

Our Savior Lutheran church
Holy Trinity Sunday - June 7, 2020
Pastor Barnes' Message

More Than a Recipe, it's about Relationship!

May the peace of God who “spoke” and all things came into being...the wind, the rain, earth and sky, people in his image and likeness, to be in relationship with Him.

Peace in knowing that God's heart and intent was that we would never be alone!

I never quite know what to do with this Sunday - Holy Trinity! Yes, we can sing the favorite hymn...which I included...Holy, Holy, Holy. But “trinity” is a doctrinal concoction trying to encapsulate that which we really can't contain or fully understand!

It probably comes from our trying to “box in” God too much towards our meager human understanding of how things might be.

So, on this day, we get the “first” story of creation that hints at the magnificent way God is able to operate: The Spirit moved over the Waters. God spoke, (the holy Wind) and it came into being, .and Jesus is the “living Word”, the second part of the Trinity

Ergo: God, creator; Jesus, redeemer; Spirit mover and guide. Could there be more ways? Probably but it might just be way beyond our ability to comprehend.

So for me, the best comprehend comes in 2 ways:

1. The Recipe to make or bake something
2. The Song: “You'll Never Walk alone”

Think of it as splitting my sermon in 2!

So, recipes: I can follow box directions! I can make waffles and brownies, some cakes. Now, I can't guarantee that it will always come out tasting spectacular or everything will be “fluffy!” But I try! So, I marvel at those who can use a “dash” of this or a “pinch” of that and oh, by the way, measuring spoons and cups are usually set to the side. And yet these things come out better than the box! How long should they be the oven? Well, they look and they just know. Unfortunately, smoke sometimes occurs with mine or “underdone.”

Have you ever watched those “cooking/baking” shows? People are stressing and sweating trying to “create” something delicious and maybe new.

God spoke. God, creator, could do no less than spectacular. I mean how is it that creation can be so cohesive? That is to be in sync with all things. Unfortunately, humanity hasn't learned that “baking” lesson and I hope won't miss the critical recipe!

When I was little, sometimes I got to “lick the bowl,” and even now my spouse allows me to “lick the beaters” once they are done. But don't dare interrupt the creative process.

Think about this, we have interrupted God's creative process from the very beginning. An “apple” from a tree that was taboo. Cain upset about his offering and began self-importance. Things got so bad, that Noah had to go into the boat building business.

Yes, there are almost uncountable more stories but did God throw out His recipe of creation? No, born unto us in Bethlehem was/is love incarnate.

God wants us to understand the recipe. God is hoping we will read the doses and dashes, pinches and promises of how this love is supposed to be.

Sadly, especially right now, we believe that we don't need help. That we can somehow cook up a better life than the creator of all things. People have decided that the ingredients of grace, compassion, patience, forgiveness and bearing with one another as people of the recipe just isn't going to "taste good!"

Do you remember the Psalm 34:8:

O taste and see that the Lord is good; Happy are those who take refuge in him."

The sad thing many folks don't even want to "try" the Lord "to see."

I remember distinctly that my mom had a "purple glass, fluted mixing bowl" where it may not have looked like much when mixing ingredients but then what did I know! So many great tasting memories!

So many still don't know. How arrogant and uncomprehending even when the Spirit of God is willing to intercede and whisper in our hearts. "Did you try a "dash" of this?"

There is a verse from Luke Chapter six that sounds like baking and mixing to me!: "A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap, for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."

Luke was Greek and he was a doctor. I wonder if he was a baker as well and understood the recipe of God? Luke 6:37-42: Judging Others:

³⁷ "Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."

³⁹ He also told them a parable: "Can a blind person guide a blind person? Will not both fall into a pit?" ⁴⁰ A disciple is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully qualified will be like the teacher. ⁴¹ Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? ⁴² Or how can you say to your neighbor 'Friend, let me take out the speck in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor eye.

God is love. The recipe emptied himself and became obedient even unto death, death upon the cross. Even now when we don't know what ingredient comes next, the Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.

I know I have about worn out my "recipe" half of the sermon and you are ready to move on from mixing ingredients and baking.

Good: The second portion is also "pressed down and overflowing" to you.

You will Never Walk Alone!

God creator. Jesus Redeemer. Spirit Sanctifier. Needs a qualifier, God's Children, created in His image and likeness. Not for, in and about ourselves but for, in and about each other!

Do you think the Heavenly Kingdom is going to be a quiet place of solitude?

You Will never Walk Alone!

In the words of that old theologian Bob Dylan!: Everybody serves somebody.

In the modern world, when we say that we are "free", that so often means that we are unaware of the control and authority that determines our lives.

In too many cases, when we claim that we are free from all master, the truth is that we are bound to the most imperious of lords - Me, myself, and mine.

You'll never walk alone connects with the gospel:

"God therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Too many people want to walk alone. Think they are better off alone. Don't have to listen to anyone, alone. Again, Dylan: Everybody serves somebody.

So, the question is not, "Will I live my life free of all external determination?" The question is, "Which externally imposed authority will tell me how to live my life?" "I did it my way," is often evidence that one is attempting the unauthorized life, or more precisely the self-authorized life. That is, you think that your life is the sum of your astute choices. What you concoct on your own: unaccountable, unauthorized, and oblivious to any external claim. It's up to us to give our lives a theme.

About now, a lot of you are shaking your heads saying, no, that is not the way I work! Truly? Really? I have to say I don't always remember that God holds the "mixing spoon." I don't always take time to reflect, or pray what would fit into the recipe that God continues to give? Or what gives me strength to know I am not walking alone?

St. Paul reminds each of us that there is "a more excellent way" in 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13. You know it if not by heart, almost! This is both recipe and a reminder you were created NOT to walk alone:

"Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."

See, if you or I were truly "walking alone" none of this would make any sense. God created and continues to create us in and for relationship. That's why Jesus was born not only unto us but into a family. That's why the Spirit intercedes because there is more than just you or me involved.

On this Trinity Sunday, here is the grand finale: I hope earnestly you will listen to the song: "You'll Never Walk Alone." A virtual performance by 300 people during this "being apart time." They came together to remind us that God's recipe still works! In Part:

When you walk through a storm

Hold Your head up high, and don't be afraid of the dark.

When on through the wind

Walk on through the rain

Though your dreams be tossed and blown.

Walk on, walk on

With hope in your heart

And you'll never walk alone.

Trinity is just a doctrine that is trying to grasp the amazing and beyond human boundaries of our Creator God. Of our Redeemer God. Of our Sanctifier/guiding God.

And who knows how much more God?

Amen.