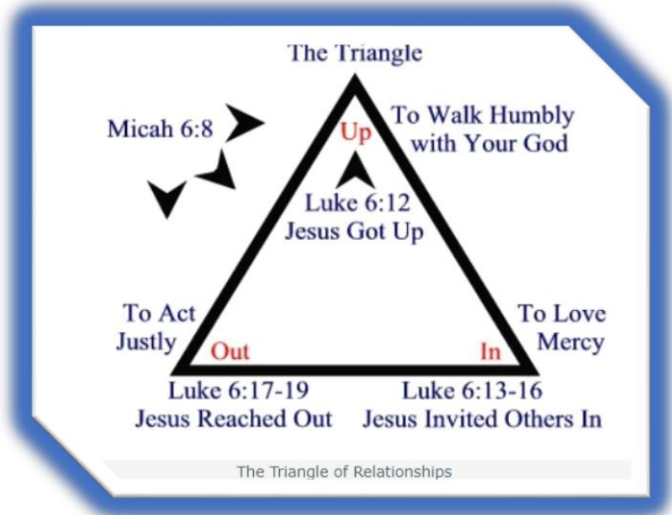


ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, SIGHTHILL

21 JANUARY 2024

DEEPER RELATIONSHIPS

THE TRIANGLE



All: Before we move or think or speak, you know our actions and our words.

Leader: You breathed life into us, and shaped us in human form to serve your purpose and sing your praise.

All: We praise you for the gifts of substance and spirit, of acceptance and expectancy, of lineage and legacy.

Leader: How wonderful are your thoughts, O God!

All: How vast is the expanse of your grace and love!

Leader: Praise the Lord!

All: The Lord's name be praised!

BEFORE THE SERVICE:

O GOD YOU SEARCH ME AND YOU KNOW ME

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6pogfMMhYg&t=9s>

GATHERING SONG: BE STILL

1. Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here; come bow before him now with reverence and fear: in him no sin is found—we stand on holy ground. Be still, for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here.

2. Be still, for the power of the Lord, is moving in this place: he comes to cleanse and heal, to minister his grace—no work too hard for him. In faith receive from him. Be still, for the power of the Lord, is moving in this place.

CCLI Song # 120824, David J. Evans© 1986
Thankyou Music (Admin. by Integrity Music)

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Our call to worship this morning is inspired by our OT reading, Psalm 139: *O Lord, you have searched us and known us.*

HYMN: CHRIST BE OUR LIGHT

1. Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

CHORUS

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

2. Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.

Christ, be our light!

3. Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.

Christ, be our light!

Bernadette Farrell, Calamus

OPENING PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER



Please envision an equilateral triangle with Jesus at the top, the people praying at the bottom left corner, and people or communities prayed for at the right corner. Got it?

This diagram represents the situation in intercessory prayer, when one person is praying for a particular need of another.

God encourages us to ask in prayer, but he doesn't need our permission or persuasion or prompting. Our compassion can't surpass his. He is omniscient, almighty, and sovereign over all His creation. His wisdom knows what is the best thing to do, and His love does it, in His time and in His way... His covenant with us in Christ establishes eternal relationships, where the dialogue goes both ways, with the Holy Spirit as the transmission line. As the "prayer triangle" indicates, intercessory prayer involves three such relationships, all of which are essential to our life in Christ. Our prayers build and enrich our relationships with God and with the people we pray for, and these relationships are the vital heart of every believer's spiritual life. Our prayers resonate throughout the whole network of praying people, enriching all our spiritual lives. This vast, intricate, beautiful network of interlinked triangles, extending through the centuries and around the world, is the structure of our spiritual life in Christ. The less we pray for one another, the weaker our spiritual life will become. The more we pray, the more we all "may be healed." <https://thoughtaboutjesus.com/2021/08/06/the-prayer-triangle/>

Now hold that thought as we pray.

God of Peace, Lover of Justice, we come before you with hearts filled with gratitude and thanksgiving for the countless women and men, past and present, who have worked tirelessly advocating for equality and promoting peace.

May we be inspired by their bravery and wisdom. May we get to know one another, fostering trust and honouring our unique God-infused gifts to collaborate in order to continue to do the good hard work that is before us.

We ask that you nurture our relationships, prompting us to be curious about our differences and to delight in the ways we challenge one another. We pray for your guidance when the obstacles seem insurmountable and when our vision gets blurry. We pray for your tenderness when violence erupts, and we fall into despair.

Hear our heartfelt plea to show us the way to make a difference in a world that is on fire. Prompt us to slow

down and to focus on the depth of your love, our most Gracious God. May we experience You in all your fullness, allowing us to soften our hearts while we name injustice and speak truth to power.

Spirit of the living God, help us to let love lead us forward. Many of our hearts are broken. The news in the world is grim. Violence is pervasive. Like ink, slowly seeping to the edge of a cloth, we watch as it and spreads, eventually damaging the whole fabric. Soothe our suffering and enable us to hold one another in hope, and to be connected with you and with one another in an enriching triangle of deep and deepening love, respect and joy. In Jesus name, Amen

LIFE SHAPES



BIBLE READING: LUKE 6:12-19

HYMN: GLORIOUS THINGS OF THEE ARE SPOKEN (AUSTRIA)

1. Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God.
He whose Word cannot be broken
formed thee for His own abode.
On the Rock of Ages founded,
what can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
thou may'st smile at all thy foes.
2. See, the streams of living waters,
springing from eternal love,
well supply thy sons and daughters
and all fear of want remove.
Who can faint while such a river
ever flows their thirst to assuage?
Grace, which like the Lord, the Giver,
never fails from age to age.
3. Saviour, since of Zion's city
I through grace a member am,
let the world deride or pity,
I will glory in Thy name.
Fading is the worldling's pleasures,
all his boasted pomp and show;

solid joys and lasting treasures
none but Zion's children know.

CCLI Song # 99371
Franz Joseph Haydn
| John Newton

2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart
to fear. And grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed

3. Through many dangers toils and
snares I have already come.
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus
far. And grace will lead me home

4. When we've been there ten
thousand years
Bright shining as the sun
We've no less days to sing God's
praise. Than when we've first begun

CCLI Song # 2762836, John Newton,
Public Domain

BENEDICTION AND SUNG AMEN

OFFERINGS/SONG: OFFERING (VIDEO)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NmgzBrYw5Nk>

PRAYERS FOR OFFERINGS AND OTHERS

All: O Lord, giver of life and source of freedom, we know all we have received is from your hand. You call us to be stewards of Your abundance, the caretakers of all you have entrusted to us. Help us to always use Your gifts wisely and teach us to share them generously. May our faithful stewardship bear witness to the love of Jesus Christ in our lives. Amen.

During this time of great strife and chaos in our world we pay attention to the extraordinary things that are happening and the lovely people that are doing God's work:

- We honour the work of Sindyanna of Galilee (**Israel**) where Arab and Jewish women work side by side, sharing a vision of peaceful coexistence as they lovingly market olive oils, almonds, honey and other items.
- We are inspired by Conductor Ron Davis Alvarez (**Sweden**) who founded the Dream Orchestra comprised of unaccompanied minors from Afghanistan, Syria, Eritrea, and Albania.
- We are thankful for the passionate spirit demonstrated by Osei Boateng (**Ghana**) who delivers medical care to thousands of people in remote communities in Ghana through the use of a converted van.

God of all things beautiful, bless the work that is happening all around the world, sending messages of hope, mercy, and love. May we seek this. May we be this. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: CG 6 – AMAZING GRACE

1. Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost but now am found
Was blind but now I see

