

**SERMON:** *“HOPE: Hope in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit”*

Rev. Geoff Ross, Sunday, May 30, 2021, St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church

Today is the last special Sunday of the long period of Easter-tide – and it is the day on which we celebrate not just the Holy Spirit (that was last week with Pentecost) but the nature of the relationship between God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. Adding Trinity Sunday to the Christian/liturgical calendar – like “Mother’s Day” or “Father’s Day” – seems somewhat forced and redundant: shouldn’t we celebrate/acknowledge the Trinity every Sunday? Yet, if we’re completely honest, the Trinity isn’t something we think a lot about. But, as we begin our Summer series entitled “HOPE: A Series for Hard Times”, we start with Trinity Sunday and Paul’s treatise on the Trinity – and how, our faith in the Triune God provides us with a hope that “does not disappoint us.”

*[Old Car/Volkswagen ad that ran years ago on television – like this: In 30 seconds/the progression of life – single guy/girlfriend/wife – dog/first child/second child/third child – sports teams/ballet/etc... sound familiar?/sounds like life! The message is simple enough:a car for every stage of life, as your life/needs expand. In essence:what Trinity Sunday is all about – except it’s not about cars.]*

The message of Trinity Sunday is just as simple: Love – God’s love – expands to fill the void. That’s what today’s reading is about/what the Bible is about. That’s what Jesus kept talking about. Love expands to fill the void. The void in the universe before time began/that swept the earth before creation occurred – the void that ensued after Adam and Eve lied to God and fell from grace: The void that God’s heart felt then/when His Son/Jesus, died for our redemption. Love expanded each time to fill the void so that God’s presence now existed – created out of love, in love, for love.

And just like the commercial, love expands/multiplies. One starts a relationship/becomes two. Through love two becomes three/four – five. We live in relationships and love is the tie that binds us together. Love creates new things/changes things, it makes things better. Love moves outward from itself toward others. Those in love want to tell everybody what they’re feeling. Those in love wish everyone could experience what they they’re experiencing. Love wants the best for everyone. It wants to make the world a better place. And God’s love did just that. And that love, says Paul, was poured into our hearts as hope – a hope that yearns for all that God’s love can do/does/has done.

The Romans reading echoes Trinitarian themes/speaks of love – and the hope that is to found/experienced/known in/through the full/Triune nature of God. As short as it is, this reading highlights the work of God: it is the love of God that starts everything and that moves all things toward the glory of God, with the reconciling peace/love of God serving as the ongoing relationship by which we are able to approach God. The role of Christ throughout the passage is one of active agent, the through whom we are able to experience God’s love and salvation. Finally, the Holy Spirit is depicted here as the one in/through whom we actually experience the love of God in our lives. God’s love is before/through/after all that is, without which nothing exists or is sustained. And to drive this point home, Paul says that *“God’s love has been poured into our hearts...”* God’s love. Poured. Into our hearts. Filling us. Spilling over the brim. Overflowing/Effervescent/Ebullient. What a wonderful description

of why we are Christians – we've been filled to overflowing by God's love and we are moved to respond – to give our thanks, our lives, in return: and to be people of hope!

You see, it doesn't matter what the world throws at us. It doesn't matter what insult that may buffet us or injury we suffer. It just doesn't matter because we have faith/hope – we've been justified before God through our faith/hope by the One we call Lord. God can be trusted says Paul, place your trust/faith – your hope – in God and you will not be disappointed. Hope. Trust and hope in the Lord who gained us access to God's grace. God's love/hope in/through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us to sustain and deliver us. Have faith and hope in God's love/plan/purpose for you: God will not disappoint/let you down. Amen.