

## **LAY PREACHERS' BULLETIN**

Lectionary Notes – May 2026

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### **MAY 3 - EASTER 5**

Propers: BAS page 340

Gospel: [John 14:1-14](#)

#### **BACKGROUND:**

This passage is part of the Farewell Discourses of John's gospel (John 14-17), when Jesus is speaking to his disciples about the fact that he will be leaving them. The disciples are asking a lot of questions (see John 13:36, 37; 14:5; 14:8; 14:22) – questions that show that they are struggling to understand what Jesus is saying – and Jesus is responding with words of reassurance and comfort.

Previous to these chapters, we have Jesus at supper, washing the disciples' feet (John 13), and telling them that they should treat one another in the same way that he is treating them: that they should serve and love one another.

And previous to the foot washing, we see Jesus return to Bethany to save his friend Lazarus, who he raises back to life, calling him out of his tomb (John 11). Jesus' return is significant not just because of this incredible miracle and everything that it portends of what is to come, but also because, in returning, Jesus is putting his own life at risk in order to save his friend. Why is this so? Because, throughout the gospel of John in the lead up to that moment, Jesus is increasingly drawing negative attention to himself amongst the religious leaders. They see him as dangerous because he challenges

religious convention by healing on the sabbath and challenging their teaching and practice, and also because he is increasingly making claims to his very close association with God the Father. This culminates in the moment when Jesus says, “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30), which leads to the crowd trying to stone him for blasphemy, though he escapes across the river Jordan.

#### TEXTUAL NOTES:

##### **“do not let your hearts be troubled” (14:1)**

This is a significant phrase: it tells us much about how the disciples are feeling and also gives us insight into Jesus’ compassion for them in this moment. It’s significance is underscored by the fact that it is repeated just a few lines later in verse 27b.

The word for “hearts” here in verse one is actually singular. This is interesting, because in the same line, we have the word “your” which is plural. So, interpreted more literally, this line would read, “let not your (plural) heart (singular) be troubled.” The disciples are portrayed here as being of one heart. This mirrors God’s heart for them to be united as we will hear that God is preparing a place for them: one house, with many rooms. Later, Jesus will pray that all his disciples will be one (John 17:20-21).

In this passage, Jesus comforts the disciples in their distress upon Jesus telling them that he will be leaving them. He is patient with their questions and he reassures them that even when they think they don’t know the way, or that they haven’t yet seen God the Father, that they can be reassured that they do know the way, and that they have seen God the Father, because they know him and they have seen him. Note Jesus’ patience with his disciples who are struggling to understand what he is saying, and his promises to them that he will not abandon them even after his death. This is deeply reassuring to us too, even if we sometimes struggle to understand everything Jesus has told us. Here we find ourselves reassured that Jesus loves us and cares about us and that he will not abandon us, even in death.

### **“I am the way, the truth, and the life” (14:6)**

The Way: so much of the Judeo-Christian story is about a journey: the journey of Israel out of slavery, and through the wilderness to the promised land; the journey of Jesus in his own life, from Galilee to Jerusalem; the journey of the early Christian church in Acts from Jerusalem, into Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (cf. Acts 1:8). Consider also that the disciples are called not just to believe, but to follow. And that the early church in Acts were called “the people of the way” (9:2; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22).

The Truth: John has presented the person of Jesus as a revelation of who God is right from the start of his gospel (see John’s prologue in John 1, particularly verses 14 and 17). The “signs” (John 2:1-11; 4:46-54; 5:1-15; 6:5-14; 6:16-24; 9:1-7; 11:1-45) and the “I am” statements (John 6:35; 8:12; 10:7; 10:11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1) in John’s gospel point to the fact that the truth about God is uniquely revealed in the person of Jesus.

The Life: Jesus makes it clear that the purpose of his mission is to bring life to the world (1:4, 10:10). This is both about life abundant in the here and now, and also about the promise of life after death. Jesus promises the disciples – in this passage and in the broader Farewell Discourses – that even though he is going to die, this death will not sever their relationship with him. He will bridge the chasm of death and return to them, even after he dies, promising them sure passage with him into eternal life.

### **“I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it” (14:13-14)**

This call to pray ‘in Jesus’ name’ is not a call to simply say those words, as if they were a magical incantation. It is a call to pray in the spirit of everything that has been revealed about God’s will in the person of Jesus. Jesus is promising that he will continue working in the disciples after he has gone, as they align their wills with the will of God, revealed in the person of Christ.

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

1. The words, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” are well known to many Christians. Does our hearing of these words change when we hear them within the context of this conversation of Jesus with his disciples?
2. How do we hear them as part of Jesus’ overall message of compassion and reassurance for the disciples who are troubled in their heart as they hear of his imminent departure from them?
3. What is the way, the truth, and the life, as it has been revealed in Jesus?
4. Does looking back to previous moments in John’s gospel help you speak about that? (there are many places you could look here, but some suggestions might be: Jesus washing the disciples’ feet in chapter 13; Jesus meeting and talking with the Samaritan woman at the well in chapter 4; Jesus healing the man born blind in chapter 9).
5. It is worth keeping in mind that this passage is commonly read at funerals and some in your congregation may connect this passage with the memory of a loved one who has died. How might this help you think about what your congregation needs to hear?
6. What is the good news in this passage to those who are grieving?

### LITURGICAL CONTEXT:

We are in the Season of Easter, the time between the resurrection of Jesus and his ascension (this year, liturgically remembered on May 17). This is a season when we hear words of reassurance from Jesus about how to live in this world, even when it can feel like he is absent from us. The promise here is that Jesus cares about us, and that we are not left alone by him. In this season, we both look back to the promise for all of us that is revealed in Jesus’ resurrection, and also forward to the promise of God’s presence with us in the Holy Spirit, which we celebrate at the feast of Pentecost (May 24).

## MAY 10 - EASTER 6

Propers: BAS page 341

Epistle: [1 Peter 3:13-22](#)

### BACKGROUND:

The First Epistle of Peter bears the name of (perhaps) Jesus' most famous disciple. It is thought to have been written during the latter third of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. It is believed that the Christians in this area were an oppressed minority who were ostracized socially. They may well have been suffering under a generalized persecution. The apostle consistently affirms their dignity as an elect and holy people, and encourages them to endure suffering faithfully, all the while remembering their special relationship with God.

### TEXTUAL NOTES:

Despite the stresses and strains that come with suffering, the verses prior to this section (8-12) encourage the reader to carefully tend their relationships - within households, within the Church, and within the community. Psalm 34 is quoted; "...seek peace and pursue it" knowing that "the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

Peter acknowledges that sometimes people suffer for doing good. When such suffering occurs, he encourages them to "sanctify Christ as Lord." Later, in vs. 18, the reader is reminded that Christ also suffered unjustly. It seems the example of Christ, and allegiance to him, can result in a purposeful and even redemptive response to unjust suffering.

The response to unjust suffering is not entirely passive. People are encouraged to be ready to make a defense of the hope that is within them, but to do so "gentleness and respect." In other words, in their response, they should not mirror the harshness they are being subjected to, as tempting as that may be.

The section regarding Jesus speaking to the spirits in prison during the days of Noah, apparently invokes a popular Jewish tradition captured in the book of I Enoch (this book is not in the bible or the apocrypha, and was not authored by the biblical Enoch). The main point of this slightly confusing section seems to be to remind them that in baptism they are 'saved through water' like Noah and his family were.

#### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

1. Many Christians throughout the world suffer unjustly. What might this section of scripture have to say to them. What might it say to those in our own country who believe they are suffering for their faith, or that they are in danger of such suffering?
2. How might the instruction to "seek peace' and to answer with "gentleness and respect" inform a Christian response to persecution?
3. Unlike the author of 1 Peter, we live in a participatory democracy in which we are encouraged to make our voice heard. How should his words about gentleness and respect be applied while still speaking truth to power?
4. How should our connection to the resurrected Jesus, who suffered unjustly, affect our own response.

#### LITURGICAL CONTEXT:

The Easter season explores all aspects of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. This includes very practical material on how to live 'resurrected lives' in Christ.

## MAY 17 - ASCENSION

Propers: BAS page 342

Gospel: [Luke 24:44-53](#)

### BACKGROUND:

This account of the ascension is the final part of Luke's resurrection narrative, and it ends the gospel. It is worth reading the whole of the chapter: all the events appear to be set within one day ("the first day of the week" – 24:1). First, the women go to the tomb and find that the stone has been rolled away. In their confusion, they meet two men in dazzling clothes who ask them, "why are you looking for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen" (Luke 24:5b). The women are told to return to the eleven and all the others and to tell them what has happened, but when they do that, the others don't believe them. Peter alone gets up and runs to the tomb. He sees the empty tomb, and the linen cloths lying there, and he leaves the tomb, amazed.

On "the same day" (24:13), we find ourselves with two disciples, travelling home to Emmaus. They have heard the account from the women who went to the tomb that morning, but they find it impossible to believe, and so, wracked with grief, they are leaving Jerusalem – and their whole lives – and going back home. While they walk along, Jesus joins them, but they are unable to recognise him. They tell this stranger what has happened, and he takes time to open the scriptures up to them, explaining as they walk along all the ways in which his life, death, and resurrection were fulfilments of scripture. But they still don't recognise him. Evening is falling and they encourage this stranger to stay with them. He does, and when they sit down at dinner, Jesus takes the bread, gives thanks for it, breaks it, and gives it to them, and in that moment, in that echo of the Jesus they had known, they recognise him. He disappears and they immediately return to Jerusalem to share their story with the other disciples.

"While they were talking about this" (24:26), Jesus himself appears and stands among them, saying, "Peace be with you." The disciples are afraid,

thinking that they are seeing a ghost, but Jesus tells them they can touch him, and he eats some fish, showing them that he really is present with them. Even in this moment, we hear that “in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering” (24:41). This is a lot for them to take in.

The chapter (and the gospel) then ends with the passage that is assigned for us today. Jesus, again, explains to them everything that has been written about him in the scriptures and he “opens their minds to understand” them (24:45). He tells them of the promise of the gift from on high that they will receive from the Father, and then he goes out to Bethany, just outside of Jerusalem, lifts up his hands to bless them, and is carried up into heaven. This account of the ascension is the ending of the gospel, but it is also clearly a transition: we are left with the disciples, back in the temple in Jerusalem, praising God and waiting for the gift of power from on high that Jesus has told them to wait for. The story will pick up in the book of Acts (the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts are largely thought of as one story, told in two parts), as the disciples wait for this gift from on high, and as the story of Pentecost begins (the story we will be remembering next week at Pentecost Sunday).

#### TEXTUAL NOTES:

##### **“the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms” (24:44)**

This list represents the whole of scripture (which, for the disciples, was the Hebrew Bible – the Old Testament). Jesus is showing them that his suffering and his resurrection are a fulfilment of not just a few obscure prophecies, but indeed, the whole movement of the scriptures up until that point. This does not just help us see Jesus in a new light; we also now look back on everything written in the Old Testament with new eyes, in light of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection.

##### **“Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures” (24:45)**

This is an echo of what we heard in the story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus. As Jesus walks with them on the road (though they do not yet recognise him), he “open[s] the scriptures” to them, “beginning with Moses and all the prophets” (24:31, 27). There is a pattern here. Jesus opens up

the scriptures, but they don't yet fully understand. Then Jesus is revealed to them in some important way (first, in the breaking of the bread, and then later, in the ascension), and then, the witnesses of that revelation return to gathering with their community, sharing this good news with one another.

**“...and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem” (24:47)**

Notice that it is not just Jesus' suffering and resurrection that Jesus says are foretold in the scriptures, but also the “repentance and forgiveness of sins,” “proclaimed in his name to all nations.” This raises the significance of the work of the early church that we will hear more about in the book of Acts. Both are now put on the same trajectory of salvation history. Just as God has spoken through the law and the prophets, and then through Jesus himself; now, the promise is that God will also speak through Jesus' disciples as they seek to continue in his work in the world after he has returned to his Father.

**“ ... and lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven.” (24:50b-51)**

This moment echoes back to other significant leaders in the history of Israel in times of transition. The lifting up of his hands in blessing is reminiscent of Moses (e.g. Exodus 17:11). And the being taken up into heaven is reminiscent of Elijah's ascension (2 Kings 2:1-14). Both Moses and Elijah are figures in the Old Testament who hand on their leadership at the end of their ministries: Moses to Joshua (Deuteronomy 34:9) and Elijah to Elisha (2 Kings 2:9-14). You may also remember that Elisha asks Elijah to receive a double measure of his spirit. In echoing back to these stories, Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and ascension are once again placed directly and confidently in the line of God's work through the Old Testament, and now through Jesus, and forward (through the promise of the coming “power from on high” – 24:49b) into the work of the disciples in the early church. The disciples carry forward, then, not just the work of Christ, but the work of God through the centuries; they are now the culmination of the whole story of God's people, right from the beginning.

**“And they worshipped him... and were continually in the temple blessing God” (24:52a, 53)**

In Luke’s gospel, it is clear that it is only God who is worthy of worship (cf. Luke 4:5-8), and so this act of worship in response to the ascension is a really significant way for Luke to end his gospel narrative. It is also significant that the disciples wait for the gift of power “from on high” that Jesus speaks of in the temple in Jerusalem. The temple is the place where earth and heaven meet, where God is present in the midst of his people. During Jesus’ life, it was Jesus himself, as he travelled and healed and taught, who took the place of that temple: the presence of God in the midst of his people. Now that Jesus is ascended, the disciples return again to the temple, waiting for the gift of the Holy Spirit which will descend on them at Pentecost. When this happens, it is the disciples who will become living temples, taking the presence of God with them wherever they go.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

1. Most regular attendees of church are familiar with Jesus’ birth, life, death, and resurrection. But the ascension is not always as familiar. So it is worth thinking a bit about your congregation – what ideas are they likely to already have about the ascension, if any? And what misconceptions? It may also be helpful to acknowledge the strangeness, and even the humour of the image that we often have in our minds when we think of the ascension.
2. Perhaps the hardest but the most important question to ask yourself when preparing a sermon on the ascension is why it matters. Why does the ascension matter to us now as Christians?
3. What is the message – the good news – of the ascension for us, here and now in our own lives?

LITURGICAL CONTEXT:

With Ascension Sunday, we come close to the end of the Easter Season. Jesus returns to the Father and we, like the disciples, now wait for the power of the Holy Spirit to arrive in our midst, the story of which we retell at Pentecost (next Sunday). We wait for the Spirit of God to come to us and to lead us through ordinary time (the Season of Pentecost), as we look for the

presence of God at work in our world, and respond to our own call to go out into the world sharing the good news of Christ.

## MAY 24 - PENTECOST SUNDAY

Propers: BAS page 345

Gospel: [John 7:37-39](#)

### BACKGROUND:

The relationship between Jesus' departure and the Holy Spirit's coming is an important theme in John (7:33, 39; 14:16-26; 15:26; 16:8-14; 20:22). A reading of these passages in preparation for preaching on Pentecost Sunday is vitally important.

### TEXTUAL NOTES:

The text reminds us (several times) that in this section of John, Jesus is teaching during the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles (Sukkot). The 1<sup>st</sup> century historian Josephus regarded this as the most important of the Jewish festivals. It is believed that during Jesus' time, this festival included a ceremony in which water from the pool of Siloam was poured in large quantities on the altar of the temple, reminding everyone of the hope that God's Spirit would flow from the temple bringing healing and shalom (Ezek. 47:1-12; Joel 3:18). Jesus takes up this theme and draws attention to himself as the source of this life-giving water.

The text begins with an invitation. "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me...." This calls to mind John 4, where Jesus promises the Samaritan woman living water.

The passage literally says "out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water." There is significant dispute as whether 'his' refers to Jesus, or to those who would drink of the water Jesus offers. There are strong arguments for both. Different translations handle this differently. If the second view is adopted, there is a strong opportunity to remind believers that God's Holy Spirit, given by Jesus, and flowing through his followers, can make the world a less thirsty place.

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

1. How does spiritual thirst show itself in us? How about in the world around us?
2. How can belief in Jesus quench this thirst?
3. What implication does the promised coming of the Holy Spirit have on the church's relationship to the broader community around it?
4. How can God's Spirit flow through the church to the broader community?

### LITURGICAL CONTEXT:

The feast of Pentecost, among other things, celebrates the birth of the Church. Pentecost Sunday provides an important opportunity for reflection on what God intends the Church to be and for repentance where we collectively fall short of that mark.

It is also an occasion of great hope and joy as we realize the vast scope of God's loving embrace and our part in extending it! The Pentecost liturgy makes this abundantly clear in the prayers before and after communion: "Let the Spirit you bestow on your Church continue to work in the world through the hearts of all who believe." And "may we who have received this eucharist live in the unity of your Holy Spirit, that we may show forth his gifts to all the world."

## MAY 31 - TRINITY SUNDAY

Propers: BAS page 346

Gospel: [Matthew 28:16-20](#)

### BACKGROUND:

Many think that Trinity Sunday is not an easy Sunday to preach on, because the theological concept of the Trinity can seem so obscure and un-grounded in the real life of faith. I hope that by the end of these notes, you will see that it is quite the opposite! The concept of the Trinity, though rooted in scripture, is not found fully formed in the pages of the Old or New Testaments. Rather, the language of Trinity was developed in the first few hundred years of the church. When the early church was wrestling with the right way to speak of God as both three and one, they were struggling with how best to speak of God's real presence in Jesus – in the incarnation – and in our own lives, through the presence of God's Spirit. The early church was rooted in the core Jewish tenet that there was only one God. And yet, they also believed that God really was present in the person of Christ. *And* that this same God was now present with them in their lives and in their communities. It is the concept of the Trinity that allowed the early church – and all of us that follow – to not just talk about this, but to affirm that this relationality is central to who God has revealed himself to be in Christ, through the power of his Spirit.

You may know this passage from Matthew as “The Great Commission.” It is the ending of Matthew's gospel, and a powerful reminder, after everything that Matthew has told us about Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, that the call to the disciples to share the good news of Jesus is also our call.

### TEXTUAL NOTES:

**“Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain...” (28:16)**

Mountains in the scriptures are places of revelation and reception. When Jesus is on a mountain in certain significant moments in the gospels, we should hear an intentional echo of other significant figures and moments involving mountains in the Old and New Testaments.

Think of Moses going up on the mountain to receive the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20). The Israelites have just been delivered from slavery and now God wants to show them how to live their new lives together in freedom. In the same way, Jesus stands with the disciples in this moment on the precipice of a new community (the early church), a community who have been delivered by Jesus' death and resurrection from the enslavement of sin and the fear of death.

In Jesus' own life, we might think of other mountain echoes. In the Beatitudes as part of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught the disciples about the upside-down kingdom of God (Matthew 5). In the transfiguration, Jesus shines with the glory of God, and those with him are told by a voice from the cloud, "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" (Matthew 17:5b). And when else have we heard those words? At Jesus' own baptism, of course (Matthew 3:17). And now in today's passage, Jesus commands his disciples to go out into all of the world, making disciples of all nations, and baptizing them. These echoes are not coincidental. They all add layers to the richness of the text and its meaning.

**“When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted” (28:17)**

It is worth noting here that even though we are told expressly that some of those gathered at the great commission doubted, all are still commissioned. Jesus does not only commission those whose faith was without doubt (are there any of us whose faith is without doubt?)

The specific Greek word for doubt here occurs in the New Testament only one more time: in Matthew 14:31. Here it again appears alongside the word for worship. In that passage, Peter steps out of a boat onto the water with Jesus, but when he notices the strong winds, he becomes afraid and begins to sink. Jesus reaches out his hand and lifts him up. What Jesus is commissioning those disciples (and us) to do in our passage for this Sunday is a really daunting task. We are reminded here that if we have the faith to step out of our boats, Jesus will not leave us if we start to feel afraid.

**“All authority... all nations... everything I have commanded you”  
(28:18, 19, 20)**

The doubt in the crowd at the great commission is contrasted here with the absolute certainty and authority that is portrayed in the person and words of the risen Christ. He has received *all* authority in heaven and on earth; the disciples are commanded to go and make disciples of *all* nations; and they are told to teach them to obey *everything* that he has commanded them. When Jesus says “all nations,” he is making expressly clear what has been gestured toward but not fully embraced throughout the whole of his life (and the whole of this gospel) – that the good news will be not just for the Jewish people, but for all people. Here, at the end of the gospel, the time has come for that to be fully embraced: the disciples will go out and make disciples of *all* nations. It might also be helpful to think about what is intended by Jesus when he says, “everything that I have commanded you.” It is always a good idea to fill a word such as this (‘command’) with living content from Jesus’ life – we are not called to blind obedience, after all, but to a trust, built on relationship. Places to go here might include the sermon on the mount (Matthew 5-7), the feeding of the multitudes (Matthew 14:13-21, 15:32-39), the tending to the ‘least of these’ (Matthew 25:34-40), and the ‘greatest commandment’ (Matthew 22:37-40), among many others in Matthew’s gospel.

**“...baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (28:19)**

Here is the “trinitarian formula” of baptism that likely was present from the very earliest days of the church. Though we see these words and can connect it to the early practice of baptism, it would be a mistake to assume that we can read back into the early church a later and more developed conception of what those words mean. However, the presence of this baptismal formula here in the gospels is an important anchor for the development of the idea of the trinity in the first few hundred years of the church.

It is notable that in this passage, we hear that when the disciples saw the risen Christ, they worshipped him. It was this recognition of the revelation

(and very presence) of God in the person of Christ that drove early Christian debates about the nature of Jesus' humanity and divinity. And it was the experience that the early church had of the presence of God's Spirit with them in their lives and in their worship, in a very real way, that drove the early Christian debates about the divinity of the Spirit also. These are the building blocks of Trinitarian theology.

The doctrine of the Trinity, despite its complexity, is not intended to be an obscure theological doctrine. It is a way of witnessing to the experience of the presence of God in the person of Christ, and with us today in the power of the Holy Spirit. Trinitarian theology is about presence. And it is about affirming that relationship is not just something that God seeks out with us, but that it is at the very heart of who he is.

**“And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (28:20)**

Modern translators have chosen to use the word “remember” here, but that really doesn't capture what Jesus is saying in this moment. A better (if rather old fashioned or 'churchy') word here would be “Behold!”. “Behold! I am with you always, to the end of the age!” Jesus is not telling them to remember that he is with them. Jesus is telling them to see, to look right now and to see – to behold that he is with them right now – and to continue beholding his presence with them, even to the end of the age. The truth that is proclaimed in this final line of the gospel of Matthew is the same truth that is proclaimed in its first chapter when the angel of the Lord appears to Mary: That she is to bear a son, and he will be called Emmanuel, which means, “God is with us” (1:23).

**QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:**

1. Much like Ascension (see notes for Ascension Sunday, May 17), our primary question for any Trinity Sunday sermon must be – why does this matter?
2. Is the Trinity just an academic concept, or does it have significance for our Christian journey today? If you can help your congregation see that speaking of God as Father, Son, and Spirit is a way of speaking of God's real presence in the person of Jesus, and in our lives now through the

Holy Spirit, then you will have helped them to hear the heart of this passage: that God is with us, and goes with us, as we are sent out into the world.

3. Matthew leaves us with this powerful scene on the mountain, and with words that offer us purpose and direction in our Christian lives. This message is for all of us – all in the sense of the whole community, but also all in the sense of the whole of any one of us – the parts of us that doubt and the parts of us that embrace our faith in Christ with joy and abandon. Jesus speaks to all of us here. How can you preach today in a way that does not get in the way of the power of these words?
4. How can what you say about Trinity (if you choose to speak about this) not distract from Jesus' words on this holy mountain, but serve and illuminate them?

#### LITURGICAL CONTEXT:

Given what we have discussed about the concept of the Trinity being a way of speaking about the real presence of God in the person of Jesus, and in our lives now by the power of the Holy Spirit, it is deeply appropriate that we are called to speak about this on the first Sunday after Pentecost. At Pentecost, the church is born, and the people who are sent out to preach the good news of Christ become the vehicles for God's Spirit to go out into all of the world. The early church that we hear of in the book of Acts, and that we hear about through the Epistles of the New Testament, was utterly reliant on God the Holy Spirit, and upon everything that Jesus had shown them and taught them. And they were utterly reliant on one another: breaking bread together, reminding one another of the apostle's teachings, and sharing all that they had in common. Relationality stands at the heart of the early church just as it stands at the heart of who God is. We reach out to the world because God first reached out to us.