

Sunday Service ~ July 27, 2025

Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church

Welcome & Prayer

Good morning and welcome to our interactive service. As we gather together today, it is good to be reminded of how great and awesome our God is. For as it says in Psalm 145: *“Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom. One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts. They will speak of the glorious splendour of your majesty.”* Let us pray.

Our Heavenly Father, You are our God, the almighty King. We marvel at your splendour and extol your wondrous name for ever and ever. You are most worthy of all praise, and your greatness is beyond comprehension. You are the creator, and the Lord of all. By your Word you created the heavens and the earth, the land and the sea, and everything in between. And you created us, and you continue to sustain us, and everything occurs according to your will. For you are majestic and infinite, your power is limitless, and you judge the world in righteousness and demand perfection. Yet you are caring and compassionate, loving, merciful and forgiving. And as we come before you today, we do so with trepidation and humility.

For we know that we have fallen short of your expectations. We forget about you, we rely on our own strengths, and don't acknowledge your blessings and all that you do for us. We have so much to be forgiven for. So, we ask for your forgiveness. We ask that you help us to focus on you: that we will be thankful for everything that you have given us, and continue to provide to us. And we ask that as we worship you today, that you will help us to set aside any distractions, and that we will focus on you, so that we can give you the honour and glory that you deserve. Amen.

Song – 10,000 reasons

[10,000 Reasons \(Bless the Lord o my soul \) - Matt Redman \(with Lyrics\) - YouTube](#)

Chorus Bless the Lord O my soul

O my soul

Worship His Holy name

Sing like never before

O my soul

I'll worship Your Holy name

2. You're rich in love

And You're slow to anger

Your name is great

And Your heart is kind

For all Your goodness

I will keep on singing

Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find

1. The sun comes up

It's a new day dawning

It's time to sing Your song again

Whatever may pass

And whatever lies before me

Let me be singing

When the evening comes

3. And on that day

When my strength is failing

The end draws near and my time has come

Still my soul will

Sing your praise unending

Ten thousand years

And then for evermore.

Bible Reading – Isaiah 40:9-31 (NIV)

“Listen to me, Jacob, Israel, whom I have called: I am he; I am the first and I am the last. ¹³ My own hand laid the foundations of the earth, and my right hand spread out the heavens; when I summon them, they all stand up together. ¹⁴ “Come together, all of you, and listen: Which of the idols has foretold these things? The LORD’s chosen ally will carry out his purpose against Babylon; his arm will be against the Babylonians. ¹⁵ I, even I, have spoken; yes, I have called him. I will bring him, and he will succeed in his mission ¹⁶ “Come

near me and listen to this: "From the first announcement I have not spoken in secret; at the time it happens, I am there." And now the Sovereign LORD has sent me, endowed with his Spirit."

Announcements

Focus for Month: Hospitality. *"Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling."* (1 Peter 4:8-9) One way we show our love for one another is by offering each other hospitality. Conversely one way we grow in our love for one another is to get to know others deeply which is also done through hospitality! So let's pray for a greater love for one another and let's put that prayer into action by being hospitable to one another.

Kids Church Kids Church Update. Families, please note that from term 3 (27/7) children will begin the service with their families in church. After the kids talk, children will be walked out together for their Kids Church program at the cottage. They will be brought back to church at the end of the program to rejoin you. Thank you for partnering with us as we help our kids grow in faith!

New City Catechism: Question 31. The Apostles' Creed. We believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and 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, & was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. We 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. **Bible Passage: Jude 3.** I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

Sermon Series for Term 3 (AM Services only). Stephen starts a new sermon series in the morning, entitled, "God is...",

3.8	God is holy	Isaiah 6:1-7
10.8	God is good	Psalms 145:8-21
17.8	God is love	1 John 4:7-12

Stephen is away. Stephen is speaking this weekend at the Parkes Presbyterian church annual camp. He should be back later on tonight ready to be at work tomorrow!

Annual Leave. Audric and Elise and the family will be back from holidays tomorrow.

JOY. All welcome Friday 10-11am, 1st August @ 16 footers.

Offerings for June.

Budget offerings for June	\$37,583
Actual Offerings for June	\$46,241
Surplus for June	\$ 8,658
Surplus for Jan-Jun 2025	\$ 727

The Church is so thankful for the generous and sacrificial support it receives for our regular attenders. This is a critical year financially for us with the Charlestown redevelopment taking place and it is wonderful that half way through the year we are meeting budget, for if this continues it gives us the best chance to meet our current expenses and help start paying off the borrowings for our redevelopment.

Scots Kirk (Women) (If room). Games and Trivia with Afternoon Tea. 16th August 2-pm. RSVP by 1st August 0421 643 350 (Kathy)

Annual SRE Fundraiser Concert (if room). Saturday 9th August from 2pm at the Willows Uniting Church, Warners Bay. \$20 Donation. Includes a delicious afternoon tea. Featuring performances by Macquarie Life choir, Vocal Company, Maureen O'Brien, Jennie Wilton, Geoffrey Hicks and Hannah gibbons (who was part of our congregation before going over to support Scots Kirk Hamilton). More details Paul 0411 236 047

The John Drama, Aug 14-16: (if room) An immersive theatre-in-the-round presentation of the Gospel of John, performed by Newcastle Christian Students. Each evening includes the 90-minute drama followed by a light supper. Tickets are \$5 & can be purchased from www.newcastlechristianstudents.org/john-drama/.

Pastoral Prayer

Pray for Mexico (Population 129 million, Christians 123 million). Christians face intimidation and abuse from gangs and drug cartels. That God protects His people in areas with drug cartels and criminal gangs. For God to continue drawing indigenous communities to Himself.

For God to strengthen those preaching the Bible as they help build Jesus' Kingdom.

Pray for Indigenous Ministries. That lives would be transformed as a result of the Bible being translated into various Indigenous languages. Pray for Anne Spragg as she settles into Bible translation ministry in the Northern Territory. Pray for perseverance for Rick and Kayleen Manton as they serve at Mount Druitt. For Christians in Indigenous communities — that they would be salt and light wherever God has placed them. That God would raise up young men and women to serve the Indigenous Church as strong, gospel-focused leaders in their particular locations.

Pray for Applebys (Pioneers, IndoChina) Please pray for the Applebys currently in Australia for a few weeks visiting family: for the team in Cambodia in their absence and for Gilbert's leading of the team on return to Phnom Penh on 2/8.

Scots Kirk Hamilton. Give thanks for the continued growth in numbers attending Scots Kirk morning service, for new people visiting the service regularly and for the positive response to the new format of Alive at 5, including from several non-Christians. Please pray for David's health which has not been great the last few weeks, for the continued development of Alive at 5 as they work their way through Romans and for more workers to help with the work at the Kirk. Please pray that the Lord would send suitable people to be new Elders to form a Kirk Session.

Pray that we would all grow in faith, hope and love.

Song – This I believe <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNiYUPsHgls>

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Our Father everlasting | Bridge |
| The all-creating One | I believe in You |
| God Almighty | I believe You rose again |
| Through your Holy Spirit | I believe that Jesus Christ is Lord |
| Conceiving Christ the Son | (Repeat) |
| Jesus our Saviour | |
|
I believe in God our Father | Chorus |
| I believe in Christ the Son | |
| I believe in the Holy Spirit | 3. I believe in life eternal |
| Our God is three in One | I believe in the virgin birth |
| I believe in the resurrection | I believe in the saints' communion |
| That we will rise again | And in Your Holy Church |
| For I believe in the Name of Jesus | I believe in the resurrection |
| (In the name o' Lord) | When Jesus comes again |
| | For I believe in the Name of Jesus |
|
2. Our Judge and our Defender | |
| Suffered and crucified | Chorus |
| Forgiveness is in You | |
| Descended into darkness | |
| You rose in glorious light | |
| Forever seated high | Chorus |

Bible Reading – John 14:15-31 (NIV)

¹⁵ "If you love me, keep my commands. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to

help you and be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹ Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.” ²² Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?” ²³ Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. ²⁴ Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me. ²⁵ “All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. ²⁸ “You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. ³⁰ I will not say much more to you, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold over me, ³¹ but he comes so that the world may learn that I love the Father and do exactly what my Father has commanded me.”

Sermon – God is ... Trinity! (John H)

Sermon link: <https://youtu.be/utNGWDJC50Y>

Last week Stephen started a new sermon series looking at who God is, starting with his sermon titled “God is — Incomparable”. This week we are looking at “God is — Trinity”.

A couple of weeks ago as I was working on this sermon, I was thinking about how to start it and what sort of introduction it should have. I had a few ideas and I was writing them down, but I wasn’t convinced, and then suddenly — ding, dong, the doorbell rang.

SLIDE 1

As I walked towards the front door and looked through the glass panel, I could see the shadows of two people standing there. I knew straight away who they would be, and I was right — two Jehovah Witness ladies. They quickly launched into their task and quoted a Bible verse they had prepared earlier on their phone. To cut a longer story short, in the end I told them that as they rang my doorbell, I was working on a sermon about the Trinity I would be preaching at the Presbyterian church I attend.

The elder of the two Jehovah Witness ladies immediately started moving away from the door. From a book about the JW’s, written by an ex-JW, I understand that they are trained not to engage with Christians if the conversation moves too far away from their script and from their views of God (Jehovah) and the Bible. So, they didn’t ask me what I believe about the Trinity and what I was going to preach, which, of course, is quite different to their views.

As I went back to my desk and contemplated this encounter at my front door, it made me wonder if we Christians can be a bit the same. Do we avoid thinking about, reading about and talking about difficult theology, doctrines, and passages of the Bible that we fully understand or don’t like or even totally agree with?

There is no doubt that the Trinity, for example, is a difficult teaching about God. But just because it’s difficult doesn’t mean we shouldn’t dig deep into what God has revealed about himself so that we can

know him in the greatest possible way that is humanly available to us, especially given that, as Christians, we have the Holy Spirit to help us to do it.

So today we are looking at “God is — Trinity” and to help us do this, I have framed the sermon around two questions:

SLIDE 2 – Questions

1. **What** do we know about the Trinity? Or to say this another way, what can we know about God as a Trinity? We’ll look at this from the perspective of Analogies, Creeds and the Bible
2. **Why** is knowing about the Trinity and knowing the Trinity so important? And I’m going to suggest that knowing and understanding the Trinity is vitally important for at least three areas of our Christian Walk: in our worship of God, in our discipleship under God, and in our relationship with God.

Firstly: What do we know about the Trinity? Basically, when we say we believe in the Trinity, we are saying that we believe that God is One God in Three Persons; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And to start we’ll look at ways people have tried to explain the mysterious nature of the Trinity through analogies.

SLIDE 3 - Analogies

These analogies about the Trinity include, for example; the three-leaf clover; or H₂O/water which can be a liquid, a gas as steam, and as solid as ice; or an egg which has a shell, a yoke and the egg-white; or an actor who wears various masks to play various roles in a play.

Unfortunately, I don’t have time to explain these in detail other than to say that, while these and other analogies of the Trinity do say something correct about the Trinity, they also say something that is wrong about the Trinity and can be misleading. And the reason for this is because there is nothing in all creation that is similar to the nature and essence of God. There is no other thing or being that can be completely one and also three at the same time, in the same way God is. As Stephen preached last week — God is incomparable. And these analogies are not only misleading, but they also contain elements of heresy or false teaching, so we really shouldn’t use them. Some of these heresies persist today, including in the beliefs of the Jehovah Witnesses.

And because these heresies attempted to infiltrate the early church, the church wrote down its core beliefs in the form of creeds.

SLIDE 4 - Athanasian Creed

When we think about important creeds of the church we typically think of the Apostle’s Creed and the Nicene Creed, which acknowledge our belief in one God in Three Persons; the Father Almighty, our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit. But there’s another creed that was specifically written to acknowledge and articulate the attributes of the Trinity, called the Athanasian Creed.

The Athanasian Creed is a very clear affirmation of trinitarian doctrine and originated sometime between 4th and 6th centuries. It is still used in Protestant and Catholic churches today. I’ve included just an extract from it because it’s fairly long. It says:

We, of the Catholic (universal, worldwide Christian) Faith, believe:

3. That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity;
4. Neither confounding [*or blending*] the Persons [*meaning they are three Persons*]: nor dividing the Substance [*or essence, meaning they are still One Being. So within the Trinity there is unity of one and diversity of three*].
5. For there is one Person of the Father: another of the Son: and another of the Holy Spirit.
6. But the Godhead [i.e. Trinity] of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, is all one: the Glory equal, the Majesty coeternal.
7. Such as the Father is; such is the Son; and such is the Holy Spirit.

8. The Father uncreated: the Son uncreated: and the Holy Spirit uncreated ...
10. The Father eternal: the Son eternal: and the Holy Spirit eternal.
11. And yet they are not three eternals: but one eternal.

This formula of saying that the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit have the same divine characteristic, in this case, they are each eternal but are not three eternals; is repeated three more times to describe that they are all Almighty, they are all God, they are all Lord; but they are not three Almighties, not three Gods, and not three Lords (lines 13-18). The creed continues ...

27. So that in all things: the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity, is to be worshipped.
28. He [or she] that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity. (*quoted from Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology*)

The creed states that God is both united as one in substance or essence, and also diverse in their personhood, which leads to a diversity in roles, which we will look at in a minute.

The creeds are important and useful because they make what the Bible says about God and the Trinity more accessible to us and they provide clarity and conciseness, which is useful because the truths about the Trinity are spread throughout the whole Bible. The creeds bring it all together for us so it's good for us to read them and be familiar with what they say. But they do not replace the Bible. The Bible is the only infallible source of information about God and the Trinity.

When we go to the Bible, we have to note that the word "Trinity" is not used in it. The word "Trinity" was first created and used by the theologian Tertullian in the 2nd century. Tertullian simply looked at all the evidence in the Bible and realised that the word "Trinity" was a good way to describe and explain what the Bible said about God, or to put it more correctly, how God had revealed himself as Trinity through the Bible.

So, what does the Bible say about the Trinity? And we need to note that God's revelation of himself is what is called a 'progressive revelation'; that is, God revealed himself over time and in ways that could be reasonably understood by humans as their experience of God grew; and as each layer of his being and character were revealed, he could then add more to the fuller revelation of himself.

SLIDE 5 - The Bible 1

Let's start in the Old Testament.

- Deuteronomy 6:4-5 says, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."
- In Isaiah 45:5 God said, "I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God."

So our God is God alone and God is One. But God also revealed that he is more than one person while still being one God.

- For example, in Genesis 1:26 God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."
- In Genesis 3:22, after Adam and Eve had sinned, God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil."
- In Genesis 11:7, in response to the people's desire to build the Tower of Babel, God said, "Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech."
- And when God called the prophet Isaiah, he said, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (Isaiah 6:8).

In these verses God is not talking to angels, who are, after all, created beings. He is talking to “other persons” who are equal in divinity with himself, including being able to create. He is, in fact, to quote from Tim Chester’s “Delighting in the Trinity” — “talking within himself”, within the Godhead, within the Trinity, within the Three Persons.

Later, God revealed that he is not only more than one person in one God, but that he is three persons in one God. For example, Isaiah chapter 42 introduces the suffering servant, who we know as Jesus, the Son of God. And then in Isaiah 48:16 this suffering servant, when speaking of what would come to pass in the future, said, “And now the Lord God has sent me, and his Spirit.” Jesus was saying, in the Old Testament, “And now God the Father has sent God the Son and God the Holy Spirit” (ESVSB). And we know from John 3:16 that the Father did send his Son and, from Acts 2:1-4 we know that he also sent the Holy Spirit.

In the New Testament God confirmed that he is One God in Three Persons during the baptism of Jesus. In Matthew 3:16-17 we read, ‘And when **Jesus** was baptised, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the **Spirit** of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a **voice** from heaven said, “This is my beloved **Son**, with whom I am well pleased.”’ The Father’s voice from heaven declared that he is pleased with his beloved Son as the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in his baptism.

And then at the end of his ministry, following his death and resurrection, and before his ascension back to heaven, in Matthew 28:19, Jesus said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the **Father** and of the **Son** and of the **Holy Spirit**.” To be baptised in the name of the One True God, a person must be baptised in the name of the Three Persons of the One True God; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

SLIDE 6 - The Bible 2

This brings us to our reading from John 14:15-31, which I will refer to but not read through again. This passage is really the beginning of the explicit revelation of the Trinity in the Bible, but to get a fuller picture of the Trinity from the lips of Jesus, we need to read John chapters 14 to 17, where Jesus talks extensively about the relationships between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and their distinct roles. If you want to get a good understanding of the Trinity from God’s perspective, then reading and studying these four chapters is quite possibly the best place to start.

But focussing on our passage today, in John 14 verses 24 and 31, Jesus talked about the Father sending him and him doing the Father’s will, and in verses 16 and 26 Jesus talked about the sending of the Holy Spirit. The Father sends; and the Son and Holy Spirit respond to the Father by coming to do their part in their agreed mission of salvation and sanctification.

These verses show us that the Trinity has agreed within themselves to take on different roles, which they do in creation, salvation and sanctification. To quote from the ESV Study Bible, “The uniform pattern of Scripture is that the Father plans, directs, and sends; the Son is sent by the Father and is subject to the Father’s authority and obedient to the Father’s will; and both Father and Son direct and send the Spirit, who carries out the will of both.”

SLIDE 7 - The Bible 3

With regard to these different roles that the Trinity take on, Tara-Leigh Cobble wrote in “The Joy of The Trinity”, that for all eternity the Father, Son and Holy Spirit have always had certain, agreed roles including in creation and in Jesus’ baptism which we looked at earlier. She writes, “In both [these] events, God the Father was speaking; God the Son was doing; and God the Spirit acted as a hovering seal of approval, enlivening the work. How Beautiful! And they use the same pattern in our salvation. God the Father calls us into his family (John 6:37-39); God the Son secures our salvation through His finished work on the cross (John 19:28-30); God the Spirit breathes new life into us and is the seal of our salvation (Ephesians 1:13-14)

... Each Person of the Trinity played a unique role in our creation, salvation and restoration. The Father authored our salvation; the Son accomplished it, and the Spirit applied it ... Salvation starts with God [the Father], is achieved by God [the Son] and is applied by God [the Holy Spirit]."

And we need to remember that the relationships on which these roles are based has existed for all eternity. For example, the Father and the Son have, for all eternity, been in a Father and Son relationship. The Father has always been fatherly toward the Son, and vice versa.

When Jesus taught his disciples to pray the words, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name" (Matthew 6:9) he wasn't introducing a new title for his Father, or describing a new relationship between them; he was simply and profoundly inviting us to share and enjoy a Father-child relationship that he has always had with his Father. John would later write in his first letter, "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are" (1 John 3:1). And Paul wrote in Romans 8:16-17, "The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him." And being adopted as children of God, is a Trinitarian activity; the Father's love is poured out, the Son makes our redemption and relationship with God possible through his suffering on the cross, and the Holy Spirit bears witness within us that we are adopted as children of God. How beautiful!

Ok, we have looked at what we know about the Trinity, but we need to move on and look at our second question: **Why** is knowing about and knowing the Trinity so important? And to answer this I'll look at it from how it affects our worship of God, our discipleship under God, and our relationship with God.

SLIDE 8 - Worship

Firstly, regarding **worship**. As the Athanasian Creed states, "So that in all things: the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity, is to be worshipped. He [or she] that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity." The creed is a reminder and a warning. We need to have our thinking about God right when we worship him, because we can get it wrong.

Quoting again from Tara-Leigh Cobble's "The Joy of the Trinity", "If we prefer worshipping the version of [God] we've imagined instead of getting to know who He really is ... we'd be guilty of laziness at best ... [and] idolatry at worst."

And R. C. Sproul says the same thing this way, "If the religion we embrace and practice [even if that is Christianity] is based on a distorted, false view of God, then it is idolatry." (Truths We Confess)

To worship the wrong idea of God is, in effect, to worship an idol; so we must know the God who is, and we must worship the knowable God, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. "An understanding of the Trinity provides a better understanding of the God we worship, consequently, our worship can be directed to the God who is." (ESV Study Bible)

Why is knowing the Trinity so important? Because we need to know and worship our God as Trinity; as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

SLIDE 9 - Discipleship

Secondly, knowing the Trinity is also important for our **discipleship** because the three persons of the Trinity are involved in our discipleship, in our sanctification, in our ongoing growth and maturity as Christians. Jesus told his disciples, in John 14 verses 15, 21, 23-24 and 26, that the disciples' relationship with him must not only be based on love, but it required them to obey his commandments and to listen to the Holy Spirit.

We need to obey Jesus' commandments, which he received from the Father, and which the Holy Spirit will teach, guide & reveal to us as we engage with the Word of God. It's important to understand & acknowledge the role of the Trinity in our discipleship and sanctification and let them do their work within us.

SLIDE 10 - Relationship

Worship, discipleship and thirdly, knowing the Trinity is also important for our **relationship** with God and our relationships with each other.

And our relationships with God and with each other are based on the relationship the Trinity have with each other as persons of God, which is one of pure love for each other. God is love (1 John 4:8, 16). So, when God calls us into relationship with himself and with each other as brothers and sisters in him, our relationships are, or should be, ones of love for God and for each other. As John wrote in his first letter, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God ... God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him [and her]." (1 John 4:7, 16)

God knows how to be in a loving relationship and he extends the relationship of love he has within the Trinity to us. And it's fair to say that one of the reasons God created us in the first place is that he wants to share the relationship of love he has within the Trinity with us.

And the model of the Church is based on the nature and relationship within the Trinity; a relationship of love, and of unity and diversity. So, the church is the place where we are known by our love, and where we are united in our love and faith, and where we have diverse roles according to God's will and our gifting.

Knowing and understanding the Trinity is important for our relationships with God, with each other and within the local and wider Church.

And because we worship the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit; and our discipleship is empowered by the Trinity, and our relationship is with the Trinity; we can also pray to the Trinity: to God the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Most of our prayers will be directed to the Father, in the name of the Son, and with the help of the Holy Spirit. But we can pray directly to Jesus, because he is God — prayers of thanksgiving and gratitude and love for what he has done for us, dying on the cross in our place for the forgiveness of our sins.

And we can pray directly to the Holy Spirit, because he is God — asking him to guide us and to teach us the truths from the Bible, to produce the fruit of the Spirit in us, and to reveal our spiritual gifts to us so that we can serve him in the world and in the church.

And so, with this in mind, I want to finish with a prayer by John Stott, the famous English pastor and theologian, a prayer he prayed each day. (*quoted from Langham Partnership*)

SLIDE 11 - Prayer

"Holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, three persons in one God, have mercy on me.
Almighty God, Creator and sustainer of the universe, I worship you.
Lord Jesus Christ, Saviour and Lord of the world, I worship you.
Holy Spirit, Sanctifier of the people of God, I worship you.

Heavenly Father, I pray this day I may live in your presence and please you more and more.
Lord Jesus, I pray this day I may take up my cross and follow you.

Holy Spirit, I pray this day you will fill me with yourself and cause your fruit to ripen in my life – Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-control.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now and shall be forever, Amen.”

Song – King of Kings <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Of5lcFWiEpg>

1. In the darkness we were waiting
Without hope, without light
'Til from Heaven You came running
There was mercy in Your eyes
To fulfill the law and prophets
To a virgin came the word
From a throne of endless glory
To a cradle in the dirt

Chorus:

Praise the Father, praise the Son
Praise the Spirit, three in one
God of glory, Majesty
Praise forever to the King of Kings

2. To reveal the kingdom coming
And to reconcile the lost
To redeem the whole creation
You did not despise the cross
For even in your suffering
You saw to the other side
Knowing this was our salvation
Jesus for our sake you died

Chorus

3. And the morning that You rose
All of Heaven held its breath
'Til that stone was moved for good
For the Lamb had conquered death
And the dead rose from their tombs
And the angels stood in awe
For the souls of all who'd come
To the Father are restored
4. And the church of Christ was born
Then the Spirit lit the flame
Now this gospel truth of old
Shall not kneel, shall not faint
By His blood and in His name
In His freedom I am free
For the love of Jesus Christ
Who has resurrected me

Chorus

Benediction Jesus said, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father & he will give you another Helper ... the Holy Spirit ... Go therefore & make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Help us this day to know and worship you — our Father; our Lord and Saviour, Jesus; and our guide and sanctifier, Holy Spirit. Amen