



SUNDAY, MAY 31, 2026
HOLY TRINITY SUNDAY



Introduction

Though the word *Trinity* never actually appears in scripture, today's readings draw us deeply into the mystery of the God we know as Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit. In Genesis, the Spirit of God hovers over the waters as creation begins. In Second Corinthians, Paul blesses the church with "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit." And in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus sends imperfect disciples into the world with the promise: "I am with you always." More than a doctrine to explain, the Trinity reveals the heart of our faith: a God of relationship, grace, communion, and abiding presence — a God who continually makes room for us within the dance of divine love. As we gather in worship today, we celebrate the mystery of the Holy Trinity and are reminded that we do not journey through life alone, but together, held by the love of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING SONG

"GOD OF WONDERS"

Music and lyrics: Marc Byrd, Steve Hindalong
© 2000 Never Say Never Songs; New Spring; Meaux Mercy;
Storm Boy Music Administrators Brentwood-Benson Music
Publishing, Inc., Capitol CMG Publishing

INVOCATION

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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.**

KYRIE



Ⓐ Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: ☒ Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy:



Ⓐ Chri - ste e - le - i - son: ☒ Christ, have mer - cy.
Christ, have mer - cy:



Ⓐ Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son: ☒ Lord, have mer - cy.
Lord, have mer - cy:

HYMN OF PRAISE



☒ Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God in the high - est;



glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

I Lord God, heav-en - ly king, al-might- y God and Fa- ther, we
wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.

II Glo- ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God in the high - est;
glo- ry to God, glo - ry to God, and peace to God's peo- ple on earth.

III Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther,
Lord God, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world: have mer - cy on us; you are seat - ed at the
right hand of the Fa - ther: re-ceive our prayer.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty Creator and ever-living God, you are the source of life, the Word made flesh, and the Spirit who continues to move among us in grace and love. When the path ahead feels uncertain, remind us that we do not walk alone. Draw us more deeply into your communion, teach us to live in harmony with one another, and make room within our hearts for mercy, hope, and belonging. Hold your church together in faith, and lead us forward with courage and joy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

READING

Genesis 1:1–2:4a Holy Trinity Sunday Multi-Voice Reading

“And God Saw That It Was Good”

Participants: ▪ *Narrator* ▪ *Voice of God* ▪ *Congregation*

Narrator: When God began to create the heavens and the earth, the earth was complete chaos, and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.

God: “Let there be light.”

[pause]

Narrator: And there was light.

Congregation: **AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.**

Narrator: God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening, and there was morning, the first day.

God: “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, separating the waters above from the waters below.”

Narrator: So God made the dome, separating the waters above from the waters below. And it was so.

Congregation: **AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.**

Narrator: God called the dome Sky. And there was evening, and there was morning, the second day.

God: “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place and let the dry land appear.”

Narrator: And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas.

Congregation: **AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.**

God: “Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.”

Narrator: And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it.

Congregation: **AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.**

Narrator: And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

God: “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years.”

Narrator: And it was so. God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars.

Congregation: AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

Narrator: And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

God: “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.”

Narrator: So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind.

Congregation: AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

God: “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.”

Narrator: And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

God: “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind.”

Narrator: And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind.

Congregation: AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

God: “Let us make humans in our image, according to our likeness.”

[pause slowly]

Narrator: So God created humans in the image of God;

beautifully and wonderfully made,

beloved and diverse, they were created.

[pause]

Congregation: AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

God: “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and tend and care for it.”

Narrator: And it was so.

Then God saw everything that he had made—

[pause]

Narrator: —and indeed, it was very good.

Congregation: AND INDEED, IT WAS VERY GOOD.

Narrator: Thus the heavens and the earth were finished in all their vast beauty.

And on the seventh day, God rested from all the work that had been done in creation.

So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy.

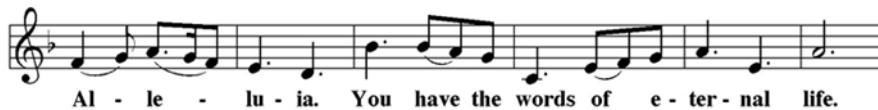
These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

[pause for silence]

Congregation: THANKS BE TO GOD FOR THE GIFT OF CREATION, COMMUNITY, AND REST.

[silence]

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL

MATTHEW 28:16-20

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 28th Chapter. **Glory to You, O Lord.**

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him, but they doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ 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 ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to You, O Christ**

SERMON

GEORGE DONOVAN, JR., COMMISSIONED LAY MINISTER, VA SYNOD ELCA.

HYMN OF THE DAY

COME, JOIN THE DANCE OF TRINITY (ELW #412)



- 1 Come, join the dance of Trin - i - ty, be - fore all worlds be - gun—
- 2 Come, see the face of Trin - i - ty, new - born in Beth - le - hem;
- 3 Come, speak a - loud of Trin - i - ty, as wind and tongues of flame
- 4 With - in the dance of Trin - i - ty, be - fore all worlds be - gun,



the in - ter-weav - ing of the Three, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son.
then blood - ied by a crown of thorns out - side Je - ru - sa - lem.
set peo - ple free at Pen - te - cost to tell the Sav - ior's name.
we sing the prais - es of the Three, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son.



The u - ni - verse of space and time did not a - rise by chance,
The dance of Trin - i - ty is meant for hu - man flesh and bone;
We know the yoke of sin and death, our necks have worn it smooth;
Let voic - es rise and in - ter-weave, by love and hope set free,



but as the Three, in love and hope, made room with - in their dance.
when fear con - fines the dance in death, God rolls a - way the stone.
go tell the world of weight and woe that we are free to move!
to shape in song this joy, this life: the dance of Trin - i - ty.

Text Ricard Leach, b 1953 Music: Kingsford, English folk tune Text ©2001 Selah Publishing Co Inc. All rights reserved.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition will end with “God of grace” and the response will be “**Hear our prayer**”

SHARING OF CHRIST'S PEACE

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

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

OFFERING

Thank you for your continued generosity in supporting the ongoing ministry of Bethel Lutheran Church! In-person gifts may be placed in the offering plates, mailed to Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church (2077 N. Frederick Pike, Winchester, VA 22603), given online at www.bethelwinchester.com or using the adjacent QR code.



MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

VENI SANCTE SPIRITUS (ELW #406)

Ve - ni San - cte Spi - ri - tus. Ve - ni San - cte Spi - ri - tus.
Ho - ly Spir - it, come to us. Ho - ly Spir - it, come to us.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is simple and repetitive, with lyrics in Latin and English. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and single notes that support the vocal line.

Text: Pentecost sequence: Taizé Community

Music: TAIZÉ VENI SANCTE, Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994

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LET THE VINEYARDS

Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were
sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gath - er the hopes and dreams of all; u - nite them with the prayers we
of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your pres - ence,
Lord, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is simple and repetitive, with lyrics in English. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and single notes that support the vocal line.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord**
Let us give thanks to the lord our god. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PREFACE

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and
might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the
high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

JESUS WORDS ABOUT COMMUNION

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Heaven has come near. Come, share in the feast!

THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Welcome to the Lord's Table!

Everyone, regardless of age and denomination, is invited to join us for Holy Communion. If you prefer a blessing, simply inform the communion distributors. The ushers will direct your row when it is time to come forward.

You will receive the bread from the first Holy Communion distributor. You will pick up the cup of wine or juice from the tray held by the second distributor. For those who need gluten free a pre-packaged **gluten-free** wafer and a cup of **grape juice** is also available.

Once you have communed, you are invited to return to your seat for silent reflection or singing

LAMB OF GOD



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.



COMMUNION HYMN

IMMORTAL, INVISIBLE, GOD ONLY WISE (ELW #834)



1 Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise,
 2 Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing, and si - lent as light,
 3 To all, life thou giv - est, to both great and small;
 4 Thou reign - est in glo - ry; thou dwell - est in light;



in light in - ac - ces - si - ble hid from our eyes,
 nor want - ing, nor wast - ing, thou rul - est in might;
 in all life thou liv - est, the true life of all;
 thine an - gels a - dore thee, all veil - ing their sight;



most bless - ed, most glo - rious, the An - cient of Days,
 thy jus - tice like moun - tains high soar - ing a - bove
 we blos - som and flour - ish like leaves on the tree,
 all laud we would ren - der; oh, help us to see



al - might - y, vic - to - rious, thy great name we praise!
 thy clouds which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.
 and with - er and per - ish, but naught chang - eth thee.
 'tis on - ly the splen - dor of light hid - eth thee!

Text: Walter Chalmers Smith, 1824–1908, alt.

Music: ST. DENIO, Welsh traditional

COMMUNION BLESSING

Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

BENEDICTION

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit ✝ rest upon you and remain with you. As the Spirit once hovered over the waters of creation, may God hover over your lives with peace and hope. As Christ called imperfect disciples and promised to remain with them always, may you go forth trusting that you are never alone. And may the Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—continue to hold you together in grace, love, and communion, now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG

“HOLY FOREVER”

Music and lyrics: Chris Tomlin

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Phil Wickham Music; Simply Global Songs; Bethel Music Publishing
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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Love one another. Care for creation. And remember: there is room within God’s dance for all! **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

We hope every person felt welcomed here, especially our guests. We trust that our time together has filled you with a sense of joy and peace, and we invite you to return soon.

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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