

May 30, 2021 – Holy Trinity – ELW Service of the Word (Page 210)
Prelude

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Introduction

When we say God is the triune God, we are saying something about who God is beyond, before, and after the universe: that there is community within God. Our experience of this is reflected in Paul's words today. When we pray to God as Jesus prayed to his Abba (an everyday, intimate parental address), the Spirit prays within us, creating between us and God the same relationship Jesus has with the one who sent him.

Gathering Hymn: ELW #413 – *“Holy, Holy, Holy”*

Confession & Forgiveness – *Page 211*

Greeting - *Page 213*

Kyrie – *Page 213*

Canticle of Praise – *Page 213*

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.**

First Reading: Isaiah 6:1-8

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. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 29

¹Ascribe to the LORD, you gods, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

²**Ascribe 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.

⁴**The 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;

⁶**the 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.

⁸**The 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!”

¹⁰**The 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

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. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION – *Page 216*

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 our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Message – “Asking Questions with Nicodemus”

I have been watching a series on Youtube with my mother. She heard about it on a religious show she watches, and she asked me to find it for her because she is 86 and a little afraid of technology and really didn't know what Youtube was. But we got her Firestick out and I showed her how to access Youtube and there it was--“The Chosen”. Maybe you've heard of it. It's described as “the first ever multi-season series about the life of Christ”. It's pretty good. It's entertaining, and although it is filmed in Texas and Utah, it looks like it is set in Israel. The religious consultants they are using have helped to make it true to the scriptural setting—the culture and history of Jesus' day. I'd recommend it if you are interested in watching something a little different than your usual fare on Netflix or cable TV.

One of the main characters in Season One of “The Chosen” is Nicodemus, the same Nicodemus who is featured in our gospel lesson today. In the TV series we see Jesus through the eyes of Nicodemus, and we get a glimpse of the surprise and consternation Jesus caused for the people of his day. For people like Nicodemus, Jesus turned the world upside down and challenged the rules of his faith and the very core of his beliefs.

Nicodemus was an educated Jew, a leader and a member of the Sanhedrin, the religious court of the Jews centred in Jerusalem. As such, he was charged with upholding the Laws of Moses, overseeing the religious observances of the people, and ferreting out any who might be sinners and blasphemers. He was a Pharisee, a group that the Gospel of John most definitely associates with opposition to Jesus. But apparently Nicodemus was not interested in bringing charges against Jesus, rather, he wanted to know more! Nicodemus was a rabbi with a curious mind, and when he saw Jesus teaching and healing in God's name, he asked for a one-on-one interview with him. Mind you, he came to Jesus at night, so that he could be open and honest and ask questions without being seen as supporting

Jesus. Nicodemus was not yet interested in wearing a team jersey. He wanted to wait and see where Jesus was going with his message before he put his support behind Jesus.

Nevertheless, Nicodemus was a seeker. The questions he asked were not intended to trick Jesus or catch him in breaking the law, like the questions the other Pharisees asked. Nicodemus showed genuine respect for Jesus' miracles and his teaching. Later, when the other Pharisees wanted to arrest Jesus because of the surprising things he said, and without investigating his many miracles and the good works he was doing, Nicodemus came to his defense, saying, "Does our law condemn a man without first hearing him to find out what he has been doing?" In other words, do a proper investigation and see if what he is saying has merit! We don't see Nicodemus again in John's gospel until the very end when Nicodemus, showing his true colours at last, brings costly spices to the burial of Jesus to anoint his body.

Our gospel story today shows Nicodemus and Jesus having a lengthy theological discussion about the function of the Spirit of God. Jesus spoke to Nicodemus of being "born from above" or being "born again". Nicodemus was a little confused and perhaps a little annoyed, taking Jesus literally. He said, "I'm a grown man, Jesus. I can't come out of my mother's womb again and start all over. I can't be born again!"

But Jesus said, "Nicodemus, the Spirit is like the wind. You do not know where it has come from and you do not know where it is going. And Nicodemus...so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit. God can change you simply by an act of grace. There is no reason for it having happened and there is no explanation for its continuance. You cannot hear the wind; you cannot map its journey. This man, that woman, this old man, this young child will be fundamentally changed when the Spirit of God comes into their hearts."

Obviously, Jesus was not talking about a natural birth. As he explained to Nicodemus, he was talking about a spiritual birth, a birth that was supernatural. Some Christians talk about being "born again" as a spiritual conversion—an instant in time when a life is turned around, through prayer or healing. When we Lutherans talk about being born of the Spirit, we are usually referring to baptism. That is usually the first marker in our spiritual

journey with God, the first time we are introduced to the Holy Spirit, and in fact, are filled with the Holy Spirit. In baptism God comes into our lives, claiming us as one of God's own children through a spiritual adoption process.

How God comes to us in baptism, and **what exactly the Holy Spirit does**, is a mystery to us—in the same way the concept of the Trinity is a mystery to us. Today, as you know, we celebrate the Sunday of the Holy Trinity. We know that the church teaches us that God is three persons in one, and we have knowledge of God as acting in three different ways:

God the Father- the God who made us and gave us our first birth.

God the Son - who was human like us, and yet by becoming one with us, and dying a death like us, is able to raise us to new life.

God the Holy Spirit - who lives and works in us and gives us our second birth, our “supernatural” birth.

We know from scripture that God's Holy Spirit is the bringer of visions and dreams, the source of strength and hope, the supplier of healing words. God's Holy Spirit prays with us and for us when we do not have the words to pray. This is the God who is wind, who is breath, who is in the very air we breathe; God the transformer, the one who gives new birth, new life, who calls to us, works through us, and resides in us. This is the God that Jesus described to Nicodemus.

As Jesus taught Nicodemus, we are taught that the Spirit comes into our lives and makes changes. We are never too old or too entrenched to be changed by the Spirit of God. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can become whatever is in the mind of God for us to become.

The Spirit of God can change the world. It is that powerful. Jesus taught this. Nicodemus learned this. And we the baptized have come to know this to be true. When people like us allow the Spirit to lead us, we leave behind our own feelings of unworthiness, of being powerless. We leave behind our feelings of fear, our dread for being hurt or conned or exploited by others. We leave behind our selfishness—our desire to do only those things which

have a direct benefit to us and our own. We leave behind our greed to build bigger piles of “things” to mark our success and fill our lives with pleasure and comfort. With the urging of the Spirit, we instead look for ways to act out God’s love towards others, to be the living Christ for people who need Christ in their lives. For as St. Paul tells us, when the Spirit breathes new life in us, it is no longer we who live, but Christ, who lives in us.

Perhaps you don’t feel particularly close to God right now. I have times like that. It has been a difficult year, a year of fear and monotony. Fear of Covid, fear of isolation and loneliness. A year of weariness, from days that seem endless, dull and the same. We have been in exile from in-person church, and a bit like the people of Israel, lost in Babylon and cut off from the Temple. Perhaps God feels very far away to you. Or maybe you have seen things that confuse and concern you—like Nicodemus did when he witnessed Jesus healing and teaching in God’s name. Your spirit may be troubled or doubting...or seeking answers. It’s good to ask questions, like Nicodemus did. And perhaps it’s also wise to ask questions of yourself...

What are the changes that you need in your life? What are the things you need to let go of, to leave behind? What would you ask the Spirit to pray for you? Where is the Spirit leading you?

Take time to be quiet and listen...the Spirit is like the wind, blowing softly, the very breath of God, breathing life into us.

Amen.

Hymn of the Day: ELW #456 - *“Baptized in Water”*

Apostles’ Creed – Page 217

Prayers of Intercession

Let us come before the triune God in prayer.

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. 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 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 nations currently experiencing war or turmoil. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for healing for all those who suffer, especially victims and survivors of trauma or violence. Give respite to those living with PTSD or any other mental health concerns. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for this worshiping community, 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; especially, Leslie Hein and Marion Hammel. We remember also those whose lives have been lost due to the horrors of war. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace.
Amen.

Offering

Offertory Hymn – ELW #691 “Accept, O God, the Gifts We Bring” – Verses 1 & 3

Offertory Prayer

Jesus, Bread of life, you have set this table with your very self, and called us to the feast of plenty. Gather what has been sown among us, and strengthen us in this meal. Make us to be what we receive here, your body for the life of the world. **Amen.**

Thanksgiving for the Word – Page 220

Lord’s Prayer

BLESSING

SENDING HYMN: ELW #415 – “Father Most Holy”

Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

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News and Announcements:

Please Pray for Those Who are Ill, in Hospital, or Requested Special

Prayers: Florence Felske, Jason Godin, Richard Hubert, Heather Miller, Sheila Purdy, Vince Rabishaw, Robert Schoof, Dorian Verch, Ryan, Kristen.

Please Pray For Those Who Mourn The Loss Of Loved Ones;

especially, this day we pray for the family and friends of Leslie Hein and Marion Hammel, that they may find comfort in the promises of our risen Saviour.

SERVICE BROADCAST ON COGECO

Cogeco Community Channel is now broadcasting Zion's services at 9:00 a.m. and 12 noon on Sunday mornings a week later.

COVID-19 VACCINE REGISTRATION AND BOOKING

In order to assist our seniors, Chair Susan Dupuis asked Ellen Vandersleen and Jan Scheidt for assistance in registering and booking our senior members for the Covid-19 vaccine. We have worked our way down the list (arranged by age) and continue to assist those members who might have difficulty in registering and booking an appointment. At the same time, we are also updating our church records, asking for cell phone numbers and email addresses. It is the goal of Church Council to have an updated list of membership for when Pastor Scott and his wife, Sue arrive at the end of May. Pastor Scott begins his ministry here effective June 1st, 2021. Effective April 15, those members who received their shot, also received a return date the third week in July. Members who received their vaccine prior to April 15, will be telephoned or emailed a date for their second dose. If you require further assistance and need some help, please phone Ellen

Vandersleen at (613) 732 – 7649 or Jan Scheidt at (613) 631 – 0658 and leave your name and phone number. Please note that Jan prefers to use her cell phone number (due to severe hearing loss) and it is (519) 752 – 9826. Many thanks to the many members who have graciously shared with Susan, Ellen and Jan information to update the church records. Jan Scheidt, Social Ministry Committee

PUBLIC BIBLE READING

On Sunday June 6 the public reading of the bible will be taking place at the Pembroke Amphitheatre beginning at 1:00 pm. If you would like to participate please contact Ruth Kirk Davidson at 613-735-1877 or Lois Wilson at 613-687-4906 to book your time. You can also participate by reading your bible out loud at your home, either inside or outside.

UPDATES FROM CHURCH COUNCIL

Please remember that Pastor Leena is available to all for pastoral care during the next few months. This support may look different than we are accustomed to as she will be following all of the covid restrictions. She can be contacted at 613-631-1082

Today's Video Has Been Brought To You By Zion Lutheran Church's Production Crew:

Presider: Pam Harrington

Musician: Blaine Sack

Worship Assistant/Reader: Ellen Vandersleen

Projectionist:

Recorder: Ty Phannenhour

Sound Board Operator: Todd Phannenhour

Credit Researcher: Diane Hammel

This Week at Zion – May 30 – June 6

Tuesday **7p.m.** Narcotics Anonymous

Sunday **10am** Worship Service with Holy Communion