

June 12, 2022  
 The Vast Expanse of Interstellar Space  
 Psalm 8  
 St. Luke's Shelby Township  
 The Rt. Rev. Dr. Bonnie A. Perry

Come Holy Spirit...  
 Good morning!

*"O Lord our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" ( v. 1)*

*"When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
 The moon, the stars that you have established;  
 What are [we] human beings that you are mindful of [us] them,  
 Mortals that you care for [us] them?....  
 You have given [us] them dominion over the works of your hands;  
 And put all things under[our] their feet....  
 O Lord, our sovereign,  
 How majestic is your name in all the earth! (Psalm 8 vv 3, 6, 9)*

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
 The moon, the stars that you have established,  
 What are we that you O lord of all, that you are mindful of us???

In the vast expanse of all that is, I find myself wondering, as the *Talking Heads* once said,  
 "Well How did I get here?"  
 How did I get here, and where do I, where do we fit in—in the midst of all that is  
 everything?

As I was wondering about all of this, to fully understand what I'm asking, I did a bit of a  
 brush up on my basic understanding of astronomy. Perhaps you'll find this helpful.

We live on earth, the third planet from our sun in our solar system. (you knew that) Our  
 solar system consists of 8 planets, the ones your remember from 6<sup>th</sup> grade and a sub-  
 planet, Pluto, which got demoted in 2006, ( don't' get me started—but it is smaller than the  
 earth's moon). So, our solar system consists of our planets, their moons, comets, and  
 asteroids, and star dust, all of it orbiting around our sun, a tiny part of the Milky Way  
 galaxy.  
 Solar systems revolve around the center of a mass of a galaxy just like planets orbit around  
 their suns.

Galaxies are huge--- there are small ones called dwarves with just a few hundred million  
 stars, and giant galaxies that have more than a 100 trillion stars. In case you are wondering,  
 our galaxy is bigger than many, but way smaller than some of the giant galaxies. I'm going

to go with us being in an above average galaxy because it makes me feel better about myself. Scientists estimate that there are around one billion galaxies.

Each Galaxy has billions upon billions of stars and every star has a solar system of some sort...

The universe is that vast expanse of space that contains all of everything in existence, all of the galaxies, big ones and small, all the stars and planets—all of everything. Here's the thing scientists are pretty convinced that that the universe is still expanding outwards...

Friends, in the midst of all of this do you find yourself wondering, how it is that we came to be-- here? Do you long for an understanding of how it is that we, you and I came to be, lodged here, amidst "the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, how it is we wound up here, on this fragile earth, our island home?" (*taken from Eucharistic prayer C, p 370, Book of Common Prayer, 1979*).

I do. Particularly as the days grow longer and my time to wander in the evening lengthens during this glorious run toward the longest day of the year. These are the days, weeks and the coming months when I will put myself outside, when I will immerse myself in the blue and green of our world. These are the times when I will set aside some of my worries and concerns and bathe in the wind and water, star-light and sunrays, soaking in beholding the glory of the world, the world in which we live. When the sun finally recedes behind the horizon and the Michigan summer light dies, I look up into the heavens above and stare in sheer delight.

How am I here and how do I matter?

*"When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
The moon, the stars that you have established;  
What are [we] human beings that you are mindful of [us] them,  
Mortals that you care for [us] them?...."*

Isn't it cool that God thought enough of us that God has put us, created us, thought enough of us to include us, in all that is. Doesn't that make us, beloved, important, astonishingly important because God has called us to part of the phenomenal, expanding createdness of this universe of being. We matter, we are worthy, we made in God's image and likeness in a grounded rooted, DNA infused way, filled with Grace. Let us behold our world and on this day give amazing thanks for this gift, for this thing we call life.

Knowing of this gift, we who are here now, might we do all we can, this day, today and tomorrow and the next to ensure that God's world, in all its ways, may flourish, and in spite of the trauma around, that we may in small and grand ways always and forever choose life and life in abundance.

*"O Lord our sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth." Psalm 8 v.10*