



THEME

WHAT WE BELIEVE and EXPERIENCE ABOUT GOD MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Have a printed copy of this service for the Zoom meeting on Sunday 7th at 10am

Psalm 8

1 O LORD, our LORD, your majestic name fills the earth!

Your glory is higher than the heavens.

2 You have taught children and infants to tell of your strength,
silencing your enemies and all who oppose you.

3 When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers—
the moon and the stars you set in place—

4 what are mere mortals that you should think about them,
human beings that you should care for them?

5 Yet you made them only a little lower than God
and crowned them with glory and honour.

6 You gave them charge of everything you made,
putting all things under their authority—

7 the flocks and the herds and all the wild animals,

8 the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea,
and everything that swims the ocean currents.

9 O LORD, our LORD, your majestic name fills the earth!

**YOU MAY BE INVITED TO SAY TOGETHER OUT LOUD THE FOLLOWING AFFIRMATION
FROM AFRICA**

AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH FOR TRINITY SUNDAY

*I believe in the Spirit of God that swept over the face of the deep and created the heavens
and the earth. I believe this same Spirit swept over the waters of the Middle Passage and*

*created the will to live deep in the hearts of our (African) (WORLD)ancestors.
By God's Spirit did we come to know that we were created by God and belonged to God,
even in the days of chattel slavery.*

I believe in the Spirit of God, the Almighty Creator.

*I believe in the grace and love of the Lord Jesus Christ, which has kept us as a people
through racism, Jim Crow, lynchings, discrimination, disenfranchisement, and post-
affirmative action.*

*I believe the same Jesus who suffered on the cross and who equipped the apostles with
grace in their persecution suffers with us in our tribulations and provides grace for every
situation.*

*I know that Jesus is walking with us even now, and that God knows us no matter the
challenge.*

I believe in the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe in the Holy Spirit and the sweet communion of saints She creates.

*I believe that by the Holy Spirit our ancestors were empowered to found Sunday schools,
churches, learning centers, and homes that have given us the foundation for the abundant
living we have been promised.*

*By the Holy Spirit, we are empowered to live in community with one another, with love
and peace.*

I believe in the power of the Holy Spirit.

*I believe in the Triune God, who has covered our past, present, and future with grace,
hope, and love.*

*May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy
Spirit be with us, now, and forevermore. Amen.*

Written by Marilyn E. Thornton, The Africana Worship Book: Year A © 2006

Prayer of Adoration and confession

LORD We are seeing your creation being reshaped by man's activity.
We in Australia have seen just in this least year. Cyclones, drought, flood, fire, pandemic,
continued exploitation and poverty among the disadvantaged and now recession that will
affect those with savings, high unemployment and poverty. Lord help us!

In the past whenever any one of these things individually happened your prophets called the
people to a time of prayer and repentance.

So we come before you this morning asking your forgiveness ,for us, as your people, for our sinfulness and waywardness.

(Silence for mediation)

Open our eyes , O Lord, that we may see the needs of others;

Many: Open our ears that we may hear their cries;

One: Open our hearts, O Lord, so that they need not be without succor;

Many: Let us not be afraid to defend the weak because of the anger of the strong, nor afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the rich.

One: Show us where fear and prejudice blind us. Spirit of the Living God, open our eyes.

Lord hear our prayer.

JESUS told us that when we confess our sins we can Know “we are forgiven.”

Hymn 671 TIS

Refrain

Made in God’s likeness, moved by the Spirit, called to create a new world for the Lord, called to create a new world for the Lord

Bible readings:

2Corinthians 13:11-13 ¹¹ Finally, brothers,^[a] rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another,^[b] agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.¹² Greet one another with a holy kiss. ¹³ All the saints greet you.

Matthew 28:16-20. ¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in^{td} the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Ideas from the readings.

How can you still believe in God when all this stuff is happening around the world? The environment is going to pack. Democracies appear to be collapsing. Inequalities of money and power among peoples are increasing?

I feel scared too. The short answer to give is.

Which part of all that is God in control of? Explore the depth of the anxiety in the question? But it is best to get around to saying, the readings today indicate how we can we can know God is real . God is real, present and in control and because I know Him and I am in a relationship with him. **I don't have to worry.**

Paul and Jesus are indicating this when he mentions the three aspects of God whereby we can know him.

The idea of the trinity for me is a means whereby I can understand, experience or know God in at least 3 different ways.

What has your experience been of the trinity: I have experienced YAHWEY as:

God the Father; Jesus the Son; The Holy Spirit

You may have had a separate event, or experience of each aspect of God's nature or it may have been a unique event of the whole trinity.

It is important that we all can talk about that experience because of the way society is today. We have to be able to give reason for the HOPE that is in us. The world is looking for meaning and purpose. The time is right. Be prepared !

I would like you to think about your experiences of God.

It may help to think chronologically.

For example my experiences include:

Walking to get the cows and calves to lock up the calves overnight so Dad could milk the mothers in the morning. I was walking through the swamp looking at the sunset.. we live on a treeless plain and have magnificent horizons my heart was full of wonder. God is a creator. He loves me. I was (9, 10 year old)

Confirmation was a significant spiritual experience for me...How? ... with the laying on of hands by the Anglican Bishop I felt a warmth that made my skin prickle.(I felt the presence of God. I was !2 year old) I felt anointed by God for a purpose.

You may be able to think of the significant people who made you aware of your need for a

commitment. I remember my scripture union camp leader suggested 'I needed to make a public commitment' 'When that happened I became bolder. In my faith, bolder about talking about my faith. I became a team leader. I was 15yr old

Do you remember your first public statement about being a Christian.

I was asked to preach my first sermon at the Methodist church in Forbes. I felt God gave me the words to say. I spoke about my relationship with Jesus and how he was involved in all my activities on the farm and in the community. I was (22yrs old)

I was being asked to change my career. Was this God's will? I asked God to give me proof he would be with me....He gave me the Holy spirit in a special way. I felt partnered, empowered and went into full time ministry I was (42yrs old)

I was rostered on to preach this Sunday. 'What do you want me to say God?'

'Why have you been writing about in your autobiography Ross? what I have I been showing you about myself across the world?' SoYou get this message this morning. I am 75years old

How has t your experience of the Trinity hanged the way you live your life?

For 3 years I worked on putting together a series of studies about 'Jesus Conversations' when I was with the Board of Mission of the Uniting Church. As part of that program I interviewed 38 very different ordinary people, only a few ministers, across NSW to share their God experience. They all had 5 minutes to prepare their thoughts. I recorded them in all sorts of places. This study and DVD was sent to over 400 congregations.

These 38 people saw Jesus reveal himself in a variety of ways:

'a voice; in my thoughts; in a feeling of love; as a presence; a feeling of euphoria; in the earth as something I could feel and touch; in a miraculous answer.; the alignment of circumstances;'

I invite you to listen to just a few of those stories now.

**Have you had a personal
experience with Jesus?**



I have told you what my experiences have been but that is no use to you if someone asks you .
'What about your experience? Do you know God like that?'

You can be more convincing and defend your own experience better than you can mine.

Evangelism, telling people about Jesus, is actually a spiritual task, so we need to be protected and empowered. to share our experiences. Remember Jesus said 'I will give you the words to say' Matt. 10:19 'I will be with you always' Matt 28

As the churches decline because of Covid 19 It is being predicted, 1/3 of all USA major denominations will probably close because of finances.

How can you answer the statement that may come from your acquaintances or friends 'religion is a thing of the past . It has no relevance to me.to us as a society'

We can begin by saying:

'Well my experience is that **the Hope of the gospel gives you a power to understand and face the pain and reality of life. It shows a way of life that can transform community life. It shows a way to find meaning and direction in my life and also for how community can live** .But My story and experience is.....

The people in the Jesus conversations DVD have some thoughtful comments.

'Pick up on topics that give you an opportunity to share; You don't always have to say something, you can sometimes say more just ,by doing: make people feel loved for who they are' in the way you answer and listen to them.

Ordinary people have a wonderful opportunity in these troubled times to excite curiosity wonder and awe by our story telling about the hope and the reality of His presence our God gives us.

Hymn TIS 40

Verse 1

**O Breath of Life come sweeping through us
Revive Your church with life and power
O Breath of Life come cleanse renew us
And fit Your church to meet this hour**

Chorus

**O Breath of Love come breathe within
Renewing thought and will and heart
Come love of Christ afresh to win
Revive Your church in every part**

**O wind of God Come bend us break us
Till humbly we confess our need
Then in your tenderness remake us
Revive restore for this we plead**

Verse 3

**Revive us Lord is zeal abating
While harvest fields are vast and ripe
Revive us Lord the world is waiting
Equip Your church to spread the light**

CCLI Song # 5439290
Elizabeth Ann Porter Head | Trevor Hodge
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PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

L: Having listened to the Word of God let us now call upon the Living God who made us, the Son who redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit who renews us, as we bring our petitions:

For all the Christian churches as they seek a way out of the pandemic, that wisdom and compassion show forth in the unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

(pause)

Lord in your mercy.

P: Hear our prayer.

L: For world leaders, that they may guide us with wisdom and truth. For Donald Trump that he may listen to the cries of his people. For Xi Jinping to pull back Beijing's bullying and interference in other nations' affairs.(pause)

Lord in your mercy.

P: Hear our prayer.

L: For all who struggle in faith, that the Spirit of God may move in their hearts and minds, encouraging them along the ways of discipleship. We pray especially for loved one.

(pause)

Lord in your mercy.

P: Hear our prayer.

L: For all who suffer from the lockdown, those in isolation, those without someone close to talk to, those who have lost their jobs, businesses struggling to hold on, women experiencing violence, that they may experience the liberating presence of Christ in their lives.

(pause)

Lord in your mercy

P: Hear our prayer.

L: For all in our Congregation who are sick, injured, going into hospital, suffering or recently bereaved that they will know the healing touch of Christ in their lives.

(pause)

Lord in your mercy.

P: Hear our prayer.

L: God our Father, have mercy on us and hear our prayers. May the love which unites the persons of the Trinity shape our lives and the lives of all people. We ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son, who celebrates life with you and the Holy Spirit.

P: Amen

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. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Benediction May the blessing of God the father and the Holy spirit be with you this week in all that you do and say.

TIS 780