

ZOOM Worship for May 30, 2021
Trinity Sunday

Territorial Acknowledgment and Announcements

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is situated upon traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron - Wyandot, the Haudenosaunee and later the Mississauga of the Credit First Nations. The territory is mutually covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and the Ojibway and other allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.

Today, this remains the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work in their community, and to share and respect Mother Earth.

Announcements

Centering Music: "Holy Sacred Spirit" MV 15

Holy sacred Spirit, breathe your breathe on us.

Holy sacred Spirit, breathe your life in us.

Holy sacred Spirit, breathe your breathe on us.

Holy sacred Spirit, breathe your life in us.

Call to Worship:

One: Father, Son and Holy Spirit . . .

Two: Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

One: Three who are One . . .

Two: Confusingly complicated. Confoundingly simple. Awesomely and always present in our lives.

One: Thank you

Two: for calling us to be your people, for holding us close, for setting us free, for being awesomely and always present in our lives.

One: Praise to you!

Two: Blessings and honour and glory, Holy One – Holy Three – now and
always! Moderator Richard Bott

Opening Prayer:

One: God of grace and God of glory, make your presence known to us as we worship this morning.

Two: Jesus, our Christ, may your name be praised from the rising of the sun to the midnight hour, may your name always be honoured among us.

One: Spirit of Holiness, breathe on us all and bind us in Christian love and servanthood.

Two: O God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, be known to us today. Transform our lives and our community into the image of Jesus Christ in whose name we gather and pray. Amen.

Opening Hymn: "Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness" VU 375

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,

blow thro' the wilderness calling and free,

Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,

stir me from placidness,

Wind, Wind on the sea.

You moved on the waters, you called to the deep,

then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep;

and over the eons you called to each thing:
wake from your slumbers and rise on your wings.

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,
blow thro' the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,
stir me from placidness,
Wind, Wind on the sea.

You swept thro' the desert, you stung with the sand,
and you goaded your people with a law and a land;
and when they were blinded with their idols and lies,
then you spoke thro' your prophets to open their eyes.

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,
blow thro' the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,
stir me from placidness,
Wind, Wind on the sea.

You sang in a stable, you cried from a hill,
then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still;
and down in the city you called once again,
when you blew through your people on the rush of the wind.

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,
blow thro' the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,
stir me from placidness,
Wind, Wind on the sea.

You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes,
from the bondage of sorrow the captives dream dreams,
our women see visions, our men clear their eyes,
with bold new decisions your people arise.

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness,
blow thro' the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness,
stir me from placidness,
Wind, Wind on the sea.

Scripture readings:

Romans 5: 1–5

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that

suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

John 14: 8–11

Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves.

John 16: 12-15

'I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Special Music: "The Wonder of it All"

Reflection: "The Other-Centredness of God"

Profession of Faith: "A New Creed" VU 918

We are not alone,

we live in God's world.

We believe in God:

who has created and is creating,

who has come in Jesus,

the Word made flesh,

to reconcile and make new,

who works in us and others

by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

to celebrate God's presence,

to live with respect in Creation,

to love and serve others,

to seek justice and resist evil,

to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,

our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,

God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn: "When We Seek Language" MV 49

When we seek language to praise you, O god,

all we can utter seems stale, tame, or odd.
Tongue-tied and word-lost, we struggle to find
phrases that slight neither heart, soul, nor mind:

Infinite intimate unbounded friend,
cosmic companion who loves without end,
nearer than heartbeat, more subtle than breath,
keener than insight, and stronger than death.

Steadfastly loving, you gave us your Word,
living among us on earth, seen and heard,
teacher and healer whose promise came true,
dying and rising to make all things new:

Infinite intimate unbounded friend,
cosmic companion who loves without end,
nearer than heartbeat, more subtle than breath,
keener than insight, and stronger than death.

To be our guardian, supporter, and guide,
you sent your Spirit to stay by our side,
source of community, wellspring of prayer,
power to strengthen, and courage to dare:

Infinite intimate unbounded friend,
cosmic companion who loves without end,
nearer than heartbeat, more subtle than breath,
keener than insight, and stronger than death.

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer: (sung) VU 959

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 glory are yours
now and forever. Amen

Offering Invitation

Prayer of Dedication:

One: We are grateful God, that your Spirit is at work within us, nudging and stretching us, causing us to grow in understanding and service.

Two: May our offerings be an expression of our gratitude for all your gifts, and may our lives be an expression of your love for the world. Amen.

Closing Hymn: "There's a Spirit in the Air" Vs 1,5,6 VU 582

There's a spirit in the air,
telling Christians everywhere:
'Praise the love that Christ revealed,
living, working in our world.'

When a stranger's not alone,
where the homeless find a home,
praise the love that Christ revealed,
living, working, in our world

May the Spirit fill our praise,
guide our thoughts and change our ways.
God in Christ has come to stay,
live tomorrow's life today.

Commissioning:

One: Let us bless God our Creator.

Two: Blessed be God, forever.

One: Let us bless Christ, our Savior.

Two: Blessed be Christ, forever.

One: Let us bless the Spirit, the Comforter.

Two: Blessed be the Spirit, forever.

One: May the blessing of Almighty God, Creator, Savior, and Comforter, be with us all, now and forever.
Amen.

Two: Amen.

Reflection

"THE OTHER-CENTREDNESS OF GOD"

(Scripture: Romans 5: 1 -5; John 14: 8 – 11; John 16: 12 – 15)

I lived at home in church manses with my parents until I was 23 years of age and during that time my father would repeatedly say to me, **"Young man, you can't only do what you want, you have to think of others."** I came to dislike the word "others."

"Others" is a very Christian idea. Thinking about others, caring about others, praying for others, doing things for others. Last week I participated in the Festival of Homiletics online with 1400 ministers. One of the speakers spoke about having a spirit of sacrifice, emphasizing "otherness" and stated the Holy Spirit works in the believer against self-interest. A poem written by Rick Meigs in 1910 and made into a hymn describes this idea **"Others, Lord, yes others, let this my motto be, help me to live for others, that I may live like Thee."**

For some people the concept of others may seem natural but for most people it is very unnatural because most people are oriented around themselves. The prevailing culture which promotes “self-care, self-help, self-awareness, self-promotion, self, self, self suits our natures quite well. It feels natural to be self-oriented, to think about ourselves, care for ourselves, do things for ourselves, pray for ourselves.

Someone has said, **“We live in a world where too many people conduct their lives cafeteria style: self-service only.”**

A little boy and his younger sister were riding a rocking horse together. The boy said, **“If one of us would just get off this horse, there would be more room for me.”**

The New Testament biblical writers experienced God in ways that no one image, no one word could describe. Over time, the word “Trinity” came to describe the common Christian understanding of God's interaction with humankind. The doctrine of the Trinity refers to God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Let us look at how the three relate to and interact with each other.

Twice in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke we hear the voice of the one Jesus referred to as abba or father: at Jesus' baptism and again at the transfiguration of Jesus. What does this voice say? **“This is my beloved son with whom I am deeply pleased. Listen to him.”**

The voice does not say, “Listen to me too! Don't forget I am here too!” The voice points selflessly to the Son.

When we look at the Son, we do not find him walking around saying, “I'm the greatest” like some people do. Jesus said he came to show us the Father, to show us the personality and will of God.

“I and the Father are one. The one who has seen me has seen the Father.” Jesus prays that because we have seen the love of God in him [Jesus Christ] we might desire to be one with God as Jesus is one with God. During his climatic struggle in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus says to the Father, **“not my will, but yours be done.”**

In addition, Jesus submitted to the Spirit who Mark tells us “drove him into the wilderness” where he was tempted. Later, Jesus says to his followers there is something they need more than him. **“It is better that I go away,” he says. “If I do not go away, the Helper, the Comforter [the Holy Spirit], will not come and you need the Helper more than you need me.”**

It is the work of the Holy Spirit which comes in the history of the church and through the scriptures and in the lives of Christians to call us to respond to the light of Jesus.

In the Gospel of John (14: 26; 16: 13) the Spirit constantly draws attention not to Self but to Jesus – the Spirit comes in Jesus' name, bears witness to the Jesus and glorifies Jesus.

Theologian Dale Bruner says the ministry of the Spirit can be pictured by drawing a stick figure representing Jesus on a sheet of paper and then in order to express what the Spirit does, stand behind the piece of paper and reach around with one hand and point with a single finger to the image of Jesus.

“Look at Him. Listen to Him. Learn from Him. Follow Him. Worship Him. Be devoted to Him. Serve Him. Love Him. Be preoccupied with Him.”

Each member of the Trinity points faithfully and selflessly to the other. God has been revealed to us as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer in a community of greater humility, servanthood, mutual submission and delight. Three and yet One. Oneness, unity is God's signature.

Rev. Dr. John Ortberg of Menlo Park Presbyterian Church in California says it is not just in relation to one another but in relation to us that the Triune God shows breathtaking humility.

What cost does God pay for us to have fellowship with him? The Son says, **“I will leave heaven to come on earth.”** To experience like humans brokenness, aloneness, to die on a cross. But it is not just the Son who pays a price. The Father says, **“I will offer my Son whom I love beyond words. I will know the broken heart of a father.”**

And the Spirit pays a price as well. The Spirit says, **“I will be poured out on earth and in mostly silent, invisible ways I will offer to lead and guide, never exalting myself, always pointing to the Son.”**

To a large extent the Spirit's promptings are ignored or even denied. We read the Spirit will be quenched on earth and **“the Spirit will be grieved” (Ephesians 4: 30)**

The doctrine of the Trinity teaches us that at the core of reality lies not an isolated self but a community of humble love. Self-serving and disunity are not just wrong but doomed. Our self-centredness can be cured by looking deeply within the life of the Trinity.

Colleague Andrew Stirling says, **“Jesus Christ desires us to know the inner life of God and calls us to manifest this love for others.”**