

Service for use at home on **TRINITY SUNDAY – 7th June 2020**

Opening prayer

Thanks be to the Father

I arise today

He gives me light

He guides my way

Thanks be to the Saviour

I arise today

He gives me love

He hears me pray

Thanks be to the Spirit

I arise today

He gives me life

With me to stay

David Adam (1936-2020)

Hymn: StF 139 Today I awake

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Prs9ZoACHeY>

- 1 Today I awake
and God is before me.
At night, as I dreamt,
he summoned the day;
for God never sleeps
but patterns the morning
with slithers of gold
or glory in grey.
- 2 Today I arise
and Christ is beside me.
He walked through the dark
to scatter new light.
Yes, Christ is alive,
and beckons his people
to hope and to heal,
resist, and invite.

- 3 Today I affirm
the Spirit within me
at worship and work,
in struggle and rest.
The Spirit inspires
all life which is changing
from fearing to faith,
from broken to blest.

- 4 Today I enjoy
the Trinity round me,
above and beneath,
before and behind;
the Maker, the Son,
the Spirit together -
they called me to life
and call me their friend.

John L Bell (born 1949) and Graham Maule (1958-2019)

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Prayers of Adoration and Thanksgiving

Father,

In you is my birth
In you is the earth
In you is eternal worth
I bow before you

Jesus,

In you is love so dear
In you salvation near
In you I lose my fear
I bow before you

Spirit,

In you is all strong power
In you is every hour
In you my life will flower
I bow before you

David Adam (1936-2020)

Amazing God – three persons, and yet one.
We come before you in worship,
finding it hard to grasp
and yet knowing in our hearts
that this is the mystery and marvel of you.
We pause in awe and wonder.

Amazing Father God
we thank you for all the wonders of your creation
– beauty that astounds us and fills us with awe.
We pause to consider the beauty and intricacy of a flower.

Amazing Son of God
we thank you for your constant and unchanging love,
demonstrated in your birth at Bethlehem
and your death on a cross.
We pause to offer our sadness and grief
at the ways in which we have let you down during this past week
... and we ask for your forgiveness.

Amazing Spirit God
we thank you for your ongoing, ceaseless presence with us,
drawing us closer to you
and filling us with your grace and power.
We pause to receive you into our lives afresh
... refilling us with your love and power.

Amazing God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.
Help us to stay close to you,
to live in your power not our own,
and to share your amazing love with all those we meet.
Amen.

Hymn: StF 8 – God with us: Creator, Father (*Tune: Ode to Joy*)

- 1 God with us: Creator, Father,
bringing everything to birth;
Mother of the whole creation,
fire of stars and life of earth:
down the countless years composing,
from the earth's evolving night,
love's response to love, and forming
mind and soul to seek your light.
- 2 God with us: Redeemer, Brother,
Friend for ever at our side,
here, in flesh, you walked among us,
taking up your cross, you died.
Crucified, despised, rejected,
Perfect Love, who shared our shame,
streaming from the cross, your judgement,
full of mercy, clears our name.
- 3 God with us: Unwearied Spirit,
from the birth of time and space,
surging through unconscious being,
joyful, Life-Creating Grace:
through the centuries you find us;
you, as God, inspire our prayer;
Life and Power at work within us,
Love for ever, everywhere!
- 4 God, Transcendent, far beyond us,
closest Friend, unfailing Guide:
through the ages, wronged, affronted,
in your poor, still crucified!
God with us: convict, forgive us;
by your holy love destroy
all that hinders peace and justice:
fill this aching world with joy!

Alan Gaunt (born 1935) © 1998 Stainer & Bell Ltd Used By Permission. CCL 61615

Prayers of intercession

Into the presence of our God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - we bring people and situations in need of our prayers.

firemen, fishermen, farmers

plumbers, prophets, priests

street cleaners, home cleaners, hospital cleaners

the people of Burkina Faso, Brazil, Bangladesh

rubbish collectors, refugees, refugees

night workers, night owls, nightwear manufacturers

people affected by cyclones, storms and civil unrest

Amazing God,
bring your love into the hearts and homes
of those for whom we pray,
that they may be comforted and sustained,
and find themselves able and ready to face another day.
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

Reading: Matthew 28.16-20

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'

SERMON

*This is not going to be another boring sermon about how the Trinity is like a triangle or a shamrock or suchlike. There will be no long theological words.
Promise.*

Let's begin with Jesus' last words to his friends as recorded by Matthew; 'the Great Commission' which sets out what Jesus expected his disciples to do after he had returned to God – 'go – make disciples – baptise and teach'.

'Making disciples' is the central task for the church and for all individual Christians – to bring people who do not yet know Jesus into a personal experience of God's love for them. But you can't bring anyone anywhere until you have been alongside them for long enough to gain their confidence and respect – to let them realise that you care for them as individuals, and don't simply see them as 'pew-fodder'.

So 'baptising and teaching' is definitely a second stage, since (as we all know) commitment may take time. It is certainly what God wants, so that his family may increase and what Jesus taught may be passed on to another generation; but, as John Wesley himself discovered so dramatically, only the Holy Spirit can touch someone so that they can say for themselves 'Jesus Christ is my Lord'.

However, unless we 'go' – actually get up out of our comfort zones – none of this will happen. We can't make disciples by standing on the church

doorstep and waving to the world any more than we can run a marathon without leaving our armchair. We must be out in our community, being Christ's body by what we do and say; we must join in with the life of the world, listen to the hopes and concerns of other people and earn their trust through our loving acceptance of them before ever we think of talking about God.

And when we stop to think about this, perhaps we can see the Trinity in action – for what God calls us to do is to be like the Spirit, in the world to change it; to be like Jesus, offering God's love by embodying it; to be like the Father, taking the initiative to love the world. And as we actually embark on this risky activity, we realise that we are being drawn into the dynamic life of the Trinity itself – that we are at one with God, just as Jesus promised (John 14.23). We become part of what theologians call 'perichoresis'..... *hang, on I said 'no theological words': we'll keep that for another time.*

At this point you will say, 'This is difficult enough in normal times – how about now, in lock-down?' In John 14.12 we read that Jesus told his disciples that anyone who believes in him will be able to do even greater things than he himself. He meant that twelve disciples could go in twelve directions, which he as a man could not. Just think how many people we are able to be in contact with through modern technology. Just think how much time we have been given to do that because of everything being shut down. Just think how many people who may never cross the threshold of a 'real' church have invited God into their own living-rooms through streamed services. Just think what the simplest acts of neighbourliness – like a telephone call to ask how someone is coping, or a conversation over the garden fence – mean in terms of demonstrating the love of God. We can show the world that the church is still open for business by what we are doing, one by one, for people one by one; we can show that the church is capable of adapting and evolving to meet new situations so that we never stop carrying out that Great Commission to the best of our ability and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Hymn: StF 11 - Holy, holy, holy

- 1 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!
- 2 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.
- 3 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.
- 4 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!

Reginald Heber (1783-1826)

Blessing

May the Sending One sing in you,
may the Seeking One walk with you,
may the Greeting One stand by you,
in your gladness and in your grieving.

May the Gifted One relieve you,
may the Given One retrieve you,
may the Giving One receive you,
in your falling and in your restoring.

May the Binding One untie you,
may the One Beloved invite you,
may the Loving One delight you,
Three-in One, joy in life unending.

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