

Trinity Sunday, Year C, 6/12/22

Almighty and everlasting God, you have given to us your servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of your divine Majesty to worship the Unity: Keep us steadfast in this faith and worship, and bring us at last to see you in your one and eternal glory, O Father; who with the Son and the Holy Spirit live and reign, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

**Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31**

Does not wisdom call, and does not understanding raise her voice?

On the heights, beside the way, at the crossroads she takes her stand;

beside the gates in front of the town, at the entrance of the portals she cries out:

"To you, O people, I call, and my cry is to all that live.

The LORD created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of long ago.

Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth.

When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water.

Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth--

when he had not yet made earth and fields, or the world's first bits of soil.

When he established the heavens, I was there, when he drew a circle on the face of the deep,

when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep,

when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth,

then I was beside him, like a master worker; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the human race.

**Psalm 8**

O God our Governor, \* how exalted is your Name in all the world! 2 Out of the mouths of infants and children, \* your majesty is praised above the heavens. 3 You have set up a stronghold against your adversaries, \* to quell the enemy and the avenger. 4 When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, \* the moon and the stars you have set in their courses, 5 What are we that you should be mindful of us, \* mere mortals that you should seek us out? 6 You have made us but little lower than the angels; \* you adorn us with glory and honor; 7 You give us dominion over the works of your hands; \* you put all things under our feet: 8 All sheep and oxen, \* even the wild beasts of the field, 9 The birds of the air, the fish of the sea, \* and whatsoever walks in the paths of the sea. 10 O God, our Governor, \* how exalted is your Name in all the world!

**Romans 5:1-5**

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God.

And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,

and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

**John 16:12-15**

"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

How many times have I said those words in my lifetime? More than I can count. Beginning and ending our prayer in the Name of the Blessed Trinity. And it started so early in my life that it is part of me. Whether I understand what it all means or not, the Trinity is a routine familiar part of my awareness.

That awareness of the Trinity has grown over the years. To the point where I think this may be one of the first times in my life when I can truly say I have seen a glimpse of what the Trinity means for you and me in our day to day lives.

The mutuality, the co-equality, the interconnectedness, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, speaks to us, calls to us. It shows us how God works. And it shows us how we as God's children, God's created ones, how we work.

In the past few days, I have re connected with many of you whom I have known since I first came to St. Clement's in December 2005. When I first came to the Islands. And in all my comings and goings, I have felt connected with this community ever since. Over all these years, whether we have been physically present or not, Kaipō and I have felt ourselves to be a part of this place, and all of you.

This is how our connections are in real life. We come. We go. We drift apart. We come back together. We get older. Our lives become interconnected with each other through friendships, love relationships, work relationships, marriages, births, illnesses, death: in all of it as God relates within the Three Persons of the Trinity, and so you and I relate with one another.

This past Thursday I awoke to a text message on my phone that a friend of mine in California had died. I knew it was coming. In fact, at the end of last week I had sent his wife a message reminding her of my prayers for her and for her husband

and for their whole family as they circled around him in his last hours on earth. Even though I knew it was coming, it was still a punch in the na'au. As the day wore on, I kept thinking of all the lines of relationship that had brought him into my life and my awareness. His wife was a close friend of my best friend. Over his lifetime, I had shared in his cancer journey. I knew his wife and his daughter better than I knew him. But still there was the connection.

While I was still reeling from the news of his death, along in my email came my daily Civil Beat Morning News. The first item described a project called Ka Ulana Pilina. "Ulana means 'to weave,' and pilina means 'relationship' – this project seeks to foster a more unified, engaged Hawaii through the strengthening of community bonds." It is a collaborative effort involving University of Hawaii, Civil Beat, and the wider community, to provide daily articles in 'ōlelo Hawai'i.

Well, you could have knocked me off my chair. I had already written this sermon that I was calling, "Community! It's inevitable!"

Ka Ulana Pilina, the weaving of relationships, is my definition of community. In the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, we say that God is Three Persons in One God. To me, this is Community in its simplest form. Three co-equal Persons that represent how God relates with the Universe: as Creator, as Redeemer, as Inspirer and Sustainer.

My first point: the doctrine of the Trinity is significant in that it shows us how God works. Ka Ulana Pilina, the weaving of relationships. Within the Trinity, God has woven relationships among Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: Three Persons, One God. Likewise in our individual relationship with the God that created us, God weaves this relationship with each of us and calls each of us to be in community with God. Each of us, whether we want it or not, is in community with the God that made us. God doesn't act alone. When God creates, whatever or whoever God creates will be part of God's tribe, God's family, God's gene pool, if you will. In every breath we take, in every action in our lives, in every thought, word or deed, we are part of God and God is part of us. So that's my first point. You and I exist in community with God because that's how God works. And so, in turn, that's how we work.

My second point has to do with our corporate life in every community of which we are a part. Name any community of which you are a member: your family,

people at work, professional colleagues, people that you play with, clubs you belong to, people you study with, people you pray with and for. Some are communities of choice, some communities by default. Even the solitary person, whether one is alone unwillingly or by choice, is part of a community. And where we are, God is, because God created us and lives in us. No one is an island. We are all part of some community with our fellow humans. Because that's how God works. And that's how we work.

What does this mean for this community of St. Clement's where we are woven into relationship with one another? Here, and now, we find ourselves needing to make our transition in our next chapter of life here. Some of you are ready: damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead! Others of you are thinking that you're not ready, that you don't want to have to face another transition as you look for a new priest.

Here's the reality of living in community. Even if you don't feel ready for the search and the transition, there are others in the community that will carry you until you are ready.

Jesus tells us in today's gospel that when the Spirit of truth comes, that Spirit will guide us into all truth. And so here we are. Once again trying to hear and to discern that Spirit of truth that Jesus has already promised is guiding us.

And so it is in that Spirit that we go forward to this next chapter in the life of St. Clement's.

So how does the Spirit of truth speak to us here? Well, in a lot of ways. But since we are a community within the Episcopal tradition, we believe the Spirit speaks to us through our leadership, through our Wardens and our Vestry. Somewhere out of the heart of God, the Spirit of truth speaks to us through Beth Fincke, our Senior Warden, and through Carol Taylor Kim, our Junior Warden, Martha and Holoua, and the members of our Vestry: Jane, Matthew, Sarah, Susan, Brian, Leslie, Tau'eva, and Amy. These are the servant leaders that will be guiding us into all truth in the months to come.

As part of St. Clement's Community, we are also a part of another community, into relationship with whom we have been woven, the Diocese of Hawaii. As part of the Diocese, St. Clement's will also be led by Canon Sandy Graham, who is professionally trained and experienced to work with congregations to do the

homework we need to do to find and hire another priest. Canon Sandy and the Vestry will meet on Saturday, June 25, to pray and to study St. Clement's Community and to make decisions for going forward in the process.

Notice I said homework, and I said process. This will not happen overnight. It is once again time for some months of introspection and prayer, and lots and lots of communication.

So what is your role in this transition? The truth is every person that is part of St. Clement's Community has an opinion or two or seven as to what works and what does not work in promoting the life of this community. St. Clement's members are famous for just how opinionated we are. And that's a good thing. Your job is to communicate your opinions to the Vestry and to keep communicating your opinions to the Vestry until the new priest comes. Your job is to pray for yourself and for every member of St. Clement's so that at least two things will happen: you will continue to communicate with God (and in the process God will be communicating with you), AND you will be contributing to the life of the St. Clement's Community.

That's how God works, and that's how God wants us to live with one another. Turn to each other and see. Pick up your parish directory and see. See the others that are part of this parish community with you, others with whom you have been woven into relationship.

Imua. Forward we go. Talking with each other. Listening to each other. Taking care of each other. Praying for God's guidance along the way.

Holy Trinity, Three Persons in One God, show us Your light and Your wisdom.  
Amen.