



Trinity Sunday

MAY 31, 2026 · FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Trinity Sunday beholds the one God whose life is creating love, reconciling grace, and abiding communion, and who sends doubtful worshipers into the world in that name.

FIRST READING Genesis 1:1-2:4a	PSALM Psalm 8
SECOND READING 2 Corinthians 13:11-13	GOSPEL Matthew 28:16-20

Before You Hear the Readings

Trinity Sunday is not primarily a day for solving a puzzle about God. It is a day for adoration: to stand before the mystery that the God who made all things, the Son who commands and accompanies us, and the Spirit who draws us into communion are not three competing powers but one living God of holy love.

The readings invite us to hold together wonder and mission. We begin with creation declared very good, pray our astonishment at human dignity, receive an apostolic blessing of grace, love, and communion, and then hear the risen Christ send a fragile band of worshipping doubters to baptize, teach, and trust his presence to the end of the age.

The Lectionary Thread

Genesis opens with God bringing order, beauty, fruitfulness, and rest into being by word and breath. The world is not an accident or a battlefield of rival gods; it is a gift summoned into goodness. Humanity is placed within that creation not as an isolated species but as image-bearers, called to reflect God's wise care in the midst of creatures who also receive blessing and breath.

Psalm 8 turns that doctrine into prayer. Looking at moon and stars, sheep and oxen, birds and fish, the psalmist feels both small and honored. The proper response to human authority is not domination swollen with pride, but praise filled with humility. The majesty belongs to the Lord; human glory is derivative, entrusted, and answerable.

Second Corinthians gives the gathered assembly one of the New Testament's most explicitly Trinitarian blessings: the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit. Paul is not offering abstract metaphysics to a peaceful congregation; he is blessing a strained community into restoration, peace, mutual recognition, and holy fellowship. The life of God becomes the pattern and medicine for parish life.

Matthew's Gospel gathers the thread and sends it outward. The risen Jesus meets the eleven on a mountain, receives worship even from those who doubt, and commissions them to make disciples by baptizing in the triune name and teaching obedience to his way. The Creator's good world, humanity's vocation, and the Spirit's communion converge in mission: baptized people are sent to participate in God's renewing life for all nations, sustained by Christ's promise, "I am with you always."

The Readings Broken Open

FIRST READING

Genesis 1 is a liturgical and theological proclamation of creation's goodness. Its ordered rhythm—God speaks, creation responds, God names, God sees, evening and morning unfold—has the feel of worship as much as narrative. Ancient hearers would have recognized a world full of

waters, darkness, heavenly bodies, and living creatures, but Genesis refuses to treat any of these as divine rivals. Sun, moon, sea monsters, earth, sky, animals, and humanity all belong within the ordered generosity of the one God.

The repeated declaration that creation is good matters. The material world is not a mistake to escape, nor raw material to exploit without reverence. Light and darkness, waters and land, vegetation and animals, time and rest all have a place in God's intention. When the whole is complete, God sees that it is very good. Christian worship, including the sacramental imagination of Anglican life, depends on this claim: water, bread, wine, oil, bodies, voices, and time can bear grace because creation is God's beloved handiwork.

Human beings are made in the image and likeness of God, male and female together. The text gives humanity "dominion," a word often misused as permission for violence toward the earth. But within Genesis 1, dominion is bounded by blessing, provision, and the goodness of other creatures. To image God is to exercise care that reflects God's own life-giving rule. The Sabbath climax also corrects our restless grasping: creation is not finished in productivity but in holy rest.

On Trinity Sunday, Christians may hear hints—though not proofs—of the fullness of God's life: God speaks, the wind or Spirit of God moves over the waters, and the divine word brings forth light and life. The doctrine of the Trinity is not imposed on Genesis as if the text were a code. Rather, Christians read this first creation song in the light of the whole canon, confessing that the God who creates is the same God revealed in Christ and poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

PSALM

Psalm 8 is praise shaped by astonishment. It begins and ends by addressing the Lord's majestic name, and between those praises it lingers over the strange dignity of being human. The psalm teaches worshipers how to look: up at the heavens, down at creatures of field and sea, and inward at our own frailty without either contempt or self-worship.

Its central question—why would God be mindful of mortals?—is not cynical. It is wonder. The psalmist knows that human beings are small, yet not insignificant; vulnerable, yet crowned with

glory and honor. In parish worship, this psalm gives the congregation language for humility that does not collapse into shame and dignity that does not inflate into pride.

Placed after Genesis 1, the psalm becomes a prayerful response to creation and vocation. It receives the gift of dominion as something held beneath God's majesty. The animals and seas are not trophies under human feet but works of God's hands entrusted to human care. To pray this psalm truthfully is to let praise discipline our power.

On Trinity Sunday, Psalm 8 also trains the heart for mystery. Before we speak of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we begin by saying, "How majestic is your name." Doctrine becomes faithful when it is rooted in worship: a mind stretched by revelation and a mouth opened in praise.

EPISTLE

Paul's final words to the Corinthians are tender, urgent, and communal. This congregation has known conflict, mistrust, moral confusion, and challenges to Paul's apostolic ministry. His farewell is not a vague wish for everyone to be pleasant. "Be restored," "live in peace," and "greet one another" are concrete practices for a wounded body learning again how to belong to Christ and to one another.

The closing blessing is one of the treasures of Christian worship and has become familiar in Anglican liturgical life. The order is striking: the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit. Paul is not pausing to define the Trinity in later creedal language, but he is already praying in a deeply Trinitarian pattern. God is known through the grace of Christ, the love that is the source of all, and the Spirit's fellowship that binds the saints together.

This matters for the worshiping community. Trinitarian faith is not only what Christians say about God; it is the life into which the baptized are drawn. Grace heals our failures. Love grounds our identity. Communion remakes our relationships. The peace Paul desires is not simply the absence of argument but the presence of God's own reconciling life among ordinary believers.

For a parish, this reading asks whether our common life bears the shape of the blessing we speak. Do our greetings, meetings, disagreements, Eucharists, and acts of service make room for

grace, love, and communion? The doctrine of the Trinity becomes credible when a gathered assembly, however imperfectly, learns to live as people blessed into peace.

GOSPEL

Matthew's Gospel ends not with a flawless community but with the eleven disciples. The absence of Judas is felt; the group is diminished and marked by failure. They go to Galilee as Jesus commanded, and when they see him, they worship, but some doubt. The risen Christ does not wait for perfect certainty before speaking his commission. He draws near to worshipers whose faith is real and unfinished.

Jesus announces that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to him. This authority is not domination for its own sake; it is the crucified and risen Lord's authority to reconcile, teach, gather, and send. The mission that follows is universal in scope: all nations are to be welcomed into discipleship. Baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is not a tribal marker but entry into the life and allegiance of the triune God.

The command to teach obedience can sound severe if heard apart from Jesus' life. In Matthew, what Jesus commands includes mercy, forgiveness, enemy-love, truthfulness, justice, prayer, humility, and care for "the least of these." Disciples are not made by religious branding alone, but by being immersed in God's name and formed in the way of Jesus. Word and Sacrament belong together: baptizing and teaching, water and commandment, promise and practice.

The good news is the final promise. Jesus sends the disciples, but he does not abandon them to their own competence. "I am with you always" echoes the Emmanuel promise from the beginning of Matthew's Gospel: God with us. Trinity Sunday hears in that promise the fullness of divine companionship—the Father's love, the Son's grace, and the Spirit's communion sustaining the baptized until the end of the age.

Hearing It Fresh

If you are new to these readings, notice how large the vision is. We move from the beginning of everything to the daily life of a conflicted congregation, and then to a small group of disciples standing before the risen Jesus. Scripture is not asking you first to master a theory. It is inviting

you to see the world as gift, your life as held by God, and the Christian community as a people sent with a promise.

Trinity Sunday can sound abstract because words like “Trinity” and “doctrine” may feel far from ordinary life. But these readings are very earthy: light, water, animals, stars, greetings, peace, mountains, baptism, teaching. The mystery of God is not distant from creation or community. The God Christians name as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is the one who makes, blesses, restores, sends, and stays with us.

Going Deeper

The doctrine of the Trinity emerged from worship, Scripture, and the lived encounter with salvation before it was clarified in technical language. Israel confessed one God. The first Christians continued to worship the God of Israel, yet they also worshiped the risen Jesus and experienced the Holy Spirit as God’s own presence and power. The grammar of Trinity arose as the church learned to speak truthfully about this revelation without collapsing Father, Son, and Spirit into mere masks, or dividing God into three gods.

Genesis 1 has often been read christologically and pneumatologically in Christian tradition. The “wind from God” moving over the waters evokes the Spirit for Christian readers, and God’s creative speech has been connected with the Word through whom, as John and Colossians proclaim, all things came into being. Responsible interpretation should acknowledge that Genesis speaks first within Israel’s confession of the one Creator. Yet the canonical Christian reading sees continuity: the Creator is not other than the God revealed in the Son and the Spirit.

The plural phrase “Let us make humans in our image” has a long interpretive history. Some Christian readers have heard a Trinitarian resonance here; many biblical scholars point to ancient divine council imagery or a majestic plural. Trinity Sunday does not require using the verse as a proof text. More important is the theological claim that humanity images a God whose own life is not isolation but relation. If God’s life is communion, then human dignity is inseparable from mutuality, care, and responsibility.

Matthew 28 also carries important tensions. The Great Commission has sometimes been entangled with coercion, empire, and cultural domination. Yet the risen Jesus sends wounded disciples to make learners, not subjects of conquest, and to teach obedience to his cruciform way. In the Episcopal tradition, baptismal identity is inseparable from renouncing evil, continuing in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, seeking Christ in all persons, striving for justice and peace, and respecting the dignity of every human being. Mission in the triune name must therefore look like humble witness, sacramental welcome, and love shaped by the commandments of Jesus.

For Young Listeners

Today we remember that God is bigger and more wonderful than we can fully explain, and also very near to us. God made the world and called it good: light, water, animals, trees, stars, and people. Jesus told his friends to share God's love with everyone, even though some of them still had doubts and worries. He promised to be with them always. When we are baptized, we are marked as belonging to God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That means we are loved, we are never alone, and we are called to care for God's world and God's people.