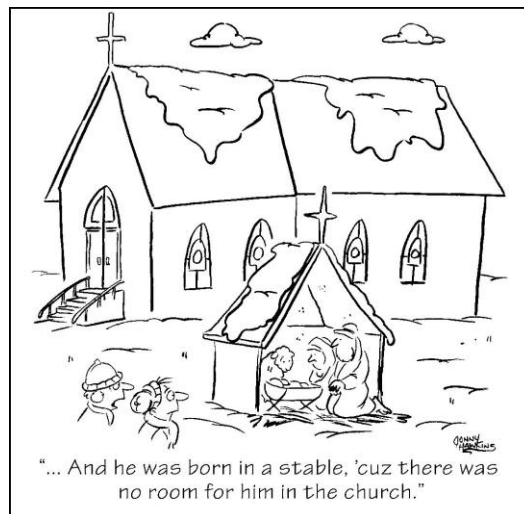


ALDRSGATE UMC OF BUTTE, MT
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June 12, 2022 - Pastor Matthias Krier

Trinity Sunday / Peace With Justice Sunday

Background to Scripture

One of the verses that I have found most intriguing in the New Testament is a verse where Jesus puts out a teaser. I know that Jesus must have had a sense of humor, right? In fact, there are rumors that Jesus came back to earth, not too long ago and was trying to once again reach the religious folks of our generation. The gossip continues that Jesus, himself, left this cartoon for religious church folks to think about:



**“He was born in a stable, cuz there was
No room for him in the church!”**

Yes, I have no doubt that Yeshua had a sense of humor, but he also had a serious side when he sat his disciples down and said: *“I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.”* John 16:12

Doesn't it make you wonder about the kind of things he wanted to say, but knew they were not ready. One can only speculate on what he wanted to say, but didn't.

I believe that one of the things Jesus tried to get across to the disciples was the concept of Oneness which can be illustrated in the Trinity. Here is an image of the Trinity:



The doctrine of the Trinity did not crystalize until the 4th century, although Trinitarian language is found in the New Testament and in the early church. Jesus spoke to this Oneness again and again with God and with the Advocate that came at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit to guide us into all Truth.

As we hear this passage of scripture, contemplate what other things, what other Truths, Jesus would have liked to have taught the disciples, but they were not ready to hear the prophetic Truths Yeshua could have shared with them. Open your hearts and minds to how the Spirit will speak to you through this passage from the Gospel of John:

Scripture Lesson: John 16:12-15

12 'I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

The Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Message What is Our Guide to Know the Truth? Pastor Matthias

Once upon a time there was this lovely couple who had never married and found each other late in life. When they both had died unexpectedly they were reunited in heaven and one said this to the other:



What is “*Our Guide to Know the Truth*”? Some of you may already know the answer to this question, but let’s begin with a story from the gospel of John to set the stage around this subject. Incidentally, Jesus begins with sharing a *Kingdom Truth* at the beginning of this passage:

³⁶Jesus answered, ‘My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.’ ³⁷Pilate asked him, ‘So you are a king?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.’

³⁸Pilate asked him, ‘What is truth?’

“What is Truth,” Pilate asked Jesus during his interrogation. Jesus did not come back with an answer to his question. However, if Pilate had been listening carefully, he would have realized that the answer had already been given.

Let’s hear it again: *Jesus answered, Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.’*

I have to say that in this era of Christians being severely divided over abortion, capital punishment, climate crisis, immigration, LGBTQIA concerns, and gun control, we need to invite the Voice of Truth and then listen to the Voice of Truth in these discussions.

The Voice of Truth as you already know shared these words: *"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."*

Said differently, The Golden Rule sounds like this: *"Treat Others the Way You Want to Be Treated."*

If Christians could model this for the rest of the world, imagine what a different world it could be: *"Treat others the way you want to be treated."*

For those who seem to forget this very important Truth to live by in the way we treat our siblings in Christ or anyone for that matter, is something I find very helpful in my coping with difficult people and difficult situations and that is to apply this Truth, WWJD: *"What Would Jesus Do?"*

We have talked about this before and how when this first came out, I was bothered by it for some reason. I don't know why, but then it grew on me especially with so much division that has been developing within Christianity for decades in issues already mentioned.

There are millions of Christians around the world who are mistreating others because they either forget or simply ignore the Golden Rule, but maybe, just maybe, if we could imagine Jesus being in the midst of whatever is going on at the time, it would change the way certain events unfold. What if during meetings all over the country and in our communities and in our churches we put an empty chair in the room inviting the Presence of Jesus into our midst. Imagine the difference in these meetings if we practiced this spiritual discipline of an empty chair inviting the Presence, the Wisdom, the Love, the Peace, and the Light of God to illuminate the darkness.

One example would be the folks who claim to be Christians who stormed the capital on January 6th, 2021, ...



... where capital police and others were injured and some were killed on that awful day in American history.

Imagine if those in charge had WWJD in mind when deciding to storm the capital. If WWJD had been considered, storming the capital where innocent people died would not have happened. Furthermore, let's imagine in all that transpired prior to this event had been prefaced with this idea:

WWJS

“What Would Jesus Say?”

Can you imagine if just the politicians who claim to be Christian who serve on a state level or the national scene would practice this very simple thing: *WWJS*, first, *What Would Jesus Say* if the Presence of Jesus was brought into the conversation?

And then move to *WWJD*, *What Would Jesus Do?*

Let's just stop to imagine how different things would be if our leaders in our states and in our nation's capital would practice this? Imagine how different it would be in the House of Representatives and in the Senate if Jesus were taken seriously. Instead of making Jesus in our image, we would be made in the image of Jesus.

Unfortunately in this age of disinformation, misinformation and outright lies we have something that could destroy our already fragile democracy.

**“Some people don't really want to know the truth.
They want to hear that what they already believe is the truth.”**

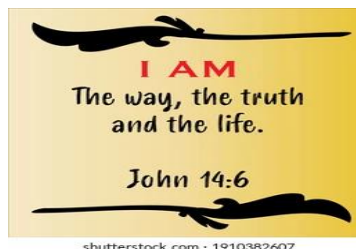
I am deeply concerned as many of you are in this day and age of all the conspiracy theories being propagated on social media. These conspiracy theories have become an alternative reality where even though there was no evidence of widespread voter fraud, millions believed that the presidential election was stolen.

Those claiming to be Christian must seek the Truth and nothing but the Truth if we are to become a healthy democracy. Let's hear this verse again from the Gospel of John: "The Spirit of Truth Will Guide You Into All Truth!" John 16:13

There is a Way of seeking this Truth openly and objectively where we must put our agenda aside and what we believe to be the Truth. If we cannot put our agenda, our beliefs aside to listen to the *Voice of Truth*, then all we are doing is listening to the sound of our own voice.

We need to pray these words from Casting Crowns: *I will choose to listen and believe the Voice of Truth.*

Who and what is this Voice of Truth?



Once we know the Truth and that Truth being *The Triune God*: something in us changes and we realize that this kingdom Jesus speaks of is not of this world as we heard earlier: "*My kingdom is not of this world,*" however, another Truth from the Voice of Truth comes in the Lord's Prayer: "*Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*"

When we come to know this Truth, no matter the circumstances of life, are set free. We hear once again from John 8:32: "*Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free!*"

While we may be set free in knowing the Truth, there are consequences for speaking the truth. The Truth Tellers have been suffering the consequences of

speaking the Truth in Love, with Peace and Justice. The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his family were threatened again and again because he had the courage to speak the Truth to those who opposed full equality.

The question again is will we believe and listen to the *Voice of Truth* in the things that really matter in this world? Our hearts ache and we grieve the loss of innocent men, women and children lost in wars abroad, mass shootings, domestic abuse, hate crimes and the increase in natural disasters due to climate change.

As Yeshua shared that God's kingdom is not of this world, Jesus taught the disciples and all of us, our mission is to bring the kingdom of God to earth. As followers of Yeshua, we cannot lose hope in a world divided, but instead we are to be a people of hope bringing the Truths of the kingdom to all creatures of this planet we call home.

A truth Jesus taught was we are all equal and no one is better nor worse than another. When we come to the table, no one is excluded. No one! The words of the hymn we are about to sing in preparation for the Sacrament of Holy Communion:

*Gentile or Jew, servant or free,
Woman or man, no more
One bread, one body, one Lord of all,
One cup of blessing, which we bless.
And we though many throughout the earth,
We are one body in this one Lord.*

Hymn of Preparation # 620 One Bread, One Body