

Holy Trinity Sunday

June 4th, 2023

Introduction to the Day

Though the word *trinity* is not found in the scriptures, today's second reading includes the apostolic greeting that begins the liturgy: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. In the gospel Jesus sends his disciples forth to baptize in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. More than a doctrine, the Trinity expresses the heart of our faith: we have experienced the God of creation made known in Jesus Christ and with us always through the Holy Spirit. We celebrate the mystery of the Holy Trinity in word and sacrament, as we profess the creed, and as we are sent into the world to bear witness to our faith.

Greeting – The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who greets us in this and every season,
whose word never fails,
whose promise is sure.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God
and of our neighbors.

Merciful God,

we confess that we have sinned.

We have hurt our community.

We have squandered your blessings.

We have hoarded your bounty.

In the name of Jesus,

forgive us and grant us your mercy.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Righteous God,

we confess that we have sinned.

We have failed to be honest.

We have lacked the courage to speak.

We have spoken falsely.

In the name of Jesus,

forgive us and grant us your mercy.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God is a cup of cold water when we thirst.

God offers boundless grace when we fail.

Claim the gift of God's mercy:

you are freed and forgiven

in the name of † Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Gathering Hymn

“Rise, Shine, You People!”

#665

Prayer of the Day

Almighty Creator and ever-living God: we worship your glory, eternal Three-in-One, and we praise your power, majestic One-in-Three. Keep us steadfast in this faith, defend us in all adversity, and bring us at last into your presence, where you live in endless joy and love, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Reading: Exodus 3:1-12

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ²There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. ³Then Moses said, “I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.” ⁴When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” ⁵Then he said, “Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” ⁶He said further, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

⁷Then the LORD said, “I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, ⁸and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ⁹The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. ¹⁰So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.”

¹¹But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” ¹²He said, “I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.”

Thanks be to God.

Children’s Message

Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew the 28th chapter, verses 16-20

¹⁶Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ

Sermon

People of God, grace to you and peace from God, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. AMEN.

This Holy Trinity Sunday we are going to take a break from trying to make sense of the Triune God, and instead make sense of a call narrative that involves a burning bush through which God speaks.

Who’s excited for that?!?!

We heard today call narrative of Moses. The book of Genesis ends with Abraham and Sarah’s descendants in Egypt, following Joseph to live there during a time of famine. The book of Exodus opens many generations later. As the Israelites grew in number, they became a threat to the Egyptian Empire. The Pharaohs of Egypt enslaved them to keep them from power and put them to work.

During this oppression, a boy named Moses was born to an Israelite mother. Since all male babies were to be killed, she hid him for three months before putting him in a basket in the river. The daughter of the Pharaoh found him and raised him in the royal palace. Moses seemed destined for power until an incident occurred when he killed an Egyptian overseer abusing an Israelite slave. Moses fled to the hills for safety.

While tending to the sheep in his new life, God appeared.

Moses call narrative is born out of fighting, and actually killing, the forces of oppression. And from that, he flees. Moses seems content with what he has done. Ready to live the remainder of his life tending his flock in the hill country.

Then God shows up. Out of a burning, unconsumed bush, God speaks to Moses in a rather urgent manner. “Moses! Moses!”

“Here I am.”

And we see something here which is a repeat of the theme from last week, that when Abram and those whom he led reached a resting point they built an Altar keeping God at the center of what they were doing. Moses is encouraged to remove the sandals from his feet for the ground which he is on is Holy Ground.

In speaking to Moses, God starts with assurances. This is who it is that is speaking to you. It is me. God. And I am with you.

God acknowledges that Moses has been up to the Holy work of fighting for the oppressed, but also tells him that his work is not done. God has seen the injustice that God's people have experienced and now God is calling Moses to continue this fight.

To this point this call narrative is strikingly similar to that of Abram. God speaks. God shares a promise. God says there is more work to be done. But here is where the Moses story shifts.

Abram was ready to pack up and go and got on with this journey to which they have set out.

Moses can't think of anyone less qualified than himself to do what God is calling him to do.

“Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

Surely there has to be somebody else that can take on this task. Moses at this point was in his 80s. Surely there is some young whipper snapper that can take on the mantle of this task.

And it is here that we find the answer to the question we ask, “what does this story say to our community of faith as we go through this Strategic Plan Process?”

Perhaps you are asking the same question that Moses asks.

Who am I, as a person that has accumulated a few birthdays, to think that I am an important voice?

Who am I, as a child, to think that I have an important voice?

Who am I, as the parent of that wild child, to think that people want to hear what I have to say?

Who am I, with whatever excuse I might have, to think that I have a place and a purpose in this process?

To which God responds, “I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you; when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.”

So, people of God, going back to God commanding Moses to remove his sandals for the ground on which he stands is Holy Ground, I ask this question:

In what do we ground ourselves as a people of faith?

As we go through this process, as we hear these call narratives, let us be grounded in the promise that God goes with us, that the ground on which we stand and the process in which we immerse ourselves is Holy, and the future that we approach is God led, and God centered.

Thanks be to God.

AMEN

Song of the Day

“Here I Am, Lord”

#574

Apostle's Creed

Prayers of Intercession

Trusting in God's abundant mercy, let us offer our prayers for a world in need.

A brief silence.

Holy three, holy one, you call the church to make disciples of all nations. Encourage bishops, pastors, and deacons in their proclamation of the gospel and direct all the baptized into lives of humble service. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Holy three, holy one, you spoke creation into being and called it good. Protect lands and waters threatened by human misuse and sustain living creatures of every kind: wild animals, birds, fish, and every creeping thing.

God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Holy three, holy one, you have given humankind authority over the earth. Raise up leaders who listen earnestly, speak honestly, and govern thoughtfully. Heal divisions between nations, that we might agree with one another and live in peace. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Holy three, holy one, you promise to be with us always, to the end of the age. Surround those most in need of your healing presence: any who are lonely, all who are grieving, and those who are sick (*We pray especially for Peyton, Matt, David, Verna, Lois, Irene, Connie, Clarice, Steve, Kathy, Val, Jacob, Cherri, Keith and JoJo, Bob and Joanne, Bill and Bonnie, Frank and Heather, Bob and Sonja, Bill and Betty, Tom and Kay, Sherm and Mary, Sandy*). God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Holy three, holy one, you set the earth on its axis, and we experience the seasons. Strengthen those enduring challenges this summer: those who suffer in the heat, parents overwhelmed by childcare responsibilities, and children experiencing food insecurity outside of school. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Holy three, holy one, you give rest when our work is done. We give thanks for (*name/s and*) all the saints who now rest in you, confident in the promise of resurrection life in the age to come. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Receive our prayers and answer us, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Offering

Offertory Prayer

God of field and forest, sea and sky,
you are the giver of all good things.

Sustain us with these gifts of your creation,
and multiply your graciousness in us,
that the world may be fed with your love,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Words of Institution

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; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

Communion

Communion Hymns #471 “Let Us Break Bread Together”

#466 “In the Singing”

Prayer

We thank you, generous God,
for the refreshment we have received
at your banquet table.

Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world,
through the one who is our dearest treasure,
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Blessing

The God who calls across the cosmos
and speaks in the smallest seed

✠ bless, keep, and sustain you
now and to the end of the age.

Amen.

Sending Song “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty” #413 vs. 1,2,4

Dismissal

Go in peace. Share the harvest.

Okay! We will! Thanks be to God!

And all of Good Shepherd said...

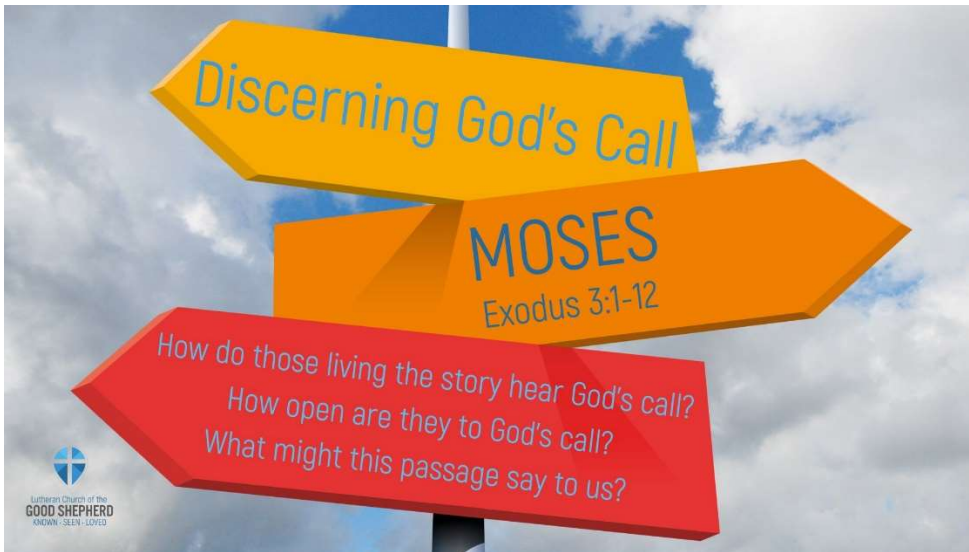
AMEN!

2023 Financial Snapshot

	Month of May	Year-to-Date	One year ago...
Total Revenue	\$27,338	\$133,254	We were looking at a -\$9,700 gap between giving and expenses. NOW, we are looking at a nearly \$4,000 gap to the positive!
Total Expenses	\$23,760	\$129,457	Our total revenue is up \$9,370 from one year ago while our expenses are down \$4,314.
Difference	\$3,578	\$3,797	This has been a congregation wide effort. Your generosity that has made this happen!

What your generosity makes possible

We are heading into the summer months ready to clear some of our smaller debts through our Going Strong Summer Giving Appeal. With your generosity we will be able to erase our Line of Credit Debt as well as our Boiler Loan Debt and set ourselves on a firm financial foundation heading into the fall!



Questions to ponder with today's Call Narrative for Moses. We encourage you to respond as you are able:

How do the people in the story hear God's call to them?

How open are they to God's call?

What might this passage say to our community of faith?

