

Lectionary C May 22, 2016 Trinity Sunday
Grace and Peace Lutheran Church, Evansville, Indiana
Pastor Roberta Meyer

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31
Psalm 8
Romans 5:1-5
John 16:12-15

Dancing with Mystery

"I still have many things to tell you, but you can't handle them now." No wonder we have had such a hard time explaining doctrines like the Trinity. We just plain aren't supposed to have all the answers. We try. But every time, something is missing. We always come up short. I've heard the Trinity being explained through the use of an apple, the seeds, the inside meat, and the peeling, Three parts of one thing. I've heard people use an egg to explain the Trinity, the yolk, the whites, the shell. How about a shamrock, that is what St. Patrick used. And what about these guys?



They are right. Any way we choose, we get close to showing the idea a three in one God, but each time we border on heresy if we try to pin it down and say this is the answer, this is who God is. We don't know the answer. And like Jesus says, we really and truly cannot handle the answer.

What we do know is what Paul tells us. Have faith. Have faith that what God tells us is true. *Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Through Jesus we are justified. When we have faith is this, we have peace. Nothing can mess with that peace. No sufferings, no hardships, no trials. In fact because we are justified through Jesus, those hard times in our lives only make us stronger and help us grow.

So there's another theological buzz word. Justification. We use it in our creeds, it is in Luther's Small catechism, but do we really understand this word as an integral part of who we are? Here's how one of my favorite theologians, David Lose, explains being justified.

"Justification is nothing less or more than the promise that God accepts you as you are not

because of who you are or what you have done, not because of what you might become or do, not because of who you have promised to be or what you have pledged to do, but that God accepts you because that's who God is and what God does – justify the ungodly in order that we might know peace and turn in love to extend the same grace, mercy, and acceptance to those around us.” Being justified affects our lives. The gift of justification is what gives us peace in this world where we live.

Having faith in God who is a mystery that we cannot explain, this Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is all we need. We can't solve the mystery, but we can live with the mystery and we can dance with the mystery, always anticipating surprise and always knowing God's peace in the midst of the twirling.

“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth...” See, the Spirit is our dance partner, and the dance is always moving, always turning, always changing.

This dancing with the Trinity, is what makes Christian love so amazing. When we truly let go of our own ideas of what God is, and look outside the safety of our own “what makes sense” box, the Spirit guides us to deeper love and our relationship with God becomes stronger.

Let me share with you a little about my dance with the Trinity, just because it is the dance I know. Almost 46 years ago my first husband and I moved from Central Indiana, where we both grew up, to Evansville. We had a three-month old daughter. Our first home in Evansville, was up the road from here, just off Boeke Rd. in those duplexes across the railroad tracks. We noticed a Lutheran Church down the road, and yes, we visited Peace Lutheran Church. That week, I was home with my baby when the doorbell rang. It was the pastor and a member of the congregation greeting us and welcoming us to the neighborhood and to their church. We became members of Peace Lutheran Church and our daughter was baptized right here at this font.

Fast forward about 5 years, we moved away from Evansville and we joined the Lutheran church in Holland, In. More fast forwarding... I grew in my spiritual life. I felt called to be a lay worship leader and entered the first training in Southern Indiana for Lay Worship Leaders. That is when I met Brenda Piper, a member of Grace Lutheran Church. We hit it off from the beginning. We were both teachers and mothers and Lutherans.

After twenty years of bumping into each other from time to time either at school functions or through the church, we kept in touch, through our ups and downs in life through the dips and sways in our dances, we both grew.

Until about nine years ago...all of a sudden we discovered we were both called to retire from teaching and go away to seminary. We went together to Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio, where we were suitemates for two years. In the middle of that process, it became clear to David and I that we needed to leave the church in Holland. I started seminary with no home church. Brenda invited us to check out her church, a newly merged church with diversity and a welcoming spirit on Boeke Road, Grace and Peace Lutheran Church.

And here I found myself very same building where I was a member almost 40 years earlier and where my baby girl was baptized. Do you see the dance? I felt like God had spun me around in a circle. At a time when I felt homeless, with no church, God brought me to a place that strangely seemed like home. The dance was still moving at a fast beat. A lot of you know I was not seeking ordination. I was a diaconal minister. Brenda was the pastor. We both graduated. She went to Toledo, Ohio. I stayed here. Then stuff happened and Grace and Peace was without a pastor.

Somehow I began leading worship...then I became a Synodical Authored Minister...then, well you all know that next big dance move—here I am, your Pastor.

I don't understand what happened. I can't explain the reasons or the process, but I do know who is leading me in this dance with the Trinity. And the dance goes on, as we join together. Each of you, I know, can look back at your own dance and see the Holy Spirit's leading you every step of the way. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, a community in one being, takes hold of each of us, loving us, and justifying us, and weaving our dances together through the power of the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

That is what Church is, the weaving of our lives, our dances, intertwined with the mystery of the Holy Trinity. And it keeps going as we reach out to others inviting them to come join this whirling dance of life that, in Paul's words, "*produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts...*" and that, my precious dance partners, is pure grace and peace.

. Amen