

Circuit Service TRINITY SUNDAY June 12th 2022

Call to worship

To God be all glory,
the One who visits us in three persons,
the Holy Trinity of hope and love.

For there is no place which is without you, O God,
and no time when you are not there.
For you are the beginning and the end,
the source of all that is
in the wonder of universal life.

And yet, you take us by the hand and lead us,
as the life of Christ walks our human way
and shows us that life is stronger than death.

In the Holy Spirit, we are gifted, again and again,
and are called onwards toward a future
in which we are surrounded with love and grace,

We praise and worship you, O God,
for there is no other God like you.

Hymn StheF 11 Holy Holy Holy https://youtu.be/zzM9P_Gqw-s

<p>1 Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty ! Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee : holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty, God in three Persons, blessed Trinity !</p> <p>2 Holy, holy, holy ! All the saints adore thee, casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea ; cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee, who wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.</p>	<p>3 Holy, holy, holy ! Though the darkness hide thee, though the sinful human eye thy glory may not see, only thou art holy ; there is none beside thee, perfect in power, in love, and purity.</p> <p>4 Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty ! All thy works shall praise thy name in earth and sky and sea ; holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty, God in three Persons, blessed Trinity !</p> <p>Reginald Heber (1783–1826) (<i>alt.</i>) Based on Revelation 4:8-11</p>
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Prayer

God, who we know as Father, we adore you. In your presence we struggle for words to express your power in creation, the majesty of your being. We can never in the life grasp you, but you grasp us in your heavenly embrace.

God, who we know as Jesus the Son and Saviour, in you we see divine love and human greatness combined. By your birth, life, death and resurrection we have hope and purpose.

God, who we experience as Holy Spirit, through you we find it in ourselves to be people of faith, being a holiness we could not be of ourselves and doing what by ourselves we would never have it in us to do.

Almighty and eternal God,
you have revealed yourself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
enlarge our minds with the knowledge of your truth,
and draw us more deeply into the mystery of your love,
that we may truly worship you.
Hold us firm in this faith,
that we may know you in all your ways,

who are three Persons yet one God.

And this one thing we ask, that in this service may each of us know what we have been in the presence of a Living God and bless us with a fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit that we may continue to live to your praise and glory. now and for ever. Amen

Hymn StheF 6 Father we love you <https://youtu.be/LPVN3NjBJ U>

<p>1 Father, we love you, we worship and adore you : glorify your name in all the earth. Glorify your name, glorify your name, glorify your name, in all the earth.</p> <p>2 Jesus, we love you, we worship and adore you : glorify your name in all the earth. Glorify your name, glorify your name, glorify your name, in all the earth.</p>	<p>3 Spirit, we love you, we worship and adore you : glorify your name in all the earth. Glorify your name, glorify your name, glorify your name, in all the earth.</p> <p>Donna Adkins (b. 1940)</p>
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Bible Readings: Isaiah 6 verses 1-8

Romans 8 verses 12-17

John 3 verses 1-17

Hymn StheF 17 With gladness we worship <https://youtu.be/705eMUhoGs8>

<p>1 With gladness we worship, rejoice as we sing, free hearts and free voices how blessed to bring ; the old, thankful story shall scale thine abode, thou King of all glory, most bountiful God.</p> <p>2 Thy right would we give thee — true homage thy due, and honour eternal, the universe through, with all thy creation, earth, heaven and sea, in one acclamation we celebrate thee.</p>	<p>3 Renewed by thy Spirit, redeemed by thy Son, thy children revere thee for all thou hast done. O Father ! Returning to love and to light, thy children are yearning to praise thee aright.</p> <p>4 We join with the angels, and so there is given from earth alleluia, in answer to heaven. Amen ! Be thou glorious below and above, redeeming, victorious, and infinite Love !</p> <p>George Rawson (1807–1889)</p>
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Sermon <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nVL-PZVHODhvYWqUisDyrQDuwcBskCiS/view?usp=sharing>

Ancient humans must have been a scrappy lot. Unlike birds of prey with their

- Visual acuity
- Speed
- Sharp talons

And unlike the great cats with their

- Powerful bulk
- Sharp daggers for teeth

Pre-fire human had only

- sticks for digging and hitting,
- rocks for scraping
- stones for throwing

No fangs or talons to speak of, no armoured hide, no wings to fly or claws to burrow hurriedly into the ground.

Without the physical endowments given to other animals, before **mastering fire** humans were marginalised, vulnerable, SCAVENGING creatures.

According to myth, Prometheus stole fire from the gods and gave it to humans.

However it was that when humans discovered fire, then the age of human ascendance was born and humans began to change the earth. The shape of their societies and the course of human history was changed.

Last Sunday was Pentecost and with that fire of the HS The church was born, bravery to speak the message of Christ Crucified and Risen was inspired by that fire the disciples now had- first as tongues of flame on their heads and now in their bellies, in their speech. The shape of societies and human history was changed.

We come today, to Trinity Sunday, and somehow some of that life and energy may seem from the previous Sunday to have gone. You see your name on a rota for preaching that day and there is a sinking in your heart and a confusion in your mind. The spectre of folk who in the early centuries were beheaded or stoned or burnt for some perceived heresy against the way they expressed the doctrine of Trinity rises up! I well recall in theological college having to write various dissertations on the Trinity, carrying forth from the library great tomes which probably contributed to my back problems and amazingly didn't cause any hernias!

Whatever you say in the way of explanation or understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity you are bound to fall into some kind of heresy from which people in former times have been done to death in dreadful ways for saying much the same. So what is it? Can we at least have 'a stab' at it?

The doctrine of the Trinity means that there is one God who eternally exists as three distinct Persons — the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Stated differently, God is one in essence and three in person. These definitions express three crucial truths: (1) the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct Persons, (2) each Person is fully God, (3) there is only one God.

HEADACHEY, ISN'T IT!!!

Yet, we are here because we stand in a great line of people who have experienced God in those three ways.

- Sometimes as Isaiah said in the Old Testament reading – as the holy God, the One who is too mysterious and 'other' for us to adequately put into words. That goosebumpy feeling...
- Sometimes as Paul in the Epistle reading – as the uplifting Holy Spirit who assured that we can call God 'Father' but that even as we share in the joy we must be prepared to share in suffering
- Sometimes as Nicodemus, he came in the darkness of the night and in his encounter with Jesus came into the light of knowledge as to who Jesus is- the One sent to bring LIFE.

We may not speak the language of the theologians but we have fire in our bellies for coming to worship and to live lives of holiness and of righteousness, in the faith that the Spirit will be our enabler and that Jesus Christ on the cross and in his emergence from the tomb has broken down every barrier that prevents us from knowing God, NO VOICE OF CONDEMNATION NOW HANGS OVER OUR HEADS.

So, we are Trinitarian people who in our own ways are knowing God, as Father, as Son and as HS.

I am going to finish with this: at the beginning of my marriage to Nigel he was a very high church, Anglo Catholic and to such a parish church he went in his first curacy. His vicar was very disapproving of me – a Methodist Deaconess....wooh!- who although knowing about the liturgy of the Anglo Catholics had had no experience. Very early on I went to babysit for the vicar and his wife. At that time they had a child about 2 and a half, David. Martyn the vicar told me that every night either he or Ann would put David to bed and say a prayer with him. That I thought would be okay. So I put David to bed and as I was about to start a prayer he said “First we sing the fire song.” Fire song? So I started the only fire song I knew, London’s Burning. He burst into tears and said “No No No the Fire Song.” In the end he sobbed himself to sleep. On confession of this scenario to Martyn and Ann, I learnt that the fire song is that hymn, beloved of the Anglo Catholics

Immaculate Mary!

Our hearts are on fire;

That title so wondrous

Fills all our desire!

However we express our theology, our experience of God, our theology plain or complicated, expressed in high liturgy or extempore worship, REMEMBER THIS we are not to get bogged down with the kind of theology which gives us a headache but to be uplifted by the confidence in our inner selves that we do belong to a Triune God and in and through that great mystery WE are His. AND THAT is what gives us fire in bellies and in our speech. That is the way that societies and human history is changed. That is the way that WE are changed. Changed from glory into glory til in heaven we take our place til we cast our crowns before Him lost in wonder love and praise.

Prayer

Enfolding God,

Trinity of love,

You are our source, our goal, our life:

Forgive us those times when we resisted your Spirit’s work in us to be transformed into the likeness of Jesus who commanded us to love one another. Forgive us our anger, our pride, our holding of grudges, our passing by on the other side. May we be born again in You:

no more to live unconnected to your purposes but sharing in the Spirit's breath and carried to Your heart.

To end that we live always to your praise and glory. Thank you for your forgiveness and your never failing promise of making all things anew in our lives. Amen

<p>1 God with us : Creator, Father, bringing everything to birth ; Mother of the whole creation, fire of stars and life of earth : down the countless years composing, from the earth's evolving night, love's response to love, and forming mind and soul to seek your light.</p> <p>2 God with us : Redeemer, Brother, Friend for ever at our side, here, in flesh, you walked among us, taking up your cross, you died. Crucified, despised, rejected, Perfect Love, who shared our shame, streaming from the cross, your judgement, full of mercy, clears our name.</p>	<p>3 God with us : Unwearied Spirit, from the birth of time and space, surging through unconscious being, joyful, Life-Creating Grace : through the centuries you find us ; you, as God, inspire our prayer ; Life and Power at work within us, Love for ever, everywhere !</p> <p>4 God, Transcendent, far beyond us, closest Friend, unfailing Guide : through the ages, wronged, affronted, in your poor, still crucified ! God with us : convict, forgive us ; by your holy love destroy all that hinders peace and justice : fill this aching world with joy !</p> <p>Alan Gaunt (b. 1935)</p>
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Prayers of intercession adapted from John van de Laar – Sacredise.com

Lord, Creator Father God, we are a world that is desperate for You. Powers struggle for dominance, and war, oppression and abuse are in many places. Groups of people oppose one another because of ideology, religion or culture. Poverty and disease and despair are over all the earth. In our need for a God who is bigger than ourselves, and our personal interests, in our need for a God who is able to do more than we can even hope for, we hold our world before you.

(time of silence)

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayers

Lord, Saviour Son of God, we are a world when so often compassion and justice is withheld to some because of sexuality, race or gender; We need a Saviour who is more compassionate than we are who includes even those we would exclude. We hold our world before you.

(time of silence)

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayers

Lord, who we experience as Holy Spirit, we are a world where natural resources are mismanaged and abused, and some of its creatures are endangered; When motivation is scarce and creativity is in short supply to address the challenges that we face; We need a Spirit who is more powerful and more creative than we could ever be. We hold our world before you.

(time of silence)

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayers

Lord God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we hold before you those who are ill and those who are bereaved.

(time of silence)

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayers

May all for whom we have prayed be filled with peace and with strength.

We gather all our prayers in the words that Jesus taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven....

Hymn StheF 503 Love Divine <https://youtu.be/dPbD2G3i-7Y>

<p>1 Love divine, all loves excelling, joy of heaven to earth come down, fix in us thy humble dwelling, all thy faithful mercies crown. Jesu, thou art all compassion, pure, unbounded love thou art ; visit us with thy salvation, enter every trembling heart.</p> <p>2 Come, almighty to deliver, let us all thy life receive ; suddenly return, and never, never more thy temples leave. Thee we would be always blessing, serve thee as thy hosts above, pray, and praise thee, without ceasing, glory in thy perfect love.</p>	<p>3 Finish then thy new creation, pure and spotless let us be ; let us see thy great salvation, perfectly restored in thee : changed from glory into glory, till in heaven we take our place, till we cast our crowns before thee, lost in wonder, love, and praise !</p> <p>Charles Wesley (1707–1788)</p>
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Closing prayer (adapted from Book of Common Prayer)

The Almighty and everlasting Triune God,
who has given us faith
to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity,
will keep us steadfast in this faith,
and bring us at the last
to eternal glory, where we shall no longer see as through a glass darkly but shall behold face to face the
majesty of God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit, we with us all,
evermore, Amen.