



Sixth Sunday of Easter - A
May 17, 2020

Key Scripture - Acts 17:22

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way.

**Making the
unknown God
known!**

Theme - Unknown Faith

Welcome All

† Newcomers please sign our guestbook



† Special requests may be made through Facebook



Contact Us

† Trinity is Welcoming, Open, Inclusive and Accessible.

- Trinity is an Affirming Congregation and is inclusive of folk who find themselves a part of what is described as “LGBTQ+”
- Our church building is closed but our Congregation is Open and Active in a Ministry of Prayer, Service and Care
- Church business will be conducted remotely as much as possible
- Worship will be recorded and posted to FaceBook and our WebPage

Welcome and Announcements

This week's Phone Tree Message - 13 May 2020

○ Comfort

Dear God,

You show Your power and caring by healing people of all ages and stations of life from physical, mental, and spiritual ailments. Be present to people who need Your loving touch.

Take away the fear, anxiety, and feelings of isolation from people receiving treatment or under quarantine. Give a sense of purpose in protecting others from exposure. Protect their families and friends and bring peace to all who love them.

AMEN

○ Communication

○ Trinity United Church News and Updates -

■ Our Congregation is active in Prayer, Care and Service

■ Worship Services are replayed

● On COGECO - Your TV Sundays at 10:00 and 2:00

● On the Trinity Web Page and FaceBook at our regular Service Time, 10:30 Sunday Morning

■ **This Sunday's Scripture speaks to Faith Unaware -**

● **Key Scripture - Acts 17:22**

○ **Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way."**

● **Paul found abundant faith in the people of Athens and he honoured it. During this time of COVID-19, we are witness to an outpouring of support and charity. Love and faithfulness is manifest all around us. It is wonderful and we honour it.**

- Thank You to Arlene Hunter and all those who are making and distributing non-medical face masks.
- Food Distribution continues. Please contact Betty Lou Kempt at 613-291-0701 if you would like to help
- **We are able to deliver lunches to your home. Cynthia Sirett has organized the delivery of 28 lunches this week. Names are confidential, of course. However, we see the list as we prepare. We pray for each person as the lunch is assembled, just like we do when we sign Christmas Cards. This is a wonderful privilege.**
- **If a lunch delivered to your home would be helpful, we will serve as we are able. Contact the Office and Gwenda will let us know.**
- We are mindful about finances
 - **Thank you Barb Byam and the Stewardship Team. All our geraniums are sold.**
 - Please consider Pre-Authorized Payments (PAR) as a consistent way to support the congregation
 - Grocery / Gift Cards are still available for sale - Contact the Church Office at - 613 283 4444
- Connection
 - If you would like the latest posts from the church but have not been receiving updates by email, we may not have your address.
- Care
 - The Healing Pathway Team and others are actively praying together starting at 1:00 pm every Wednesday.

If you want to be contacted regularly by phone, contact the church and let us know - the church office number is - 613 283 4444

COVID-19 Community Meal Distribution Points

Monday	St. John the Evangelist Anglican Delivery Only	11:00 am - 12:30 pm
Tuesday	Trinity United Church - Brown Bag & Blessing Front Foyer - 41 Market Street	11:30 am - 12:30 pm
Wednesday	St Francis de Sales - St. Vincent de Paul Society 4 McGill St (Hanley Hall)	12:00 - 12:30 pm
Thursday	St. John the Evangelist Anglican Delivery Only	11:00 am - 12:30 pm
Friday	Mississippi Rideau Lakes - Salvation Army 251 Brockville St	11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Saturday	Trinity United Church - Volunteers from - SFDCI Front Foyer - 41 Market Street	11:30 am - 12:30 pm
Sunday	St. John the Evangelist Anglican Delivery Only	11:00 am - 12:30 pm



We are grateful for the Town of Smiths Falls and Lanark County. Take Away Meals offered during this State of Emergency are subsidized through the generosity of the Community Grant Program and COVID-19 emergency funds.

We are grateful for the teachers and staff of SFDCI and Duncan J. Schoular Public School who volunteer on Saturdays.

Two Guys for Lunch are active partners with us in this community service.

People who prepare and people who serve are screened.
Conditions under which the food is prepared is consistent with best practices respecting COVID-19

Acknowledging Traditional Territory

Smiths Falls is located on the traditional territory of the Algonquin peoples dating back countless generations. We are grateful for our neighbours and recognize the opportunity to exercise the Ministry of Reconciliation

Elements of today's Worship Service are drawn from the Presbyterian Church in Canada online Worship Planner

Introit "Labrador Rose" (Dick Gardiner)

Call to Worship

Let us see you this day,
Come to us as light.
Let us hear you this day,
Come to us as truth.
Let us sense your presence,
Come to us as love.
Come and let us worship.
We will rejoice in our Saviour.

Prayer of Gathering

Creator, Christ and Spirit;
how awesome is your love, One in Three and Three in One!

In you, we live and move and have our being.

In you, we find our beginning and our end.
In you, we find one who is kind and gracious.

We know you as Saviour,
calling us to walk in paths of justice and peace,
leading us toward the hope you promise.

Here we offer praise, worship and gratitude.

Amen.

Hymn 316 "Praise Our Maker"

Praise our Maker, peoples of one family; God is love, God is love!
Praise our Maker, peoples of one family; God is love, God is love!

Love our Saviour, followers of Jesus; God is love, God is love!
Love our Saviour, followers of Jesus; God is love, God is love!

Care for others, children of the Spirit; God is love, God is love!
Care for others, children of the Spirit; God is love, God is love!

Learning with Children

Have you ever done something that made you proud, showed it to somebody and they were not immediately impressed? -

Like if you are colouring and find the perfect picture, you colour and you are so careful. Your choice of colours is perfect and bright. You make sure that all the spaces are solid and even. If you are like my sister was when we were little children, you let the colour fade a bit at the edges where there are no lines or you might make your own lines at the edges, just to keep everything neat. I always found the edge of the page the trickiest part...

When you are finished, it is perfect for a place of honour on the

refrigerator... or to glue on another piece of paper for a homemade card. You might have hand-drawn hearts to show your love.

You show off your work... and somebody says right away that they can see where you went outside of a line? Their eye goes straight to what they think is a mistake and they say so? ... Well, that does not feel very good.

It does not feel good when somebody does that to us and it does not feel very good when we do that to other people.

It is very important when we comment on other people's work or way of being that our approach is not negative ... even when we see little areas for improvement.

In the Bible story today, Paul is visiting a city and he sees how faithful the people are. He also sees a way that something could be a little better. The way he describes it shows that he was very careful to make sure that the people of the city knew that he was not there to pick them apart and that he appreciated and noticed their goodness.

All of us are a little imperfect and make mistakes. Let us pray that we are able to notice all the good around us before we go straight to something that we think has to change.

Dear God,

We thank you for all the goodness in our world, in our neighbourhood and in our neighbours, in our friends and in our family. Help us always to see and be thankful for that good before we start to pick things or people apart.

AMEN.

Call to Reconciliation

Let us join together as we admit our human frailty -

Prayer of Confession

Creator, Christ and Spirit,

**We thank you first for the goodness and faithfulness we see
in us and around us.**

**We offer you our confession so that we might renew our
faithfulness to you.**

We sometimes claim to be wise when we were ignorant.

**We sometimes seek truth in untrustworthy voices,
and trust lies without questioning.**

**We sometimes seek things of little value,
and under-value things of great worth.**

Forgive us.

Renew us by your mercy.

**Restore us with a right spirit
and guide us in your ways of wisdom.**

Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news! Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ –
And Christ died for us;
Christ rose for us,
Christ reigns in power for us,
Christ prays for us.

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and set free by God's generous
grace.

Amen.

Scripture Acts 17:22-28; Psalm 66:8-20 (VU 784); John 14:15-21

Acts 17:22-31 (NRSV)

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among

them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.

The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him - though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said,

'For we too are his offspring.'

Psalm 66:8-20 (VU 784)

God of all, to you we raise this our song of joy-ful praise.

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. Both staves are in the key of D major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The treble staff contains a melody with various note values including quarter, eighth, and half notes, along with rests. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes. The lyrics 'God of all, to you we raise this our song of joy-ful praise.' are written below the treble staff, aligned with the melody.

Bless our God, all peoples,
and let the sound of praise be heard.

God has preserved us among the living,
and kept our feet from stumbling.

For you, O God, have tested us;
you have tried us as silver is tried.

You led us into the desert,
you laid a burden upon our back,
you let sickness furrow our brow,
we passed through fire and water;
but you brought us out to a land of plenty. R

I will come to your house with burnt-offerings;
I will pay you my vows,
the vows which I made with my lips,
and swore with my mouth when I was in trouble.

I will offer fat beasts in sacrifice,
a savoury offering of rams;
I will prepare you an offering of bulls and goats. R

Come then and listen, all you that fear God,
while I tell what God has done for me.

I cried aloud to God;
high praise was ready on my tongue.

If I had cherished evil in my heart,
God would not have heard me.

But truly God has heard me,
has given heed to the voice of my prayer.

Blessed are you, O God,
for you have not rejected my prayer,
nor withdrawn from me your steadfast love. R

John 14:15-21 (NRSV)

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever.

This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.”

Hymn 570 Jesus' Hands Were Kind Hands"

Jesus' hands were kind hands, doing good to all,
healing pain and sickness, blessing children small,
washing tired feet, and saving those who fall;
Jesus' hands were kind hands, doing good to all.

Take my hands, O Jesus, let them work for you,
make them strong and gentle, kind in all I do;
let me watch you, Jesus, till I'm gentle too,
till my hands are kind hands, quick to work for you.

Reflection

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, “Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, ‘To an unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.

While Paul eagerly engaged in debate in both the Jewish and Greek neighbourhoods of Athens, this was not unusual or disrespectful. What we might experience as argument was a way of exchanging and challenging

ideas as part of learning and teaching. So after engaging the synagogue and debating Epicurean and Stoic philosophers, Paul is called to the Areopagus.

The Areopagus was the traditional place of governance and judgement of serious matters. Paul's engagement has clearly sparked interest and he is called to speak to this new teaching. His treatment of the local culture and his disposition toward local faith expression is telling, particularly since his view is different than that of the community that surrounds him. The way he approaches this difference is instructive -

Paul starts with what is wonderful, not with what is wrong -

I see how extremely religious you are in every way.

Paul is astonished by the faith and faithfulness of the people of Athens.

Paul continues with informed and observed examples of that wonder -

For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.'

Paul includes a specific example of "***how extremely religious you are in every way.***"

Paul offers something even more wonderful -

What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.

Paul values the Athenian God-quest. He does not belittle it but offers something more complete, knowable and personal.

We who are active in the church, any church, have sometimes been fond of remarking on what we perceive to be a generational decline in religious life. This is true, if we limit religious life or, in our case, Christian faith expression to Sunday Gatherings. However, if we, like Paul

go through our community, we will see abundant evidence of faith and faithfulness.

In these days impacted, as they are, by COVID-19; we see wonderful examples of this faithfulness manifest in works of charity, care and courage. Because of necessary health and safety limitations, literally only a few, that is - three people are permitted in our kitchen to participate in person as Take Away Lunches are prepared for distribution and delivery.

There is no limit, however, on the numbers of folk who are permitted to support the work. Individual donations and offers of support have been wonderful. Acts of charity and giving, whether it be through a congregation, FoodBank, the Table, Interval House or Crisis Centres are consistent with one of the core values of our Christian faith, to care for and to advocate on behalf of those less fortunate than ourselves. Whether you serve through Trinity United Church, Civitan, the Lion's Club, SFDCI Student Council or Smiths Falls Police Services, these works of care and compassion are God's work. When you care for others in need, you walk on Holy Ground.

Arlene Hunter is coordinating our efforts in making non-medical face masks. Support for this effort continues from all corners of Smiths Falls. Holy folk in all ages have expressed their faith in ministries of healing and cleansing. This too, is part of our understanding of God's work. Helping us find fabric, elastics and helping hands is an extension of or expression of a Healing Ministry. When you participate in this, insofar as is safe and possible, you walk on Holy Ground.

COVID-19 and your response to it helps us all see how extremely faithful Smiths Falls is - how extremely faithful you are. We know this as we consider the work of your hands and your support for the care of others. In these acts, you walk on Holy Ground. Thank You for your Faithfulness.

Paul acknowledged the faithfulness around him and offers something even more wonderful - a next step -

What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.

If you are one of the many who walk the Holy Ground of charity, of service, of healing. If you sense and experience a connection to the rest of humanity and all of creation but have not connected that experience to what you consider as intentionally or consciously religious, I invite you to consider the possibility. Trinity would love to be a part of your exploration and discovery.

AMEN.

Hymn 381 "Spirit of Life"

Spirit of Life, come unto me.

Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.

Blow in the wind, rise in the sea;

move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.

Roots hold me close; wings set me free;

Spirit of Life, come to me, come to me.

**We Respond to God's Word
Offering Ourselves
For The Work And Witness Of The Church**

Invitation to Offering

Jesus shares his gifts with his followers throughout all time and in every place.

As we offer our gifts in thanksgiving, may our generosity reflect the generosity we meet in Christ Jesus, Lord of all times and all places.

Trinity Needs Your Help

During these trying times, Trinity's life and work continues in many ways. While our Sunday services and many other things in our lives are on hold until further notice, and our building is closed, our staff and members are still active and operational costs continue.

There will be no opportunity for the regular collection of offerings each week, so Trinity needs you to share your gifts in a different way. We have 4 options:

1. Please visit the www.trinityunitedsf.ca and use the "DONATE" button. It takes you to CanadaHelps.org where you can make a safe and secure, one time or monthly donation as often as you want.
2. This may also be a good time to start using Pre-authorized Payments. The form for that is attached to this post and can be printed off and mailed to the church office at 41 Market Street / PO Box 28, Smiths Falls, K7A 2E7
3. We have also set up an e-transfer account to accept your donation. Please use secretary@trinityunitedsf.ca . Password not required. Please note your envelope number and amount allocated to general church expenses, M&S. and/or capital projects.
4. Of course you can always mail a donation to the church office at 41/ PO Box 28 Market Street, Smiths Falls, ON K7A 2E7

If you require assistance or have any questions about making donations, please do not hesitate to contact the church office at 613-283-4444 or by email at secretary@trinityunitedsf.ca.

Thank you.

***Offering Prayer**

Generous God, we bless you for your gift of life renewed through Christ's love.

Bless us and the gifts we bring so that our lives may reflect the hope and renewal we have found in Christ, throughout our community and in the world you love, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Meditation "The Empty Chair" (Graham Lindsey)

Prayers of the People

Loving God,

We thank you for calling us into a relationship with you, and setting us in the world you love. Through our prayers, we bring to you our doubts and fears, our joys and our concerns, and our deepest longings for your world.

Reconciling God,

We pray for our family and friends, those far away and those close by, and those whom we depend upon daily. Bless and protect relationships that are joyful and life-giving.

Guiding God,

We pray for public officials, politicians and all who serve the public good day by day. Guide each one to uphold standards of good service. Give wisdom to make faithful decisions and courage when those decisions are unpopular.

Caring God,

We pray for the people we encounter every day, both those who are shining lights in our communities and those whose lights have yet to be discovered. Help us be respectful of every neighbour, and treat each person we meet with kindness.

Healing God,

We pray for those who are suffering from illness or chronic conditions, for those in grief or loneliness, and for any who feel frustrated or overwhelmed by what they face. Move in their lives with your healing grace and show them signs of your presence and compassion in life-giving ways.

Faithful God,

Your Spirit has worked in the world throughout all generations. We thank you that we belong to you in this generation. We pray for life-long believers and for those whose faith is new. May your church benefit from the

wisdom of the experienced and the vibrancy of those beginning their journey. Help us work together in hope, so that our witness to your purposes and promises will invite others to discover life in you.

We are thankful that we can experience God in a relationship from which we draw strength, courage and encouragement.

The ways of knowing God - Mother, Father, Fiend -

Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer;

may be expressed in the prayer Jesus taught us -

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven,

Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us,

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory,

for ever and ever

Amen

We Depart to Serve with Joy

Hymn 264 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might;
thy justice like mountains high soaring above
thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all, life thou givest, to both great and small;
in all life thou livest, the true life of all;
we blossom and flourish, like leaves on the tree,
then wither and perish; but naught changeth thee.

Thou reignest in glory, thou rulest in light,
thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
all laud we would render, O help us to see
'tis only the splendour of light hideth thee.

Benediction

Go from this time, speaking of what God has done.

We will remind everyone that God loves us.

Go from this time, singing of what God is doing.

**We will rejoice that God has not left us orphaned,
but makes us one with everyone.**

Go from this time, imagining what God will do.

**We will witness to that hope which seems distant,
yet is as close to us as our hearts.**

Choral Amen

Postlude "Bill Crawford's Fiddle" (Natalie McMaster)