Worship Resources for May 22nd, 2016—First Sunday after Pentecost, Trinity Sunday

Revised Common Lectionary: Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-21; Psalm 8; Romans 5:1-5; John 16:12-15

Narrative Lectionary: Consolation, 2 Corinthians 1:1-11

We begin Trinity Sunday by a creation story we do not often read from, the creation as told by the voice of Wisdom in Proverbs 8. Wisdom is personified as a woman in Proverbs, and is often seen manifest as the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. Wisdom is a partner with God in creation, delighting in all that God does and in the creation of humanity.

The psalmist sings of creation in Psalm 8, the wonders that God has created, and how such a small part humans have to play; yet God has made them “a little lower than the angels” and has given us stewardship (often translated as “dominion”) over the earth. God has called us to care for the earth the way God has provided and cared for us. God has left it all in our care.

Romans 5:1-5 is Paul’s call to persevere and to know God’s peace through Jesus Christ. The early Christians had to suffer much, and Paul encouraged the Christians in Rome to know that in their suffering they also had hope, a hope that would not disappoint them, because God’s love was made known to them in the Holy Spirit.

Jesus tells the disciples in John 16:12-15 that they will continue to hear the truth through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will guide and lead them forward. In this time, right before Jesus’ betrayal and death, the disciples were not ready to receive and accept what Jesus was telling them, but after the resurrection, the Holy Spirit would continue to speak to them the truth of God.

The Narrative Lectionary begins a six-week series on 2 Corinthians. The first eleven verses introduce the letter, which most likely was not the second but a later letter to the church in Corinth (1 Corinthians mentions an earlier letter that is lost, so this letter is probably the third or more in a series; most scholars believe 2 Corinthians is more than one letter to the church pieced together). Paul speaks of consolation in these introductory verses, that God is the one who will bring comfort and peace. Paul and his companions have experienced suffering and hardship, but this should not discourage the Corinthians, but rather bring them consolation knowing that Christ is the one who rescues us from sin and death in the end. Even if they suffer, they should know that their hope is in Christ Jesus and they will be saved from death. Paul writes in the hope that the church in Corinth will not be discouraged by the suffering they have endured, but rather will know the peace of God through Jesus Christ, especially in the midst of their suffering.

The Holy Spirit is what guides us, and has guided creation since the beginning in following the call of God in the world. The Holy Spirit is still speaking to us, still teaching us and leading us. God has given us dominion, called us into stewardship of this earth, taught us to love one another through the love of Christ, and now, through the Holy Spirit, continues to guide us in this life and in this world.

Call to Worship

Listen to the voice of Wisdom;

 **Wisdom is showing us the way to life.**

Listen to the voice of God;

 **God is calling us to care for one another and the earth.**

Listen to the voice of Jesus;

 **Jesus is calling us to follow Him.**

Listen! Hear the call on our lives:

 **Follow Jesus, serve God, and listen to the Holy Spirit speak wisdom in your heart.**

Prayer of Brokenness/Confession

God of Wisdom and Insight, we have failed to listen to You. We have failed to follow the lessons of Jesus; we have failed to attend to the needs of others; we have failed to heed the teachings of Scripture on the way of justice and peace. Forgive us. Call to us again so we might listen. Call to us again so we might follow You. Call to us again so we might be compassionate and love our neighbor as ourselves. Amen.

Blessing/Assurance of Pardon

Wisdom still speaks to us. The Holy Spirit still moves in us. Christ still calls to us to follow Him. Turn, and know God’s love. Turn, and know God’s forgiveness. Turn, and forgive and love your enemies as well as your friends. Turn, because Wisdom is still calling you. Amen.

Prayer

Spirit of Life, move us to justice. Spirit of Compassion, move us to love others. Spirit of Hope, move us to build Your beloved community on earth as it is in heaven. Spirit of Peace, may we know Your presence in our lives. Spirit of Love, may we feel Your embrace as we love one another. Spirit of the living God, move through us, blow through us, stir in us, so that we might not be complacent with the way things are, but determined to bring about Your reign on earth. Amen.