

HOLY TRINITY AND ST PETER'S



Sunday 20th September 2020

15th 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

We continue with our sermon series on "Communion" 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 third theme is Confession and Absolution. In confession we need to be honest with God about our failings and weaknesses and in the Absolution we acknowledge God's faithfulness in his forgiveness of our sins.

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 Holy Trinity and St Peter's 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.

You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power.

For you have created all things, and by your will they have their being.

You are worthy, O Lamb, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed us for God.

From every tribe and language and nation, you have made us to be a kingdom and priests serving our God.

To the One who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honour and glory and might for ever and ever. Amen.

Revelation 4.11;5.9b,10,11

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 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

God, who in generous mercy sent the Holy Spirit upon your Church in the burning fire of your love: grant that your people may be fervent in the fellowship of the gospel that, always abiding in you, they may be found steadfast in faith and active in service; 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 1 to 9:

New International Version

For the director of music. A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.

¹ Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.

² Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

³ For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.

⁵ Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

⁶ Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb; you taught me wisdom in that secret place.

⁷ Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

⁹ Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Our second reading is from 1 John Chapter 1 verses 5 to 10

New International Version

Sin and Forgiveness

⁵ This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. ⁸ If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Talk ** Please either open the audio file attached to hear sermon
or read it below:-**

Prayer

Heavenly father help me to speak these words in your name, so that your message can be delivered and understood. Amen

We are focusing this week on the subject of confession. Before I talk about confession further let us look at a very basic question. The question is "What is a Sin?" I think this is summed up by St Augustine of Hippo who was a Bishop known for his books written on confession in the 4th century AD when he said, "Sin is a word, deed, or desire in opposition to the eternal law of God."

It is important that we understand what a 'Sin' is so that we can recognise when we have committed a Sin and can include them in our confession.

When Augustine wrote his book confessions it was based on his life and he openly acknowledged himself as a sinner, and this shows that despite a life spent dedicated to God, he had human faults as we all do

Being brought up as a Catholic I had experience of attending confessions from an early age. I would go into the confessional box and kneel down. I still remember the words that were said after kneeling down which were:

Bless me father for I have sinned. It has been so many days since my last confession and these are my sins. I would then recant whatever sins I had committed. The priest would sit on the other side of the box. There was a black veil behind a small grille which neither party could see each other but you hear each other's voice. After confessing your sins, the priest would say prayers to guide you, and award you prayers to say. Before you left, you would say the "Act of contrition". This is a prayer of absolution. You would then kneel outside in the main church and say the prayers that the priest had given you. These would-be well-known prayers such as Our Father or Hail Mary. You would have to say the prayers a number of times depending upon how many times the priest had decided you needed to say each prayer.

We have also had confession in the Anglican church at every Sunday service. We say the words every week as follows:

*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:*

How many of us truly confess our sins properly? God knows our errors even before we utter a word. But like me when I went into confession box, I would do so not really recognising my sins for what they were. Without this honesty and humility, we cannot develop our relationship with God and therefore receive forgiveness.

The feelings that confession provoke are the same whether I confessed as a Catholic or an Anglican. I often minimise things and therefore I am not truly opening my heart and be wholly honest with God. By doing this I am not fully engaging with God, and acknowledging my sins and so I do not have a clear conscience as I am fooling myself. Nobody likes criticism and self-criticism is the hardest. It is my pride and fear that get in the way of the process. Yet there is nothing to be feel pride about, and the fear is pointless as God knows our failings. When we confess God gives insight. So, if we have been in a situation or with someone that we dislike we can act in a more Christian manner, as God will give you a gift of understanding where we have gone wrong. When we reflect on our sins, he will show you the bigger picture of why our behaviour was wrong and the impact on others. Sometimes we commit sin through our own ignorance and lack of empathy. We sit in judgment of others. God will open your eyes and help you to understand what is possibly happening with someone and how hard their lives are. God will forgive us when we repent.

The forgiveness our Lord provides is because of his love for us, and he gives this freely when we ask and it provides us with the opportunity to put something right. Maybe we have offended someone in our lives or been unkind. We can then seek a chance to rectify what we have done with this person as God has given us the strength to rectify the problem. The more we confess the greater our relationship with Gods develops. He will guide you.

To Quote St Augustine

The confession of evil works is the first beginning of good works.

How is this related to our Psalm?

The Psalms are attributed to King David. Looking at our Psalm today we can see David confessing his sins. I am sure he had the same feelings as I have about confession. In fact, he only confessed after Nathan the prophet confronted him about his sin of adultery and he how he had also arranged for Bathsheba's husband to be killed by sending him to the front of the battle line. Like us today in Service he asks for Gods mercy in verse 1. In Verse 2 we see how David is acknowledged his sins by directly asking god to cleanse him. This is David's way of asking God's forgiveness and by cleansing, it removes away the sins. David goes on further in verse 3 and the first 2 lines of verse 4 to honestly look at himself in the mirror and show how he understands he has offended God. There is remorse in his words:

"For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is always before me.
⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight;"

And his guilt is expressed when he says and an acceptance of whatever Gods decision is and whether he will be punished in the final 2 lines of Verse 4

"so, you are right in your verdict
and justified when you judge."

In the next 2 verses, (5 and 6) David shows his regret and sorrow for his failures, as he recognises Gods love for him that even though he was born sinful God gave him the way to redeem himself and yet David still sinned. These verses are expressing the shame and a comprehension that he has hurt God by his actions.

⁵ Surely, I was sinful at birth,
sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

⁶ Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb;
you taught me wisdom in that secret place.

In verse 7 David refers to his need to be fully forgiven. He uses the term Hyssop. Hyssop is a flower that was used during Passover to sprinkle lamb's blood. It was recognised for its cleansing effect with diseases such as plague and leprosy. It was seen as a way of cleaning the soul. We can see this in the words he has written to quote verse 7.

⁷ Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

In Verse 8

⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

David is crying out in anguish to take away the guilt and physical and mental pain that he feels for offending God. He is desperate for relief through God's forgiveness. In the final verse David is mentioning again speaking about how ashamed he is about his behaviour, so much that he doesn't want God to be more offended asking him to turn his face away from his sins. He re enforces his plea to be fully forgiven in the last line.

Saying "and blot out all my iniquity." The word iniquity is defined as "immoral or grossly unfair behaviour" in the dictionary, so David is asking for mercy and Grace to bring him back into the light of God and therefore provide him with a sense of cleanliness and renewal to take away his failures.

Therefore, to summarise the sermon today, we know that we are all sinners. Our route back to the Lord is through the act of confession. However, we need to recognise our Sins as they are, and reconcile ourselves that we are responsible. We need to be open and honest and humbly accept who we are. God will forgive us and it will become one of the building blocks of our Christian life. As we confess, he will guide us and lead us to learn from our experience so that we can help others.

To finish I would like us all to pray again the prayer we say after confession.

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.

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

Trusting in our loving and faithful God, let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we pray for a deeper understanding of your unfailing love for each one of us. Help us in our failings and weaknesses. Grant us your mercy and forgiveness and so we pray:

God of Love **Create in me a pure heart**

Heavenly Father, we pray for the world where the misery and tragedy of wrong choices grieves your heart of love. Let there be wisdom and compassion in all negotiations and decisions; let there be humility in leadership and responsibility for right action shared by all. May right choices start with each one of us?

God of Love **Create in me a pure heart**

Heavenly Father, we thank you for all who teach and minister in your name. We ask you for blessings on our Bishops Christopher and John. Strengthen and bless Heather and Sharon.

Encourage all who serve you. Help each one of us in our daily walk with you. May we seek your guidance and Spirits leading in all we do and say.

God of Love **Create in me a pure heart**

Heavenly Father, give to our homes and places of work and leisure your harmony and peace; give us grace to respect one another and ourselves in the way we talk and think and in the way we behave. May the decisions we make take into consideration the needs and fears of others. Help each one of us to 'stay safe'.

God of Love **Create in me a pure heart**

Heavenly Father, we thank you for all the medical research that has brought healing and quality of life to so many. We pray that a vaccine for Covid 19 will be found and that each nation will be prepared to share knowledge and resources needed to overcome this pandemic.

We pray for all who work in hospitals, hospices, clinics and care homes and for all patients in their care. We pray for all who are worried about their health. Grant them peace of mind and an assurance of your presence with them.

We pray particularly today for those in our benefice who are ill or need your help- 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; and in a moment of quiet, others who are known personally to us.

God of Love **Create in me a pure heart**

Heavenly Father, we call to mind all those we have known and loved who lived among us and have now died. We ask that they may all know your mercy and the everlasting peace and joy of heaven. We especially give thanks for the life Robert Sugrue and pray for Jenny (at Galley Common) and all her family at this time of shock, sadness and loss of her brother.

God of Love **Create in me a pure heart**

Heavenly Father, you have shown us such love and humility; we thank you for the privilege of knowing you.

Merciful Father **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

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.**

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, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Closing Prayers

**Keep, O Lord, your Church, with your perpetual mercy; and,
because without you our human frailty cannot but fall, keep us
ever by your help from all things hurtful, and lead us to all things
profitable to our salvation; through 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**

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.

Matthew 28.19

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

Theme for 15th Sunday after Trinity

This week's theme is The Neighbour.

In Matthew Chapter 22 verse 39 Jesus said 'Love your neighbour as yourself'

Traditionally we think of our neighbours as those living next to us or nearby. However, in the Christian Faith it can be anyone we come into contact with. It can be a relative, friend, work colleague and even a stranger as well as our neighbours. In loving our Neighbour in this context we need to show love by seeing if there are any needs we can help with or it may just be spending a bit of time offering a listening ear, compassion, a smile and a prayer. This can be so hard in some circumstances but as a Christian we are to try and love all people as we would ourselves and our children.

Thank you, Lord, for the neighbours you have given us as well as the friends we choose.

Thank you, Lord, for people of different ages from us as well as those of our own.

Thank you, Lord, for people of different races from us as well as our own race.

Help us to accept each other and serve each other, recognising that we have all been created in your image, and offered free salvation through 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.

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.

Special Notice for St Peter's

Around this time of year the coffee club would host their annual fund raising event for Macmillan. Obviously such an event is not possible this year but we would still like to send a donation. If you would like to contribute to this – and you are coming into St Peter's church – please place it in the fund raising box. If you are not coming into the building at the moment – then please place it in an envelope and post it through Sylv Page's door – marked Macmillan. Thank you.

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

Robert Sugrue

