

TRINITY SUNDAY JUNE 11th 2017

The Commissioning

A Reflection by Peggy Jensen

Prayer: Holy God, Holy One, Holy Three in One, help us to comprehend the variety of ways that we can know you. Awesome God, from the vastness of the heavens to the tiny cell of life within us, you are here. Words are inadequate; we feel your presence above us, beside us and within us. Encourage us as we share our words and thoughts today. We pray in the name of Jesus the Christ, Amen

Did you know it was Trinity Sunday before you arrived today? Trinity Sunday does not have the excitement and flare of Pentecost or Christmas or Easter but this is a significant day in the Church year.

When I served Trinity United in Nanaimo, they proudly hung their banner for **Trinity Sunday**. Did you know it is also known as an ecumenical center, off Metral drive near Super Store in Nanaimo? Trinity United and Trinity Catholic congregations have shared the same building since 1979. That was a time when Ecumenism was alive and active.

Four small congregations worked together to buy land and build a big, brand new church together. It is a large facility, the sanctuary holds 500 people and the Catholics fill the building with 3 services on the week-end and mid-week services too. About 75 United folk have lots of space for worship. The congregations function independently but have a joint Board of Governors. Today they will exchange choirs to celebrate Trinity Sunday.

Trinity Sunday gives us an opportunity to remember that there are a variety of ways that we can name God and speak about the Trinity. I am sure you have noticed a variety of ways that we have addressed God in our service today. All of us are familiar with the phrase Father, Son and Holy Spirit, or Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver. Using inclusive language is very important, and we are more sensitive in the church about being inclusive. I am always concerned that for some people the term “Father” may have some negative memories. Most of us are thinking about the Heavenly Father when we use the term but others may not be able to do that. Referring to God as *Lord* is one of your traditions. I hear it as “master, ruler, member of the male nobility”. I have tried to respect the tradition and the importance of using some familiar language. My preference is Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

How do you like to name the Trinity?

What word describes your relationship with the three-in-one God?

Sometimes images help us to understand the interconnectedness of the Trinity. Like the circles overlapped on the bulletin cover, or three sides of a triangle. Within the Celtic tradition examples from nature are used to reflect the Trinity: a three leaf clover; earth, sea and sky; three forms of water: liquid, steam and ice. The Great Augustine reduced it to a very simple illustration. He used the example of a tree. The root is wood; the trunk is wood; the branches are wood; one wood, one substance but three different entities.

(On June 11th Peggy was unable to speak due to a bad cold so Kris read her sermon and ad-libbed more than once but Kris likes to use [3-in-1 Oil](#) to explain the Trinity and for fixing any machinery.)

Did you hear the Triune formula that were in the two scriptures that were read this morning?
(Mathew 28:16-20 and 2 Corinthians 13:11-13)

Matthew's gospel ends with Jesus addressing the eleven saying: "*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*"

That Trinitarian formula is recognized around the world and authenticates Christian baptisms. Jesus commissioned his disciples and added:

"*Remember I am with you always to the end of the age.*" This commissioning would be impossible without the presence of Jesus in our lives. You may not be up to going into all the nations but being a witness to Christ in your family or community is strengthened by the power of Christ's presence.

Our worship services usually end with a commissioning, words to send you out from the worship, and a benediction, a blessing. Many of you are familiar with the dismissal phrase:

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

I try to choose words for the commissioning that will be with you as you go from worship, returning to your everyday lives. I hope that they will offer some light on your path.

It is almost time for me to say farewell and offer a final commissioning, so the final words of the 2nd letter to the Corinthians seem really appropriate for us to hear today. IF you read all of the letter you will know that the community has gone through many ups and downs, challenges and changes. You can identify with that. Now Paul offers this commissioning:

"Put things in order" ---- sounds like the Shared Ministry Agreement, all of you have contributed to getting this document in order for the future of this faith community. The essential intent has not changed, we just need to make sure it is in the legal language for the land transfer. The formal congregation meetings are required to have everything in order.

"Agree with one another" ----- " You have made great efforts to understand one another. Of course you will never agree about everything, but you have the patience to listen carefully and respect the differences. Look for the paths of good communication and peaceful resolution. Keep up the good work.

"and live in peace" ----- This congregation does seem to be more harmonious . You are a very special community of faith. Appreciate the gifts each one brings and together you will continue to be strong and healthy.

"Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you."

Scripture says so!! Maybe not a holy kiss, but ' Passing the Peace', part of our history and I have believe this is one of the most important parts of worship. This special connection you have with one another is valuable. Sometimes this is the only physical touch a person may have all week. Each one of you is a saint! Greeting each other in the name of Christ is important. .

So friends as you continue your journey of faith wherever it may lead know that the God of love and peace will be with you.

**"The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you." Amen**