Worship Resources for May 31st, 2015—Trinity Sunday

(There is also the option of the [readings for the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth](http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/texts.php?id=332), but I have chosen not to blog on those readings as most will observe Trinity Sunday).

Revised Common Lectionary: Isaiah 6:1-8, Psalm 29; Romans 8:12-17; John 3:1-17

Narrative Lectionary: Psalm 1

The Call of the Prophet Isaiah takes place in the sixth chapter. King Uzziah is dead, and the prophet Isaiah has a vision of the heavenly realm, the seraphs and the throne of God. Isaiah experiences this heavenly worship of God and believes he is not worthy, because the people of Israel have failed to follow God’s ways. A seraph touches his lips with coal, purifying his lips—so that Isaiah now will believe he is worthy. When God asks “Whom shall I send?” Isaiah responds with “Here I am, send me!”

Psalm 29 is a song about worship in the heavenly realm, for God is the God of all creation, of the heavens and earth, and all of creation is called into this heavenly worship of God. The voice of the Lord that calls out to the prophet Isaiah also calls out to all of creation, and the call is for everything to worship God, who is a king that reigns forever.

Romans 8:12-17 speaks of eternal life for those who are led by the Spirit. Those who are led by the Spirit will put an end to their worldly ways of selfishness and greed, the “deeds of the flesh” that seek one’s own desire and satisfaction above others. Those who are led by the Spirit have been adopted by God—Jew or Greek. When we turn back to God and follow God’s ways, we know that we are children of God, because the Spirit is alive in us, leading us.

John 3:1-17 is the story of a Pharisee named Nicodemus. Found only in John’s Gospel account, Nicodemus comes to Jesus at night—afraid to be seen by day, but speaks in the plural: “We know that you are a teacher who has come from God.” Nicodemus hints that there are other Pharisees who did not see Jesus as a threat, but were not sure what to make of him. Jesus tells Nicodemus that one must be born of the Spirit, born from above, in order to have eternal life. To be born is to become alive in a new way. To be born of the Spirit is to have an awareness of the Spirit of God in a new way, an awareness of what God is doing in the world that was not present before. This awareness also brings about belief in the Son of God, belief in eternal life—but the Son was not sent into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved (vs. 17).

The Narrative Lectionary for the month of June focuses on the Psalms, and begins with Psalm 1. Psalm 1 speaks of those who plant themselves in the teachings of God through the scriptures as being rooted in God, whereas those who do not follow the teachings of God are blown about like chaff in the wind. The wicked are the ones who do not care for the teachings of God, but the righteous are those who choose to root themselves in the word of God.

This Trinity Sunday we have scriptures about the work of God as Creator, about the work of the Spirit, and the work of Christ. Since the beginning, the Spirit of God has been doing something new—separating light from darkness, creating a world, bringing forth life—and life is being brought forth in a new way, through the Spirit, and we must all be born again in order to experience that life that has no death. If the Spirit is in us, we hear the call of God and the desire is in our hearts to say, “Here I am! Send me!”

Call to Worship

Who is worthy? Who will God send to share the Good News?

**Here I am! Here we are! Send us!**

But we are weak, we are tired, we are not perfect.

**Christ calls us all, and Christ redeems us and gives us strength.**

The way seems too hard and too difficult.

**God gives us courage, and lifts us up.**

Christ is calling each of us to follow him;

**May we say yes to God, may we follow Jesus, and may we be filled with the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Prayer of Brokenness/Confession

Almighty God, we confess that in arrogance we believe we are more deserving and worthy than others. We believe we have worked harder and have more claim to the world’s resources and joys than others. Forgive us of our selfishness and arrogance. Call us by name, to remember that You are our Creator, that You breathe life into us, and that You are the one who emptied Yourself, becoming last of all to serve us all, and even gave Your life for us, that we might know eternal life through Your love. May we live by Your example, and seek to empty ourselves of power and privilege to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with You. Amen.

Blessing/Assurance of Pardon

The Spirit is upon you to bring Good News. The Spirit is breathing new life in you. The Spirit is opening this new life that is reborn in Christ, a life that knows no death. The Spirit is leading you into the ways of life. You are forgiven and beloved, and are called children of God. Go, follow the Spirit’s leading, and know that God is with you. Amen.

Prayer

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty, You created the universe that is ever-expanding far beyond what we can possibly know, and Your love is expanding in us far beyond what we can possibly understand. May we grow in understanding Your reign in our lives and our hearts, that we may give ourselves, all we are, over to You and Your love, so that we might see all Your children as our beloved kindred in Christ. For we know that Your kingdom, Your beloved community, will not be complete until we know everyone as Your child. Open our hearts, for Your dream, Your universe, all Your creation, to expand Your love in us. In the name of Christ, whose love crosses from death to life, we pray. Amen.