



# Darkwood Brew.org

*Wherever You Are, We'll Meet You There*

**New to the role of facilitator?** Here are a few tips to help you get started.

- First of all, a facilitator's job is to coordinate the flow of each session. View the video segment ahead of time and make your own notes and observations.
- Prepare the meeting place so that it is comfortable. Arrive early; help organize any refreshments and test your video player/computer.
- Getting to know one another helps the discussions flow. Welcome all, catch up and reflect a bit on last week's session in the first few minutes.
- You don't have to be the expert. You are not expected to provide answers to questions provided. So let the questions ignite the conversation and see where it takes the group.
- It's everyone's responsibility to make sure everyone else gets an equal amount of time to talk.
- Listen first; evaluate later. Make sure you understand a comment, then ask questions or pose other options.
- Encourage participants to bring a Bible or other resources.
- If you feel so moved, start, and/or end your session in prayer.

## Leaders Guide

### "On Earth As It Is In Heaven"

"Are we blessing the Earth or destroying it? Modern science and ancient Celtic Christianity both suggest a better way of being – exercising an ethic of stewardship, not dominion. Join us for "On Earth As it Is In Heaven," a provocative seven-week Darkwood Brew series, produced in conjunction with the United Church of Christ's Mission 4/1 Earth.

### Welcome to the Darkwood Brew journey!

We are glad you can join us. Our primary resources for small group study are condensed versions of Darkwood Brew's weekly one-hour episodes. These are called GUIDED EPISODES. Each Guided Episode is 25-30 minutes in length. There are pause points with questions provided for each Episode, intended for group discussion or individual reflection.

On the following page, you will find information on the Series Topic, Skype Guests, Scripture passage, and Questions posed during the episode.



### Questions:

1. How do you understand the Genesis story of creation? Where do humans fit into that story for you?
2. Eric suggests a poetic claim that love is the energy that precedes all matter. What does that mean to you? What would it say about creation?
3. What is our responsibility if God calls us to be co-creators?
4. Why do you suppose the story of creation in Genesis 1 is paralleled by the story of building the Tabernacle?
5. What is the result when social and ecological systems are in harmony? How might creation be an act of worship? How might worship be an act of creation?

### EPISODE TITLE: "The Genesis of Environmentalism"

On Earth As It Is In Heaven, Episode 1

### Featured Guest: Eric Elnes

Dr. Eric Elnes is a biblical scholar with a Ph.D. in Biblical Studies from Princeton Theological Seminary. He is also a leading articulator of Convergence Christianity and Senior Minister of Countryside Community Church (UCC) in Omaha, NE. Eric has written several books on faith, theology and culture including, *The Phoenix Affirmations: A New Vision for the Future of Christianity* (Jossey-Bass, 2006) and a book on experiential worship called *Igniting Worship: The Seven Deadly Sins* (Abingdon, 2004). In 2006, Eric also helped lead a 2,500 mile walk from Phoenix to Washington, DC, to promote awareness of progressive/emerging Christian faith and practice and meet with Christians at a grassroots to hear their hopes and dreams for the future of faith in America. His journey, which is the subject of a feature-length film, *The Asphalt Gospel*, is recounted in his book, *Asphalt Jesus: Finding a New Christian Faith on the Highways of America* (Jossey-Bass, 2007). Elnes lives as an "empty nester" in Omaha with his wife, Melanie, dog Roe, and cat Tamar. They have two college-age daughters, Arianna and Maren.

### Pneuma Divina Scripture: Genesis 1:1-5

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

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### Questions:

1. What are some examples of wildness? What are some examples of regimentation and fixity?
2. What are some actions you can take, alone or in community, to benefit the environment?
3. If God is in all creation, how does that affect our attitude towards the environment? How is wildness a part of that relationship?
4. Have you received a call to wildness in your life? What did it ask? How did you respond? What was the result?

### EPISODE TITLE: "Wildness"

On Earth As It Is In Heaven, Episode 2

### Featured Guest: Meighan Pritchard

Pritchard, who has been working half-time as interim at Prospect UCC in Seattle since March 2012, has long been interested in environmental issues since her childhood growing up in University Congregational UCC in Seattle. During studies at Pacific School of Religion in 2007 she spent two weeks on a seminary immersion trip to the border of El Paso and Ciudad Juarez, where she connected environmental issues with justice and the frequent siting of toxic waste dumps near communities of color. Since returning after earning her master's of divinity in 2010, she became involved with the conference Justice and Witness Ministries Committee.

### Pneuma Divina Scripture: Genesis 1:6-8

And God said, 'Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.' So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

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## Questions:

1. What does it mean if our egos are intended to serve the center, not to be the center? How does that affect our relationship with creation?
2. Sonsiris's poem asserts that one way the cosmos speaks is through our physical existence. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin said, "We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience." How would you describe the nature of our relationship with creation?
3. How might your faith inform your attitudes and actions relative to environmental justice?
4. If creation is a self-revelation of God how does that shape our relationship to it? What are some ways we are disconnected from creation? How might we reconnect?
5. What does it mean if God is an active partner in creation? What part does the Earth play in that partnership? What part do we play?

## EPISODE TITLE: "Fecundity"

On Earth As It Is In Heaven, Episode 3

### Featured Guest: Kit Evans

Argrow Kitnequa ("Kit") Evans grew up in Mebane, North Carolina and in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, in which her mother served as a minister. Kit graduated from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. She taught special education in Washington, DC for two years while earning an MA in teaching at Trinity University. Kit continued her education receiving an MA in Social Justice and Community Development. She served as a peer outreach educator for the AIDS Projects of Southern Vermont before joining the US Peace Corps as a community development worker and being sent to the Caribbean. During the healing period that followed a sexual assault there, she became a motivational speaker for the National Association of Students Against Violence Everywhere and also decided upon seminary. She chose PSR after attending a Ministry as Vocation conference on campus.

### Featured Guest: Sonsiris Tamayo-Dewitt

Sonsiris brings a spirit of wholeness to her healing arts. She is a champion for social justice and will tenaciously defend a cause or speak out for the voiceless. She is a gifted preacher and poet who empowers others to express themselves critically and creatively by modeling freedom and joy in a safe and loving environment. ~Linda Fraser, EdM, SPHR

### Pneuma Divina Scripture: Genesis 1:9-13

And God said, 'Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.' And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, 'Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.' And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

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### Questions:

1. What aspects of natural harmony tend to pass by us without being noticed? What can we do to pay more attention?
2. How do our attitudes and actions change when we work towards cooperation instead of superiority? What does that have to do with harmony?
3. What needs to happen to build trust in a relationship? What needs to happen to maintain that trust?
4. What are some of the ways we are deeply disconnected from creation? What steps might we take to begin to heal that brokenness?
5. What patterns of night, day, season and years reveal deeper harmonies in your life and in creation?

### EPISODE TITLE: "Harmony"

On Earth As It Is In Heaven, Episode 4

### Featured Guest: Catherine Foote

Catherine Foote is Reverend at the University Congregational Church of Christ, and has been in the area since the late 1990s. While at first she thought she could never see herself living in the University district, now Foote loves the area, and all the aspects that make it unique. Foote describes the energy of The Ave (University Way), homelessness, social services in the area, Nickelsville, Conversations on Homelessness, and the relationship between businesses, service providers, and the homeless, and how these relationships affect the community.

### Pneuma Divina Scripture: Genesis 1:14-19

And God said, 'Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.' And it was so. God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

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## Questions:

1. What does it mean if there is a continuous flow between the human, the angelic and the creaturely? How is that different from the prevailing view?
2. What stood out for you from Genesis 1:20-23? What insights do these verses provide into the continuous flow of life on Earth?
3. Bruce suggests an idea that God may not have created the universe, but rather may be an ongoing participant in its creation. What do you think of that idea? What does it take away from or add to the idea of God as the sole creator?
4. How do you think living things other than humans fit into God's universe? What is our relationship to them? What should it be?
6. Does creation have an inherent sense of playfulness? If so, where do you find it? What opportunities for playfulness do you have in your life?

## EPISODE TITLE: "Creatureliness"

On Earth As It Is In Heaven, Episode 5

### Featured Guest: Bruce Epperly

I am a practical theologian, pastor, spiritual guide, author, and leader in lay and pastoral faith formation. This fall I was Visiting Professor of Process Studies at Claremont School of Theology/Claremont Lincoln University. Prior to that I served as Director of Continuing Education and Professor of Practical Theology at Lancaster Theological Seminary (2003-2010). I also was co-pastor of Disciples United Community Church (a partnership Disciples of Christ/United Church of Christ congregation) from 2004-2010.

Prior to coming to Lancaster I served as acting Associate Dean, Assistant to the President for On-line Programs, and Adjunct Professor in Theology, Spirituality, and Pastoral Care at Wesley Theological Seminary (2000-2003). Always enjoying combining pastoral with teaching ministry, I have also served as interim minister in several UCC and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) congregations. For seventeen years I served as Director of the Protestant Ministry and Adjunct Professor in Theology, Spirituality, and Medicine at Georgetown University and Medical School.

### Pneuma Divina Scripture: Genesis 1:20-23

And God said, 'Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.' So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.' And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

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**Questions:**

1. If, as Celtic Christianity suggests, we are of the Earth, not opposed to the Earth, how does that shape our ideas about environmental stewardship? How can we put those ideas into practice?
2. In Genesis 1:31, God looks at everything that has been created, including mankind, and declares it very good. How does that inform our ideas about the earlier instruction to subdue the Earth and to have dominion over the animals?
3. Whichever way you turn, there is the face of God ~ The Qur'an Where do you see the face of God? Can you see it when you look in the mirror?
4. How does grace figure into your understanding of our place within creation? How does it figure into our relationships with people of other faiths?
5. How do the ideas of Pelagius, Celtic Christianity and Genesis call us into deeper expressions of our own humanity?

**EPISODE TITLE: "The Image of God"**

On Earth As It Is In Heaven, Episode 6

**Featured Guest: John Philip Newell**

John Philip Newell is a poet, peacemaker, minister and scholar, acclaimed for his work in the field of Celtic Spirituality. Based in Edinburgh, Scotland, Newell's work relates to the sacredness of the earth and the oneness of the human soul.

**Pneuma Divina Scripture: Genesis 1:24-31**

And God said, 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.' And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.'

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.' God said, 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.' And it was so. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

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## Questions:

1. How does rest help us access the ground of our being?
2. What stood out for you from Genesis 2: 1-3?
3. Which of our human activities seem to operate outside of the will and intentionality of God? Which seem to be in accordance? How does rest fit in?
4. What positive effects does rest have in your life? What can you do to make your life more restful?
5. What might be different if humanity embraced the concept of Sabbath?

## EPISODE TITLE: "Its All Good"

On Earth As It Is In Heaven, Episode 7

### Featured Guest: John Philip Newell

John Philip Newell is a poet, peacemaker, minister and scholar, acclaimed for his work in the field of Celtic Spirituality. Based in Edinburgh, Scotland, Newell's work relates to the sacredness of the earth and the oneness of the human soul.

### Pneuma Divina Scripture: Genesis 1:24-31

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.