

# Holy Trinity

June 7, 2020

## Introduction

*Though the word trinity is not found in the scriptures, today's second reading includes the apostolic greeting that normally begins the liturgy: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all." In the gospel Jesus sends his disciples forth to baptize in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. More than a doctrine, the Trinity expresses the heart of our faith: we have experienced the God of creation made known in Jesus Christ and with us always through the Holy Spirit. We celebrate the mystery of the Holy Trinity as we profess the creed, and hear the word, and as we are sent into the world to bear witness to our faith.*



## Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity one God, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit,  
whose steadfast love is everlasting,  
whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation. **Amen.**

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Reconciling God,

**we confess that we do not trust your abundance,  
and we deny your presence in our lives.**

**We place our hope in ourselves and rely on our own efforts.**

**We fail to believe that you provide enough for all.**

**We abuse your good creation for our own benefit.**

**We fear difference and do not welcome others as you have welcomed us.**

**We sin in thought, word, and deed.**

**By your grace, forgive us; through your love, renew us;  
and in your Spirit, lead us;**

**so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen.**

Beloved of God,

by the radical abundance of divine mercy

we have peace with God through ✝ Christ Jesus,  
through whom we have obtained grace upon grace.

Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope.

For hope does not disappoint,

because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**Gathering Hymn ELW #408 / LBW #522**

*Come, Thou Almighty King*

*Listen and sing along [here](#).*

### **Prayer of the Day**

God of heaven and earth, before the foundation of the universe and the beginning of time you are the triune God: Author of creation, eternal Word of salvation, life-giving Spirit of wisdom. Guide us to all truth by your Spirit, that we may proclaim all that Christ has revealed and rejoice in the glory he shares with us. Glory and praise to you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

### **Children's Time**

*Listen to **The Three Questions**, based on a story by Leo Tolstoy, [here](#).*

### **First Reading: Genesis 1:1 - 2:3**

*At the beginning of time, God the Creator, God the powerful Word, and God the life-giving Spirit form the earth and all its inhabitants. God sees that all this created work is good and then rests on the seventh day.*

*Read the text [here](#).*

### **Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 13:11 - 13**

*Paul closes a challenging letter to the Corinthians with an appeal to Christian fellowship grounded in the triune harmony of Christ's grace, God's love, and the Spirit's partnership.*

*Read the text [here](#).*

### **Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20**

*After his resurrection, Jesus summons his remaining disciples and commissions them to baptize and teach all nations in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

*Read the text [here](#).*

## Reflection on the Text

Well, a lot has changed since last Trinity Sunday, not just the COVID-19 pandemic under which we live. But also, the killing of George Floyd, an unarmed, handcuffed black man by a white police officer in Minneapolis. Just a few weeks ago, we learned, many of us, of the shooting of Ahmaud Arbery, but since that time, Breonna Taylor, Dreasjon "Sean" Reed, Tony McDade have also been killed. And how many others whose names are known only to their families and to God?

Today is Trinity Sunday. It's a hard holiday for us to wrap our minds around it's a difficult, a difficult concept. But, we learn about the Trinity, particularly in today's first lesson from Genesis. In this beautiful song of creation, we hear, "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. And a wind from God swept over the face of the waters."

God said and creation began. Martin Luther put it this way, "So also the Christian Church agrees that in this description there is indicated the mystery of the Holy Trinity, Father created through the Son who Moses called Word, and over this creative work brooded the Holy Spirit. Later, God says, "Let us make humankind in our image." This is the glorious relationship with God that spills out into all creation. God is not a lone ranger. And all of God shows up, all of God shows up, delighting in creation, caring for creation, weeping for creation, redeeming creation.

I confess that I do not fully understand or even have language to describe the mystery of the Trinity, probably won't until I finished my baptismal vocation and stand in the presence of God. I can't explain how, but I can testify to the great Lutheran question, what does this mean?

God is relationship. Within God and flowing from God. Creation is God's decision not to look after God's self but focuses God's energies on creation. This Trinity, this God, this relationship is outward and overflowing. God is the one who does not grasp.

As we hear in Philippians, "Let this same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as a thing to be grasped. Likewise, the Spirit is poured out on us all. Again, what does this mean? God is relationship. Within God, with the creation, with humankind and among humankind. And since we are baptized into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, baptized into the Trinity.

We are also part of this powerful, dynamic, living, giving, loving relationship, with God, in God, with creation, with each other. We are inextricably woven together. No one is alone. No one is beyond the fierce, tender love of God and God is not far off. God is present in creation, in each of us and in all of us. God is flesh and blood made visible in Jesus of Nazareth and in every human being.

God is spirit, closer than our own breath. And this is how God as Trinity shows up today. God is creator. God created diversity, beautiful, vital, alive. We must reject calls for colorblindness. That diminishes and washes out God's gift of diversity.

We in the white majority can begin to see our siblings of color more clearly. We should be color amazed, recognizing the strength that comes with all our many colors and God as creator made all of us in God's image. "Let us make them in our image" that means all of us are a part of this relational triune God who did create all of humankind, each and every one and all of us together, in God's image, all. And God is the word made flesh. Our flesh, your flesh, my flesh, George Floyd's flesh.

Jesus in his passion still suffers with those who suffer. The crucifixion of an unarmed, handcuffed man lying face down on the street is the crucifixion and the passion of our Lord. The crucifixion of so many, too many, black and brown people, who live constantly with the violence of racism, is the passion of our Lord.

And God is spirit. The wind, the breath that moved over the face of the deep at creation, the breath of God that was breathed into the first earth creature, Adam. The breath of Jesus as he gave them the gift of the Spirit, the breath crushed out of George Floyd, the breath of life God had given to him. And now, church, we as the baptized, those of us baptized into the Trinity, show up.

We work for an end to violence, the violence of racism that kills bodies and maims souls. And we work for the end of violence brought about by lawlessness and also frustration, masquerading in some cases, as protest.

In the fierce love of the Trinity, we do not deny anger. In the face of the reality and inequity of racial injustice, anger is appropriate, is appropriate. But we use our anger to bring about change. We put out fires at the stores, workplaces, churches and property but we ask the Spirit kindle in us the fire of justice.

We work for calm and quiet throughout our country, but we remain disquieted as we search deep within ourselves. We work for peace, but not the passive peace that allows the mechanisms of racism and white supremacy to stay in place. No, it's the peace God alone can give that gives us the strength and courage to act. The Trinity is a relationship, within God, with creation, with us and among us. Until the white majority feels in our soul that the pain and suffering of black and brown people is our own pain and suffering, it will not be safe to be black or brown in America. And until we feel in our own soul that this is our pain in our story, we are not open to the relationship that God wants to shower, share, lavish upon us as a relational God, a loving God, as a God of the Trinity, as a God who has brought us into that relationship and commands us to share that relationship and live that relationship with creation and with each other.

Paul's second letter to the Corinthians ends, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all " It's actually a promise and I think marching orders for us. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is with us, the love of God is with us, the communion of the Holy Spirit is with us and, together in the communion and community of the Holy Trinity, we can make that a reality. Amen.

**Special Music** [here](#)

***Hymn of Joy & Nicaea Arranged By Ruth Elaine Schram***

## Nicene Creed

*We profess our faith with the whole church:*

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God, begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation**

**he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## Prayers of Intercession

Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray for our shared world.

*A brief silence.*

God of community, you form us as your church. Guide our bishops, pastors, deacons, and all the baptized in sharing your life-giving good news with all the world. Strengthen us to be bold in our proclamation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of creation, you called everything into being. Sustain this world with your renewing care. Inspire us to see waterways, plant life, birds, fish, insects, and mammals and call them good. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of counsel, all authority belongs to you. Encourage the leaders of this and every land to seek peace, equality, and unity. Instill wisdom in advocates who work toward justice in often ignored communities. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of care, you created us in your image. Help us see your likeness in one another. Open our eyes to see and attend to all who face oppression and suffering. Console, heal, and nourish all in need (*especially those we name now*). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of companionship, you accompany this body of faith. As the rhythms of summer begin, protect all who travel, renew all who will enjoy a time of sabbath, and shelter all who will not be protected from the sun's heat. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

God of compassion, you comfort us in our grief with the promise of the resurrection. We give you thanks for the saints of all time and in our lives. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Lord's Prayer**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

**Closing Hymn ELW #413 / LBW #165 *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty!***

*Listen and sing along [here](#).*

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Today's reflection was written by ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.

