

Welcome and Announcements – Brendon

Good morning, Emmanuel. Welcome to our service for the sixth Sunday after Pentecost, or the sixth Sunday of ordinary time. I trust it's been a good week for you. I had the privilege of spending part of Monday in a boat on Lake Diefenbaker. Clear sky, beautiful sunshine. The only problem was the fish did not bite so we came home empty-handed. But hey, the weather was great and so was the conversation. Nothing to complain about.

I trust that most of your families had an encounter with a panda this week. This would usually be the week of our Kids Camp. But as that got cancelled, our creative and dedicated staff team spent the week delivering bags of treats and crafts to kids who would have been at Kids Camp. And they were accompanied by the famous Kids Camp panda. If you did not check out the video from Rob that came out on Thursday, please do so to learn more about that great initiative.

We gather each week to imagine what our lives could be like because Jesus is Lord, and we believe he is at work in our world making all things new. So we gather to be reminded of who Jesus is, King of kings and Lord of lords, of who we are as his beloved children, and who together we can be as a community seeking his kingdom and pursuing his righteousness and justice in our world. May we allow the Holy Spirit to root us deeply in God's love so that his love overflows from us in righteousness and justice and mercy and compassion and peace.

It was good to visit with some of you in person this past week, and I look forward to doing more of that over the summer. As much as I have appreciated our connections through zoom and other media, nothing beats physical presence. So I trust that we will continue to connect responsibly with others in person. Let's take advantage of the great weather to meet in a park or on a deck, go for a walk or hang out on a sidewalk.

As always, you can find more information on our website, www.ebap.ca, about ways to connect. Simply click on the banner that says "New Ways of Connecting @ EBC". A lot of that information is also sent out in the weekly emails that Jan sends out on Mondays. And remember to check out the weekly bulletin for prayer concerns and other information about our church family.

I remind you of the note in the bulletin from the nominating committee regarding nominations of suitable candidates to serve on the board of elders for the next season, which will begin after our Annual General Meeting in October. This is a significant way to serve our church family and participate in the leadership and oversight of our church. I am grateful for our elders and the good work they do. Each elder can serve two three-year terms, so there's usually one or more rotating off each year, hence the need to replace them. If you'd like to nominate someone to serve, you can contact the office for more details on that. Just send Jan an email at info@ebap.ca. The deadline for nominations is August 16.

Now, let us we lift up our hearts in joyful worship and grateful thanksgiving to Jesus, our risen and exalted Lord. May he continue to strengthen us in every way as we look to him and trust in him. May he fill us with his Spirit and enable us to be the people he created and redeemed us to be, for his glory and for the good of the world. Amen.

Song – Emmanuel Musicians

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

Come thou fount of every blessing
tune my heart to sing your praise
Streams of mercy never ceasing
call for songs of loudest praise
Teach me some melodious sonnet
sung by flaming tongues above
Praise the mount I'm fixed upon it
mount of thy redeeming blood

Prone to wander, Lord I feel it
prone to leave the God I love
Prone to hear you and not heed it
prone to scorn you in your love
Prone to wander
prone to wander

Oh to grace how great a debtor
daily I'm constrained to be
Let your goodness like a fetter
bind my wandering heart to thee
Jesus sought me when a stranger
wandering from the heart of God
He to rescue me from danger
used his own precious blood

Robert Robinson
John Wyeth
Sara Groves

Kids Moment - Beverly

Hello to everyone~

Has anyone seen the panda? I have!
I actually saw the panda walk right up to somebody's front door and hand them a treat bag.

Keep your eyes peeled.
There is so much fun to be had in the summer!

One thing I love about summer is water.
I love water.

I love to **be** in the water. I have been in backyard pools,
in chilly Saskatchewan lakes, and a few times I've even had the fun of bobbing up and
down in the warm ocean!

A long time ago my big brother Colin and his family lived in Texas. When I was visiting
there once,
his friend lent him a huge boat for us to use for a whole day.

We packed a lunch, and got in the boat. The sun was very hot. And there was not a
cloud in the sky.

Colin drove the boat for a long time, until we were in the center of this gigantic lake. We
couldn't see land at all. Just water all around us. Then he turned off the engine. We
jumped into the water. It was so refreshing and fun!

I hollered YAHOO and YIPPEE and we laughed and laughed. We splashed each other
and floated around the boat and swam til we were very tired.

I remember this prairie girl (that's me) thanking God for the fantastic experience as we
got back into the boat to eat our lunch. I chomped on my sandwich and was smiling ear
to ear.

We didn't even speak. I listened to the water lap the side of the boat. My skin felt
warm. The water sparkled like diamonds. I closed my eyes. I felt the gentle rhythm of
the waves and was lulled into a peaceful sleep.

When my brother woke me up, I couldn't believe what was happening.

The wind was loud. It was fierce, and it had blown our swim towels into the water. The
waves were strong and were getting bigger. The clouds were dark grey, almost black,
and hung so heavy in the sky you felt like you could touch them. The rain pelted
against my skin and it stung but I had to endure it. The water was filling the boat and
we had to keep scooping it out to stay afloat.

I was scared. My big brother was scared. We prayed and asked God to keep us safe.
We were so far from land.

Finally the weather calmed down, and the sun peeked through the clouds. We made
our way to shore. But there was no more laughing. No more hollering with happiness.

That night, holding a mug of tea, I thought a lot about the events of the day. It had all
started out so simply – everything seemed easy...but then seemingly out of nowhere
came such trouble and hardship.

I thought about how that day is like my life. Your life. Everybody's life.

We are having a grand time, thanking God for the blessings around us, then BOOM. Suddenly, we are in the middle of a terrible storm begging God to keep us safe.

In the Bible we read in Hebrews 13: 5 that God has said 'I will never leave you or abandon you.'

Another translation puts it this way. 'For you always have God's presence. For hasn't He promised you, "I will never leave you alone, and I will never loosen my grip on your life."

We are never alone.

Let's pray.

Thank You God. Thanks for this reminder that You are always with me. No matter where I am. Thanks that You are with me when things are easy and going great, and thank You that You are with me when I'm tired and scared and the storms of life are raging around me.

In Jesus powerful and precious name I pray,
Amen.

Remember God will never loosen His grip on your life. He will never leave you alone.

Have a good week everybody.

Song – Emmanuel Musicians

I Lift My Eyes Up / Too Proud

I lift my eyes up to the mountains
where does my help come from
My help comes from You maker of heaven
Creator of the earth

Can you sing over me words of comfort
can you satisfy me sweet honey
Can you break through me strong hands
can you undo me enough to heal me

Oh how I need You Lord
You are my only hope
You're my only prayer
So I will wait for You
to come and rescue me
Come and give me life

You take the weight from my shoulders
my hands were clinched now their open
I'll take Your goodness poured from the sky
food from the ravens water from the dry well

Brian Doerksen
Aaron Strumpel
Laura Elizabeth Thornton
Timothy Thornton

Community Prayer – Betty

Hello my name is Betty Elmgren please join me in the prayer of confession, after which I will lead in the community prayer.

We confess to you, Lord,
what we are:

we are not the people
we like others to think we are;

we are afraid to admit even to ourselves
what lies in the depths of our souls.

But we do not want to hide
our true selves from you.

(Silence)

We believe that you know us as we are,
and yet you love us.

Help us not to shrink
from self-knowledge;

teach us to respect ourselves
and affirm our uniqueness and worth;

give us the courage to put our trust
in your guiding and power.

(Silence)

We also confess to you, Lord,
the unrest of the world,

to which we contribute
and in which we share.

Forgive our reliance
on weapons of terror,

our cold indifference
to the needs of others,

our discrimination
against people of different races

our preoccupation
with material standards.

(Silence)

Forgive our being unsure
of the good news about you and from you,

and so unready to tell it,
share it and live it.

Raise us out of the paralysis of guilt
into the freedom and energy
of forgiven people.

And for those who through long habit
find forgiveness hard to accept
we ask you to break their bondage
and set them free
through Jesus Christ Our Lord.
Amen.

Baptist Union of Great Britain

Dear Heavenly Father, Thank you for this day that you have designed. Thank you for your great love! We pray that that all will see and experience this amazing love, your great and awesome vision, power, holiness and grace.

We marvel at your creation in the quiet of the still night, the reflection of moonlight on water, the vastness of the clouds and sky, the ancient moon that remains unchanged over the centuries. As the the world sleeps you watch over us. Great is your faithfulness! Many are your thoughts towards your children. You do not grow weary or tired, and your mercy endures forever.

We praise you for all the amazing things you have done and for how you continually provide for us.

Give us your peace and help us to remain in your love as we learn to live in a world of uncertainty. As we turn to you, fill us with the assurance that you are always with us and that ultimately you are in control even when things seem otherwise.
God, even though we are physically apart, help us to grow together as we support each other through encouraging phone calls and messages, small gatherings and helping

one another in big and small ways. Thank you for the many ways that people have already been doing this.

We pray for those in our community and beyond who are suffering from the effects of COVID-19. For those who have lost employment, or struggle with financial constraints. We lift up families working from home, caring for children and navigating the pressures of life. We lift up the elderly as they may feel the effects of extended isolation and loneliness. We pray for those in our church family who are sick, waiting for medical treatment, diagnosis, and surgeries. We ask your presence for those who have lost loved ones and are grieving alone.

Thank you for the many front line workers, medical professionals who we depend on and we ask your protection over them.

We cry out for mercy because of racial unrest....for each of us to search our hearts and offer love in place of hurt, kindness in place of retaliation, mercy in place of defensiveness, and peace in place of insult. You are a God of love. Fill us with your love and give us your spirit. Make each of us a light that dispels the darkness. Help us to look to you, Jesus. As written in Isaiah: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than yours and my thoughts than yours." Father, we seek to abide in your great love, allowing your kingdom of love and compassion to grow deep roots in us so we can care for those around us.

We thank you for the wonderful staff that work to serve our church family each week. Bless them. And as Brendon and Rob each deliver their thoughts to our communities today, we ask a special blessing. In the name of Jesus, your precious son, Amen

Song – Emmanuel Musicians

Holy Spirit

There's nothing worth more that will ever come close
no thing can compare You're our living hope
Your Presence, Lord

We've tasted and seen the sweetest of loves
where our hearts becomes free and our shame is undone
In Your Presence Lord

Holy Spirit You are welcome here
flood this place and undo our doubt and fear
Your glory God is what our hearts long for
to be overcome by Your Presence Lord

Bryan Torwalt
Katie Torwalt

Scripture Reading - Emily

My name is Emily Wiks and I will be reading John 14:1-23 from the New Living Translation:

¹ “Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. ² There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? ³ When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. ⁴ And you know the way to where I am going.”

⁵ “No, we don’t know, Lord,” Thomas said. “We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

⁶ Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!”

⁸ Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.”

⁹ Jesus replied, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don’t know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show him to you? ¹⁰ Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me. ¹¹ Just believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or at least believe because of the work you have seen me do.

¹² “I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. ¹³ You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father.

¹⁴ Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!

¹⁵ “If you love me, obey my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. ¹⁷ He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn’t looking for him and doesn’t recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you. ¹⁸ No, I will not abandon you as orphans—I will come to you. ¹⁹ Soon the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. Since I live, you also will live. ²⁰ When I am raised to life again, you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹ Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and reveal myself to each of them.”

²² Judas (not Judas Iscariot, but the other disciple with that name) said to him, “Lord, why are you going to reveal yourself only to us and not to the world at large?”

²³ Jesus replied, “All who love me will do what I say. My Father will love them, and we will come and make our home with each of them.

Abiding Reflections - Harold and Lawrence

(Brendon) Please join me in prayer: Triune God, Father, Son and Spirit, thank you for your love for us and for this life that you have drawn us into. Grant us the grace to pay attention to you and to all that you are doing in us and among us as we walk with you

and live in you day by day. Speak to us now by your Spirit and help us to hear from you those things you want to say to us now. We ask in your holy name. Amen.

We are into the second month of our summer series called “Abide” in which we are exploring the invitation from Jesus to abide or remain in him, as he abides or remains with in us. Before we get to today’s teaching, I want us to hear from a couple of people in our church family as they respond to the question: “What does abiding in Jesus look like in your life?” Today we hear from Harold Corbett and Lawrence Milner:

(Harold) For me Abiding with Jesus means, taking time Daily to read and reflect on scripture, acknowledge His presence in my life, and to remember in all of my life’s ups and downs, He is with me.

I have a spin ring I bought in Israel, a few years ago, when Karin and I were fortunate to visit. The inscription In Hebrew is the Shema prayer ... Love the Lord your God with all your heart... This serves as a constant reminder many times a day as I spin the ring, of how God is present in all areas of my life, and as a response of how I am to love others.

Abiding is an act of daily devotion, and visioning of Jesus wrapping his arms around me, and saying I am with you always, never leaving you or forsaking you.

(Lawrence) Well, I think it means being close to him every day and to be able to be close to him, I find that I have to read his word everyday and then think about him during the day at times, you know, recognizing that he’s with me and I’m with him and we’re together, as you said.

And, I was just reading in the Old Testament, one of the Psalms, I think yesterday. It said that God brought a vine out of Egypt, and that was the Israelite nation, and then he looked after them - he was with them every day in the desert - and he promised to be with them all the time. And that’s what Jesus promises to us - to be with us all the time. So we just have to respond to that and realize that he is with us, he abides with us, and it’s up to us then to decide to abide with him, because he invites us to do that.

Teaching - Brendon

Thanks, Harold and Lawrence for your reflections. As I’ve said before, I would love to hear how others of you abide in Jesus. What does abiding look like in your life? Send me an email sometime with your response.

To be a Christian is to be united to Jesus, the God-man, who has united himself to us. That is the heart of the Christian gospel. That is the core component of the Christian story. In order to rescue and restore His creation, God became human. He united himself to us, assuming our humanity, in order to heal it from the corruption of sin and free us from slavery to Satan. This is the salvation that Jesus came to bring to us in his life, death, resurrection and ascension. And those who trust in Jesus, those who cast their lot in with him and give him their allegiance, are united to Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

Union with Jesus is the heart and soul of the Christian life. It is what we are saved for. We often focus on what we have been saved from - sin and spiritual death and eternity apart from God. But what matters more is what we have been saved for - a life of union and communion with Jesus. This is the life that Jesus promises in John 10:10 when he says that he came that we may have life to the full - a rich and satisfying life. And we experience this abundant life through our union with Jesus - a union that involves a mutual indwelling, an abiding that is reciprocal because Jesus lives in us and we live in Jesus.

That is one of the truths that Jesus sought to communicate to his disciples on his last night with them. To help them grasp this truth, Jesus takes two approaches in his upper room discourse.

In John 15, which we've been looking at over the past several weeks, Jesus uses the metaphor of the vine and branches to communicate the reality of our union with him. We are connected to him as branches are connected to a vine. His life flows into us just as the sap from the vine flows into the branches, enabling us to live and flourish and produce fruit. Our lives are dependent on him and his life in us. Apart from him, we have no life.

Our union with Jesus is maintained by the mutual indwelling that Jesus refers to as abiding or remaining. "Remain in me as I remain in you," he says in John 15:4. And as we've explored over the past few weeks, we remain in Jesus by abiding in his word, by abiding in his love, and by keeping his commands. Our union is nurtured and sustained by inhabiting and embodying his teachings, by resting in his love, and by obeying his commands.

But, in addition to the vine and branch metaphor, Jesus points to a relational framework - to a set of relationship - that is even more foundational to our life with him, and that is the life of the Triune God, in which Jesus participates and into which he now draws us. This relational framework is what informs and undergirds the metaphor of the vine and the branches.

Jesus indicates that he is part of a relationship with two other participants - the Father and the Spirit - and that their relationship is one in which each could be said to be "in" the other in such a way that, though they are three distinct beings, they are united as one. And if that is not mind-blowing enough, Jesus says that his disciples get to participate in that relationship because that tri-unity of persons will come to live in each of us. And because they live in us, we will also live in them in a mutually reciprocal relationship.

I want us to spend the next few weeks thinking about the nature of this relationship that Jesus speaks of between the Father and himself and the Spirit, and the incredible privilege that is ours to be drawn into that wonderful communion of Triune love. We are stepping into deep waters here, and I want to acknowledge that we are peering into the deepest mystery of the universe, the mystery of the Being we call God. So we approach with wonder and worship, with awe and adoration.

Now here's the thing: anything we know about God, we know only because God has chosen to reveal Godself to us. Without God's self-revelation, we would know nothing

about God. But because of who God is, because of what God is like, God wants to be known. And God in his love and grace has chosen to make himself known to us.

God has revealed elements of his glory in and through his creation. All that God has created suggest that God is a God of order and creativity and beauty and purpose. But God went further and revealed himself to a people with whom he entered into covenant relationship - the people of Israel. Through the patriarchs and prophets and poets of Israel, God revealed himself as a God of love and compassion and justice and holiness. And then, God chose to reveal himself supremely in Jesus Christ, the God man. In Jesus, God became one of us. He took on our humanity and united it with his divinity for all of eternity. And because of Jesus, we now have the truest and clearest and fullest picture of God.

Whenever we want to see God, we look to Jesus. And whenever we see Jesus, we are looking at God. That is what Jesus says in response to Philip's request to show them the Father in John 14:9 - "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father".

To see Jesus is to see God the Father. This is a conviction that is echoed and affirmed by others in the New Testament. Writing to the Colossians, the apostle Paul says that Jesus is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15), and the pastor to the Hebrews declares, "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being" (Hebrews 1:3). Along with them, we have the witness of John in the opening verses of his Gospel: "No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known" (John 1:18). When you look at Jesus, what you see is God.

And it's not that Jesus simply reveals God the way a child resembles his father or a mirror reflects an image; it's not that Jesus reveals the glory of God the way the moon reflects the light of the sun. There is a union between them, a shared intimacy, an intermingling of lives. "Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?" Jesus says. "The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me. Just believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or at least believe because of the work you have seen me do" (John 14:10-11). There is a union of shared words and shared deeds between Jesus and his Father. When Jesus speaks, the Father is speaking through him, and when Jesus acts, the Father is working through him. All those words and deeds that the disciples had heard and witnessed as Jesus taught and worked miracles were the very words and works of God the Father whose life he shared. "I am in the Father and the Father is in me."

Jesus then introduces a third person in the Triune relationship, the Holy Spirit, whom he calls "another advocate." The word translated advocate is *paraclete* in Greek. It is a word used exclusively in John's gospel by Jesus to refer to the Holy Spirit, though interestingly, it is used in 1 John 2:1 to refer to Jesus. There, John writes, "My dear children, I am writing this to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate (a *paraclete*) who pleads our case before the Father. He is Jesus Christ, the one who is truly righteous."

The word *paraclete* has long been a challenge for translators. Some render it Comforter; others Counsellor; others Helper. The New Living Translation and some more recent translations use Advocate. Fredrick Bruner, in his commentary on John, translates *paraclete* as Encourager or True Friend (*The Gospel of John: A Commentary*,

834). The word *paraclete* literally means someone called alongside: *para* - alongside; *kletos* - called. One called alongside to assist and support, to help, particularly in critical situations.

The word has both legal and relational connotations. It could refer to someone who speaks on your behalf in court, as 1 John 2:1 suggests Jesus does; but it could also be a friend who comes alongside to comfort and counsel. Both of these connotations are applicable to the Holy Spirit, the *paraclete* whom Jesus promises to send.

Jesus says he will send **another** *paraclete*. In the New Testament, there are two Greek words that are translated “another.” The first is *heteros* from which we get words like heterosexual and heterogeneous. *Heteros* referred to another of a different kind. The second word is *allon*, which in Greek refers to another of the same kind. *Allon* is the word that Jesus uses when he speaks of another *paraclete*. The Holy Spirit is the *allon paracleton* -- a second of the same kind and not of a different kind.

So who is the first *paraclete*, of whom the Spirit is another of the same kind?

Well, the first *paraclete* is Jesus himself. Jesus is the one sent in alongside us as Comforter, Counsellor, Helper and Advocate, and he promises that when he leaves he will send in another *paraclete* of the same kind. In Jesus’ physical absence, another just like Jesus comes. This means that the person and work of the Holy Spirit cannot be separated from the person and work of Jesus. The *Paraclete* Spirit comes instead of Jesus and continues his work after Jesus departs. He is another of the same kind.

The *paraclete* comes to replace Jesus to continue the presence and work of Jesus in us. “You know him,” Jesus says, as he had said about the Father, “because he lives with you now and later will be in you,” (John 14:17). Just as they had known the presence of the Father in Jesus, so too, they had known the presence of the Spirit in Jesus. Both Father and Spirit had been present in Jesus throughout his life and ministry.

“When I am raised to life again,” Jesus continues, “you will know that I am in the Father and you are in me and I am in you” (John 14:20). Through the Spirit, the Father and Jesus will be in those who belong to Jesus. “All who love me will do what I say. My Father will love them, and we will come and make our home with each of them” (John 14:23). Just as Jesus had mediated the presence of the Father and the Spirit, so too, the Spirit will mediate the presence of Jesus and the Father. Our relationship with Jesus and the Father is made possible through the presence and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

All three members of the Triune relationship will make their home in those who love Jesus and obey his teachings. They will be in us and we will be in them.

This is the staggering promise that Jesus makes to his disciples: Through the Spirit, we participate in the same sort of relationship Jesus that Jesus shares with his Father! As Gordon Smith observes, “the quality of life within the triunity of God is precisely the kind of life that we can have in Christ Jesus” (Called to be Saints, 41). That seems almost too good to be true. But it is. Jesus has made it possible for us to participate in precisely the kind of life that is experienced within the community of love that is Father, Son and Spirit. As incredible as it may seem, this is our reality as followers of Jesus. And we live into it by abiding in Jesus.

What we have been exploring this morning are the basic contours of the Triune Life of God, otherwise known as the doctrine of the Trinity. That is what Jesus provides us with in John 14-17 - a window into the heart of God. In the early centuries after the New Testament was written, as the church sought to make sense of the revelation of God that Jesus had provided them with, as they pondered the appearance of Father and Spirit at his baptism, as they reflected on his teachings about the Father and the Spirit, as they mused on his final commission to baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Spirit, and as they reflected on the various ways that Paul and the other apostles spoke of Father, Son and Spirit (see, for example, in Acts 2:33, 10:38, Romans 1:4, 8:9, 1 Corinthians 6:11, 2 Corinthians 13:14 Ephesians 2:18, Hebrews 9:14, 1 Peter 1:2) they came to the conclusion that God was a Union of Three Persons who shared the same essential nature and who lived as a communion of mutual indwelling, but who were differentiated in their relationship as Father, Son and Spirit. The term the early Christians came up with was Trinity. One early creed affirms that God is a Unity in Trinity and a Trinity in Unity. That is the God whom Jesus has revealed to us. That is the God into whose life we have been immersed by baptism. And that is the God we worship in and through the Holy Spirit.

To abide in Jesus as he abides in us is to participate in the life of the Trinity. Jesus himself has become our true home - we are "in Christ" - just as we have become his true home - he is in us. And where Jesus is, the Father and Spirit are also there - they mutually indwell each other; they share fully in each other's nature and life. So to abide in Jesus is to share in the communion and love of the Father, Son and Spirit. As the Apostle Peter informs us, God "has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them, we may participate in the divine nature..." (2 Peter 1:4). We do so, we participate in the divine nature, by maintaining our connection with Jesus, by abiding in him.

Now there is much about this that none of us understands - how God can be three in one - just as none of us really understands how Jesus can be fully God and fully man. These are mysteries that even the greatest minds in the history of the church have failed to grasp with any clarity. But these mysteries stand at the heart of the Good News we have received and which we proclaim, and they most fully reflect the witness of the Scriptures in the person and life of Jesus of Nazareth.

God is a communion of three persons - each fully God - who together inhabit and contain each other in such a dynamic and loving union that they are one being - The Triune God. And this God has come to us in the person of Jesus Christ to draw us into the life and love that is shared among them. The theologian Thomas Torrance puts it, "[T]hrough Jesus Christ, God has given himself to us and through the Holy Spirit he lifts us into communion with himself as Father, Son and Spirit . . . he draws near to us in such a way as to draw us near to himself within the circle of knowing of himself" (Trinitarian Perspectives, 2). This is not something we will ever understand, but it can be experienced; in fact, it has been experienced to some degree by each of us who acknowledge Jesus as Lord. We have been drawn into the life of the Triune God and the invitation from Jesus is to abide in him so that we can live more fully into this life of communion with God.

Next Sunday, Dave Toth will offer some thoughts on what he has been learning about participating in the life of the Trinity, and I look forward to what he has to say to us.

As we wrap up today, I want to invite you to consider two responses to what we have been thinking about:

First, I want to encourage us to consider acknowledging the reality of the Trinity in our lives daily. This could be as simple as making the sign of the cross when we wake up in the morning and saying, "I acknowledge that I live in communion with the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit" or "May I live today in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit". Making the sign of the cross has been the practice Christians from the earliest centuries of Christianity, as has been the practice of invoking the Triune name of God, Father, Son and Spirit. Please find ways to acknowledge and embrace the Triune God as our lived reality.

Second, I want encourage us to become more acquainted with the Trinity. I have included a few suggestions at the end of the handout to help us get started. Take advantage of one or more of them and ask our Great God of Love to help you deepen your understanding of his Triune reality. As we do so, may we be drawn deeper into wonder and worship, into awe and adoration, of this great mystery, however limited our understanding may be. Amen.

Let's pause now and ask Jesus to help us to pay attention to whatever he has been saying to us, and to give us the grace to do something about it.

Father, Son, and Spirit - Holy Trinity

You are indeed a great mystery.

We praise you for your revelation in Jesus,

And we pray that you would draw us deeper into your life as we abide in him.

May we grow in our experience of you, of your life and your love as our deepest reality, though we will never fully understand you, for you are beyond all human understanding.

Blessed Holy Trinity, we worship you, One God in Three Persons,

Unity in Trinity, Trinity in Unity! Blessed be your name, and we pray now as we were taught by Jesus:

Our Father who art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy name,

Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven

Give us this day our daily bread,

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever, Amen.

As I said before, I would love to hear from you how you are working at abiding in Jesus - what practices you use to help you stay connected to him, or how you have been engaging with this series thus far. Please email me, bgibson@ebap.ca and let me know. If you'd like prayer for anything, I or one of the other staff would be happy to hear from you as well. We would love to pray with you and do what we can to support you during this time. May we be drawn deeper into the life of the Trinity as we abide in Jesus!

Song – Emmanuel Musicians

Awaken My Soul

Come, come like the rain
a quiet stream, a holy downpour
Come, come like the rain
a truer fount than I could ask for

Reign over me, awaken my soul

Come, come like the wind
a gentle breeze a Holy breath here
Come, come like the wind
Your perfect love removing all fear

Breathe into me, awaken my soul
breathe into us, awaken our souls

Joel Davis
Brady Toops

Benediction - Brendon

May we go now, dependent on God, rooted in Jesus and led by the Spirit, to fully love God and all people for God's Kingdom, pleasure and glory. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Musicians

Adam Bourassa, Amy Bourassa, Marc Bourassa, Kari Elliott, John Erik Gustafson, Scott Jeschke, Scott Lepp, Barb Milner, Laura Monchuk, rob Priestley, Jordan Reimer, Joyce Reimer, Dave Young.

Becoming More Acquainted with the Trinity

Trinity is not the result of abstract metaphysical speculation about how one god can be three. Trinity is not an explanation. Rather, Trinity names the mystery that is the very life of God. God, therefore, is the name we use to indicate the love that constitutes the relation Jesus and his Father share through the Spirit. God is the description we use to celebrate the Father's sending of the Son and the Son's doing the Father's will so that the work of the Spirit might be fulfilled by judging the world in truth.

[...]

Trinity, therefore, is not a doctrine that is an "add on" to the essentials of the Christian faith. Trinity names the essentials of our faith. The good news that is the gospel is that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit make possible our participation in the very life of God. The beauty that radiates from God's holiness is not a beauty that allows us to stand gawking at a safe distance. Rather God's beauty is the love that is the relation between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the love that sings the miracle of creation and redemption. We are drawn into that love through the work of the Spirit.

- Stanley Hauerwas, *A Cross-Shattered Church*, 56, 58.

There is a beauty in the concept of the Trinity itself that points toward the beauty of God himself. It is the beauty of love reflected in a truth: God is love. Whom did he love before there was a world? Himself - within the fellowship of three mutually loving persons. The Trinity thus becomes a model of creaturely love and fellowship. In the end, it is not an esoteric idea but a supremely practical doctrine for the guidance of Christian life and thought.

- Roger Olson and Christopher Hall, *The Trinity*, 4.

The Ordinary Christian life is lived as an experience of the Trinity.

- Fred Sanders, *The Deep Things of God*, 231.

To go deeper in your understanding of the Trinity, I would recommend the little book by Darrel Johnson called, *Experiencing the Trinity*. It's a very accessible discussion, written with great passion and clarity.

Also, check out some of the articles at the blog, The Surprising God (<http://thesurprisinggodblog.gci.org/>). Their recent four-part series on the Holy Spirit is a great introduction to Trinitarian Theology.

Here is a diagram that captures some of the essential elements of the Trinitarian relationships. Sit with it and ponder our Triune God.



For a discussion of this diagram, check out the article by Justin Taylor, *Using a Diagram to Illustrate the Trinitarian Relationships*.

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/using-a-diagram-to-illustrate-trinitarian-relationships/>

One of the great artistic portrayals of the Trinity is the icon below by Andrei Rublev. For one interpretation of Rublev's famous work, check out <https://catholic-link.org/andrei-rublevs-icon-of-the-holy-trinity-explained/>.



Finally, here's a prayer that John Stott, an Anglican minister and scholar from Britain, prayed regularly:

Good morning heavenly Father,
good morning Lord Jesus,
good morning Holy Spirit.

Heavenly Father, I worship you as the creator and sustainer of the universe.
Lord Jesus, I worship you, Savior and Lord of the world.
Holy Spirit, I worship you, sanctifier of the people of God.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Heavenly Father, I pray that I may live this day in your presence
and please you more and more.
Lord Jesus, I pray that this day I may take up my cross and follow you.
Holy Spirit, I pray that this day you will fill me with yourself and cause your fruit to ripen
in my life:
love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-
control.

Holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, three persons in one God,
have mercy upon me. *Amen.*

- John Stott's Morning Prayer, quoted in *Basic Christian, The Inside Story of John Stott*,
by Roger Steer.