Worship Resources for June 15th—Trinity Sunday, First Sunday after Pentecost, Father’s Day

Revised Common Lectionary: Genesis 1:1-2:4a; Psalm 8; 2 Corinthians 13:11-13; Matthew 28:16-20

For many Protestants, this is the last Sunday of note until we get to Reign of Christ/Christ the King Sunday in November in our church calendars. We are in the season after Pentecost, which is a long season of ordinary time. It is also Father’s Day and I have included a special litany in the liturgy resources below.

We begin with the beginning, with the story of creation. We recall the order and method of creation, of God’s speaking into the darkness, the wind of God—the spirit of God—sweeping over the waters of creation. God speaks, and the Spirit moves, and creation comes into being. And our response is to remember to rest on the last day, to give thanks for all that God has made through the work of the Spirit.

Psalm 8 sings of God’s majestic creation and our role in creation—when you look at the world, what are we to feel we are so important? God made us a little lower than the angels, the psalmist sings, and we are called to care and have stewardship over the earth. Everything is under our feet, including the responsibility to care and assure the continuance of God’s creation.

2 Corinthians 13:11-13 contains the benediction to this second letter to the church in Corinth. The benediction is written beautifully: “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.” The role of God is to love, as God has loved us into creation. The role of Jesus is to show us grace, the free gift of God. And the role of the Holy Spirit is to bring us into communion, to bind us together. Love, Grace, and Communion—this is what the Trinity is.

Matthew 28:16-20 is Jesus’ final instructions to the disciples and a benediction. The benediction is triune in nature but does not necessarily mean a subscription to the Trinitarian belief that would become part of church doctrine three centuries later. Rather, it is a blessing to go forth, baptizing in their name. And we recall that in this passage, it says that some of the disciples believed and some doubted. Jesus does not address their doubts, but tells them to go forth and baptize in his name, and that he will be with them, until the end of the age.

Maybe, even in our times of doubts, one of the greatest acts of faith we can do is to go forth and to share the Good News. To baptize others indicates bringing them into the communion with God, the Holy Spirit, and with Jesus. And we remember with Paul’s benediction that we go with the love of God, the grace of Jesus and the communion of the Holy Spirit. Even in times of doubt, may we know God’s love. Even in times of rejection, may we know the grace of Jesus. And in times of loneliness and our greatest trials, may we feel the communion of the Holy Spirit in the presence of those around us.

Call to Worship

God our Father, our Creator, who made the heavens and earth

 **We are Your children, and we are in awe of all you have made.**

Christ the Son, our Redeemer and Savior, You lived and died for us all

 **You live again, and have prepared the way for us.**

Holy Spirit, the Sustainer, You move in us and among us

 **We follow Your wisdom and feel Your presence.**

God, Triune, Three-in-one, help us to know You more fully.

 **Guide us in this time of worship. Amen.**

Prayer of Brokenness/Confession

Almighty God, we are aware that we fall short and we fail others. Sometimes we allow our failures and shortcomings to overwhelm us. We feel we are not good enough and that we cannot live up to the standards of the world around us. Forgive us for our shortcomings, and help us to forgive ourselves, knowing Your grace and peace are free gifts. You love us. Help us to know Your love more deeply, to acknowledge Your grace and to lift up one another. We are an imperfect people, but help perfect our ability to love and forgive. In the name of Jesus the Christ, who gave himself for us because he loves us, we pray all things. Amen.

Blessing/Assurance of Pardon

May you know that God loves you, madly and deeply. May you know the surpassing abundance of grace in Christ Jesus. And may you know that you are part of us, part of the Church Universal, part of the great communion with the Holy Spirit. You are never alone. You are never abandoned. You are loved. You are strong. You are forgiven. You are renewed. Go and share this Good News. Amen.

Prayer

Loving Creator, Restoring Spirit, Father and Mother of us all, we know You are always present with us. Help us to know Your presence in our lives more deeply. Help us to slow down and be aware of all You are doing in creation and in our lives. May we be present with each other. Help us to slow down from the busy-ness of the world and truly listen to one another. Guide our hearts and minds to a deeper communion with You and with each other. In the name of Your Son, Jesus the Christ, who showed us how to love, forgive, and restore, we pray all things. Amen.

Litany of Recognition for Father’s Day [(originally written on 6/13/2012)](http://rev-o-lution.org/2012/06/13/fathers-day-worship-resources/)

On this day we recognize our fathers and stepfathers, those who have nurtured and guided us in our lives.
**We thank You, O God, for those who have been fathers to us.**

We honor our grandfathers, our uncles and brothers, those who have demonstrated love and care to us in our lives.
**We thank You, O God, for those who have been like fathers to us.**

We appreciate our teachers, leaders and pastors, who have been both male and female, but we especially honor those who have extended fatherly tenderness and love in our lives in our past and present.
**We thank You, O God, for those who have fulfilled a fatherly role in our lives.**

Loving God, You have been both Mother and Father to us. Abba, Father, we remember how Jesus called out to You on earth, recognizing that You are closer to us than our earthly parents. Your love and care for us are felt in the ways we are loved and cared for by others. We thank You for all the male figures in our lives who have shared Your love with us. We ask that You guide and nurture new fathers and fathers-to-be. We seek Your forgiveness for fathers who have fallen short, for models of fatherhood that were limiting rather than embracing, for that is not Your model. You are our ever-loving Parent, Father of us all. Grant Your wisdom to all fathers and fatherly figures to love their children as You have loved Your children.
**We thank You, O God, for fatherhood and motherhood, for the blessing of parents in our lives.**

Abba, Father, we pray with those who are mourning the loss of fathers today, and for those whose fathers were absent or abusive. Ease their pain on this day, loving God. May they know Your embrace, and that You are more than Father or Mother to us–You are the all-loving, all-caring Parent, Creator of heaven and earth, who knows the hairs on our heads.
**We thank You, O God, that You are always with us, that You will never leave us or forsake us.**

We thank You for this day, and ask that You bless all of Your children with Your love, as a wonderful father loves their child.
**Amen.**