

# Three Dimensions of God's Love

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## Preparing

*During the organ prelude, please reflect on the reality of God's infinite love for all humanity. It is the nature of love to come, and the Christian understanding of God celebrates three dimensions of God's coming – as our transcendent Creator, as our liberating Savior, and as our empowering Sustainer.*

*This year the weekend of May 10 is a time when many Christians around the world remember the Day of Pentecost as an extraordinary experience of the God's spiritual presence and power, and the weekend of May 17 is a time to think anew about the doctrine of the Trinity, recognizing God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Here we are remembering both on the last four Sabbaths of the month.*

## Inviting

*The pastor says:*

As we worship here this Sabbath morning,  
the love of God our Creator,  
the grace of God our Savior,  
and the fellowship of God our Sustainer  
are with each of you.

*Please join in reading the bold-face type:*

**And also with you.**

*The pastor may express shared concerns  
of our community of faith, and then prays:*

God our transcendent Creator,  
you have made us in your image  
to make your love a reality in this world.

**We want to live creatively and faithfully  
as your sons and daughters.**

God our liberating Savior,  
in Jesus of Nazareth you showed us  
your unconditional, universal, unending love.

**We want to live and serve  
compassionately and generously.**

God our empowering Sustainer,  
within our inner selves you speak to us  
that calls us, challenges us, and changes us.

**We want to live and serve  
in spirit and in truth.**

In silence let us each identify a blessing  
we want and need to receive today.

*After several moments of silence, the cantor says,*

I invite you to stand.

*Please join the cantor in singing these words  
to the familiar tune of hymn 12 (Hymn to Joy):*

**Womb of life and source of being,  
home of every restless heart,  
In your arms the worlds awakened;  
you have loved us from the start.  
We your children gather 'round you  
at the table you prepare,  
Sharing stories, tears, and laughter,  
we are nurtured by your care.**

*Please remain standing as the cantor sings:*

*Word in flesh, our brother Jesus,  
born to bring us second birth,  
You have come to stand beside us,  
knowing weakness, knowing earth.  
Priest who shares our human struggles,  
Life of Life and Death of Death,  
Risen Christ, come stand among us,  
send the Spirit by your breath.*

*Please join in singing a third stanza:*

**Brooding Spirit, move among us;  
be our partner, be our friend.  
When our memory fails, remind us  
whose we are, what we intend.  
Labor with us, aid the birthing  
of the new life yet to be,  
Free of servant, lord, and master,  
free for love and unity.**

*Please remain standing as the pastor leads in prayer:*

Eternal God, you are the source  
of all reality, life, and truth.

**Especially in Jesus, your human Self,  
you have revealed the salvation  
that is our glorious hope.**

By your Spirit you give us a share  
in your generous life and transforming grace,  
so that we may love you with all our hearts  
and serve you with gratitude and joy.

**Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

## *Praying*

*After several moments of silence,  
the service leader begins our shared confession:*

God our Creator, Savior, and Sustainer,  
you have offered to fill us with willing faith.

**But we have resisted your power  
within us and among us.**

We have not truly believed  
that you are unconditional and unending love.

**We have not remembered that nothing we do will  
keep you from loving us,  
and nothing we do will make you love us more.**

Forgive, we pray, our failure to comprehend  
and our slowness to believe.

**We have been hesitant to live your love  
and to value others as much as ourselves.**

We have been reluctant to spread the good news  
of liberation in Jesus the Christ.

**Forgive our fearfulness, our short-sightedness,  
and our self-centeredness.**

Now inspire us, Creator God,  
to make your love real and attractive

**in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior,  
and by the sustaining presence of your Spirit.**

Although our love has been feeble  
and our service defective,

**we know we are accepted and forgiven,  
with a love that will never let us go.**

Alleluia!

**Amen.**

*The service leader may remind the congregation  
of special blessings and special needs.*

*The service leader then says,*

I invite you to kneel and join in the prayer  
Jesus taught his disciples:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come and your will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins**

**as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial**

**and deliver us from the evil one.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory  
are yours now and forever.**

**Amen.**

Transcendent Creator,  
open our eyes to the possibilities of grace  
that can lift us up when we have stumbled  
and make us communicators of your strength.

**The love of God be with us all.**

Let us each pray for spiritual strength.

*Please pray silently.*

Liberating Savior, enable us to hear and experience  
the extent and persistence of your love.

**The love of God be with us all.**

Let us each pray for the assurance that we are loved.

*Please pray silently.*

Empowering Sustainer,  
lead us into opportunities to serve  
in our homes and our communities,

**The love of God be with us all.**

Let us each pray for empowering of the Spirit.

*Please pray silently.*

Transcendent Creator, liberating Savior,  
empowering Sustainer,  
our God eternally before us, always with us,  
and yet ever ahead of us,  
we want to feel and live as wholly yours,  
now and forever.

**Amen**

*Please be seated.*

## *Listening*

*The first reader says:*

Listen for the word of God in the words of \_\_\_\_\_, chapter \_\_, verses \_\_ to \_\_.

*After the reading:*

This ends the reading.

**Thanks be to God for these words.**

*After several moments of silence, the cantor sings these words to the tune of hymn 103 (St. Anne):*

Creator God, creating still  
by will and word and deed,  
Create a new humanity  
to meet our present need.

*After several moments of silence the pastor says:*

Please join in reading responsively from Psalm \_\_\_\_,  
printed on the sheet you received  
with your worship folder.

*After the Psalm and several moments of silence,  
please join the cantor in singing another stanza:*

**O Savior God, who saves us now  
with overflowing grace,  
Pour out your love on us, through us,  
wake this a holy place.**

*The second reader says:*

Listen for the word of God in the words of \_\_\_\_\_, chapter \_\_, verses \_\_ to \_\_.

*After the reading:*

This ends the reading.

**Thanks be to God for these words.**

*After several moments of silence, the cantor sings  
a third stanza to the tune of hymn 103:*

Sustainer God, sustaining still  
with strength for every day,  
Empower us now to do your will;  
correct us when we stray.

*Please join in singing a fourth stanza:*

**Eternal God, throughout our lives  
we need your presence still;**

**Create, redeem, sustain us now  
to do your work and will.**

*The service leader says:*

I invite you to stand to hear the Gospel.

A reading from the Gospel of Jesus Christ  
according to \_\_\_\_\_, chapter \_\_,  
verses \_\_ to \_\_.

*After the reading:*

The gospel of Jesus Christ!

**Thanks be to God for the gospel.**

*Please be seated.*

## *Giving*

*The service leader says:*

Our lives are graced in many ways  
with the goodness of God  
our transcendent Creator, redeeming Word,  
and guiding Comforter —

**We give now our tithes and offerings —**

symbols of our gratitude, our responsibility,  
and our willingness to serve.

**Amen.**

*The offering is received.*

## *Singing*

*After the offering, the cantor or the service leader says:*

I invite you to stand and join in singing hymn \_\_\_\_\_.

*After the hymn, please remain standing.*

## *Considering*

*The homilist prays:*

In the name of God our transcendent Creator,  
incarnate Savior, and spiritual Sustainer —

**Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

*The homilist briefly expounds the meaning  
of one or more of the scripture readings.*

## Affirming

*The service leader begins our affirmation of faith:*

I invite you to stand as we affirm our faith together.

**We believe in God our transcendent Creator –**

Maker of heaven and earth and everything in them,  
whose power expresses  
unconditional, universal, unending love.

**We believe in God our incarnate Savior –**

Jesus Christ, born of Mary, baptized by John,  
crucified and buried,  
raised from death and welcomed into heaven,  
now ministering grace to us  
and soon to come again.

**We believe in God our spiritual Sustainer –**

the divine presence in and among us,  
transforming us in faith, worship, and service,  
inspiring our witness to the forgiveness of sins  
and the hope of everlasting life.

**Amen.**

*Please remain standing and join the cantor in singing  
a final stanza to the tune of hymn 103:*

**Mother, Brother, holy Partner;**

**Father, Spirit, Only Son;**

**We would praise your name forever,  
one as three, and three in one.**

**We would share your life, your passion,  
share your word of world made new,  
Ever singing, ever praising,  
one with all, and one with you.**

*Please remain standing*

## Blessing

*The pastor prays:*

The everlasting God, incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth,  
has shown the world the power of love,  
and has called us to live that love.

May God's Spirit enable each of us  
to live with integrity, wisdom, and compassion,  
to love the unloved and minister to all in need.

**Amen.**

*After the organ chimes, please be seated  
for prayer and meditation during the organ postlude..*

## Reflecting

*At the conclusion of the postlude the pastor says:*

Go in the peace of God,  
knowing that you are secure in Christ Jesus  
and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

**Alleluia!**

**Amen.**

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## Scripture Readings for Coming Sabbaths

### *Pentecost Sabbath*

May 10      Numbers 11:24-30      *Psalm 104:24-34,35b*      Acts 2:1-21      John 7:37-39

### *Trinity Sabbath*

May 17      Genesis 1:1-2:4a      *Psalm 8*      2 Corinthians 13:11-13      Matthew 28:18-20

### *Ordinary Time*

May 24      Isaiah 49:8-16a      *Psalm 131*      1 Corinthians 4:1-5      Matthew 8:24-34  
May 31      Gen.6:9-22;7:24;8:14-19      *Psalm 48*      Rom. 1:16-17; 3:22b-28      Matthew 7:21-29  
June 7      Genesis 12:1-9      *Psalm 33:1-12*      Romans 4:13-25      Matthew 9:9-13,18-25  
June 14      Genesis 18:1-15      *Psalm 116:1-2,12-19*      Romans 5:1-8      Matthew 9:35-10:8  
June 21      Genesis 21:8-21      *Psalm 86:1-10,16-17*      Romans 6:1b-11      Matthew 10:24-39  
June 28      Genesis 22:1-14      *Psalm 13*      Romans 6:12-23      Matthew 10:40-42

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The hymns are adapted from *The New Century Hymnal* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1995).