



Call to worship

In the church calendar, this Sunday, the Sunday after Pentecost is known as Trinity Sunday, the day when we think about God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit and what that means for us as Christians.

Our call to worship reflects that -

The triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
blows among us, burns among us, flows among us.
Come, ascribe to the Lord the glory due to his name.

As children of God we are here,
part of the one family of God
gathered from the corners of the earth,
together united in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Roots 2018

Hymn – StF 6 Father we love you

Father, we love You
We worship and adore You
Glorify Your name in all the earth
Glorify Your name
Glorify Your name
Glorify Your name in all the earth

Jesus, we love You
We worship and adore You
Glorify Your name in all the earth
Glorify Your name
Glorify Your name
Glorify Your name in all the earth

Spirit, we love You
We worship and adore You
Glorify Your name in all the earth
Glorify Your name
Glorify Your name
Glorify Your name in all the earth

What do we mean by the Holy Trinity?

I looked this up in a little book called **A catechism for the use of the people called Methodists**. A catechism is a summary of the principles of Christian religion in the form of questions and answers and is used for religious instruction.

Question 65 is “What do we mean by the Holy Trinity? And this is what it says:

When we think about the universe and our place in it and all that we have been given we worship God as Creator and Father. When we look at Jesus, we see in him the expression in human form of all the qualities of God, especially love and we worship Jesus as God and Saviour. Although Jesus has ascended to the Father, Christians have continued to experience the presence, power and love of Jesus in the church and in their own lives through the Holy Spirit, whom we therefore also worship as God. Though we experience and respond to God in these three ways, we are not

conscious of any division in God. The bible rather suggests that Father, Son and Holy Spirit exist as a perfect communion. Therefore we worship one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Holy Trinity.

Interestingly, there are no specific references to the Holy Trinity in the bible, but the catechism says that it is implied in all passages which refer to Jesus or the Holy Spirit in the same terms as Father. The Trinity is a way of expressing the idea that God is Three in One and One in Three - we worship One God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

God the Father: Reading – Isaiah 6 v 1 – 8

First of all, our Old Testament reading from the prophet Isaiah, the familiar reading of Isaiah having a vision of God.

6 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. ² Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. ³ And they were calling to one another:

“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty;
the whole earth is full of his glory.”

⁴ At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

⁵ “Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.”

⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. ⁷ With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”

⁸ Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?”

Here Isaiah himself is writing and describing a vision or encounter he had with God. “I saw the Lord” – on a throne, his train filled the temple, there were seraphs, they were calling to each other. If that wasn’t enough the doorposts shook and the temple was filled with smoke!! Can you imagine being there? Can you imagine seeing those things, hearing those voices, feeling the whole building shake?? What on earth was happening? I don’t know about you, but I think I might have run a mile. But not Isaiah, no he recognised that this was God.

“I saw the Lord.” Isaiah saw God in his majesty. He saw God in the presence of the Seraphs part of the highest hierarchy of angels. He got a sense of the power of God as the temple shook and was filled with smoke. And in the midst of all that he got a real sense of the holiness of God. “Holy is the Lord God Almighty” sang the seraphs. The seraphs were describing God, as Holy not once, but three times - Holy, Holy, Holy.

To repeat something three times was common in Jewish language, to emphasize it or declare with force. Only one other time does the phrase Holy, Holy, Holy appear in the bible, again spoken by heavenly creatures – in Revelation 4 v 8

“And the four living creatures ... never cease to say,

Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!”

They are expressing with force and passion the truth of the supreme holiness of God, that essential characteristic which expresses His awesome and majestic nature, his mystery, his purity and as we look at the verse from Revelation, a God who does not change.

So we are going to join with the seraphs as we join in our prayers of adoration

Prayers of Adoration - Psalm 29

Praise the Lord, you heavenly beings;
praise his glory and power.
Praise the Lord's glorious name;
bow down before the Holy One when
he appears.[b]
The voice of the Lord is heard on the
seas;
the glorious God thunders,
and his voice echoes over the ocean.
The voice of the Lord is heard
in all its might and majesty.
The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars,
even the cedars of Lebanon.
He makes the mountains of Lebanon
jump like calves

and makes Mount Hermon leap like a
young bull.
The voice of the Lord makes the lightning
flash.
His voice makes the desert shake;
he shakes the desert of Kadesh.

The Lord's voice shakes the oaks[c]
and strips the leaves from the trees
while everyone in his Temple shouts,
"Glory to God!"
The Lord rules over the deep waters;
he rules as king forever.
The Lord gives strength to his people
and blesses them with peace.
Amen

Hymn – StF 34 O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness

O worship the Lord in the beauty of
holiness,
bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience and incense of
lowliness,
kneel and adore him the Lord is his name.

Low at his feet lay your burden of
carefulness,
high on his heart he will bear it for you,
comfort your sorrows and answer your
prayerfulness,
guiding your steps in the way that is true.

Fear not to enter his courts in the
slenderness
of the poor wealth you would count as your
own;
truth in its beauty and love in its tenderness
these are the offerings to bring to his
throne.

These, though we bring them in trembling
and fearfulness,
he will accept for the name that is dear;
mornings of joy give for evenings of
tearfulness,
trust for our trembling and hope for our
fear.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of
holiness,
bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience and incense of
lowliness,
kneel and adore him the Lord is his name.

God the Son Reading – John 3 v 16

“God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

I can remember many many years ago, my dad doing a children’s address – “the bible in a nutshell” “God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son,

God gave his son, but it’s not as simple as that. Because God didn’t just **give** his son to the earth, God became his son on earth.

Jesus is God’s son, born among as a human being, completely human and completely divine. We see this throughout Jesus’ life, right from his birth, born to a virgin by the Holy spirit, - born to a woman to be loved and cared for as part of a human family. Human, spending time with his friends and yet stilling their fears by calming the storm. Human, enjoying the occasion of a wedding and yet holding off a crisis by changing water into wine. Human, weeping at the death of a friend, Lazarus, and yet raising him to life. Experiencing a very human death and yet divine by being raised from the dead and then appearing to his disciples in a very human form as he walked with them and talked with them and even ate with them. Jesus, completely human and yet completely divine.

So that begs the question, why on earth would a divine and holy God choose to come and live in a world like this, anything but holy and clean. Well in one sense, that answers its own question. Because the world is anything but perfect, God wanted to come, needed to come, to show us how to live, how to make that world perfect, show how it could be. He walked and talked and ate with the tax collectors, the prostitutes, the women, the adulterer, people living with leprosy, children, people who were blind, people who were ill, those who were perhaps struggling with mental illness or experiencing illnesses we can’t describe or understand. And to everyone, he showed love and care, even, and maybe especially, those to whom others wouldn’t.

As the answer to our question in the catechism said

“When we look at Jesus we see in him the expression in human form of all the qualities of God, especially love”

In 2018 a sermon was preached which was seen and heard by millions across the world. It was given by Bishop Michael Curry at the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Merkle. Do you remember it.? It was a sermon about love, not surprising at a wedding really! But he took love out of the romantic context of a wedding, all be it a very public one, and took it into the world as a whole.

“Imagine,” he said, “our homes and families where love is the way. Imagine our neighbourhoods and communities where love is the way. Imagine our governments and nations where love is the way. Imagine business and commerce where love is the way. Imagine this tired old world where love is the way. Ultimately the source of love is God himself: the source of all our lives.”

God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son.

Over the past week I have seen a glimpse of a world where this sort of love is in action through a community working together and sharing their story, their ideals, their belief in each other and in a better world. I am talking about the work of Pulp Friction whom I am sure that many of you are aware of. This charity, working with adults with learning

disabilities, have had an exciting few weeks, building and hosting a garden at the Chelsea flower Show, winning a silver gilt medal. Working in the circuit office at Bestwood Park Church, I have been privileged to see the hard work, to see the pride and excitement as the members worked together to create their garden, growing not only the plants, but also their skills, their teamwork, their care and respect for each other. In this tired old world, I have seen how love really can be the way.

Hymn – StF 503 Love divine

Our next hymn speaks of that divine love, of God as son, compassion, pure, unbounded love, inviting us to glory in that love so that we can and the world can be a new, pure and spotless creation.

Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heav'n to earth come down,
fix in us Thy humble dwelling;
all Thy faithful mercies crown!
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love Thou art;
visit us with Thy salvation;
enter every trembling heart.

Come, Almighty to deliver;
let us all Thy life receive;
suddenly return and never,
nevermore Thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve Thee as Thy hosts above;
pray, and praise Thee without ceasing,
glory in Thy perfect love.

Finish then, Thy new creation;
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see Thy great salvation
perfectly restored in Thee.
Changed from glory into glory,
till in heav'n we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before Thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise.

God the Spirit

While we often think of the spirit appearing after Pentecost, of being a very new testament phenomenon, The Holy Spirit has been there from the beginning. In the second verse in the bible we are told “[and the Spirit of God was moving over the water.](#)” It’s an interesting picture isn’t it. At the beginning of time, with the raging ocean covering the earth and everything in total darkness, God’s spirit was already moving, moving over the water.

The role and action of the God as Holy Spirit is present in both Old and New Testament, but slightly different. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit tended to be present with one person often to help them for a specific task.

In the New Testament the Holy Spirit is available to all, all the time. In a sense, the spirit within us is what defines us as Christians and what defines our Christian Life.

Back to the catechism where it says Christians have continued to experience the presence, power and love of Jesus in the church and in their own lives through the Holy Spirit. In Romans chapter 8, and from the Message we hear “[God’s Spirit beckons. There are things to do and places to go!](#)”

That sermon heard by millions is a real challenge to every single one of us. God as Father is love, God as Jesus came to show love, God as Holy Spirit allows us to enter that love, but also beckons us, and helps us to show that love in our world today. Amen

Prayers for others

Our world at the moment is a world in need of God's love. All around us we hear of war, injustice, fear, illnesses, problems due to climate change, poverty. This list goes on. And in leading our prayers for others, it's difficult to know what to say.

So today I invite you to pray some good news prayers for others.

This week ...

Where have you seen good news in your life?

Where have you seen good news in the life of your church?

Where have you seen good news in your community?

Where have you seen good news in our country?

Where have you seen good news across the world?

Give thanks for the good news and pray for the people involved.

Blessing – words written by Keith Getty

May the peace of God, our heavenly
Father,
And the grace of Christ, the risen Son,
And the fellowship of God the Spirit
Keep our hearts and minds within His
love.

*And to Him be praise for His glorious
reign;
From the depths of earth to the heights of
heaven
We declare the name of the Lamb once
slain
Christ eternal, the King of Kings.*

May this peace which passes
understanding,
And this grace which makes us what we
are,
And this fellowship of His communion,
Make us one in spirit and in heart.

*And to Him be praise for His glorious
reign;
From the depths of earth to the heights of
heaven
We declare the name of the Lamb once
slain
Christ eternal, the King of Kings.*

Amen