



The Central Norfolk Methodist Circuit

Sunday 31st May 2026

BIG Sunday

The trinity



Welcome:

A very warm welcome to our Big Sunday worship whether you are at home worshipping on your own, in one of our church congregations, or on social media. Sunday 31st May 2026 is known as Trinity Sunday, and our focus is on God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. I hope that you find this time of worship helpful.

Opening words:

On this Trinity Sunday, we come to worship the God who is relationship, the God who is Creator, Christ and Spirit, the God who is closer to us than we can possibly imagine.

We come, come Lord Jesus, we pray

Hymn 11 Holy, holy holy, Lord God almighty!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zzM9P_Gqw-s

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, Holy, Holy! though the darkness hide thee,
Though the sinful human eye thy glory may not see,
Only thou art holy; there is none beside thee,
Perfect in power, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! all the saints adore thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy
sea.
Cherubim and seraphim, falling down before thee,
Who wert and art, and evermore shalt be.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name, in earth, and sky,
and sea;
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity.

Opening Prayers:

On this Trinity Sunday let us join together in prayer, in this moment let us give thanks for our world, for the love you have for us. Forgive us when our faith is small and weak, when our doubts and fears overwhelm us. Amidst the doubts help us remember you know and love us.

On this Trinity Sunday we give thanks for the Holy Spirit, comforter, teacher, guide, helper, empowerer. Help us embrace the gifts you have given us. Forgive us when we are too afraid to lift our heads up and appreciate those gifts. When we don't allow your light to shine upon us. The Spirit is there for all of us, help us lift our heads up and accept your divine power.

As we embrace the Spirit let us embrace it in a way that it flows from us, flows from us and out of us so we can embolden others, spreading peace, love, gratitude and truth in your name in all aspects of life. Amen.

We say together the Lord's Prayer

Hymn 116 Sing for God's glory <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sKj-04iPIHs>

Sing for God's glory that colours the dawn of creation,
racing across the sky, trailing bright clouds of elation;
sun of delight
succeeds the velvet of night,
warming the earth's exultation.

Sing for God's power that shatters the chains that would bind us,
searing the darkness of fear and despair that could blind us,
touching our shame
with love that will not lay blame, reaching out gently to find us.

Sing for God's justice disturbing each easy illusion,
tearing down tyrants and putting our pride to confusion;
lifeblood of right,
resisting evil and slight,
offering freedom's transfusion.

Sing for God's saints who have travelled faith's journey before us,
who in our weariness give us their hope to restore us;
in them we see
the new creation to be,
spirit of love made flesh for us.

Reading **2 Corinthians 13: 11-13**

Reflection: **Aileen Fox**

Paul in his letter to the Corinthians mentions the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. These sentences are part of what we have come to know as the Grace that we say at the end of services, meetings, as a means of blessing one another. Paul's relationship with the Christian community at Corinth, wasn't an easy one. Corinth was an important city in Southern Greece with a diverse population, it was very wealthy due to trade. It had a reputation as a city of loose morals and the early Christian community was affected by this. Pulled in two directions, the world and following Jesus. Paul had a hard task preaching and encouraging them, reminding them of the power of the Holy Spirit to transform lives and that it was possible to change. He had many theological as well as practical disagreements, but he continued to build the new community up into a place of peace and agreement.

We too can be influenced by what we see happening around us, it's so easy to be led astray by worldly influences. We might also disagree over ways to move forward, how we think the church should be, how it should respond to many issues. Do we pray and ask the Holy Spirit to direct us?

Do we show love to each other?

Through the grace of Jesus, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, we are not alone. God is merciful, he loves humanity and he offers us salvation freely and not because of any good works we might be involved in. The ending of the passage reflects what we call The Trinity, God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Next time you say the Grace remember who these words are attributed to and why; we don't always tread the path we should, but God loves us and forgives us, he sent Jesus who died for us and the spirit to encourage and enable us. Blessings indeed.

Hymn 411 **May the God of hope go with us every day**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UuIL3GIBpoc>

May the God of hope go with us every day,
Filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.
May the God of Justice speed us on our way,
Bringing light and hope to every land and race.

God will be our shepherd as we go our way
And will not forsake us when we go astray.
Even though the load of life is hard to bear,
We must not forget that God is always there.

*Praying, let us work for peace;
Singing, share our joy with all;
Working for a world that's new,
Faithful when we hear Christ's call.*

*Praying, let us work for peace;
Singing, share our joy with all;
Working for a world that's new,
Faithful when we hear Christ's call.*

Reading **Matthew 28: 16-20**

Reflection: **Rev Neil Vels**

This is the ending of Matthew's gospel, yet it isn't an ending at all but is rather a new beginning. The story of Jesus is going to continue as Jesus sends his disciples out. They've followed Jesus, now they're going to go out and do what Jesus has taught them to do and as they do that, they change from being disciples into apostles, apostles coming from the Greek words which mean to be sent out, or to be called out. They're transformed from an inward-looking people to an outward looking people, to an inward journeying people, to an outward journeying people, even as promised in the Acts account of the Ascension with the power of the Holy Spirit coming upon them for the purpose of being his witnesses.

So, what is Jesus telling his disciples, and what can we learn from what Jesus says to them?

We are invited, first of all, to make disciples.

I think there's a fundamental difference between making disciples and making converts. Jesus isn't saying go out and proselytise, and get a lot of converts, and then leave them there. But Jesus is saying, as you engage with people of the world as you engage with people from other nations, you are to help them move into a space where they intentionally follow me, where they want to learn from me, where they want to become like me. And so, our mission

is to perpetuate the work of Jesus, to pass on the baton. The disciples, the people whom Jesus called, have now become apostles, to go out, and to call others, to be disciples, who, in turn, will go out to be apostles.

So, we're invited to make disciples.

And we're invited to make disciples out of every nation.

In other words, not just the people who are like us, because so often our when we think of evangelism, we bring our friends, people who may look like us, and speak like us, and say, we can become a nice friendly family in church on a Sunday morning. But the instruction from Jesus is specifically to go to other nations, to other peoples, to bring in those who may be different from us. It's an intentional inclusion and diversity program.

And so, we are called, first of all, to make disciples, we're called to make disciples from all nations, not just people like us, but we're also, then

called to teach them to obey what Jesus has taught us.

And again, this is often somewhere where, I think, we fall short, because, perhaps, because we ourselves haven't been disciplined properly, and we often find ourselves in engaging with other people, that we are simply teaching them a rule book: "These are the rules that Jesus taught... these are the rules that we find in the New Testament... you have to do things this way..." And yet when Jesus says "teach them everything I have commanded..." I'm reminded again of John's gospel where Jesus says, "this is my command, that you love one another."

I think our world would be a far better place if we were to go around teaching one another how to love rather than how to obey rules! Imagine if all those who called themselves followers of Jesus, all those who had been disciplined, and all those who went out to tell the world of the church, went out teaching and telling people how to love. I think we would be a very different world! And then the last thing that Jesus says, he says, "surely, I will be with you to the end of the age." If we find ourselves asking where Jesus is in this broken world, where Jesus is in the pain we feel, in society today; and we may look back to a time thirty or fifty or seventy years ago, where Jesus seemed to be far more present. Then I would invite you to say, well, do we still go out to make disciples? Or have we forgotten our evangelical roots?

Do we still go out to people who are far from us, people who are different from us?

Or do we just want to associate with those who are like us?

Are we teaching people to love? Or do we give them another rule book?

So can I encourage you, as we move into the post Pentecost season, as we remember what it means to be a church that is empowered by the Spirit - for the purpose of witnessing - to encourage you to maybe take a step of faith. Maybe look at your own discipleship journey. Maybe look at what it means to go out, are you able to go out?

Are you able to share the good news? Are you willing to engage with people who are different, and are you willing to love them?

And I pray that as we do that, we will, indeed, see that Jesus is, surely, still with us.

Hymn 415 The Church of Christ in every age

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wUvPH_gy1c

The church of Christ in every age,
beset by change but Spirit-led,
must claim and test its heritage
and keep on rising from the dead.

For Christ alone, whose blood was shed,
can cure the fever in our blood,
and teach us how to share our bread
and feed the starving multitude.

Across the world, across the street,
the victims of injustice cry
for shelter and for bread to eat,
and never live before they die.

We have no mission but to serve
in full obedience to our Lord;
to care for all, without reserve,
and spread his liberating word.

Then let the servant church arise,
a caring church that longs to be
a partner in Christ's sacrifice,
and clothed in Christ's humanity.

Prayers: Intercessions

Creator Father, Redeemer Son, Spirit and Advocate, we bring our prayers for our world before you.

We pray for the people of Ukraine and Russia; Israel, Palestine and Iran; for the continent of Africa; for the people of our own nation and for all places in the world that are on our hearts where there is division, hardship, climatic challenges and suffering. Empower the peace makers, resource the aid workers, and unite us all with the courage to believe that together we can make a difference.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

We pray for our church and Circuit. Help us all to follow Jesus' teaching and be beacons of your love in our community. May our church be a place where people find fellowship and strength in our increasingly troubled world.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

We give thanks for our homes and our loved ones and pray that we may have peace in our communities and in our lives. We remember with love all who are stressed at this time because of the current economic climate. Help those of us who have more than enough for our own needs to help those with less. Bless the work of all the agencies - local communities and foodbanks working hard to help their communities.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

We pray for those who are struggling through illness or disability, especially those among our own congregations: we hold before you especially this morning those areas in Africa struggling with the outbreak of Ebola; for all whose lives are disturbed or distressed and those coping with bereavement. May they be strong in spirit and strong in the Lord and feel your comforting presence.

Lord in your mercy Hear our prayer

We rejoice that in the power of our Triune God we are more than conquerors. With the aid of the Holy Spirit help us to follow the example of your Son, overcome evil, triumph over death and rejoice in life eternal.

We ask this and all our prayers in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Introduction to the video:

I first saw this wonderful little video last year at our ministers retreat. The British journalist Steve Rosenberg spent part of his career working for the BBC in Moscow. One place of haven that he found in Moscow was a small newspaper kiosk where he bought his morning paper and it was there that he met Valentina, just an ordinary woman, nobody special, but she made a difference to Steve Rosenberg, and he wrote this song about her. This reminds me that we often find God in the most unlikely places, and I hope that others might find God in places that I inhabit. Sometimes we can make a huge impact on the world in small and humble ways.

Video: Valentina's song

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cw7Q60X76tM&list=RDcw7Q60X76tM&start_radio=1

Hymn 566 Take my life and let it be

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Of4I5bTdZ8M>

Take my life and let it be
consecrated, Lord, to thee.

Take my moments and my days;
let them flow in endless praise.

Take my hands and let them move
at the impulse of thy love.

Take my feet and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee.

Take my voice and let me sing
always, only, for my King.

Take my lips and let them be
filled with messages from thee.

Take my silver and my gold;
not a mite would I withhold.

Take my intellect and use
every power as thou shalt choose.

Take my will and make it thine;
it shall be no longer mine.

Take my heart it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure store.

Take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.

Blessing:

The invitation is for you to join the table, to join the relationship, to stand in the presence of the divine and the human, together, to spread the love of God in the world, in Jesus name.

Go in peace, my friends, and serve the Lord.

Amen.