

Materials for Virtual Worship
The last Sunday after Trinity, 24 October 2021

Please use this material with the order of Virtual Service for the Linton Team of Churches
Ordinary Time

Collect

Blessed Lord,
who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning:
help us so to hear them,
to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them
that, through patience, and the comfort of your holy word,
we may embrace and for ever hold fast
 the hope of everlasting life,
which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Readings

Isaiah 55:1-11

An Invitation to Abundant Life

Ho, everyone who thirsts,
 come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
 come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
 without money and without price.
Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
 and your labour for that which does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
 and delight yourselves in rich food.
Incline your ear, and come to me;
 listen, so that you may live.
I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
 my steadfast, sure love for David.
See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
 a leader and commander for the peoples.
See, you shall call nations that you do not know,

Materials for Virtual Worship
The last Sunday after Trinity, 24 October 2021

and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.

Seek the Lord while he may be found,
call upon him while he is near;
let the wicked forsake their way,
and the unrighteous their thoughts;
let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

John 5:36b-47

But I have a testimony greater than John's. The works that the Father has given me to complete, the very works that I am doing, testify on my behalf that the Father has sent me. And the Father who sent me has himself testified on my behalf. You have never heard his voice or seen his form, and you do not have his word abiding in you, because you do not believe him whom he has sent.

Materials for Virtual Worship
The last Sunday after Trinity, 24 October 2021

‘You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf. Yet you refuse to come to me to have life. I do not accept glory from human beings. But I know that you do not have the love of God in you. I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not accept me; if another comes in his own name, you will accept him. How can you believe when you accept glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the one who alone is God? Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; your accuser is Moses, on whom you have set your hope. If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But if you do not believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?’

Reflection TWG (Together With God)
Rules (Psalm 19:7-10 and John 5:36b-47)

Who is good at following rules?! (Pause for possible reactions!)

Perhaps when we were younger we weren’t so good! I know I wasn’t. Serendipity has it that I now hear as a parent the words “No” and “But why?” And “what do you know?”, echoing right back at me!

I guess with age comes understanding...but not always, not always. Here we have a situation in the passage of John we just heard, grown men, not just any men, but the Jewish Authorities no less and they simply could not grasp the authority of God himself. Even after just witnessing the healing at the pool and trying to explain to them that Jesus is acting on God’s authority, they just don’t understand.

Sometimes our pride, position, stubbornness, ignorance and fear stops us from accepting another way of thinking, particularly when it comes to be called to obey another set of rules, another way of doing things which are unfamiliar to us.

I just want to go back to the healing at the pool for a moment..

Materials for Virtual Worship
The last Sunday after Trinity, 24 October 2021

The man at the pool had been sick for 38 years, a long time. Jesus came alongside him and his first words to him were, “Do you want to get well?”. What a strange question! “Do you want to get well?! That line has stayed with me ever since I read it. I have never forgotten it. I have never forgotten it, because in it’s surprising randomness, it is actually so deeply profound. It made me think, why on earth wouldn’t he want to get well? But now I realise that it’s a very important question. The man who was ill hadn’t experienced any other existence because he had been ill for so long his existence was a life with illness, he knew nothing else. Sometimes that’s a bit like us isn’t it. We carry around ‘illnesses’, guilt, unresolved issues, things that we sometimes find so hard to change or let go of, we get used to it. We describe it aptly as ‘carrying around our baggage’. And actually the thought of being without it is liberating in theory but also very scary, because we, possibly, won’t know how to ‘be’.

Living a new way, following a different set of rules can trigger these same emotions. Going back to our passage in John, Jesus is frustrated that these men are so off the mark, He says to them,
“You search the scriptures...yet you refuse to come to me to have life”
‘I know that you do not have the love of God in you’
“I have come in my Father’s name and you do not accept me”

The Psalmist writes,
“The law of the Lord is perfect”
“The statutes of the Lord are just”
“The commandment of the law is clear”

Why? Because we are told they revive the soul, rejoice the heart, give light to the eyes. We wouldn’t, perhaps, normally associate words like law, statutes and commandments with words like rejoicing and reviving.

But remember, these are God’s laws and rules, nothing scary here! The rules of God’s law are woven into the fabric of life itself. Christians

Materials for Virtual Worship
The last Sunday after Trinity, 24 October 2021

often like to think about the Bible as a set of instructions for how to live a good life, but the truth is that obedience to God is much more than simply following a set of rules and regulations.

The two greatest 'commandments'; to love God with all of you mind, body and soul and to love your neighbour as yourself. I would suggest that the two are more closely interlinked than we sometimes imagine. When we focus on a loving God, delighting in His Word and growing in the fruit of the Spirit, we find that God's concerns become our concerns. We begin to notice those people on the margins whom God loves and longs calls to himself. We recognise the ways that systemic injustice is affecting our minority groups. We can see the ways in which poverty harms our children and stops them from fulfilling their potential. The list could go on and on.

There are no rules for situations like this, except a call to love the people around us and be the hands and feet of Jesus to them. It is as simple and as complicated as that. Let's be people who listen closely for the Spirit's direction and be kind and loving to those around us. It's much more than just following the rules!

Nicola Collard

Jesus Is Lord

1 Jesus is Lord

Creation's voice proclaims it

For by His power each tree and flower

Was planned and made

Jesus is Lord

The universe declares it

Sun moon and stars in heaven cry

Jesus is Lord

Materials for Virtual Worship
The last Sunday after Trinity, 24 October 2021

Chorus

Jesus is Lord

Jesus is Lord

Praise Him with hallelujahs

For Jesus is Lord

2 Jesus is Lord

Yet from His throne eternal

In flesh He came to die in pain

On Calv'ry's tree

Jesus is Lord

From Him all life proceeding

Yet gave His life a ransom

Thus setting us free

Chorus

3 Jesus is Lord

O'er sin the mighty conqueror

From death He rose

And all His foes shall own His Name

Jesus is Lord

God sent His Holy Spirit

To show by works of power

That Jesus Is Lord

Seek Ye First

1 Seek ye first the kingdom of God

And His righteousness

And all these things

Shall be added unto you

Allelu alleluia

Chorus

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,

allelu, alleluia.

Materials for Virtual Worship
The last Sunday after Trinity, 24 October 2021

2 Man shall not live by bread alone
But by ev'ry word
That proceeds
From the mouth of God
Allelu alleluia

Chorus

3 Ask and it shall be given unto you
Seek and ye shall find
Knock and the door
Shall be opened unto you
Allelu alleluia

Chorus

Purify my heart (Refiner's fire)

1 Purify my heart
Let me be as gold
And precious silver
Purify my heart
Let me be as gold
Pure gold

Chorus

Refiner's fire

My heart's one desire

Is to be holy

Set apart for You Lord

I choose to be holy

Set apart for You my Master

Ready to do Your will

Materials for Virtual Worship
The last Sunday after Trinity, 24 October 2021

2 Purify my heart
Cleanse me from within
And make me holy
Purify my heart
Cleanse me from my sin
Deep within

Chorus

Make me a channel of your peace

1 Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred,
let me bring your love.
Where there is injury,
your pardon, Lord,
and where there's doubt,
true faith in you.

*O Master, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood, as to understand,
to be loved, as to love with all my soul.*

3 Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there's despair in life,
let me bring hope.
Where there is darkness,
only light,
and where there's sadness,
ever joy.

Materials for Virtual Worship
The last Sunday after Trinity, 24 October 2021

Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning
that we are pardoned,
in giving of ourselves
that we receive,
and in dying
that we're born to eternal life

Make Way Make Way

1 Make way make way for Christ the King
In splendour arrives
Fling wide the gates and welcome Him
Into your lives

Chorus

Make way (MEN - WOMEN ECHO)
Make way (MEN - WOMEN ECHO)
For the King of kings (MEN - WOMEN ECHO)
Make way (MEN - WOMEN ECHO)
Make way ((MEN - WOMEN ECHO)
And let His kingdom in (ALL)

2 He comes the broken hearts to heal
The prisoners to free
The deaf shall hear the lame shall dance
The blind shall see

Chorus

3 And those who mourn with heavy hearts
Who weep and sigh
With laughter joy and royal crown
He'll beautify

Chorus

Materials for Virtual Worship
The last Sunday after Trinity, 24 October 2021

4 We call you now to worship Him
As Lord of all
To have no gods before Him
Their thrones must fall

Chorus

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Closing Prayer

God of all grace,
your Son Jesus Christ fed the hungry
with the bread of his life
and the word of his kingdom:
renew your people with your heavenly grace,
and in all our weakness
sustain us by your true and living bread;
who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. **Amen.**