



LAKE OF BAYS PASTORAL CHARGE

Knox United Church, Dorset, 9:00 a.m.

Stewart Memorial, Dwight 10:15 a.m.

Pioneer Memorial Church, Hillside 11:30 a.m.

Trinity Sunday, May 26, 2024

Minister: Rev Meg Jordan (705-789-6600) jordanm@vianet.ca

lakeofbayspastoralcharge196@gmail.com

<https://www.lakeofbaysunitedchurches.org/>

Bookkeeper/Administrator: Linda Pinkerton

Leadership Chair: Jennifer Parker

Musician, Knox: Cynthia MacLean

All music reproduced under OneLicence #734030-A

WE GATHER

Welcome

Family Life and Work

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Acknowledgement of the Land

Call to Worship

Like the leafing of a tree in spring time,

You are present in us.

Like a steady mountain stream,

You are present with us.

Like a heart carrying blood to all parts of the body

**You course through the veins of our souls and our lives,
energizing our lives and our spirits.**

God of Life, be with us now in our worship

Help us to sense your presence,

pulsing through all the parts of our being. Amen

Opening Hymn: Holy,Holy Holy VU#315

- 1 Holy, holy, holy! Lord God almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee;
holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!
- 2 Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee,
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,
which wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.
- 3 Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee,
though the eye made blind by sin thy glory may not see,
only thou art holy; there is none beside thee,
perfect in power, in love, and purity.
- 4 Holy, holy, holy! Lord God almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name in earth
and sky and sea;
holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Prayer of Approach (unison)

**Holy One,
We hunger for wholeness.
You burn within us
as a desire for healing
greater freedom,
deeper meaning,
a brighter future,
Fill our hearts with new hope
Open our minds to fresh possibilities. Amen.**

WE LISTEN

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 6:1-8

Leader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church

All: Thanks be to God.

Hymn: MV#49 When We Seek Language

1. When we seek language to praise you, O God,
all we can utter seems stale, tame, or odd.
Tongue-tied and word-lost, we struggle to find
phrases that slight neither heart, soul, nor mind:

***R. Infinite intimate, unbounded friend,
cosmic companion who loves without end,
nearer than heartbeat, more subtle than breath,
keener than insight, and stronger than death.***

**2. Steadfastly loving, you gave us your Word,
living among us on earth, seen and heard,
teacher and healer whose promise came true,
dying and rising to make all things new.**

***R. Infinite intimate, unbounded friend,
cosmic companion who loves without end,
nearer than heartbeat, more subtle than breath,
keener than insight, and stronger than death.***

**3. To be our guardian, supporter, and guide,
you sent your Spirit to stay by our side,
source of community, well-spring of prayer,
power to strengthen, and courage to dare.**

***R. Infinite intimate, unbounded friend,
cosmic companion who loves without end,
nearer than heartbeat, more subtle than breath,
keener than insight, and stronger than death.***

Sermon: Infinite, Intimate, Unbounded

A sermon based on the 2018 lectionary essay of Debie Thomas on Journey With Jesus and the book *The Divine Dance* by Richard Rohr.

This week, we celebrate Trinity Sunday, and try, for better or for worse, to contemplate the question: “What difference does three make?” It’s a tough question. While most of the festivals on our liturgical calendar celebrate dramatic and suspenseful *events* — Jesus’s birth, the Resurrection, the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost — Trinity Sunday can seem abstract and irrelevant to our daily lives,

In *The Divine Dance*, a beautiful and transformative book on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, Franciscan priest and theologian Richard Rohr argues that caring comes from starting in the right place: “Don’t start with the One and try to make it into Three,” he writes, “but start with the Three and see that this is the deepest nature of the One.”

Start with the Three and see that this is the deepest nature of the One. What would it look like to do this? What would we discover about God’s character, God’s personality, God’s priorities, and God’s reality, if we saw *threeness* as the very ground and essence of God’s being?

First, we’d see that God is not rigid and immutable. God does not exist in stasis. Rather, God’s self is dynamic and fluid. God moves. Or to use Rohr’s language again: God flows, and God *is flow*. God dances, and God *is dance*. Whether we learn to tolerate the surprise and discomfort of divine fluidity or not, we worship a God who is impossible to pin down, a God who is mysterious beyond reckoning.

Secondly, we'd see that God is diverse. If God exists in three persons, then each person has their own way of embodying and expressing goodness, beauty, love, and righteousness. As Rohr puts it, the Trinity affirms that there is an intrinsic plurality to goodness. "Goodness isn't sameness," he writes in *The Divine Dance*. "Goodness, to be goodness, needs contrast and tension, not perfect uniformity." If God can incarnate goodness through contrast and tension, then why can't we? Why *won't* we? Why do we fear difference so much when difference lies at the very heart of God?

Thirdly, we'd see that God is not a loner. Or as Lutheran minister Nadia Bolz Weber puts it, "This is not a 'me' God, but a 'we' God—God as community." It's one thing to say that God *values* community. Or thinks that community is good for us. Or hopes that we'll build our own. It's altogether another to say that God *is* community. That God *is* relationship, intimacy, connection, and communion. If God is both plural and interactive at God's very heart — if Three is the deepest nature of the One — then what are we doing when we isolate ourselves from each other? When we decide to go it alone? When we hold ourselves back from intimacy and connection, and thus deny ourselves the expression and experience of God's own self? If Rohr is right, and if the Trinity really is much more than a bit of dusty doctrine the early Church fought over, then we dare not take lightly the life-changing power of our communal. God *is* Relationship, and it is only in relationship that we experience the fullness of God.

Lastly, we'd see that God is hospitality and inclusion. In the 15th century, Russian iconographer Andrei Rublev created, "The Hospitality of Abraham," also known as "The Trinity," one of the most well known and well loved icons in Christendom. In it, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (depicted as the three angels who appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre), sit around a table, sharing food and drink. Their faces are nearly identical, but they're dressed in different colors. The Father wears gold, the Son blue, and the Spirit green. The Father gazes at the Son. The Son gazes back at the Father, but gestures towards the Spirit. The Spirit gazes at the Father, but points toward the Son with one hand, and opens up the circle with the other, making room for others to join the sacred meal.

As a whole, the icon exudes adoration and intimacy — clearly, the three persons around the table love and enjoy each other. But it also exudes openness. There is space at the table for the viewer of the icon. For me. For *us*. As if to say, the point of the great Three-in-One is not exclusivity — God is not a middle school clique — but rather, radical hospitality. The point of the Three is always to add one more, to extend the invitation, to make the holy table *more* expansive and *more* welcoming. In fact, the deeper the love between the Three grows, the roomier the table grows. The closer we draw to the adoration of the Three, the wider and more hospitable our hearts grow towards the world. What difference does three make? As we celebrate the Trinity this week, let's not make the mistake of ignoring the question. It's an excellent one, and the answer is well worth exploring: three makes all the difference in the world.

WE RESPOND

Call for Offering

Offertory: Grant us God the grace of giving #540

Grant us God the grace of giving
With a spirit large and free
That ourselves and all our living

We may offer faithfully Amen

Dedication of Offering

Prayers of the People w. Singing bowl

Closing Hymn: Spirit Dancing VU#388

Spirit dancing on the waters,
Sun reflecting song of grace
Calling life to all the creatures,
Giving life to human race.

Spirit dancing on the waters,
Naming moment they should part,
Giving freedom to the peoples,
Signed for all in dancer's art.

Spirit dancing on the waters,
Give your people their new birth,
Healing, loving one another
In community with earth.

Spirit dancing on the waters,
We would come and dance with you
'til our world is filled with music
And in Christ all things are new.

Commissioning and Blessing

Let us go forth with God's blessing
to live deeply, boldly and daringly
as people with an intimate relationship with God,
as people whose actions reflect our life as followers of Jesus Christ
And as people whose commitment to justice bears witness to the presence and power of the
Holy Spirit among us. Amen

FOR YOUR CALENDARS

May 26 TODAY Trinity —a celebration of Holy Mystery

May 27- June 30 Rev Meg will be away for combined Study Leave and Holiday. For pastoral care emergencies when Rev Meg is away, please contact our Voluntary Associate Minister, Rev. Donna Bowman-Woodall at. 705-571-1992. Details about pulpit supply will be provided separately.

May 28 Seniors for Climate ZOOM information session 6:30 pm. Register: <https://seniors-forclimate.org/>

June 2 Guest Minister: Rev. Jane Haapiseva

June 9 Guest Minister: Rev. Nina Fulford

June 16 Guest Minister: Rev. Jane Haapiseva

June 18 HELP! Seabreeze Cleanup day 10 a.m.

June 23 Guest Speaker: Dr Karen Mock
June 30 Guest Minister: Ms Lorna Bywater
July 7 Rev Meg returns for the summer.
Aug 12-16 **CAMP AWESOME “Bees for Peace”** at Pioneer led by Rev Meg and Judy Bath.
Registration deadline: May 31 Details on website

Table Soup Collection at Pioneer every first Sunday. Current Needs: Pasta Sauce & Pasta, Hamburger Helper, Canned Fruits, Fruit Cups, Juice, Canned Corn and Tomatoes, Sugar. Peanut Butter, Pancake Mix and Syrup.

Ongoing Stewardship Options: 1.In person and on the plate., 2. Via PAR (preauthorized remittance). Money is withdrawn monthly from your bank account. 3. By e-transfer. The email address for donations via e-transfer is lobunitedchurches@gmail.com In the subject line/comment please identify to which of the Churches you wish to donate, Pioneer in Hillside, Stewart in Dwight or Knox in Dorset. 4. By mail: If you send a cheque, please make it out to Lake of Bays Pastoral Charge and mail it to: LOB United Churches, P.O. Box 196, Dwight, ON, P0A 1H0, specifying for which church the donation is intended. Thank you.