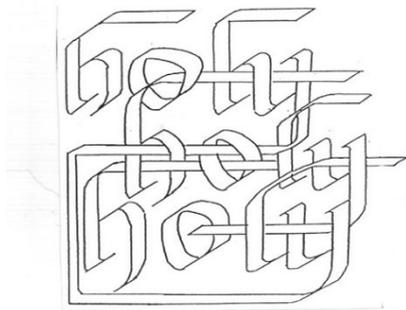


Virtual Worship for Linton Team Churches

Trinity Sunday, 7th June 2020

Welcome to our worship for Trinity Sunday, wherever you are, and however you are joining in with this service. A special welcome to anyone who has not joined with one of our services before, or who is coming back to them after a break.

If you are reading through this service at home, feel free to take it at your own pace, to pause for reflection where you want, to play music, or to sing hymns you know.



Graphic by Caroline Hamilton

As we gather our hearts and minds for worship, we remember all who are worshipping with us today– separated, but together – and pray for each other, saying:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all.

Penitence and Forgiveness

St Paul says
'Be imitators of God;
love as Christ loved;
do not grieve the Holy Spirit.'
(from *Ephesians 4.30 and 5. 1,2*)

We have not always worshipped God, our creator.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

We have not always followed Christ, our Saviour.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

We have not always trusted in the Spirit, our guide.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

May the Father forgive us
by the death of his Son
and strengthen us
to live in the power
of the Spirit
all our days.

Amen

Receiving God's Word

Today's Epistle is Romans 8.12-17.

Gospel Reading: John 3.1-17

Nicodemus Visits Jesus

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the

Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.' Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.' Nicodemus said to him, 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered him, 'Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

'Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Reflection by Maggie Guite

I recently asked a friend what she thought about Trinity Sunday. She rather surprised me by saying 'O, I love Trinity Sunday'. She's a Baptist minister, and I wasn't quite sure how much her tradition would have kept the different Sundays of the year, so that was one reason for my surprise. The other was, of course, that Trinity Sunday is often dreaded by preachers as an occasion when they think they have to explain complicated dogma which nobody understands, with symbols which are never remotely adequate. So of course I asked Tricia what it was that she loved about the day. And this is the essence of her reply:

On Trinity Sunday, she said, we've heard all the main parts of the story which we need to give us faith: faith in God the Creator who loves the world he has made; in Jesus who came as a baby, was baptised in solidarity with us, suffered testing and temptation just as we do, who loved and taught, healed and transformed, walked the path of rejection and suffering, died for us - and rose again; and finally, we've learnt of the Holy Spirit, rushing and burning, gentle and powerful, giving us a voice, standing beside us, and living within us. On Trinity Sunday we know all we need to know, and God is saying to us 'Get on now, and live it out' – *'go into all world and baptise people in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit'* so that they can live out the story too.

A Christian education programme called 'Godly Play' which we've used at Linton, describes the season of the church's year which follows Trinity Sunday as 'the green growing time' – and we all know why. In church, the colour is green, but even more, outside

us in our northern hemisphere, the colour is also green. Things are burgeoning towards the harvest. We know what we need to know to get us started, but like young shoots in the ground, we've got a lot more growing to do. And as is so often true in life, we grow by living— through trial and error, through baby steps and great leaps, through self-questioning and doubt, and through the surprising welcome and encouragement of others. We become disciples by trying to follow, by travelling with others, and by inviting yet others to follow, too. It's an adventure.

In the season to come, the church's readings will show us a lot more of Jesus' life and teaching, and we'll be trying to apply it to ourselves and our community. But for now, in the church's year we stand with that very factually-focussed man, Nicodemus who came to Jesus wanting to understand, and was told to let go and see himself as an infant again – a new-born child of God with a lot of growing to do. Jesus' undermined his certainties with elusive language, demonstrating that the rigid structures of his mind needed to be blown into something much more exciting by the unpredictable wind of the Spirit.

This Trinity Sunday, let's let go of our settled ideas of who we are and what it means to be Christians; we've *all* got a whole lot more growing to do. We've no idea where life will take us in the coming months – this time last year, we never conceived how different Church and or lives would become! But here we are! It's the knowledge of the heart which tells us, beyond our understanding, that God is with us in all the unexpectedness of life – the God we know in Jesus. And if God is with us, we can grow and discover new things in confidence, just as a growing child flourishes and develops with the support of a loving parent. We don't have to *understand* everything about our parents to flourish in their love

– but we do have to know with our hearts that in the core of *their* being they are loving, and that their love is for *us*. This is what the course of the church's year has shown us up to this point about God, and that is enough!

Hymn

Father, Lord of all creation,
ground of being, life and love;
Height and depth beyond description,
only life in you can prove:
You are mortal life's dependence:
thought, speech, sight are ours by grace;
Yours is every hour's existence,
sovereign Lord of time and space.

Jesus Christ, the man for others
we, your people, make our prayer
help us love, as sisters, brothers
all whose burdens we can share
where your name binds us together
you, Lord Christ, will surely be
where no selfishness can sever
there you love the world may see.

Holy Spirit, rushing, bringing
wind and flame of Pentecost
fire our hearts afresh with yearning
to regain what we have lost
may your love unite our action
nevermore to speak alone
God, in us, abolish faction
God, through us, your love make known.

Stewart Cross , 1928 – 1989

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Prayers

Why not make your prayers in threes today? Three things about God which you praise him for...Three gifts in your life you want to give thanks for...Three places in the world you lift before him in intercession... Three people whose needs you have on your heart...Three things in which you need help for yourself...

If you have access to your parish's current prayer list (prayer board) this may help you in praying for others

The Collect of Trinity Sunday

Holy God,
faithful and unchanging:
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,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father...

The Church's Great Thanksgiving, and Spiritual Communion

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God
It is right to give thanks and praise.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Father, you made the world and love your creation.
You gave your Son Jesus Christ to be our Saviour.
His dying and rising have set us free from sin and
death.

By your Holy Spirit you make us your friends.
And so we gladly thank you,
with saints and angels praising you, and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

*As you give thanks for the saving death and resurrection of Jesus,
ask him to be with you now.*

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the pains and insults you have borne for me. Since I cannot
now receive you sacramentally, I ask you to come spiritually into
my heart. O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I
know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you
more nearly, day by day. **Amen.**

O God, help me to trust you, help me to know that you are with
me, help me to believe that nothing can separate me from your
love revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

God's Blessing

Peace from God our heavenly Father;
Peace from his Son Jesus Christ who is our peace;
Peace from the Holy Spirit, the life-giver;
The peace and blessing of the triune God be among us.
Amen.

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