

Podcast

7th June 2020

Matthew 28:16-21

Music

Welcome



Hello, and welcome to this week's worship podcast from New Kilpatrick Parish Church. I am Jeanette Peel, the probationary minister, at New Kilpatrick. For the moment, the church doors are still closed but church is very much open. This worship podcast, which is brought to you weekly, is part of that new way of being church, here online from the comfort of your own home or when out and about. Whether you are a regular or this is your first time, joining us today, welcome.

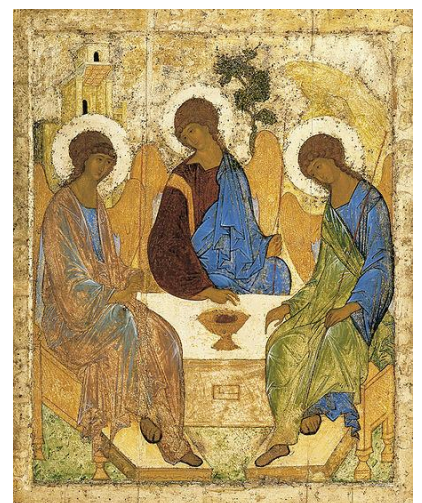
We have begun the month of June not only with sunshine, but a relaxation of some of the Stay at Home advice. Families and friends can meet each other more freely, although at a physical distance of 2metres. And this is a wonderful new beginning as things begin to change. Even more as time moves on. Eventually, the church doors will open too, and this will mean changes for how church returns in a physical sense – from outside the church building to back inside.

Slowly, we are coming out of what is a bit like an enforced hibernation. Moving back into the world and space and people around us and it feels good. And with today being Trinity Sunday, that is what Jesus told his disciples to do.

After being hunkered away since the events of Easter they have now been directed to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing, and teaching everything that Jesus commanded them. It is a time of renewal, of freedom to go to all places and teach the words Jesus said. New doors are opening. A new way awaits in front of all of us.

Reading: Matthew 28:16-21

16Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."



Prayer

Let us quieten our hearts and minds in prayer.

Loving God,
we come to you this day, to be close to you, to be in your presence, in everything we say and do. Help us find the shelter where you are. Open our hearts, ears and eyes so that we can see and find it.

It is often the stranger who notices us at our most vulnerable, finding us in the shadow rather than the shelter. And it is in here that you find us, ready to listen.

Just as the Holy Spirit poured out on the disciples, when they were at their lowest, speak to us now so we can build our relationship with you. Guide, comfort and forgive us as you have done from the very beginning. We need your strength to let go of the things that hold us back. We should learn to put them into your hands as you help shoulder the burden, walking along side us or carrying us on our way when the way is long and weary.

Your welcome is assured, with you we can be ourselves, not a false self, no pretense is needed as you always show your love and forgiveness towards, and for, us. Guide us in this journey. We come to you remembering we are part of something more than us, the wider church community, both now in these difficult times, and in the future.

Just as we are, we come before you now as we say 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 debts,
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever.
Amen



Short Reflection

We are one week through a new month – although I am still trying to work out where the previous two months have gone – and today is known as Trinity Sunday. In the western Christian Church calendar, Trinity Sunday celebrates the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, the three Persons of God: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit but it was not celebrated in this way in the Early Church. The Trinity is a much later concept brought about by disputes and arguments and accusations of heresy, about who God was, who Jesus was, and who the Holy Spirit was and how they were, or were not, understood as one!

Eventually this brought together the First Council of Nicaea in 325AD followed by the First Council of Constantinople in 381AD when the words of the Nicene Creed were formalized, thus supposedly ending any more heresy of the Trinity, among other important theological points. But the disciples were not concerned about doctrine and did not understand the concept of the Trinity. They just had a mission to focus on, given to them by Jesus, and that was their priority. Not doctrine!



The first thing we notice about today's reading is that it is set where Jesus' life began. It is set in Galilee. It is the place where Jesus announces in Luke's gospel, that prophets are not accepted in their hometown. And yet this is the end point for Matthew's gospel. Or maybe we should say the beginning?

Last week, the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples at Pentecost. We could say the Trinity was born. And now, Jesus is telling the disciples to go out to all nations baptizing and spreading the news of all that he has done in the world. By doing so, everyone will come to know God. We find a similar message in Mark and Luke's gospel. There is no exclusivity any longer, the message is for all. We are called to recognise that in creation we are one.

We are called to follow Christ and his words. We are not called to follow the words of the loudest, the foolish, those that think they are above everyone else, or carry the most authority and can bully their way through. We are called to continue Christ's mission.

And it will not be long till we read of Peter's dream, which sent him to Rome to stay in the home of Cornelius, whom he knew ate foods considered unclean by Jewish law, whom he knew was an uncircumcised man, whom he knew had worshipped idols. In the dream, Peter saw all the forbidden foods lowered to him in a sheet, and he heard the voice of God saying, "Rise, Peter, take and eat." It is a revelation to Peter's understanding. Christ's message is for everyone to hear, not just a chosen few.

Yet this call to discipleship is not straightforward, simple or at times elegant in what we are tasked to do. It is, however, a complete transformation, a metanoia – a change from the old to a new way of thinking, to a new way of being. Trinity Sunday's text gave the disciples the authority to go out to all nations. To never stop baptizing and teaching. There was no end date. It was a continuous action which we, as disciples of Christ, are also instructed to do. But we are not alone in doing this, and neither were the disciples.

The Trinity asserts God is with us. The Trinity affirms God's presence. That no matter whatever circumstances we find ourselves in, God will be there. Making disciples and baptizing are not just symbolic events. They are a commitment to follow through with what has been taught. It should make a difference as to how we are in the world – metanoia.

How will we act, think, and behave towards other people considering this? How will we care for God's creation? We are living in an age when decisions and actions and speech demonstrate a lack of concern for other human beings - as if they do not matter. You only need to watch the news to see this happening. Just as much is at stake now as it was for those first disciples.

Because by following through and doing as Jesus asked us to do, we find God. The fact that God promises to be with us, in all time and through all things, is not so much a rosy

reassurance but a necessary part of mission. This promise accompanied God's call to the prophets in the Old Testament too. 'I am with you always, to the end of the age,' offers a call of hope as we come to the end of the gospel of Matthew but a timely reminder for each of us to also do what is asked. Amen

The Temple

By George Herbert (1633)

Trinitie Sunday.

Lord, who hast form'd me out of mud,
And hast redeem'd me through thy bloud,
And sanctifi'd me to do good;

Purge all my sinnes done heretofore:
For I confesse my heavie score,
And I will strive to sinne no more.

Enrich my heart, mouth, hands in me,
With faith, with hope, with charitie;
That I may runne, rise, rest with thee.

Prayer

Let us pray.

Loving God,

One church, one body, one kingdom. Where two or three are gathered in my name, I will be there among them, Jesus said.

Today, we give thanks, as we are commissioned to go out to all nations, just as those first disciples did, doing what Jesus asks us to do in his name. Lord God, we now need to take this message and share it, share it with all we meet. We can do this without fear, without worry for ourselves or others because of where we live. Some do not have the freedom to do so. Let us be their voice wherever we can be.

It has been another week of heartbreak, tears, miracles and hope. And in amongst it all is love. Love being a neighbour for those most in need, wherever they may be.

Loving God, we cannot change the past, and recent events, but we can work towards changing the future. To change hate into love, anger and frustration into reconciliation, suspicion into understanding. Remind us what Jesus asked of us, being a neighbour and friend to those different from us. Remind us to stand up to oppression and prejudice, challenge what is wrong, by action, real action that makes a difference. Remind us to give generously to those who have little.

Let us be Christ's words to all we meet, wherever we are, whoever they are.

At this difficult time bless all who are bereaved, sick, lonely, the people living in complete isolation, the most destitute and vulnerable in our society. Help us to find the ways to comfort and support them, as best we can.

And now, in silence, we remember all those in the world who need the voice and prayers of the church. Hear us now as we pray in silence.

These are our prayers. May they change us. May they transform us. And may we have the humility and the courage to change the world. Amen.

Epilogue

Meanwhile, the eleven disciples were on their way to Galilee, headed for the mountain Jesus had set for their reunion. The moment they saw him they worshiped him. Some, though, held back, not sure about worship, about risking themselves totally.

Jesus, undeterred, went right ahead and gave his charge: "God authorized and commanded me to commission you: Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life, marking them by baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Then instruct them in the practice of all I have commanded you. I'll be with you as you do this, day after day after day, right up to the end of the age."

Benediction

Paul writes these words in 1 Corinthians 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 us all. Amen

Announcements

Thank you for the invitation to journey with you today, wherever you may be. It is always a special time when we meet. If this is your first time with us, then it is a pleasure to be with you. We are back again next week but while we cannot meet *in* church we do meet *as* church, mainly online at nkchurch.org.uk where you can engage with us in different ways. And we hope you will join us on our podcast next week.

You can get updated with all the different things happening at New Kilpatrick Church through the website www.nkchurch.org.uk, on the phone, through the weekly bulletins which are emailed or posted out, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. So please join us.

And thank you to Roddy Hamilton and Iain Douglas, who shared in our time together to make this podcast. But, for now, thank you and we will meet again next week.