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Our Saviour Lutheran Church
May 30, 2021
Trinity Sunday

Let us pray...May the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, for you are our strength and you are most certainly our redeemer. Amen.

Sisters and brothers in Christ, Trinity Sunday is about mystery.

Now, I am not talking about the Agatha Christie Who-Dun-It kind of mystery.

I am not talking about the literary genre in which we learn about a murder or some other kind of caper and we are invited to try to figure out the culprit.

I am not talking about that kind of mystery.

No, I am talking about “mystery” in the sense that something is unfathomable, incomprehensible, inexplicable.

That is the kind of mystery I am talking about.

Trinity Sunday is about mystery.

Because on Trinity Sunday we are talking about the Triune God.

God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

God is one God but three persons.

Trinity Sunday is about mystery, because Trinity Sunday is about the Christian God who is mysterious.

God is mysterious.

Indeed, Trinity Sunday might be better named “Mystery Sunday.”

But it is not Mystery Sunday in terms of not knowing what we are going to get when we come to worship.

It is not like a mystery such that we don't know what to expect.

It is not like the brand of lollipop called Dum Dum, in which they have a “mystery flavor,” and we don’t know what it will taste like.

And as I understand it, the mystery flavor is the result of the mixture of two flavors that come together when the end of one candy in the mixing vat meets the beginning of the next candy.

Mystery Sunday is not like that, it is not like not knowing what we are going to get.

We know what we get on Trinity Sunday, we get the Triune God.

The mystery is the perplexing reality that God is one-in-three, and three-in-one.

The mystery is that God in God’s self is unfathomable, incomprehensible, inexplicable.

This is the mystery we associate with Trinity Sunday.

And this is why I think we might call this day Mystery Sunday.

PAUSE

Indeed, I would argue that we need at least one Sunday of the church year in which we acknowledge the mystery of God.

Because we need to remember that God is mysterious.

We need to remember that we come before God in awe.

We need to remember that we come before God with a sense of wonderment, a sense of amazement, a sense of astonishment, and a sense of sheer reverence.

We need to be reminded of the mystery, and Trinity Sunday is a good day to do that.

PAUSE

But, truth be told, we encounter the mystery of God regularly in our worship life.

God in Jesus Christ is born of a virgin at Christmas. That is mysterious.

The Word is made flesh is mysterious.

At the time of Jesus' baptism, a dove descends upon Jesus, and a voice from heaven declares Jesus to be God's Son. That is mysterious.

On Transfiguration Sunday, Jesus is transformed in appearance on a mountain. That, too, is mysterious.

On Good Friday, Jesus was crucified, and it was said that darkness covered the land from noon until three in the afternoon.

That is mysterious.

And then on Easter Sunday we get the mystery to end all mysteries, Jesus is raised from the dead.

Our Christian Faith is filled with mystery.

But, we don't have a particular Sunday set aside, such that we call it Mystery Sunday.

So today, I am taking the liberty to call Trinity Sunday, Mystery Sunday.

God is three-in-one, one-in-three. God is mysterious.

PAUSE

Yes, sisters and brothers in Christ, we need at least one day on the church calendar reserved for mystery, because so much of life is about removing the mystery around us.

Indeed, if we think about the incredible discoveries that have been made, even though these discoveries are extremely important and helpful for our lives...

If we think about scientific discoveries, we must also recognize that with those discoveries comes a partial loss of the mystery that once was.

For instance, people had once wondered about the mysterious building blocks of life?

And then, Watson and Crick discovered the double helix known as DNA.

And this revolutionized molecular biology, but at the same time it removed some of the mystery of life.

And people have wondered about dreams, what they mean, where they came from?

And then in the early 2000s brain imaging technology emerged such that scientists can observe the brain to see where it is active during dreaming.

And now science is able to tell what we are dreaming about by observing the brain scan of a dreaming person.

Again, technology has revolutionized neuroscience and dream interpretation, while at the same time removing something of the mystery that was once there.

Our human society is like this.

Our human society wants to understand, to comprehend, to explain the mystery.

And, don't get me wrong, that is not a bad thing, especially as science continues to work to improve human existence.

But, I wonder, if we as a human species are succumbing more and more to the belief that everything will eventually become knowable.

That there really is no mystery.

And, if there are things that aren't knowable, well then, those things are either not real or are of no great importance.

This is my fear for us as human species.

That we are losing our sense of the mysterious.

And if we lose our sense of the mysterious then that puts pressure on the validity of religion and in the existence of God, doesn't right?

PAUSE

But the truth is that the more we come to learn, the more we realize just how much we don't know.

The more we learn the more we discover how much we just don't know.

PAUSE

Indeed, when we stop to think about it, mystery is something inherent in life, and the further we dig down into the question of why, the deeper we see how far the mystery actually goes.

So again, mystery is inherent in life.

And mystery, sisters and brothers in Christ, starts with the simple question...
“Why is there something and not nothing?”

Why is there a universe, and a planet that sustains life?

And why, among that great diversity of life that exists on that planet, why are there intelligent creatures that are self-aware and can ponder the reality around them?

Again, why is there something and not nothing?

Why, except that some creator God decided there should be?

But why would this creator God decide that there should be something and not nothing?

Why bother? Why create? Why make this beautiful world and establish the human race in it?

Why? Because of love.

That is the only answer that makes sense of the mystery.

Why is there something and not nothing? Because God loves.

Love is God’s essence. Love is God’s nature. Love is what God is.

The mystery of life is love. The mystery of the universe is love.

And it is not enough for God just to love us, his human creatures, in one way.

No, God decided to love us in three ways—as Father who creates us, as Son who redeems us from sin and death, and as Spirit who sustains us.

God’s love is threefold.

PAUSE

Love is the mysterious force at work in our everyday lives.

Love, God's love is the real mystery in life.

For we know, it makes perfect sense that sin and wickedness would exist in our world.

It makes perfect sense that people would be self-centered.

That people would be self-serving.

That people would be all about themselves.

It makes perfect sense, right?

I mean, from an evolutionary standpoint, from the standpoint that life, including humans will do everything in their power to sustain their own life...

From this standpoint it would make sense that sin and wickedness should thrive in the world.

But then we are blessed with the mysterious example of our Lord and Savior.

Jesus was not self-serving.

Jesus was not self-centered. He was not all about what was best for his own survival.

Jesus willingly died on the cross, suffered crucifixion for our sake.

Yes, it makes perfect sense that sin and wickedness exist in the world.

But the mystery is God's love in Jesus Christ, such that Christ would die for a broken and sinful world.

PAUSE

As we think about this Trinity Sunday, this Mystery Sunday, we are again reminded of the mystery that is God's love.

We are reminded that God's love in the singular form was not enough for God.

God desired to love us in a three-fold way, through Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

And as we are reminded of this incredible mystery that is unfathomable, incomprehensible, and inexplicable...

As we are reminded of the mystery of God's love, we are invited again this day to enter into that mystery ourselves.

We enter into the mystery that is the essence of God, when we embrace the opportunity to be loving toward others.

But, be assured, Friends, that the world will continue to find this strange.

Be assured that the world will look at us as peculiar.

Why would we want to care for the needy?

Why would we want to seek justice for those who are looked upon with indifference?

Why would we speak of neighbors, even strangers, as our brothers and sisters?

Why would we bother? It makes more sense to care for ourselves and for our own.

The world will be mystified by our actions and our words which bespeak God's love.

The world will not understand.

But, that is the great mystery of God's love.

And the world needs to be reminded of mystery.

The world needs a sense of awe and wonderment.

The world needs a sense of astonishment.

And Lord knows, we need a sense of reverence.

Not reverence toward persons who demonstrate love.

But reverence toward God through whom we are empowered to love others.

We need a resurgence of reverence toward God, which is engendered in people when they encounter the mysterious.

So, may God bless you, this Trinity Sunday, this Mystery Day.

May God bless you with a renewed sense of mystery and a profound calling to love, so that many may come to revere the Lord. In Christ, we pray...Amen.