



*This Sunday at St. Luke's Blue Ridge
May 27, 2018*

(Holy Communion, both services)

Trinity Sunday



Nicodemus Comes to Jesus by Night

Nicodemus, a Pharisee, went to see Jesus at night at a time when his co-workers and friends were turning against Jesus and looking to find a way to have him killed. The fact that Nicodemus, in spite of all of this opposition to Jesus, still made the choice to seek him out may well be seen as an act of courage, even if he went in secret. In countries around the world where Christians are persecuted, many Christians meet to worship in secret. How strong is your faith? Would you have the intestinal fortitude to seek out Jesus' people if danger was involved?

Background of Trinity Sunday

Trinity Sunday was first observed in Liege, a city along the Meuse River in Belgium's French-speaking Wallonia region, in the tenth century. Thomas à Becket introduced the festival into England. It differs from other great festivals of the Christian Year in that, while they recall *historical events*, Trinity Sunday celebrates a *doctrine*, that is, Church truth which is also bible truth. Earlier festivals in the Church's Year have set before us the events on which our faith is founded; now on Trinity Sunday we sum it all up: God is known to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit – three Persons in one God – Trinity in Unity.

What it means to God Himself to be Triune – that is Three in ONE and ONE in Three – is fast beyond our understanding, but we need not be surprised; a God whom we fully understood could hardly be God any more. This is where today's **Collect** begins. God by His own gift and grace has led us to declare our faith in Him as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but for all that we worship one God only (the Unity), not three.

The petitions which follow in this Collect are simple and sensible. The first is that we may hold on to our faith because those who trust in God are strong in God; the second, that we may be protected when adversity or trouble threatens – a prayer for which we have the authority of Gethsemane.

The Collect for Trinity Sunday

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hast given unto us thy servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity; We beseech thee that thou wouldest keep us stedfast in this faith, and evermore defend us from all adversities, who livest and reignest, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

THE EPISTLE (H.C.) – Revelation 4:1-11 (J.B. Phillips)

A vision of heavenly worship

4 Later I looked again, and before my eyes a door stood open in Heaven, and in my ears was the voice with the ring of a trumpet, which I had heard at first, speaking to me and saying, "Come up here, and I will show you what must happen in the future."

^{2-6a} Immediately I knew myself to be inspired by the Spirit, and in my vision I saw a throne had been set up in Heaven, and there was someone seated upon the throne. His appearance blazed like diamond and topaz, and all around the throne shone a halo like an emerald rainbow. In a circle around the throne there were twenty-four thrones and seated upon them twenty-four elders dressed in white with golden crowns upon their heads. From the central throne come flashes of

lightning, noises and peals of thunder. Seven lamps are burning before the throne, and they are the seven Spirits of God. In front of the throne there appears a sea of glass as clear as crystal.

^{6b-8} On each side, encircling the throne, are four living creatures covered with eyes in front and behind. The first living creature is like a lion, the second is like a calf, the third has a face like a man, and the fourth living creature appears like an eagle in flight. These four creatures have each of them six wings and are covered with eyes, all around them, and even within them. Day and night they never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is coming.”

⁹⁻¹¹ And whenever the living creatures give glory and honour and thanksgiving to the one who sits upon the throne, who lives for timeless ages, the twenty-four elders prostrate themselves before him who is seated upon the throne and worship the one who lives for timeless ages. They cast their crowns before the throne and say, “You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things and by your will they exist and were created.”

NOTE: This impressionistic word painting fills us with a sense of the majesty and glory of God. The glory of the Lord, which was revealed to the seer in a vision of heaven, is also revealed in the world about us. (William Sydnor)

THE GOSPEL (H.C.) – St. John 3:1-15 (J.B. Phillips)

Jesus and a religious leader

³ ¹⁻² One night Nicodemus, a leading Jew and a Pharisee, came to see Jesus. “Master,” he began, “we realise that you are a teacher who has come from God. Obviously no one could show the signs that you show unless God were with him.”

³ “Believe me,” returned Jesus, “a man cannot even see the kingdom of God without being born again.”

⁴ “And how can a man who’s getting old possibly be born?” replied Nicodemus. “How can he go back into his mother’s womb and be born a second time?”

⁵⁻⁸ “I assure you,” said Jesus, “that unless a man is born from water and from spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Flesh gives birth to flesh and spirit gives birth to spirit: you must not be surprised that I told you that all of you must be born again. The wind blows where it likes, you can hear the sound of it but you have no idea where it comes from and where it goes. Nor can you tell how a man is born by the wind of the Spirit.”

⁹ “How on earth can things like this happen?” replied Nicodemus.

¹⁰⁻²¹ “So you are a teacher of Israel,” said Jesus, “and you do not recognise such things? I assure you that we are talking about something we really know and we are witnessing to something we have actually observed, yet men like you will not accept our evidence. Yet if I have spoken to you about things which happen on this earth and you will not believe me, what chance is there that you will believe me if I tell you about what happens in Heaven? No one has ever been up to Heaven except the Son of Man who came down from Heaven. The Son of Man must be lifted above the heads of men—as Moses lifted up that serpent in the desert—so that any man who

believes in him may have eternal life. For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that every one who believes in him shall not be lost, but should have eternal life. You must understand that God has not sent his Son into the world to pass sentence upon it, but to save it—through him. Any man who believes in him is not judged at all. It is the one who will not believe who stands already condemned, because he will not believe in the character of God's only Son. This is the judgment—that light has entered the world and men have preferred darkness to light because their deeds are evil. Anybody who does wrong hates the light and keeps away from it, for fear his deeds may be exposed. But anybody who is living by the truth will come to the light to make it plain that all he has done has been done through God.”

NOTE: In our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus there is much to help us think more deeply about God's revelation of Himself in the Son of man and through the Holy Spirit. (William Sydnor)

Services on Trinity Sunday

- **8:15 a.m.** – Holy Communion (said service)

A quiet meditative service.

Celebrant: The Rev. Ronald O. Wikander

Preacher: The Rector

Lector: Pat McConnell

Acolyte / Server: Fin Thoreson

- **10:00 a.m.** Holy Communion

Joyful celebration of the Supper of the Lord with hymns and exposition of the Scriptures.

Officiant: The Rector

Preacher: The Rector

Acolyte: Bob Morgan

Lay Reader: Rodney Allen

Usher coordinator sought

A person is needed to coordinate scheduling ushers beginning the August – October. Please speak to Dewey Cates or the Rector.

Spring Picnic

MAKE PLANS NOW! -- St. Luke's Men's Group is hosting a **spring-time, parish-wide picnic and outdoor activities event on Saturday, June 2**, at Lake Winfield Scott Recreation (near Suches). The park opens at 8 a.m.

SLMG master-hikers Robert Cranor and Dewey Cates are planning some hikes on comfortable trails within the park.

A mid-day picnic luncheon will be held at a reserved pavilion. SLMG will provide hamburgers, condiments and drinks. Attendees are asked to bring side dishes and desserts.

Please consider carpooling, as parking is limited. The parking fee is \$5 per carload.

A sign-up form will be available Sunday.

Outreach opportunity

Habitat for Humanity needs volunteers to work at its ReStore in Blue Ridge for two-to-three-hour shifts Tuesday through Saturday, between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. ReStore's sales proceeds go toward helping Habitat provide affordable housing for needy families. If interested, contact Dena Jacobs, ReStore Manager, at (706) 632-6237.

From Pat McConnell concerning antique and collectible sale . . .

Please remember the antique and collectible sale scheduled for Saturday, June 9. If you have items you wish to donate, please put them in the old office downstairs in Thomason Hall. I will sort and price them so we will be ready to set up on Friday June 8.

We are looking for silver, china, old quilts, nice lamps, pictures and decor items. Please no yard sale items (these I will put in the garage), no clothes, toys or books, other than coffee table type books. We are selling some of Jane Koster's items for her benefit, but the money collected for the other items will go to mortgage reduction. For more information, call (706) 632-8443.

Jane Koster's birthday.

Jane Koster, who now lives in Cameron Hall Assisted Living, Ellijay, will be celebrating a birthday on May 27. St. Luke's members and friends are encouraged to send cards and to visit. Cards should be addressed: Mrs. Heinz Koster, Cameron Hall, 114 Penland St, Ellijay, GA 30540.



MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR BARBARA HAYES CARPENTER

A Memorial Service for Barbara Hayes Carpenter, an early member of St. Luke’s, will be held at 1 p.m. on Saturday, June 2, with interment to follow in St. Luke’s Memorial Garden. A reception will follow in Thomason Hall. Mrs. Carpenter was an interior decorator and was living in Ormond Beach, Fla., at the time of her death on Feb. 22. She was 83. Pat McConnell is coordinating the reception. Several of St. Luke’s stained glass windows were given by Mrs. Carpenter and her husband Gill, who died in 1998.

OUR MISSION

St. Luke’s mission is to grow spiritually in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ and in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and to share our faith, our hands and hearts for the sake of the Gospel, our community and the world.

Financial Pledge for the Year of our Lord 2018

As stewards of God’s gifts and in gratitude for all blessings, I pledge the following amount to the work of Christ through St. Luke’s Church for 2018

Name _____

Address _____

Amount _____

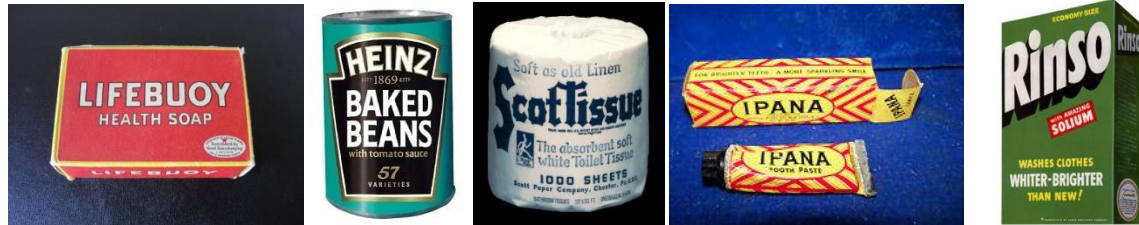
_____ Weekly _____ Monthly _____ Yearly

(Please tick the appropriate blank)

Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him to store, as God has prospered him. 1 Corinthians 16:2

REMEMBER THE NEEDY

EVERY TIME YOU COME TO CHURCH



Please bring one or more item for the needy -- paper, soap products, tinned and dried food, etc. Leave in Narthex. Items will be distributed through North Georgia Community Action Agency



NEW SIGN-UP SHEET FOR 2018 IS AVAILABLE

A sign-up sheet for Altar flowers is available in Thomason Hall for 2018. Please sign up for days you wish to commemorate.

St. Luke's Church, "The Parish Church of the Mountains," 7 Ewing St., (POB 1821), Blue Ridge, Georgia 30513; [\(706\) 632-8245](tel:7066328245); www.stlukesblueridge.org; stlukes@tds.net.