

## Community-Developed

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## A Reading of Genesis 1

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### Note:

*Prepare the congregation ahead of time so that at a signal they will say with the Readers:  
“And it there was morning and there was evening - Day x.”*

- 1 In the Beginning . . .
- 2 What beginning?
- 1 The Beginning, the Start, the First Thing.
- 2 Of what? The race? A novel? A TV show? A Story? The Beginning of what?
- 1 Of Everything, Man. EVERYTHING! In the Beginning of Everything, before there was nothing else. That Beginning.
- 2 Wow! That’s a long time ago, that Beginning. So, in the Beginning ... what was in the Beginning?
- 1 Well, if you would just listen, I would tell you.
- 2 I’m listening.

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<sup>1</sup> Though copyrighted, you are free to make copies for use in your congregation, provided you send me an email letting me know you are using it. Email me at [jumpintothestory@sasktel.net](mailto:jumpintothestory@sasktel.net)

- 1 Okay, then. In the Beginning, there was Nothing, so much Nothing it was actually Something.
- 2 What?! Nothing that was Something?! That makes no sense!
- 1 It may not make sense to you, or anyone else for that matter, in Swift Current or anywhere else. But it was. In the Beginning there was Nothing. So much Nothing it was Something.
- 2 Okay, and so?
- 1 In the Beginning there was so much Nothing it was Something. And it was a Mess. Dark, so dark you could feel it. So Dark, you could see Nothing. Chaotic. Absolute Chaos. So Chaotic you could make sense of Nothing. Water. Water, so deep and dark and Cold, if you fell in, you would never stop falling and freezing and shivering and falling. Evil. It sent cold shivers up your spine. Like a Black Hole in space, it sucked Everything into its Dark, Evil, Cold Chaos so that there was Nothing. Except for one thing.
- 2 Yeah?
- 1 The wind of God blew gently over the Waters. Like God breathing, in and out. Life moving, gently rippling the surface of the Dark, Deep, Cold Waters. Had you been there, it would have caressed your cheek. The Spirit of God like a gentle, peaceful dove, hovering over top the Chaotic Deep. A gentle, but unstoppable wind. Dovelike, but with the strength of an eagle.
- 2 And then?
- 1 And then a Voice.
- 2 A Voice? From where?
- 1 A Voice. From Everywhere and from Nowhere. A Voice both Loud and Quiet. Both Strong and Gentle. Both Commanding and Inviting. A Voice that could never, would never be silenced. It spoke, and its Beauty, its Melody, its Strength, its Assurance, its Hopefulness, its Authority sent more shivers up your spine, covered your skin in goosebumps, warmed your heart, and turned Fear to Hope.
- 2 What did it say?
- 1 It said and it sang, a perfect melodious pitch clearly spoken and articulated. It said: "Let there be Light!"
- 2 And?

- 1 And there was Light. Everywhere. All the colours of the rainbow. Brighter and more alive than the fireworks on July 1<sup>st</sup>.<sup>2</sup> Everywhere explosions of Light and Colour. You needed sunglasses, a welder's helmet even, yet you didn't want to miss any of its brightness and life. Light exploded and drove back the Darkness. Even God was impressed with the Light and its Colours and its power to push back Darkness.
- 2 Did it destroy the Darkness?
- 1 No, God kept it around, giving it a kind of balance with Light, though Light would always be more powerful. However, with that balance, there could now be Day and there could be Night, time to sleep and time to be awake.
- 2 And?
- 1 (*with Congregation*) And there was evening and there was morning, Day 1.
- 2 That took care of the Darkness. What about the Waters. Now, half the time, you could see the Chaotic, Deep Water. What became of that?
- 1 That was next. So thanks for asking. God took the water and divided it in half. With half of it God made the dome of the sky - blue sky, white clouds, dew, gentle rains, flash-flood downpours, thunderstorms, hail, sleet and snow.
- 2 And the other half?
- 1 Not so fast. By the time the dome and clouds and rain storms and snow falls were all done and on track and in place and properly scheduled, well a day had gone by.
- 2 And so, I bet - let me say it (*with signal to Congregation*): And there was evening and there was morning - Day 2.
- 1 Yes, there was. Then God got down to the other half of the water, and all the dirt that had been hidden by the Chaotic, Dark Water. God dug ditches, built hills and mountains, made large ponds, drilled holes, and leveled out meadows. Well, God didn't actually do it. God's Dream and God's Voice were so strong and authoritative, God just had to Imagine it and Speak it, and Reality happened. Oceans, lakes, rivers, creeks, springs, and wells. All of the Water now in its places, with dikes and shores keeping it in place. Lofty, snow-covered mountain peaks towering over deep, shaded valleys. Meadows waiting, waiting for something. Prairies, so flat and so vast you could see forever.
- 2 And I bet God took a step back, looked at all that had been made, and was quite impressed. Thought it pretty darn good. And, the day must have been about done.

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<sup>2</sup> Or July 4<sup>th</sup> if you are reading this in the US>

- 1 God did and God was. And there was just enough day left to do some planting. And again, with a flash of powerful Imagination and a proclamation of the Word, trees covered the lower slopes of the mountains and filled the valleys. Flowers in profusion grew in the meadows. And the prairies were covered with waving grass. River valleys had fruit trees - apple and peach, choke cherry and saskatoon. Fields that were especially fertile had potatoes and tomatoes, corn and pupkins in neat rows. Coral reefs in the oceans. Cattails in ditches. Moss and algae. By the time the sun set - wait, there was no sun - by the time the light went out and darkness moved in, it was all there. And just before God blew out the candle, God said: Wow, this is good. I'm good. This world looks beautiful!"
- 2 (*signal to Congregation*) And there was evening and there was morning - Day 3.
- 1 Half done.
- 2 Half done?! Already?!
- 1 What?! You think God is slow and lazy? God gets stuff done. God's no slouch.
- 2 But what about millions of years and dinosaurs and fossils and stuff?
- 1 Can you imagine how long we would be here if I had to tell the story in "millions of years" sections?! These people would all leave and go home for lunch and supper and work tomorrow and ... and, you and I would still be here. Never mind millions of years. We have to get the story told. So three days - half done.
- 2 Okay. Next day.
- 1 The next day God realized that candles would never do the job. This world needed lights to adjust the Light. So God made a huge ball of fire - needed a good set of tongs for this job - and threw that ball of fire into Space till it stopped at just the right distance - so it could provide bright light and lots of warmth, but not so it would burn things, well except skin if you took off your shirt and forgot sunscreen. And God made it that this ball of fire would shine on everything half the time and not shine the other half.
- 2 You mean it had a switch or shut-off valve with a pilot light and timer?
- 1 No, that's too complicated and could break down. The sun - that's what God called this ball of fire - the sun moved around the earth . . . Wait a minute. Or did the earth spin?
- 2 The earth spin?! You mean it was round, like a ball? Not flat like the prairies?

- 1 Heck. Who cares? Round or flat? Earth spinning or sun moving? Does it matter? The important thing here is the sun was just the right distance from the Earth, and it helped with keeping track of Day and Night.
- 2 And I bet God made a smaller light to shine at night, so it would never, ever again be so dark that Dark Nothing could take over. And then sprinkled more tiny lights - stars God called them - across the entire dome. And when the sun hid behind the horizon, you could see them, in all their glory and awe-inspiring beauty.
- 1 You could. And God nigh danced a jig, it was so beautiful and worked so well. (*Signal to Congregation*) And it was evening and it was morning - Day 4.
- 2 Only three days left to go.
- 1 Three? Only two. God knew this creating business would have to make good time. Lots left, and only two days.
- 2 Should have given God those millions of years.
- 1 Yeah, and put this congregation to sleep. Two days. With God's hands being tired from making sun, moon, and stars, God went back to speaking. So God said: "Fish in the sea, swim. Whales and sharks, get with it. Sea horses and starfish, all of you, come to life." God looked up at the sky and Imagined birds - robins and eagles, chickadees and meadowlarks, canaries and parrots. God spoke the Dreams and Imaginings and butterflies and bees filled the meadows. Birdsong filled the air. Fish splashed in the sea. Whales spouted. Wow. And to make sure there would always be enough fish and sea monsters and birds and bees, God said: "Be fruitful and multiply. Make sure there is always enough of each of you."
- 2 You mean God said to fish and whales and robins: "Have sex."?
- 1 What? Don't say that in church! God said: Be fruitful and multiply."
- 2 Yeah, but to be fruitful and multiply you have to have . . .
- 1 You just have to be fruitful and multiply. Now can we get back to the story?
- 2 Wow, God said to have . . . . Never mind, I won't say it. I bet that took all day. So, (*signal to Congregation*) And it was evening and it was morning - Day 5.
- 1 One day to go.
- 2 And lots still to do.
- 1 The last day. The sky was full of birds, the meadows had butterflies and bird song, and the oceans and rivers teemed with fish and whales. But the land, the land needed

something too besides grass and trees and saskatoon and chokecherry bushes.<sup>3</sup> So God kicked in that Imagination one more time, and God spoke the Dream that came to be. Cattle and horses, dogs and cats, lions and tigers, elephants and giraffes, bears and foxes, gophers and chipmunks. All of them. And in the dirt, beetles and worms, caterpillars and fleas.

2 Wish God had skipped the mosquitoes.

1 What?! And starved the purple martins and dragonflies?! All of the creatures were needed for the circle of Life.

2 And so God was done. And it was evening . . .

1 Hold it. Hold it. You forgot something. One last thing. Think about it. What is still missing?

2 Hmmmm. (*counting on fingers*) Light. The dome of the sky. Oceans and prairies and plants. Sun and moon. The birds and the fishes. Animals. What else is there?

1 Humans, you dufuss. Humans. You and me.

2 Oh, yeah. Humans.

1 So God made humans, male and female.

2 So they could have . . .

1 Male and female, so they could be God's presence, God's representatives in the world. That would take both men and women.

2 Yeah, but I bet he told them to be fruitful and multiply. And you know what that means.

1 Oh, you. Yes, he told them to be fruitful and multiply. And he told them one more thing. God told them: Take care of this beautiful creation. All of it. Keep its beauty bright. Keep its life alive. Make sure it will always be there, and the healthier it is, the healthier you will be. Make good decisions. I trust you to take care of it. It's your mission in life. Take care of creation.

2 And that's it?

1 Well, almost. Then God had a good look around and just couldn't help but be proud. Downright impressed. God had done good. By golly, God had done very good.

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<sup>3</sup> Two fruit that grow wild on the Canadian prairies. They have also been domesticated and can be found in many gardens. If you use this reading someplace else, use what plants make sense to your area.

Absolutely fantastic. And with humans in charge, taking care of it, it would always be beautiful and fantastic and wonderful.

**2** (*signal to Congregation*) And it was evening and it was morning - Day 6.

**1** And then God rested.

**2** God what?!

**1** God rested. Six days of work was enough. And besides, tomorrow there would probably be more work. God already figured these humans might need some help. And so, God rested. And set the example: six days of work and one day of rest. If that is good for God, surely it's good for everyone.

**1 & 2** (*with signal to congregation*) And it was evening and it was morning - Day 7.