

Order of Worship for June 15, 2025

Prelude

P: The Lord be with you,

C: and also with you.

Opening Hymn: *“Glory Be to God the Father”* – Hymn #506

Confession and Forgiveness p. 203

Service of the Word

Kyrie: *(Lord, Have Mercy)* p. 204

Hymn of Praise: *(Glory to God in the Highest)* p. 204

P: The Lord be with you,

C: and also with you.

Athanasian Creed (1-18) p. 319

Hymn of Praise: *“Holy, Holy, Holy”* – Hymn #507

P: The Lord be with you,

C: and also with you.

P: Almighty and everlasting God, You have given us grace to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity by the confession of a true faith and to worship the Unity in the power of the Divine Majesty. Keep us steadfast in this faith and defend us from all adversities; for You, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, live and reign, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Old Testament Reading: Proverbs 8:1–4, 22–31

R: Does not wisdom call? Does not understanding raise her voice? On the heights beside the way, at the crossroads she takes her stand; beside the gates in front of the town, at the entrance of the portals she cries aloud: “To you, O men, I call, and my cry is to the children of man. ... “The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His work, the first of His acts of old. Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth, before He had made the earth with its fields, or the first of the dust of the world. When He established the heavens, I was there; when He drew a circle on the face of the deep, when He made firm the skies above, when He established the fountains of the deep, when He assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress His command, when He marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside

Him, like a master workman, and I was daily His delight, rejoicing before Him always, rejoicing in His inhabited world and delighting in the children of man.”

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Second Reading: Acts 2:14a, 22–36

R: Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them, ... “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves know— this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised Him up, losing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. For David says concerning Him, ‘I saw the Lord always before me, for He is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption. You have made known to me the paths of life; You will make me full of gladness with Your presence.’ Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, ‘The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.’ Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel: John 8:48–59

P: The Holy Gospel according to Saint John, the eighth chapter.

C: Glory to You, O Lord.

P: The Jews answered [Jesus], “Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?” Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon, but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. Yet I do not seek My own glory; there is One who seeks it, and He is the judge. Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.” The Jews said to Him, “Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham died, as did the prophets, yet You say, ‘If anyone keeps My word, he will never taste death.’ Are You greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do You make Yourself out to be?” Jesus answered, “If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing. It is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, ‘He is our God.’ But you have not known Him. I know Him. If I were to say that I do not know Him, I would be a liar like you, but I do know Him and I keep His word. Your father Abraham rejoiced that He would see My day. He saw it and was glad.” So the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?” Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you,

before Abraham was, I am.” So they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Athanasian Creed (19-26) p. 319-20

Sermon Hymn: “*Father Most Holy*”- **Hymn #504**

Sermon: “*Circle of Love*”- **John 8:48-59**

When they talk about great baseball teams, the 1998-2000 Yankees come into the discussion. You have to keep in mind that I was raised a Baltimore Orioles fan so I have always hated the Yankees. But I have to agree, that was a great team. They did have Hall of Famers Derek Jeter and Mariano Rivera, but what marked that team was that they were a team. They liked each other and played well with each other. There were no big egos, just the team.

A good team like that is sort of like a windmill or a water wheel. Each part of those machines contributes equally to the effort of turning a rod to harness power. Each one works to force in the same direction to create a circular motion. When I visited our friend Kebede in Ethiopia, I got to see how they use oxen moving in circles to grind seeds for flour. To work effectively the oxen should be working in tandem as a team.

That is what we celebrate today in the Trinity—God in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is not an intellectual exercise to explain God. The Trinity is not so much about who God is, but what He does. The Father shows us how God made us and protects us. The Son shows how God rescued us from sin. The Spirit shows how God gives us the life to follow Him. But above all what we see in the Trinity is the perfect team, a team based on perfect love.

We see this in the words Jesus spoke in our Gospel lesson:

If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing. It is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, ‘He is our God.’ But you have not known Him. I know Him. If I were to say that I do not know Him, I would be a liar like you, but I do know Him and I keep His word.

Jesus never sought glory. It was always given to Him by the Father. With the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit there is no “keeping score” of who did what, just everything directed towards loving each other and directing that love to us. The Trinity shows us the perfect “circle of love.”

That is how God created us. We were made “In His image.” Those means are meant to be a part of that circle, receiving God’s love and giving it back to Him by loving others.

That may just seem to make sense. The book Team of Rivals is about how Abraham Lincoln used his political rivals to become members of his cabinet, who capably helped him get through the great crisis of the Civil War. Harry Truman engineered the recovery plan in Europe after World War 2 by calling it the “Marshall Plan,” naming it after Secretary of State Marshall who was above politics. Truman said, “It is amazing what you can get done when you don’t worry about who gets credit for it.” Great things happen when people cooperate!

But we foul up God’s circle of love. I can talk about our petty jealousies, our greed, our insistence on our own way. We think of crime, war, injustice, rape, prejudice, stealing, and all

the bad things people do to each other. But it is even deeper than that. Let's not talk about criminals, corrupt politicians, the abusive wealthy, or the usual list of "bad guys." What about with the people who seem to have their act together. Listen to this description of them:

Then do an even better you next time. And the next time, still. Onward and upward. The appeal of such sentiments is that they groom us into thinking that we are free agents in the world. Who doesn't want that? Life becomes a series of challenges we can, in our self-declared freedom, overcome. Life also becomes a place with definable groups: the have-it-togethers and the messed up, the good and the bad, us and them. All we have to do is think smart, remain positive, and stay on the right side of history.

These high-sounding, humanity-exalting sentiments lose much of their charm when there's a knock on your door at 11:30 PM and two Army officers are standing on your front porch. Or your mom calls, frantic as doctors try in vain to revive the heart of your already dead father. Or this, or that. We are all one day, one event, one disappointment away from the burst of our high anthropology bubble. Blessed is the bursting of that bubble.

What motivates our human efforts to work together—real love for each other or the benefits it gives "me"? We all end up breaking the "circle" by clinging to "me," not God.

But God is not that way. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit live and work in perfect love. That love is not based on what the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit can gain from each other. Jesus said, "The Father glorifies Me." It is given, not paid for. That love reaches out to us, in making us, in forgiving us, and in leading us back to Him.

Jesus sacrificed Himself for us. He had nothing to gain from that. It did no personal benefit to Him. He didn't do it to get our love in return, because as God, He does not need it and because he died for all people, even those who would not respond to His love. It is that love which forgives, which removes our sins which fouls up the circle. Now we can, even as sinners, be a part of God's circle of love.

As we praise the Triune God, we are drawn into that circle of love. It is not that we can figure God out better, but we can have a wider view of what He does for us. God as Father shows our relationship with Him, not as some distant uncaring deity, but the Father who made us and cares for us out of love. In the Son, we see the extent of that love as he died for us on the cross. In the Holy Spirit, we see that God does not give up on us, that He is constantly after us to receive His love and share it with others. The Trinity is God's love going through our lives and into the lives of others, back into our lives, and back to God, the source of it all.

It is that love that our children will see in the five stories they will learn during VBS this week. 1.) We hear about God calling Moses to free His people from slavery, calling Moses, not because he was so qualified, but so that God could show His power and love for His people through even a stutterer like Moses. 2.) God leads His people under Joshua across the Jordan

River, not by their power or cleverness, but by parting the flooded waters before them. 3.) Jesus uses the example of the Good Samaritan to show how His love moves us to even love enemies. 4.) Jesus rises from the dead on Easter to free us from sin and death. 5.) Jesus ascends into heaven to confirm He is God and all His promises to us are true.

God bless us daily to be a part of that circle of love.

Athanasian Creed (27-40) p. 320

Prayer of the Church

P: Lord, in Your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

Sharing Our Ministry:

Offering & Voluntary:

Service of the Sacrament

Preface: p. 208

P: It is truly good, right, and proper that we should in all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, Almighty Father, everlasting God, who with Your only-begotten Son and the Holy Spirit are on God, one Lord. In the confession of the only true God we worship the Trinity in person and the Unity in substance, of majesty coequal. Therefore with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your name, evermore praising You and singing . .

Sanctus (*Holy, Holy, Holy*) p. 208

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

P: Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we thank You for Your love which has worked salvation for us. Bless us as we come to the table You have set for us as we receive the true body and blood of Christ Jesus to forgive us of our sins and strengthen our faith in You. Hear us as we pray . . .

Lord's Prayer and Words of our Lord, and Peace of the Lord p. 209

Agnus Dei (*Lamb of God*) p. 210

Distribution Hymns:

"Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise" – **Hymn 802**

"O Blessed, Holy Trinity" – **Hymn #876**

Song After Communion: Nunc Dimittis (*Song of Simeon*) p. 21

Prayer After Communion

P: Almighty God, our Father, dwelling in majesty and mystery, renewing and fulfilling creation by Your eternal Spirit, and revealing Your glory through our Lord Jesus Christ: Cleansed us from doubt and fear, and enable us to worship You, with Your Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, living and reigning, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Benedicamus and Blessing: p.212

Closing Hymn: "*Glory to God, We Give You Thanks and Praise*" – **Hymn #946**

Postlude: