

This week I was speaking with a couple of other pastors about what scripture they were going to read. To some people that seems like a strange question because generally most congregations use the same liturgy. They follow the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) or the Narrative Lectionary (NL). So, no matter where you go to church the scriptures will probably be the same, but everything else can be different.

This question led into a couple of great discussions. I should begin with I read from the NL. That liturgical series begins at Advent and runs until Pentecost. It follows the life of Jesus through one specific Gospel, in our case this year it was Matthew. But after that, you are kind of on your own to fill the season after Pentecost.

There are recommended readings for the Summer. So you aren't completely scrambling. But, it isn't as in depth as what we were doing the rest of the year. And there are a lot more Old Testament readings than the rest of the year. This will be important a little later.

The RCL series never ends. No matter which Sunday it is, you are guaranteed there will be a series of readings. It also covers every Christian holiday, whether or not every denomination observes it. There is always an Old Testament reading, Psalm, New Testament reading, and Gospel lesson.

The reason that I asked what they were planning on reading was because today is Trinity Sunday. It is the first Sunday after Pentecost in which we are to celebrate the triune God. The church didn't start recognizing this day until around the 4th Century because of the Arian heresy. They suggested that Jesus was not only not a part of God, but he also was not born from God.

The first pastor I spoke with is a fellow UCC minister. He told me that he was going to continue with the narrative series even though the next study is on the book of Isaiah, which is what we read today. I laughed when he told me this because we had talked about how his congregation did not like reading from the Old Testament.

To them the Old Testament is just that old. It doesn't speak to them in a modern way. The rules were written before Jesus and are not part of the new covenant. But, Jesus said that he is not here to change the old ways. He is here to teach us about his Father and grant us entrance to the Kingdom of Heaven.

The second pastor I spoke with didn't hesitate when he told me that he used the RCL series and was just following that lesson. I asked him if he thought that was a little lazy and cheating since we had just read Genesis 1-2a at Easter and Matthew 28:16-20 a few weeks ago with the great commission. He wasn't amused with my question.

The third pastor told me that he was going to read something from John because that was where he had been reading from the last couple of weeks. He told me that Trinity Sunday isn't directly expressed in the bible. So, his church didn't recognize it.

I shared with him that at first, I didn't understand why Trinity Sunday was significant from the point that we needed to remind people about our triune god. Everywhere around the church we have symbols reminding us of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Today in the choir loft, we have hanging a banner that is the symbol for the Holy Trinity. The three points represent a part of God with the unifying circle surrounding it. On our altar we have the Alpha and Omega representing God with IHS signifying Jesus. We have the hanging cross and the cross with the crown on our flag and lectern also symbolizing Jesus. And today we see the Holy Spirit with the dove on the parament as well as the flame burning on our

memorial candle signifying the baptism through fire we share with us and our remembered loved ones.

The more we spoke, the more I realized that it makes absolute sense to celebrate the Holy Trinity today. We celebrate God the Father everyday. We speak directly to that part in almost everything we do and say, whether it is a hymn or a prayer. We say the Lord's Prayer at every service.

Now we've just celebrated the resurrection of Christ. This is significant because he fulfilled the prophecy and forgave our sins so that we can enter heaven. In doing so, we were promised to be baptized by fire and filled with the Holy Spirit. And that occurred on Pentecost Sunday.

So this week is figuratively the first time that we would be in communion with all three. We know that everyday they are a part of our life, but if we were the apostles this would be the very beginning for us and our calling. We now have been blessed by the Holy Trinity and have been commissioned to go forward.

In today's scripture readings, we are talking about being chosen to spread the word of God. Our first reading from Isaiah, we have a very vibrantly colored picture about what happened to Isaiah.

It is important to remember that Isaiah was not a priest or holy man. He served as an advisor to the king. Because of this, he would not have actually had access to the chamber in his vision. This room was not just in the temple in Jerusalem, but this room was the most significant room in the temple. It was called the Holy of Holies because it held the arc of the covenant. This is the throne that God would have sat upon and would be guarded and protected at all costs.

So, Isaiah is seeing this in his vision. He is seeing God sit upon his throne and the three seraphs come to life from the carvings on the arc. And the seraphs, or winged fire snakes, identify God as the one true God and Isaiah realizes that he is not worthy of being in his presence and goes through a purification ritual.

When God asks who he shall send, he isn't speaking directly to Isaiah. No, he is speaking to the room at large. Isaiah tells God that he will be the one and requests to be sent to spread the word of God.

In our Gospel lesson from Luke, we see Peter confessing to Jesus that he is a sinner and not worthy to be in the presence of the Lord. But Jesus doesn't care. He is taking another sinner and telling him that he doesn't care. He just wants him to share the word of God.

God has chosen all of us to spread his word. But not everyone hears his message the same way. Some people need to hear a contemporary vision of his love. Others need the repetition of scripture and prayer. And some just accept that the lesson is there. Whether we are ready to accept our calling like Isaiah or we are put into a situation where others reassure us that we can do it, like Peter, we have all been blessed by the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.