

Sunday, June 12, 2022 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church

Trinity Sunday

Bible Study –John 16:12-15 and Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

“Does Not Wisdom Call”

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes)

In groups of two or three, have each participant complete the following sentence, “When I think of the God as Trinity, I feel . . . because . . .”

John 16:12-15. Context. This week’s reading is the fifth of the “Paraclete” (Holy Spirit) passages in Jesus’ Farewell Discourse. The evangelist wants to emphasize the nature of the Holy Spirit’s role in the Christian community, and not just to report specific instances of the Spirit’s activity (for example, the disciples receiving the Holy Spirit in Acts 2) or to name the Spirit’s gifts that the disciples experience (for example, the gifts that Paul enumerates in 1 Corinthians 12). These verses emphasize the Spirit as Jesus’ presence among the disciples after his resurrection and ascension, and the role of the Spirit in interpreting Jesus’ words and deeds in new contexts.

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31. Context. Proverbs are short, pithy sayings that encapsulate conventional wisdom ("the early bird catches the worm," "look before you leap"), and are common to all cultures. The book of Proverbs in the Bible is a collection of collections, with different groups of sayings gathered together. Attributed to King Solomon, the book begins with admonitions to "my child" not to be led astray by those who would commit injustice. In this week's reading, "Lady Wisdom" (the word for "wisdom" in both Hebrew and Greek is feminine), who had earlier appeared to scold those who had ignored the King’s admonitions, appears here to tell of her place in God’s cosmic plan. In the prologue of John’s Gospel, the evangelist’s description of the “Word” echoes the role of Wisdom described here. In the subsequent interpretation of “wisdom” in the Christian church, “Holy Wisdom” becomes another name for Jesus. (This phrase translates the Greek Hagia Sophia, the name of the famous sixth-century cathedral built by the Emperor Justinian in Constantinople, now Istanbul).

Read John 16:12-15 and Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

What touches your heart, what do you hear in the scripture, what questions do you have, or what doesn’t make sense to you in the story?

Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

Read John 16:12-15 and Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31 again

Some reflection questions – Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

Read the Nicene Creed as a group:

*We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through Him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
He came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
He became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.
For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered death and was buried.
On the third day He rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and His kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father. [1]
With the Father and the Son He is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic (meaning “universal”) and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. AMEN.*

- What questions or curiosities arise from the Nicene Creed? If you could ask God one question about the affirmations within the Nicene Creed, what would it be?
- One of the core truths of believing in the Trinity is that God, by nature, is relational. What does it mean to you that God's nature is relational.
- What might that mean for how we understand the nature of humanity? For the Christian community? For our growth as disciples of Jesus Christ.
- What might that mean for our relationship with God?
- How does the relational nature of God give us a model for how Christians engage in witness? [Not merely giving of our money but giving of our time and in building relationships.]
- How would our society shift if we took the relational dynamic of humanity seriously (as opposed to prioritizing individuality and autonomy)? How would our church community look if we were serious about embodying the relational understanding of God and one another?
- **(R)** How does it make you feel that no matter how much you believe you've failed or messed up, God still desires to gather you up for your protection and care?

Closing Reflection Question

How is this scripture calling you to change, to see, to be or what might it be calling you to do?

Prayer (10 minutes). Share prayer requests and respond appropriately.

Sending Forth (2 minutes). After all, have shared, pray the closing prayer. Ask for a volunteer to lead the group or read the following prayer in unison:

Father, Son, and Spirit, we give you thanks that comprehending you is not required. If it were, none would qualify. Your vastness, enormity, and love are more than we could attempt to comprehend. Yet, we can also trust that you are a God of wisdom, truth, and love that has been displayed in the person of Christ and that enlivens us today through the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

And now we pray The Lord's Prayer....

Our Father who art in Heaven
hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power
and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.