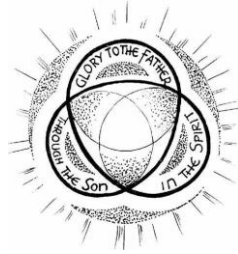


Our Sunday Service Together

Trinity Sunday May 26th 2024



An Acclamation for the Season

All: Alleluia, alleluia! It is our duty and our joy, always and everywhere to give you thanks, holy Father, almighty and eternal God. For you have revealed the glory of your eternal fellowship of love with your Son and with the Holy Spirit, three persons equal in majesty, undivided in splendour, yet one God, ever to be worshipped and adored. Alleluia!

Preparation

All: This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Through the brokenness of Christ, we become one body
as one body we now gather in the name of Christ to offer our praise and thanksgiving, to receive God's holy word, to pray for the needs of the world,
and to seek the forgiveness of our sins, that by the power of the Holy Spirit
we may give ourselves to the service of God.

Our 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.

All: Jesus Christ, risen Master and triumphant Lord, we come to you in sorrow for our sins, and confess to you our weakness and unbelief.

We have lived by our own strength, and not by the power of your resurrection.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived by the light of our own eyes, as faithless and not believing.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

We have lived for this world alone, and doubted our home in heaven.
In your mercy, forgive us, hear us and help us.

Be still for a moment in confession and in receiving God's Grace in Christ

All: May Almighty God, who in Jesus Christ has given us a kingdom that cannot be destroyed, forgive us our sins, open our eyes to God's truth, strengthen us to do God's will and give us the joy of his kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Risen Lord. **Amen.**

The opening prayer

All: The night has passed, and the day lies open before us; let us pray with one heart and mind.

Silence is kept.

All: As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you;
now and for ever. Amen.

The Psalmody Psalm 29 *We say the psalm aloud*

Ascribe to the Lord, you powers of heaven, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

Ascribe to the Lord the honour due to his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders; the Lord is upon the mighty waters.

The voice of the Lord is mighty in operation; the voice of the Lord is a glorious voice.

The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees; the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf and Sirion like a young wild ox.

The voice of the Lord splits the flash of lightning; the voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

The voice of the Lord makes the oak trees writhe and strips the forests bare; in his temple all cry, 'Glory!'

The Lord sits enthroned above the water flood; the Lord sits enthroned as king for evermore.

The Lord shall give strength to his people; the Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Scripture Reading Isaiah 6.1-8

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. ² Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. ³ And one called to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.'

⁴ The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. ⁵ And I said: 'Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!'

⁶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. ⁷ The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: 'Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.' ⁸ Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I; send me!'

Gloria

All: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ² He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.' ³ Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' ⁴ Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?' ⁵ Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶ What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." ⁸ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.' ⁹ Nicodemus said to him, 'How can these things be?' ¹⁰ Jesus answered him, 'Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? ¹¹ Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹² If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴ And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷ Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

A Reflection for the day

Trainee Priest Farhad Cherhamini writes:

In John 3, we read that Jesus explains to Nicodemus how one can see the kingdom of God only by being born again through the work of the Spirit. One of the interesting points here is that being born again can't mean becoming more religious or developing greater morality because there could be no more religious and morally upright person than Nicodemus. He was a member of the Sanhedrin, the ruling council of the time, and a scholar in the Law of Moses. So, what did Jesus mean by the phrase 'be born again'? There are different attempts by scholars to explain what Jesus meant. But they all agree that being born again leads to having our understanding enabled so we can see the truth of who Jesus is, God with us, and accept it. It's about finding clarity about God's priorities and ways of understanding.

In Isaiah 6, the prophet Isaiah had a vision of God in the temple, and he suddenly became aware of how unprepared he was to meet God. But God on the other hand made it possible for him to be in God's presence: one of the seraphim touched Isaiah's lips with a live coal, implying God had removed his guilt and purified him. This act showed God's desire for Isaiah to be near God. Then came a call for a messenger, and Isaiah, who was cleansed and was feeling a renewed sense of purpose, responded with, 'Here am I. Send me!' Isaiah was born again: all of a sudden, he could see with clarity what God's priorities were.

John 3 and Isaiah 6, show how God takes the initiative to prepare individuals for God's mission. After the preparation, there is a commissioning and it has implications for the household of God, the church. Firstly, transformation is primarily what God does. We are called to be open to the movement of the Holy Spirit and to recognise that God brings true change and prepares us for his work. Secondly, the awareness of our shortcomings should lead to reliance on God's grace otherwise we are simply experiencing condemnation which is not the work of the Spirit of God. Thirdly, new birth is not an end but a preparation for service. We are to pursue and embrace our calling because God's work in our lives is his equipping of us for mission. And lastly, service is offered by God for us to respond to with joy not as an obligation: though Isaiah was there, he was not personally called; he heard the call and was given a choice to respond as he wished, and he joyfully stepped into it.

There is a sense that the new birth shifts our focus toward the priorities of the kingdom of God, which include our own needs but goes beyond them to put our needs in the context of God's purpose for the whole creation, so we can trust God that as we seek his kingdom, he provides our needs.

The Creed

All: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers

God of light and power, we rejoice in your light, we live in your power, we look for your glory.

Open our eyes to perceive your presence, that we may give ourselves to you...
Lord, in your mercy hear our prayers.

We give thanks for the light that is revealed to us in the face of our Lord Jesus Christ. Lord, enlighten your church where vision is dim and the light of the gospel nearly gone out.
Lord, in your mercy hear our prayers.

We pray for spiritual renewal, for an increase in vision and hope. We remember all who are prophets and visionaries today. *Lord, in your mercy hear our prayers.*

Lord, direct all who are seeking to improve the world. We pray for peace-makers, for relief agencies, for all involved in scientific research, for all who hunger for righteousness and justice.
Lord, in your mercy hear our prayers.

We give thanks for all who have led us to you, all who shared insight and knowledge, all who kept the lamp of faith burning. *Lord, in your mercy hear our prayers.*

We pray for all who have entered into weakness, into sadness or into trouble this week, all who have been injured in accidents, the afflicted and perplexed, the persecuted and the forsaken.
Lord, in your mercy hear our prayers.

We rejoice that the afflicted will know affection, the perplexed will know purpose, the persecuted will come to your peace, the forsaken will be enfolded in love, in the fullness of your kingdom. We pray for our loved ones departed. *Lord, in your mercy hear our prayers.*

Almighty and everlasting God, who grants us the gift of new birth, empower us by your Holy Spirit to embrace our new identity in Christ, that we may be bold and faithful witnesses of your gospel. Guide us in your truth, reorient our lives towards your kingdom, and fill us with love for others, that our words and actions may draw others to your saving grace.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

The Collect

All: 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. Amen

Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

All: 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.

The Conclusion

All: Christ, as a light illumine and guide me this day.
Christ, as a shield overshadow me.
Christ under me, Christ over me;
Christ beside me on my left and my right.
This day be within and without me.
Amen.