May 26th—First Sunday after Pentecost, Trinity Sunday

Revised Common Lectionary: Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31; Psalm 8; John 16:12-15; Romans 5:1-5

In the Wisdom Literature of the Bible, Wisdom is given a feminine voice, referred to with feminine pronouns, and is seen as part of God, a partner in creation, especially the creation of humanity. It is a voice that we often do not hear reflected in our church traditions and has been silenced in our church history. As we commemorate the Trinity today, we remember that we know very little about God, and what we often do is create an image of God that reflects us, rather than reflecting the image of God through us. God created us male and female, so it makes sense that the image of God would be both masculine and feminine. We continue to have a very narrow view of God when we limit the image of God to male only.

Psalm 8 reminds us that we are created in the image of God, and that we ought to reflect that image in our lives. In the way that God has dominion over all creation, so God has given us dominion over the earth—in that we are called to create, renew, and care for all of creation. Once again, when we limit our image of God, we also limit the understanding of our own creation—that we are whole when we are male and female, together, and that we are whole when we are caring for creation the way God has cared for all. We are a “little lower than God,” and given the responsibility of care for creation.

We are reminded in this passage from John 16 that God is still speaking. We have the words of Jesus, but Jesus is the Living Word. God is still speaking through the acts of creation, which Wisdom (which also has at times been interpreted as the Holy Spirit in the New Testament) is part of. In verse 15, we know that everything that belongs to God belongs to Jesus, and Jesus promises that the Spirit will take what belongs to Jesus and declare it to us—in other words, the Spirit will speak of God in new ways to us. As our knowledge and understanding of who God is continues to unfold throughout creation (the Word becoming flesh, the Holy Spirit coming), God will continue to surprise us, to do the unexpected, and be revealed in new ways.

Romans 5:1-5 speaks to this new unveiling of God, the continued revealing of God in new ways throughout our history, and that God is not finished yet. Hope does not disappoint us, because God continues to do a new thing. We know that even in times of suffering and doubt, God will continue to be revealed to us.

The Trinity is something that we continually try to define but the definitions fall short, just in the same way our attempts to make sense of God fall apart. God is constantly doing something new, and God is constantly being revealed to us in new ways. Maybe even the Trinity falls short in showing us the way God is made known to us, but we have used it throughout Christian history. Our Eastern Orthodox brothers and sisters would tell us to stop trying to make sense of it. God is Mystery with a capital M. But we continue to draw closer to God, and I believe God is drawing closer to us, when we are open to new insights and experiences, and new understandings of God made known to us in Scripture, tradition, and our personal experience with God, others and creation.

Call to Worship

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!

 **Who was and who is and who is to come!**

God has been made known to us as the Father, Son and Holy Ghost

 **God has been made known to us as Creator, Christ, and Wisdom Spirit**

We are created in God’s image

 **Young and old, male and female, all of us reflect the image of God**

God continues to be made known to us in new ways

 **Come, let us worship together our God who continues to be revealed!**

Prayer of Brokenness/Confession

God of many names, we come to You confessing we have attempted to put you in a box, to name You as we see You, to claim You as our own in our image. In doing so, we have built walls around ourselves to keep others away from You. Forgive us for our narrow ways, for our short-sightedness. Call us to tear down the walls so You might be revealed more fully to us. Stir in us Your wisdom and insight to be open to new experiences of You through our relationships with others. In the name of Jesus, who came to reconcile us and to prepare us for what is to come, a new relationship with You. Amen.

Blessing/Assurance of Pardon

God is still speaking to us. God is continuing to be revealed in new ways, as the Word became Flesh. God continues to be made known to us in new ways. As we seek to draw closer to others, God draws closer to us. When we forgive others, we are forgiven. When we love, we know that God loves us. Go and live into this good news. Amen.

Prayer

God of unveiling, the curtain has been torn, the walls have come tumbling down. We seek Your guidance in peeling back the layers that have built up through tradition and history, layers that keep us from experiencing Your love and grace fully. Challenge us when we are comfortable with the boundaries in place, so that we might not build a box around our understanding of You. Call us to build bridges instead of walls where there is less understanding. Help us to be comfortable with Mystery, with the unknown, especially with unanswered questions. Guide us to live grace-filled lives in which we extend that grace to others, knowing that we see only in part, as if in a mirror dimly. In the name of Christ, who calls us into the fullness of life, the wholeness of humanity, and the restoration of creation, we pray. Amen.