

Materials for Worship at Home - Sunday, 12 June 2022
Trinity Sunday

**Please use this material with the order of Service
for Worship at Home for the Linton Team of Churches
Ordinary Time**



TRINITY SUNDAY

Collect

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.

Readings

Romans 5:1-5

Results of Justification

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint

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us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

John 16:12-15

'I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Reflection

St Mary's Church, Linton Pentecost Sunday 5 June 2022

I'm going to read you three short passages about Babel.

Now the whole land had one language and the same language ... so the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth and they left off building the city. Therefore, it was called Babel because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth. (Genesis 11: 1, 8-9)

They were passing through hyperspace. *'The Babel fish,'* said The Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy quietly, *'is small, yellow and leech-like, and probably the oddest thing in the Universe.... It absorbs all unconscious mental frequencies from brainwave energy to nourish itself with. The practical upshot of all this is that if you stick a Babel fish in your ear you can instantly understand anything said to you in any form of language.'* (*The Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy* pp. 49-50)

Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy

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Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. (Acts 2:3-4)

At one level Pentecost, the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on the first Christians, is a dramatic sign that God's punishment for the sin of human pride in trying to build a tower up to God, has been reversed. The Jews from different parts of the civilised world, who had gathered in Jerusalem for the festival of Pentecost, were amazed to find they could each understand what the Galilean apostles were saying to them! It was as if each had been given a Babel fish, so memorably described by Douglas Adams in his *Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy*.

There has long been a dream that if we could all speak the same language then misunderstandings, rivalry, wars, squabbles, racism, sexism and so on would all disappear. It would be like the time before the tower of Babel, a time of cooperation and harmony. The 18th century philosopher Gottlieb Leibnitz held this optimistic view and inspired the Polish doctor, Ludwik Zamenhof in 1887 to create a new language called Esperanto. Esperanto means 'one who hopes' and although it has not caught on as much as Dr Zamenhof had hoped, in recent years popes such as Pope Benedict XVI have added Esperanto to their multi-lingual blessings as a sign of Pentecost hope.

But of course, as useful as it would be for all of us to speak one language, it is not really language as words which Pentecost is all about. The true language of Pentecost is that of the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Truth, which will guide us along our way in life. As Jesus said to Philip, the Spirit whom he will send after his resurrection, is the one who stands alongside us as a helper and advocate, just as Jesus had been in his earthly life. The Holy Spirit is not like Douglas Adam's Babel fish; it is not a clever means of translating God's voice, but the creative, guiding presence of God, who would otherwise be beyond our comprehension.

So, if Pentecost is the reversal of Babel, why is the world still so divided? The answer comes in Peter's sermon in which he begins with

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those memorable words, 'Indeed, these [men] are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only 9 o'clock in the morning' (Acts 2:15)! It seems that the words spoken by the apostles were not actually proper languages, but what is known as glossolalia, 'speaking with tongues' – a babble of sounds considered to be a sign of the Holy Spirit. The Jewish critics just thought they were drunk on 'new wine' as the sounds they uttered made no sense.

Perhaps some of you have heard people speaking in or with tongues or have spoken in tongues yourself. In some charismatic churches speaking with tongues is considered one of the essential signs of the presence of the Holy Spirit. St Paul appears to have had the gift of glossolalia, but he warned the congregation at Corinth:

For those who speak in a tongue do not speak to other people but to God; for nobody understands them, since they are speaking mysteries in the Spirit. (1 Corinthians 14:2)

But the other reason Peter gives why the world has not been fully restored at Pentecost is that the work of the Spirit is not yet completed. Peter quotes from the prophet Joel when he says that it will only be towards the end of time that God will pour out His 'Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy' (Joel 2:28).

Undoubtedly the Holy Spirit of Pentecost speaks to us often in unexpected ways and not always as we would wish. That is because the Spirit is always a *gift*. Those who have had a more intense experience of the Spirit often hope to have it repeated and at times which would suit them, but we cannot demand a gift, and that is not what receiving the Holy Spirit means. When I was at school, I prayed earnestly for the Holy Spirit to speak to me, as members of the Christian Union said he would, if I was to be a true believer.

But nothing happened. Or so I thought.

What actually happened was much more subtle: no speaking with tongues, no prophecies, no dramatic moments, but a gentle nudging in

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particular directions and moments of clarity. Sometimes a piece of music has come alive in a profound way which has spoken to me at a deep spiritual level; other times a particular conversation with a friend has brought me into the presence of the Spirit. I didn't need a Babel fish to translate actual words because the Spirit doesn't speak in that literal sense.

It wasn't until the day before my ordination at evening prayer that I became – at last - *very* aware of the sustaining presence of the Holy Spirit confirming me, as it were, in my role as priest.

I now understand why in the Queen's otherwise very public coronation, the most significant and sacred part of the ceremony- her anointing with oil by the archbishop- was not broadcast. For her anointing symbolised the presence of the Holy Spirit in her God-chosen role as monarch to be a servant to the nation. It is a role she has carried out for 70 years in good times and bad with complete faith in the continuing guidance of the Spirit. She is indeed a model of Christian Spirit-led discipleship to us all.

The world is not a perfect place and having a single language would not make it so, but we do have the gift of the Holy Spirit, so let us each pray to have discerning hearts and minds so as to become more receptive to the Spirit in whatever ways he chooses to make himself known to us and to walk hopefully and faithfully in his ways.

Michael Wilcockson



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When In Our Music God Is Glorified

1 When in our music God is glorified
And adoration leaves no room for pride
It is as though the whole creation cried
Alleluia

2 How often making music we have found
A new dimension in the world of sound
As worship moved us to a more profound
Alleluia

3 So has the Church in liturgy and song
In faith and love through centuries of wrong
Borne witness to the truth in every tongue
Alleluia

4 And did not Jesus sing a Psalm that night
When utmost evil strove against the Light
Then let us sing for whom he won the fight
Alleluia

5 Let every instrument be tuned for praise
Let all rejoice who have a voice to raise
And may God give us faith to sing always
Alleluia

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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
Which wert and art
And evermore shalt be

3 Holy holy holy
Though the darkness hide Thee
Though the eye of sinful man
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

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Firmly I Believe And Truly

1 Firmly I believe and truly
God is three and God is one
And I next acknowledge duly
Manhood taken by the Son

2 And I trust and hope must fully
In that manhood crucified
And each thought and deed unruly
Do to death for He has died

3 Simply to His grace and wholly
Light and life and strength belong
And I love supremely solely
Christ the holy Christ the strong

4 And I make this affirmation
For the love of Christ alone
Holy church is His creation
And His teachings are her own

4 Honour glory power and merit
To the God of earth and Heaven
Father Son and holy Spirit
Praise for evermore be given

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Glorify Thy Name

1 Father we love You

We worship and adore You

Glorify Thy name in all the earth

Glorify Thy name

Glorify Thy name

Glorify Thy name in all the earth

2 Jesus we love You

We worship and adore You

Glorify Thy name in all the earth

Glorify Thy name

Glorify Thy name

Glorify Thy name in all the earth

3 Spirit we love You

We worship and adore You

Glorify Thy name in all the earth

Glorify Thy name

Glorify Thy name

Glorify Thy name in all the earth

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Closing Prayer

Almighty and eternal God,

you have revealed yourself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

and live and reign in the perfect unity of love:

hold us firm in this faith,

that we may know you in all your ways

and evermore rejoice in your eternal glory,

who are three Persons yet one God,

now and for ever.

Amen.

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