

Holy Trinity, Elgin with St Margaret's, Lossiemouth

Welcome to the Scottish Episcopal Church.
This parish welcomes members of other denominations to
share in its worship

Sunday 2 May 21 Fifth Sunday of Easter

There are in-person services at both Holy Trinity and St Margaret's, though in a limited way, with strict precautions and limits on numbers. There is be a booking system for those wishing to attend.

The pew leaflet will continue to be produced, containing prayers, readings and reflections that we can all share in. We will continue to be a worshipping community from our homes, supporting each other and sharing our love, though at a distance. An online service will be available each week on our YouTube channel, in addition to the Provincial services. (Links on page 7)

This leaflet comes out each week. It can be downloaded from the website, will be emailed to you if we have your email address, or posted to you if we do not.

For any contact, questions or queries please get in touch with Tembu
01343 547505 or rector@trinityelgin.org

Mon 3 May Athanasius (from 2 May)

Tues 4 May

Wed 5 May

Thurs 6 May

Fri 7 May

Sat 8 May Julian of Norwich.

Scottish Episcopal Church Calendar and Lectionary.

Sunday Year B Weekdays Year 1

Week of Easter 5 Daily Prayer: New Life: The Lord

Collect

O God, who alone can bring harmony to the minds of your faithful people: give us grace to love the things you command, and to desire the things you promise; that, amid the uncertain changes of this world, our hearts may be firmly fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

First Reading Acts 8: 26 – 40

An angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over to this chariot and join it.' So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' He replied, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: 'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.' The eunuch asked Philip, 'About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?' Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?' He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

Psalm Ps 22: 25 – 31

Response *All the ends of the earth shall turn to you, O Lord.*

My praise is of him in the great assembly, I will perform my vows in the presence of those who worship him. The poor shall eat and be satisfied, and those who seek the Lord shall praise him: 'May your heart live for ever!' **R**

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall bow before him. For kingship belongs to the Lord; he rules over the nations. **R**

To him alone all who sleep in the earth bow down in worship; all who go down to the dust fall before him. My soul shall live for him; my descendants shall serve him; they shall be known as the Lord's for ever. They shall come and make known to a people yet unborn the saving deeds that he has done. **R**

Second Reading 1 John 4: 7 – 21

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, 'I love God,' and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

GOSPEL

John 15: 1 – 8

Jesus said to his disciples: 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.'

Reflection

Just before the bit of John's Gospel that we read this morning, at the end of ch 14, Jesus said to his disciples, *Come. Rise. Let's be on our way.* And the disciples must have gone out with Jesus from the upper room into the night. As they strolled through the streets of Jerusalem towards the Mount of Olives, they would have passed the massive gateway of the temple. On its top was an impressive carving of a vine. A vine or a vineyard was the traditional image of Israel. And the disciples would have known that.

Ps 80 talks about God bringing a vine out of Egypt, preparing the ground for it and planting it. In Isaiah there is a love song about the vineyard that is Israel: the owner loved and cared for the vine, but it produced only **wild** grapes. In the past, the vine, God's people, was not as fruitful as God had hoped it would be. I like to think of the disciples standing with Jesus in the semi-darkness that evening, looking up at that huge carving of a vine, and remembering those stories in the scriptures about Israel, the **unfruitful vine**. Perhaps they might also have remembered the words of the prophet Jeremiah: *I planted you as a choice vine from the purest stock. How then did you turn degenerate and become a wild vine?* And as they stood looking at the carved vine winding its way over the entrance to God's holy Temple, Jesus' friends would have felt and understood God's pain and sadness, and grieved with him.

Jesus seized the moment, as he so often did. To their astonishment he suddenly declared *I am the true vine. My Father is the vinegrower and you are the branches. You, the people of God can at last have the life and love of God*

flowing through you. You will be the branches of the vine, bearing good, sweet, wholesome fruit. All that is required of you is ABIDING in me, because you, the branches are attached to the main body of the vine, the trunk, and you will receive sap from it which sustains life and enables you to be fruitful.

Abide in me said Jesus. **Abide**.....that is the key word here. We don't have a good modern word that quite catches the meaning of the original Greek word "Abide". It means to dwell, to make somewhere your abode, your home. But it involves much more than just settling down. It includes perseverance, patience and staying power, and a willingness to accept that God may lead us into situations and places and relationships that we ourselves cannot wholly control. So Jesus is asking us, his disciples to let God cut away all that is unproductive. We, the branches do not have to struggle on alone; he tells us, *apart from me you can do nothing*. All the branches have to do is to **Abide**... allow... let the sap flow into us... and to keep on letting God in..... and the natural outcome will be, that in God's good time, not ours, fruit will appear. Abiding in Jesus Christ, staying close and connected to the root and the thick trunk of the vine is how we will all be fruitful. For us that means staying connected, in these strange pandemic times, in whatever way we can to the Church. It means being as active as we can in caring for others. **And** abiding in Christ also means coming quietly and regularly to God in prayer; it means perseverance. But the kind of abiding that Jesus calls his followers to can sometimes also mean our having to be open to change and to the unexpected, and it means accepting that we may be called to live a life which is a bit uncomfortable or out of our own control.

The last verse of Hymn 506 expresses exactly what Jesus was talking about to his disciples as, in my imagination, they all stood at the threshold of the Temple in Jerusalem, looking up at the great carved vine winding its way around the top of the entrance into God's holy temple.

This is what Jesus told them then and this is what he is telling us now:

Filled with my Spirit, how you will grow.

You are my branches; I am the tree.

If you are faithful, others will know

You are alive in me.

Intercessions

Gardener God, thank you for letting us grow as part of your vine. Nurture in us a desire to produce an abundance of good fruit on the branches. Help us to

anchor our roots deeply in you for nourishment and growth. Train and prune back where necessary, all that stands in the way of peace amongst us, so that we may all make fragrant and rich spiritual wine.

Response: **You are the vine and we are the branches.
May we remain united with you.**

Gardener God, when we look around our bruised and battered world, we see the tragic and disastrous consequences of branches that have gone their own way and been cut off from your vine. Fill us with the sap of life so that we do what is right for the vine, seeking your truth in all aspects of our lives to help it flourish. Help us to continue to show your love and care to all parts of your vine. **R.**

Gardener God, we pray for all who we love, live with, spend time with, work with and share neighbourhoods with. We pray for all who are separated from their family, home or friends by the on-going pandemic, natural disasters, conflicts, ill-health or frailty. We ask for your healing, wholeness and care for all who feel frightened, isolated or remote from the ever changing communities in which they live. Give them a sense of rightful belonging to your vine and help us to play our part in that healing, by grafting them onto our church communities. **R.**

Gardener God, because of Jesus, we know that death cannot separate us from your love. We pray for all who have died recently. We place them lovingly into your care. We pray for all who grieve and miss them. Help us to show your tenderness and compassion by our actions and words, so that the whole vine may continue to grow together and the wounds may heal. **R.**

Gardener God, we thank you that we can live in the joyful freedom of your love, knowing that you have chosen us. May we show this to the world by dedicating ourselves to serving others as part of your true and living vine. AMEN.

Thanks to Judith for these prayers

Please pray for the sick, especially Andy Roberson, Ian and Ann Bartholomew, Carol Wetherell and Kay McGloan.

Please remember Padre Richard, currently deployed to the Middle East.

Readings for next Sunday 9 May 21 Easter 6

Acts 10: 44 – 48 Psalm 98

1 John 5: 1 – 6 John 15: 9 – 17

Activities and Future Events
www.trinityelgin.org

Activities currently suspended due to Covid-19 precautions.

Baptisms, weddings and funerals – please contact 01343 547505.
Tembu's normal day off is Saturday.

“Not in the pews” leaflet. Please check if your friends have received a copy by e-mail or post and encourage folk to get in touch if they'd like a copy. It's also on our website: <http://www.trinityelgin.org/>

You'll also find a weekly SEC service at:

<http://www.scotland.anglican.org/broadcast-sunday-worship/>

or listen on the telephone. (Details from Jenny on 07950 830017)

Our own psalms, readings and weekly services are available at

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSYhBaWnrmXOvc1HgDzlm_g

KEEP IN TOUCH!

Please remember, Tembu is really happy to hear from you. He's not too busy to take your phone call or read your e-mail.

Pattern of services

Digital	In-person (<i>limited numbers</i>)
Recorded digital service of the Word – with psalm & virtual singers hymn (Usually available from 9 am on Sundays)	Thursdays 10 am HT Sundays 9.30 am St Margaret's Sundays 11.15 am HT

The Youth Fellowship If you are S1-S6 and would like to join us please get in touch with Tembu at rector@trinityelgin.org Normally, on Tuesday evenings (apart from the first week of the month) we have Bible study. Once a month, we have a themed evening. This month we have taken a break on Tuesdays as many of our people have assessments. Our next meeting will be in person at 7pm on Sun 9 May in Forres. The Tuesdays will resume after the assessments are over.

Save the Children / Parish funds There will be a sales table after both churches next week Sun 9 May for these very good causes. Plants definitely, jam probably, and if anyone has anything else to donate please call Mary on 01343 814845 / 07786 911611.

Phew! All the records for the last financial year are now complete and your tax repayment has already been paid in. Those who regularly get an annual receipt letter should have received it. If you still need one, or for help on any method of regular giving, please get in touch with Kate.

01343 835133 or GiftAid@trinityelgin.org

Julian of Norwich, commemorated on Saturday, lived as an anchoress (self isolation!) at the end of the 1300s and into the 1400s – times of great insecurity with plagues and revolts. Here is some of her writing:

Our Lord is greatly cheered by our prayer. He looks for it, and he wants it. By his grace he aims to make us as like himself in heart as we are already in our human nature. This is his blessed will. So he says, “Pray inwardly, even if you do not enjoy it. It does good, though you feel nothing, see nothing. Yes, even though you think you are doing nothing. For when you are dry, empty, sick or weak, at such a time is your prayer most pleasing to me though you find little enough to enjoy in it. This is true of all believing prayer.”

Revelations of Divine Love, chapter 41

Glad, merry, and sweet is the blessed and lovely face that our Lord shows to our soul. He is ever turned towards us who live in longing love. And he wants our soul to respond cheerfully to him, which is no less than he deserves. In this way I hope his grace will continue to bring our outward expressions more and more into line with our inner looks: to unite us all with him and with one another in the true and lasting joy that is Jesus.

Revelations of Divine Love, chapter 71

And finally

Laughter is the sun that drives winter from the human face

Victor Hugo

Priest in Charge: The Revd Tembu Rongong
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Items for next Sunday's leaflet should be with Kate by Wednesday evening.
pewleaflet@trinityelgin.org or 01343 835133