Morning Prayer for **Sunday, 7th June**

**Trinity Sunday**

*God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit*

**Opening Sentence:**
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory. *(Isa 6.3)*

**Preparation**
As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,
so may the light of your presence, O God,
set our hearts on fire with love for you;
now and for ever.

*All*  
Amen.

**We Sing:**  
[Holy, Holy, Holy](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ln-km29p7Io)

*All*  
We come together as the family of God
in our Father's presence to offer him praise and thanksgiving,
to hear and receive his holy word, to bring before him the needs of the world,
to ask his forgiveness of our sins,
and to seek his grace,
that through his Son Jesus Christ we may give ourselves to his service.

Amen

**Confession**

Lord God, we have sinned against you
We have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoings and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore us to the joy of your salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen
Absolution

May the father of all mercies
Cleanse us from our sins,
And restore us in his image
to the praise and glory of his name.
through Jesus Christ our Lord    Amen

The Word of God

Psalms 8

Psalmody

1 O Lord our governor, how glorious is your name in all the world!
2 Your majesty above the heavens is praised out of the mouths of babes at the breast.
3 You have founded a stronghold against your foes, that you might still the enemy and the avenger.
4 When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have ordained,
5 What is man, that you should be mindful of him; the son of man, that you should seek him out?
6 You have made him little lower than the angels and crown him with glory and honour.
7 You have given him dominion over the works of your hands and put all things under his feet,
8 All sheep and oxen, even the wild beasts of the field,
9 The birds of the air, the fish of the sea and whatsoever moves in the paths of the sea.
10 O Lord our governor, how glorious is your name in all the world!

All Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning is now and shall be for ever. Amen.
Readings

Isaiah 40: 12-17, 27-31 New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised (NRSVA)

God's People Are Comforted

12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance?
13 Who has directed the spirit of the LORD, or as his counsellor has instructed him?
14 Whom did he consult for his enlightenment, and who taught him the path of justice? Who taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding?
15 Even the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are accounted as dust on the scales; see, he takes up the isles like fine dust.
16 Lebanon would not provide fuel enough, nor are its animals enough for a burnt-offering.
17 All the nations are as nothing before him; they are accounted by him as less than nothing and emptiness.
27 Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, 'My way is hidden from the LORD, and my right is disregarded by my God'?
28 Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.
29 He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless.
30 Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted;
31 but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.
The Commissioning of the Disciples

16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 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, 20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’

Response

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Sermon

Prayer: Father God, thank you for loving us. Thank you, Jesus that you are the living word. Thank you, Holy Spirit, that you lead us into all truth. Come now, Holy Spirit and open our minds to receive your word. May we be strengthened and sustained by it. Amen.

Are you a words person or a numbers person?
I prefer numbers to words. I love Sudoku, the number puzzle where you use the digits 1-9 to fill in every row and column in a 3by3 box.

Three is a very interesting number!
There are a lot of associations with the number three, and many things come in threes:
- Wise men, musketeers, blind mice, musketeers, little pig, bears – the ones linked to Goldilocks!
- We often think in threes;
  - every story, or even sermon, must have a beginning, a middle and end,
  - every solid object must have height, depth and length.
- We have a past, present and future, we work, rest and play - the list could go on.

Jesus was baptised at the age of 30, and died 3 years later aged 33, at 3 o’clock under an inscription written in 3 languages - Latin, Greek and Hebrew.
On the third day he rose again, and in a resurrection appearance he asked Simon Peter three times ‘do you love me’, echoing the three times Peter denied Jesus.

Three, then I think we have established is a very special number!
And I think, by now, you will all know where I am going with this!

Today is Trinity Sunday when we celebrate the Christian understanding which states that God is three in one - and one in three!
Recently we celebrated the ascension of Jesus into heaven, when his physical presence left the earth, having promised to send the Holy Spirit – the third person of the Trinity, so that his special presence would still be among us.

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit became available to all believers. Trinity Sunday follows straight after Pentecost. It is interesting to note that - Pentecost was an experience before it was a doctrine; whereas Trinity Sunday commemorates a doctrine not an event. The doctrine of the Trinity became formally defined in the Nicene Creed in 381 AD.

The word trinity is not found in the bible. It was first used by the early church father, Tertullian who attempted to provide a succinct term for ‘tri – unity’ or ‘three – unity’ that existed in God. Simply put, it means there is one God, who exists as three distinct persons. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each are fully God and equally God.

Augustine said:
‘If you deny the Trinity you lose your soul,
If you try to explain the Trinity you will lose your mind.’

I hope to avoid both those pitfalls this morning! St Augustine of Hippo was speaking from experience I believe, as he took nearly 30 years to write 15 volumes called – ‘De Trinitate’ - (day-tri-tart-ta) translated ‘About the Trinity’ - which he was constantly updating and revising.

The best way to try to understand the Trinity is in my view, is to keep it simple. I hope to keep this ‘simple’.

In life there are plenty of unanswered questions. In life there are lots of mysteries. Things we cannot explain. The Trinity is one such mystery.

One of my favourite films is called ‘Shine’, which tells the story of pianist David Helfgott, - who being driven by his father and teachers, has a breakdown. Years later he returns to the piano, to popular if not critical acclaim. The main character David, whenever he doesn’t understand anything he says ‘It’s a mystery’ which he repeats often throughout the film!

Even though Augustine wrote so much on the Trinity he still viewed it as a mystery. As Christians we shouldn’t try to understand the doctrine of the Trinity logically or see it as a mathematical problem – 1+1+1 = 1!

One way to get our heads around this mystery is to think outside the box. We are all limited in our understanding - we can’t fully understand God, because he is God. Isaiah tells us in chp.55 vv. 8&9: For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,’ declares the Lord. ‘As the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts...’
The whole truth and nature of God is simply beyond us, since we are limited by language and comprehension. The teaching of the Trinity gives us an elementary outline of the mystery of God’s nature, rather than a full description of what God is like. God is a mystery before whom we all should stand in awe. If you look closely you will find the presence of the Trinity running throughout scripture. The Trinity isn’t obviously referred to in the Old Testament; although there is strong evidence that it is there - there is, an underlying awareness!

The Old Testament reading today gives us a sense of God’s mystery, power and greatness and highlights that underlying awareness.

- Genesis 1- verses 1 and 2 says:
In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

And in verse 26 - God says ‘let us make human beings in our image, in our likeness...’

There are numerous passages in the New testament that speak of all three persons of the Trinity.

In the reading from Corinthians, all the members of the trinity are mentioned; which we often use and referred to as ‘The Grace’

The gospel scripture for this morning is one of the many passages from the bible that mentioned all three persons of the trinity.

Matthew 28:19 – Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...

Notice it says in the name - singular not names plural!

Also, Elohim is a plural Hebrew noun used to refer to God.

So far, we have established that –

- There is only one God
- There are three really distinct Persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- Each of the Persons is God
- Trinity is a doctrine not an event.
- The word "Trinity" does not appear in the Bible
- The word "Trinity" was first used by Tertullian (c.155-230)
- The doctrine was formally defined in the Nicene Creed
- The Trinity is evident throughout scripture.

As I mentioned at the beginning St. Augustine wrote extensively on the doctrine of the Trinity. We can’t hope to do it justice in the time available here. But what can we learn from the Trinity for our lives today?
One of the main truths we can learn from the Trinity is that it teaches us how to be relational, and how to be community. In the Trinity we see the perfect example of relationship and community. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are persons - they live in relationship with each other and they exhibit qualities of personhood – emotion, will, intellect and so on.

Though the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one, they can communicate with each other, they live for one another, and they love one another and indwell one another. In this ideal model of relationships there is an infinite giving and receiving from one divine Person to the other.

One of the most known, and often quoted bible verses is:
John 3:16 – God so loved the world...
In this verse, God set the pattern for true love, the basis for all love relationships.

By modelling the Trinity in their loving relationship with each other, we too, can ‘love our neighbour as our self’ (Matt19:19)
We love, because God first loved us. (1John 4:19)
God is love! - as 1 John 4: 16 tells us.
It doesn’t say that God is loving which would be true.
But God is love!

He is, who he is, because of these love relationships between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that are inseparable and are bound together in love.

The Trinity has always existed in a structure of relationship, and each three persons have equal positions of authority based on their relationship with each other. Ideally this structure is reflected in marriage, in the family and in the church. Like the Trinity, all the members of the family and the church, and those married have equal value, but not always the same role.

Love should be central and key.

To summarize - the relationship between the persons of the Trinity provide for us a recipe for the best sort of human relationships.

Relationships in which individuality is balanced with the needs of others.

Relationships that are based on mutual love, and good communication.

You may have heard it said, that as Christians we are - ‘Easter People’ that is, people who live in the light of the resurrection of Jesus.

We need also to be ‘Pentecost People’! - Living in the power of the Holy Spirit.

But we need to be Trinity people! – All of our prayer, all of our worship, all of our service, all we do, is by the empowering Holy Spirit, through the Son to the Father.

All of life is Trinitarian.

Let’s pray.

Glorious Father, Gracious Son and Generous Holy Spirit. May we all live a Trinitarian life in your love Now and always, Amen.
We Sing: All Creatures of Our God and King
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VdfTekZcgGM

Affirmation of Faith

Let us declare our faith in God.

All I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.
A time for your personal Prayers

As you pray today, this Trinity Sunday, pray in the power of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

- Thank God for the gift of his Holy Spirit to live with us to be our mentor and friend along life’s way - whatever befalls knowing that we are never alone
- Thank God for our creation, preservation and all the blessings of this life
- Thank God for giving us the example of Jesus as the Good Shepherd, his teaching and example, and most of all for his death and resurrection, which opens to us the way to eternal life
- Ask for the Spirit to guide the leaders of our own and every nation into making wise choices as they work to contain and eliminate the coronavirus
- Remember those in communities across the world who are very vulnerable to coronavirus, the elderly and the infirm
- Those people living in refugee camps and crowded cities, especially those with limited sanitation, who cannot wash their hands regularly, or isolate from others.
- Thank God for his amazing provision to us through our homes, family and friends, our food and the wonders of his creation
- Give thanks and pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit for those in our Church community working to maintain fellowship during the current vacancy and for those who are alone, particularly those feeling isolated
- Pray that God's Holy Spirit will work powerfully within us as we minister to our village community of Horsell, the local shops, businesses and schools and all who work in them, and those working from home
- Give thanks for the dedication and skill of teachers in our schools as they work to keep our young people’s education on track and prepare to start a phased return of students of our schools during the coming few weeks
- Pray for those who are unwell and those involved in caring for them - especially our splendid NHS and all within it who serve us so faithfully
- Those mourning the loss of a family member or friend
The Collect for Trinity Sunday

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

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

All: 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.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.

We Sing: Angel voices ever singing
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y6DAWtFm7j8

The Conclusion

All: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore.
Amen.