

HOLY TRINITY AND ST PETER'S



Sunday 30th August 2020

12th Sunday after Trinity

A very warm welcome to all those joining us in our virtual worship, and in Church at Holy Trinity and St Peter's. It is wonderful we can worship in our various places as part of the body of Christ.

For those using the virtual service, if possible, please start at 10am (or 10.30am if you belong to St Peter's) so we are able to continue to worship together. Also try saying the parts in bold aloud.



Introduction

This week's theme is the Suffering Community.

Suffering is part of our lives. Christianity teaches us God is not aloof from humanity's suffering. His son Jesus Christ suffered throughout his ministry including dying on the cross and his disciples also suffered during their ministries. The apostle Paul suffered many physical challenges and illness during his life as well.

Paul in his second letter to the Corinthians Chapter 1 verse 3 said 'Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.'

A community that is united to Christ can offer comfort to those in our communities who suffer, as well as to ourselves.

We hope our worship today will help provide comfort to those who are suffering.

Lighting of Candle

At the start of the services in both our churches a candle will be lit and the following prayer will be said. Those using the virtual service are welcome to do the same.

Dear Lord,

We light this candle as a symbol of your light and grace.

Please watch over us all:

Those of us gathered here at St Peter's and at Holy Trinity to worship you,

Those who, for whatever reason, are unable to attend our services, but worship with us from their homes,

Those who are no longer here with us but are always in our hearts.

Let your light shine in the darkness so that those that feel lost in these uncertain times can find their way back to you.

Help us all to be a reflection of your light so that those who don't yet know you might begin to see you in us. Amen.

Opening Prayers

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Lord Jesus, you suffered on the cross of our salvation. Help us to understand the mystery of your pain, to accept patiently our share of suffering, and to enter with compassion into the sufferings of others. We ask this in your name. Amen

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength; ascribe to the Lord the honour due to his name.

The whole earth is full of his glory.

The Lord shall give strength to his people; the Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Amen

Confession

We have too often exchanged the worship of the living God for idols of our own imagining. As we gather to offer our praises to the holy and undivided Trinity, and to worship him in spirit and in truth, let us call to mind our sins.

Let us begin by reflecting on the week that has just passed:

Consider the things which we have done, or not done, and our thoughts which we now wish to say sorry to God for:

Let us return to the Lord our God and say to him:

Father, we have sinned against heaven and against you. We are not worthy to be called your children. We turn to you again. Have mercy on us, bring us back to yourself as those who once were dead but now have life through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Absolution

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
Amen 1 John 1:8-9

Collect for today

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray and to give more than either we desire or deserve: pour down upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

Readings for today

Faithful Creator, whose mercy never fails: deepen our faithfulness to you and to your living Word, who is Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Our first reading today is taken from Psalm 105 verses 1 to 6:

¹ Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done.

² Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts.

³ Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.

⁴ Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always.

⁵ Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced,

⁶ you his servants, the descendants of Abraham, his chosen ones, the children of Jacob.

New International Version – UK

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Our second reading is taken from Romans Chapter 12 verses 9 to 21:

Love in action

⁹ Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰ Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves.

¹¹ Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. ¹² Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. ¹³ Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practise hospitality.

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. ¹⁹ Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord. ²⁰ On the contrary: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.'

²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

New International Version - UK

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Talk ** Please open the audio file attached to hear Heather's sermon**

Lord by your spirit – would you open your word to our hearts and our hearts to your word. Amen.

I was going to begin today's sermon by saying a 5th Sunday is usually one of my favourite Sundays of the year for me. Being able to worship together as a benefice gladdens my heart as sisters and brothers across both parishes can worship and fellowship – united and together – which I will miss today. However, although we are in separate buildings or in our own homes – we are actually still united as we share the same service, readings, prayers and this talk. It is lovely too that we had a special prayer written for today for lighting our single candle of unity, hope, remembering and light. And although this particular way of 'doing unity' was never envisaged when we thought of the 5th Sunday combined service - it is a consolation that we can remain united despite the enforcement of limited numbers, shielding and social distancing.

In fact, the greatest reason and source of unity can be found in both our readings today. Psalm 105 reminds us to be united in worship as we are called to "Give praise to the Lord and proclaim his name". This is a really helpful way to pray when we may not be sure what to say...in that proclaiming God's name can help us connect to Him in such a rich variety

of ways. One year I began a journal to reflect on a different name of God each day – wonderful, counsellor, prince of peace, redeemer, lord, king just to name a few. Like a facet of a diamond – each name reflects God in a different way and can help us get to know God more in our walk with Him. Take a look at any chapter in the bible and perhaps note down the names or descriptions you find for God or Jesus and perhaps use the in your prayers or meditations – thanking Him for the characteristics that are reflected in His names.

In verse 2 of the Psalm it calls us to “tell of all his wonderful acts” and similarly in verse 5 we are told to “Remember the wonders he has done,” which I know I need to do more often. My spiritual director recently set me some ‘homework’ to write down all the ‘good things’ or ‘blessings’ I have found or received during this pandemic crisis – and it was so amazing to ‘count my blessings’ and focus on the good things that God and His people have done – rather than just dwell on the difficulties we have had to face day by day. I know I have spoken before of an ‘attitude of gratitude’ and about keeping a ‘blessing book’ to remind ourselves of the good things which can especially then help us during the tough times. I have a friend who has taken this to a new level during lock down as she has posted 3 things every day on the internet to be thankful for – things that are extra special and things that some could seem to be everyday but can often be taken for granted. And this routine became contagious with other friends doing the same...and although it didn’t negate or stop the struggles they’re still facing – it helped them stay more positive in what was and continues to be a difficult time.

Psalm 105 v 4 also calls us to seek God’s face ALWAYS. We heard a couple of weeks ago about God’s face shining down on us...and this psalm is the other side of that coin calling us to look to God’s face – His will and His character. Sadly I know so many Christians for whom the thought of looking at God’s face is terrifying. Not the reverential ‘fear’ or respect that we heard about recently but actually being scared of what expression they may see in God’s face or eyes if they dared to look, suspecting a response or look of disapproval or disappointment which would understandably be crushing or soul destroying. It is hard to think or consider what God’s expression would be if we dared to look at His face - which is why I have a book on my shelf that I really love called “When God thinks of you He smiles.” If we believe that God is love...and as Love personified He is patient and kind and keeps no record of wrongs, not proud or rude or easily angered (or any other positive expression of love we can find in 1 Corinthians 13) ...then let us not be afraid to seek God’s face and His will and instead approach Him with confidence and hope as

when we see Him as He truly is – we won't be able to do anything but worship Him in unity and strength.

So if our Psalm is about unity in worship – our Romans reading is about unity in service....and as part of that - love in action. When I spoke earlier about the blessings I'd recognised and acknowledged during lock down – it was mostly about the loving kindness and loving service of others. When I think about some of the kindnesses I have received over these past few months I am almost (or sometimes literally) moved to tears because of the sheer lovely and gracious words or actions of others. Perhaps Paul's words have never been more critical than during a global pandemic when he says in v9 onwards "Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another." And perhaps most difficult of all these challenges in that section we have had today is " Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer" And haven't we seen this done in such a variety of thoughtful and creative ways?

But perhaps it's verse 15 that is especially poignant when we are called to " Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn" when restrictions in our gatherings and movements has made this so limited and narrow in what we have been able to do. Even as we ease out of lockdown there are a lot of celebrations that have been missed but equally there is a lot of mourning that still needs to be done in community and as individuals. Don't underestimate some of the difficult feelings that will be around for a long time yet as we come to terms with our losses and re-assess our new ways of doing life in a way that will, in many ways, never be the same again.

Another part of unity in action is emphasised in v16 where we are called to "Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited." If there is anything that the pandemic has taught us – it is this- Our need for one another in community. It's not about independence or dependence – but interdependence – our need for one another....just as we are taught through the image and call to be the body of Christ. And that is what the church has tried to continue to be and do even (or especially) when our buildings were closed. Hearing first hand experiences and examples of this has been truly humbling.

There is also a call for unity in community where we are charged with the task in v18 "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." The only way we can do that is through love, forgiveness and grace....and as far as it depends on us. We can't control other people's behaviours or actions so the only thing we do have any control

over is our reactions. It's not always easy, and we may sometimes need to put Jesus in between us and others who have or who are hurting us.... And in that way we are able to use love as the ultimate 'weapon' against hate or injustice.

So, today we have looked at unity in worship, unity in service to others and unity in community. From next week we continue to be united in our Sunday services as we plan to use the same material for our readings, prayers and talks whether we are using our emailed out service at home or worshipping back in either of our buildings. We are going to be following a sermon series on "Communion" in the widest sense of the service by looking at different themes that we find in a traditional Holy Communion service. We will be looking at how we can safely share communion again in church (although it will just be the bread for now) and hope to be re-introducing it to our Sunday morning services soon....but for now....we will be looking at 'communion' again in its widest sense over the next 9 weeks (a booklet will be sent out for you to use and follow if you wish.)

So let's end, for now with Paul's exhortation "Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer." And let us always be united in worship, service and community – for God's glory and for His kingdom. Amen.

The Peace

Peace to you 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 of the triune God be always with you

And also with you

Statement of Faith

Let us declare our faith in God:

We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high.

We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen

A prayer of thanks for our giving to God

Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the splendour and the majesty; for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.

All things come from you, and of your own do we give you.

Prayers of Intercession

Let us pray for the Church and for the world, and let us thank God for his goodness.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father you promised through your Son Jesus Christ to hear us when we pray in faith.

Lord God, we thank you for sending us your Son Jesus Christ and that through his life and death he revealed the wonder of your love to all people.

Help us to understand, loving Father, that sometimes we may have to suffer to follow you and we will face troubles and challenges during our lives. We ask that during these times we look to you through prayer for your strength and that you will help us to endure our suffering with patience and hope.

Help us not to be tied by our safe and predictable ways and thinking and accept the challenges that following you brings.

Keep us all faithful and vigilant as your servants who wait for their Lord with great hope.

We ask that you will strengthen Christopher and John our Bishops, Heather and Sharon in their ministries in Hartshill and Galley Common, Nick and Sally our lay readers and churchwardens at Holy Trinity and Kate and Debbie, our churchwardens at St Peter's, and all your Church in the service of Christ, that those who confess your name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory to the world.

Lord in your mercy - hear our prayer

Lord God, we heard in our reading that we are to live in peace with everyone. We pray that the leaders of the nations and people everywhere may turn to you so that war, terror, cruelty and hatred may end and peace, justice, kindness and love may reign.

We ask that you will help and support all those people suffering in the troubled parts of the world.

We pray for all those people who have lost loved ones, are homeless, and suffering as a result of natural disasters and climate change.

Let all who have power remember that they are your servants and that your Son came to serve rather than be served.

Bless and guide Elizabeth our Queen, give wisdom to all in authority and direct this and every nation in the ways of justice and peace; that people may honour one another and seek the common good.

Lord in your mercy - hear our prayer.

Lord God, we heard in our reading and talk today that we should live in harmony with one another. Give us eyes to see you in other people, and make us instruments of your care to all especially to our families, neighbours and friends.

Help us to recognise how much you do for us and we in return look for ways to help those who are in need in the communities we live in.

We pray for all children and young people and that they are brought up in happy, loving and supportive surroundings.

We pray in particular for all those returning to school next week and those starting school for the very first time or are moving to a new school. We ask that you will support them as they deal with their mixed emotions of excitement, fear and perhaps loneliness.

We also pray that you will support all teachers and assistants who work tirelessly for the good of the children in their care.

Give grace to us, our families and friends, and to all our neighbours; that we may serve in Christ in one another and love as he loves us.

Lord in your mercy - hear our prayer.

Lord God, your Son Jesus suffered on the cross for our salvation. Help us to understand the mystery of your pain, to accept patiently our share of suffering, and to enter with compassion into the sufferings of others.

We ask that you will comfort and heal all those who are ill at this time, give peace to those with troubled minds and restore hope to those who feel there is no future.

In a moment of silence we bring before you all those known to us who need your help at this time: in particular we pray for Rachel M and Family; Mark J; Maureen; Olive; Julie; Jan & Tony; Mark P; Rebecca; Jane; Stan A; Penny H; Sue P; Lucy W; Lucy and Michael B; Mark; Brian V.

Give all those we have prayed for, courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation.

Lord in your mercy - hear our prayer.

Lord God, in our reading and talk today we heard that we are to mourn with those who mourn. We pray for those whose lives have recently been saddened by the death of a relative or friend – especially praying for the family and friends of Baby Rueben Daniel Baddeley

Be with them and give them faith and strength to look beyond their present loneliness and grief to Jesus, who died and rose again and lives for evermore.

Lord in your mercy - hear our prayer.

Finally Lord God, give us the faith to believe that whatever may lie ahead you will be with us to strengthen and uphold us, forgiving us our natural anxiety.

Rejoicing in the fellowship of all your saints who kept the lamp of faith burning brightly, grant that we who are following may be lit by him who is the light of the world and show it in our work for you.

We now commend ourselves and all Christian people to your unfailing love.

Merciful Father- Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayerful reflections:

Spend some time thanking God for what you have and the blessings you have received.

Pray for those on the front line who are still serving so faithfully.

Pray for those whose livelihoods have been impacted.

Pray for those on your heart.

Pray for yourself – be honest with God about your fears and feelings.

The Diocesan Prayer

Father, pour out your spirit upon us.

Grant us a new vision of Your glory,

A new experience of Your power,

A new faithfulness to Your word, and

A new consecration to Your service,

That Your love may grow among us and Your kingdom come,

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us so we pray:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,

Your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

Closing Prayers

God of all mercy, you have set aside our sins and given us your healing: grant that we who are made whole in Christ may bring that healing to this broken world, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Almighty and eternal God, you have revealed yourself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and live and reign in the perfect unity of love: hold us firm in this faith, that we may know you in all your ways and evermore rejoice in your eternal glory, who are three Persons yet one God, now and forever. Amen.

It is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness', who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4.6

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

The Blessing

The Lord God almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the holy and undivided Trinity, guard you, save you, and bring you to that heavenly city, where he lives and reigns for ever and ever; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among us and remain with us always. **Amen.**

The Commission

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
In the name of Christ. Amen.

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Notices for the week ahead

Church Services

All services, for the time being, at Holy Trinity will start at 10am (there will be no 9am service on the second Sunday- it will be 10am).

Services at St Peter's will start at our usual time there at 10.30am.

There is no communion, or refreshments, at present.

To comply with all the Covid-19 secure advice unfortunately we are going to be very restricted on numbers who can attend at both churches.

Because of the restrictions if you wish to attend a service at either church you need to ring or email Heather to ask to be put on a list of attendance for a Sunday. This is vital as we do not want to turn people away.

Those able to attend will be contacted so please do not turn up if you have not been informed that you can attend. A Guidance note has been prepared for all those attending- please read it carefully.

It is compulsory that face coverings are worn in the Church buildings so please come prepared. Church leaders/preachers/pray-ers are permitted to temporarily lift their face coverings when speaking...but for congregation members it is now mandatory to wear them inside church at all times.

For those not able to attend we will be continuing with services being sent out by email and resources being sent in the post as at present.

The Churches' Premises are still closed to everyone outside service times and entry can only take place with the agreement of Heather or in her absence the Churchwardens – please do not attempt to access them with any keys that you may have.

We would ask for your prayers during what is going to be a difficult and developing situation.

Daily Hope

Daily Hope is a free phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers launched by the Church of England. It has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind. So, if you know someone in this situation, please phone them and tell them about free-phone **0800 804 8044**, and why not try it for yourselves.

Food Bank

Due to the restrictions in church during services we are **still not able** to continue with the bringing of items to Church or deliveries to the warehouse. We will review that as restrictions are lifted.

This is at a time when the Food Bank is still under huge pressure.

The Food Bank is still working with its volunteers and there are collection points in most supermarkets. If you are visiting a supermarket for your own shopping please consider adding a few items to donate in this way. A list of the most urgently required items can be found on the food bank website.

Please note, they are no longer able to accept infant formula milk or baby food due to a UNICEF directive.

Can we urge everyone to consider if they can give a donation of money? Please visit their website- www.nuneaton.foodbank.org.uk and click on the Donate button at the top right of the page.

This is a really valuable way we can collectively as Churches show our love to the vulnerable people in our society.

Any items on messages: prayers; prayers answered; birthdays or anniversaries to be included on the weekly service and notice sheet please email Nick Blamire-Brown at njbb@hotmail.co.uk

If you want to be added to the email prayer chain/group or have any prayers you want to put on the prayer chain please email:- prayers.holytrinity@gmail.com

Please be aware that all documents are now going to be much more in the public domain (emailed out and they have been posted too on Facebook and possibly church websites in the future.) Please be careful to get permission from any person you wish to mention.

Please pray for the following in the coming week:

Coronavirus Crisis

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy.
Sustain and support,
be with those who care for the sick, the anxious
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may find comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Leaders and Clergy

Heather and Sharon in their ministries in Hartshill and Galley Common;
Kate and Debbie our St Peter's churchwardens, Nick and Sally our lay
readers and Holy Trinity's churchwardens; Ruth & Rob Kinderman in their
youth work; Michael Brandsma in his ministry in Atherstone; and Bill
Walton in his curacy.

Pray too for our Archbishops, Bishops and Bishops' Staff team as they
lead the nation and diocese.

Pray for the government and local/national/international leaders as they
make life changing and potentially life-saving decisions.

Those on our hearts at Holy Trinity

Rachel M and Family; Mark J; Maureen; Olive; Julie; Jan & Tony; Mark P;
Rebecca; Jane; Stan A; Penny H; Sue P.

Also for care firms who are under severe pressure to protect both staff
and residents.

Those on our hearts at St Peter's

Lucy W; Lucy and Michael B; Mark; Brian V; and others known to us.

Family and Friends of those recently deceased

Baby Rueben Daniel Baddeley

