

**Traditional Home service  
Sunday 13th September Trinity 14**

**OPENING PRAYER**

Almighty God,  
whose only Son has opened for us  
a new and living way into your presence:  
give us pure hearts and steadfast wills  
to worship you in spirit and in truth;  
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.

**PRAYER OF PENITENCE**

Let us return to the Lord our God and  
say to him:

**All Father, we have sinned against  
heaven and against you.  
We are not worthy to be called your  
children. We turn to you again.  
Have mercy on us, bring us back to  
yourself as those who once were dead  
but now have life through Christ our  
Lord.  
Amen.** *cf Luke 15*

**PRAISE**

Let everything be said and done in the  
name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to  
God through Jesus Christ. Sing psalms,  
hymns and sacred songs:

Let us sing to God with thankful hearts.  
Open our lips, Lord:  
**and we shall praise your name.**

*HYMN 1 (see page 2)*

**READINGS** - Exodus 14:19-31  
Romans 14  
Matthew 18:21-35

*TALK (see page 3)*

**CREED**

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son,  
our Lord, who was conceived by the  
Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the  
Father, and he will come to judge the  
living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

*Spend some time praying for our nation,  
our community and our families.*

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your  
name, your kingdom come, your will be  
done, on earth as in heaven. Give us  
today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation but deliver  
us from evil. For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours, now and for  
ever. Amen.

*HYMN 2 (see page 2)*

**CONCLUSION**

God the Holy Trinity make you strong in  
faith and love, defend you on every side,  
and guide you in truth and peace;  
and the blessing of God almighty, the  
Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be  
among you and remain with you always.  
Amen.

## HYMNS TO USE

77 Matthew Bridges & Godfrey Thring.

**CROWN HIM WITH MANY CROWNS,**  
The Lamb upon His throne;  
Hark, how the heavenly anthem drowns  
All music but its own!  
Awake, my soul, and sing  
Of Him who died for thee,  
And hail Him as thy matchless King  
Through all eternity.

Crown Him the Lord of life,  
Who triumphed o'er the grave  
And rose victorious in the strife  
For those He came to save:  
His glories now we sing,  
Who died and rose on high,  
Who died eternal life to bring  
And lives that death may die.

Crown Him the Lord of love;  
Behold His hands and side,  
Those wounds yet visible above  
In beauty glorified:  
No angel in the sky  
Can fully bear that sight,  
But downward bends His burning eye  
At mysteries so bright.

Crown Him the Lord of peace,  
Whose power a sceptre sways  
From pole to pole, that wars may cease,  
And all be prayer and praise:  
His reign shall know no end,  
And round His pierced feet  
Fair flowers of paradise extend  
Their fragrance ever sweet.

Crown Him the Lord of years,  
The Potentate of time,  
Creator of the rolling spheres,  
Ineffably sublime!  
All hail, Redeemer, hail!  
For Thou hast died for me;  
Thy praise shall never, never fail  
Throughout eternity.

381 Copyright © 1967 Sebastian Temple/  
OCP Publications/Adm. by Calamus.

### **MAKE ME A CHANNEL OF YOUR PEACE.**

Where there is hatred let me bring Your love;  
Where there is injury, Your pardon, Lord;  
And where there's doubt, true faith in You.

*Oh, Master, grant that I may never seek  
So much to be consoled as to console;  
To be understood as to understand;  
To be loved as to love with all my soul.*

Make me a channel of Your peace.  
Where there's despair in life let me bring hope;  
Where there is darkness, only light;  
And where there's sadness, ever joy.

Make me a channel of Your peace.  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
In giving to all men that we receive,  
And in dying that we're born to eternal life.

13th Sep 2020 Revd Adrian Morton

Romans 14:1-12 - 'Don't judge one another'

I was tempted to call this talk "Thank God for Broccoli"!

Which is the way The Message version translates the latter part of verse 6.

"Thank God for Broccoli"!

In this Romans chapter, Paul is addressing a sticky issue.

Torah (the OT law) observant Christians and nonobservant Gentile Christians were not getting on.

Now this church was a born again, Spirit filled church.  
And the issue wasn't about faith in Christ per se.

It was more how that faith works out in practice.  
How faith is applied to everyday decisions.

And the argument, the division was about whether certain days were holy, or whether you could eat all foods or only certain foods.

One of the things I like about the Church of England.  
Is that you have all sorts of people in a church family.

There will be those mature in faith, those who are new to faith, and those who are not sure they have faith yet.

There are those who are fully signed up members of 'Spirit filled' club!

Who are excited about the things of the Spirit and are thirsty to know more.

There are those who are dipping their toe into all that and treading carefully.

And there are those who think it's all a bit weird and extreme but hopefully stay in the family because they have a conviction to worship Jesus.  
And whilst this all gives several challenges. I quite like it... I quite like the mess of all that!

But it does mean we have to work hard to get on together.

It means we have to have a 'patient endurance' to move together in unity.

Which is where Paul's argument is ultimately leading to.

A unity which is so precious, I believe to God.

So whilst these arguments about holy days and food may not be directly relevant for us today.

What Paul was doing and trying to get these Christians to understand is very relevant for us today.

He was saying it's ok to have strong convictions.  
It's good to have strong convictions.

You may even be theologically correct.  
And one side was in this passage - It's clear that God cares nothing at all about observance.

But more important than whether you have strong convictions.  
More important even that you are theologically correct.

Is that you are acting in love for one another.

What Paul didn't like was that Christians were being critical of one another, judging one another or being scornful to one another.

Depending on the convictions they held.

Being judgmental, I think, is a sneaky sin.

Other stuff, and there are various lists we could look at, are just more obvious.

If we've been caught out by sexual sin, or drunkenness, it's more obvious.

Whereas being judgemental sneaks up on us.

And is less obvious.

We can hide it well.

Not to God .. but to others.

And it can show itself when we are just cooler towards other people.  
We may not say anything but we act differently towards those we are judging.

Its a sneaky sin.

I'm sure we've all done it, looking at someone behaving in a way we never would, and sneakily the voice of judgement comes in: "What are they even thinking? How could they do such a thing?"

And before we know it, we've given that voice a place in our hearts, opened a door for it to breed hate and self-righteousness in our hearts.

I know sadly, I have partnered with that voice in this way.

And you know, and I want to say this respectively, I think those of us who have lived the Christian life a while. Those of us who have experienced, maybe many things of God. Who may have long held beliefs of how things should be.

It's a particular temptation to look down in judgement on those who are maybe new to faith.

Or come from a different tradition.

Or to judge those who are not behaving as we think they ought.

And I'm speaking about other born again Christians.

It says in Romans 14:1

"Remember, they have their own history to deal with."

Which of course is right.  
We don't know anyone's history.  
And even if we did, we couldn't understand it because we haven't lived it.

So we are in no position to judge anyone.  
Because we have never walked in the shoes of anyone.

Nigel spoke so well last week about being Christ-like.

And what is meant by losing your life to gain it.

Well, I wonder whether part of the way that works itself out is in this.

That we lose our right to judge.  
We lose our right to be critical.  
We lose our right to insist on our correct theology.

For the sake of loving our brother and sister in Christ.

We become more concerned about their faith than our need to be right.

<I became a born again Christian in a small Anglican village church in Norfolk.

It was a church going through charismatic revival really.

It's a long story, but in the process, the vicar moved the congregation out of the traditional building into a village hall, then into their own purpose built worship centre.

One of my memories of that time is hearing about a little old lady.

Who had moved from the traditional building into the new style service.

She said it was a bit loud, not really her style at all.

But she also felt love in the place.  
That was what kept her coming.

>

We are New Covenant people.  
Where mercy triumphs over judgement.

I said at the beginning Paul's argument is leading towards Romans 15:5-7:

*May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

We learn in this passage that we belong to God.

That each of us will answer to him as to how we followed our own convictions.

But ultimately our lives are to glorify God.

Yes, individually, in whatever we do....

We are to do for His sake...

Whether that is eating steak or broccoli.

But the way we glorify God corporately, as a church family together.

Is to have on display a unity amongst us.

That we have one mind and one voice.

In this Covid season, where guidelines & restrictions are ever changing.

Where many of us will have different opinions on whether to meet or not on a Sunday.

On what's the new normal.

On what are the new opportunities we should be grasping as a church.

We will have strong but differing convictions. We may believe we are theologically correct.

And all this gives plenty of opportunity to fall out, to disagree...

But let's fight for unity.

Let's work hard to keep together as a church family.

And above all, let's love one another deeply.

Amen.