



# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

## **A Devotion During This Time of the Coronavirus Pandemic Trinity Sunday, June 7, 2020**

### **Good News of the Triune God**

#### **Matthew 28:16-20**

28:16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them.

28:17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.

28:18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

28:19 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,

28:20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Today we celebrate Trinity Sunday, the Sunday after Pentecost. It reminds us of the three different ways we experience the one God whom we worship. We worship God the Father (Creator); we worship Jesus (Redeemer) who experienced the life of a human; and we worship the way that God works within us - the Holy Spirit (Holy Ghost) (Sustainer).

The first of the Articles of Religion of the AME Church says this:

#### 1. Of Faith in the Holy Trinity

There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the Maker and Preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead, there are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

This passage in the gospel of Matthew is one of the few references in the Bible where we see this explicit reference to the Trinity. It comes after Jesus has been crucified and has risen. He now prepares to ascend to heaven; but, before he does he affirms and commissions the disciples to

spread his good news of the reign of God and to make disciples, expanding the family of believers, initiating them in the name of all of who and what God has shown Godself to be. Jesus will go to the Father even as he commands the disciples to go into the world. This will be a new normal; Jesus will not physically be there walking beside them, eating and fellowshiping at table with them, settling rocking fishing boats and calming seas and storms. They must face the world head on and declare the good news and enlarge the family of faith.

In these days, divisions are magnified and descensions amplified. Many feel powerless and unheard. Many have quoted Dr. Martin Luther King during these days of civil unrest, “A riot is the language of the unheard.” We are called even now to preach the gospel of salvation, justice, and liberation and to enlarge the family of faith in this time when many feel unheard, helpless, and even hopeless.

Greg Carey in *Living by the Word, The Christian Century, June 3, 2020* says, “At the end of the day, the doctrine of the Trinity is good news, worthy of celebration. It affirms the whole of the gospel: that the God who created the world, called Abraham and Sarah, blessed and healed in Jesus, and now empowers the church through the work of the Holy Spirit is one God. All these blessed realities constitute a whole. It also acknowledges the relationality core to the divine mystery. We worship a great and transcendent God, who from the beginning and throughout history draws near to humankind with love and blessing. ‘What are human beings that you are mindful of them, indeed?’”

In a time when some can't breathe either because of COVID-19's suffocation or corrupt policing and unjust policies and practices which have a knee on our necks literally and figuratively, the God who was at the beginning, sending a wind across the face of the waters and went on to breathe life into clay to make human is still breathing and bringing about the winds of change for justice. The God with us, Emmanuel, born in obscurity, who walked, healed, and preached that the first would be last and the last first so much until authorities of the religious and political empires of the day killed him, and who rose with power and authority, is still with us healing and giving us authority to welcome the seeker, the lost, and the last. The God of Pentecost with wind and fire, brings not a fire and wind of destruction but a purifying and resetting presence and force. This is the good news of the Triune God. As impossible as it is to fully understand or explain all of who and what God is, we have what we need to expand the family, to speak a word of hope, and to fight the good fight because this same God is mindful of us because of God's great love.

**TALK:** Take a moment to be silent, reflect, and share/write down— How would you explain the mystery of the Trinity to someone who has never heard of the Triune God?

Read or recite the Apostle's Creed, our Affirmation of Faith

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; the third day He arose from the dead, He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Church Universal, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.**

**PRAY:** Holy God, we pray as our forebears did, “I’ve been ‘buked and I’ve been scorn. There is trouble all over this world; but, I ain’t gonna lay my ‘ligion down!” So, show yourself mighty; show yourself strong for you are God in three persons. In the name of the blessed Trinity, we pray. AMEN

**ACT:**

1. Exercise the authority given to you as a disciple and a citizen and take some action of advocacy for justice and peace. (e.g. Write a letter to a public official regarding racialized policing and brutality or environmental racism or unequal access to quality healthcare or education, support a peaceful demonstration for justice and peace, make a donation to an organization working for justice, etc.)
2. See also the craft activity that accompanies this devotion.
3. Revisit the Psalm 23 Challenge first issued as part of the March 22, 2020 set of resources.

**Song:**

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty  
AMEC Hymnal, #25

1. Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly! Lord God Al-might-y!  
Ear-ly in the morn-ing our song shall rise to Thee;  
Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly! mer-ci-ful and might-y;  
God in three per-sons, bless-ed Trin-i-ty!
2. Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly! All the saints a-dore Thee,  
Cast-ing down their gold-en crowns a-round the glass-y sea;  
Cher-u-bim and ser-a-phim fall-ing down be-fore Thee,  
Which wert, and art, and ev-er-more shalt be.
3. Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly! Though the dark-ness hide Thee,  
Though the eye of sin-ful man Thy glo-ry may not see;  
On-ly Thou art ho-ly; there is none be-side Thee,  
Per-fect in power, in love, and pur-i-ty.
4. Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly! Lord God Al-might-y!  
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea;  
Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly! mer-ci-ful and might-y;  
God in three per-sons, bless-ed Trin-i-ty! A-men.

Alternative Song:

*Psalm 8*, <https://youtu.be/UiryUzSgu8g>  
By Richard Smallwood

Physical space—You may wish to create a dedicated space for your time of devotion. You may choose to place a candle, bible, and special symbols or material/fabric to help you focus and center during this time of reflection and prayer.

If you use this meditation and exercise in a time of family or group devotion, share in the leadership; allow different persons to read or lead different parts of this meditation.



Title: Trinity  
by Kelly Latimore, visit <https://kellylatimoreicons.com/>

*The Christian Education Department, AMEC Publishing House, and others will continue to develop resources that can be used as times of personal and collective devotion and study during this pandemic to help us all sustain and strengthen our faith and resolve.*