**New Kilpatrick**

**Podcast**

**18th June 2023**

**Genesis 1:1-5, 2:4-9**

**Gathering**

How long a silence

Before the first word?

A word in the darkness

Hesitating

Wondering

If it is enough

Enough hope

Enough imagination

Enough love

To charge silence

And change the course of nothingness

And the word breathed in

Slowly

The last moments before everything cascaded

Held its own breath a moment longer

And in the fraction of an instant

Before the word was finished

Light bloomed

And flowered

And swept

And eddied

And danced

And played

The silence had ended

It was begun

And it was good

**Welcome**

Hello… I’m Roddy Hamilton the minister of New Kilpatrick parish… and thank you for shuffling over and letting us join you today in worship… though given the weather we have been having… perhaps looking out the window… or just taking in the scenery… is worship enough… Our chief end is to glorify God… and those of us in Scotland this last week can easily do that given the weather… the colour… the way it makes us brighter and more informal… If you haven’t had good weather… there are still spaces here… but they are going fast and it will probably rain soon…

Ah, but, the garden needs it…

Let’s worship

**Prayer**

Silence

Beginnings

Possibility

Imagination

Here our prayer begins

Word moving over the deep

Light taking form

Colours emerging

Stoor moving into life

In this creative moment, O God,

Where words have still to settle into shape

And sound to find its cause

We wait

And pause

In your possibility

With our impossible asks

For renewal

And recreation

Of all we have damaged and dimmed

In what you have created in us

For words that uncreated

And acts that were unkind

In this place

In this sacred pause

May we together

Recreate

Who we are to be

Reimagine

Your call in us

Renew

Our covenant with you

Gracious creator

Holy God

Divine moment

In which everything is possible

Hear us as we pray together

Lord’s Prayer

**Reading**

**Reflection**

In the beginning…

Words that have shaped faiths, societies, theologies, religions

In the first moment

The first thought

The first idea

In the beginning

The spark

The urge

The moment the idea takes her first step towards reality

And the chemicals of hope

Swirl

And eddy

And move

Towards stars

And planets

And land

And seas

And life

God creates stuff

But that is not the only story of beginning

There is another

In which God is not a creator

God is a gardener

The first of creation is a human

And God grows a garden round the human

And fills it with imagination

For he knows the human

And feels the loneliness

The longing for something

And the divine imagination responds

With every conceivable

And some inconceivable ideas

And creates a game with the human

Using the power of names

And the garden grows wider

Becomes denser and more faun and fauna

Are woven into the experience of life

In this story God does not create systems

But relationships

Weaving everything created together

In balance

A place in the tapestry, the circle of life

‘Let there be’ speaks God

And creation is spoken into existence.

The power of each word

The power of God’s desire to create

Is strong enough to bring things into being

Not the second story

Here God is actively involved

God has to reason and imagine and work

Yes, God works to balance the world

It is as if the creator is a sculptor

A potter, an artist

Entering into the human condition

Feeling the human’s longing

Even in the first breaths of creation

God is engaged with humanity

Feeling the loneliness

The need

And God works to respond and fulfill that need

Animals

Plants

Naming ceremonies

But nothing works

Until God and God’s muse, fuse in a moment of inspiration

(They are still learning how to create)

What this human needs

Is another human

And what if each compliments each other

That together they offer both sides of humanity

It was a big moment

The first story has a God with a big voice

Little effort on the divine part to create

The second story

God is involved up to the divine eyeballs

Effort

Work

Design

When it comes to the first human

There is no: 'let there be’ incantation

God is a sculptor, the potter, the poet, the worker

Fashioning this image out of dust and breath

Holy clay

Animated with holy inspiration

But that is who God is in this second story

God is the gardener

This place is designed

Thought about

Planned

Chosen

There is no word to summon anything into existence as in chapter 1

Chapter 2 is a God who works the garden

And the human is co-creator

A gardener too

And if ever the human thought this was beneath human dignity

You only need to look to God

Who was the first gardener

But it wasn’t enough

That’s why God took a side of the human

An aspect

And created woman

And what was left was man

Because God knew

That existential reality of isolation

Perhaps God knew that all too well

God enters into the human mind

God empathises

It is a deeply poignant moment

God relates to

Has insight of

What humanity feels

That is an astounding moment in creation

For this story is not the easy summonings of stuff

This is the difficult awkward honest process of relationships

God feels what we feel

Is there any other ancient creation story like this?

That reveals at the very beginning

God is closer to us than we are to ourselves

In all this vastness of creation

So beautifully sung in our first creation story

Of star fields and the vastness of space

Here is God breathing life into one

Tiny

Infinitesimal

Singular

Part of creation

And around this being created a garden

Created a partner

Let the knowledge of good and evil sit there

Let them be with freewill

And followed them out of the garden eventually

It is sheer poetry of faith

Creation is not a system

It is a relationship

The focus is not the wonder of planetary orbits

And relativity

The focus is the connection, the sharing, the relationship we have

It is in relationship humanity and faith are born

That is our creation story

Beautifully retold in the garden metaphor

It is how we are to be

To live

It is how we meet God

And find life

It is where we grow

And flourish

In the being together

The loving and caring and gardening we do

In the lives of each other

Our community

Our church

Our faith

So be it

Amen

**Prayer**

Let creation sing for the least

And provide for the hungry

Let creation make a home

For the homeless and refugee

Let creation provide generously

For the hungry and the starving

Let creation bring to earth

The lofty and the proud

Let creation’s fragility

Concern governments and industry

Let creations diversity

Renew our society and neighbourhoods

Let creation’s pain

Be felt in conflict and war

Let creation’s peace

Be a gift to those invaded and broken

Let creations’ laughter

Be heard the ears of the autocrat

Let creation’s love

Be shared in all our relationships

Let creation be loved

By a world that needs a future

So be it

Amen

**Benediction**