

This World Matters and Right Now Matters—Holy Trinity

Click [here](#) to watch on Facebook!

[Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31](#)

[Romans 5:1-5](#)

[John 16:12-15](#)

Sermon delivered at Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Hamden, CT

It's hard to believe we are already two weeks into the month of June. The season of Easter, our season of recalling the new life God opens in Christ, has concluded. And following this, last Sunday, we celebrated the birth of the Church, the coming of God to us as the Holy Spirit. A gift, a breath, a guide, we've been hearing for these past several week, that, in the Gospel of John, Jesus has been promising to his disciples. And now this Sunday, at the conclusion of it all, we stop and rest to ponder about God.

To describe the God that the earliest apostles and disciples encountered; to explain the God that takes shape in the Old Testament and in the New; to do this, some of the earliest Church leaders invented a word: Trinitas. Or trinity in English. Unity, oneness—but in three. And, essentially, this concept doesn't make any sense.

By definition three things can't be one, and one thing can't be three. Church leaders for 2000 years have been throwing words at this. And for 2000 years we've been getting it wrong. And that's ok. I get it wrong, you get it wrong. But we try our best.

So, of course, as I try and give you this message about the Trinity, your eyelids will begin to get heavy and close with boredom.

We say God Father, Son and Holy Spirit, every Sunday, all the time. What does that mean? How can a son be equal, be in Tri-unity, with a father? What is a Spirit? Why did they drop "Holy Ghost?"

Well, we have to admit that the "Father" is a dim metaphor. It's quite far from the mark. It's a word for a loving, personal, creator. God is not a white man with a beard. That is impossible. What matters is this: if you have no children, you're not a father. What makes God "Father", is that there is a Son. The names we use for God tell us that God is relationship.

We know that the "Son" also is a dim metaphor for Christ. We believe that Christ, as John's Gospels says, was in the beginning with God, and was God. Christ was made flesh in the human being Jesus. Christ was also made flesh in the beginning of Genesis as God created the universe. St. Paul and the Gospel writer John and the author of Hebrews go to great lengths to say: Creation was created through Christ, and Christ holds it together. Christ, the Son, is, and always was God too. The Son is not a different superhero on the God team called Trinity. The Son is God giving Godself to us, in creation, in Jesus on the cross.

And then we throw into the mix the Holy Spirit. Or as some of you remember: The Holy Ghost, both are just clumsy English words that mean the same thing. It means the life, the force, the sparkle. The Holy Breath in the lungs of the Church, you could say, the Holy Wind in our sails, the electrons lighting up the filament in our lightbulb, the water flowing up the xylem tubes of our trees. And as our lesson from the wisdom book of Proverbs suggests, especially to us a Christian readers of that book, God's Holy Spirit was in the beginning as well! The Breath hovering over the nothingness-waters in Genesis.

So, there you go: co-eternal, Three in One, One in Three. So what? What does this matter?

It matters like this, especially taking all our lessons together. This morning our readings are all saying one thing, it seems to me: This world matters, and right now matters. God as Trinity does not wait for a different heavenly realm to teach us, show us, reach us, and grab us. Scripture is just full of God teaching, showing, reaching and speaking *here*. It is now.

Proverbs tell us that God is calling out now, to say: God as Spirit was in the beginning, shaping creation, smiling, and rejoicing. Just as God the Spirit delights and rejoices now in humanity. Paul to the Romans tells us God is in our hearts, now. When we have hope, when we persevere, when we believe—now, right now, *that is not you*. Paul writes, that is the Spirit poured into you. You are not what is believing. God's Spirit has been *poured into you*. God believes in God, God delights in God's creation *in and through* you, here and now.

And Christ, in John's Gospel, teaches the same. Who Christ is, is who God the Father is, and the Spirit comes, now, and teaches us this is true. The Spirit has come, that is what Pentecost is all about. The Spirit is already here. Wars and pestilence and polarization and racism and iPhones and church-decline do not cause God to renege the deal.

This world, this creation of God, is the playing field. This isn't a waiting room. God's promises, God's lessons, are communicated *here*, And not in telepathic messages: but through God's creation—in water, bread and wine.

We confess that God's Church is the *primary* location of this teaching. But it's not limited to this place. This place is just the schoolhouse. Here, we are beginners. Here, the Holy Spirit lays the

foundation. But this place is only one corner of God's vast creation. And like all the high school and college graduates putting their caps and gowns on this month: We can't really just sit around forever in this schoolhouse. That would be a little bit like a high school grad just going back to home room again Fall after Fall.

We know we are loved. We know we are saved and justified before God through Christ. We know that now, by the Spirit, God is here. We know that the Spirit speaks through God's creation. We know that God is Three-in-One: So, now what? What is the next step?

As we are taught by the Spirit, there is an expectation we will be changed. God who *is relationship* calls us to relationship. There is an expectation we will go out and apply what we've learned! We are expected to be hopeful, writes Paul, to contribute, to labor, to let the Spirit continue to reveal Christ to us—**and to hear God speaking in new and surprising places.**

Amen.