**“Beyond, Before, With, and In Us”**

Psalm 16:8-11

Genesis 1:1—2:4a

Acts 2:14a, 22-36

Matthew 28:16-20

Trinity

From our **Introit**, which means “**beginnings**”, so **here is where we begin this Season of the Church Year / Pentecost and, really, the Season of every day life until we get the Paradise of Heaven (from Psalm 16):** “**I have** **set the Lord always before me” (it’s a confession and dedication of ourselves to do so); “because He is at My right hand” (and that’s Jesus talking first, then us with Him, baptismally and by faith), “I shall not be shaken. Therefore My heart is glad, and My whole being rejoices; My flesh also dwells secure. For You will not abandon My soul to Sheol” (joining us with Jesus, even in this confession and dedication), “or let Your Holy One see corruption. You make know to Me the path of life; in Your presence there IS fullness of joy; at Your right hand ARE pleasures forevermore**.”

Grace to you and peace from **God our Father** and from **our Lord and Savior and God the Son, Jesus Christ**, affirmed to us by **God, the Holy Spirit**.

**Beyond us**

Let’s pray: God, keep us in Your presence throughout our earthly pilgrimage, that we may come to the fullness of Your joy in heaven; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected Lord. Amen. ….

**God is God, and we are not God!** Any **knowing of Him** **at all** is solely through **how He reveals Himself in Scripture**. We cannot **describe** Him further, nor **comprehend** Him. I am thrilled to **know not** that **I especially know God**, but that **God (thankfully) knows me according to gracious ways He’s promised to**.

God, therefore, can be appropriately called “**Beyond us**”. He is **One, yet Three**, and that cannot be explained nor understood other than the Oneness by which He (singularly) works all things. Yet we know the Son, born of Mary, suffering as an (also) human, to Himself (not with the Father and Holy Spirit, but by Himself) die to pay the due penalties for human sin. To even consider the **“incarnation**” of **God into mankind** is “**Beyond us**” and He’s the closest visual we have. To imagine a Father only of Spirit and the Holy Spirit (the proper third person of the Trinity) is an exercise in **caricature** at best.

I’ve heard of attempts at description like an apple (peal, meat, and seeds) or water as vaper, liquid, and ice, but both of those become heresies of “**faces**” of the same being, or “**parts**” inaccurate so have all been given names and condemned by the Church for even their so-called “intellectual” attempts.

God is “**other**”, Three in One and One in Three. God the **Father** **did not die upon a cross**, God the **Son** **did**, but **God the Holy Spirit** also **did not**, yet **God died on the cross**. Three unique persons are the Godhead that is One.

**Before us**

And **that Godhead** lived (was the fullness or life) from an infinite amount of time prior to us. **Not created**, but “**being always**”, God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, was **forever backwards**, and that should blow any mind trying to grasp it.

I picture the oldest text in Holy Scripture as John 3:16 after John 1:1. The “in the beginning” of Genesis 1:1 (as I read it in our first reading) was some six thousand earthly years ago; the “in the beginning” of John 1:1 was infinity backwards; but then God in His Three Persons has (what I picture) in a football huddle knowing what will happen after creating the human-object for His love and deciding (agreeing) on a **redemptive** **SOLUTION** for it (the Son playing His key role) before saying “ready, break” and, then, kicking in His singularly-executed creation of the “heavens and the earth”.

God was “**Before us**”, and that makes for a “**history**” that’s not clocked by time as we tick it on, but certainly by an **existence** that only the Three in the One of the Godhead knows and has had. The creation event (or week as week’s began to be defined) began a history with a Genesis, yet a history with **no beginning (or Genesis)** did exist before that one.

**For us**

And all of that would and should **intimidate us beyond measure** if there wasn’t the component of God’s revelation that’s “**For us**”. We’re told that He “**desires**” that “all be saved” through that “redemption plan” and “come to the knowledge of the truth.” God “**in this manner** loved the world by giving His One and Only Son Jesus into death, that **WHOEVER** would believe in Him would not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through Him. **WHOEVER** does not believe is condemned already because He has not believed in the name of the Only Son of God.” The Athanasian Creed voices an acknowledgment that “**WHOEVER** desires to be saved must **think thus about the Trinity**” **(God as Father and Son and Holy Spirit, the Father sending His Son by the Godhead’s pre-ordained plan of sacrificial love for admitted sinners)**.

And that Trinitarian acknowledgement **necessitates** **faith, love, and trust in the Gospel:** **that the Father did send His Son, the Second of the Triune God, to become “incarnate” and be self-sacrifice as perfect Divinity yet also made humanity**. “**This is** the catholic (small “c” as in “universal”) **content** of faith; **WHOEVER** **does not** believe it faithfully and firmly cannot be saved.”

**With us**

And that redemptive **salvation plan** can and must be “**With us**” and “**In us**” so not just **information apart from us or outside of us**. **Jesus** (the **Fullness** of the Godhead “bodily” as Scripture tells us) said “Lo, **I am** **with**” **a particular** “**you always**, even to the end of the ages”. That “With us”-part is what we can only know from the promises that He made of **how that happens apart from a general redemptive presence in all mankind**. He expects and judges too, specifying that “**some**” **He will not** “**know**” at a final accountability point, so our goal and efforts must be to **find ourselves secure under His promises** …

**In us**

… even His promise to **dwell inside of us, joining us first by baptizing Himself and then us so that we are, with Him, “of one flesh” with the entirety of the Divine Godhead**. Our existence is, through baptismal union, “**His**” **and His Father’s where they are everywhere** but also at **His place in the Throne Room at the “Father’s right hand”**.

What is, also, **wonderful about that** is that **the “Helper” (the Holy Spirit) is in us who’ve been baptized of water and Spirit**. He (as Romans 8 tells us) **keeps us in the Divine conversation (Father, Son, with Holy Spirit) and petitions (within us and for us) in always perfect conformity with Heaven’s will**. ….

Our Trinitarian faith is an **acknowledgment** yet, also, a **thanksgiving and praise**. There is no need to understand, just **wonder and awe and love and confess and never hedge on that confession** … so may that **be always the way with us … enjoyed by us**. In Jesus’ name.