

*In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, 2the 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.*

*3Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 5God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.*

The Big Bang. I speak those three words and assume everyone here knows what I am talking about. The Big Bang is how cosmologists label the event that set in motion all of the stars and planets in the universe. For them the Big Bang is the closest that we can see to the beginning. Where did they get this idea? From observing – from measuring – from imagining. That there was a moment when everything that is was all tightly packed together and then suddenly exploded outward, this is what is suggested by what scientist do observe.

Thousands of years ago observing was somewhat different. In ancient times people noticed that water fell from the sky. They noticed that the land was bounded by water. They noticed that when you dig down far enough water is encountered. Water above – water out there – water down below. Sometimes the water broke through the boundaries and a kind of chaos was unleashed - there were torrential downpours and floods. Over time the ancient peoples in what we know as the Middle east came to the idea that all around the world was water – the deep is what they named it. If it is not held back water rushes in and overwhelms life.

“In the 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.”

“In the beginning the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep.” Before God spoke a word of creating there was this formless void – this deep. Chaos is the word that Bible scholars use to describe the deep.

Chaos.

No form, no boundaries, no limits - chaos. That is what the cells that we call cancer are like – growing without purpose – without form – without boundaries,. Cancer is a chaos within the body.

Sometimes nations recognize no boundaries, no limits. They cross borders to rape and plunder and destroy. There is chaos.

Sometimes in families there is one who knows no boundaries. He does not recognize the sexual taboo between a father and a daughter or between a brother and sister. There is chaos.

Sometimes anger leads to a crossing of boundaries - shouting, striking, lashing out, destroying. Chaos.

But where God's word is received in faith chaos is overcome - even today - even in you and in me - a new creation.

It happens to you in baptism, Down under the waters of chaos you go, and by the word naming you as one belonging to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit you are called out of chaos into the new life God is preparing for you. You are a new creation - you hear God's word, live by God's word - chaos is held at bay.

But always the chaos is pushing at the boundaries whispering, - "You're a loser. a failure."

Whispering: "what will happen tomorrow - will you have enough?"

Whispering: "no one else matters -only me and what I want."

Sometimes chaos comes in physical form cancer or Alzheimer's - chaos pushing at the boundaries. .

Once Jesus went down under the waters and came forth to see the heavens torn open and the Spirit descending in the form of a dove and a voice declaring, "You are my Son, whom I love - with you I am well pleased." But a day would come when the chaos of hatred and death would claim him once more and all of the joy of that baptismal moment was overshadowed. Down into death he would go - into the formless void. And that is where he would remain for a time.

Seven days - six days of creating - a seventh day of rest. Six days of living on earth - a seventh day of falling into death.

But then a new week came - the eighth day of creation when God the Father called the Son out of death and into life that is eternal.

In your baptism you were joined to him – buried with him in your going down into the waters of chaos. Called forth to live in his eighth day – to life that is eternal and love that knows no limits. Where chaos once was everywhere now in the one raised on the eighth day - life and love are everywhere in you.

Martin Luther taught that baptism is an everyday event – every day drowning the old and being raised new in faith. Every day drowning fear and greed and grudge-holding and being called forth in forgiveness as new and fresh as a newborn. A new creation.

Until that final eighth day of creation comes, always the battle between chaos and God ruling over you goes on. A daily battle – a daily beginning again in repentance and faith.

One day you who have been joined to Christ's dying will be eternally alive with him.

Until that day we live by God's word. Amen.