

In the name of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit: Amen.

Trinity Sunday. I always feel I'm supposed to explain the Trinity.
Except it's not really explainable. God is unknowable,
and God's triune nature is particularly hard to explore in human language.
So what do we gain by understanding God this way, as Triune?
Our Jewish and Muslim brothers and sisters have no problem with God as one;
In fact, our insistence on this Trinity stuff is a major stumbling block.
Yet we can't get away from the fact that Jesus talked about
Father, Son and Spirit, and so do we.
We claim this is the fuller revelation of Who God Is,
this trinity of "persons" in one divine entity.
We see God in 3D, if you will – and three dimensions are fuller than two, or one.

Why do people like 3D, pay more for 3D movies? Because with the depth perception
– think about it – everything pops more. You feel like you're really there.
Two Dimensions – it remains on the screen. Three steps out.
It's not just movies – one dimension is just a line, right? Doesn't do much.
With two, you're able to convey infinitely more complexity, but it's still flat.
With three dimensions, you get off the page; suddenly what you're looking at
can be explored from every angle – it's fullness of revelation.

Well friends, our God is not one to remain on the page of a book.
Our God – the Source – stepped off the page and into the world of His Creation.
Our God – the Word – stepped off the page and into human history.
Our God – the Spirit – steps off the page and into our hearts.

Our God steps out – God stepped out into human history,
first in creation, then in communication, finally in incarnation.
And all three persons of the Trinity are in all three of those activities:
The Spirit, the Creator, the Son – all participated in creating the universe.
The Father, the Spirit, the Anointed –
all participate in communicating to the universe the truth about God.
And though only one Person of the Trinity, the Son,
became enfleshed, embodied as Jesus of Nazareth,
the Spirit, who is his Spirit and the Spirit of his Father, was present with him
throughout his ministry on earth, and thus the Father was always with him too.

And because in Christ the Father's love is poured into us through the Spirit –
we participate in the stepping off the page.

All three persons of God are active in us,
and we are the next way that God is made known to the world, through us,
through our words, our witness, our living out that love actively in the world.

Maybe we should call it “stepping out” rather than “stepping off.”
“Stepping off” can be like, “stepping off a mark,” like “Go!”
“Stepping off” can be like, “stepping off a cliff,” ... like “a leap of faith.”
But “stepping out” has its own imagery, and theological depth.
“Stepping out” speaks of moving outside set boundaries, breaking into new life.
And “Stepping out” has connotations of being out on the town, of dancing.
And “dancing” is one of the ancient metaphors for the life of the Trinity,
three inter-connected persons in one Unity,
whose love and life are forever spilling out on one another and on the world.
“Perichoresis” is an ancient word given to describe this life,
with the same root as the word choreography, or dance.

And so we are partners in this unseen dance that fills us with life.
And filled with the life of God, Source, Begotten, Spirit, living in us,
we dance out into the world, giving full dimension to a God
who cannot be restricted to the pages of a book, no matter how holy.
Expressing God as Three , dancing with God as Three,
allows us to express God's love to the world:
as the love of a Father who cannot but love, even the most unlovable;
a Savior who heals and restores, even the most unforgivable, incurable;
a Spirit who comes alongside, comforting the lost, standing with the oppressed,
giving hope to the despairing.

Dancing may be a stranger metaphor to use in this time of marching and protest,
of lament and outrage. Yet doesn't the prophet promise that God will
“turn our mourning into dancing?” To dance God into the world,
even in such a time as this, is an act of faith. It is 3D faith. It steps off the page.
The world needs us living our faith in 3D. Jesus commanded his followers
to take this enormous love into all the world, making disciples.

What does it mean to make a disciple?

It's not forcing someone to believe what we believe.
It's inviting someone to this dance we are dancing with the triune God.

Jesus said to take his love to all nations, making disciples and baptizing them. Before we baptize anybody, they have to be in relationship, with us, and with Jesus. How did Jesus make disciples? My inviting people into relationship. That's the same way we make disciples – inviting people into friendship with us, and the introducing them to our friend God, Father, Son, Spirit. You know how when you make a new friend and you realize they would really click with another friend, you can't wait to introduce them? That's what we do.

But Jesus didn't just invite people – then he hung out with them. He told stories. He encouraged them to do what he was doing, and he nudged them along. That's part of making disciples too – inviting people to work with us, pray with us, inviting people into the divine community, and into our communities, and caring whether they grow in their faith. The more we care deeply about growing in faith, the more we will grow in numbers. Care about growing in faith ourselves, care about each other. That's what small groups are great for – incubating disciples.

I said last week I'm getting a vision for us carrying God's love to people who are different from us. Different in any way. Crossing boundaries. Who even knew much more urgent that vision would feel a week later, when our national intolerance for intolerance has moved people onto the streets to demand equity and justice and a dismantling of racist systems. That too we can only do by forming relationships, and in relationships we can share our faith without demanding someone else sign on. We just need to invite people into this dance of God's, the dance of love.

I guess this dance of God's must be a waltz, in three-four time. Three plus One – you – equals four. We are invited not only to join this dance here in worship, but to waltz on out, carrying the triune Love of God to the entire world. This afternoon we are hosting a county-wide interfaith prayer gathering. There will be people of many nations here, and many faiths, and some with none. Come to pray – in person or online. Come to be a welcoming presence, a witness to the power of love. Come to dance in 3D.

Amen.

Matthew 28:16-20

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Genesis 1:1 – 2:4a