

Reflection for Trinity 5 Colossians 1:15-28

A few weeks ago in House Group we looked at the creeds we use in our services, especially the Nicene Creed since this year is the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea (though it turns out that the version we use in our Sunday Eucharist is more like the creed that came out of another Council six decades later). Some of the earliest creeds seem to have developed from the statements of faith required by those who were being baptized (which you can see in the baptism pages at the back of our service books).

The first part of today's reading from Paul's letter to the Colossians reads very much like a creed (though it doesn't mention the Holy Spirit), and as such is one of the first such recorded statements of faith. It expresses Christ's role in creation, that Jesus was the perfect image of God ("If you have seen me you have seen the Father" as Jesus said) and that his death reconciled us (and all things) to God.

But why is it important that we believe certain things about God and Jesus? Doesn't the way we act and speak matter more?

I think it is important for this reason (amongst others): God can ask (or demand) that we behave in ways that are very different to how the world or society around us would have us behave. Sometimes what God asks can defy 'common sense': see how difficult the disciples found it to understand that it was God's will that the Messiah should die rather than conquer his enemies. So if we are to obey God's will we need to know that it's *his* plan for our reconciliation that works, rather than our inadequate attempts to do it ourselves. Just as a trapeze artist preparing to throw herself into mid-air has to be sure that her partner has the skill and strength to catch her, so our belief in God being Father, Son and Holy Spirit can give us confidence to trust and follow his will for our lives.

Ian Totterdell Churchwarden



NEXT SUNDAY 27.07.25 Trinity 6

10.30am in the Church

READINGS: OT Genesis 18: 20-32

NT Colossians 2: 6-15 (16-19)

GOSPEL Luke 11: 1-13



CONTACT US

Ian Totterdell Church Warden 07536459096

ian.totterdell@cantab.net

Mary Daunton Church Warden

Phil Baker, Licensed Lay Minister 07970 216740

lionelbaker@outlook.com

Revd Mike Clark Associate Priest

mike.clark@exeter.anglican.org

Revd Terry Litherland 07594633195

tlitherland36@gmail.com

Revd Sarah Cumming Assistant Priest [on secondment at St Davids]

Liz Pioneer Community Worker

pioneerstthomas@gmail.com

Email: parishoffice@stthomaschurhexeter.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/sttexeter

Website: www.stthomaschurhexeter.co.uk

X (formerly Twitter): @sttexeter

Office Tel: 01392 437486 Messages at any time.



St Thomas, Exeter

20th July 2025

Fifth Sunday after Trinity

10.30am in the Church

Today

Sung Eucharist

Hymn Numbers

46 *At the name of Jesus*

313 *Lord of all hopefulness*

545 *When God Almighty came to earth*

Wednesday 23rd July

10am Holy Communion (BCP)

2-4pm Young at Hearts

Thursday 24th July

9.30—11am St Thomas Tots

10.30-12noon Knit & Natter. See notices

Friday 25th July

9.30am Morning Prayer

10am Staff Meeting

Saturday 26th July

12.30pm Ladies Lunch at the Royal Oak



Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified: hear our prayer which we offer for all your faithful people, that in their vocation and ministry they may serve you in holiness and truth to the glory of your name; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Genesis 18: 1-10a

The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. He said, 'My lord, if I find favour with you, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.' So they said, 'Do as you have said.' And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, 'Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.' Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate. They said to him, 'Where is your wife Sarah?' And he said, 'There, in the tent.' Then one said, 'I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.'

Colossians 1: 15-28

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—

all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross. And you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him—provided that you continue securely established and steadfast in the faith, without shifting from the hope promised by the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven. I, Paul, became a servant of this gospel. I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church. I became its servant according to God's commission that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, the mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. It is he whom we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

Luke 10: 38-end

Jesus entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.' But the Lord

answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.'

Post Communion

Grant, O Lord, we beseech you, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by your governance, that your Church may joyfully serve you in all godly quietness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Notices

This week we are very pleased to welcome **Revd Ash Leighton Plom** to preside and preach at our morning service. Thank you Revd Ash for coming to cover at the start of the vacancy. We hope you enjoy your time with us.

Fr David says thank you very much for the cards, generous gifts and send-off on Sunday. I shall look back on my time at St Thomas with gratitude and with joy and I wish you every blessing for the future.

Cleaning the Church Volunteers are needed. Areas can be cleaned whenever it suits as long as there are to least two people. Speak to Ian.

The House Group meets fortnightly on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays in the month at Helen's house. They will be looking at selected Psalms. For details see Mic or Ian.

Knit & Natter From the 24th July we shall be meeting in St Thomas Pleasure Ground every Thursday morning from 10.30 till 12 noon, weather permitting. If it's wet, we shall be in Jess and Jimmy's café (118 Cowick Street). Do join us, or just come to say hello, especially if you aren't a regular at Maple Road.

Sat 16th Aug 11.00 - 12.00 Meet outside church hall entrance for 4th seasonal noticing Nature walk.

