

Email Order of Service 7th June 2020 – Trinity



Greeting-

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Call to Worship –

The Trinity is not a definition of God but a cry of faith from the heart of the Christian experience – a cry of trust and commitment, a cry of love and adoration. Let us worship the God we adore and trust.

Prayer -

Most wonderful God, forever beyond our grasp, yet always within our reach, we come to you in confidence. Courageous Christ, forever ahead of us in wisdom and faithfulness, yet always beside us in love, we approach you with eagerness. Mysterious Spirit, forever larger than the whole universe yet by love and grace living in our very hearts, we seek you with joy and humility. May our worship rise higher than our intellect and our love go deeper than our feelings. Open our hearts and minds to your presence. Centre us in the teachings of Christ, and let your Spirit renew us by grace, for we ask in Jesus' name, Amen.

HYMN- AHB 65 (TIS 132) Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God almighty

Prayer of Confession-

Merciful God, we turn to you in hope and expectation. We are aware of how often we miss the mark of your standards in our living. We are sorry for

careless words that hurt others and undermine our witness to your love. We seek your forgiveness for missing so many opportunities to serve in the way of Christ because we are focussing on our own needs or desires. We repent that we have joined the chorus of division rather than living out your gospel of reconciliation. Help us now to think with your wisdom; to act with your mercy and grace, to be people who reflect your justice and truth and so bring your Light into our daily living, for we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Words of Assurance-

In Christ, God came to open the ways to abundant and eternal life. Through Christ, we are loved and forgiven. **Thanks be to God.**

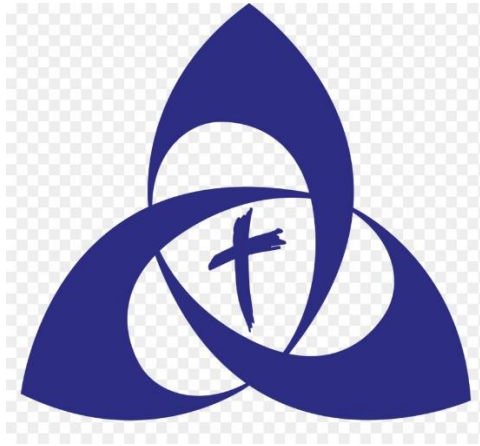
Scripture Reading: Psalm 8.

Hymn: TIS 155 O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder (How great thou art)
See p.7

Scripture Reading: Matthew 28:16-20.

Sermon The wonder of God





No matter what a preacher says about the Trinity, it will always be heresy because God is always beyond and more wonderful than any of our descriptions, let alone explanations. Ponder the simplicity and the beauty of these artistic attempts to picture the Trinity and then turn them in your imagination into three dimensional forms. Imagine the smell, the sound, the texture and the taste of the images – change those a few times and just explore God through a couple of limited pictures. Rev Bruce Prewer wrote that “God is a profound Deep, into which all our busy and clever words can fall without a sound. We can throw our wisest and most majestic words into the Mysterious Deep that is God, and they never touch bottom. There is no splash. God is always a wonderful **Mystery** - an unchartable, indefinable Personal Reality. God the Mystery impinges on our lives but eludes our grasp. God is a Mystery who leaves us on our knees in wonder and awe.”

When you think about the word GOD, what ideas or images come to your mind? What is your favourite name for God? To whom do you address your prayer in personal devotions?

Some people worry about the concept of the Trinity – some theologians enjoy wrestling with the ideas that enable them to create a doctrine of the Trinity or to make their own construct of what they consider is ‘orthodox’ Christian theology. Certainly, the trinitarian formula for baptism which is derived from Matthew 28: 19, is essential for Christians. There are places in the New Testament when God is referred to in more than one ‘person’ or form, especially in the gospel of John, but there is little attempt to define the separate ‘identities’ or functions of God. Rather there is an accumulation of understandings of the mystery and richness of God-with-us, God for us, God desiring relationship with us and offering us the chance for that deep, intimate relationship of trust and strength and love given to Jesus.

Because none of the attempts to describe or explain the Trinity to children (or adults) such as ice, water, steam; or mother, daughter, sister; or apples cut in half; or different clothes worn by one person in different roles and activities – adequately explains this mystery of God, I prefer not to try to tease apart the One-in-three and Three-in-one description of God which sets God’s people into division and argument. I prefer to marvel at the multiple experiences of God that have been written about in Scripture using many different metaphors or images. Each will evoke different feelings and ideas for different people because of their different time and cultural location. Each has been a revelation by God of God to humanity.

So I invite you to spend some time reflecting on or pondering or exploring in your mind the consequences and the associations of some of the words we use for God.

God the Creator – the Almighty - Immortal and Invisible – Eternal – existing before anything – wisdom of the universe – non-matter energy – Ultimate Power behind everything - Source of life – Foundation of all – Ground of our Being. Now think of the names given - YHWH; Elohim; LORD; Baiaame; Allah. Do these have meanings or associations for you?

God the Father – ‘Abba’ or ‘daddy’ as Jesus addressed God.
God as Mother eagle, Mother hen; birth-giver to the universe – Nurturer – Provider of food – Protector – Sovereign of all nations – Defender of the weak, with compassion for widows and orphans. Carer of the poor and oppressed. How do we relate to God when we adopt these images for God?

Jesus – Son of God – Son of Man - God Incarnate – Saviour – Lord – Teacher – Emmanuel – the Divine-human one – Redeemer – Brother – Friend – first-born of creation – Beloved Son of the Father – Good Shepherd – Light of the world – Gateway – Door – True Vine – Revealer of God - Final judge before whom we will appear. Who is Jesus for you? How do these images expand the possibilities of your relationship with God?

Holy Spirit – Spirit of God – God with us now – God’s strength in us – God’s wisdom for us – Guide – Counsellor – Advocate – Interpreter of Scriptures – Teacher of all Jesus’ ways and ideas for future disciples – Sustainer – Inspirer – Comforter – Enabler - Gift-giver and Fruit-developer for humans trying to serve God. How does the Spirit work in your life?

What ‘name’ for God comforts you most? What aspect of God challenges you?

I invite you now to join with the church since the fourth century who tried to summarize their understanding of God in the words of the Nicene Creed:

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. AMEN

HYMN- TIS 675 Lord, the light of your love is shining. (p.7 below)
or AHB 80 Immortal, invisible, God only wise

Offering-

A) Cheques to be made out to 'St Lucia UCA Parish account' and posted to 7 Hawken Dr, St Lucia Qld. 4067, please. OR

B) direct deposit to 'St Lucia Uniting Church' BSB: 334 040 acct#: 553 842 259 (St George Bank)

Prayer for offering

Gracious God, we thank you for all your care for us shown through the ordinary people in our lives. We join in the spirit of generosity and hospitality as we share our offerings this week that the work of our local church and the wider church around the world may continue. Amen.

Prayer of Intercession Robyn Cupit sent us: **PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD**

Lord hear our prayers as we pray for the world – a world that does not know universal peace, a world where pain and suffering are all too often the hallmarks of daily existence. We pray for the victims of conflict everywhere- and especially for the children. We pray most earnestly for those who have known fear, taken great risks, suffered great deprivation and now languish in overcrowded refugee camps, far from home, lost and fearful.

Let there be hope in our world Lord and let your light shine in the darkness.

We know that there are many who hunger and thirst in our world – yet despite our great wealth and blessings we seem unable to share our plentiful resources with those who have nothing. Help us Lord to find the way to change our world- a way that surpasses ignorance, greed and fear and unites us in generosity and kindness. The wealth of our world, our ingenuity, inventiveness, our ability to solve problems are all your gifts to us Lord – help us to use them wisely to care for one another.

Let there be love Lord that will help us to care and to share.

Lord we pray for the leaders of our country, our politicians and for all world leaders that they may be moved to seek justice for all peoples. Let your Spirit move in their hearts and show them the ways of peace and truth. Lord, where we would sell weapons and create suffering, let us plant food to relieve it instead. Lord, we pray for your church everywhere, for her ministry in the world and for those who lead. Bless their work in discipleship so all may hear the ‘good news’ of Jesus Christ. Send your Spirit Lord to strengthen and protect those who worship you despite threat and intimidation.

Lord, bless and keep the faithful everywhere.

Merciful and loving God, we lift to you our prayers for those who are grieving, for the physically and mentally ill, the dying and for all those who tend them and walk alongside them. We pray especially Lord for those dealing with Covid – 19 and for those who put themselves in harm’s way daily to care for the afflicted. We pray for those whose desperate work is seen and unseen, for the call you place on the lives of doctors and nurses, the call of duty for police and soldiers alike as they guard our borders, and we ask your blessing on all those in the scientific community as they struggle to find an effective virus to protect humanity from this threat to existence. We name in our hearts those who are near and dear to us and for whom we seek a relief from suffering. **Lord, let your peace and mercy flow to them.**

We humbly ask that you hear all our intercessions for the world – we pray them through Jesus Christ. Amen *The Lord’s Prayer-* Pray the Lord’s Prayer.

HYMN- AHB 92 (TIS 158) God has spoken by his prophets

Benediction-

May God the Creator lead us in love,
Christ the Saviour of the world, grant us freedom for living,
And the Holy Spirit guide us in all wisdom. Amen.

Resources used in this service include *Words for Worship* Trinity year A 7th June 2020 by MediaCom (subscription of Rev Dr Elizabeth Nolan); Bruce D. Prewer Trinity Sunday worship and *Uniting in Worship People’s Book* by Uniting Church Press (JBCE) 1988 Melbourne and *The Australian Hymn Book* multiple copies owned by the St Lucia Uniting Church congregation. Copyright license 217268.

TIS 155 How Great Thou art (Based on Carl Gustaf Boberg 1859-1940
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O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
consider all the works thy hand has made,
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,
thy power throughout the universe displayed:
*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
How great thou art, how great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
How great thou art, how great thou art!*

When through the woods and forest glades I wander,
and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur,
and hear the brook, and feel the gentle breeze:

But when I think that God, his Son not sparing,
sent him to die — I scarce can take it in
that on the cross, our burden gladly bearing,
he bled and died to take away our sin:

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
and take me home — what joy shall fill my heart!
Then shall I bow in humble adoration,
and there proclaim: My God, how great thou art!

TIS 675 Lord the Light of your Love (CCLI Song # 30426 Graham Kendrick ©
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Lord the light of your love is shining,
in the midst of the darkness, shining;
Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us,
set us free by the truth you now bring us. Shine on me, shine on me.
*Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory;
blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy;
send forth your word, Lord, and let there be light.*

Lord, I come to your awesome presence,
from the shadows into your radiance;
by the blood I may enter your brightness;
search me, try me, consume all my darkness. Shine on me, shine on me.

As we gaze on your kingly brightness
so our faces display your likeness,
ever changing from glory to glory;
mirrored here may our lives tell your story. Shine on me, shine on me.