HOLY TRINITY AND ST PETER'S





Sunday 11th October 2020 18th 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 continue to worship together. Also try saying the parts in bold aloud.



Introduction

We continue with our sermon series on "Communion" looking at different themes that we find in a traditional Holy Communion service. Although we are not yet actually sharing the bread and wine in a Communion service there is much more in the wider aspect of the Communion service than that part of the service, and we hope that, through following the series, we will all grow in unity and in the faith of God.

Our sixth theme is the Offertory. We will look at our giving to God and what part our heart and faith play in our offerings.

For those who have enjoyed following the themes of the Trinity Season we are continuing those with an appropriate prayer, and you will find them in the Notices section.

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 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

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lord is here. **His Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

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

As we gather to offer our praises to the holy and undivided Trinity, and to worship him in spirit and in truth, we have too often exchanged the worship of the living God for idols of our own imagining. 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 as wayward children return to God and confess our sins.

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

May the Father of all mercies cleanse us from our sins, and restore us in his image, to the praise and glory of his holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Collect for today

Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us your gift of faith that, forsaking what lies behind and reaching out to that which is before, we may run the way of your commandments and win the crown of everlasting joy; through 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 1 Chronicles Chapter 29 verses 10 to 17:

David's prayer

10 David praised the LORD in the presence of the whole assembly, saying,

'Praise be to you, LORD,

the God of our father Israel,

from everlasting to everlasting.

11 Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendour, for everything in heaven and earth is yours.

Yours, LORD, is the kingdom;

you are exalted as head over all.

Wealth and honour come from you; you are the ruler of all things.

In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all.

- ¹³ Now, our God, we give you thanks, and praise your glorious name.
- ¹⁴ `But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand. ¹⁵ We are foreigners and strangers in your sight, as were all our ancestors. Our days on earth are like a shadow, without hope. ¹⁶ LORD our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a temple for your Holy Name comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you.

¹⁷ I know, my God, that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity. All these things I have given willingly and with honest intent. And now I have seen with joy how willingly your people who are here have given to you.

New International Version - UK

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke Chapter 21 verses 1 to 4

Glory to you O Lord

The widow's offering

As Jesus looked up, he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. ² He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. ³ 'Truly I tell you,' he said, 'this poor widow has put in more than all the others. ⁴ All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.' New International Version – UK

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you O Christ.

<u>Talk</u> ** Please either open the video or audio file ** or read it below:

I would like to start with a short prayer:

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. Amen.

That prayer will be familiar to you as it is part of our Communion Service and forms the basis of the sixth theme in our sermon series. The prayer is used in other services and we will be saying it later.

The words of the prayer also come directly from our first reading today from 1 Chronicles Chapter 29 and the title of the reading says it is David's prayer to God.

There is quite a context to David's prayer. In 2 Samuel Chapter 7 we hear that things were going well for David and he wanted to show his gratitude and love to God by building a temple for him but the prophet Nathan had a message from God to tell David that it was not God's plan that he should build the temple but his son Solomon who would build it.

In 1 Chronicles Chapter 29 David is reaching the end of his life and he sees it as his final task to help to get all the resources ready to help Solomon build the temple. We read at the beginning of Chapter 29 that David puts all his wealth into the project and then he challenges all leaders of families and all officials in verse 5 by saying to them, 'Who is willing to consecrate himself today to the Lord?'

What I find interesting is David's use of the word 'consecrate'. That word is such an important word in our faith. It means dedicating something to God and that can be a person, offerings, objects, buildings, in fact everything.

In Communion Services we have the consecration of the bread and wine and an ordained priest is consecrated to become a bishop. A favourite hymn of mine starts with the words, 'Take my life, and let it be, consecrated, Lord, to thee'.

What David was asking the leaders and officials to do was to put themselves right with God. Look first to God and commit to Him. The result of doing this we learn in verse 6 is that they gave willingly. Verse 9 says: 'The people rejoiced at the willing response of their leaders, for they had given freely and wholeheartedly to the Lord'. David also rejoiced greatly which lead to his prayer.

He starts by praising God and then the words of how he describes God are simply majestic: 'You are Our Father'. This is the first time in the Old Testament that God has been addressed as Father.

David says God is everlasting, God is the greatest, the most powerful. Then he goes on to describe the glory, the majesty and splendour of God and says that everything on earth and heaven belong to him.

In the rest of verses 12 to 17 David is acknowledging that the wealth and power he has comes from God. He says: 'Everything comes from you and we have given only what comes from your hand'.

That is a very important principle involved in our giving, whether it is money, or the gifts God has given each one of us to use - Everything we have comes from God.

I know the prayer I started with and which we will say later is normally said in a church service after we have taken our plate of money offerings up to the altar, but I do not think we should think of this as offering just our money but the use of all the gifts that God has given each one of us.

The apostle Paul in his letters to other churches often talks about using gifts God gives us – such as some people will have the gift of preaching, some of teaching, and some of healing. There are many gifts that we have been given and some of them are much less of a professional nature. It can be showing love to people, praying for people and events, bringing joy to people's lives, trying to bring about peace where there is unrest in our families and friends, showing patience when things are going wrong, showing kindness and goodness to others.

It is the motive behind our giving which is the most important thing to God, and this is demonstrated in our second reading, taken from Luke Chapter 21 verses 1 to 4 titled 'The Widow's Offering'.

In the temple there were offering boxes shaped like trumpets and everyone was expected to give something. In verse 1 of our second reading Jesus watched the rich putting their gifts into the boxes. They wanted everyone to see how generous they were in their giving. Then Jesus noticed a poor widow drop two small coins in the box, which was all she had. Jesus remarked that the rich had given because they had the

money to give but she gave even though she had so little. It was a complete act of sacrifice and contrasted greatly with the show of wealth from the rich.

Jesus was offering a radical definition of charitable giving. Instead of measuring the gift's financial value, he questions the cost to the giver. The widow gave little, but it was all she had to live on. The religious leaders gave huge amounts but still had vast amounts of surplus cash left over. It cost them nothing to bless and thank God, it cost the widow everything. What the widow did was a massive act of faith. She trusted God to provide for her in her needs.

I do not know about you but whenever I read about the Widow's action it makes me feel very embarrassed as if I gave everything I have I would be worried sick about how would I pay the bills and live as I do. God does bless us with giving us income to meet our needs and is interested in how we use that in the way we live our lives.

So, what was the motive for the widow being so generous? Well I think it was above all an act of love. Whatever is important to us, whether it is our house, car, holidays, hobbies, eating out or in my case our garden - it gets our money, our energy, our time and our attention. The widow loved God so much that she wanted to give so generously of everything she had. She acknowledged what David had said that everything comes from God and of that we give him.

Jesus saw that the rich people were giving out of obligation and worldly wealth - these are not gifts from the heart or true fruits of discipleship. The widow gives out of the core of her being and out of love.

Jesus is calling us all to love God and to love one another. That should lead us to respond to all God's gifts to us, not from our wealth, for writing a cheque or setting up a direct debit, or putting money on a plate is the easy bit but to give from the core of our humanity; turning our hearts and minds over to God, is the spiritual dynamic behind our stewardship and discipleship.

Soon after the New Year, Jan and I sit down to review our charity giving and the starting point has always been what can we afford to give this year. Writing this talk has made me realise that this is totally the wrong starting point. We should start with God and look at the blessings we have received.

John in his gospel in Chapter 1 verse 16 said,' From the fulness of his grace we have received one blessing after another'.

We need to develop an attitude of gratitude for all the blessings God gives us. Everything comes from him.

I want to finish with Paul's second letter to the Corinthians Chapter 9 verses 6 to 8: 'Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work'.

What might we want to offer in response to the love and grace of God to us in the use of our money and gits to our churches and communities?

A short prayer to finish:

Teach us, Our Father, to give ourselves to you as Jesus did, without being mean and selfish.

Help us to think always of what others need; help us to share what we have with others.

You have given us so many good things.

We thank you most of all for the love of Jesus, the greatest gift of all. 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

Heavenly Father, we come before you now recognising that without you, we cannot accomplish a fraction of the goodness we can when we draw on your Holy Spirit, your inspiration and divine power. So often we forget to come to you in prayer with the little things we need help with, so we take a moment now to think of all the areas of our lives, our community, our families and our friends, the nations of people and all of nature; and in this quiet moment we will concentrate and bring ourselves and others who need your help into this prayer......

Take a few moments of silence and think about issues you know about – give God time to concentrate your focus...

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer We think of your world, how marvellously you created it. Help us all to do our bit to look after the beauty and balance of nature. Inspire us to come up with new ways to stop pollution and destruction of our planet as you inspired the children of Fourlanesend School in Cornwall to remove plastic from Red Nose Day.

We pray for all the people of the world especially those who are currently suffering in poverty and with the added complication of COVID. We remember those who do not have access to clean water and we pray for all charities and aid workers in their efforts to help. Help all charities as they face higher numbers of requests at a time when they are receiving less income.

We remember children whose education is being affected and pray for those at university where many students are in a lock down situation.

We pray for wisdom for all the leaders of the world. We ask for unity and peace between nations so that they may work together for the good of all. Where there is corruption may this be brought to light so that those who are full of goodness take the place of the corrupt. The state of the world often challenges our faith but help us to always have hope that goodness, honesty, integrity and peace will prevail.

Lord in Your Mercy Hear our Prayer

Strengthen our Bishops and clergy, particularly we ask for your blessing upon Heather and Sharon as they guide and lead us. Bless Debbie, Kate and Nick and Sally our Church Wardens and all who work in the service of Christ. No matter how small a task, help us to call on you for guidance and to do it to the best of our ability so that your love may be seen in action by those who live and work around us. May we encourage each other as we all face life's ups and downs.

Lord in Your Mercy Hear our Prayer

As we hear the news that many jobs are going to be lost, we pray for the whole nation. Be with those who are unemployed or are uncertain what the future holds. We pray for our Government asking that you will guide them in how to work out the practicalities of how to look after those who are in need, how to protect the economy, how to ensure that people will be cared for and supported. We remember those known to us who are struggling through lack of money. We remember the lesson Jesus taught of how the poor Widow gave all she had, may we all find it in our hearts to give generously and sacrificially in time, money and emotional support so that the burden may be shared.

Lord in your Mercy Hear our Prayer

Lord Jesus we pray for those who go out into the world to spread the Good News of Jesus. May your protection go with them. At this time so many are in need of you Lord, may we support those who undertake this work in your name and help us to hear your call and take the message of your life giving love to as many as we can. We ask you to bless and guide the Kinderman family as they work with young people.

Lord in Your Mercy Hear our Prayer

We remember those who are sick, bringing to you Rachel M and her Family; Mark J; Maureen; Olive; Julie; Jan & Tony; Mark P; Rebecca; Jane; Stan A; Penny H; Sue P; Amie; Rita, Lucy W; Lucy and Michael B; Mark; Brian V; and in a moment of silence we remember those known personally to us....

We also remember those who are vulnerable, those who face difficult relationships at home, those in care homes and anyone who is a carer and pray that through whatever circumstance they face right now that you will assure them of your constant love, taking away any feelings of helplessness and fear. Let them all know in their hearts that they are under your compassion and protection and may they draw on your strength.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

Heavenly Father, be near to those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. Let them be comforted in the knowledge of your eternal promises. Grant them peace, in the midst of their tears.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

We join King David as we also in our time, acknowledge you as our Lord God of our ancestor Jacob, may you be praised for ever and ever! You are great and powerful, glorious, splendid, and majestic. Everything in heaven and earth is yours, and you are King, supreme ruler over all.

All riches and wealth come from you; you rule everything by your strength and power; and you are able to make anyone great and strong.

Now, our God, we give you thanks, and we praise your glorious name.

1 Chron 29 10-13

Amen

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

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

God the Holy Trinity make us strong in faith and love, defend us on every side, and guide us in truth and peace; 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

Theme for 18th Sunday after Trinity

This week's theme is The Life of Faith.

The Christian life is to be lived in the faith of God and Christian Faith is confidence in his son Jesus Christ who is alive in our lives through the Holy Spirit. It is the confidence in his ability to bring us through every circumstance of life. We know we will face many trials and temptations in our lives but with faith we know we can face those.

Faith comes from hearing the word of God and living in faith requires us to try and put that in practise in the way we live our lives.

The apostle Paul, in his letter to the Hebrews, tackles the issue of faith in Chapter 11 verse 6 says;

'And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him'

Lord, you call all people to live by faith. Enable us in faith to respond to your call, and in the fellowship of your church to grow in trust and commitment, to the glory of your Son Jesus Christ. Amen

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.

2020 Annual Parochial Church Meetings for both Holy Trinity and St Peter's

Both of these meetings will take place on Sunday October 25th.

Holy Trinity's will take place from 9.15am to 9.40am and booking is required if you wish to attend.

St Peter's will take place straight after the Sunday service.

For both Churches, elections will be held to the posts of Churchwardens, PCC members and Deanery Synod representatives. Lists will also be taken for sidespeople (although this role is on hold and they are not elected positions....but will be 'noted' in the meeting.)

Please prayerfully consider if God is calling you to serve in any of these roles. If so, please contact Heather or in her absence Sharon who will be delighted to hear from you and will run through the nature of the roles and the procedure for nomination.

Remembrance Services on Sunday November 8th

Sadly, due to very difficult practical issues to remain Covid 19 secure for the nature of these services, it is very unlikely that there will be a physical 'all gathered together' kind of service inside either church building on this Sunday. However, we are planning special arrangements to commemorate Remembrance Sunday on November 8th and more details will be forthcoming on those.

Memorial Services on Sunday November 15th

Again, for practical reasons it seems very unlikely that we will be able to hold our usual memorial services in either Church. However as with Remembrance we are making special arrangements to ensure that families and individuals will be able to remember their loved ones as part of the church families of Holy Trinity and St Peter's. More details will made available.

Christmas Fayre and Wreath Display (Holy Trinity)

The PCC decided at their meeting last Monday that it was not going to be feasible to hold our usual Christmas Fayre or the display of wreaths in Church this year. This is an important fund-raising event for the Church so we would ask that, if possible. you consider give a one-off gift to the Church to cover what you might have spent at the Fayre.

We may instead be able to do a virtual display of wreaths (collection of photographs) perhaps? We will also be creating other resources to celebrate Christmas in a safe / distanced / at home / online way.

Food Bank

Due to the restrictions of the volunteers / space at the local foodbank warehouse we are **still not able** to continue with the bringing of items to Church or deliveries to the warehouse.

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 – especially as we are not able to support them with our usual harvest collection of tinned/packet food.

Daily Hope

Daily Hope is a <u>free phone line</u> 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.

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; Amie.

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

Those on our hearts at St Peter's

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

Family and Friends of those recently deceased

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