

TRINITY SUNDAY

JUNE 4th, 2023



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

140 Russell Avenue
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 1W1
Church: 905-685-8294
www.christlutheransc.ca

Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday—9 a.m. – 12 noon

Bulletin Announcements: Please send to secretary@christlutheransc.ca.

Deadline for submission is Thursday at 9 a.m.

Pastor:	Pastor Todd Hoeffs	(289-362-0113)	pastortoddhoeffs@gmail.com
Parish Assistant:	Louise Gondosch	(905-329-8579)	parish.assistant@christlutheransc.ca
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Facebook:	Lisa Gall		www.facebook.com/ChristLutheranChurchSC
Bulletin by email:	Judy Mason		chairman.outreach@christlutheransc.ca

A recording of Sunday's service will be uploaded to YouTube at:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpING_TKT19c_OIBbMqGwLw

Prayer: Almighty and everlasting God, since You have given us, Your servants, grace to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity by the confession of a true faith, and to worship the true Unity in the power of Your divine majesty, keep us also steadfast in this true faith and worship, and defend us ever from all our adversaries, for You, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit live and reign, one God, now and forever. Amen.

DAILY SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:

Monday: Deut. 6: 4-13 Wednesday: Eph. 4: 1-6 Friday: Eph. 1: 3-14
Tuesday: Col. 2: 1-9 Thursday: 1 Tim. 3: 14-16 Saturday: John 5: 17-23

Musicians: Louise Gondosch
Reader: Tom Kuhl
Greeters: Gary and Wendy Kuenzel

EVENTS THIS WEEK:

Today: 9:00 a.m. – Sunday School
10:00 a.m. - Worship
After Service - Thank You Lunch for Pastor Makey
Tuesday: 9:30 a.m. – Precious Moments
7:30 p.m. – Worship Committee Meeting
Wednesday: 7 - 8 p.m. – General VBS Meeting
Thursday: 10:00 a.m. – SOUL
Next Sunday: 2:00 p.m. – VOTER'S MEETING



Thank You  Lunch

In honour of
Pastor John Makey
Sunday, June 4th
after service in the church basement

Cold Cuts and buns provided.
Please sign up in the Narthex if you are able to attend
and whether you can bring a salad or dessert.
Sponsored by the Fellowship Committee.

PRECIOUS MOMENTS: If you or someone you know would benefit from friendly conversation, a time for kids to play & sing; hear a Bible story and make a craft - please join us Tuesdays in the nursery area from 9:30 to 11 a.m. Coffee and tea are always on.

VOTER'S MEETING NEXT SUNDAY, JUNE 11, 2023 at 2:00 p.m: There will be an important quarterly Voters Meeting on June 11th. In addition to reports from the Committee Chairs there will be election of Church Council members for the upcoming year starting on September 1st. Due to Covid restrictions and lack of members stepping forward to serve in recent years, all terms of office have been extended. That means that all positions are up for re-election and we already have some existing vacancies and some new vacancies being created due to retirements. Please consider letting your name stand for election if you are eligible. You must have been a Voter for at least one full year. If you have any questions about this process or positions available please contact Chairman – Don Fretz or any other Council member. Please prayerfully consider this opportunity to serve your Lord by becoming a Church Council member.

CONFIRMAND & YOUTH LASER TAG: Saturday, June 17, 1:00 p.m. Cost is \$20 for 3 games. Friends are welcome to join us! Sign up by June 7th. For more information speak with Valerie, Elizabeth or Louise. Sign up at: <https://bxzq0rfovsd.typeform.com/to/BEJzDmAG> by June 7th.

FATHER'S DAY COFFEE HOUR: Sunday, June 18, after Worship service. Treat Dad to his favourite pie & coffee. A sign-up sheet is in the narthex if you would like to donate a pie for this event. (a Free-will donation for the NYG vehicle repair bill will be accepted)

MARY MARTHA POT LUCK: Tuesday, June 20, 5:30 p.m. at the home of Mary Saxton, 28 Emerald Common. If you are able to bring an appetizer, main, salad or dessert, please let Kathy Dekouchay know. Please remember to bring your own cutlery, plate, glasses and lawn chair. If you have any questions, or need more info, contact Lorraine 905 964 5837. We look forward to seeing you there!



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH PICNIC 2023

Sunday, June 25, 11:00 am
Burgoyne Woods, Section "C"

(11:00 am Service at the Church for those unable to attend the Picnic)

Activities: Games, Fun and Action for all

Food: Hamburgers, hotdogs and pop provided.

Necessities to Bring: Lawn Chairs, salads, dessert, plate & utensils

If you plan to attend, please contact: secretary@christlutheransc.ca
with number attending and preferences for hotdogs/hamburgers



Vacation Bible School

July 17 - 21

9 a.m. - 12 noon

Registration - email: parish.assistant@christlutheransc.ca
secretary@christlutheransc.ca

Last Sunday Attendance: May 28th, 2023 Attn: 10 a.m. – 82 SOUL: 23

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Weekly Need</u>	<u>Last Sunday</u>	<u>Year To Date</u>	<u>+ or – (--)</u>
Current	297,841.00	5,840.02	1,947.00	93,927.31	(32,082.34)
LCC Missions	17,000.00	333.33	240.00	6,486.50	(705.81)
Property Improvement:			154.00	2,682.50	

GREETERS: A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board and we would ask that anyone who is interested in assisting for the coming year to please sign up. It is a wonderful opportunity to get to know everyone in the congregation.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL: "*Shine Jesus Light*" VBS July 17 - 21 from 9:00 am - 12 noon. We are still seeking small group leaders to be with and take children to the various stations. If you can assist us please fill out a Volunteer form in the narthex. Whether you can help out as little as 1 day, or as many as 5 days, your support might be just what one of these children needs. Registration forms and Volunteer forms are available in narthex

2023/2024 SUNDAY SCHOOL: The Christian education of our children is important to all of us. We are looking for people to help "team teach" our Sunday school children this year; September - December; January - June. If you are excited to share God's Word to inquisitive minds we invite you to speak with our Parish Education Chairman, Brandon Kemp, or Louise.

POWER POINT VOLUNTEERS: – The Worship Committee is urgently seeking four (4) volunteers to assist with the preparation of the weekly PowerPoint projection. Frequency of PowerPoint preparation would be on a rotating basis and dependent upon the number of helpers. PLEASE give prayerful consideration to serving our Lord in this capacity. For more information, please speak to Kathy Kuhl, Judy Slingerland or Pastor Todd.



Granny Squares needed: Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! The response has been overwhelming and extremely heartwarming that there have been so many Granny squares contributed. We have already completed 3. However, since this is an ongoing project we will gratefully accept more completed 6 inch knitted or crocheted Granny Squares in any pattern or colour. We would also appreciate any yarn that you may have, leftover yarn or full balls of yarn. In the narthex there is a white cube with yarn and hooks that you are welcome to take (or donate). There is another basket for completed squares. Once there are enough, we will make a Caring Squares blanket for whoever may be in need of a hug. On behalf of the Caring Squares, if you have any questions,

call Lorraine at 905 964 5837)

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP? We are setting up a schedule to take meals to Eduardo and Daniela to help them out during Daniela's very challenging recovery from childbirth and surgery. If you would be interested in helping with a meal, please email Carole (carolepink121@gmail.com) Thanks :)

SPOKEN MATINS

Adapted from Lutheran Service Book order of Matins

HOLY TRINITY SUNDAY

June 4, 2023 + 10 AM Worship

FIRST SONG:

“Holy , Holy , Holy”

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our songs shall rise to Thee.
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity.
Holy, holy, holy! all the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Which wert and art and evermore shall be.
Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All Thy Works shall praise Thy Name in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity.

R. Heber, 1826, public domain.

SPOKEN MORNING PRAYER SCRIPTURE RESPONSES:

O Lord, open my lips! **And my mouth will declare Your praise.**

Make haste, O God, to deliver me. **Make haste to help me, O Lord.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son + and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Praise to You, O Christ! **Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Blessed be God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. **O Come, let us worship Him!**

PSALMODY

O come, and sing unto the Lord, come blend your voice toward Him Who saves. With thankful hearts we enter now, to offer songs of glorious praise.

**Our saving Lord is a great God a pow’rful King above all gods.
His steady hands embraces earth; The mountain peaks display His worth.**

**The sea and land divinely placed, our Maker, bow before His face,
His pasture nourishes all sheep, He’ll shepherd, guard and safely keep.**

**All praise and glory be to You, the Father, Son and Spirit, Who,
Protects and shelters us from fear, His holy name this day revere.**

(Hymn version of Psalm 96; Tune: “All Praise To Thee!” LSB # 883)

Blessed be God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. **O Come, let us worship Him!**

PSALM 8: 1-2

O Lord, our Lord, how magnificent is your reputation throughout the earth!

You reveal your majesty in the heavens above.

ATHANASIAN CREED verses:

Whoever desires to be saved must, above all else,

Hold the catholic faith.

And the catholic faith is this:

That we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity,

Neither confusing the persons

Nor dividing the substance.

So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God;

And yet there are not three Gods, but one God.

And in this Trinity none is before or after another; none is greater or less than another.

But the whole three persons are coeternal with each other and coequal.

Therefore, it is the right faith that we believe and confess that our Lord,

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is at the same time both God and man.

He is God, begotten from the substance of the Father before all ages;

And He is man, born from the substance of His mother in this age:

Perfect God and perfect man,

Composed of a rational soul and human flesh,

Who suffered for our salvation,

Descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead,

Ascended into Heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father,

God Almighty, from there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

This is the catholic faith.

O Lord, our Lord, how magnificent is your reputation throughout the earth!

You reveal your majesty in the heavens above.

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

We pray: Eternal God, Almighty Creator, You have revealed Yourself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and You live in the perfect and divine unity of love. We praise Your power and majesty. Keep us firm in the faith You have given, defend us from all adversity and bring us at last into Your holy presence, where You dwell in endless joy and love; O Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God in three persons, blest forevermore. **Amen.**

CHOIR ANTHEM:

“Be Still”

Be still for the Spirit of the Lord, the Holy One is here
Come bow before Him now with reverence and fear
In Him no sin is found -- We stand on holy ground
Be still for the Spirit of the Lord the Holy One is here
Be still for the glory of the Lord is shining all around
He burns with holy fire, with splendor He is crowned
How awesome is the sight -- Our radiant King of light
Be still for the glory of the Lord is shining all around
Be still for the power of the Lord is moving in this place
He comes to cleanse and heal, to minister His grace
No work too hard for Him; In faith receive from Him

Be still for the power of the Lord is moving in this place
Holy holy holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee
Holy holy holy! merciful and mighty!
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity.
Be still (Be still) Be still (Be still). The Ho.....ly One, is here

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THE SCRIPTURES

The Old Testament: *Genesis 1: 1-28; 2:1-3*

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 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. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. And God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day. 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. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. And God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth." And it was so. 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. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day. 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, and for days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth." And it was so. 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. And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day. And God said, "Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens." 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. And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day. 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. 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. Then God said, "Let us make man 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." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. 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."... Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 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. 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.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Epistle: *2 Corinthians 13: 11-14*

[St. Paul writes:] Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SUNG GOSPEL VERSE: *“To God Be The Glory”*

To God be the glory great things He hath done
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin
And opened the life gates that all may go in. *Chorus:*

*Praise the Lord praise the Lord
Let the earth hear His voice
Praise the Lord praise the Lord
Let the people rejoice
O come to the Father through Jesus the Son
And give Him the glory great things He has done.*

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The Holy Gospel: St. Matthew 28:16-20

The Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew, the 28th chapter:

Glory to You, O Lord. Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go 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.’ This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to You, O Christ.**

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE



1 On Gal - i - lee's high moun-tain Christ gave the great com - mand
 2 The Lord who, born of Mar - y, Came down as man and died,
 3 His strength with - in my weak-ness Will make me bold to say
 4 And not a - lone to na - tions In far - a - way re - treats,



In words of strength and prom - ise Which all can un - der-stand:
 Who preached to all who lis-tened, For us was cru - ci - fied—
 How His re - deem - ing pow - er Trans-forms my stub-born clay;
 But ev - 'ry-where I broad-cast His love through crowd-ed streets:



"All pow'r to Me is giv - en To do what I shall choose;
 This Lord, our liv - ing broth - er, In pow'r at God's right hand,
 His touch of fire ig - nites me, With cour - age I am sent,
 The lives that my life touch - es, How - ev - er great or small—



There - fore I send My chil-dren, Their wit - ness I will use."
 Has cho - sen us to car - ry His truth to ev - 'ry land.
 My tongue - tied si - lence bro - ken, With grace made el - o - quent.
 Let them through me see Je - sus, Who served and saved us all.

5 That ev'ryone He chooses,
 For reasons of His own,
 Will find in Christ his calling
 To live His love alone.
 His presence always leads us
 Till time no more shall be;
 Christ's strength, His love, His comfort
 Give us His victory.

Text: Henry L. Lettermann, 1932-96

Tune: Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

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Tune: Public domain

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MESSAGE

TE DEUM PRAISE HYMN: *We Praise You, O God*"

www.hymnary.orgLSB



1 We praise You, O God, our Re - deem - er, Cre - a - tor;
2 We wor - ship You, God of our fa - thers, we bless You;
3 With voic - es u - nit - ed our prais - es we of - fer



In grate - ful de - vo - tion our trib - ute we bring.
Through tri - al and tem - pest our guide You have been.
And glad - ly our songs of thanks - giv - ing we raise.



We lay it be - fore You, we kneel and a - dore You;
When per - ils o'er - take us, You will not for - sake us,
With You, Lord, be - side us, Your strong arm will guide us.



We bless Your ho - ly name, glad prais - es we sing.
And with Your help, O Lord, our strug - gles we win.
To You, our great Re - deem - er, for - ev - er be praise!

Text: Julia B. Cory, 1882-1963, alt.

Tune: *Nederlandsch Gedenckclanck, Haarlem, 1626*; setting: *Service Book and Hymnal, 1958*

KREMSE
12 11 12 11

THE OFFERING *is received.*

THE PRAYERS

Eternal God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit: thank you for making yourself known through your mighty works. Continue to show yourself to the world by spreading the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Support all the church's pastors, teachers and lay workers true to the Trinitarian faith; blessed are you, Lord God, King of the universe.

Blessed be Father, Son, and Holy Spirit forever and ever.

For all you have made, for the earth and the sea and all their creatures, and the universe of space and stars, planets and moons, and for the world of spirits and angels, blessed are you, Lord God, King of the universe.

Blessed be Father, Son, and Holy Spirit forever and ever.

For all humankind, made in your image, adult and child, spouses, caretakers, leaders and followers, and people of every tribe, nation, race and language, blessed are you, Lord God, King of the universe.

Blessed be Father, Son, and Holy Spirit forever and ever.

For your gift of community: families and friends, towns and cities, provinces and nations, reflecting the communal love of the Trinity, For all who have been baptized into Your Triune name, as they witness to your love and action in the world, blessed are you, Lord God, King of the universe.

Blessed be Father, Son, and Holy Spirit forever and ever.

We pray for your worldwide church – for the on-going the Ministry of Word and Sacrament which we share and proclaim here. Protect those who are persecuted for bearing Jesus' holy name, and bring all people to rejoice in you as their Saviour. Blessed are you, Lord God, King of the universe.

Blessed be Father, Son, and Holy Spirit forever and ever.

Triune God, you continue to give life and love. We pray for all weighed down by heavy loads - all who are in trouble and give fortitude and hope founded on the suffering of Christ. Help us bear each other's burdens in a community of compassion, and meet the needs of those we know personally to be in want especially remembering...(names added here...) blessed are you, Lord God, King of the universe.

Blessed be Father, Son, and Holy Spirit forever and ever.

Holy God, you are our beginning and our end, the ground of our existence and the foundation of our faith. Support us in this faith so that at our life's end we may be raised to eternal life to share with all your saints in glory, for you are Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come...

LUTHER'S MORNING PRAYER: I thank You, Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger. And I pray that You would keep me this day, also, from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe have no power over me. **Amen.**

BLESSING: Let us praise the Lord: **Thanks be to God.**

BENEDICTION: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God the Father and the Communion of the Holy Spirit, + be with you all. **Amen.**

LAST SONG: "Christ Beside Me" *St. Patrick's Breastplate [Tune: Praise & Thanksgiving]*



1. Christ be - side me, Christ be - fore me, Christ be -
 2. Christ on my right hand, Christ on my left hand, Christ all a -
 3. Christ be in all hearts think - ing a - bout me, Christ be on
 4. Christ be - side me, Christ be - fore me, Christ be -



hind me - king of my heart; Christ with - in me,
 round me - shield in the strife; Christ in my sleep - ing,
 all tongues tell - ing of me; Christ be the vi - sion
 hind me - king of my heart; Christ with - in me,



Christ be - low me, Christ a - bove me - nev - er to part.
 Christ in my sit - ting, Christ in my ris - ing - light of my life.
 in eyes that see me, in ears that hear me Christ ev - er be.
 Christ be - low me, Christ a - bove me - nev - er to part.

WORDS: Adapt. James Quinn, 1969, alt.; from *Sr. Patrick's Breastplate*
 MUSIC: Traditional Gaelic melody; arr. David Evans, 1927
 Music used by permission of Oxford University Press

REV. TODD HOFFS
Holy Trinity Sunday
Matthew 28:16-20
June 4, 2023

My dad was very good at judging good or not so good used cars. He owned many used cars in his life-time giving him much wisdom. I will never forget the 1st time I went out looking for my 1st car. I spotted it. A big, beautiful mint green 1976 Chrysler Cordoba. Dad looked at it. Nope. Engine was too big, with rust in bad places. Then I found it! A Dark green 1971, 2 door Ford LTD. Arizona car, low milage. Dad loved Fords. Looked at it. We test drove it. [I was in love...] Nope. Very large engine, had a trailer hitch, bad sign. No. He found a 1979 2 door black Chevy Caprice. Dad said it would be reliable. It was. Kept it 6 years and put over 300,000 miles on it. A trouble-free car. Good thing I trusted Dad's wisdom.

It's quite easy talking about cars – like sports, economy, sometimes politics. Think of all the things you find so easy to talk about with other people?! What if we talked about all that God has done in our lives With as much interest and gusto as cars?! Or Sports? Or hobbies? Most people tell me– they don't know what TO say? We don't want to say the wrong thing. We don't want to be embarrassed. We don't want to make an enemy. We all know what to say. We have faith, we trust God; I'm sure most if not all of us know at least part of a Scripture or church song verse?! Yet we struggle to get the words out. We worship, we believe, we doubt. Our lack of communicating our faith betrays our fears. We may talk about our opinions or beliefs, but our faith we keep tucked away. No different than the gathered believers recorded in Matthew's Gospel. They didn't doubt Who Jesus is, they doubt over what they are to do once He's gone. Standing on the mount reminds them of the Sermon on the Mount. How blessed His believers are. The Son of the Father will return to Heaven and sends the Spirit. Our God is One divine being in Three persons, three distinctive ways of revealing Who He is. The Father Trinity Sunday is from the Latin TRIUNE -- 3 in One. 3 united. And the Trinity has been the most controversial of all our Christian teachings. This posed some difficulty for the Jewish followers of Jesus. The children of Israel had been commanded to be MONO THEISTIC – Adhere to ONE God. "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One," said the ancient *shema*. Jesus is not a new or greater Moses. He is God in the Flesh returning to His Father. Jesus' followers put the GREAT COMMISSION into action right away. They all believed that they'd encountered the Living God in Jesus of Nazareth. Worshipping, teaching, baptizing, witnessing, loving each other, all hallmarks of the church. What helps is seeing the Trinity with OT Hebrew eyes. The trinity is relational. They move. They dwell. They engage all whom they love. This ever-vital, ever-interweaving of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is essential. It's Who God is. This is why when we're baptized faith animates us in good help toward others.

400 years passed since the Holy Spirit's coming And the religious leaders of the church made Father, Son and Holy Spirit Into a written, doctrine ALL must adhere to. Politically speaking, Trinity doctrine entitled nobility to make God be on their side. Making the lower class peasants build gigantic, palace like churches == It shows that God is on the Emperor's side! And they are on the church's side. Glory and power! Obey and be important! Sounds so familiar. Unity becomes uniformity. All doing the very same thing if believed or not. But the church community is headed by Jesus, not emperor or governor. The church is for "all people," not just the privileged and elite. These are the kinds of things that makes people doubt faith even exists in churches. That leaves it to us to witness this. No in an overseas mission trip sort of way [although that has value as well]. But in how we live in the communities we call home. We need not fear doubt or growth or challenges. We have the Holy Trinity dwelling inside each one of us. Doubt just means God has our heart but our heads can't make sense of life. God aligns our hearts with our heads, and our hands, feet and mouths follow. We should expect people in our churches to have doubts about what we're teaching them, especially when it involves changing their schedules, their use of money and their professional and family lives. To rethink how you are going to live and then take risks that threaten any sense of normal security is daunting. Like the 11 disciples, you desire evidence of authority to answer such a call. Jesus reassures us, "ALL AUTHORITY IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ME." Jesus is authorized. This authority comes to us. This is the authority to make disciples, and making disciples is the one thing Jesus has authorized His people to do. When a disciple wonders how much spiritual authority he has, the answer is "all of it." Disciple = teach them how to be FOLLOWERS/STUDENTS – trust Good leaders are good followers. Not because we follow a particular human, but Christ. As a pastor, my leadership is good when I am following Jesus. That takes trust. Common sense tells us trust is earned, but not with God. Trust is given with faith and proven in how He takes care of us. That takes memory. And the memory of God's goodness is why we are here. The church ministry fills memory, reassures the heart With the grace to live by faith and trust. The most important aspect of faith is action. To believe in Jesus means following Him. Following means trusting. Trusting means resting secure in God's way of taking care of you. This making disciples happens with baptizing and teaching.

This is why we are told to God. Jesus' command to GO is passive in the original language. In the ancient world it's about "being led forward on a journey," a journey to make disciples of "all the nations" -- *ethne*, "peoples."

We can never expect people of the world will run into the church for this. We take Jesus out into the world wherever we go. By using Jesus' own words, baptizing "in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit" Will be the 1st entry into the journey of disciple making. This sense of "belonging" is one of the most inviting parts of following Christ. Even though church communities of people are flawed, the grace filled opportunity for good brings the Kingdom of Heaven alive. This is why I like to visit families first before baptizing. Making a worship life in the church a blessed priority Is as important as the baptism itself.

None of us would even think of eating one meal and never eating again. So we baptize and families promise to join us here to enjoy the treasures of our God. This is part of the teaching, the discipling. In an age we are in bombarded by information overload, Much of which isn't always trustworthy, Our words carry less impact than our action. Doesn't mean the Bible is less important. It means if the Bible is important to us, it will show in how we live. When I was a little kid, my parents fought like cats and dogs in the car ride to church. Then, as the car doors opened and we walked in they were all smiles. I always wondered if people knew, they'd think we didn't believe in Jesus. Actions speak louder than words. Jesus bonded with His disciples and trained them on the job. Over the course of His ministry on earth, the disciples observed Him and questioned Him; He shocked them, scandalized them, scared them, explained His teaching to them, and then asked them to try it out for themselves. They were connected to Him through His belief in them, the authority of His call, the power of His life and His clear focus on His mission to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). Jesus gave the gift of His presence and His time. Two very valuable gifts. Priceless treasure for sure. Remember Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane; He mentioned His followers more than 40 times. He knew he was entrusting the ministry to them. He asked His father to take care of them (John 17:1-26). He Himself took care of them greatly by opening up His arms On the cross, welcoming them into forgiveness, washing them in His blood, saving them and winning all of the world Paradise. Through Jesus' life, death and resurrection, we keep all that He has given. We observe al that Jesus is. We treasure what He treasures. Which are His people. All people. Seeking and saving the lost wherever they be. Jesus even blesses our witness. HE never leaves us. I AM with you always. The I AM of the OT is the same I AM today.

The I AM Matthew recorded at Jesus' Birth Is the same I AM giving us the authority to gather the scattered nations. The God of creation is the God over our new creation By water and Gospel. Because God loves the world, we trust the Spirit will change our fumbling words into an intelligible and helpful message to others too. Or maybe the Holy Spirit doesn't change our words at all, but instead changes the ears of the hearers, moving them to listen and comprehend beyond our own capacity to speak. 5 years ago I listened as some of our Lutheran clergy leaders bemoan Low attendance and low offerings. I listen for about 5-8 minutes. Then I spoke: Concern over low numbers in the pew and in the plate Is exactly the negative people think of when they imagine church. Not to mention it depresses our people. Maybe we have entered into a time Where we have to throw aside our worries on how we look Or if we're Lutheran enough And in order to win over the lost, We may have to minimize our ritual for right living. Caring, loving, even if it looks weak or like we're caving in. Silence. Dead silence. ALL nations means just that. All.

We become ONE for all
To win over ALL.
That ALL may be one in the Holy Trinity.
Amen.

The Holy Trinity

R	S	N	H	I	R	E	H	T	E	G	O	T	I
I	R	N	N	O	C	T	P	G	A	G	L	I	M
I	E	I	N	C	A	R	N	A	T	I	O	N	M
E	S	E	N	A	A	F	R	E	A	T	T	E	O
H	U	E	R	I	E	B	T	S	R	E	A	J	R
O	R	E	S	D	O	G	I	I	T	L	H	E	T
L	E	E	O	D	E	E	A	B	L	S	O	N	A
Y	C	E	F	E	C	A	N	E	L	R	I	I	L
S	T	E	A	J	G	O	R	R	Y	E	D	I	I
P	I	S	T	E	U	N	E	N	O	I	I	T	R
I	O	N	H	S	L	B	O	R	F	H	V	I	S
R	N	T	E	U	R	P	E	R	T	I	I	G	O
I	R	U	R	S	B	B	N	B	T	I	N	B	E
T	E	L	R	B	E	L	I	E	F	S	E	E	L

FATHER
 PRAISE
 IMMORTAL
 DIVINE
 HOLY SPIRIT
 INCARNATION
 STRONG
 RESURRECTION
 SON
 BELIEF
 TOGETHER
 GOD
 JESUS
 BIBLE

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