

## The Holy Trinity June 7, 2020

Lectionary Year A – the Gospel of Matthew

# Living the Lutheran Lectionary

*A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.*

*An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the rhythms of the readings part of the rhythms of your life.*

### Available on line at:

- ✦ [www.bethlehemlutheranchurchparma.com/biblestudies](http://www.bethlehemlutheranchurchparma.com/biblestudies)
- ✦ Through [www.Facebook.com](http://www.Facebook.com) at “Living the Lutheran Lectionary”, “Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma”, or “Harold Weseloh”
- ✦ All links in this on-line copy are active and can be reached using Ctrl+Click

### Gather and be blessed:

- ✦ **Thursdays at 10 AM(5pm Kenya/Uganda):** At Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH 44134 and on line through <https://zoom.us/j/815200301>
- ✦ **Fridays at 7 PM in a house church setting:** For details, contact Harold Weseloh at [puritaspastor@hotmail.com](mailto:puritaspastor@hotmail.com)
- ✦ **Tuesdays at 1:00 PM (8pm Kenya time)** via Zoom to the Lutheran School of Theology - Nyamira , Kenya
- ✦ **On Facebook through Messenger** in a discussion group shared by people throughout the United States, Kenya and Uganda. Contact Harold Weseloh on Facebook Messenger.
- ✦



<https://www.knoxunitedvancouver.org/news/trinity-sunday--2>

### Hymn of the Day

**Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 498/499 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 233**

**“Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest”**

Two melody choices. LSB 498 and TLH 233 both use Komm, Gott Schopfer is based on “Venit Creator Spiritus”, a Sarum plainsong, circa 600 (LSB 499).

Authorship is uncertain but may include “Charlemagne, Ambrose, Gregory the Great and a great theologian and scholar, Rhabanus Maurus who is the most widely accepted...

The earliest use of the hymn was a Vespers during the week of Pentecost, and it came also to be used at Terce (9 a.m. – the hour which the Apostles received the Holy Ghost – Acts 2:15) in the late tenth century. In addition, it has been used through the centuries on any special occasion when invocation of the Holy Spirit was appropriate, especially at ordinations...” The Lutheran Book of Worship (LBW) translates the title as “Come, Holy Ghost, Our Souls Inspire”.

Hymnal Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship, Mariyn Kay Sulken, Fortress Press, 1981, pages 494-5.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3Bt4RceK4c> Higher Things youth conference, Te Deum 2015, recorded in Grand Rapids, Michigan.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-DtMzsXQtM4> “Actress and singer Ann Blyth sings Come Holy Ghost. Taken from Family Theater Production's Classic Television special, "The Triumphant Hour."”
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jqAGF3j2GI> Enjoy our fun arrangement of Come Holy Ghost... God Bless, the Schaals. “That was very beautiful. Watching everyone come in and share their part to create this beautiful music reminds me of "there are many gifts, but the same spirit"”, Tim Warzecha

Commentaries have been chosen because the author has written in a way that compliments the reading. Not all of the commentaries are from Lutheran sources. They have been edited for length and in some cases for additional content that is not in keeping with a Lutheran understanding of Scripture. Links are provided for those who wish to read the entire commentary.

The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001  
by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

“Today is the Feast of the Holy Trinity. On this day we sing hymns emphasizing the Trinitarian nature of the one true God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. On this day we say that really long creed with the funny name, the Athanasian Creed, which goes into the most detail on the relationship of the three persons in the Trinity. Today we are celebrating, not some dry doctrine with no connection to life, no, rather we are celebrating a living reality—the reality of who God is, as he is, as he has acted to save us and give us life, as he has revealed himself to us in Holy Scripture. Today we are confessing the truth of the Holy Trinity, over against all heretics that have arisen in history, from the Arians of the fourth century to the Mormons and Jehovah’s Witnesses of our day. The living reality of the triune God and the true and saving doctrine concerning the same—that’s what this Holy Trinity festival is all about...”

- <https://stmatthewbt.org/2014/06/14/the-living-room-of-peters-pentecost-sermon-acts-2-14a-22-36/> Rev. Charles Henrickson, St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Bonne Terre, MO

**O. T.** - “And God said...(9 times). He also saw, separated, called, made, set, created and blessed”

**Psalm** – “...how majestic is your name in all the earth!”

**Epistle** – “Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain...”

**Gospel** – “*the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*”

**Genesis 1:1-2:4a; Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), the same reading (Next week: Exodus 19:2-8; RCL, Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7) or Exodus 19:2-8a)**

*Genesis 1-11 is in part God’s inspired response to the plethora of gods in which people have nearly always believed. In fact, it’s, among other things, perhaps even primarily, a passionate argument against the false gods we naturally and eagerly worship.*

*Our text, for example, insists right from its beginning that only one, not many gods exists. The sun, moon and stars are not, as Israel’s neighbors assumed, creators, but creatures. The planets are part of God’s creation and so do not, as some of our contemporaries believe, shape our destiny. Even “the great creatures of the seas” (21) that Israel’s contemporaries assumed were gods are only creatures.*

*So while God is intimately involved with what God creates, Genesis reminds us that creation isn’t itself divine. As a result, things like the sun and moon can’t destroy us because they’re not gods. The “creature” that is the seventh day of the week brings not bad luck, as the Babylonians assumed, but an opportunity for rest ...*

*So while many religions believed that creation emerged from a battle among the gods, Genesis insists that God fights no one to create the heavens and the earth. God simply speaks, and creation somehow happens.*

*Yet when God speaks, things also begin to separate: light from darkness, water from land, and fish from birds. Boundaries are, after all, as Waltke points out, important in both creation and society. When everything does what God created it to do within those boundaries, there is order. When, however, creatures blur boundaries by failing to fulfill the purpose for which God made them, there is chaos.*

*Our text notes that once God creates, God also “grades” God’s handiwork. The narrator repeatedly tells us that “God saw that [it] was good.” In fact, verse 31 reports that when “God saw all that he had made, it was very good.”*

*Yet when God evaluates God’s creation, God is assessing not its moral quality, but its fulfillment of the purpose for which God created it. So, for example, God calls the sun “good” because it emits light and warmth. Humanity is “good” when it increases in number, subdues the earth and rules over other creatures ...*

*Yet while God spends those days somehow speaking all of created things into existence, God graciously speaks to only to human creatures. God addresses our first parents in order to bless us by giving us work to do in God’s creation. What’s more, while verse 25 reports that God creates other creatures according to their “kinds,” to resemble each other, God creates people, according to verse 26, to somehow resemble God.*

*So while we’re not gods, God creates us to imitate God in fundamental ways. Among those ways, much like God fills the earth, people “fill the earth” by bearing children. What’s more, just as God rules over the earth whose chaos God subdued, people carefully “rule over” every living creature that God makes...”*

➤ [https://cep.calvinseminary.edu/sermon-starters/trinity-sunday-a/?type=old\\_testament\\_lectionary](https://cep.calvinseminary.edu/sermon-starters/trinity-sunday-a/?type=old_testament_lectionary) Doug Bratt

## The Creation of the World Verses 1-31

1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

3 **And God said**, “Let there be light,” and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. **And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.**

6 **And God said**, “Let there be an expanse<sup>[a]</sup> in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” 7 And God made<sup>[b]</sup> the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. 8 And God called the expanse Heaven.<sup>[c]</sup> **And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.**

9 **And God said**, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. 10 God called the dry land Earth,<sup>[d]</sup> and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

11 **And God said**, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants<sup>[e]</sup> yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.” And it was so. 12 The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 13 **And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.**

14 **And God said**, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons,<sup>[f]</sup> and for days and years, 15 and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. 16 And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. 17 And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, 18 to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 **And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.**

20 **And God said**, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds<sup>[g]</sup> fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” 21 So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And

God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup> And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” <sup>23</sup> **And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.**

<sup>24</sup> **And God said**, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. <sup>25</sup> And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup> **Then God said**, “Let us make man<sup>[h]</sup> in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> And God blessed them. **And God said** to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

<sup>29</sup> And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. <sup>30</sup> And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. <sup>31</sup> And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. **And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.**

- a. [Genesis 1:6](#) Or *a canopy*; also verses [7](#), [8](#), [14](#), [15](#), [17](#), [20](#)
- b. [Genesis 1:7](#) Or *fashioned*; also verse [16](#)
- c. [Genesis 1:8](#) Or *Sky*; also verses [9](#), [14](#), [15](#), [17](#), [20](#), [26](#), [28](#), [30](#); [2:1](#)
- d. [Genesis 1:10](#) Or *Land*; also verses [11](#), [12](#), [22](#), [24](#), [25](#), [26](#), [28](#), [30](#); [2:1](#)
- e. [Genesis 1:11](#) Or *small plants*; also verses [12](#), [29](#)
- f. [Genesis 1:14](#) Or *appointed times*
- g. [Genesis 1:20](#) Or *flying things*; see [Leviticus 11:19–20](#)
- h. [Genesis 1:26](#) The Hebrew word for *man (adam)* is the generic term for mankind and becomes the proper name *Adam*

## The Seventh Day, God Rests Verses 1-3

**2** Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. <sup>2</sup> **And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done.** <sup>3</sup> So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

## The Creation of Man and Woman Verses 4-24

<sup>4</sup>These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, *in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens...*

“Genesis 1 traditionally appears on Holy Trinity Sunday, doubtlessly because interpreters have long understood portions of the text as allusions to the Trinity.

Luther, for example, believed the “Spirit of God” (RSV)<sup>1</sup> in verse 2 represented the Holy Ghost:

“So also the Christian Church agrees that in this description there is indicated the mystery of the Holy Trinity. The father created through the Son, whom Moses calls the Word; and over this (*creative*) work brooded the Holy Spirit...”<sup>2</sup>  
Indeed, that interpretation of the brooding spirit of God (*rua?’elohîm*) reaches back to the Patristics.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, ancient interpreters regarded the presence of the first-person plural in verse 26 (“Let us make humankind in our image”) as evidence of the Triune God. Both Gregory of Nyssa and Chrysostom understood the “let us” as a divine deliberation among the persons of the Trinity.<sup>4</sup> Luther also heard a revelation of the Trinity in the phrase:

“Again, the words, “Let us make man” confirm the mystery of our Christian faith, namely, that there is one eternal God, in whose divine essence there are three distinct persons: God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”<sup>5</sup>

Naturally, other interpretations are possible. Many have understood the first-person plural as a reflection of God’s conversation with members of the heavenly court (see 1 Kings 22:19; Job 1:6 -- 2:1-2, 38:7; and, possibly Isaiah 6:8). Others have seen the plural as a means to distance human semblance from that of God or as a way to signal that God is not actually revealing God’s self as God might by the use of a first person singular address. Westermann dismissed all of these interpretations, and instead understood the grammatical construction “let us make” as a plural of self-deliberation. Although he acknowledged that a heavenly court might be in the historical background, he maintained that the Priestly writer would not have countenanced such an image. He concluded, “The plural of deliberation in the cohortative is an attested and sufficient explanation.”<sup>6</sup>

Obviously, the interpretation of verse 26 is not settled. Depending on one’s understanding of the inspiration of Scripture, one can envision the Triune God permeating the creation account. **Admittedly, this is a bit of an obstacle for those of us trained in the historical critical method.**

Nevertheless, we should take a clue from the patristic fathers. Marius Victorinus, Prudentius, Augustine, and many more saw in Genesis 1:26 a reflection of the Trinity.<sup>7</sup> The early fathers had no difficulty relating the eternal Word of John 1:1-3 to the word that God speaks in Genesis 1. Indeed, John’s *Logos* hymn cries out for just such a bridge, as does Hebrews 1:3. Doctrinally, the connection cannot be gainsaid: the eternal Triune God was fully present in the creation of the cosmos. The Athanasian Creed, traditionally recited on Holy Trinity Sunday, is clear on this point...”

➤ [https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=3300](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=3300) Walter C. Bouzard

Professor Emeritus, Religion and Philosophy Department, Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa

**Psalm 8; the same reading (Psalm 100; RCL, Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19 or Psalm 100)**

*“Psalm 8 is a psalmic interpretation of creation, comparable to Genesis 1-2 and Job 38-41. More specifically, it is a panegyric on human excellence (Psalm 8:4-6) couched within a pious frame (8:1a, 9). For the psalm celebrates not so much God as the God who created human beings. Human beings, according to our psalm, occupy the honored center in the great chain of being -- “a little lower than divine” (8:5 JPS) but above all earthly creatures (8:6-8).*

*All of this raises the question that the psalmist appropriately places at the structural heart of the psalm: “What is humanity?” (8:4). And the psalm provides an intricate response: Humanity plays the intermediary role of articulating creaturely praise to God and of mediating divine sovereignty to creation...”*

- [https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=3298](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=3298) Paul K.-K. Cho Assistant Professor of Hebrew Bible, Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C.

### **How Majestic Is Your Name**

**To the choirmaster: according to The Gittith.<sup>[a]</sup> A Psalm of David.**

**8** O LORD, our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens.

**2** Out of the mouth of babies and infants,

you have established strength because of your foes,

to still the enemy and the avenger.

**3** When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,

the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

**4** what is man that you are mindful of him,

and the son of man that you care for him?

**5** Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings<sup>[b]</sup>

and crowned him with glory and honor.

**6** You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;

you have put all things under his feet,

**7** all sheep and oxen,

and also the beasts of the field,

**8** the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,

whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

**9** O LORD, our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!

**Footnotes:**

- a. [Psalm 8:1](#) Probably a musical or liturgical term
- b. [Psalm 8:5](#) Or *than God*; Septuagint *than the angels*

“While Psalm 8 is addressed to God, it’s really mostly about us: about the human relationship with the rest of creation and about the right exercise of human dominion.

But as the psalm also shows, human sovereignty can only be understood in light of divine sovereignty, in light of what it means to call God “our Lord.”...

The world that is at our feet is not there for us to trample. It is there to receive our care, for us to provide for it, as a whole and in each part, and to seek creation’s fulfillment. In the psalmist’s understanding of sovereignty we can hear the echo of the description of the king of God’s choosing in Deuteronomy 17. The king who serves in God’s image keeps the covenant and observes God’s law, not “exalting himself above other members of the community” (verses 18-20). In our dominion over creation, we are to remember the covenant and God’s commands, and not seek our own good at the expense of the domestic and wild world.

The implications of this are, of course, are far-reaching. How to interpret humanity’s proper governance over the rest of creation must go into assessing questions regarding ecology; food production, distribution, and consumption; medical and technological advancements; even the morality of puppy mills. To be human is to be responsible for our fellow creatures, and we must take that responsibility with the utmost seriousness.

Moreover, at the same time that Psalm 8 recognizes our dominion, it also reminds us of our humility. We are each still that awestruck person gazing in wonderment at the stars. We bear the image of God; we are not God. Our finitude and fallibility must be kept in mind as we exercise our responsibility. We are also reminded that we are a part of the creation over which God has granted us dominion. We do not stand apart from our fellow creatures, but we stand with them...”

- [https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2133](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2133)  
[Elizabeth Webb](#) Theologian and Episcopal layperson, Liberty, MO

**Acts 2:14a, 22-36; RCL, 2 Corinthians 13:11-13 (Romans 5:6-15; RCL, Romans 5:1-8)**

*“Today’s passage is part of Peter’s sermon following the original, powerful experience of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.*

*The experience of the Spirit began with a sound like a strong wind and tongues of fire extending to all members of the early Christian community as they gathered in the upper room (2:1-3).*

*The Spirit then enabled the gathered to speak “in other tongues” (2:4), and when the many Jews from disparate nations who were in Jerusalem became aware of the spectacle, the Spirit enabled them all to hear the Christians in their own languages (2:5-13). Peter then stood up to speak to the crowd, as told in the opening part of today’s passage (2:14a).*

*The sermon has two main parts to it, each with its own main point:*

***The first part** (2:15-21) interprets these happenings as the “last days” fulfillment of the prophet Joel’s promise of God’s Spirit being poured out on all people.*

*The second (2:22-36), from which our passage comes, focuses on Jesus, especially his death and resurrection, the main point being that these were part of God's plan as revealed in prophetic Psalms. (continued after the reading)*

## **The Coming of the Holy Spirit Verses 1-13**

### **Peter's Sermon at Pentecost Verses 14-41**

<sup>14</sup> But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them:...

<sup>22</sup> “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know—<sup>23</sup> this Jesus,<sup>[a]</sup> delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. <sup>24</sup> God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. <sup>25</sup> For David says concerning him,

“I saw the Lord always before me,  
for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken;  
<sup>26</sup> therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;  
my flesh also will dwell in hope.  
<sup>27</sup> For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,  
or let your Holy One see corruption.  
<sup>28</sup> You have made known to me the paths of life;  
you will make me full of gladness with your presence.’ [Cited  
from Ps. 16:8-11](#)

<sup>29</sup> “Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. <sup>30</sup> Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, <sup>31</sup> he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. <sup>32</sup> This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. <sup>33</sup> Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. <sup>34</sup> For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,

“The Lord said to my Lord,  
 “Sit at my right hand,  
 35 until I make your enemies your footstool.” [Cited from Ps. 110:1](#)

<sup>36</sup> Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”...

## The Fellowship of the Believers Verses 42-47

a. [Acts 2:23](#) Greek *this one*

“The end of this second section then relates the story of Jesus back to the Pentecost events, with Peter demonstrating that it is in fact the risen and exalted Jesus who has poured out the gift of the Spirit (verse 33). The Pentecost events then in turn serve as a call to recognize Jesus’ status as “both Lord and Christ” (verse 36). Peter’s speech thus serves to link the story of Jesus with the giving of the Spirit and to interpret both as fulfilling Old Testament prophecies.

Besides the introductory verse 14a, our passage has three parts to it:

Verses 22-24 quickly summarize the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Verses 25-31 interpret Jesus’ resurrection as the fulfillment of Psalm 16:8-11.

Verse 32 restates Jesus’ resurrection as God’s act and asserts the apostles’ status as witnesses of it.

In summarizing the story of Jesus (verses 22-24), Peter points out the unfortunate contrast between the divine attestation of Jesus by his miracles, on the one hand, and his treatment by the audience on the other (“[whom] you crucified and killed,” verse 23)...

Resurrection is not a common topic in the Old Testament, but Peter finds a verse from Psalm 16 that suggests it, even if only obliquely: “For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One experience corruption” (verse 27; Psalm 16:10).

As verses 29-31 explain, this statement could not apply to the psalmist himself, i.e. to David, as it is certain that David died and that his body experienced the normal subsequent decay (“corruption”). It is important to note here that the line from the psalm is interpreted in an ultimate sense -- while one might interpret the line more mundanely as referring to a momentary experience of salvation from death, Peter takes it much more strongly, no doubt because the experience of Christ’s resurrection had suggested such an importance!

➤ [https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2041](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2041)

[Scott Shauf](#) Associate Professor of Religious Studies, Gardner-Webb University, Boiling Springs, North Carolina

**Matthew 28:16-20; RCL, the same reading (Matthew 9:35-10:8(9-20); RCL, Matthew 9:35-10:8(9-23))**

“What does the Great Commission have to do with the Trinity?”

*Readers today often interpret this passage as a directive to evangelize others. After all, the imperative verb is right there: “make disciples of all nations...” (28:19). Although Jesus uses the formula “Father and Son and Holy Spirit,” Trinitarian theology as we know it took many centuries to develop. Reading it backward into this first century Gospel may not be appropriate.*

*But if we only read this passage as a manifesto on evangelism, we may be missing out. The passage is also a strong statement of the authority of the risen Jesus. The word “therefore” in “Go therefore and make disciples” suggests that the action of making disciples results from the previous verse: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matthew 20:18). Jesus’ instructions result from the authority he possesses.*

*Because of this, it is fitting to reflect on this passage on Holy Trinity Sunday. The risen Jesus, fully vested with divine authority, stands before his disciples with one final teaching...”*

- [http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=3268](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=3268) [Susan Hulen](#) Associate Professor of New Testament, Emory University, Atlanta, Ga.

## **“The Holy Gospel according to the 28<sup>th</sup> Chapter of St. Matthew”**

### **The Resurrection Verses 1-10**

### **The Report of the Guard Verses 11-15**

### **The Great Commission Verses 16-20**

***16*** Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ***17*** And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. ***18*** And Jesus came and said to them, ***“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in<sup>a</sup> the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,<sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”***

- a. Matthew 28:19 Or into

**“This is the Gospel of the Lord” “Praise to You, O Christ”**

“Each of the Gospels ends in a distinctive way.

Mark focuses on the empty tomb and the fear of the first witnesses; Luke on the appearances of the risen Jesus to the disciples, his ascension, and their preparation as witnesses; and John on a series of appearances of the resurrected Christ, especially to Peter. Matthew depicts the resurrected Jesus’ commissioning the disciples for mission. In what ways is

this a fitting end -- not only the right stopping point, but the goal -- of Matthew's Gospel? What does this ending tell us about that mission?

This episode draws together many of the most important themes and motifs of the Gospel, thereby suggesting that this ending is designed for this very story. As so often before in Matthew, the setting is an unnamed mountain (28:16, cf. 4:8, 5:1, 14:23, 15:29, 17:1), which Matthew associates especially with the revelation of divine presence and authority. Matthew also refers prominently here to "heaven and earth" (28:18), terminology that recalls the story of creation in Genesis 1, thereby linking this episode to a long tradition of stories about the fracturing of earth from heaven and the hope of their repair.

Jesus also provides the warrant for the disciples' commission by affirming that he has been given "all authority in heaven and on earth." Authority -- its nature, source, and effects -- is yet another persistent Matthean interest (7:29; 8:9; 9:6, 8; 10:1; 21:23, 24, 27). Matthew also returns in this scene to the christological identification of Jesus as "God with us" (28:20, cf. 1:23), thereby framing the entire Gospel with this claim.

Even as this ending emphasizes key themes and claims of the whole Gospel, it also marks a fresh beginning point, signaled in part by the return to Galilee (28:16), where Jesus' own ministry began. While they are called to be people on the move in mission, the disciples must also be rooted in the story and the land where their own journeys began. They will conduct their mission between two worlds: with Jesus on the mountain -- itself apparently a thin place between the human and divine realms -- they stand at the edge of a new world and a new time..."

➤ [http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=2097](http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2097) Stanley Saunders  
Associate Professor of New Testament, Columbia Theological Seminary, Atlanta, Ga



➤ Angus Day appears with the permission of <https://www.agnusday.org/>

➤ The Matthew Challenge?

➤ The readings are back to Matthew. Is your writing?

*Rick and Ted once again offer a review of last week's lesson.*



## Season & Preparations

Trinity Sunday is one of the few Sunday festivals in the Church Year during which we celebrate a doctrine, not an event. Trinity Sunday is a celebration of the revelation, as seen in Scripture, that our God is one God in three persons. The Father has made Himself known through His Son and by His Spirit.

Many Lutheran congregations mark Trinity Sunday by confessing the Athanasius Creed, the longest of the three ecumenical creeds (the Nicene Creed and the Apostles' Creed being the other two). In the Athanasius Creed, we confess what we believe about the triune God, including phrases such as these:

We worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, neither confusing the persons nor dividing the substance (*LSB* 319).

But the Godhead of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is one: the glory equal, the majesty coeternal (*LSB* 319).

So the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God (*LSB* 319).

And in this Trinity none is before or after another; none is greater or less than another (*LSB* 320).

Because of the length and challenging language in this creed, some congregations elect to confess this creed responsively, dividing the lines between the pastor and the congregation.

The color for Trinity Sunday is white. You also may have appropriate banners to beautify your sanctuary space. Banners with Trinitarian symbols or the phrase "Holy, Holy, Holy" are appropriate choices.

## Readings & Theme

[View the readings on Lutheran Calendar >](#)

Despite the word “trinity” never appearing in Scripture, the concept exists in numerous places. The reading from Acts 2 is one such place. This reading is a continuation of Peter’s Pentecost sermon from the previous week. We see the Trinity at work in verses 32 and 33:

This Jesus God rose up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

Likewise, we see the Trinity throughout the Gospel of the day, from John 3. Jesus tells Nicodemus, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God” (v. 5). And later, we read these familiar words:

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him (vv. 16–17).

The Old Testament Reading, from Isaiah 6, provides the words of praise most common on Trinity Sunday. In verse 3, we hear the seraphim calling to each other, “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!” We continue to sing these words every time we sing the Sanctus in preparation for the Lord’s Supper.

## Hymns & Music

The Hymn of the Day for Trinity Sunday is “Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest” (*LSB* 498/499). While much of the hymn focuses on the Holy Spirit, the final two stanzas draw on the Trinity as “Three in One.”

Drawing on the Isaiah 6 reading, another popular choice for Trinity Sunday is “Holy, Holy, Holy” (*LSB* 507). If you wish, you can use Martin Luther’s “Isaiah, Mighty Seer in Days of Old” (*LSB* 960) for the Sanctus.

Also, consider “O Blessed, Holy Trinity” (*LSB* 876) and “I Bind unto Myself Today” (*LSB* 604) as they draw on the trinitarian themes of the day.

## Additional Resources for Worship & Study

The Arch Book *Nicodemus and Jesus* is an excellent resource for teaching the Gospel story from this week to children.

➤ <https://churchsupplies.cph.org/planning-for-every-sunday/2018/planning-for-the-holy-trinity>