

A reading from:

The Star Within

a creation story by Dr. Paula Lehman & Rev. Sarah Griffith

In the beginning, the energy of silence rested over an infinite horizon of pure nothingness. The silence lasted for billions of years, stretching across aeons that the human mind cannot even remotely comprehend. Out of the silence arose the first ripples of sound, vibrations of pure energy that ruptured the tranquil stillness as a single point of raw potential, bearing all matter, all dimension, all energy, and all time: exploding like a massive fireball.

It was the greatest explosion of all time! An irruption of infinite energy danced into being. It had a wild and joyful freedom about it, and like a dance it was richly endowed with coherence, elegance, and creativity.

The universe continued to expand and cool until the first atoms came into being. The force of gravity joined the cosmic dance; atoms clustered into primordial galaxies. Giant clouds of hydrogen and helium gases gathered into condensed masses, giving birth to stars!

Generations of stars were born and died, born and died, and then our own star system, the solar system, was formed from a huge cloud of interstellar dust, enriched by the gifts of all those ancestral stars.

Planet Earth condensed out of a cloud that was rich in a diversity of elements. Each atom of carbon, oxygen, silicon, calcium, and sodium had been given during the explosive death of ancient stars. These elements, this stuff of stars, included all the chemical elements necessary for the evolution of carbon-based life. With the appearance of the first bacteria, the cosmic dance reached a more complex level of integration.

Molecules clustered together to form living cells! Later came the algae, and then fish began to inhabit the waters!

Thence the journey of life on land and in the sky. Insects, amphibians, birds, reptiles, and mammals: all flourished and diversified and elaborated the themes of life. And now it is our time, too.

This is our story. The story of our beginning, our cosmology.

Here ends the reading.

A reading from the first chapter of Gospel according to Matthew:

This is the family record of Jesus the Christ, descendant of David, descendant of Abraham- Abraham begot Isaac; Isaac begot Jacob; Jacob begot Judah and his sisters and brothers; Tamar and Judah begot Perez and Zerah; Perez begot Hezron; Hezron begot Ram; Ram begot Amminadab; Amminadab begot Nahshon; Nahshon begot Salmon; Rahab and Salmon begot Boaz; Ruth and Boaz begot Obed, Obed begot Jesse; and Jesse begot David, the ruler.

Bathsheba—who had been the wife of Uriah—and David begot Solomon; Solomon begot Rehoboam; Rehoboam begot Abijah; Abijah begot Asa; Asa begot Jeshoshaphat; Jehoshaphat begot Joram; Joram begot Uzziah; Uzziah begot Jotham; Jotham begot Ahaz; Ahaz begot Hezekiah; Hezekiah begot Manasseh; Manasseh begot Amon; Amon begot Josiah; Josiah begot Jeconiah and his sisters and brothers at the time of the Babylonian captivity.

After the Babylonian captivity, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel; Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel; Zerubbabel begot Abiud; Abiud begot Eliakim; Elikim begot Azor; Azor begot Zadok; Zadok begot Achim; Achim begot Eliud; Eliud begot Eleazar;

Eleazar begot Matthan; Matthan begot Jacot; Jacob begot Joseph, the husband of Mary.

And from her Jesus was born.

Thus there were fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen generations from David to the Babylonian captivity, and fourteen generations from the Babylonian captivity to the Messiah.

Here ends the reading.