

# Christ the Lord Episcopal Church Pinole, CA

Trinity Sunday: June 12, 2022

“Wisdom and Compassion”

Rev. Dr. Lois Williams

Good morning and welcome to Christ the Lord Church. Today is what is known as Trinity Sunday. This is the day as the church we recognize the three expressions of God, mainly as a creative force, as Jesus being the Son of this creative force, and last, but not least, the Holy Spirit that is with us as we live our daily lives, which is hopefully the voice of wisdom when you need it.

Our readings this morning begin with the understanding that Wisdom, sometimes referred to as Sophia, has been a part of ancient culture and spirituality for as long as there are human records. Wisdom is often represented as a female part of the Creator – God.

Wisdom by definition, is the soundness of an action or decision with regard to the application of experience, knowledge, and good judgment. Wisdom is also part and parcel of the body of knowledge and principles that develops within a specified society or period of time.

From the moment we are born we are learning. From touch, taste, smell, memories, and things taught, we create ourselves within the world, sometimes we fit in, sometimes we don't, all the while creating our own personal wisdom.

And when we are having difficult times, we often reach out to God with the question why? Or why now? Why them? Is it me? Is it them? Do I deserve this?

Did I do something wrong? And we then wait for some kind of answer, trying to find peace about the situation, but a lot of the time we feel our questions remain unanswered. But are they?

We have answers, our ancestors shared their wisdom. Everything from “there is a time for everything under heaven,” to Jesus telling us, “do not be afraid.” Today we are told, that “suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us.”

Rather than create division, we must realize that wisdom has grown in each culture, society and faith tradition and curiosity should be our stance, for all of humanity whatever faith tradition or culture, I believe if inspired by God, it should be working toward the Golden Rule, or as Jesus reminds us, to love our neighbors as ourselves.

A perfect example of God given wisdom was used is our story from last week. Lola presented her story about different cultures, countries and people who by coming together and sharing their knowledge and wisdom, brought a way for those in Africa without electricity an eco-friendly resolution, creating possibility, creating hope. Using wisdom to co creating in the world to create a better place to live for all. She also shared there was suffering, endurance needed, and hope created.

We, as Christians come to church to worship, to praise God, and part of that praise is to admit we are not perfect, but it is also to practice sharing ourselves in ways that encourage the Golden Rule, or the love one another stance. Part of being able

to do that is to understand forgiveness, and to truly learn to – if not love yourself – at least accept who you are with a bit of grace. This is also wisdom.

And just how do we begin this process of being more compassionate, more loving, more Christlike as we are called? What is it the Advocate actually does, and how does the Holy Spirit really work? It begins with Wisdom, and Wisdom begins with true reflection. When one begins to reflect on their past, with truth, honesty, and grace, one can begin to see where the Holy Spirit was working and maybe when the Holy Spirit was present, but you chose something different.

Now making a bad choice is just part of being human, and some choices come with consequences. Some situations are resolved fairly and justly while other times they are not, or there is corruption. Our choices can give us a wonderful life, or they can keep us miserable until we change our direction. And yet why does God let us make bad choices?

Within creation, there is the God given safety net, that when all is said and done, we will return to where we come from, that is the promise given through our faith in Jesus. Use any language or expression you prefer, basically the sum of one's life will still live on through the wisdom shared through others, so that means all exchanges have equal value, the suffering, the enduring, the growing of character, and what we create with the Holy Spirit has purpose, even when we don't understand it.

Not to say that when you are in the midst of a rough situation you are in a place to do major reflective work, but if you can take a moment to breathe and reflect on your reaction and aim for compassion, this is the "Way" that Jesus was talking

about. But as most of us can only review a situation after the fact, we need to learn to view it from the compassionate eyes of Jesus, of God, through the Holy Spirit.

To look truthfully at ourselves and those around us, and how we are going to move forward. More importantly, how can we move forward with the wisdom we have learned, with a more compassionate stance.

We are at a time and place in the world where forgiveness, grace and love are needed, and we are at a place when accepting the struggles we are dealing with means to accept the wisdom to know there is a purpose far beyond what we will know while we walk the earth, this can make things easier. I leave you with a prayer, one to begin your road to compassion. And by the way, we can discuss more of this in our compassion class later today.

Let us pray.

Thank God to those who hurt me, you made me a stronger person. Thank God to those who loved me, you made my heart bigger. Thanks to those who cared, you make me feel important. Thanks to those whose care was absent, you kept me humble. Thanks to those who showed concern, you let me know that you care. Thanks to those who left, you showed me that not everything is forever, and that is alright. Thanks to those who stayed, you showed me the true meaning of friendship. Thanks to those who entered my life, anywhere in my journey, you helped me become the person I am today. **Amen**