



Sunday June 12th, 2022 ***The Fig Tree Worship Resource***

Call to worship & Lighting the Candle

Today is Trinity Sunday.

Again, we are invited into the mystery
of the Triune God;

Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Source, Son and Spirit,
Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer ...

As we worship the One in Three
and Three in One,
we light a candle and recall that God is with us,
within us and amongst us.

Using the non-binary pronoun: They are here.

Acknowledging



As we gather, we acknowledge the traditional
custodians of this land and these waters. We pay
respect to elders past, present and emerging. As
First and Second Peoples walking together, we
commit ourselves to be people of the covenant,
listening, truth telling and seeking justice for all.

Singing – Come, O God..., TiS 181

Prayer

(a paraphrase of Psalm 8)

O Holy One, who holds our hearts
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
**Your magnificence rises above everything
and yet, the babble of a baby
stops us in our tracks and gives us shelter.**

When I look up with awe and wonder
into the intricacy of the night sky
I feel so insignificant.

**Who are we, that you notice us?
Mere mortals, that you care for us?**

And yet, you have given us so much power,
and blessed us

with the unbounded depth of your love.

**You have entrusted us
with your exquisite works in the world.**

From your creative expression,
you offer all occupants
of land and sky and sea
all into our safe-keeping,

**O Holy One who holds our hearts,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!**

(the prayer continues)

And yet we confess,
that we are not good keepers of the earth.
We have ignored the wisdom of the land
and discarded her ancient peoples.
They sit calling at the gates of our cities,
longing for a voice, bringing their wisdom.

Holy One in Three, Three in One,
Forgive us

**O Holy One who holds our hearts,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!**

And yet, we confess,
that we abuse the power that we hold
over the bounty of the earth,
taking more than we need
filling our barns and bank accounts,
while others are hungry.

Holy One in Three, Three in One,
Forgive us

**O Holy One who holds our hearts,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!**

And yet, we confess,
that we are selective in our looking
and in our listening.
Only seeing
what pleases and affirms our stance.
Only hearing
the voices that support our views,
and keep us comfortable.



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While wisdom calls from the outside
with challenge and change,
with justice and truth.

Holy One in Three, Three in One,

Forgive us

(time of quiet)

Sisters and brothers in Christ,
Holy Siblings of wonder and magnificence.
Our failings are forgiven.
We are always welcomed home
by the love that births us.

**O Holy One who holds our hearts,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
Open our eyes to know your presence.
Open our hearts to love you more.
Open our ears to hear your truth.
Open our mouths to speak your blessing.
Amen.**

Listening

Read: Romans 5:1-5
John 16:12-15

For these words of faith and for Jesus the Word:
Thanks be to God.

Reflecting - Rev. Arnie Wierenga

I was quite startled by my response to the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans. While talk of suffering producing endurance and endurance producing character is familiar enough, the circumstances of the world have shifted vastly in recent times. Suffering runs deep in numerous ways both locally and globally. But in the context of more than two years of pandemic - with associated lockdowns, isolation, grief, and polarizing attitudes - does suffering produce endurance and character?

I had imagined that as Australia emerged from lockdowns our health and wellbeing would improve. Reunions of family and friends, renewed freedoms and being able to make plans without constantly pivoting would surely be a good thing.

While much of that is true, it seems that suffering continues but in different forms.

Many are struggling to be part of community again. COVID 19 is more prevalent than at any time throughout the pandemic, and despite the protection of vaccinations, many feel extremely vulnerable. Families and friends have fractured over the divide of those who are and are not vaccinated, and the distress seems to deepen rather than heal.

Have we reached the end of our endurance? I see many places where character has diminished – that is if character refers to grace, compassion, and respect for our fellow people.

One of the challenges is the way truth is understood. Truth has always been contested but perhaps this is now more than ever. ‘Fake news’ has become a common phrase to undermine the integrity of another opinion. It is easy to go looking for opinions that support our own biases and therefore strengthen resolve against another paradigm. Be it online or in physical groupings, when we find our tribe of like-minded people sharing the *one* truth, it polarizes and fractures our world. This has happened in troubling ways through the pandemic.

We recently spent a week in Mallacoota offering ministry support. We camped at the caravan park which means meeting people from all walks of life. One night we chatted around the fire with some new friends from Sydney and once we moved on from our shared interest in campervans, we discovered how different we were. One of our new friends talked about ‘truth’ that was so far from my understanding I couldn’t see truth there at all ...

From the gospel of John, Jesus is preparing the disciples for life beyond him. He says to them that the Spirit of truth will guide them in truth, as part of God’s plan or glory. So ‘what is truth?’

Perhaps some truths might include: If we cannot find ways to resolve the COVID vaccination divide, things will get more fractious; if we find safety in a close-knit tribe and dismiss difference, divisions will deepen; if we are so worn out as to lose hope, we are less likely to find love and grace towards our neighbour ... *(you may wish to add your own thoughts here).*



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Last week the church celebrated Pentecost. In today's passage from John, Jesus talks of the Holy Spirit as truth, to guide us into all truth. Jesus says the Spirit 'will not speak on his own'. It is not the opinion of the Spirit that is truth. It is the discernment and listening of the Spirit in relationship that guides us into truth. As we consider the deep mystery of our triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer – we are invited into the mystery of God as community. They (one in three / three in one) are the glory of God. It is together that truth is revealed.

Whatever truths I may hold, I can never fully understand all things. Our triune God invites us to consider the strength of diversity. It is in encountering different gifts, skills and perceptions that we are brought to wisdom and truth. That calls me to be open to the different 'tribes' that are beyond the church, and to those within it. As we listen for the voice of the Spirit, hope comes. We shall be as one, as they are one.

Affirmation of faith *

We believe in God,
holy source of all that is.
We believe in God,
who has spoken the eternal Word in Jesus Christ.
We believe in God,
ceaselessly breathing the Spirit into creation.

We trust in God's love and wisdom:
fully revealed in the humanity of Jesus Christ,
present to us in the Spirit's working
in the church and beyond.

We believe that God is calling the whole creation
into a future of justice and peace.
We share in Christ's risen life,
and commit ourselves today to receive
the coming reign of God.

To the only God, Three yet One,
be all honour and glory and praise
now and forever. Amen.

Passing the peace

Peace be with you:
and also with you.

Singing - She sits like a bird, TiS 418

Notices

Today is the World Day against Child Labour – what do you know about the prevalence and impact of Child Labour in the world today? June 15th is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. This is a good time to check on your Safe Church training and the processes that you have in place. Go to the Synod Website for more information.

Offering

As we work to be good stewards of what we have been given, we bring these offerings to you, God of abundance. Use them and use us to support your ministry of presence and bring about hope and healing where it is scarce.
In the name of Christ, Amen.

Responding:

Prayers for World & Community

*Invite people to pray the prayers of their hearts, aloud or in silence, leaving plenty of quiet space. You may like to have a bowl of sand and taper candles for people to light as they pray. You may choose to use a call and response: God of love, **hear our prayer.***

Source and giver of life,
we join you in prayer,
lifting before you the hurts and struggles
of our lives, families, communities,
the church and the world.

We pray for the Church:

We pray for the peoples of the world:

We pray for this country and community:



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We pray for these situations of need:

as we pray together:

The Lord's Prayer

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.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
are yours, now and forever. Amen.

** Affirmation of faith and Blessing
from Uniting In Worship 2*

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Singing - Amazing Grace TiS 129

Blessing

**O Holy One who holds our hearts,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
Open our eyes to know your presence.
Open our hearts to love you more.
Open our ears to hear your truth.
Open our mouths to speak your blessing.**

*And may the love of God enfold you,
the wisdom of Christ enlighten you,
and the fire of the Spirit inflame you;
and may the blessing of the Holy Triune God
rest upon you and abide with you
now and evermore, **Amen.**

Singing - Come, O Holy Spirit TiS 711

Maybe you loved singing this so much last week that
you want to sing it again – and again!