



**Olds-Sundre Pastoral Charge and  
Knox, Didsbury Pastoral Charge  
of the United Church of Canada**  
Sunday June 12, 2022  
Minister: Rev. Tammy Allan



*As we worship we gratefully acknowledge that our churches are located on the ancient and traditional lands of the people of Treaty 6 (Sundre) and Treaty 7 (Olds and Knox) and all are in the area of Metis Nation Region 3. May we cherish and care for these lands and the people, just as those who came before us have done.*

**Prelude**

**Announcements**

- Welcome to all!
  - Olds – June 26 – update on building plans – following worship
  - Thanks to the Community Choir for their gift of music; and thanks to Vivian for hers as well, as Rev. Janice is away.
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**Introit** MV 115 Behold, Behold (sung twice, remain seated)

**Lighting the Christ Candle**

The Christ candle reminds us that the light of Love is with us always.

**We are called to let our lives be a reflection of that light for the world.**

Let us let our love light shine for all to see.

*(the candle is lit)*

**Call to Worship**

Here, O God, we gather: at the crossroads of busyness and rest, of judgement and mercy, of conflict and peace, of wants and needs.

**Here at this crossroads, we come to hear your wisdom,**

Calling us over the noise of the marketplace; over the hubbub of competing voices, competing desires, possibilities, and calamities.

**Here, O God, meet us.**

Enable us to slow, to stop, to stand and hear your Wisdom speak to us again; of the beauty of your earth; of the gift that is each one gathered here; of the joy you bring.

**Here, O God, meet us.**

Seasons of the Spirit, SeasonsFusion Pentecost 1 2022, pg. 16

**Community Choir** Precious Lord, Take My Hand

## **Opening Prayer**

We delight in you, O God. We give thanks for your Wisdom woven, at the beginning, brought forth from you, Creator God: before land was shaped, before the waters swirled and flowed. Wisdom stood beside you and before you, as you carved the mountains and bent the streams. She spoke then; she speaks still.

**May we listen for her. May we open our ears and our hearts to her inspiration. We delight in you, O God – and we give you thanks that you delight in us. Amen.**

Seasons of the Spirit, SeasonsFusion Pentecost 1, 2022, pg. 17

**Hymn** VU 315 Holy, Holy, Holy

## **Time with the Children in All of Us**

Things that come in 3's ...

look at the symbol at the back of the church –it has 3 points, each point comes together in a common centre...3 in 1...called a triquetra (Latin word meaning 3 corners)...

Sometimes we talk about God like that...God, Christ, Spirit....sometimes we imagine God as loving parent, God as Jesus who was God in human form; and the Spirit, unseen yet with us always....3 different ways of speaking of God. We call that – the 3 different ways, the Trinity.

**Hymn** VU 299 Teach Me God to Wonder

## **Readings**

**Proverbs 8:1-4 and 22-31**

### **The Gifts of Wisdom**

**8:1** Does not wisdom call, and does not understanding raise her voice?

**2** On the heights, beside the way, at the crossroads she takes her stand;

**3** beside the gates in front of the town,<sup>[SEP]</sup>at the entrance of the portals she cries out: **4** “To you, O people, I call,<sup>[SEP]</sup>and my cry is to all that live.

### **Wisdom’s Part in Creation**

**22** The Lord created me at the beginning of his work,<sup>[SEP]</sup>the first of his acts of long ago. **23** Ages ago I was set up,<sup>[SEP]</sup>at the first, before the beginning of the earth.

**24** When there were no depths I was brought forth,<sup>[SEP]</sup>when there were no springs abounding with water. **25** Before the mountains had been shaped,<sup>[SEP]</sup>before the hills, I was brought forth—**26** when he had not yet made earth and fields, or the world’s first bits of soil.

**27** When he established the heavens, I was there,<sup>[SEP]</sup>when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, **28** when he made firm the skies above,<sup>[SEP]</sup>when he established the fountains of the deep,

**29** when he assigned to the sea its limit,<sup>[SEP]</sup>so that the waters might not transgress his command,<sup>[SEP]</sup>when he marked out the foundations of the earth, **30** then I was

beside him, like a master worker,<sup>[L]</sup>and I was daily his delight,<sup>[L]</sup>rejoicing before him always, **31** rejoicing in his inhabited world<sup>[L]</sup>and delighting in the human race.

### **John 16:12-15**

**12** “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

**13** When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. **14** He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. **15** All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

### **Response to the Scripture Reading**

This is the witness of the people of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Reflection**

To go back to the earlier conversation – with the child in all of us...after hearing the scripture passages – another Trinitarian formula for the divine – Wisdom, Creator, Spirit of Truth.

Today is Trinity Sunday – next week, we begin the longest of the seasons of the church calendar, with roughly 5 months of ‘Ordinary time.’ The length of the ordinary time varies because of the timing of Easter, which was rather late this year. There are no big Holy days in this season. Ordinary in this context isn’t about plain old, plain old. It is about ordered, following a sequence. This year, if Kelly follows the lectionary, you’ll mostly follow Luke’s gospel, and learn the stories of Jesus’ life and ministry from that perspective.

The Day of Trinity, the concept of the Three-in-One God – those are not biblical concepts.

In fact, the word ‘trinity’ never appears in scripture, although the three persons of the Trinity certainly all are found throughout scripture. The idea of the Trinity is a construct of the early Christian Church – with the great theologian Augustine- or Augustine, kind of like tomato or tomato. Anyway – the Trinitarian Formula, as it’s called in the church, arose out of the Council of Nicea, in 325 AD.

Some argue that it came about as a means to define God, to put some sense of common understanding and common language around the great mystery of the divine; and some believe that need to define – or perhaps confine God came about as a means of countering the faiths that worshipped many small ‘g’ gods.

For many years, the early church tried to limit God to 3 “persons” or images – Father, Son and Spirit. That hymn, that we sang earlier - Holy, Holy, Holy – it’s a hymn written about the Trinity.

Some of the most passionate conversations in the church still today revolve around the trinity; and how we understood the mystery that is God.

That discussion reaches beyond our denominational borders, as our understanding of God language has an impact on our relationships with the broader ecumenical community of faith, and the agreement we have to uphold that Trinitarian formula of Father, Son and Spirit in order to maintain a recognition of baptism across ecumenical lines.

What that means is that on our baptismal certificates, those words are there – so that it reads... name, was baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit...at our town United Church, on whatever date, into the Holy catholic church - catholic being small ‘c’ and meaning the universal church.

In using that language – recognizing the Trinity in those terms, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we assure that our baptism is recognized by other denominations. In speaking the words of baptism, I make sure I use the Trinitarian formula – however, I stand on the side of the discussion that says there are many more ways to envision and experience the divine, so I also speak other words...God – father and mother of us all; the Son, love incarnate; the Holy Spirit, loves power.

I have colleagues that find little inspiration in Trinity Sunday – who simply do not name or recognize it’s place in our worshipping lives. They argue that there are so many more ways to envision and experience the holy, so many more ways to perceive the presence of God among us – that to limit naming the Holy to that prescriptive formula of Father, Son, and Spirit is not helpful. Even biblically, there are indeed so many images of God – God as light; God as Mother Hen protecting her brood; God is wind and fire.. and so many more.

For me, this day is about honouring the history of our faith; where we have been, how certain things have come about – and taking that Trinitarian Formula as a starting point for discussion on who God is for us, who Jesus is for us, who the Spirit is for us, today.

We are created in the image of God...I believe that; yet I believe that all of creation is made in the image of God – such that to try and describe God, contain God, to mere words seems impossible to me.

Our need to name the divine, speaks of our own human limitations, our own needs to find meaning, and to speak of our experiences.

In saying we believe that we are created in the image of God – an aspect of that image is compassion and love. To live as an image of God, therefore, is to live with love at the core of everything we do.

Easy enough to say. Somewhat more challenging to live out. Yet that is the call, isn't it. Each of us – individually – first; and then collectively, as community, as people of faith, is called to live love, to live with our understanding of the divine informing how we live our lives.

Let's start with the scriptures for today. How do they inform our thinking, our acting?

Proverbs – today's reading is part of a longer poem. This is one of the 5 creation stories in the bible. We're really familiar with the Genesis 1, and the 6 days of creation, with God resting on the 7<sup>th</sup>; and Adam and Eve version; there's also a brief creation narrative in Psalm 8 (another one of today's lectionary readings); and finally, in John's gospel opens with the words "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God." (John 1:1-2). The passage goes on, offering another image of creation.

Back to today's reading from Proverbs. It speaks of Wisdom as an expression of God that has been part of the unfolding of God's creation from the beginning. Wisdom, biblically, is a feminine image of God. Wisdom cares about creation, and celebrates creation. The lesson for us, if we're up for the challenge, is to care more for creation, too.

Our planet is crying out for us to care more -to take delight in God's created world. If only we would – perhaps the changes to our climate, the extremes in weather, the warming of our earth, could be slowed down.

In our gospel reading for today- Jesus speaks to the people about a Spirit of Truth that will come to guide the people.

The passage begins with these words: "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now." What I hear in that is that there was still work to be done, but that Jesus knows the time is not yet right for what is left to be said...that another – the Spirit of Truth, will come.

On this, my last Sunday – these words touch home in another way. I, too, still have more to say. However now it is time to take that 'more' to another community, and share God's wisdom in new ways. I trust, and I hope you do too, that the Spirit of Truth will continue to walk with all of us as we journey forward in faith.

We are part of the ongoing story. We are disciples, called to listen for the Spirit in our lives, for the wisdom and guidance of the Spirit, to show us how to love one another, and all of creation.

I leave you today with words of wisdom from our newest United Church statement of faith – a longer piece of poetic writing – the first verses that speak of God – fitting for this day of honouring the Trinity.

God is Holy Mystery,  
beyond complete knowledge,  
above perfect description.  
Yet, in love,  
the one eternal God seeks relationship.  
So God creates the universe  
and with it the possibility of being and relating.  
God tends the universe,  
mending the broken and reconciling the estranged.  
God enlivens the universe,  
guiding all things toward harmony with their Source.  
Grateful for God's loving action,  
We cannot keep from singing.  
With the Church through the ages,  
we speak of God as one and triune:  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.  
We also speak of God as  
Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer  
God, Christ, and Spirit  
Mother, Friend, and Comforter  
Source of Life, Living Word, and Bond of Love,  
and in other ways that speak faithfully of  
the One on whom our hearts rely,  
the fully shared life at the heart of the universe.  
We witness to Holy Mystery that is Wholly Love....

An excerpt from "A Song of Faith", United Church of Canada, 2006.

In gratitude for the many years of love shared in ministry together, I pray that God, Creator, Christ and Spirit, may fill us with wisdom and grace for our journey. Amen.

**Hymn** MV 268 Bring Many Names

**Minute for Mission**

*Credit: 99mimimi from Pixabay*



Published On: May 13, 2022

Gill visited Mission & Service partner Our Place Society for her meals every day. At one community meal, she met an outreach worker and inquired about making a meaningful change in her life. But making the changes she needed meant accessing programs in parts of the city she couldn't easily get to without a bus pass.

Too often, lack of transportation is a significant barrier that prevents people from accessing the support they need. It's hard to keep appointments, go to school, or visit family and friends with no way to travel. High gas prices, the cost of a vehicle, lack of public transit or a system that does not reach job-rich areas are barriers to creating a better life.

In a recent study, Jeff Allen and Steven Farber, geographers at the University of Toronto, report that in Canada's eight largest cities, 5 percent of the total population are living in low-income households that are also situated in areas with low transit accessibility. "This totals nearly one million people who are at risk of transport poverty nation-wide," they write.

What does it mean to not have adequate transportation? Farber told University of Toronto News it's a mix of disadvantages: socioeconomic status (low income, ill health, being a recent immigrant or elderly) and a lack of access to transportation (being unable to afford a car or to reach destinations easily by transit, for example).\*

"The time is right for a national accounting of those living in transport poverty and the development of a national transport and land use strategy."\*\*

**Mission & Service** partners working on the ground to alleviate poverty regularly help people access transportation so they can improve their lives. The bus pass project that provided Gill with passes she needed to keep life-changing appointments was supported through the United Church's *Gifts with Vision* catalogue. Thank you for your generosity.

**Offertory Music**    MV 191    What Can I Do?

### **Offertory Prayer**

**Bless our offerings, Holy One: our gifts of time, talent and treasure. May they reflect our shared joy and hopes for this beautiful earth. We pray this as followers of the way of Jesus. Amen.**

### **Words of Decovenanting**

I thank you, friends and members of Olds, Sundre and Knox (Didsbury) United Churches, for the love and support you have shown me while I have ministered among and with you. Our ministry together has been Christ's ministry, and has been blessed by God. I am grateful for all the ways my leadership has been accepted, challenged, and affirmed. I ask your forgiveness for the mistakes that I have made and any pain that I have caused. I will pray for your ongoing ministry, as you reconfigure your relationships, and continue to serve the communities you find yourselves in.

**We receive your thankfulness and offer our forgiveness. We are grateful for your time and gifts among us. We ask your forgiveness for our mistakes. Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will not end today. We release you from your duties of ministry here and pray for your future ministry among God's people, at Innisfail United Church.**

In gratitude for all that I have learned here, I prepare to leave this ministry, offering my forgiveness as well as my hopes and blessing for your future ministries. Let us bless one another as we sing.

**Hymn** MV 214 May God's Sheltering Wings

**Prayers for the Day and The Lord's Prayer**

God of love, we come to you with open hearts this day, hearts ready to respond to your call to love.

May the Spirit fill us with strength and compassion towards our neighbors, near and far.

We pray for those in our world who are hungry, and living in poverty. May political, social, and religious leaders work together to mitigate the effects of poverty, throughout the world.

We pray for those who struggle with illness – mental illness or physical illness; for those seeking treatment or awaiting tests, we pray for healing and hope.

We pray for the students who are preparing for final exams, and those celebrating their graduations. May their learning enrich our world.

We pray too, for teachers – busy with all the transitions of year end, whose vocation places them in a world of deep responsibility, rich with love and compassion.

We give thanks for the rain and sun, and pray for those who farm the lands around us, who steward the land and animals in their care.

O God, may we feel the Holy Spirit in our daily lives—at work, at play, at home, as we travel.

As we experience the transitions that come with the change in our pastoral relationship, may we trust in your presence with our communities faith. Bless the ministries we have shared, and those that will continue on.

May we live out your call to love, wherever we find ourselves.

It is in love that we take a moment of silence to share our unspoken prayers....

And together, we join our voices in the words that Jesus taught us to pray....Our Father.....

**Hymn** MV 150 Spirit God, Be Our Breath

### **A Blessing for Today**

Let us go from here to celebrate the Spirit's presence in all we do.

**We will go here the Spirit leads us, to love and serve God. Amen.**

**Choral Benediction** MV 122 This is the Day

### **Postlude**

*Thank you for participating in our worship service.  
Please feel welcome to stay for refreshments.*

*Things are changing...*

*June 19<sup>th</sup> worship leader will be at Knox, with Roxanne Williams guest leader; service livestreamed to Olds United and beyond. 9:30 am.*

*June 26<sup>th</sup> worship leadership will be at Olds with Rev. Stephen Harper guest leader, livestreamed to Knox (Didsbury) and beyond. 9:30 am.*

*Sundre continues to have in- person worship at 1:30 both June 19 and 26.*

### **Beginning July 3<sup>rd</sup>:**

*Worship times – Olds and Knox 9:30 – in person worship, alternating between churches.*

*July 3, 17, and 31 and August 14 and 28 services will be at Knox.*

*July 10 and 24 and August 7 and 21 services will be at Olds.*

*Sundre will shift to morning worship – time TBA*

## **Prayers of the People – June 16, 2019 (Trinity Sunday)**

God of love, we come to you with open hearts this day, hearts ready to respond to your call to love.

May the Spirit fill us with strength and compassion towards our neighbors, near and far.

We pray for those in our world who are hungry, and living in poverty. May political, social, and religious leaders work together to mitigate the effects of poverty, throughout the world.

We pray for those who struggle with illness – mental illness or physical illness; for those seeking treatment, awaiting tests, we pray for healing and hope.

We pray for the students who are preparing for final exams, and those celebrating their graduations. May their learning enrich our world.

We pray too, for teachers – busy with all the transitions of year end, whose vocation places them in a world of deep responsibility, rich with love and compassion.

We give thanks for the rains this week, and pray for those who farm the lands around us, who steward the land and animals in their care.

On this day of celebrating Fathers, we give thanks for all people who share the gifts of nurturing, mentoring, loving and caring. Hold in love those who are grieving the loss of fathers.

We also lift in prayer those who have not had positive relationships with the father's in their lives.

O God, may we feel the Holy Spirit in our daily lives—at work, at play, at home, as we travel. May we live out your call to love. It is in love that we take a moment of silence to share our unspoken prayers....

And together, we join our voices in the words that Jesus taught us to pray....Our Father.....