

Sunday, May 30, 2021 Holy Trinity Sunday



Welcome to Worship

### **Thanksgiving for Baptism**

Blessed be the holy Trinity + one God,  
The fountain of living water,  
The rock who gave us birth,  
Our light and our salvation, **Amen.**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God,  
For in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters  
And by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight.

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family.  
Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.  
At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons, making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life,  
And above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.  
Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.

To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever, **Amen.**

## **GATHERING SONG *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.

### **REETING**

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**

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 MESSAGE**

**CHILDREN'S SONG**      *God Welcomes All*      **(ACS 978)**

God welcomes all, strangers and friends;  
God's love is strong and it never ends.

*This reading narrates Isaiah's vision of the Lord surrounded by angels. They sing "Holy, holy, holy," a song the church sings at the beginning of the great thanksgiving. This liturgical text invites the church and all creation to sing in praise of God's glory. That glory is God's mercy toward sinners.*

## **FIRST READING: Isaiah 6:1-8**

<sup>1</sup>In 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. <sup>2</sup>Seraphs 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. <sup>3</sup>And one called to another and said:

“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;  
the whole earth is full of his glory.”

<sup>4</sup>The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. <sup>5</sup>And 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!”

<sup>6</sup>Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. <sup>7</sup>The 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.” <sup>8</sup>Then 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: Psalm 29**

***Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.***

<sup>1</sup>Ascribe to the LORD, you gods,  
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

<sup>2</sup>**Ascribe to the LORD the glory due God’s name;  
worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.**

<sup>3</sup>The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders;  
the LORD is upon the mighty waters.

<sup>4</sup>**The voice of the LORD is a powerful voice;  
the voice of the LORD is a voice of splendor.**

***Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.***

<sup>5</sup>The voice of the LORD breaks the cedar trees;  
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon;

<sup>6</sup>**the LORD makes Lebanon skip like a calf,  
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.**

<sup>7</sup>The voice of the LORD  
bursts forth in lightning flashes.

<sup>8</sup>**The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;  
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**

***Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.***

<sup>9</sup>The 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!”

<sup>10</sup>The LORD sits enthroned above the flood;  
the LORD sits enthroned as king forevermore.

<sup>11</sup>O LORD, give strength to your people;  
give them, O LORD, the blessings of peace.

***Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.***

*In describing the new life of faith, Paul refers to all three persons of the Trinity: the Spirit leads us to recognize that we are children of God the Father and joint heirs with Christ the Son.*

## **SECOND READING: Romans 8:12-17**

<sup>12</sup>Brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—<sup>13</sup>for 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. <sup>14</sup>For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. <sup>15</sup>For 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!” <sup>16</sup>it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup>and 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.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

**(ELW p. 171)**

**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?**

**You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.**

*Jesus' miracles prompt Nicodemus to visit him in secrecy. Jesus tells him about being born of the Spirit and about the Son who has been sent by God to save.*

## **GOSPEL: John 3:1-17**

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. <sup>2</sup>He 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.” <sup>3</sup>Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” <sup>4</sup>Nicodemus 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?” <sup>5</sup>Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. <sup>6</sup>What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sup>7</sup>Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ <sup>8</sup>The 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.” <sup>9</sup>Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” <sup>10</sup>Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

<sup>11</sup>“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. <sup>12</sup>If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? <sup>13</sup>No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. <sup>14</sup>And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup>that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

<sup>16</sup>“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.

<sup>17</sup>“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 by Rev. Douglas Reble**  
**Assistant to the Bishop, Eastern Synod**

Are you familiar with the name Chris Hadfield? I suspect many of you are. He is the Canadian astronaut who, when he was in space, twittered and sang himself in to the hearts of our country, young and old alike. Are you familiar with the name Russell Schweikert? I suspect many of you are not. He is an American astronaut who flew on Apollo 9. After he returned to earth from his space adventure, he wrote these words:

*“When you are in space you see the earth not as something big but as a small thing out there. And the contrast between that bright blue and white Christmas tree ornament and the black sky, that infinite universe, really comes through, and the size of it, the significance of it. It is so small and fragile and such a precious little spot in the universe that you can block it out with your thumb, and you realize that on that small spot, that little blue and white thing, is everything that means anything to you – all of history and music and poetry and art and death and birth and love, all the tears, joy, all of it on that little spot out there that you can cover with your thumb.”*

It is all a matter of perspective, is it not?

Truth be told, our lives are lived on the basis of our perspectives. The graduates that we honour at this time of year have a perspective that can no doubt be described as on top of the world. And why not? They are celebrating a significant accomplishment whether it is graduating from high school, university, or community college, whether they took online course because of Covid or not. But soon that perspective will change and life will be seen through the nervous eyes of someone starting their post-secondary education or from the bottom rung of the job ladder. We all see different things at different times. It is all in the perspective.

The story is told of a wealthy man, he made his money in oil, who commissioned Pablo Picasso to paint a portrait of his wife. When the portrait was completed, the man was shocked to see the image that had been created. "Why that looks nothing like my wife. You should have painted her the way she really is!"

Picasso took a deep breath and said, "I'm not sure what that would be."

Without hesitation, the man pulled out his wallet and removed a photograph of his wife saying, "There, you see, this is how she really is!"

Picasso, bending over, looked at it and replied, "She is rather small and flat, isn't she?"

Perspective. Today is Holy Trinity Sunday on the church calendar, the only Sunday set aside during the entire year to honour a doctrine. As students of the Bible know, the word "trinity" is found nowhere in scripture but the doctrine of the Trinity comes from a faithful reading of that scripture with an attempt to give a reasonably adequate understanding of God. We find the creator God making an entire universe out of nothing but a spoken word. We see God as redeemer in the person and work of Jesus Christ, God in human flesh. We see God as sustainer in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. "God in three persons, blessed Trinity" as the hymn writer has it. It is all in the perspective.

On this day, a goodly number of preachers will try to explain the mystery of the Trinity, how can one God be three persons? Some will use the illustration of H<sub>2</sub>O, depending on the circumstances we find these same elements in either water or ice or steam, some composition of two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen, but three different ways of experiencing these elements.



Or I might say to my wife Sharon, I am husband; to my sons, I am father; to many others I am Pastor Doug or friend. Same person but from different perspectives. None of these examples is exactly accurate in explaining this mystery of the Trinity, but suffice it to say, no matter what we say about God, it will never be enough. What we do say, will depend upon our perspective. Beyond that, we can let it go with the words of the psalmist, again from Psalm 8: "O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth."

Perspective. One more story. A man had an awful day at work. Everything had gone wrong. There was one interruption after another and he was never able to complete his work. When he entered the door that evening, he knew that his husband must have had a similar day. You could see it in his face. So, to set the process straight, or get the upper hand, from his perspective, he began, "I have had the worst day of my life. At work today it has been nothing but bad news, bad news, bad news. I don't know what kind of day you've had, but if at all possible, can you share some good news with me?"

His husband, a thoughtful and loving person, considered his request for a moment and then responded. "Of course, I can. You know we have four beautiful children?" He agreed. "Well," he said, three of them didn't break a leg today."

Perspective. Friends, I have a question for you. From what perspective will you view life, later today? From what perspective will you view life this coming week? Covid or no Covid. It will make a difference.

Through the eyes of the world, it was another brutal murder in a brutal existence. Through the eyes of faith, it was God so loving the world that God gave God's only Son so that all might live. John 3:16, from today's Gospel reading for Holy Trinity Sunday. It's all a matter of perspective.

Though the eyes of the world, Saul of Tarsus was another religious fanatic bent on terrorism. Through the eyes of faith, Saul would become Paul, the writer of First Corinthians, Chapter 13: “And now faith, hope and love abide, these three, and the greatest of these is love.” It’s all a matter of perspective.

Through the eyes of the world, those who are poor and hungry and sick and imprisoned and vulnerable are a burden. Through the eyes of faith, they are our sisters and brothers, the people of God who we are called to love and serve and to do it in word and actions, the most clear, caring, loving and just ways we can.

Though the eyes of the world, we are too small and powerless to make a difference. Through the eyes of faith, we know that when we go into the world this coming week and in the weeks to follow, we do not go it alone, we go with each other, and our God goes with us and that is power. It’s all a matter of perspective.

Through the eyes of the world, you and I are unbelievably insignificant – just one of six billion plus. through the eyes of faith, we are incredibly important. God knows us so intimately that even the hairs of our head are numbered.

My dear friends in Christ. How will you see things today? How will you see things tomorrow? How do you live your life? Through the eyes of the world? Through the eyes of faith? Remember, it’s all in the perspective. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

AMEN.

## **HYMN OF THE DAY *Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth* (ELW 735)**

1 Mothering God, you gave me birth  
in the bright morning of this world.  
Creator, source of ev'ry breath,  
you are my rain, my wind, my sun.

2 Mothering Christ, you took my form,  
offering me your food of light,  
grain of life, and grape of love,  
your very body for my peace.

3 Mothering Spirit, nurt'ring one,  
in arms of patience hold me close,  
so that in faith I root and grow  
until I flow'r, until I know.

### **Affirmation of Faith**

Source: *Candles and Conifers*, Ruth Burgess

We believe in God,  
robed in splendour,  
veiled in mystery,  
ruler alike of darkness and light.

We encounter God in Jesus Christ,  
who was tortured and put to death,  
but whose radiance could not be quenched;  
whose touch brings a blaze of colour to a drab, dull world:  
receiving the weary, healing the wounded, dazzling the satisfied.

We walk with God,  
guided by the light of God's loving spirit,  
who enters the shadowed places of our hearts  
and leads us into truth and life.

We wait for God,  
and for the fulfilment of God's promises,  
for the time when the darkness will hold no fear  
and the light will no longer blind,  
but creation will be made whole once more  
and God's peace will reign forever. Amen.

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Let us come before the triune God in prayer. With the words,  
"God of Love," you are invited to respond, "Hear our 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, to do your delight in this  
world. God of Love, **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. Help us to  
care for it as if our life depended on it. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the nations and our leaders, that led by your Spirit, all work  
towards a world where all of your children enjoy peace. We pray  
especially for India and the Covid crisis that is challenging and  
heartbreaking for so many. Help us to ensure vaccine equity for all.

God of Love, **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. Hear our prayers for those we name silently and aloud. God of Love, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all the congregations of the BC Synod Southern Interior Region... Hills of Peace in Kamloops; Deo in Salmon Arm; Ascension in Nelson; North Thompson Shared Ministry in Barriere/Clearwater; Peace in Vernon; Our Redeemer in Penticton; Faith in Kelowna; Christ in Kelowna; -that the splendour of your majesty and the holiness of your mystery may be glorified through our worship and our relationships with one another.

We give you thanks, O God, for those who have died in the faith. Be with and embrace those who die this day. We remember also those whose lives have been lost due to the horrors of violence and war.

God of Love, **hear our prayer.**

Be with us as we live our mission as a community of Christians empowered by the grace of God through Word and sacrament to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with God. We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace. **Amen**

## **PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

## **OFFERTORY AND 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.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

Let us now pray the prayer which Jesus taught his disciples, as we say,

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

## **Sending Blessing**

*Source: Holden Prayer Around the Cross, Susan Briehl and Tom Witt*

As tender as parent to child,  
so gentle is God to us.  
As high as heaven is above earth,  
so vast is God's love for us.  
As far as east is from west,  
so far God removes our sin,  
renewing our live in Christ.  
The holy Three, holy One  
bless you now and forever. Amen.

## **SENDING SONG *As a Mother Comforts Her Child* (ACS 1015)**

As a mother comforts her child,  
so God will comfort you.  
As a hen gathers her brood,  
so Christ will gather you.  
As a wise one counsels her friend,  
so the Spirit will counsel you.  
The Trinity of love will be with you.

### **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Share the good news.  
**Thanks be to God.**

Thanks to the members of the participating congregations of the Southern Interior Region of the British Columbia Synod of the ELCIC:

Hills of Peace, Kamloops  
Deo, Salmon Arm  
Ascension, Nelson  
North Thompson Ecumenical Shared Ministry, Barriere/Clearwater  
Peace, Vernon  
Faith, Kelowna  
Christ, Kelowna  
Our Redeemer, Penticton

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