

**Collect, Readings and Sermon for Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2020**  
**Trinity Sunday**

**Collect**

Holy God,  
faithful and unchanging:  
enlarge our minds with the knowledge of your truth,  
and draw us more deeply into the mystery of your love,  
that we may truly worship you,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.  
Amen.

**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.

**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."

## Sermon

Last week our House Group was discussing discipleship and discipling others. It was a lively conversation. From the beginning we were encouraged to think about people who had encouraged us in our own faith journey. I always enjoy taking time to look back and remember those people who have had a significant influence on my faith. And hearing others' stories added an important dimension, because it reminded me of others who have had a slightly different kind of influence, and also got me thinking about the different things that have been important at different times in my faith.

As the conversation continued, we were invited to consider why it is important to share our faith, and the ways in which we do so. Having opened by remembering people who have inspired us, it was easier to begin to explore these issues. During the course of the evening, we had also thought about faith in the working environment, including working alongside people of other faiths, a discussion which included asking ourselves about our understanding of salvation (don't worry, I don't think any of us felt we had all the answers.)

What occurred to me by the end of the evening was just how wide-ranging an exchange we had had. I had read the materials in advance, but the ideas that were shared during the evening were far beyond anything I would have come up with on my own. And for me, the way that we can learn and discover more together than alone; the way our ideas can bounce off one another, leading us in new directions; the way we can be inspired to remember or realise something we had not known before; reminds me of the way that the Trinity works. If God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, relationship is in God's very nature. That means that when we relate well to one another, we are perhaps the closest we can come to understanding the nature of God.

Over the past few weeks our gospel readings have come from John's gospel. In beautiful poetry, John's Jesus talks of the relationship between Father, Son and Spirit and invites us into that relationship. We can be one with the Father, just as the Father and Son are one. There is something extraordinary about the notion of being caught up in the relationship of the Trinity – sharing in the works and purposes of God.

This morning we hear from Matthew's Gospel. This is the great commission, and represents the way in which we join in the work of the Trinity in a very different way. Here, Jesus, who claims authority on heaven and earth has been given to him by the Father, tells his followers to go and "make disciples of all nations, baptising in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Notice the imperative voice. This is a command. But here's the key. We are indeed commanded to do God's work. And we are also promised that we will never be alone in doing so. Hear those extraordinary words of reassurance: "and remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Just like John, Matthew recognises that we are called to be involved in God's work. And he promises God's continued presence.

It strikes me that on Trinity Sunday it is worth remembering that it is in God's very nature to be with us, not least because on the day that we are once again reminded of those words of the great commission, it can help us to know that if it is in God's nature to be with us, then perhaps part of our own discipleship will involve being with others. Before a recent funeral, the next of kin said to me that since his wife had died, he had two friends who had telephoned every single day, without fail. Whether or not he picked up. Even if they simply sat and listened to him sobbing. They kept on

telephoning. To show him that they were with him. If we are ever tempted to think that being with people isn't enough, or is a cop out, this surely reminds us that it is neither.

One image that is often used to describe the inter-relationship between Father, Son and Spirit in the Trinity is that of a dance. And the invitation to us is to join in the divine dance as we seek to fulfil God's purposes. I particularly like this image in an age of Strictly Come Dancing. Because I often feel like my attempts to join in God's work feel a little more like Ann Widdecombe or John Sargent than those wonderful group dances with the professionals, in which they all move as once in time to the music.

But if you're a Strictly fan, one thing you will know is that it's all about the journey. In the end, while we all love watching the beauty of the professional routines – indeed, it gives us all something to aspire to – what we appreciate most of all is watching the journey of each celebrity. Those who struggled to keep time, or to get the steps right, or to move their body in what is to many of us an unnatural manner until gradually it all comes together, are those who win our hearts.

And perhaps that's not a bad way to think about our own dance with the Trinity. We probably all have our Ann Widdecombe moments, feeling like we are being dragged into something against our will. But the more we practice; the more we pray; the more we spend time in God's presence; the more experiences we have of being in sync.. Of discovering, even if only for a moment, that we might just be doing God's work. And the reminder to us this Trinity Sunday is to keep dancing.

Amen