**NVMA Service, trinity sunday- may 30, 2021**

**GATHERING**

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,

who forgives all our sin,

whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Most merciful God,

**we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.** **Amen.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ☩ Jesus Christ, your guilt is departed, your sin is blotted out and you are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. **Amen.**

**GATHERING SONG*Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty!* (ELW 413)**

1 Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

2 Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee,
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,
which wert and art, and evermore shalt be.

3 Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee,
though the eye of sinfulness thy glory may not see,
only thou art holy; there is none beside thee,
perfect in pow'r, in love and purity.

4 Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

**GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

Almighty Creator and ever-living God: we worship your glory, eternal Three-in-One, and we praise your power, majestic One-in-Three. Keep us steadfast in this faith, defend us in all adversity, and bring us at last into your presence, where you live in endless joy and love, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**WORD**

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 6:1-8**

A reading from Isaiah.

1In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. 2Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. 3And one called to another and said:
 “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.”
4The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. 5And I said: “Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!”
  6Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. 7The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: “Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.” 8Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I; send me!”

The word of the Lord.

**PSALM: Psalm 29**

 1Ascribe to the Lord, you gods, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
 2Ascribe to the Lord the glory due God’s name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.
3The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders; the Lord is upon the mighty waters.
4The voice of the Lord is a powerful voice; the voice of the Lord is a voice of splendor.
5The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees; the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;
6the Lord makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.
7The voice of the Lord bursts forth in lightning flashes.
8The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
9The voice of the Lord makes the oak trees writhe and strips the forests bare.
And in the temple of the Lord all are crying, “Glory!”
10The Lord sits enthroned above the flood; the Lord sits enthroned as king forevermore.
11O Lord, give strength to your people; give them, O Lord, the blessings of peace.

**SECOND READING: Romans 8:12-17**

A reading from Romans.

12Brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—13for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. 15For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” 16it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

The word of the Lord.

**GOSPEL: John 3:1-17**

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

1Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. 2He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.” 3Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” 4Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” 5Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. 6What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ 8The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” 9Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” 10Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?
  11“Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. 12If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? 13No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. 14And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.
  16“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.
  17“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON**

 A number of years ago, I was on the call committee at Trinity, Sebastopol, and we attended the service of a perspective call on Trinity Sunday. We met with them after the service and they remarked that it might not have been the best Sunday to hear them preach, as the Trinity, the triune God is difficult to preach. Back then I did not understand their concern, but I completely get it now, because trying to explain and preach this concept or doctrine of Trinity is difficult. How do we explain just who God is from an academic or theological perspective, and how do we do it well? A doctrine is a belief, or a set of beliefs held and taught by an institution such as the church, or a political party, and the doctrine of Trinity is central to our faith, It is a theological construct that was established by an early group of Christian forefathers in the second century who were attempting to understand and explain the relationship of God the Creator, Jesus, the Son, and the breath of Holy Spirit through Scripture. It is interesting to note, that the “Trinity” does not appear in scripture. It is of human abstract and design. So, I am not going to spend a lot of time trying to explain it theologically, because in all honesty how can we. The Trinity is a mystery that is deeply embedded in relationship. What appears impossible for us as humans to understand is made possible by God, by the one in three and the three in one.

      Jesus’ conversation with Nicodemus in our gospel reading today, speaks to the mystery and relationship of the Trinity. Nicodemus comes to Jesus in the darkness of night, questioning and curious about the identity of Jesus. Although Nicodemus is a religious leader, he was confused as to who Jesus was and what it means to believe. Jesus goes on to speak of the relationship of God, himself and the Spirit, the need to trust and the ability to share in the mystery and freedom that only God can bring. All are equally God, and each cannot be separated from the other, the one in three and three in one.

      There are many names for God, God the Creator, God the Father, the Mother, the Parent, Yahweh, the Divine, the Almighty, and so many others. Jesus is the Son of God, the Son of Man, the teacher, the healer, the Word, the Messiah, Emmanuel. The Spirit is a bit harder to name because we cannot physically see the Spirit, she comes to us in the wind, or in the *ruah,*the Hebrew word for breath. She is that feeling in our hearts, that feeling of comfort and help, that presence that walks alongside us in times of sorrow, grief, or pain, yet also in joy and happiness. So many names, so many titles, abstracts and designs all encompassed together in this relationship of one in three and three in one.

     The relationship of the Trinity is always moving, it is never stagnant. God the creator who made the heavens and the earth, the mountains, the oceans, the seas, the valleys the trees, and the humans and animals. Each of us is different, but all are designed to live cohesively in relationship with one another, depending on one another, learning from and growing with one another. In an unconditional display of love for the world, God sent to Mary and Joseph a tiny babe who was born and laid in a manger, he was the Messiah, the one who would liberate the oppressed and othered. This beloved Son of God walked the earth, sharing his radical ideas of love, acceptance, and relationship. He was found guilty, crucified on the cross, was resurrected, and ascended into heaven. He is full of mercy and grace and connects heaven and earth and all that is in it. The grace of Jesus Christ was given to us as a gift in our baptism where the water and Holy Spirit envelop us. We are given new life, we are given eternal life, we are given the gift of unconditional love and mercy. The Spirit walks alongside us throughout our lives, enabling and empowering us, provoking us, working in, through, and around us, to share the love of God and the light of Jesus Christ.

     The one in three and the three in one give us life, each gives us a calling to serve, each gives us an abundance of love to share with one another. They guide us and teach us. Jonathan Wilson, suggests that the “doctrine of the Trinity teaches us to read the Old Testament and the New Testament as one story; the God of the Old Testament is also the God of the New Testament. The doctrine of the Trinity guides us in our understanding the good news of Jesus Christ: God has come to us in Jesus Christ, and it teaches us today that God is present in the Holy Spirit.”[[1]](#footnote-1)The one in three and the three in one are intertwined and entangled with one another in vulnerability and intimacy, in community and relationship, and in unconditional love.

      Love is an emotion that can be used to describe the Trinity, it does not explain it, but it just might be what the Trinity is based on. Pastor David Lose proposes this,

the Father is one who loves, the Son the beloved, and the Spirit the love shared between them. No, it doesn’t explain the Trinity, but it does help us imagine and remember that the whole point of the Trinity is that God’s love is too big, too immense, even, to be described as the love of a single person but is more like the love shared among a community, a love shared so deeply that it can’t be contained but spills out from the Trinity into the whole world and into our lives.[[2]](#footnote-2)

     The love of God through the relationship of Trinity can be found in the beloved verse of John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life.” This is the Trinity, this the dance and movement of the one in three and the three in one.

     Yes, relationship and love are at the heart of the Trinity, and it is also at the heart of the church. As a church we are called to be in relationship with one another, we are stronger together when we are in relationship with one another working together towards a mission of love and acceptance. When we live into the mystery of the Trinity we are loving our neighbour, we are serving as we have been called to serve, we are looking outward at mission instead of inward at our own four walls.

     So let us join the dance of the Trinity. Let us live into the mystery of the one in three and the three in one. Let us become entwined and entangled in relationship, community, service, and genuine love for one another. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen

**HYMN OF THE DAY*Come, Join the Dance of Trinity* (ELW 412)**

1 Come, join the dance of Trinity,
before all worlds begun--
the interweaving of the Three,
the Father, Spirit, Son.
The universe of space and time
did not arise by chance,
but as the Three, in love and hope,
made room within their dance.

2 Come, see the face of Trinity,
newborn in Bethlehem;
then bloodied by a crown of thorns
outside Jerusalem.
The dance of Trinity is meant
for human flesh and bone;
when fear confines the dance in death,
God rolls away the stone.

3 Come, speak aloud of Trinity,
as wind and tongues of flame
set people free at Pentecost
to tell the Savior's name.
We know the yoke of sin and death,
our necks have worn it smooth;
go tell the world of weight and woe
that we are free to move!

4 Within the dance of Trinity,
before all worlds begun,
we sing the praises of the Three,
the Father, Spirit, Son.
Let voices rise and interweave,
by love and hope set free,
to shape in song this joy, this life:
the dance of Trinity.

**nicene creed**

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**

Let us come before the triune God offering our prayers for the church, the world and all who are in need. *A brief silence.*

We pray, O God, for your holy church around the world. Revitalize and renew us, that we may be reborn once again through the waters of baptism and the blowing wind of your Spirit. Help us to proclaim the good news of the age in the world you so dearly love. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We give you thanks for your power revealed to us in creation; for cedar and oak trees, for rushing waters, for mighty mountains, and for the echoes of thunder. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the nations and our leaders, that led by your Spirit, they work towards a world where all of your children enjoy peace. We pray especially for Palestine and Israel and all other nations experiencing turmoil and injustices. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

We pray for healing for all those who suffer from illness or injury. Wrap your loving arms around victims and survivors of trauma or violence. Give respite to those living with PTSD or any other mental health concerns. We remember the names we speak before you in our hearts. Pause, Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the congregations of the Nith Valley Ministry Area that the splendor of your majesty and the holiness of your mystery may be glorified through our worship and our relationships with one another. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We give you thanks, O God, for those who have died in the faith. We remember also those whose lives have been lost due to the horrors of war. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Through Christ, with Christ in the unity of Holy Spirit, we praise you O God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**MEAL**

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

 **DIALOGUE**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

 Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

 Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**PREFACE**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places

give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God.

You reveal your glory

as the glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit:

equal in majesty, undivided in splendor, one Lord, one God,

ever to be adored in your eternal glory.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,

with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,

who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,

who preached good news to the poor,

and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension,

we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,

and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,

the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;

to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,

be all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

**LORD’S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

**INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Christ has set the table with more than enough for all. Come!

**COMMUNION**

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**SENDING**

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

**BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. **Amen.**

**SENDING SONG*Holy God, We Praise Your Name* (ELW 414)**

1 Holy God, we praise your name;
Lord of all, we bow before you.
All on earth your scepter claim,
all in heav'n above adore you.
Infinite your vast domain,
everlasting is your reign.

2 Hark! The glad celestial hymn
angel choirs above are raising;
cherubim and seraphim,
in unceasing chorus praising,
fill the heav'ns with sweet accord:
"Holy, holy, holy Lord!"

3 Lo, the apostolic train
join your sacred name to hallow;
prophets swell the glad refrain,
and the white-robed martyrs follow;
and from morn to set of sun
through the church the song goes on.

4 Holy Father, holy Son,
Holy Spirit, three we name you,
though in essence only one;
undivided God we claim you
and, adoring, bend the knee
while we own the mystery.

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ

**Thanks be to God.**

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1. Jonathon Wilson, *A Primer for Christian Doctrine*, (Michigan: Eerdman’s, 2005), 23 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. David Lose, “Trinity Sunday B: Love. Yeah Just Love” in *In the Meantime,* published May 25, 2018, accessed May 25, 2021, <http://www.davidlose.net/2018/05/trinity-sunday-b-love-yeah-just-love>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)