

Dorset South and West Methodist Circuit
Service for 7 June 2020 by Mrs Pam Woodland

May the strength of God pilot us,
May the power of God preserve us.
May the wisdom of God instruct us.
May the hand of God protect us.
May the way of God direct us.
May Christ be with us, Christ before us, Christ in us, Christ beneath us, Christ over us.
May your salvation, O Lord, be ours this day and for evermore. Amen

Hymn Holy, Holy, Holy

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty, God in three Persons, blessed Trinity.

Holy, holy, holy! All saints adore thee, casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee, which wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee, though the sinful human eye thy glory may not see,
only thou art holy; there is none beside thee, perfect in power, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty! all thy works shall praise thy Name, in earth, and sky,
and sea;
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty, God in three Persons, blessed Trinity.

Prayers

God, Creator of all the universe, we thank you for all that you have made: for land and sea, air, fire and light; all make the universe what it is, designed and ordered by your wisdom. We search its mysteries, rejoice in its beauty, revel in its joys and struggle to understand when it causes suffering. But without you we would not exist and life would be nothing. God, divine Son Jesus, we thank you for all you have done; for your saving work on the cross, your resurrection and ascension, your mediation for our needs, your selfless love and obedience. We study your words, admire your deeds, follow your example, knowing we can never reach your perfection. But without you our life would be nothing. God, Holy Spirit, we thank you for being with us, in us; we depend on your guidance, rely on your inspiration, seek your gifts, and try to share your love. But without you we would be empty and life would be nothing. Give us good things, generous God so that we can truly live Christian lives, and share you with our neighbours. Amen

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Father God, we know that in our daily lives we have sinned in thought, word and deed, and in what we have left undone. (*Silence*)
We praise you that to those who confess their sins and are determined to live a new life, Jesus says "Your sins are forgiven." Amen.

John 16 v 12 – 15

¹² ‘I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Sermon

This is Trinity Sunday. God – the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Many churches are named after the Trinity – we have Holy Trinity on Town Bridge in Weymouth. Our earlier hymn, “Holy, Holy, Holy” confirms God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity. I expect, like me, you learnt the Nicene Creed at school, although at a young age it does not always have as much meaning as in later life when we are able to give more depth and understanding to our Christian faith. The words at the beginning of each paragraph: *We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth...; We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God...; We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son...* affirm our own beliefs and understanding of the Trinity.

We all know from experience that life is easier if we keep the Lord in our hearts at all times – probably never more so than at the present time. Decisions can be easier to make if we take time to have a word of prayer. Differences can be overcome if we bring our problems to God and ask for his guidance and peace.

Our reading from John’s gospel is part of Jesus’ farewell speech to the disciples. He has the disciples’ attention and wants them to understand that although they will not be able to see him, he will always be with them through the Holy Spirit. Jesus was communicating with his disciples, answering their questions, assuring them that they would be able to do what was being asked of them, promising them the Spirit of Truth to guide them. Although they would not see Jesus for much longer, it was necessary for him to go, so that the Spirit could come to them and they would be empowered to carry out God’s plan for the world.

It is still difficult for people, even Christians, to understand and accept the Trinity. Dame Julian of Norwich, a saint of unusual depth and insight, believed the meaning of the Trinity to be love. In her visions and writings she came as close as anyone to understanding the God of love – the God of the Trinity. Towards the end of her life, she wrote this short but profound exchange: “*Would you know your Lord’s meaning? Know it well, love was his meaning. Who showed it to you? Love. What did he show you? Love. Why did he show it? For love.*” It all comes back to love.

It is only when we put ourselves in God’s hands and listen to the Holy Spirit in our hearts that we are fully aware of his love being poured out for us. God showed his love for us by giving his Son, Jesus Christ, to die for our sins – as we sing on Good Friday “*he died to make us good.*” The Holy Spirit is a means by which God pours his love into our hearts; but how can we explain to others that we feel the love of God through the Holy Spirit in our heart?

How can we bring the Trinity into the present through our daily lives? Ask yourselves ‘Where is God today?’ He is in the person who telephones to see if you are OK. He is in the care workers who have not stopped during the pandemic but carried on often risking their

own health. He is in the people who do shopping for those who need to self-isolate because of age and for health reasons. And he is in us all as we let others know that we are thinking of them and sending love even if we cannot see or touch them.

Dame Julian, in her day, found God in love, pure and simple. As Paul reminds us “*God’s love has been poured into our hearts. As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.*” There is a place for the Trinity in our world at this difficult time. By acknowledging that the Trinity of God - the Father, Son and Holy Spirit - guides us as we go about our daily lives we are acknowledging God’s love and showing our trust that the Lord is with us, guiding and guarding us always. Amen.

Meditation

Bless us, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with the vision of your glory:

That we may know you as the Father who created us,
rejoice in you as the Son who redeemed us,
and be strong in you, the Spirit who sanctifies us.

Keep us steadfast in this faith and bring us at the last to your eternal kingdom, where you are worshipped and glorified, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

Prayers of Intercession

Three-in-one God, three things we ask of you; that we may see you more clearly, love you more dearly and follow you more nearly, day by day.

May we see you more clearly in the world around us, in the needs of our neighbours, in the social and political events of today.

May we love you more dearly in the delight of worship and devotion, in the challenge of service, in the enthusiasm with which we tell people about you.

May we follow you more nearly, into the places where people are struggling for justice, into the wilderness of people’s grief and pain, into the situations where peace is absent.

Three-in-one God, strengthen and sustain us as we seek to be your people day by day. Amen

The Lord’s Prayer

Hymn Come let us sing of a wonderful love

Come, let us sing of a wonderful love
Tender and true
Out of the heart of the Father above
Streaming to me and to you
Wonderful love
Dwells in the heart of the Father above

Jesus, the Saviour, this gospel to tell
Joyfully came
Came with the helpless and hopeless to dwell
Sharing their sorrow and shame
Seeking the lost

Saving, redeeming at measureless cost

Jesus is seeking the wanderers yet
Why do they roam?
Love only waits to forgive and forget
Home, weary wanderer, home!
Wonderful love
Dwells in the heart of the Father above

Come to my heart, O Thou wonderful love
Come and abide
Lifting my life, till it rises above
Envy and falsehood and pride
Seeking to be
Lowly and humble, a learner of Thee

Blessing

May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst us and remain with us always.