Sacred Space: A Resource For Small-group Ministry

Year A

Focus: Trinity Sunday

Scripture: Genesis 1:1–2, 4a NRSV

Gathering
Welcome
Trinity Sunday is observed the Sunday following Pentecost. Christian tradition celebrates the doctrine of the Trinity: God, who is experienced in three persons. God is Creator (traditionally identified as the Father), Jesus Christ is the Redeemer (the Son), and the Holy Spirit is the Comforter or Sustainer. In other words, God is one and three. From Community of Christ Basic Beliefs:

We believe in one living God who meets us in the testimony of Israel, is revealed in Jesus Christ, and moves through all creation as the Holy Spirit. We affirm the Trinity—God who is a community of three persons.

—www.CofCchrist.org/basic-beliefs

Prayer for Peace

Ring a bell or chime three times slowly.
Light the peace candle.

Gracious God,

We come today to this place, at this hour, in need of your sustaining love and gift of understanding. Our hearts are wrenched with sorrow and remorse for our brothers and sisters throughout the world who live in constant fear and distress.

Our arms and hearts especially yearn to hold and comfort the children. They are such innocent victims of inhumanity. We struggle to understand the fearsome power of greed and hate. We cannot and do not want to accept it as inevitable, though some persons and systems reject your ways.

We feel so helpless and yet somewhat guilty. We know that the remedy for these situations is the gospel of Jesus Christ. We know and have witnessed the power of the message that changes lives. We know personally the power of relationships in the Spirit of Christ that brings true peace and hope to hearts and souls.
We confess our failure, our inadequacy, to bring the message in meaningful and affirmative ways. We get sidetracked with issues of our own comfort and welfare.

Our prayer is twofold. Help us, Lord, help us to get beyond ourselves and to respond to your invitation to join you in your desires to bring all people to you, to knowledge of the gospel of Christ. Help us also to have the wisdom and strength of purpose to become involved in our communities and our world to effect policy and program in our social, political, and economical affairs that will reflect your constant love and care for your creation everywhere.

Lord, please see beyond our mere words to the real desires of our hearts and add the power of your Spirit to their intent. We would be open to the guidance of your Spirit. We would be instruments of peace and redemption in this wonderful world you have given us.

In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

—Marjorie Nilsen

**Spiritual Practice**

*Darshan*

Read the following:

Today’s practice comes from the Hindu tradition. *Darshan* means to behold the Divine in all things with reverence. In the Christian tradition this also is known as *Visio Divina*. Both practices are rooted in the same concept of approaching images with openness to God’s presence.

Invite the group to go outside with you. Read the following:

Choose an image around you that is calling to you. It can be anything: a tree, clouds, the sky, grass.

Pause to allow group members to choose their image. Then read the following:

We will spend several minutes looking at the image we have chosen.

Look slowly at the image, taking in every detail without critique or judgment. Observe the colors, shapes, shadows, lines, etc. Allow your feelings, memories, and thoughts about the image to arise. Notice and welcome all reactions.

Give the group members two or three minutes to meditate on their images, and then read the following questions and allow a discussion to follow:

How do these feelings, evoked by the image, connect with your life?

How is the Spirit calling you through the image?

What is your response?

After the discussion, close the practice with the following words: May you rest in God’s presence. Amen.
Sharing Around the Table
Genesis 1:1–2, 4a NRSV

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless
void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the
face of the waters. ...And God saw that the light was good.

This familiar passage is about inclusion and new beginnings. God’s creation activity is
not about a specific nation or origin of people. The God we meet in this story is breathing and
creating all things. In the image of “wind from God swept across the waters,” the biblical writer
offers us a glimpse of the power that flows from God.

From a formless void, God’s breath and Spirit bring life that begins in a new way. At
every step of the creation process, God declares that what was and is being created is “good.”
That single word, good, reminds us that all of creation has value and purpose and will bring
meaning and blessing to life.

The deeper narrative in this imagery of creation can awaken us to how God’s creating
presence still is moving and shaping our lives today. Therein lies God’s invitation to see that
what God is creating now also is very good.

Questions

1. When have you encountered God’s creating activity at work in the world?
2. How does the idea of God’s continued activity in creation invite you to ponder what God
   is seeking to create in you?
3. How are God’s creating actions in the world good?

Sending
Generosity Statement

Note: If you are using Thoughts for Children, make time for the children to share their
clay creations.

Faithful disciples respond to an increasing awareness of the abundant generosity of God
by sharing according to the desires of their hearts; not by commandment or constraint.
—Doctrine and Covenants 163:9

The offering basket is available if you would like to support ongoing, small-group
ministries as part of your generous response. Pray with me:

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, Three who are one, may we offer our resources to you
that they may be used to share loving community with those seeking respite,
connection, purpose, and love. May our generosity bring blessing and further the

Invitation to Next Meeting
Closing Hymn

CCS 143, “Morning Has Broken”

Closing Prayer

Optional Additions Depending on the Group

- Communion
- Thoughts for Children
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Generosity Statement

*Note:* If you are using *Thoughts for Children, make time for the children to share their clay creations.*

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Communion Statement

Choose one scripture to read from this selection: 1 Corinthians 11:23–26; Matthew 26:17–30; Mark 14:12–26; Luke 22:7–39.

Invitation to Communion

All are welcome at Christ’s table. The Lord’s Supper, or Communion, is a sacrament in which we remember the life, death, resurrection, and continuing presence of Jesus Christ. In Community of Christ, we also experience Communion as an opportunity to renew our baptismal covenant and to be formed as disciples who live Christ’s mission. Others may have different or added understandings within their faith traditions. We invite all who participate in the Lord’s Supper to do so in the love and peace of Jesus Christ.

We share in Communion as an expression of blessing, healing, peace, and community. In preparation let’s sing from Community of Christ Sings (select one):

515, “In These Moments We Remember”
516, “Coming Together for Wine and for Bread”
521, “Let Us Break Bread Together”
525, “Small Is the Table”
528, “Eat This Bread”
Thoughts for Children

Materials: Play-Doh or other non-toxic modeling clay
Say: God created the world and everything in it. After God created, God said it was all good.
Ask: What is the funniest thing God created? What is the scariest thing? What do you think was the most difficult thing?
Say: We believe in the Sacredness of Creation. That means we try to take good care of the world and all that God created. We care for the Earth, plants, animals, water, and air.
What are some things we can do to care for and protect the Earth, sea, plants, and animals? (Pick up trash, water plants, feed our pets.)
Give each child a lump of clay. Invite them to “create” something good. They can choose what to create. Give them an opportunity to share their creations at the end of your time together.
Offer a short prayer of thanks for the good world God created.

Note: Make time for the children to share their clay creations during the Generosity moment.