of the sun never reaches. On land, God created birds and monkeys and wombats and worms. And mosquitos.

God created sheep and goats. Butterflies. Lady bugs. And bumble bees.

In the warm light of the sun, the animals played while the trees and flowers grew.

When the sun stepped down from the sky and darkness fell, the moon and stars shined their gentle light, and the garden fell quiet, and slept.

God was happy with all that God had created. All was in balance, for God had created it so. But God was not done creating. In the garden one early morning, before the sun had come up, there appeared a CHILD. God set a human child in the garden that was earth.

Her name was Eve.

God brought forth a second child, whose name was Adam.

In the darkness, they found each other. They couldn't see very well by the light of the moon and stars, so they sat down and fell asleep. They were tired from having just been created.

Dawn broke. The sun began its climb into the sky, and the moon and stars gave way.

While the children slept far into the morning. But the animals awoke early and gathered to see the new creatures. They had never seen humans before. Adam awoke first and was amazed by the world he saw, but he wasn't scared, even a little bit. He hadn't learned to be afraid. He woke Eve. Eve too was amazed.

The children walked around. They looked up at the trees. They smelled the flowers. They came and stood side by side, and looked up to the heavens, and their hearts filled with a song of thanks and praise for the world God had made.

CONGREGATION READS:

(note: Psalm 104 from NIV)

Praise the Lord, O my soul.

O Lord, my God, you are very great;

You are clothed with splendor and majesty.

You set the earth on its foundations.

You water the mountains; you make the grass grow.

The moon marks off the seasons, and the sun knows when to go down.

How many are your works, O Lord!

In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

I will sing to the Lord all my life;

I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.

Praise the Lord, O my soul.

Praise the Lord.

Act Two

NARRATOR

Day after day, the sun rose and set. The children lived happily in the world God had made.

They loved the trees and flowers. They loved the animals. They ate from the abundance of food that God's Garden provided. They played. As time went by, they grew.

They were no longer children. They were still very young, but already they had begun to understand more of the world around them: how they, and the animals, and the plants, and the turning of the seasons, were all connected. And as their understanding grew, they marveled even more at God's creation and at the wonder of God's love for them.

CONGREGATION READS:

(note: Psalm 8 from NIV and Mitchell)

**When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,
what is a human, that you love them,
a person, that you gladden their heart?**

NARRATOR

One day, there was a terrible storm.

(CHOIR WILL CREATE STORM.)

It rained and thundered all morning and all afternoon. With no shelter from the rain, the young people got very wet, and very cold. They grew cross with each other. They said mean things. Finally, they stopped speaking altogether. Near the end of the day, the rain ended, and the sun came out.

They felt better, and, although each of them wanted to be friends again, neither wanted to be the first to speak. Then Eve got an idea. It was a nice idea.

She went to a field and picked a flower, brought it back and gave it to Adam, and the young people were friends again. Then Adam got an idea.

It was a new sort of idea, not like any of the ideas either of them had ever had before.

He went to the woods and found two trees. For the idea, he would need to cut one of them down. Adam chose a tree, cut it down, and carried the it back. Out of the branches and trunk, the young people made themselves a simple lean-to. A shelter from the rain.

Among all God's creatures on earth, it was to humans, only, that God gave the power to imagine things that had never been, and then create them. Eve and Adam had made themselves a house – a simple one – not by instinct, like the nesting bird or burrowing rabbit, but by the creative power God had given their minds and hands.

They observed God's creation and began to create, in their small way, on their own. They planted seeds to grow their own food. They learned to forge metal from rocks. From metal and wood, they made tools.

NARRATOR

When the things they had created broke, or wore out, they tossed them aside, to rejoin the earth. In time, for instance, that first house would rot and fall down.

The wood from the tree they had cut down to build their home would decay and become dirt, and in that dirt, new trees would grow.

Indeed, for every plant and animal that dies, new ones take their place.

So the young people saw that in God's world, living things come into being, live their time, and perish. But all is renewed. All is in balance. They saw that in this way, God provided for them and for all living things.

CONGREGATION READS:

(note: Psalm 104 from NRSV)

**O Lord, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
These all look to you
to give them their food in due season.
When you give it to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.
When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath, they die
and return to the dust.
When you send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the earth.**

Act Three

NARRATOR

Day after day, the sun rose and set.

And the moon and stars rose and set.

The young people came to know more of the world God had made. Their feet brought them to other lands. And in every land, they found trees and flowers. They found animals.

And they used their powers of creation to make more and more things for themselves.

NARRATOR

Years went by. Centuries went by.

The children had become a young people, and then adults. But they still had the songs they had sung to God since they were little. They loved those songs, and they loved God.

CONGREGATION READS:

(note: Psalm 100, from NRSV)

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.

**Worship the Lord with gladness;
come into his presence with singing.**

Know that the Lord is God.

**It is God that made us, and we are God's;
we are God's people, and the sheep of God's pasture.**

**Enter God's gates with thanksgiving,
and God's courts with praise.**

Give thanks to God, bless God's name.

For the Lord is good;

**God's steadfast love endures forever,
and God's faithfulness to all generations.**

NARRATOR

More and more, though, Adam and Eve had come to live not in God's world, but in a world of their own creation.

They lived now in a house. A real house. With four walls and a roof.

They had jobs. Grownup jobs. Working for big companies.

Eve was a Measurer, whose job was to measure things. How long they were.

How tall they were.

Adam was a Valuer, whose job was to figure out how much money things were worth. Some things were worth a lot of money.

Some things were not.

Every day Adam typed in numbers.

At the places where they worked, there were a few plants (growing in plastic pots), but animals were not allowed. No giraffes, no monkeys. No sheep.

No goats.

At the end of each workday, Eve and Adam returned to their house... where they were very comfortable. The roof kept out the rain.

(And the sun. And the glow of stars at night.)

The walls kept out pesky bugs. (And breezes. And the sound of frogs in spring.)

Their house had a machine that made warm air in the winter cool air in the summer.

They had machines they could sit inside to travel fast, over hard gray paths where nothing could grow. Even their traveling machines had little machines inside them to make the air warm or cool.

Their machines made their world comfortable, but each machine also made the air in God's world just a little bit dirtier.

Eve and Adam began to realize that they were hurting the world God had made, in ways they did not understand. They cut down forests, and there were fewer trees.

They knew *why* there were fewer trees; they had cut the trees down themselves. But insects began to disappear, too, and they didn't know why.

They remembered how, in God's world, all things were renewed. But now, many of the things they created, used, and threw away did not rot and rejoin the earth. Instead, they clogged the land and swirled in God's oceans.

All this troubled their hearts. They began to realize that the world they had made was more complicated than they could understand. Or control. They had designed it for their own comfort, yet they felt strangely uneasy. And afraid.

What had they created? Theirs now was a world so unlike the one they had grown up in -- the garden God had created. Their world was full of problems. It was hard to find God in the machines. It was hard to hear God's voice over the noise. They felt alone, and far from God.

CONGREGATION READS:

(note: Psalm 42, from Stephen Mitchell's A Book of Psalms, adapted)

**As a deer longs for flowing streams,
so my soul longs for you, O God.
I thirst for the living God;
I ache for him day and night.
When will God fill me with God's presence?
When will I see God's face?**

**Why are you desolate, my soul?
Why weighed down by despair?
Trust in God; God will save you;
you will sing to God with great joy.**

**My soul is heavy with anguish;
my heart keeps longing for you, O God.
I am lost in a sea of wretchedness;
I drown in the waters of despair.
The roar of waterfalls surround me,
and the waves crash over my head.**

**Why are you desolate, my soul?
Why weighed down by despair?
Trust in God; God will save you;
you will sing to God with great joy.**

NARRATOR

ADAM and EV felt desolate. But they trusted in God and listened for God's voice. They listened; and one day, they heard a song they had known since they were children.

CHOIR SINGS:

(Bobby McFerrin's Psalm 23)

jThe Lord is my shepherd
I have all I need
She makes me lie down in green meadows
Beside the still waters, She will lead
She restores my soul; She rights my wrongs
She leads me in a path of good things
And fills my heart with songs.
Even though I walk
Through a dark and dreary land
There is nothing that can shake me
She has said She won't forsake me;
I'm in her hand.
She sets a table before me in the presence of my foes
She anoints my head with oil
And my cup overflows.
Surely, surely goodness and kindness will follow me
All the days of my life
And I will live in her house forever,
For ever and ever.
Glory be to our Mother, and Daughter
And to the Holy of Holies.
As it was in the beginning
Is now and ever shall be,
World, without end.
Amen.

NARRATOR

Yes, God had given humans the power to create. God had meant for people to grow up, to make a world of their own fashioning. To fail. To try again. To do better. But God was the Great Creator. God's world was the greater world, the world built by the Master Builder. It was God's green meadows and still waters that would restore their souls.

From that day onward, the Adam and Eve would spend more time in God's world and not be quite so caught up in their own. They would celebrate the garden. They would protect it. They would teach generations that followed.

Living in God's world, they were closer to God again. The fears churned up in their own world would lose all meaning in God's Garden. The people, whom God had created, would know goodness and kindness all the days of their lives. And they would dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

CONGREGATION READS:

(Note: psalms 147-thru-150 from Psalms Now, by Leslie Brandt)

We celebrate what God has done for God's children through all time:

God's creation of our world

And the sun and the moon and the unnumbered stars that light up our universe;

God's creatures that swim and crawl and walk and fly on our planet;

God's children, chosen to enjoy these great gifts around them.

We celebrate God's continued blessings to our world:

The flowers that bloom in glorious color,

The rains that freshen the earth,

(Someone raises rain stick overhead, tilts it side to side a couple of times.)

The birds that fill the air with song.

We give thanks for God's perpetual love

Manifest in the world God has made.

Presiding priest:

We call all people to praise God. Those who preach to proclaim God's love. Those who sing to glorify God's name. Those who can shout or whistle or write or paint or dance or play musical instruments or pound on drums or ring bells to join in celebrating the majesty of our great and *loving* God!