

“When I look upon your heavens,
the work of your fingers,

the moon and the stars that you have established;

what are human beings that you are mindful of them,
mortals that you care for them?” AMEN!

In the Psalm reading today we heard
the writer say those words and then
the statement that God has
“made human beings a little
lower than God.”

I call that wishful thinking... :-)
“a little less than divine.” Pfft!

I mean we can't even explain the ways God
intersects in our lives without
stumbling over the words.

Sure, many do like to THINK they're
are a “little lower than God,”

(I'm looking at you Gov't leaders...
and some pastors, too).

What does the Bible mean when it says

"you've made them a little lower than God."

Well, to answer that question one needs to know
what God does and how God is reflected in
Jesus and what the Holy Spirit is up to.

It means we open our eyes to possibly knowing
what God is up to.

We will likely be wrong! Yet, the invitation remains.

Speaking of being wrong,
that's what happens when
we try to explain the Trinity.

I remember a few years after my return to the church,
I was asked to consider becoming
the youth director at the
Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd.

About a year into the position I thought,
"I'm going to ask the pastor if I can
lead a children's sermon every
once in a while."

Pastor Chip was thrilled! :-)

"How about Holy Trinity Sunday?" I suggested.

“Sure!” Was his reply.

So I went to work on how to explain
the Trinity to the children for that Sunday.

I don’t know what in the world I said or
what kinds of heresies I uttered. :-)

But I do recall one thing.

At the very beginning, as I sat down with the children,
I said, “Okay, kids.

Today I am going to explain the Holy Trinity to you.” :-)

That’s the same response I got from the congregation!

To my young disciple mind,
I thought it could be done.

I know better now.

It’s probably taken me about 20 years. Literally!

Father, Son, Holy Spirit.

Parent, Child, Advocate.

Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier.

Egg yolk, Egg white, Egg shell.

You know what I'm talking about if
you've spent a length of time in the church.

So rest easy, I have learned my lesson
to know that just because this is the
festival day of the Holy Trinity,

it does not mean I am required to preach
a sermon that tries to justify or make sense of
the doctrine or choreograph the
dance of the Trinity. (Pause)

Kathleen Norris, in her poem called
"Kitchen Trinity," says:

"Three women at a table hold the world.

One gets up to stir the stars,
one makes the fire, another
blows on it to keep it going."

I like that image because in the poem there's agency.

Meaning it reveals God's action,
in the form of women,
God's action makes space for you and me
to enter.

In the space of the Trinity there's room

for love and room for living.

There's space that is both encapsulating and infinite.

There's space where we care for the earth
and her creatures.

A space where we know people are people,
not illegals or aliens, and not kings.

And where we are told
God's desire is to be known.

In the same way we hold Christ
in the form of bread, wine, and grape juice
we hold the understanding that
the Trinity does the same thing.

It helps make God tangible.

It let's us in on a secret of understanding
a little who God is, in a variety of forms,
but present in all. (Pause)

We probably know the attack some
people in our nation have made on diversity.

Yet, the Holy Trinity is diversity.

The diversity of God in varieties of forms
that can be different to/for people.

That's how BIG God is.

This means, that without knowing it,
we are clear about
the Trinity in different ways.

For me, the Trinity is like looking
upon an infant sleeping.

A peaceful slumber knowing
they're safe and secure.

The assurance is reflected on their face, and
one may see a peace that can only
be understood as a miracle of creation.

When I listen to their quiet breath,
I feel the Spirit that is not only wind,
but a life-giving and healing whisper
where I know a power
greater than myself. (Pause)

I recall holding each of our newborn sons.

In one hand when they were first born,
I'd hold them and think,

“My God, how am I able to fulfill
the trust you’ve giving me with this gift?”

(Pause)

We remember holding Davis when
the specialized doctor in Atlanta said
he’d like us to admit him
for examinations because he was
what they called “failing to thrive.”

The other doctor we had kept telling us
“Baby’s throw up.”

Just deal with it was what he’d implied,
but Colleen knew this wasn’t normal.

I remember holding our tiny child and
praying every prayer I could remember
when we turned him over to care team.

In these moments of suffering,
no one pauses to explain the Holy Trinity,
but when I’d sit in the glider by the window,
I know now why it mattered.

In those times, the Trinity becomes more
than a symbol or an explanation of words.

In those times, the Trinity becomes what

we long to be bound to.

A protecting parent who knew the pain
we were enduring.

A child, who knows the pain and suffering of
the patient seeking healing.

And a Spirit who gave strength to go on;
a Spirit that breathes on us and into us. (Pause)

I know you have experienced these things too.

The Trinity has loved you here, at St. Stephen
and guided this congregation through
many changes.

Some were significant and others not as much,
but still the Trinity was called upon. (Pause)

Beloved, I thank God for all of you.

Fathers, mothers, and all figures of parenting
all who who protect and nurture others;

For children, adults and all times of development
as it pertains to age -

your suffering is acknowledged and

able to be let go as the suffering flows to hope,
and hope does not disappoint us;

and for the Spirit, the other, the outside of us
and the invisible around us.

The abstract and mysterious part of God
that resides in, under, and above us.

The mystery that's not a problem but
a place where God's glory is made visible.

Where there's access, peace, sharing,
and where God's love is poured out.

AMEN!