

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN

GOD'S KINGDOM BELONGS TO PEOPLE LIKE THESE CHILDREN - LUKE 18.16B



Trinity Sunday with Children and Families

[Do United Methodists believe in the Holy Trinity?](#) Yes! The Articles of Religion state that the Godhead is “three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.” In Methodist congregations all over the world, we say as a gathered body that we “believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit.” But, explaining the Trinity remains challenging for us.

Trinity Sunday is celebrated on the Sunday after Pentecost, reminding us of the three different ways we experience the one God whom we worship. We worship God the Creator; we worship Jesus who experienced the life of a human; and we worship the way that God works within us — the Holy Spirit. For many children and adults, the concept is difficult to explain and understand. How do we make the Trinity accessible for children without using object lessons that are not necessarily appropriate examples of the relationship of the Trinitarian God?

Search Matthew 3.16-17 or Matthew 28.16-20 with Children

The word “Trinity” does not appear in the New Testament, but we do see evidence of the three persons of the Trinity throughout. Jesus spoke of God as a father or parent. Jesus said that he would send the Holy Spirit to help us. These passages illustrate the relationship and work of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Let children ponder how each person of the Trinity works in their lives.

Wonderings:

- I wonder how many things God created.
- I wonder what it would have been like to sit beside Jesus as he told his stories.
- I wonder why, inside ourselves, we sometimes feel that God wants us to do certain things.
- I wonder how Jesus would act if he were a student in your school.
- I wonder why we feel bad when we have done something wrong.
- I wonder what names there are for God in the Bible.

Delia Halverson is an author, retreat leader, and Christian education consultant. She has written curriculum and books for over twenty-five years. Delia continues to consult through Faith Discovery Ministries <http://www.deliahalverson.com>. Adapted for use on Discipleship Ministries website by Melanie C. Gordon.

Activity Starters:

- Share times when you felt that God was with you.
- Draw, trace, or make a collage of [symbols for the Trinity](#).
- Go into the sanctuary and search for things that have three.
- Enjoy a prism, which has three sides.
- Make a [3-D triangle](#).

Conversation Starter:

Read the Apostles' Creed together and point out the references of what we believe about God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Say: "Finish this sentence. God is like..." and let the children share all of what they believe God to be. Be mindful of children who may have strained relationships with their fathers. After the children share their ideas, point out how these traits have love in common. Let them ponder what that means about God.

Encourage families to recognize the Trinity in their lives

Use some of the Wonderings and activities above. Introduce the book [In God's Name by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso](#). In the book, everyone sets out to find God's single name but soon realizes that God goes by many names.

Families Create Together

Families can celebrate the Trinity by searching the Bible for different names for God. Search for these, and let children tell you what these names mean to them:

- builder (Jeremiah 31:4)
- eagle (Deuteronomy 32:11)
- father (Psalm 103:13)
- healer (Jeremiah 30:17)
- helper (Psalm 54:4)
- king (Psalm 47:6-7)
- lamp (2 Samuel 22:29)
- mother (Isaiah 66:13 and Psalm 131)
- rock (Deuteronomy 32:4)
- shepherd (Psalm 23)
- teacher (Isaiah 28:26)
- tower (Proverbs 18:10)
- wisdom (Proverbs 9:11)

Take time to offer help to someone in the name of God.

Reminder: Be sensitive to family dynamics.

Accessible Worship

Invite children to contribute to visual images of the Trinity for the projector, the bulletin, or the altar on Trinity Sunday.

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