

HOLY TRINITY AND ST PETER'S



Sunday 13th September 2020

14th 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

Last week we started a sermon series on "Communion" by looking at different themes that we find in a traditional Holy Communion service. Although we aren't 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 second theme is Prayer of Preparation and Worship. How, in our services, do we prepare ourselves to come into the presence of an awesome and Holy God.

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

God the Father forgives us in Christ and heals us by the Holy Spirit. Let us therefore put away all anger and bitterness, all slander and malice, and confess our sins to God our redeemer.

cf Ephesians 4.30,32

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

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 God, whose only Son has opened for us a new and living way into your presence: give us pure hearts and steadfast wills to worship you in spirit and in truth; 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 Psalm 51 verses 10 to 12:

10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

11 Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

New International Version – UK

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Our second reading is from Joel 2 verses 12 to 18

Rend your heart

12 'Even now,' declares the LORD, 'return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.'

13 Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.

14 Who knows? He may turn and relent and leave behind a blessing – grain offerings and drink offerings for the LORD your God.

15 Blow the trumpet in Zion, declare a holy fast, call a sacred assembly.

16 Gather the people, consecrate the assembly; bring together the elders, gather the children, those nursing at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room and the bride her chamber.

17 Let the priests, who minister before the LORD, weep between the portico and the altar. Let them say, 'Spare your people, LORD. Do not make your inheritance an object of scorn, a byword among the nations Why should they say among the peoples, "Where is their God?"'

The LORD's answer

18 Then the LORD was jealous for his land and took pity on his people.

New International Version – UK

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Talk ** Please either open the video or audio file attached to watch or hear Bethany's sermon or read it below....**

I'd like to open with a prayer before we look at the second aspect of a Communion service in our Communion sermon series, the Prayer of Preparation and Worship;

Lord would you open our hearts to your word and your word to our hearts, Amen.

Being prepared for things is always practicably important, even more so in these times, coming to Church I double check I've packed my mask, because it's important to have the things we need. But the preparation we are looking at today is often much harder to remember to bring to Church, preparing our hearts. This is not a passive action but a deliberate decision to make our hearts right with God – readying ourselves to receive him again. Before Communion it is important that we consciously choose to return to God with our whole hearts. Though important before Communion, it is something that we should practice throughout our lives. We prepare through prayer before Communion, as prayer reminds us to be open to receive God. As we acknowledge the powerful act of prayer in our lives in bringing us right before God. This can be through the prayer of preparation itself but is also found in all aspects of our service; the prayer before this talk also hopefully reminds us to prepare our hearts to be open to receive God's word. Whenever we prepare ourselves to meet with God and intentionally seek his presence - our deliberate coming to him, recognising our unworthiness but preparing our hearts and minds in devotional and prayerful reverence to be in God's awesome and holy presence. This is worship.

Preparing is about acknowledging where we have turned from God. The context of our Psalm 52 reading comes from David's repentance after he is visited by the Prophet Nathan, after sinning against God. David could have felt the shame of his wrongdoing and turned from God but instead he was willing to confess his shortcoming to God and make amends. It can be easy to feel like we've done too much that it is easier to try and ignore, rather than confess what we have done. Instead, like David, we need the courage to acknowledge and face up to what we have done, because by admitting our wrong to God, he is, as Joel reminds us, slow to anger and abounding in love. Within Joel 2:14, Joel offers the question of who can know whether God will turn and have pity on the shortcomings of the Israelites, this is not because we should doubt that such a gracious God will relent but rather shows then the human tendency to

misunderstand and doubt the abundance of God's love. God is always ready; it is our hearts which are unprepared to accept this love. It is not God preventing us from coming to him, it is our own pride and fear when we don't acknowledge and bring our flaws to God which stops us. This Psalm of David should be an example to us; David is a great figure within the Old Testament, not because he was perfect, he was at times far from it, but because when faced with his sin he was humble and courageous, wholeheartedly repenting before God. We must be humble enough to admit that while we are sinful and unprepared to come into the presence of God, prayerful preparation enables us to come to worship. For God wants to welcome us as we are into his presence, it is our unprepared hearts holding us back.

It is this wholeheartedness which is important. David's poetry to God was an outpouring of his heart. The beauty of it comes from the earnestness of his plea to create in him a pure heart. We do not need the sophistication of particular words in a poetic form to turn to God. It is about the intention of our hearts. The simplest of prayers when truly and sincerely meant is just as powerful as any words of David. Often, as I did today, we open a talk with the prayer to open our hearts to God's word: wonderfully simple and yet such powerful words. The steps advocated in Joel 2, declare an entire holy fast and weeping. Intentional fasting and mourning shows us the importance of this preparation. It is not to be done half-heartedly. Minimal effort shows that we do not prioritise coming to God with an open, honest and willing heart.

Joel also cautions against seeing whole-heartedness as simply achieved through this great assembly gathering or fasting, as Joel speaks of rending our hearts to the Lord rather than garments. In Biblical times, such as in Jonah 3:6-9, a key sign of repentance was tearing one's clothes and then often wearing sackcloth. Joel is highlighting the flaw of this, that it is more important to put substance over symbolism. It is easier to look like you have surrendered your heart to God but much more to do this in practice. Often in the Old Testament there was a false sense of security in these acts of repentance. By focusing on the acts, themselves and not the state of the Israelites hearts before God, they often missed the important lesson, which David knows when he asks for a pure heart to be created in him. It's about returning not with actions but with our whole hearts. This is because our separation from God is spiritual rather than a physical distance, thus it is not fixed by physical acts but by the prayer and worship of our very hearts. Like the Israelites going through the motions of returning to God, we can often fall into the trap to

saying the words of the service without really taking on board what it is we're saying and responding meaningfully. I know I often don't have enough time during a service to reflect on what I'm saying with things like the prayer of preparation and how deeply it should affect my attitude in life. Receiving the services in advance and written, has had a positive impact on this. I find myself returning to the words of the service throughout the week time and time again, spending time prayerfully reflecting on what I say each week in Church. We can thus use this new format to truly open our hearts to the words we say. This Communion series will be taking us slowly step by step through the substance behind the words of a Communion service. This will hopefully help us all to both in our actions and our hearts be prepared before God.

As I Girl Guide I was taught the motto "to be prepared", though they meant this with things like not hiking without my first aid kit. As a Christian I can use this as a reminder to check I have prepared my heart before God. For Communion it is to remind us to check our hearts regularly and come to the altar earnestly with open hearts to receive Jesus both into our physical bodies in consuming the consecrated bread and wine and in our souls. While being prepared in heart through earnest prayer is important for us before receiving Communion, this also acts as a regular reminder to us that we should always be opening our hearts to God. Thus, preparing ourselves should be something we regularly consider not just during a Church service. And when preparing it is about the substance to our words and that we mean them, not whether our words or actions look right. For when our heart is aligned with God, our desire will be to do his will, thus the actions will be right when they come from the right place of our heart. Remembering that much like David none of us can always get it right but that is no barrier to our God who is willing and eager to create in us a pure heart when we earnestly ask him to. So, let us say the Prayer of preparation itself, thinking of the importance of each word we are saying whenever we pray this prayer:

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 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.

Heavenly Father we give thanks today for your love, unconditional and everlasting. We thank you for sending your Son to be our saviour, for the sacrifice that he made for all on the cross and for the hope that his resurrection brings to the world today.

Lord in your mercy – **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the church throughout the world and ask you to give strength and courage to all those who minister in your name. We give thanks for the hard work of all in the Coventry Diocese as they tackle the ongoing and ever-changing challenges of the Coronavirus pandemic. Be with them at all times and guide and support them when they are in need.

Strengthen Christopher and John our bishops, all who work in your name here in Hartshill and at Galley Common, 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.**

Heavenly Father we pray for all the people of the world, we pray particularly for those who are in need whether due to war, natural disaster, famine or disease. We pray for all people who are persecuted or mistreated because of their race, colour or creed, be with them and help to restore peace and love where there is division and anger. Guide and strengthen our political leaders that they may be true and humble in their duties. 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.**

Heavenly Father we pray for the communities in which we live both local and further afield. Help people to follow the Coronavirus rules and guidelines so that the virus can be defeated and lives saved everywhere. 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.**

Heavenly Father we pray for the sick, we ask you to bring them comfort and relief from their pain and suffering. In particular we think of those listed in our notices today and take a moment of silence to pray for them and anyone else known to us who is in need of your help due to ill health, worry, loneliness or other troubles. Heavenly Father be with all those we have just prayed for, give them courage and faith at this time, and bring them the joy of your salvation.

Lord in your mercy – **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father we remember those who have died in faith and we pray for their families and friends. Grant them comfort and strength as they grieve, shine your light upon them, that they may know your peace, and ease their pain through the love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8.38-39).

Lord in your mercy – **hear our prayer.**

Finally, we give thanks for the gift of your grace dear Lord. Thank you for all that you do for us and for all that you provide. Help us to see the wonder of your love and to be forever grateful for the many gifts you rain down on us. As we continue to learn about the glory of Holy Communion through our sermon series help us to both Worship You and understand how we can best be prepared for coming together in communal adoration of your love for us.

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.**

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 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.

Common Worship: Times and Seasons, material from which is included in this service, is copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2006

Notices

Theme for 14th Sunday after Trinity

This week's theme is Those in Authority. God is the ultimate authority for Christians. That is undisputed but governmental and other authority is necessary in a fallen world.

1 Peter Chapter 2 verse 2 says we are to 'submit ourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men'.

1 Timothy Chapter 2 urges us to pray for those in authority so that we may live quiet and peaceful lives and preach the Gospel.

We can do that and continue to be a Christian influence in our Society.

God our Father, you set each of us within the life of a human family. Bless we pray, the families of mankind; unite us in mutual care and support; give us right standards of truth, obedience and understanding; and help us to grow in awareness and understanding; through Jesus Christ our Lord. 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.

Harvest

Sadly, there will not be a harvest collection of tinned/packet food this year. We will not be able to do an auction of fresh produce either. Instead we will be taking a cash collection for those who would like to give in that way. If in church - there will be an envelope for your gifts (Hartshill's gifts will be split between the local food bank and Aim for Change which is a charity we have supported in the past), Galley Common's gifts will all go to the local food bank. If you are not physically in the building – see below for details of how you can support on line or in different ways.

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 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.

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

xxx

