

Sermon for Trinity Sunday
June 15, 2025
The Rev. Canon Raymond Raney
Trinity on the Hill Episcopal Church
Los Alamos, New Mexico

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31
Psalm 8
Romans 5:1-5
John 16:12-15

Today is Trinity Sunday and Today is Father's Day:
a two for one Sunday.

So, here's to you who are biological fathers;
here's to you who are fathers by your nurturing of children not your own; and here's to all of us who are
fathers of a future yet unwritten.

The Church Fathers gave us the doctrine of the Trinity.
The divinity of the Son would be affirmed
through the debates in the First Council of Nicaea.
That's where the first draft of the Nicene Creed was written.

The First Council of Nicaea began about this time,
One Thousand Seven Hundred years ago.
About 300 bishops of the church were gathered in Asia Minor
to debate and define Christianity.
As with so many issues,
it all began because of theological disputes and differing opinions.

As the hymn says:
Though with a scornful wonder men see her sore oppressed.
By schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed.
Yet saints their watch are keeping, their cry goes up "How Long?"
And soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.

It is remarkable to me how the human mind
can even begin to contemplate our existence,
let alone the nature of the Cosmos and our place in it.
Where does that wisdom come from?

Which brings me to our reading from Proverbs.
Proverbs is one of the books of the Bible considered Wisdom Literature.
That doesn't mean what we often think of as wise:
academic, intellectual, knowledge, information, explanation.
It's not what we can know with our mind,
wisdom is what we comprehend with our hearts.
To my way of thinking, humanity's capacities to wonder
stem from the first of God's creations – Wisdom.

The Lord created me at the beginning of his work,
the first of his acts of long ago...
I was there...
When there were no depths I was brought forth...
Before the mountains had been shaped...
when he had not yet made earth and fields...
When he established the heavens...
when he made firm the skies above...
when he assigned to the sea its limit...
when he marked out the foundations of the earth...
I was there... beside him, like a master worker;
delighting in the human race.

Wisdom was implanted at Creation into the fabric of the Universe.
And wisdom winds her way through all that we are and have ever been.

Wisdom comes, not just from our Dads [and equally from our Moms],
but every culture has a way of recording
the practical advice of previous generations.
Wisdom Literature, of which Proverbs is one of many collections,
contains writing designed to help people live righteously,
in ways that are pleasing to God.

The wisdom literature of the Hebrew Bible is generally considered to be Proverbs and Job, Ecclesiastes,
and the wisdom psalms.
The Apocrypha also includes the books of the Wisdom of Solomon
and the Wisdom of Ben Sirach.
But wisdom literature dates back further into the ancients:
the Sumerians, the Egyptians and the cultures of Mesopotamia.

The Greeks word for wisdom is Sophia,
and the myth of Sophia entwines throughout the history of humankind.
Sages searched for the abiding principles of human behavior,
sought the laws of the universe, pondered the nature of human life,
raised questions of ultimate meaning, and sought the Truth of existence.

As evident in the reading from Proverbs,
Sophia was the first of God's creations,
and tasked to reveal the divine mind
to those who sought to live moral and productive lives,
and to prepare the way for the birth of the Word made flesh.

This divine mind was God's Logos,
God's word, God's rationale, God's conversation.
Wisdom reveals God's Word, made perfect in the Incarnation.

What we see in our reading from Proverbs is a Hymn to Wisdom,
which many scholars believe later was revised as the prologue to John's Gospel:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.
All things came into being through him,
and without him not one thing came into being.
What has come into being in him was life,
and the life was the light of all people.”

This is precisely what Proverbs says about Wisdom,
and John identifies Jesus with Wisdom as the Logos of God
whom Wisdom brought to preceding and brings to succeeding generations.

Through the Wisdom of the Logos,
God continues to act, to renew, to recreate, to create anew.
And Jesus says as much to the disciples:

"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."

The Spirit of God, like Wisdom, helps us see and know God for ourselves,
and the Spirit guides us with the Logos of the Son
through the intricacies and confusions of our own times.
This is the wonder of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The doctrine of the Trinity affirms that God continues to reveal God's self through the divine energies
that God entangled in the created universe.
The Creator (the Father) sent the divine Logos to take on our human nature and to open the physical
universe to the Wisdom and experience of God.

Once that physical world was opened again to God
by the Works of Jesus and the Wisdom of God,
then the Creator could send the Holy Spirit to sanctify the world
– to rejoin heaven to earth and earth to heaven.

The Trinity draws us into the divine life.
We are caught up into the Trinity as we search for God in creation,
as we experience this world's divine energy redeemed by the Son of God,
and as we seek to sanctify every thought, action, and relationship
through the Holy Spirit.

The Trinity continues to reveal itself as we live each day of our lives
in the Wisdom of God entangled in the fabric of Creation.

"In the beginning was Wisdom, and Wisdom was with God,
and Wisdom was of God, she was in the beginning with God,
and without her was not anything made that was made.
In her was life, and the life was the light of all the world."

Amen.

