

Sermon for Trinity Sunday
June 16, 2019
Church of Reconciliation, San Antonio TX
The Rev. Judith L. Rhodes, Interim Rector

Trinity Sunday: May I have this dance?

Good morning, Reconcilers! And a blessed Father's Day to all the Dad's among us and blessings upon the men who have loved and supported others along your life's journey.

I am humbled to stand before you this day. Since Robert's announcement of retirement, we have all made an awesome journey in one another's company. And since that time, I certainly commended to my prayer and discernment how the Divine would call me to best serve and support you in this interim time. And now, we not only know how that call unfolded, we said yes to each other to begin this awesome journey into the Divine's dream for us and the process that will unfold with grace in the calling of your new Rector.

I can hardly believe that Martha and I are standing on the threshold of nearly four years since we first visited in October, 2015! I am so often reminded of the beautiful phrase in one of our Prayer Book collects ... "trusting that you are doing more than I can ask for or imagine possible." Well, isn't that the truth! And so with a heart full of gratitude and love, full of hope and trust... I preach this sermon on Trinity Sunday as your Interim Rector.

Last Sunday, on the feast of Pentecost, we were powerfully reminded that the Advocate is already present, bestowing upon us new, holy, and life-transforming grace. Indeed, this Advocate has already emboldened us to live our faith and anchor our very lives in the ever-trustworthy promises of Jesus Christ... that He will ***always*** and ***in all ways*** be with us and that we have the unfailing power of the Holy Spirit descending upon us as in tongues of fire!

I love the timing of all that is unfolding... On Pentecost Sunday, The Rev. Mike Besson, Archdeacon of the DWTX preached and visited with us. He shared what he had heard about us and now he and his family have experienced a Reconciliation welcome, a breakfast complete with an omelette station, and the beauty of our Eucharistic celebration.

His sermon offered us a glimpse into the mysterious and magnificent ways that the Divine is present; how the Way of Jesus, the Way of Love calls us into a blessed present and a glorious future; and how to trust the ever cajoling, ever nudging grace of the Holy Spirit regardless of size, budget, or available resources. Ascension, Montel, Reconciliation, San Antonio, St. Stephen's, Wimberly and all other parishes of this diocese can seek and serve Christ, and one another given our vow to be faithful.

My sisters and brothers in Christ, we have been faithful. We are faithful. And we will continue to be faithful. That is not only our DNA. That is our calling as the baptized Body of Christ, the church. To that as Reconcilers, we respond, “We will with God’s help!”

Imagine with me, that as we gathered last week, and this week, and in all the weeks to come, we deepen our trust in the work of the Holy Spirit among us. Trust that the same Spirit is preparing our new Rector to hear God’s call to join us. Our new Rector, she or he, is already known by name. So breathe a sigh of relief... that alone is God’s call! And God is already on it! Our call is to surrender and to commit to an openhearted spirit of prayer, patience, perseverance, and trust, leading only to the discernment of God’s great and glorious dream for us.

Now don’t just kick back and relax, my friends! There *is* work “a plenty” for us in this time of transition. As your Interim Rector, you and I are called into a blessed and collaborative relationship as we continue passionate ministry in the name of Jesus Christ. We are called to continue a generosity of spirit that includes our offerings of time, talent, and yes, treasure.

Now, aren’t we the ever-polite Episcopalians! Know this about me... I wish always to be polite (I can hear my mother’s voice in the back of my head) even as I strive to be transparent and clear. So by your treasure, I mean your financial support. We have a lot of ministry going on here and beyond to support. *And* we are embarking on this search process to discern God’s call for our next Rector. My friends, this is not the time to step back or step out. This is the time to *step into* the joy, excitement, and the privilege of ministry at Church of Reconciliation.

Therefore, let me say this directly to you. If you have not pledged, now is the time. If you wish to chat with me about any of this, ***my door is always open***. And, if you are in the position to be even more generous today than when you made your pledge, please, go right ahead!!! And know my deep and abiding gratitude. This is ***an urgent call*** and ***impassioned invitation*** for each and every one of us to be a ***steward of our blessings*** thus making possible our continued participation in God’s mission by this, our beloved spiritual home.

And so, today, I invite you to: ***Trust the Holy Spirit. Speak the truth in love. Say what you mean and mean what you say. Respect the process and trust your appointed and elected leaders*** to do the work they have been given to do. And did I mention, ***“Pray, pray, and then, pray some more?”***

I also invite you to look up... Yes, look up and notice the peace cranes and the flames of the Holy Spirit hanging above your heads. When I walked into this awesome sanctuary as it was being prepared for our June 2nd celebration liturgy by Steve Gilliam, ascending and descending the ladder (now that’s pretty biblical) I knew with my whole heart that this labor of love was not only about honoring Robert and Julie but that it also speaks of the powerful and demanding

accountability that is our call to trust the Spirit at work among us. Is this not the resounding message you hear and see in this space in this very moment?

Today, my friends, is Trinity Sunday. Tomes and tomes have been written about the theology of the Trinity, the very nature of God about which we will never comprehend, let alone once and for all, describe. Schisms and agonizing divisions in the very body of the Church have happened because we human beings presumed we understood the very nature of God. So, let me say to you... please do not ask me for a definitive definition about such.

I will, however, at any time, enter into a reflection on the nature of God as loving com-union given to us in the doctrine of the Trinity. This feast day invites us into an intimate, mysterious Love that surpasses all understanding. The nature of the Divine in which Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit abide in mystical, sweet communion. This feast day is one rooted in our hearts not in our heads. As this feast is about relationship, we experience the embodied nature of the Divine having ourselves been made in the image and likeness of God. God desires us and we desire God. Thus, this feast day is about *surrender*- a surrender to a perfectly choreographed dance of love that orients us to the very nature of God as loving relationship and our participation in that relationship with and within the Divine.

Today on this Trinity Sunday, you and I find our names on the Divine's dance card. Our names have been called, individually and collectively, as the Church of Reconciliation. I invite you to give your whole self over to the Divine who choreographs this unfolding movement as we enter more deeply into the dance of Love.

Such is the gift we receive in this interim time... Hear the Divine speak your name, our names, saying...

"May I have this dance?"

Immediately following this sermon, Dr. Susanna Morrow offered a contemplative liturgical dance.