

So here we are again, another Trinity Sunday, and I'm preaching. I remember asking our former rector, Marianne Budde, why it seemed as though I always preached on this day. I asked, "Don't you like the Trinity?" "Oh," she replied, "I love the Trinity; it's just hard know how to express it in words." I recognize that many clergy, sometimes including me, feel this way, which is kind of an odd fate for this doctrine which is absolutely central to our salvation.

The way the Trinity is often discussed in church, it seems to many people as though God the Creator is there at the beginning of everything, whipping out land and seas and the stars of night. Then the Son comes into the game at half-time to work on cleaning up the mess we have made of things. The Holy Spirit enters late in the 4<sup>th</sup> period, like a substitute quarterback, to cover for the Son, who has ascended into heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father.

But this view is biblically and theologically all wrong. So let me give you another image to work with, from my favorite, idiosyncratic, Episcopal theologian, Robert Farrar Capon. He begins his book, The Third Peacock, like this:

"One afternoon, before anything was made, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit sat around in the unity of their Godhead, discussing one of the Father's fixations. From all eternity, it seems, he had this *thing* about being. He would keep thinking up all kinds of unnecessary beings to be. And as they talked, God the Son suddenly said, 'Really, this is absolutely great stuff. Why don't I go out and mix us up a batch.' And God the Holy Spirit said, 'Terrific! I'll help you.' So they all pitched in, and after supper that night the Son and the Holy Spirit put on this tremendous show of being for the Father. It was full of water and light and frogs; pine cones kept dropping all over the place, and crazy fish swam around in the wine glasses. There were mushrooms and mastodons, grapes and geese, tornadoes and tigers – and men and women everywhere to taste them, to juggle them, to join them and to love them. God the Father looked at

the whole wild party and said, 'Wonderful! Just what I had in mind! Tov! Tov! ' – It is Good. And all the unity of one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit laughed and celebrated as they all shouted together 'Tov Meod! ' – it is very good."

What's lovely about this extended metaphor is its clarity about all three persons of the Trinity together from all eternity, joined in a flow of loving community from all time and to all time, with their mutual love overflowing into creation.

It also shows that we human beings are not something separate from this party of creation, but are in unity with the whole thing. As the Apostle Paul describes this, somewhat more soberly than Capon, "...you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is the very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ..."

The theme which pulses through all of this is connection and communion. As Christians, we say that God is one God, a Three-Fold community of persons; creation itself is a community of being, within which our human lives are joined in the whole connected dance at the most basic level.

Which brings us to the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the new Quantum Physics. Now don't let your eyes glaze over. The basic premise of this science is that we do not live in a mechanical universe in which this visible cause always produces that predictable effect. Rather, we live in a relational universe in which the smallest particles of matter are entangled with each other, with unexpected consequences.

This in turn leads to Chaos Theory, which many of you have heard illustrated with the butterfly effect: that the flutter of a butterfly's wings here could influence the path and force of a cyclone in Japan.

So why should we care? John Polkinghorne, is an English theoretical physicist, Anglican priest and theologian, who has explored with delight the ways in which the new quantum physics tells

us something about God and ourselves. He says, “With physics moving in a more holistic direction, we might expect by analogy the need to challenge the individualism that is so characteristic of contemporary thinking about human nature. If electrons are entangled with each other, even over a great distance, we may need to contemplate the possibility that human persons participate in some greater solidarity than splintered Western society is able to recognize.”

It is as though Trinity Sunday is, in fact, Christian quantum physics, a celebration of the unity of all that is, from God in Godself, through electrons, molecules, cells and all created being.

This is a very different vision from the way in which we have generally seen ourselves in relation to the rest of the universe: different from everything else, disconnected from the whole. The book of Genesis tells that God gave to human beings stewardship of the created world. But we took that to mean that we are owners of it all, and can do anything we want with the beauty and fruitful abundance of our planet.

Not satisfied with our place in the community of being, we have seen ourselves as the center of everything, behaving as though we were gods, trying to control everything, struggling to claim the biggest piece that we can of the world’s goodness. Over the millennia of history, especially in the last one hundred years, we have pushed and pulled, and taken and used until we stand quite near the brink of disaster. But all we take, all we use, has not filled us up. We are left with a kind of emptiness and aloneness, which we imagine can be filled if we obtain more.

The story of the community of Trinity, invites us back to our true place in the dance of love and being – children adopted into the family of God. Instead of acting like little gods, we can be lovers of the One God, committed to loving and caring for each other, and the environment, and all the universe of being.

So it seems fitting that on this Sunday we are baptizing a child. David and Katy, in a minute you will be invited to make promises for

your precious son, Sam - promises made before this community, but also within the endless connection of God's adopted children. This community will make promises to hold all of you in love and to teach Sam that he is part of something wonderful. We will baptize him in the name of The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit, joining him to Team Trinity, the most wonderful place he could be.