

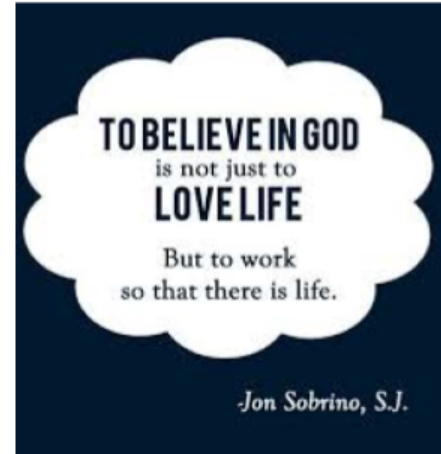


Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
Year A
August 23, 2020

Key Scripture - Matthew 16: 17

"Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah!
For flesh and blood has not revealed this to
you, but my Father in heaven.

Theme - Repeated or Revealed?



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. We hope to reopen in modified form after Labour Day weekend. Details are pending.

Welcome and Announcements

This week's Phone Tree Message - 19 August 2020

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

The "Reopening Trinity Plan" is ready for approval.

- These are the key points drawn from the proposal to be submitted to EOORC. Please note that **this plan cannot come into effect unless or until approval is secured** -
 - Sunday worship will begin on September 13, 2020 in the sanctuary.
 - **Capacity and Support**
 - The sanctuary can accommodate 30 "Bubbles."
 - 30 individuals or
 - family units to a maximum of 50 individuals
 - The church "lift" is available
 - One washroom at the sanctuary level will be available
 - Fellowship Hall and other facilities are out of bounds
 - **Suspended Activities**
 - Communion
 - Fellowship Time
 - Children's programming
 - Congregational singing
 - "Passing the Plate" for Collection
 - **Minimizing Exposure**

- Risk assessment information will be available prior to worship
 - Health screening station will be set up outside
 - Entry, Exit and Movement within the sanctuary will be managed by Ushers
 - Post Service Cleaning and Disinfecting will be completed ASAP
- **Communication**
 - Posters will be prominently displayed in all critical areas as reminders regarding physical distancing, mandatory mask wearing and hand washing

Our guiding principle will be exclusively your health and safety. Stay safe and encourage the people you love to remain so.

- Trinity United Church News and Updates -
 - **Worship Services are again being broadcast on COGECO**
 - Services are available on Trinity's Web Page and FaceBook
 - **Sunday's Scripture speaks to the difference between what is Repeated and what is Revealed -**
 - **Key Scripture - Matthew 16:17**

"Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven.
 - **Theme - Repeated or Revealed?**
 - **In answer to, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" Peter only repeats what he has heard.**
 - **In answer to, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter must summon the courage to say what has been revealed.**

- **To repeat the words of others is easy and permits an escape from responsibility. To say what has been revealed pimpls a departure from that which is commonly accepted. This comes with added responsibility and scrutiny.**
- If a lunch delivered to your home would be helpful, we will serve as we are able. Contact the Office.
- A note from the Stewardship Team
 - 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
- Care
 - Our Non-Medical Face Mask Ministry is incredible!
 - As more restrictions are relaxed and the potential for contact increases - Masks will be mandatory. Please remember your mask when you leave your home.
 - Masks are available at the church Tuesday and Saturday 11:30 am - 12:30 pm. It is a blessing to know that we have many folk in our own Congregation and community who are so faithful in making masks so that all of us can be safer.



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

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

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 and adapted from the Presbyterian Church in Canada online Worship Planner.

Introit MV 18 "Lord, Prepare Me To Be A Sanctuary"

Call to Worship

We give you thanks with all our hearts
for your love endures forever.

We sing your praise with all our might
for you speak goodness to all the earth.

We place our trust in you
for your salvation continues from generation to generation.

We worship you and lift up our hearts in praise.

Prayer of Gathering

You are the same yesterday, today and tomorrow,
and yet you come to us fresh each new day.

You breathe new life into what has become common.

You offer healing for what is broken and worn.

You restore hope for what seems impossible.

You are the source of life and love for us and all your creatures,
we worship you as Creator, Christ and Spirit,
one God, now and always. Amen.

Hymn 356 "Seek Ye First The Kingdom"

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and God's righteousness
And all these things shall be added unto you.

Hallelu, hallelujah!

Ask and it shall be given unto you; seek and ye shall find;
Knock and the door shall be opened unto you.

Hallelu, hallelujah!

We do not live by bread alone, but by every word
that proceeds from the mouth of God.

Hallelu, hallelujah.

Learning with Children

'The Emperor's New Clothes' is a fairy tale about a powerful man who loves nice clothes and spends all his time in his dressing-room. One day, two con-men arrive and tell the king that they are weavers who can weave clothes that possessed an unusual quality: they became invisible to anyone who was stupid or unfit for the job they did. Thinking this was a good way of telling wise men from fools, and finding out who was fit for their job and who wasn't, the emperor paid the con men to weave him some fine clothes.

The con menset up a loom and pretend to weave. The emperor, wanting to see how his robes are coming but afraid that he won't be able to see them, sends an advisor, who can't see the robes but is afraid that means he is unfit. He returns to the emperor and tells him the robes are beautiful. The con men demand more money and materials, but continue to weave on an empty loom. The emperor sends another adviser; who can't see the cloth, but pretends he can.

The emperor then decides to go and see the clothes before they are completed, but he cannot see them either. Fearing he is either a fool or unfit to be emperor, he lies about it and declares them to be beautiful.

When the clothes are ready, the swindlers ask the emperor to remove his old clothes so they can fit him with his new ones – but of course they only pretend to put clothes on him. When the emperor parades through the streets wearing his new clothes (but in reality completely naked), none of the townspeople admit that they cannot see the clothes, for fear of being accused of being stupid or not fit for the job they do. But then one child exclaims that the emperor has nothing on, and the spell is broken: everyone else takes up the cry and the illusion of the emperor's new clothes is destroyed. But the emperor chooses to ignore the townspeople and continue his procession.

It is hard to say something that is true but is different than what everybody else is saying. It is also hard for other people to believe it... it is still important to say.

Childrens' Prayer

Dear God,

Make us brave to tell the truth even when people around us pretend not to see it.

Call to Reconciliation

We are sometimes like Peter. We know the truth but have to be prompted to say it because what we know to be true is different than what people say around us. Let us confess this and seek courage to speak and to stand.

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God,

We confess that we sometimes stray from your purposes.

You set a path for us but we conform to the ways of this world.

You offer transforming love, but we cling to familiar patterns.

**You give gifts for the work of your kingdom,
but we wait for others to move.**

**Forgive us when we take the easy way and fail to serve you with
eager hearts.**

Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news!

Who is in a position to condemn us?

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.

So let us make a fresh start today!

Scripture Exodus 1:8-2:10; Psalm 124 (VU846); Matthew 16:13-20

Exodus 1:8-2:10

Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, "When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but

if it is a girl, she shall live.” But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?” The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.” So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, “Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live.”

Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. “This must be one of the Hebrews’ children,” she said. Then his sister said to Pharaoh’s daughter, “Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?” Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Yes.” So the girl went and called the child’s mother. Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages.” So the woman took the child and nursed it. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, “because,” she said, “I drew him out of the water.”

Psalm 124 (VU846)

Refrain - Our help comes from God the maker of heaven and earth.

'If God had not been at our side,'
now let Israel say:
'If God had not been at our side
when mortals rose up against us,
then they would have swallowed us alive,
when their fury was roused against us.
Then the flood would have swept us away,
and the torrent would have covered us.
Then the raging waters
would have gone right over our heads.'

Refrain - Our help comes from God the maker of heaven and earth.

But praised be God:
who has not given us as a prey to their teeth.
We have escaped like a bird
from the hunter's snare; the snare is broken and we are
free.

Refrain - Our help comes from God the maker of heaven and earth.

Matthew 16:13-20

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"

And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.

I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Hymn 651 "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah"

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
 pilgrim though this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
 hold me with thy powerful hand;
Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven,
 feed me till I want no more,
 feed me till I want no more.

Open now the crystal fountain
 whence the healing stream doth flow;
let the fire and cloudy pillar
 lead me all my journey through.
Strong Deliverer, strong Deliverer,
 be thou still my strength and shield,
 be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
 bid my anxious fears subside;
death of death, and hell's destruction,
 land me safe on Canaan's side:
songs of praises, songs of praises
 I will ever give to thee,
 I will ever give to thee.

Reflection -

“Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”

“Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

These are safe answers. They are safe because they are popular. Lots of people were living in expectation and speculation regarding the return of a prophet or prophets. Such musings about Jesus’ identity and mission would be common and consistent with conventional thought of that day, culture and circumstance. The disciples’ answer is safe. They are safe because they are simply repeating the word on the street. The details may be different but the manner of thinking was normal for the age. It was comfortable, like “New Normal” is intended to be comforting.

In addition, there is no ownership. There is no commitment to or comment about the validity of any of these speculations or assumptions. This is an easy question with an easy answer.

“But who do you say that I am?”

“You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

“Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven.

This confession of Peter, *“You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God”* represents a **revelation, a breakthrough**. This confession, *“You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God”* signals that Peter understands Jesus in a **new and unconventional way**.

This confession, *“You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God”* is also highly upsetting. Confessing Jesus as the *“... the Messiah, the Son of the living God”* will heighten official opposition to Jesus and his followers. *“You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God”* places Jesus

and his disciples on dangerous ground. It is too different and too unexpected.

The tide will turn against Jesus in official circles. It is as George Bernard Shaw once said, **‘All great truths begin as blasphemies.’** However, this confession, as is the case with many new truths or revelations, is as necessary as it is unconventional and uncomfortable. As a consequence, Peter receives the mantle of leadership and responsibility. Peter will usher in the dawn of a whole new way of knowing and serving God.

Minority reports, dissenting views, revelations that lead us in important new directions, are often poorly received -

As children we were taught the formula that Pythagoras used to show that the world was round. This was an introduction to math and science in grade 9. For Pythagoras, 6 centuries before Jesus’ time, it was revolutionary and rejected. It was another 300 years before others started to believe him. It was almost 1800 years after that explorers overcame their fear of falling off the edge of the earth.

Galileo was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1633 for supporting the theory that the Earth revolved around the sun.

Darwin held on to his theory of natural selection for 8 years for fear of opposition.

In 1847 Ignaz Semmelweis, an obstetrician, published evidence that when doctors washed their hands before examining or treating patients, the mortality rate for women in his birthing ward was greatly reduced. After almost 20 years of having his work rejected, he was deposited into an insane asylum. He was beaten by guards and died. His hospital went back to running ‘properly’ mortality rates increased by a factor of six. Orthodoxy was comfortably restored.

“This ‘telephone’ has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us.” Western Union internal memo dated 1876.

We have been hearing about a “New Normal” for months now. “New Normal” is easy to say. It is intended to be easy to say. It is accommodating and comforting. Change is comfortable if one of two conditions are met -

- if we can apply a familiar idea to a novel circumstance or
- if we can apply a novel idea to a familiar circumstance
- “New Normal” provides us with that.

“Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

This is both new and familiar, comfortable; a “New Normal.”

However, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

This is new and unfamiliar, quite uncomfortable, a revelation.

The World Health Organization declared a pandemic on the 11th of March this year. The last time we met was 15 March. Trinity on Tuesday became Brown Bags and Blessings two days later, 17 March. On 18 March we recorded our first service for rebroadcast. Meetings were immediately remote. Trinity was able to pivot easily because ***we applied existing knowledge to a new situation.*** These were safe answers... and popular. Most churches adopted the exact same measures at the exact same time. Our first steps were common and consistent with conventional thought; just like - ***“Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”***

Our plan for reopening is conventional. If our plan is approved, our in-person services will begin again on 13 September. Our capacity will be 30 individuals or 50 if family bubbles are considered. In effect, we have room for 25% of our usual attenders. We will, of course live stream and continue recording services for rebroadcast... as will most other churches.

Sunday Worship with 25% of the congregation. There are ministries that have been suspended. Important ministries that cannot be revived under present circumstances employing conventional thought. What about these? Perhaps it is time for something unconventional, different, daring.

During this pandemic time and for as long as necessary, ... many are now saying years, ... Your Council has been meeting weekly. So far our approach has been conventional. The time has come for us to consider leaving the “word on the street” and seek a revelation. To dare the unconventional, to dare something more than the “New Normal,” something upon which we can build our church and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.

It is nice to leave a reflection with an answer, this is normal. It seems that our days are not normal; so let this question populate your prayers -

Is there a new way of being a church that we hesitate to say and to dare?

Hymn 120 O Jesus, I Have Promised (Tune 115)

O Jesus, I have promised
to serve you to the end;
remain for ever near me,
my Saviour and my friend:
I shall not fear the journey
if you are by my side,
not wander from the pathway
if you will be my guide.

O let me hear you speaking
in accents clear and still,
above the storms of passion,
the murmurs of self-will;
O speak to reassure me,
to hasten or control;
now speak, and make me listen,
O guardian of my soul.

O let me feel you near me:
the world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle,
the tempting sounds I hear;
my foes are ever near me,

O Jesus, you have promised
to all who follow you,
that where you are in glory
your servant shall be too.
And, Jesus, I have promised

around me and within;
but, Jesus, then draw nearer
and shield my soul from sin.

to serve you to the end:
O give me grace to follow,
my Saviour and my friend.

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

Invitation to Offering

Paul wrote to the Romans that we all have gifts to share. When we give, we give generously. When we feel compassion for those in need, we give cheerfully. Let us share what we have to offer to God generously and cheerfully, so that God's good work may continue.

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

Bless the offerings we make today, as well as the time, talent, and concern we will offer you this week. Keep our hearts free of worry so that we can give what we have freely, trusting your Spirit to accomplish more than we can ask or imagine in Christ's name. Amen.

Meditation "Pastorale" (Corelli)

Prayers of the People

Life-giving God,

You equip your people with gifts to work for your kingdom, bringing justice and peace to every land and community.

Through your Spirit, you give the gift of prophecy. Help us to use this gift to speak words of justice and truth into situations where people are exploited or treated unfairly. Guide our actions so that we might influence change for good in the world, and bring hope to the hopeless.

You give the gift of serving, in the example of your Son Jesus. Help us to use this gift to serve those who have been cast aside. Increase our awareness of injustice and our dedication to work with those who suffer its effects. May the abundance we share in our country touch every life and community in this land.

You give the gift of teaching. Help us to use this gift to ensure that every child has access to education and opportunity. Be with every teacher and every student in the coming months as schools adapt to the challenges of COVID-19. Support creative teaching and diligent learning in every school and centre for learning.

You give the gift of encouragement. Help us to use this gift to hearten all who are struggling in these difficult days. Bless us with words and actions to bring comfort to all who mourn, to those coping with mental or physical illness, and to any who feel isolated or left behind.

You give the gift of leadership. Help us to use this skill to build up our communities and model respectful ways of living and loving. Show us how our churches can be places of support within our neighbourhoods.

You give the gift of kindness. Help us be kind to all who cross our paths, even those who anger or upset us. Teach us to be forgiving and reconciling in all our relationships.

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 -

We Depart to Serve with Joy

Hymn 575 "I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me"

I'm gonna live so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna live so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna work so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna work so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna pray so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna pray so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna sing so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!
I'm gonna sing so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!

Benediction

We are called to do God's work in our community,
and so, we go with God to love others.
We are called to serve every person, in every place,
and so, we go with Jesus to work in the world.
We are called to proclaim peace, and live it in our lives,
and so, we go with the Spirit of peace.

Choral Amen

Postlude "Prayer from 'Joseph'" (Mehul)