

**First United
Methodist
Church
of Fort Lupton
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6.4.26

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Message

"Forget Me Not"

Pastor Anna Viehland

Scripture: Philippians 1:3-11

3 I thank my God for every remembrance of you, 4 always in every one of my prayers for all of you, praying with joy 5 for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. 6 I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. 7 It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because I hold you in my heart, for all of you are my partners in God's grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. 8 For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the tender affection of Christ Jesus. 9 And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight 10 to help you to determine what really matters, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, 11 having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God



WAYS TO SUPPORT OUR CHURCH

NO HASSLE GIVING

Have your donations automatically come out of your bank account.

Contact Church Office or Church Treasurer for information



Safeway cards -available downstairs after worship



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What's Happening

- 6.7.26 2:00 pm
- 6.15.26 – 6.19.26
- 6.22.26 7:00 PM

- Going Away Party for the Viehland Family
- Mission Trip- Office Closed
- Ad Board Meeting

Wednesdays

9:30 am

Wednesday Bible Study

Jan. 1 - April 30, 2026 Financial Update	
Income	\$ 70,380.37
Expenses	\$ 68,578.19
Revenue/(Loss)	\$ 1,802.18

*Income includes \$9000 interest from Endowment

GOING AWAY PARTY

We're gathering to celebrate and wish

Anna, Daniel & Desmond

the best on their new journey ahead!

Sunday
June 7th | 2:00 PM

Let's make this farewell unforgettable, your presence will make it extra special!

JOIN US AT THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF FORT LUPTON, 306 PARK AVE.

“Trinity Sunday”

It is popular in this day and age to say that “all religions are basically the same” or ask “we all worship the same God.” As a scholar of religion myself as well as a religious leader, I must admit that I’m not fond of that approach. Not because I don’t believe in tolerance (I do), not because I don’t believe that other faiths have things to teach us (they do), and not because I don’t think interfaith dialogue is important (it is). But the phrase still makes me bristle. For one, it’s just patently untrue. Certainly there are beautiful areas of similarity among major religions.

Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc, all have a version of the Golden Rule: “do unto others as you would have them do to you.” Most share some common values, such as prayer, self-discipline, and charity. Still, we must be careful not to turn these similarities into a thought terminating cliché—one of those nice-sounding, yet overly simplistic phrases we use to shut down critical thinking and avoid hard discussions. If we want to learn from each other, we should have difficult conversations about diversity and celebrate what makes us different and what makes us special.

Today is Trinity Sunday. Today, we celebrate what makes *us* special. Today, we preachers make a valiant attempt to explain the unexplainable: that our God is simultaneously One God, yet three distinct Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jews and Muslims often joke that Christians are bad at math because only we could think that $1+1+1=1$! Christians through the ages have done their best to describe this great mystery. Long ago, the Church called councils to debate the nature of God. These debates got so heated that St Nicholas—yes, THAT St Nicholas—reportedly punched a guy in the face! These councils, while important, were much better at deciding who God was not, rather than who God is. We will never have a perfect way of describing the Trinity; it is a holy mystery beyond human understanding.

The good news is that our passage this morning does not approach the Trinity with a seminary theological lecture. Matthew’s Gospel tells us that Jesus gathers his disciples on top of a mountain. When the disciples see him, they worship him. He gives his friends what we now call the Great Commission—he tells them to preach the gospel to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Notice how Jesus says “in the name” singular, rather than “names.” Right there, woven into the Great Commission, is the mystery. One Name. Three Persons.

The question becomes “Why does this matter? How does this make our faith different from any other?” The fact that our God is Triune does make us unique from every other major worldview and religion on earth...and that matters. The Trinity is unique in that it is familial. The use of Father and Son to describe two of the three persons of the Trinity is no accident. This is great news for those of us who have had loving families; we can know that no matter how much our earthly family loves us, our Heavenly Father, Jesus His Son, and the Holy Spirit love us infinitely more. This is also great news for those of us who might not have had the most loving or healthy families of origin. Regardless of how dysfunctional our families are, we have a heavenly parent who loves us unconditionally. Through God’s love, we are adopted into a new family, one with billions of siblings in this life and the life beyond.

Because God exists in three persons, God is by God’s very nature communal. This is radical in a culture consumed by rampant individualism. We idolize individual rights while neglecting our responsibilities to one another. We care more about ourselves and less about our communities, we spend more time alone and less time breaking bread with others, and we become more focused on material goods and less focused on God’s Kingdom. We see the rotten fruit of our culture in family estrangement, skyrocketing rates of depression and anxiety, and a widening gap between the haves and the have nots. But the Trinity shows us that, just as God exists in community, we, because we are made in God’s image, were also created for community. One of the first things God did after breathing life into Adam, the first human, is to say, “It is not good that man should be alone” and create him a companion.

And that’s not all. God does not only exist in relationship with Godself; God desires relationship with us too. Now *that* may seem bizarre; why *on Earth* would a perfect, all powerful, and infinitely complex God want to be in relationship with

frail, flawed, small human beings? But the Trinity tells us that God loved us enough to exist as both Father who created us for love, the Son who came to live among us, and the Spirit who still abides with us today. The God who made the universe became a baby who cried to be fed and held. God ate food with friends. God laughed. God even wept. God was tortured, God suffered, and God died so that we may be free. That same God ascended into heaven with the promise that He would be with us always. God in the person of the Holy Spirit moves in and among us, ensuring that we will never again be separated from God's love.

One of my favorite metaphors for the Trinity is a dance. Early Church theologians used the Greek word "perichoresis"--meaning "dancing around"--to describe how each person of the trinity moves together in harmony while maintaining their three separate identities. Because God is a family, a community, a Triune relationship, our faith is an invitation to join that beautiful dance. That is why the Trinity matters. I'm not expecting that you will walk out of service today knowing the exact nature of the Trinity. I'm not expecting that you will understand the fancy terms theologians use to describe the miracle of a Triune God, like "hypostatic union" or "homoousios." I have three years of seminary under my belt and I'm not sure I really understand those words.

What I do hope is that we may have a new appreciation for the unique way that we

Christians understand God. I hope that this appreciation leads us to become better disciples. When we leave this sanctuary, we will walk into a world that is lonely, dark, and divided. We are sent into this world to reflect the love of a God who is, at God's very core, relational, communal, and made of perfect love. Take comfort in the fact that you do not have to fully comprehend the mystery to live inside of it. Trust the promise of the Son on the mountain. Join the dance of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, knowing the Triune God is with you always, even to the end of the age.



Pics to Enjoy!

Bringing in the Light of Christ



Pastor Anna singing special music.



Annette sharing children's time.



Praise Team warming us up.

Fun Week At VBS



