

Trinity Sunday
St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church
The Rev. Marcia M. Lockwood
June 11, 2017
Text: Trinity Sunday

*God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
The courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference. Amen.*

Many of you know I went to England last month to visit my friend, Laurie Boone Hogan and her daughter, Louise. I had a great time. We visited cathedrals, churches, manor houses, spectacular gardens!

Louise lives in Kings Cliffe, a small village near Peterborough, which is an hour north of London by train. Kings Cliffe is a quaint village of limestone houses and narrow roads that wind their way through the village. Everyone knows each other and everyone walks wherever they go - to church, the bakery, the market, the pub. Kings Cliffe is like something straight out of Downton Abbey! I'm not kidding!

What made my visit special was meeting so many of Laurie's friends. They invited us, tea, to lunch, to the pub. We went on special outings together. We did so many things together that I got real sense of their culture and how they live.

However, there was one small problem. When they spoke I could hardly understand them! Now don't get me wrong, I love their British accent, but it was really a struggle to understand what they were saying!

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We have a similar problem today! Today is Trinity Sunday, and preachers, all over the country, all over the world, for that matter, are trying to explain the Doctrine of the Trinity. And I'm willing to bet, not many people understand what they are saying!

They're probably saying things like: God is God, but God is also three persons. Now these three persons are distinct but separate from each other. They are of one substance and co-eternal. All three are God, but at the same time, there is only one God. It's way too abstract!

Here's the problem, all we have is our language to describe God. And our language is incapable of describing precisely who God is! So we need a different kind language to describe God. We need a metaphor or an image to describe who God is.

Through the years, many images have been used and you have probably heard all of them! But I don't think they have gone far enough. What we need, is an image that engages our hearts and has meaning for our lives.

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This week I was digging around and searching for such an image and I found one that I really like. One that really works! It's the image of a "dance."

Now, this dance is not a ballroom dance, where partners glide around the dance floor, with their arms around each other. Nor is it a rock dance, where partners suddenly separate and do their own thing. This dance is a circle dance, where hands are joined in a circle, expressing their life together. This dance has no beginning or end. Each partner is not confused with the others, nor is one partner of greater worth than another. Instead, each partner plays a specific role, and the three of them move in rhythm, showing the utmost courtesy, affection and grace. (Father, Son and Holy Spirit).

From time to time, you and I hear the music of this dance. During the silences of our lives when everything makes sense; during wonderful celebrations when we feel on top of the world; during times of transition when we graduate from one phase of life, and get ready to start another. Those times when we are thankful for what we've been given, proud of what we've done, hopeful about what lies ahead. It's on these occasions

that we hear the music of this dance, the rhythm of the Trinity. (Father, Son and Holy Spirit).

But we hear this music also during times of darkness, when the ordinary supports of life have crumbled from beneath us, and we feel like we've lost our way or our sense of purpose. Yet we do know, that beyond these troubled times life awaits us again, for the music we hear, is the rhythm of the Trinity. (Father, Son and Holy Spirit).

The Trinity is a never ending, joyous dance, yet the *miracle*, is that the circle breaks open. Son and Spirit, still holding hands with the Father, extend their other hands to us, inviting us into the circle, drawing us into the dance, that we can become their partners, and participate in their lives.

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Have you ever gone, wedding reception, observed the guests dancing? You usually see all levels of dancers. Some glide around the dance floor with ease. Others move with small timid steps. Still others stumble awkwardly around the floor. But the saddest thing of all, is not the dancers who lack the skill, but the people who never get out on the floor to dance! People who could dance but choose not to dance.

I think our lives work the same way. A dance is going on, and that dance is the living God, the holy Trinity. You and I are invited to join that dance. The Spirit is eager to help us move. The Son reaches out his hand. The Father wants us to see his face. Nothing should hold us back.

So the problem is not bad dancing, but that some of us choose not to dance at all! What finally matters is not how well we dance, but that we take a risk, join the circle, and move to the music. The rhythm of the Trinity. (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).

When a group of women at St. Dunstan's gather each Wednesday to pray and knit prayer shawls for those in need. "They're dancing!" When a friend is going through a tough time and you sit and listen. "You're dancing." When a group of parishioners share a meal with I-Help men or women. "They're dancing." And, yes, we're dancing with the children at St. Andre's

school in Haiti. "We're dancing" with the people for whom we provide food and clothing in the Salinas Valley. The Women of St. Dunstan's are dancing. And, "we're dancing" with the acolytes and high school graduates we honor today. On and on..... At St. Dunstan's. "We're dancing!"

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The blessing of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit gives us the reassurance in a God who is in relationship with us, providing a circle in which we are all invited and all included. We can choose to join in the dance or not. But one thing is certain, when we do, we won't be disappointed.

So.....Let's dance!

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! Amen.