

God's Good Creation
Stouffville United Church
Sunday, June 11, 2017

Genesis 1 – Trinity Sunday

Trinity Sunday. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Today is about the abundance of different ways to experience, to think about, and to encounter God. The liturgical colour is green. Our reading today is from the First Chapter of Genesis – and sets us right into the midst of the creation of the world and our place in it.

God through the ages has been imagined and experienced and understood by us in many different ways. A colleague on my online Midrash community offered this:

“I am a Trinitarian because I believe in mystery. And the Trinity is a mystery to me. The greatest minds of Christendom have applied reason, philosophical rigor, depth and breadth to understanding and interpreting the church's experience of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

But in the end, knowing God is as allusive as predicting a firefly's trajectory over a field of hay after dusk, as futile as keeping track of a drop of rain fallen into the ocean in a storm. But contemplating Trinity offers lessons in the dynamism of creation, incarnation, delight, genesis, the inter-relationship of nothing, of everything, of darkness, of light, image, silence. And, again, nothing.

The doctrine of the Trinity has an elegant beauty and simplicity and it has something important to express. There is relational movement within it, which I believe to be an essential characteristic of God, whom I honour.

And this is where I began to click in to the conversation – relational movement – how that divine spirit connects with my spirit – and in different ways, different times, different moods, different reasons. The point of Trinity Sunday is not so much to figure out the doctrinal aspects of how God comes apart in three pieces and goes back together, but rather to celebrate how we each experience God differently, although it is the same God we experience.

Our New Creed sums up our basic understanding of the Trinity – as God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit: “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.

Whatever your take on the Trinity, this is a day to celebrate the relationship between you and God, using whatever name you use to call upon that life-giving presence. About 50 years after the Council of Nicea in 325, when the Nicene Creed was starting to get around, in the year 386, St. Patrick wrote down these words, “I bind unto myself today the strong name of the Trinity, by invocation of the same, the three in one and one in three.”

God is in motion, calling us to know God deeper, to respond to God with our ‘yes’, and with our awe, with our deepening commitment.

My father gave me a very beautiful and unexpected birthday gift one year - this glass creation, blown by a glass artisan whose show they had gone to see. And I’ve always thought of it as the beginning of creation.

For in the swirl of colour within the glass, there are the blues of the ocean, and the green of the land, all in a swirl of creation. And when I look at my glass object, I know that there was a moment in time when the artist had a conception of what his creation might be, but not until the act of creation, through the inspiration and genius of the artist, would it come into being.

For in any given moment in time, there is the moment of creation, there is the work of the creative, creating force in this world. The force of creation does not simply create and then is done with it. But is always moving forward – We believe in God, who has created and is creating.

When you take the time to quietly sit and read the first chapter of Genesis, you begin to appreciate its rhythm of creation. The first day. Light. Day and Night. The second day. Sky and water. The third day. Earth and trees and plants. The fourth day. Sun and moon and stars.

The fifth day. Sea creatures and birds. The sixth day. Animals. Man and Woman. And on each day, God saw that ‘it was good.’ And on the seventh day, God rested from all the work that God had done in creation.

The poetry we explored today, the take home spiritual exercise you will do sometime this week, all celebrate our keen awareness that we have a place in this created order, and one that we called to administer faithfully. This is God’s good creation, formed by love and you are part of it.

In Psalm 8 appointed for today, the psalmist writes words that could be our words, as together we share the awe and wonder that is experienced when you stand on the edge of an ocean, or under a night sky of stars: “When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?”

This is a God who says, “In the beginning, I was. In your future, I will be. In your present, I am.”

Thanks be to God. Amen.