



In A Beginning ... A Just Creator

Velda Love
Minister for Racial Justice

In [a] 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 “Let there be light”; and there was light. And God saw the light was good... (Genesis 1:1-4A Revised verse by Velda Love)

This text is a poetic narrative that was likely used for liturgical purposes. It is commonly assigned to the Priestly tradition, which means that it is addressed to a community of exiles. This account of creation is orderly, with humans created last, a sign of God’s climatic work. This is Israel’s story held in tension and variation from the creation story in Genesis 2:4b, which comes out of the Yahwist’s tradition.

The earth is approximated to be about 4.5 billion years old. Prior to the existence of the first known humans, the planet was undergoing changes that eventually sustained animal, vegetable, and human life. The earth has much to teach us about the relationship between some of its precious elements—minerals, oxygen, nitrogen, water, and [deoxyribonucleic acid](#). DNA, or [deoxyribonucleic acid](#), is a molecule found inside every cell in almost every living thing. A molecule compound of two chains coil around each other to form double helixes carrying the genetic instructions used in the growth, development, functioning, and reproduction of all known living organisms. In turn, the mitochondria produce energy through respiration, regulating cellular metabolism.

I became interested in learning more about the interconnectedness of the earth, its natural elements and resources, [human migration across the globe](#), and my African ancestors. *When*

humans first ventured out of Africa some 60,000 years ago, they left genetic footprints still visible today. By mapping the appearance and frequency of genetic markers in modern peoples, we create a picture of when and where ancient humans moved around the world. My curiosity grew as my intellect and spirit longed for more than traditional views based on colonial perspectives of Christianity.

I rejected the church's teachings based on hierarchical, racist, and sexist teachings and language. My education as a child was formed and strengthened growing up in Black churches. All my formative experiences were shaped by movements for Black lives, the ongoing struggle for liberation and justice within Black/African American communities, and learning about [my siblings representing the African diaspora](#). My preference for interpreting scripture resulted in reading, writing, and preaching with culturally inclusive and gender equity language.

Studying creation's complex history requires patience, persistence, humility, and being open to having more questions than human tendencies that want to have all the answers. Earth's beginnings are just as complex as those of human existence, as I learned in my studies during seminary about [The Human Genome Project](#). *The Human Genome Project was a large, well-organized, and highly collaborative international effort that generated the first sequence of the human genome and that of several additional well-studied organisms. Carried out from 1990 to 2003, it was one of the most ambitious and important scientific endeavors in human history.*

With this research, I also began a journey into understanding creation narratives from diverse people groups and their origins on various continents. The Spirit urged me to go deeper and do the challenging yet necessary work to develop language and imagery that reshaped and enlarged narratives not taught or preached about in academia—higher ed, seminaries, and churches.

My spiritual practices and spirituality are more closely aligned with my ancestors whose DNA was deeply rooted in movement across continents. As they moved across the earth, they left their DNA with people groups as they migrated, settled, and procreated for thousands of years, circumnavigating oceans and lands. These are indeed lessons we can learn from—coexisting with other humans across the globe,

thriving, circumnavigating and journeying alongside our siblings, and learning from those who stewarded and nurtured their land of origin for thousands of years.

I remain curious about God's desire for human flourishing and will continue inviting others on a journey of reframing, reshaping, and correcting historical narratives meant to enlarge and encourage us to reimagine and envision what a just world really looks and feels like.

[A blessing for letting go and stretching beyond by M. Barclay of enfleshed](#)

My prayer is that we see and experience a very good creation that has nurtured and cared for us for thousands of years. May we embrace Building up a Just World for All; protect the earth's resources, food sources, environment, and creatures. May we protect human and civil rights, global democracy, and human thriving as a global priority. May we go beyond taglines and slogans for a just world and do the hard work of changing policies that care for our siblings experiencing climate changes. May we open borders, so our siblings are not harmed as they bring themselves and their children into new lands, countries, and cities seeking places to live and thrive. May we take seriously the impact of gun violence, particularly against communities of color. May we protect voting rights, registering young adults and vulnerable citizens. May we advocate for policies and legislation and provide our children with books—whatever they desire to learn about themselves and the world in which they will one day lead. Resource our children with learning materials about their family of origin, histories, and legacies as fully human and divine. God of Creation Hear Our Prayers for a Just World for All!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rev. Dr. Velda Love is the Minister for Racial Justice and Lead for the Join the Movement Toward Racial Justice Campaign for the United Church of Christ. the Movement Toward Racial Justice Campaign for the United Church of Christ.

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