

Please share this bulletin as far and wide as you can – thank you

7th June 2020 – Trinity Sunday



View Inside a Vicarage

Hello and welcome to the Bredon Hill Group Bulletin, and if you are reading this for the first time, a special welcome to what is our weekly collection of worship resources and news, as we try and stay connected as church communities during Lockdown.

This week, it has particularly felt as though the days go by faster and faster, and yet there is something both soothing and calming about the routine and rhythm of the life, as we become used to our lives in what is now recognized as the new normal; And at the time of writing this article, some of our children will just have returned to school for the first time, whilst many of us are now allowed to meet with up to 6 people, outside, the first real signs and hope for the easing of lockdown.

Therefore, for the first time in 3 months, my household took a picnic to the park at the river in Evesham, and we enjoyed the simple pleasure of eating sandwiches by the gently flowing waters of the Avon. I am pleased to say there were not many people there, and those who were, were being very responsible about the social distancing guidelines; But what struck me, was how much people were just enjoying chatting in small groups and taking in the natural beauty around them. Because it seems as though it is in the very simple pleasures of life, such as the sharing together of nature, companionship with those we care for and in the partaking of refreshments, that the soul is fed and we find that sense of joy and contentment.

This Thursday, in the churches calendar, we will commemorate the life of Columba, abbot of Iona and missionary. Saint Columba was Iona's first abbot and was the **head of Iona Abbey** during the Middle Ages, as well as the leader of the monastic community of Iona. As abbot, Columba, was also the overlord of scores of monasteries in both Scotland and Ireland, including Durrow, Kells and, for a time, Lindisfarne.

Now I have never been to Iona, much as I would like to, but the Iona community is a dispersed Christian ecumenical community, working for peace and social justice, the rebuilding of community and the renewal of worship. They run residential centres on Iona and Mull to which hundreds of visitors are welcomed each year, to experience life in community and engage with a wide range of programmes and activities. The people come together from different walks of life and different traditions in the Church, to engage with people of goodwill from across the world, in acting, reflecting and praying for justice, peace and the integrity of creation, because they are convinced that the inclusive community they seek must be embodied in the community we practice. Their spiritual acts of worship and prayer resources are simple and yet deeply moving, challenging all who engage with them, to focus on those things which are most important in life, as well as seeking God's presence in all that we are and all that we do.

Therefore, although it is different, it is perhaps interesting to reflect on how, in the pleasure of coming together with family, to participate in a picnic in a place of beauty which has God at the centre of its creation, it is not unlike the most important element of our church services, the Eucharist. For in the earliest expressions of Church, Christ was remembered through acts of Communion and Fellowship, and as we come together as a church community and gather around the Lord's Table we are able to share in, and remember, his most precious gift, that of His sacrifice on a cross for us, carried out as an extreme act of love and where we can then give thanks back to God, we too place Him in the centre of our lives.

This is something I am very much aware of as I say the Eucharistic prayers at the Sunday service on behalf of us all, knowing how much people are missing this element of their Christian worship each week. It is why when thinking about all the simple pleasures of life which we are all looking forward to doing when this time of lockdown eases, perhaps the most special will be when we can enter our churches once again, and fully take part in acts of public worship.

For in the last couple of weeks, I have received many enquiries about when we will be able to reopen our churches. The answer is that as yet we do not know, but I am fervently hoping this will be soon, at least for personal and private prayer, as I am aware that this basic need of connecting to God, in the place we call His House, has been a real point of loss for many. Yet whilst wishing and waiting for our churches to reopen, I was reminded this week, in a book written by LaGard Smith, that we meet "God in Quiet Places". These quiet places can be anywhere and in any activity in which we embark, such as in the garden, by the river, out shopping or when listening to a programme on the radio or television. At such times, we just need to have our eyes and ears ready to see and listen to His voice and be ready to respond when He meets with us.

Therefore, as we wait for our churches to reopen, let's seek God in the simple and ordinary activities of life. To this end, one good piece of news which demonstrates that our communities are coming back to life, is that on Thursday 11 June, Elmley Castle will be once again holding their market in the Village Hall in Elmley, between 9.30am to 11.30am. I'm told that there will be many of the usual stalls, although sadly it will not be possible to have a drink of coffee, due to the current lockdown measures.

We also, of course, delight to welcome Bishop Martin, Kathryn and their family, as they settle in following their move into the Rectory in Bredon last week. We hope that whilst they are living in this area, they will quickly feel part of the worshipping communities of the churches across Bredon Hill; And we pray that they will be happy here and that Bishop Martin's ministry in Dudley and across Worcestershire will be richly blessed.

Finally, a service of Holy Communion for Trinity Sunday will be recorded in Holy Trinity church in Eckington this weekend, and I do encourage you, if you are not already doing so, to follow and engage with the many offers of worship, prayer resources and news updates both on the Diocesan and Church of England websites.

As always, please feel free to contact me if you wish anything to be publicised within the Bulletin, and so this week, I pray you are all able to meet with God, not just in formal acts of worship, but in the simple and quiet activities of everyday life, and hope that you will have a blessed and enjoyable week.

Allison

Reverend Allison Davies

Vicar of Eckington, Defford with Besford and Associate Priest for the churches of the Bredon Hill Group



Principal service based on Holy Communion for Trinity Sunday Sunday 7th June 2020

Collect

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

Reading: 2 Corinthians 13: 11-13

Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

Reading: Matthew 28: 16-20

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Post Communion Prayer

Almighty and eternal God
you have revealed yourself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
and live and reign in the perfect unity of love:
Hold us firm in this faith,
that we may know you in all your ways
and evermore rejoice in your eternal glory,
who are three Persons you one God,
now and for ever.

Amen



**Reflection for Trinity Sunday 2020
Sunday 7th June**

One of the many questions, asked of asylum seekers by the UK immigration authorities to determine their eligibility for entry into the United Kingdom is to “Explain the Trinity!”

This is a question which has taxed even the most fervent of theological scholars, and yet today we are celebrating Trinity Sunday, the first Sunday after Pentecost in which we honour the Holy Trinity—the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Its origins come from the fact Thomas Beckett (1118–70) was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury on the Sunday after Pentecost, and his first act was to ordain that the day of his consecration, should be held as a new festival in honour of the Holy Trinity. This observance then spread from Canterbury throughout the whole of western Christendom; and so today we contemplate the complexities of this most amazing of relationships between the three persons of the Godhead, and the dynamic way in which the Triune God works in our world today.

The word “trinity” does not appear in Scripture, but we have heard it is taught about in Matthew 28:18-20 and 2 Corinthians 13:14, as Jesus instructs his disciples to baptise all who become future followers of Christ, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This Trinitarian relationship is therefore something special, something mystical and something that is more than the sum of its individual parts – it speaks of connection, oneness and unity and it speaks of togetherness and yet difference.

For within each element of the Trinity, there is a different characteristic and a different voice. God the Creator is Father to the Son, who took on the life of humanity in order to demonstrate the image and characteristics of God; And it was this Son, who was so obedient to the Father that He resisted sin, and became the perfect sacrifice to defeat death by rising to life again. However, as the Son ascended back to heaven and to sit alongside His Father, He did not leave the people He loved unguarded against sin, but instead sent a life transforming guide, protector, advocate and comforter to be the sustaining influence and living presence in the form of the Holy Spirit – a presence which would continue to support Christians throughout the generations as the Good News of Christ is spread.

It is no wonder then that Jesus instructed his disciples to baptise in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as He recognised that nothing heavenly in the world could be accomplished without the mutual outworking of the divine trinity. For authority was given to Jesus by His Father, and as Jesus acknowledges, *“The Son can do nothing on His own, but what he sees the Father doing”*, so the Holy Spirit would only transform the lives of the disciples, after Jesus had died, risen and ascended back into Heaven.

The Pentecost, which we celebrated last week, shows us how that Spirit is now calling us to witness to the Trinity, as we live out our lives with God. For the divine life of the Trinity isn’t a community to admire from afar, nor a model that we can or should emulate. It is a life where God invites us to share in that relationship, as He makes space for us and for all Christians everywhere. It is why we therefore now need to go and make disciples of all nations, encouraging them to join in this wonderful dance of the Trinity – a dance where the three persons of God reach out and invite all who want to, to become united with them.

During the Corona virus, even though our church buildings have been closed, we have seen so many examples of the Trinity at work – through the many different ways churches have explored new ways of worship, such as through the livestreaming of services, the recording of services on You Tube, acts of personal and shared worship in homes, the ways church communities have found ways to live out their faith by supporting voluntary agencies, foodbanks, through acts of Christian generosity, the way we are now starting to see that Church will be different in the future, once our “new normal” takes effect and our church buildings reopen. All these examples are actions which demonstrate that the Holy Spirit is at work in our world today.

So perhaps this confirms the idea that the Trinity can therefore never be contained within limits or boundaries or definitions, because it is an evolving and everchanging entity. As the world changes, the way the Trinity works within it, and within us, changes.

This is surely the hope for the future of our church - that the Spirit continues to move and push us into a new way of being, and whilst the love of the Father and the Son is constant and ever present, how that love is shown and demonstrated to others, continues to evolve and excite and empower. As such, we each have a role to play in this evolving picture; for our individual giftings mean that we are required to unite with each other, to make us into the dynamic church communities we are called to be.

Therefore, as we seek to explain the Trinity and understand our place within it, we need to look towards that experience of relationship which exists when all parts have their own individual characteristics, but which when joined in unity, subsequently comes together to form something even more powerful and special; something which ignites a desire and attracts others, such that they catch the flame and want to join in that eternal dance of the Trinity. So, this week, may we go and make disciples of all nations, by signposting them towards the Trinitarian Godhead, who is three persons in One, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and may we forever dwell in them and they in us. **Amen**



Prayers for Trinity Sunday

To the bidding God of mystery and compassion, please respond with the words **“you know us and love us.”**

On this Trinity Sunday, we remember that the mystery of God, Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, all at once, is beyond our human understanding, yet closer to us than breathing. Therefore, called by the great God we worship, let us pray fervently for the Church and for the world.

We bring before you, O God, the needs of the worldwide Church, especially in these times when our church buildings are closed, and when we cannot physically be present together to worship you. We pray for a reawakening of your Holy Spirit, and ask that as churches, we may be able to reach out to our communities in new and creative ways, sharing with many you do not yet know You, Your love and compassion.

We pray for the churches of the diocese of Worcester and especially those within the Bredon Hill Group, asking that You revive us and refresh us, teach and direct us and inspire all who preach, teach and share the Good news. We pray particularly for Bishop John of Worcester and Bishop Martin of Dudley, Archdeacons Robert and Nicki and in accordance with the Diocesan Prayer Diary, for the Worcester East Deanery and Rural Dean Diane Cooksey. We also ask that You uphold all who suffer for their faith in any way.

God of mystery and compassion
you know us and love us.

We bring before you, O God, the particular problems of our age and culture, asking for your blessing at this time, on all who have been affected by the riots across the United States of America. Renew across our world, a commitment to community, peace and mutual trust, giving a sense of value to all who despise others and themselves. We pray that You will protect the vulnerable, send words of wisdom to the peacemakers and sensitise the hearts of all who have been anaesthetised by the images of violence, such that unity, justice and reconciliation are the Kingdom Values lived out by us all.

God of mystery and compassion
you know us and love us.

We bring before you, O God, those children have returned to school this week, and we pray for the nurturing of our children and all young people in these strange times we are living through. We pray for them in homes and in parenting, in schools and in teaching, in the expectations, pressures and dangers, in the hopes and in the possibilities for good. Bless all our local schools, as we give thanks for the teachers, staff and governors who work within them. Grant them security and protection from all harm, and may our schools be places where children and young people flourish and feel valued.

God of mystery and compassion
you know us and love us.

We bring before you, O God, our Queen, all world rulers and all leaders who have to make difficult decisions on behalf of their country, asking that their actions will be made in accordance with your divine will, rather than for the sake of mere profit or personal gain. We remember those people who are hungry and malnourished, those who are vulnerable and oppressed, those who are unhappy or lonely and those who are ill in mind, soul or body. We give thanks for all those who care for them – those working in our hospitals, hospices, care homes and all those in other social care agencies and organisations. Father, may your Holy Spirit bring comfort to all who suffer, such that all wounds may be healed and human spirits raised up.

God of mystery and compassion
you know us and love us.

We pray now for all who have died in faith and for all who you now see face to face. We remember those who have died this week, those whom we have loved, but can no longer see and those whose anniversary we remember at this time of year. Gracious God bless all known to us who mourn this day with your continuing compassion. May they be comforted by the knowledge of your loving presence and strength, and may their grief be turned into a firm and living hope in your risen Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

God of mystery and compassion
you know us and love us.

Finally, we bring before you, O God, our lives and all that we are, including our successes and our failures; We thank you for, and ask you to bless, all those we love and care for, and all who make our lives so rich and worthwhile.

We therefore place into the strong hands of the Trinity, the concerns of our hearts, the tasks of the week ahead and all those people with whom we will meet and encounter, asking that through your all redeeming love, your name will be forever praised.

Merciful Lord, **accept these prayers for the sake of our Saviour, Jesus Christ Amen**



Please pray for the ill and isolated, hospital and medical research staff, all those working on the frontline and those who have died. We pray for all whose anniversary of death falls at this time and for all who have been bereaved.

Those on the frontline: Alison Herbert a nurse who has been working with the DART (Disaster and Relief Team) and the Mercy Ships in Italy

Those who are sick: David Hardy

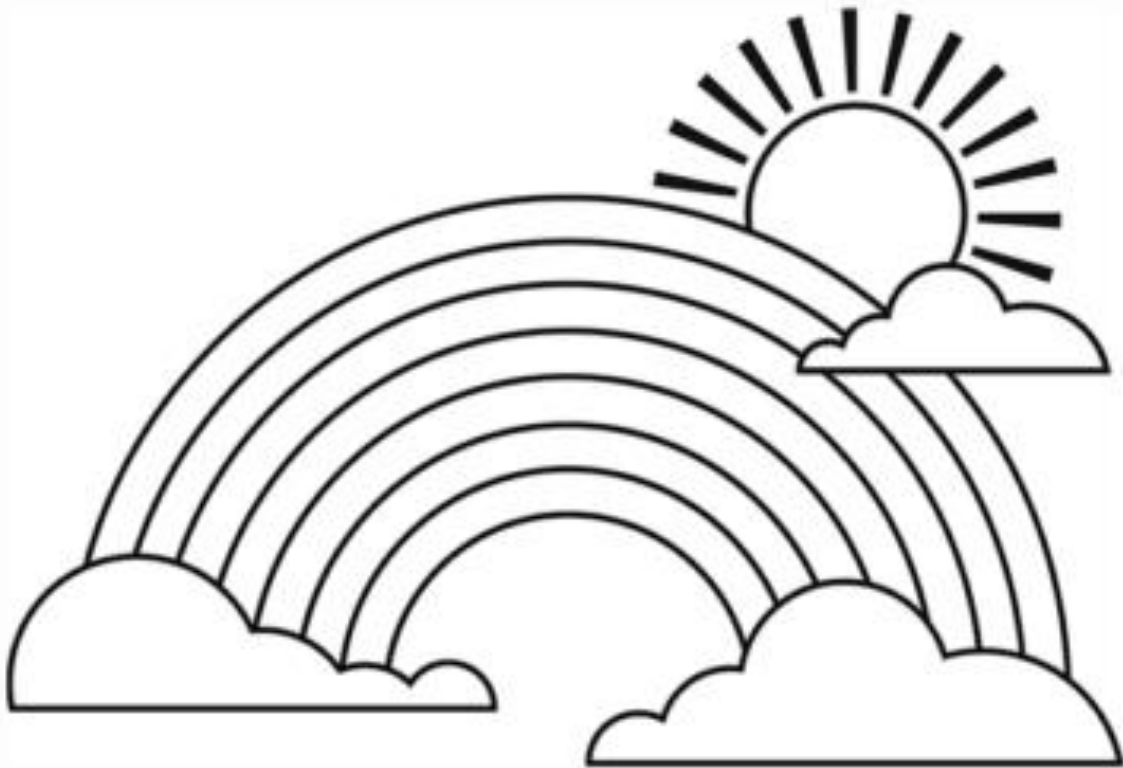
Those in residential care: Barbara Milton

Those who have died and their families: Jon Doney, Barbara Howell, John Bennett, Charles Bigland-Gibbons, John Bolton

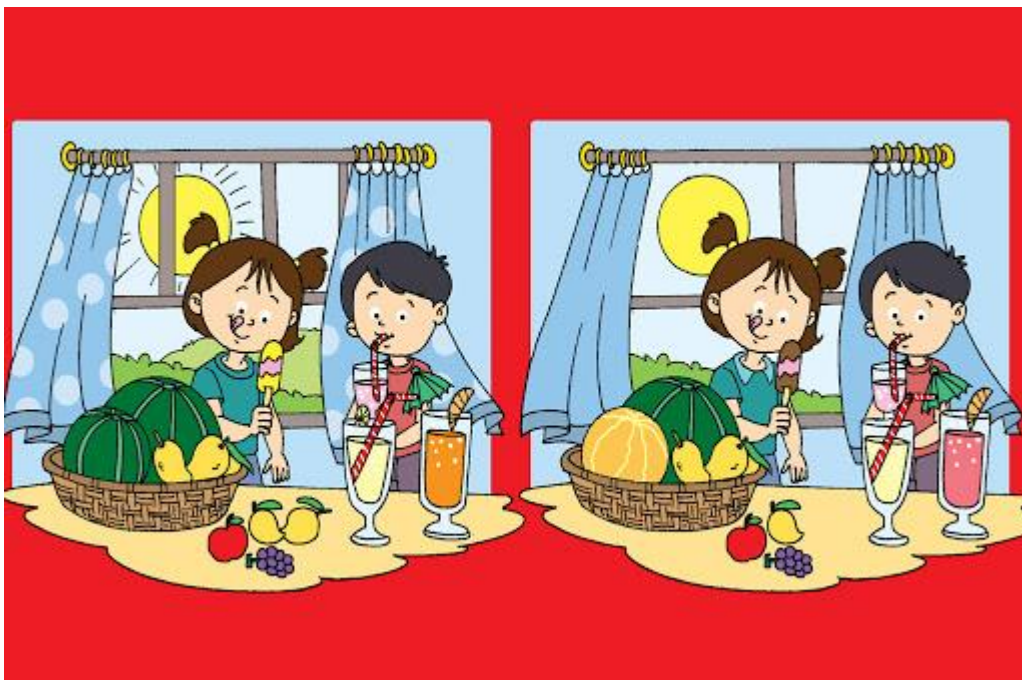
COLORING PAGE

GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES

"I set my rainbow in the cloud and it will be a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth." (Genesis 9:13)



Spot the difference



The Holy Trinity

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BIBLE
 THREE PARTS
 PRAISE
 GOD
 RESURRECTION
 BELIEF
 TOGETHER
 JESUS
 HOLY SPIRIT
 STRONG
 INCARNATION
 SON
 FATHER
 DIVINE
 IMMORTAL

Play this puzzle online at : <http://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/1162/>



Daily Hope offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.

The line – which is available 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044 – has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind.



"With many in our country on lockdown, it's important that we support those who are feeling lonely and isolated, whatever age they are." Archbishop Justin Welby

Options available include materials also available digitally by the Church of England's Communications team such as [Prayer During the Day and Night Prayer](#) updated daily, from Common Worship, and a recording of the Church of England [weekly national online service](#).

A section called Hymn Line offers callers a small selection of hymns, updated daily. An option entitled 'Hymns We Love', provides a hymn and reflection and is based on an initiative by the Connections group.

Downloadable resources include logos and posters to help publicise this free service to those who need it most. The link for this is <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-parishes/daily-hope-phone-line>



Updated prayers will also be available on our website 'prayer for the day' and our social media streams.

Reverend Allison Davies

Vicar of Eckington, Defford with Besford and Associate Priest for the Bredon Hill Group of Churches

Tel: 01386 750203

Email: eckingtonvicarage@hotmail.com