



Trinity Sunday Devotional Activity

Week of 7 June 2020

Scripture:

“Then God said, ‘Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.’ So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them... God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.” (Genesis 1:26-27, 31a)

“I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.” (Psalm 139:14)

Reflection

As we opened our worship together on Sunday, we sang these words in praise of the Triune God: *“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty! All thy works shall praise thy name, in land and sky and sea. Holy, holy, holy, Merciful and Mighty! God in three persons, Blessed Trinity.”¹*

The very essence of God the Trinity embodies diversity. God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each distinct, yet also unified. “God in three persons” is one way of speaking about the several ways we experience God – God creates. God loves. God redeems. God sustains.

God’s great love for us was present at the very moment of creation. As the creation story tells, on the sixth day God created humankind with the fullness of love. The *imago Dei* is the Latin term for “image of God.” The value of all humanity is rooted here, as it affirms that all human beings have been made in the image and likeness of God. Each one, every one – every gender, race, ethnicity, language, ability. The variety of human characteristics is intentional, as God indeed is diverse in nature and character. All people hold inherent dignity, value and worth.

This week’s devotional is an invitation to affirm and live into the “imago Dei”

The protests currently sweeping the United States and other places around the globe have given urgency to the call for an end to racial injustice. As followers of Christ, we are image-bearers of God’s love in the world, called to uphold the inherent value and dignity of all humans through our words, actions, and prayer. Together, we affirm the value, dignity, and worth of all human beings.

During this time, in what ways are we (am I) reflecting the love of Christ in my response to injustice and discrimination?

¹ vs. 4 of “Holy, holy, holy” by John B. Dykes

Prayer: "One God, in Three Persons, creator of one human species, in many hues: all who pray to you are descendants of Adam and Eve, all members of one race called "human." Forgive the blindness that causes our eyes to notice and magnify those things we regard as different from ourselves in others. Teach us to see clearly, that we, your children, are far more alike than we are different. Help us to put aside the racial prejudices imbedded within us, and to see within every person the Child of God you created, our sister or brother, destined for Glory. In the name of One who died for all persons, of all colors, Jesus Christ." Amen.²

Activity: "God is LOVE ... In Every Language"

"God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them." (1John 4: 16b)

In the New Testament, there are five different words for "love." The Greek word for God's love is *agape*. Agape love is unconditional – it is a love which is given with no expectation of being reciprocated. Agape love is unconcerned with the self and instead is concerned with the greatest good of the beloved. Agape isn't born just out of emotions or feelings, but as a choice and will. Agape love is faithful, committed, and sacrificial. This is the love God has for us. As we are image bearers of God's love in the world, this is the type of love that the Christian community is called to live out.

Every culture, every language has one (or more) words for Love. How many ways do you know how to say, "love"?

Gather a blank sheet of paper and some markers, crayons, or colored pencils. Have a world map or globe handy.

At the top of the paper write: "God is LOVE..."

Draw a large heart.

Within the heart, write the word "love" in as many languages and ways as you can, using this chart as a guide. Vary the colors you use, the size of the letters, and direction.

Say the word out loud.

Locate on your map where this language is spoken.

ADD any other languages that you might know that are not on this list.

How many ways to say "love" can you memorize? 😊

God of love, we give you thanks for the diversity of languages, contexts, and experiences, which all together give us glimpses of your vast and amazing love for us, for creation, and for our world. Help us to love and care for all that you have created, with dignity and honor. Amen.

French	<i>amour</i>
Spanish	<i>amor</i>
German	<i>liebe</i>
Italian	<i>amore</i>
Portuguese	<i>ame</i>
Icelandic	<i>ást</i>
Filipino	<i>pag-ibig</i>
Dutch	<i>liefde</i>
Polish	<i>miłość</i>
Russian	<i>lyubov</i>
Greek	<i>agape - Αγάπη</i>
Japanese	<i>ai - 愛</i>
Indonesian	<i>cinta</i>
Zulu	<i>uthando</i>
Swahili	<i>mapenzi</i>
Georgian	<i>miqvars</i>
Hebrew	<i>ahava - אהבה</i>

² "A Year of Prayers to End Racism" - The Episcopal Diocese of West Virginia

Our Church – A Mosaic of *Imago Dei*

We as a church family at ELCG are uniquely blessed by the rich diversity among us. Our worship and our community life reflect a diversity of cultures, backgrounds, ages, gender, denominational perspectives, and abilities. And yet, we are unified by our shared faith. We offer this image as a reminder that together *we are* image bearers of God’s love in the world!

