

Trinity Sunday 2026 Isaiah 40. 12=17. 27 end. Matthew 28. 16-end

Coventry Cathedral

Once again, I've drawn the short straw and been rostered to preach on Trinity Sunday! Just because I'm paranoid doesn't mean that the Canon for Worship and Welcome isn't out to get me!

The theology of the Trinity is not straight forward and we can get ourselves rather tied up in knots, but Trinity Sunday invites us not so much to explain God as to stand in awe of God, and then to explore what that awe might mean for how we live in the world, because the God we encounter in the Trinity is not an abstract puzzle. The God we encounter is a living, relational, dynamic communion of love.

As we say frequently from this pulpit these days, we are living in a time when the global community feels strained and fragile. Wars and conflicts continue with devastating human cost. Whole communities are displaced. Trust between nations is thin. Within societies, divisions seem wider, conversations are harsher and patience is shorter. Truth itself feels contested, slippery and difficult to hold and yet, these verses from our reading from Isaiah invite us to lift our eyes to a wider horizon.

“Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand...Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord?”

Isaiah is speaking to a people who feel overwhelmed, anxious, uncertain about their future. And his response is not to minimise their fear but to place it within a larger reality: the breathtaking, incomprehensible greatness of God.

The nations, Isaiah says, are “like a drop from a bucket.” Not because they don't matter but because they are not ultimate. No power, no empire, no

political force defines reality in the end. Only God does. And you've heard me say this before; when nations, or movements, or ideologies, or even our own communities begin to imagine themselves as ultimate, we risk forgetting our shared humanity. We risk hardening into fear and defensiveness. We risk treating others not as neighbours, but as threats. Isaiah gently dismantles that illusion. But, and this is so important, he does not leave us feeling small and insignificant. Instead, he moves from God's greatness to God's relational tenderness.

"Why do you say... 'My way is hidden from the Lord'?" Why do you think God cannot see you? "He gives power to the faint...those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength."

This God, the one who holds the oceans and weighs the mountains, is also the one who notices the weary heart, the anxious mind, the community longing for peace. And it's here we begin to glimpse something of the Trinity. The theologian Jurgen Moltmann has much to say about the Trinity that I believe is truly helpful as we unpack these passages of scripture. He suggests that the arc of salvation history shows us that God does not exist in divine isolation but in a shared life of love in which each person lives for the others. God is, in God's very being, a divine community. The God who is beyond all things is also the God who comes among us in Christ, and the God who lives within us by the Spirit. The Trinity is not a mathematical puzzle; it is a relationship of love that reaches outward to creation, to all humanity and to each one of us.

This takes us neatly into our gospel reading from Matthew. The Great Commission. The disciples are gathered on a mountain in Galilee feeling buoyed by the events of Easter Sunday and yet Matthew still includes an

honest observation that I also find quite comforting. “When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted.”

Even for those who had witnessed the resurrection, doubt still lurks. That feels familiar, because in a world like ours, where the challenges are vast and complex, faith can feel fragile. What difference does believing in God make in the face of war, injustice, or deep division? What does discipleship look like when the problems feel so large?

The disciples stood in the face of uncertainty and doubt and Jesus meets them there, saying “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” In Jesus’ day not to Caesar, and in our own time not to Messers Trump or Putin and all the other so called ‘strong men’ in the world. The ultimate authority has been given to Jesus.

The authority of Christ is the polar opposite of the power demonstrated by the world’s political and economic elite. It’s not expressed through domination, but through self-giving love. The authority of the one who washed feet, who forgave enemies, who endured the cross. He tells his followers to “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...” He does not tell them to conquer and control all nations as some throughout history would have had us believe, but to make disciples. In other words invite people into a way of life shaped by love, mercy, justice, and reconciliation.

This calling reflects the deeply relational Trinity. It is about teaching, baptising, and nurturing community. It’s about forming people who live in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. In other words, we are called to embody the life of the Trinity in the world.

So what might that mean for us, as a congregation committed to peace and reconciliation?

Let me draw out three threads.

1. Humility in a world of competing certainties

Isaiah reminds us that no human perspective captures the whole truth. In a time when conversations quickly become polarised, when people are sorted into categories, when disagreement becomes hostility, the doctrine of the Trinity teaches us something vital: searching for truth is relational, spacious and held within God's larger life. We can hold convictions deeply while also recognising that we do not see everything clearly. This kind of humility is not weakness. It's a strength that opens space for dialogue, for listening, for learning. It allows us to meet others not as enemies to defeat, but as people to understand. Peacemaking begins here with the quiet courage to say, "I may not have the whole picture. Tell me your story."

2. Hope is rooted beyond the powers of this world

Isaiah lifts our gaze beyond nations and systems, not to dismiss them, but to place them in perspective. When we invest all our hope in political solutions alone, we can quickly fall into despair or fear when those systems fail or falter. But our hope is anchored in something deeper: the steadfast, renewing presence of God. "Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength." Waiting here is not passive resignation, it's attentive trust. It is the refusal to let fear or anger have the final word.

For those committed to peace and reconciliation, this hope is essential because the work is slow, often hidden and rarely produces quick results.

But it is sustained by the assurance that God is already at work even when we cannot see it.

3. A calling to relational, reconciling presence

If God's very being is relational, then to follow Christ is to become people of relationship and reconciliation. The mission Jesus leaves us with is deeply Trinitarian. Jesus sends his disciples into the world not with a strategy of dominance, but with a way of life that reflects the Triune nature of God. To make disciples is to invite others into a pattern of living shaped by forgiveness, hospitality, justice, and love of neighbours - even neighbours who are different, difficult, or distant. In a global context, marked by suspicion and division, this is profoundly countercultural. It gives us the responsibility of listening across differences rather than retreating into echo chambers. Of speaking truthfully, but without dehumanising those we disagree with. Of supporting initiatives that build bridges between communities. Of holding in prayer those places of conflict that have slipped out of the news and refusing to let them become invisible to us. Of practising small, everyday acts of reconciliation in our own relationships. This is incumbent on us because peace is not only negotiated at the level of nations, it is cultivated in hearts, in homes, in churches and communities. Underpinning all of this is the promise with which Jesus ends; "And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." We are not sent out alone. The life of the Trinity surrounds us, sustains us, and works through us. The Father who holds all creation, the Son who walks alongside us, the Spirit who breathes courage and compassion into our lives.

So this Trinity Sunday, and indeed everyday of our lives, we are invited not to solve the mystery of God but to live it. To live as people grounded in God's vastness and God's tenderness. To live with humility in a noisy and uncertain world. To live with hope in a time of fear. To live as agents of reconciliation in places of fracture. And to trust that even the smallest acts of peace, offered in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are gathered into God's larger work of renewing the world. Amen