

**Sunday 4 June 2023**

# Trinity Sunday



Holy Trinity, French, ca 1475. Limestone with traces of colour.

**Sermon** © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

**Liturgy and prayers of intercession** © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

**Bible readings** © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration are included at the end.

The hymn can be accessed via a YouTube link. Please click on the links.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,  
<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

## Introduction and welcome

HYMN 1 [Father in Heaven](#)

(please click on this link to hear the hymn)

## The Welcome

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

**All Amen.**

The Lord be with you

**All And also with you.**

## The Preparation

**All 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.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,  
with all your soul, with all your mind,  
and with all your strength.’

And the second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

**All Amen. Lord, have mercy.**

Holy, holy, holy.

When our eyes have seen the Lord of hosts we echo the words of Isaiah,  
‘Woe is me! I am doomed’.

We long for the fire of God’s cleansing to touch our unclean lips,  
for our iniquity to be removed and our sins wiped away.

So we meet with God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with confession on our lips.

**All** Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
we have sinned against you  
and against our neighbour  
in thought and word and deed,  
through negligence, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.  
We are truly sorry  
and repent of all our sins.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past  
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life  
to the glory of your name.  
**Amen.**

Almighty God,  
who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep you in life eternal;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All** Amen.

## **The Gloria**

This version of the Gloria is sung to the tune of 'the **Ash Grove**'.

**All** Sing glory to God in the height of the heavens,  
salvation and peace to his people on earth;  
our King and our Saviour, our God and our Father,  
we worship and praise you and sing of your worth.

Creation unites in the power of the Spirit,  
in praise of the Father, through Jesus the Son.  
So complex, so simple, so clear, so mysterious,  
our God ever Three yet eternally one.

Lord Jesus, the Christ, only Son of the Father,  
the lamb who has carried our burden of shame,  
now seated on high in the glory of heaven,  
have mercy upon us who call on your name.

**Refrain**

**For you, only you, we acknowledge as holy,  
we name you alone as our Saviour and Lord;  
you only, O Christ, with the Spirit exalted,  
are one with the Father, for ever adored.**

**Refrain****The Collect for Trinity Sunday**

Almighty and everlasting God,  
you have given us your servants grace,  
by the confession of a true faith,  
to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity  
and in the power of the divine majesty to worship the Unity:  
keep us steadfast in this faith,  
that we may evermore be defended from all adversities;  
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.

**All Amen.**

**First reading**

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand  
and marked off the heavens with a span,  
enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure,  
and weighed the mountains in scales  
and the hills in a balance?

Who has directed the spirit of the Lord,  
or as his counsellor has instructed him?

Whom did he consult for his enlightenment,  
and who taught him the path of justice?

Who taught him knowledge,  
and showed him the way of understanding?

Even the nations are like a drop from a bucket,  
and are accounted as dust on the scales;

see, he takes up the isles like fine dust.  
Lebanon would not provide fuel enough,  
nor are its animals enough for a burnt-offering.  
All the nations are as nothing before him;  
they are accounted by him as less than nothing and emptiness.

Why do you say, O Jacob,  
and speak, O Israel,  
'My way is hidden from the Lord,  
and my right is disregarded by my God'?  
Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
The Lord is the everlasting God,  
the Creator of the ends of the earth.  
He does not faint or grow weary;  
his understanding is unsearchable.  
He gives power to the faint,  
and strengthens the powerless.  
Even youths will faint and be weary,  
and the young will fall exhausted;  
but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,  
they shall run and not be weary,  
they shall walk and not faint.

*Isaiah 40:12-17, 27-end*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

## **Second reading**

A reading from St Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians

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

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

*2 Corinthians 13:11-end*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

**HYMN 2 Father, we adore you**

[\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)



## Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

**All**    **Glory to you O Lord.**

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

*Matthew 28:16–end*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**All**    **Praise to you O Christ.**

## Sermon

All too often, we are lazy and think we have achieved the impossible and decide who God is and what He's like. We've 'put God in a box'. But God is vast—indeed, infinite—so any idea, image, or notion of God is automatically too small. You cannot put the Atlantic into a small shoe box ... the box is smaller than the ocean; similarly, the infinity of God cannot be housed within a human mind. He is too big; we are too small. His thoughts are too big to be our thoughts, and his ways are too big to be our ways. Our God is too small, simplistic, often wrong.

But this isn't just playing with words and concepts. It's important, because Scripture tells us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, all our souls, all our strength and all our mind. More than that, the God we are bringing before people must be credible: if we live and share the wrong idea of God than why should others believe in Him?

Today, we start the longest of all the church's many seasons, Trinity, which continues until the end of October. During this season, our Bible readings act as a kind of syllabus (or 'catechism') to describe the basics of the Christian faith. And straight-away, at its extreme beginning—Trinity Sunday itself, today—that teaching starts by describing God Himself.

When a builder builds anything, they should start with the foundations. If they start elsewhere (with a bedroom or bathroom, a roof or chimney) the whole edifice will crash to earth, or everything else built on it will crack then fail. Building on poor foundations never works. That's why the foundations are sometimes more costly than the rest of the structure. And notice how they always take ages: when

looking at the progress at a building site, it can look like nothing is happening but disaster will follow if the builders cut corners or rush.

We see this concept of ‘foundations first’ everywhere: you can’t learn literacy before you learn the letters of the alphabet and their sounds; you can’t learn numeracy until you understand a little about numbers. It’s the same with our faith.

All Christians need a faith with foundations capable of supporting everything we place on them. As Christians, that faith must therefore support the big concepts. We need to ask first, ‘Who is God and what’s He like? Only *then* do we respond with questions like, ‘How do we live as Christians, and what does God want of us?’

As we explore the foundations of Christianity, the answer must be ‘God’. It’s during the remainder of the long Trinity season that the church teaches the other aspects of the faith—Church, scripture, sacraments, worship—to help build us up to each become a full disciple. You can’t pray to God if you don’t know who God is.

Real Christianity is always about God. Therefore, as we progress through any exploration of faith, we must ask at every stage, ‘Where is God in this?’ or even ‘is this of God?’ As we start that journey, today’s Gospel helps answer the mystery of God because it’s telling us how to let God to tell us about Himself. It’s a short passage from the extreme end of Matthew’s Gospel that describes Jesus telling his disciples to go into the whole world and baptise. The important point is not the aspect of baptism as initiation but what happens in the baptism itself.

In baptism, we invite the Holy Spirit into a human soul. At baptism, a human soul is filled with God; and the God who resides in that soul starts to tell the person of Himself. That’s why the old name for a baptism is ‘Christening’, from *Christos*, ‘to fill or anoint’—it points to the filling and indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

That’s why, straight after baptism, the person feels their mind drawn toward God because God wants them to change. If you want an analogy, it’s like those old-fashioned radio sets with a large tuning dial on their front: God is retuning the soul for better reception. God is changing us from the inside out so that we can know Him better.

In the book of Jeremiah, there is a wonderful prophecy describing all of this. It’s in chapter 31:

<sup>31</sup> “The days are coming,” declares the Lord,  
“when I will make a new covenant  
with the people of Israel  
and with the people of Judah.

<sup>32</sup> It will not be like the covenant  
I made with their ancestors

when I took them by the hand  
to lead them out of Egypt,  
because they broke my covenant,  
though I was a husband to them,”  
declares the Lord.

<sup>33</sup> “This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel  
after that time,” declares the Lord.

“I will put my law in their minds  
and write it on their hearts.

I will be their God,  
and they will be my people.

<sup>34</sup> No longer will they teach their neighbour,  
or say to one another, ‘Know the LORD,’  
because they will all know me,  
from the least of them to the greatest,”  
declares the Lord.

“For I will forgive their wickedness  
and will remember their sins no more.”

God gives us His Spirit to kick-start this long process: God forgives our sins in order for us to become pure; God makes us pure in order that we can know Him; God wants us to know Him in order that we can commune with Him; and God wants us to commune with Him in order that we can enter into a relationship with Him that is everlasting and eternal.

That giving of the Spirit explains why we remember Trinity Sunday the very week after Pentecost. The first disciples were filled with the Spirit at Pentecost and subsequent believers have their first encounter with the Spirit at baptism.

Today, we’re starting the long season of Trinity. It’s commonly used as a time of teaching and learning the faith. That process requires foundations ... and the only foundation of worth is God Himself. In order that we truly learn who God is, God Himself wants to fill us and communicate wordlessly, spiritually, about Himself. And as He does so He communicates everything else.

## The Creed

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,  
the source of all being and life,  
the one for whom we exist?

**All We believe and trust in him.**



Do you believe and trust in God the Son,  
who took our human nature,  
died for us and rose again?

**All We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,  
who gives life to the people of God  
and makes Christ known in the world?

**All We believe and trust in him.**

This is the faith of the Church.

**All This is our faith.**

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

## **Prayers of intercession**

We come boldly to the throne of grace,  
praying to the almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit  
for mercy and grace.

**All We plead before your throne in heaven.**

Father of heaven, whose love profound  
a ransom for our souls has found:  
We pray for the world, created by your love,  
for its nations and governments ...  
Extend to them your peace, pardoning love, mercy and grace.

**All We plead before your throne in heaven.**

Almighty Son, incarnate Word,  
our Prophet, Priest, Redeemer, Lord:  
We pray for the Church, created for your glory,  
for its ministry to reflect those works of yours ...  
Extend to us your salvation, growth, mercy and grace.

**All We plead before your throne in heaven.**

Eternal Spirit, by whose breath  
the soul is raised from sin and death:  
We pray for families and individuals, created in your image,  
for the lonely, the bereaved, the sick and the dying ...  
Breathe on them the breath of life

and bring them to your mercy and grace.

**All We plead before your throne in heaven.**

Thrice holy! Father, Spirit, Son,

Mysterious Godhead, Three in One:

We pray for ourselves,

for your Church, for all whom we remember before you ...

Bring us all to bow before your throne in heaven,

to receive life and pardon, mercy and grace for all eternity,

as we worship you, saying,

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Amen.**

Merciful Father,

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

## **The Peace**

The peace to this house from God our heavenly Father.

The peace to this house from his Son who is our peace.

The peace to this house from the Holy Spirit, the life-giver.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**All And also with you**

**HYMN 3 Holy, holy, holy is the Lord** (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

## The Dismissal

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 the Almighty  
be with you now and remain with you always.

**All Amen.**

**HYMN 4 Holy, holy, holy**

[\(please click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**All In the name of Christ.  
Amen.**

## The Liturgy of the Sacrament

### **Eucharistic Prayer** (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

**All and also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**All We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God.  
For with your only-begotten Son and the Holy Spirit  
you are one God, one Lord.  
All that you reveal of your glory,  
the same we believe of the Son  
and of the Holy Spirit, without any difference or inequality.  
We, your holy Church, acclaim you,  
Father of majesty unbounded,  
your true and only Son, worthy of all worship,  
and the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide.  
Three Persons we adore,  
one in being and equal in majesty.  
And so with angels and archangels,  
with cherubim and seraphim,  
we sing for ever of your glory:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;  
and as we obey his command,  
send your Holy Spirit,  
that broken bread and wine outpoured  
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends  
and, taking bread, he praised you.

He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:  
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.  
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:  
Drink this, all of you;  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,  
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,  
we proclaim his death and resurrection  
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

**All Christ has died.**  
**Christ is risen.**  
**Christ will come again.**

Lord of all life,  
help us to work together for that day  
when your kingdom comes  
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,  
gather us in your loving arms  
and bring us with all the saints  
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,  
for ever and ever.

**All Amen.**

## **The Lord's Prayer**

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All**     **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 for ever. Amen.**

## **Breaking of the Bread**

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All**     **Though we are many, we are one body,  
because we all share in one bread.**

**All**     **Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ  
which he gave for you,  
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,  
and feed on him in your hearts  
by faith with thanksgiving.



**All** We do not presume  
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,  
trusting in our own righteousness,  
but in your manifold and great mercies.  
We are not worthy  
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.  
But you are the same Lord  
whose nature is always to have mercy.  
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,  
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ  
and to drink his blood,  
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body  
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,  
and that we may evermore dwell in him,  
and he in us. Amen.

Communion is distributed.

### **Prayer after Communion**

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 for ever.

**All** Amen

**All** Almighty God,  
we thank you for feeding us  
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.  
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies  
to be a living sacrifice.  
Send us out in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work  
to your praise and glory.  
Amen.