

Blairdaff and Chapel of Garioch Parish Church

Sunday 7th June 2020 Trinity Sunday

To be able to access the links, go to the bottom of this page and left click on the date. This will download the pdf in a new window, then simply click on the links as indicated.

Welcome

Today is Trinity Sunday. Our focus is on the nature of God as one God but three persons.

Call to Worship:

*We meet in the name of God:
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Let us praise his Holy name.*

Bible Passage: A Psalm of Praise to our creator God

Psalm 8

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory above the heavens.

² Out of the mouth of babies and infants,
you have established strength because of your foes,
to still the enemy and the avenger.

³ When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

⁴ what is man that you are mindful of him,
and the son of man that you care for him?

⁵ Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings
and crowned him with glory and honour.

⁶ You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet,

⁷ all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field,

⁸ the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

⁹ O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Song: [There is a Redeemer](#) *Click on the link*



**Prayer of Praise, Confession,
Assurance of Forgiveness and Lord's Prayer**



Blessed are you, Lord God our light and our salvation;
to you be glory and praise for ever!

From the beginning you have created all things. How wonderful the work of your hands, O Lord!
and all your works echo the silent music of your praise.

In the fullness of time you made us in your image,
and placed us in the garden of your delight. You give us breath and speech that with angels and
archangels and all the powers of heaven we may find a voice to sing your praise:.

Though we chose the path of rebellion you would not abandon your own., but sent your Son,
Jesus Christ, to be the living bread, in whom all our hungers are satisfied. He taught us the way
of salvation.

Loving us to the end, he gave himself to death for us and with a love stronger than death he
opened wide his arms on the cross. He set us free from the bonds of sin,
that we might rise and reign with him in glory.

You sent your Holy Spirit to empower us to proclaim your love and do your will that we might
bare much fruit for your Kingdom and for your glory. With all who stand before you in earth
and heaven we worship you Father Son and Holy Spirit, One almighty and everlasting God.

We bow before you confessing our sin. We have failed to love you with all our heart soul, mind
and strength and we have failed to love others as Christ loves us. We have been feeble channels
of your love and failed to grasp the opportunities to witness to you working in our lives and to
proclaim the Gospel of salvation. Father God, forgive and renew us.

We thank you, Father God, for your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, and for his
redeeming love for us, that we may know our sin is forgiven.

We thank you for your Holy Spirit at work in our hearts and in your Church, revealing your truth,
renew our lives and bringing us to your eternal kingdom. Blessing and honour and glory and
power be your forever and ever.

(Prayer based on Common Worship Eucharistic Prayer G Archbishop's Council 2000)

[A Prayer for the Morning](#) *Click on the link*

We offer our prayers in Jesus' name who gave us this prayer...

Our Father, in heaven, holy is your name. Your Kingdom come your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread and forgive us our sin as we forgive those who sin against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For yours is the Kingdom the power and the glory for ever. Amen

A Prayer for this time of Coronavirus

Loving God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit we pray.

May we who are merely inconvenienced remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors remember those most vulnerable.

May we have the necessary righteous indignation in this moment to fight for transformation.

May we who have the luxury of working from home remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools are closed remember those who have no option.

May we who have to cancel our trips remember those who have no safe place to go.

May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market remember those who have no margins at all.

May we who settle in for a quarantine at home remember those who have no home.

As fear grips our country, may we be the kind of people who stand up and who refuse to lay down. May we choose love.

During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other, let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God for our neighbours. And let us recognize that we cannot give up in this moment, and no matter what it takes; let it at least be written down in history that with our last breaths we fought for the world that ought to be.

(Cameron Bellm. Seattle USA; World Council of Churches)



Bible Passages

Our Bible passages today each have a Trinitarian conclusion. Both Jesus (via Matthew) and Paul refer to Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These three come naturally together. Jesus urges us to baptise in the name of the Trinity and Paul calls on the Trinity as a source of blessing. However, the word 'Trinity' does not appear in the Bible. It was not until a century or so later that theologians were using the word to express the threefold nature of God. There is also another connection which has been highlighted so that we can clearly identify the link.

2 Corinthians 13:11-13 (CEV)

¹¹ Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace **will be with you**. ¹² Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you.

¹³ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit **be with all of you**.

Matthew 28:16-20

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, **I am with you always, to the end of the age.**'

Trinity

What an amazing God. God who reveals his nature as three persons who desires to live within his faithful people.

Right at the beginning of creation the threefold nature of God is revealed. Genesis 1:1-3;

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. ³ And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light."

The creator God, God the Father, created the world by his Word. He said and it happened. John begins his Gospel account with "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.... Through him all things were made." (John 1:1-3) The Word of God is Jesus himself.; and the Holy Spirit, hovering over the waters, was with the Father and the Son right at the beginning, bringing order out of chaos.

God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God three persons, each creator God, each fully God.

Paul's concluding words to his second letter to the Corinthians church has become the prayer we call "The Grace". It is one of the most loved, well used and famous verses in the Bible. It has a central place in each of the many different Christian traditions (often used to conclude a meeting or gathering for worship) because it brings together God's grace, love, and fellowship.

Let's begin in the middle with, "**the love of God**" be with you.

God's creative activity wasn't simply to create a world and put human beings on it and leave it alone. God loves the world and so continues to engage with it. God is a God who wants to, and does, interact with creation and with people. Indeed, God wants a personal relationship with us.

Genesis 2:7 creates a picture of God forming humankind from the dust of the ground like a potter forming a pot from clay. It's an image picked up by the prophets and by Paul (2 Corinthians 4:1-12). God's loving creative fingerprint is forever within us; our very being is a result of his desire.

Love comes from God because God is love. (See 1 John 4:7-21.) Love is the very essence of God, not simply one aspect of God's character.

When we truly love someone we want to be with them. God wants to be with the people he made and loves. When we love someone there is no fear, just peace, and we enjoy the relationship. When we truly love someone we will do anything to ensure they are not hurt or suffering in any way.

God demonstrated the extent of his love for the world by his incarnation. Jesus *embodies* the selfless, self-giving, loving God. He came to earth to live our life and by his death redeem the world, bringing us back into a right and loving relationship with himself. His love for us is so great that it is sacrificial. God the Son lay down his life that we may be forgiven our sin and put right with God. He did this not because of anything we have done to benefit him but simply because he loves us, simply because we are God's creation, children of the Father. That is truly grace. "In him we have redemption through his blood, for the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace. (Ephesians 1:7). So, "**may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ**" be with you.

Those who have this grace are reborn, "born of water and the Spirit" to quote Jesus (John 3:5). We are remade, brand new, members of God's family; a family based not on any physical, ethnic or genetic relationship but on a common life in Jesus Christ, God the Son.

When Thomas saw the risen Jesus, he fell to his knees declaring, "My Lord and my God." (John 20:28.) Thomas looked at Jesus, his hands and his side, and saw God. The early Christians found themselves looking upon a loving God. They felt the warm intimacy of knowing that the Father loves his child. They came to love him in return, completely dependent and completely trusting of the Father.

Jesus is present in that relationship. Indeed, in his prayer for us immediately before his arrest Jesus prayed; "Father, ... I will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them [all believers] and that I myself may be in them." (John 17:26). It's a prayer

that underscores his words to the disciples earlier at the Supper, “I am in my Father, you are in me and I am in you.” (John 14:20). It’s a prayer that refocuses the believers on Jesus’ vine and branches imagery in the same conversation;

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5)

Paul wrote to the Romans telling them, and us, that the Spirit testifies that we are God’s children. The **“fellowship of the Holy Spirit”** binds us all into a family relationship with God and with other believers, our brothers and sisters in Christ. The Greek term is *koininia*, meaning , partnership, association, sharing, or communion, as well as fellowship.

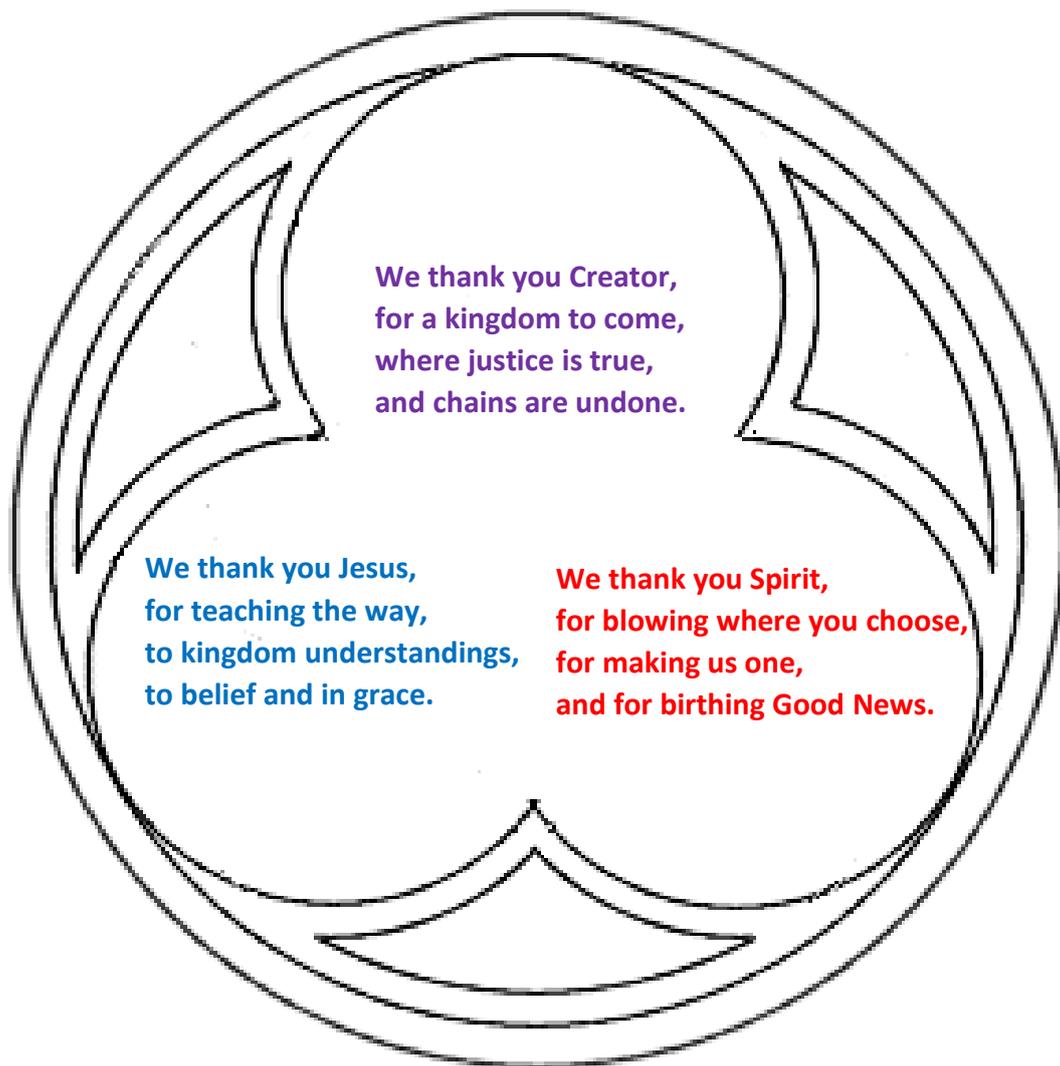
We have an amazing God. The relationship God wants with us is totally intimate. He lives within us by his Spirit. He lives within each faithful person (1 Corinthians 6:19) and the Church, the community of believers (1 Corinthians 3:16). The Spirit of God who raised Jesus from the dead lives within you and me. God’s life-giving Spirit is in us, active in each individual and in the whole Church, working through us, an ever-present companion, Counsellor, and guide.

Through faith we know God as a loving Father. In God the Son we encounter God’s loving message of reconciliation and its expression through his sacrificial, loving action. We experience oneness with God and his people through our experience of the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. We feel God’s eternal presence in our lives.

So, what does it mean for our lives today that God lives with us and in us? Here are three questions to help us reflect on the meaning of the Trinity for our lives today.

1. God is creator and Father of all that is. God is the creator of humankind and loves us with unbounded love. God saw that his creation was good. What are we saying to God about how much we value the life he has given us, and the love he has for us, if we live in ways which damage creation and ultimately damage human life?
2. “By grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God”, Ephesians 2:8. Jesus lay down his life out of his sheer love and generosity. When Peter wrote about using the gifts the Spirit gives, he said, “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.” (1 Peter 4:10). What does it mean for us to be good stewards of God grace?
3. The Holy Spirit lives within us giving us fellowship with God and one another. What does being in fellowship with God mean to you and how is that fellowship expressed in our relationships with others?

Poem: Threefold Thanks by Alex Clare-Young (*URC Prayer Handbook 2018*)



Song:

Our next song is one that is traditionally sung on Trinity Sunday. “Holy, Holy, Holy”, emphasises the threefold nature of the one God. The imagery of verse 2 is taken from Revelation chapter 4. Here are some selected verses.

Around the throne [of God] were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. ...⁶ and before the throne there was, as it were, a sea of glass, like crystal.

And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures.... day and night they never cease to say;

“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!”

¹⁰ *And the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying,*

¹¹ *“Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”*

Notice that “before the throne was, as it were, a sea of glass, like crystal” around which the elders cast their crowns.

This is mysterious imagery. We read in 1 Kings 7:23-26 and 2 Chronicles 4:6 that Solomon’s Temple had a huge bronze basin used for ceremonial washing by the priests. It was called a ‘Sea’. Since there is no longer a need for ceremonial cleansing due to the redeeming death of Christ, the waters are not disturbed and are clear as crystal.

[Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty](#) *Click on the link*

Prayers of the People for the People



At this time of isolation let us remember that God is always with us, “an ever present help in time of trouble.” (Psalm 46:1)

At this time when we are constantly washing our hands, let us remember that God has promised:

“I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, “Fear not, I am the one who helps you.” (Isiah 41:13).

And the words of Jesus;

“I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.” (John 10:28).

Father God, our creator, we know you are ever present and your fingerprint is within each one you have made. We place our hands in yours as a child holds the hand of a parent. We feel your love, compassion, and safety.

You may like to hold your own hands in front of you as you pray.

Father God we place into your hands the life of the church, in this parish, in this country and across the world. We place into your hands, your people, our witness, and the mission and ministry you call us to, to make disciples of all nations, baptising in your name, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We place into your hands our challenges, our frustrations, our worries and fears. We place into your hands our future.

You may now like to make a fist and hold it out in front of you.

Loving Jesus, when we make a fist we are unable to give or to receive, all we can do is hurt. So often when we use our fists it hurts our own hands. You taught us to love and so we place into your hands a world of fists. Show the world the holes in your hands that fists might be opened and hands offered in friendship in a world that needs peace, that hands might offer a gift to a world that needs to share the resources the Father has given us; that hands might touch and heal and mend the divisions between us.

We place into your hands

- all of us stunned by the events of this year

- people living in refugee camps and city slums, with limited sanitation facilities unable to wash their hands regularly
- children whose hands must work every day
- all whose hands must scavenge for food
- people abused whose hands are raised in fear and protection
- all whose lives are held in the hands of others
- black hands and white hands in the troubled cities of America

You may like to hold up your own hands as you pray.

Holy Spirit fill us with compassion and equip us for service that our hands may respond:

- to the cry the most vulnerable
- to the needs of the lonely
- to those whose hands can no longer care for themselves
- to people debilitated by disease
- to those who are bruised by bereavement

You may like to clap your hands as you pray.

Loving God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit we clap our hands in thanksgiving for all who serve you by serving others and use their hands to make this world more like you intend it to be.

You may like to clasp your hands as you pray

Loving God, unclasp my hands and free me, from all my fears, anxieties and all that weigh me down and keeps me from you. I place into your hands all that burdens those I personally know and love that you may make their burden light and that they may know you walk life's journey in with them holding their hand.

God in your mercy, hear our prayers. Amen



The Trinity's Grace

In you, God the mysterious Trinity, we live and rejoice.
 You are the foundations of all things, the giver of life, the sustainer of possibility.
 You are the one who comes to us in Jesus of Nazareth,
 the healing rabbi who undoes all that human brokenness can do,
 the Son who chooses the cross and draws all wickedness and suffering into your very being.
 You are the one who will not be defeated by the tomb's darkness
 but who rises to make all things new.
 Your eternal purpose draws all creation back into your love.
 One God: creating, saving, recreating,
 we worship and adore you.
 In majestic majesty you are unknowable to us,
 yet you choose instead to be known, and close, and real.
 And so we can pray that

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

(Neil Thorogood URC Prayer Handbook 2011 -Still Praying)

Blessing [Click on the link](#)

One of the consequences of us not being able to worship together is that the church anticipates a fall in income. However, we will continue to incur costs, of insurance etc. There will be little financial saving to our not meeting, yet revenues could be severely hit. Please prayerfully reflect on this and, if you are able, continue to put aside your financial offering so that you can make your contribution for the work of the church when we next meet together. Thank you.

Thank you too if you already give by standing order or by bank transfer, that is much appreciated.