

Sunday 14th September 2025 - TRINITY 13

God's Truth

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him."

John 3:16-17

For those who missed it, the Cambridge dictionary recently added some of new words, one of which is "delulu", derived from delusional, and defined as "believing things that are not real or true, usually because you choose to".

In our post-truth society, misinformation often supported by AI, is created as click currency to generate income on social media. The more outlandish the story, the more clicks it generates. Many people willingly choose to ignore all rational evidence to the contrary and believe complete nonsense. Social media also enables misinformation to be spewed out daily by people we should be able to trust, the most powerful leaders in the world. Choosing to believe fiction is nothing new.

In our earliest stories, going back all the way to Cain and Abel, humanity has tried to define God in our own image and likeness. We readily attribute human behaviour to God, that is totally inconsistent with his divine nature of perfect love, and we choose to believe it.

Some of us blame God, when we refuse to accept responsibility for our own failures and inability to control the world around us. Who better to blame than the Almighty God who has power over all. "How can a God of love allow bad things to happen to good people?"

Some choose to believe that God is no more than a petty king, requiring constant appeasement in case he gets angry with us for no good reason. Some believe that even if someone has never heard the name of Jesus and has never had the option to believe in him, they will be condemned to hell for all eternity. Why in heaven would a God without limits, a God with unlimited love, do a thing like that? When we choose love, we choose Jesus' way, truth and life, even if we have not heard of Jesus.

Others choose to believe in pre-destination, suggesting that God's grace is so limited that only a chosen few are pre-destined for heaven, while the rest of us are going to hell. If you're chosen, you're in, no matter what you do. Otherwise, you're out. If this is true, then hope is irrelevant. Make the most of every opportunity you have for self-gratification. Eat drink and be merry! Grab what you can before someone else does! It is this kind of delulu that caused God to take the extreme step of sending his own Son to remind us of the way, the truth and the life we can experience, when we choose to live under God's reign of love.

To know the true nature of God, we need look no further than Jesus: *"If you know me, then you will also know my father."* (Jn14:7). If we believe that truth must be consistent, then God consistently behaves as Jesus behaves. By his life, death and resurrection, Jesus was the incarnation of God's love: unconditional self-giving for the good of all. Truth needs to be consistent. If God is love, then it makes sense that God creates for no other reason than his desire to share all that he is with his creation. We are created for oneness with God.

Oneness means sharing in the fullness of God and his joy, which means surrendering totally to his nature of love. If we choose not to embrace his way, truth and life, then we cannot expect to be one with him. *"If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand."* Mk 3:24-25

Because God's love is unconditional, he will not force us to accept his gift of oneness. This is confirmed by Lucifer's choice to go his own way when he decided that he wanted to be a god in his own right. God gives us a free will to choose our own path. If God is consistently true to his nature of love, he insists that our choice should not just be free, but also fully informed. It therefore makes sense that God should place us on Earth where we can experience both love and the absence of love. Here we experience both good and bad, because everything in God's creation is interconnected. Our self-centred behaviour affects and harms the innocent, just as the selfish, controlling behaviour of others impacts us, through no fault of our own. Similarly, no one can do love alone. It always has a positive impact on those around us. Earth also humbles us to learn that we are not gods and there are limits to our power over God's creation. In the parable of the prodigal son Jesus again confirms that God is not out to condemn us.

Like the prodigal son, when we humbly choose to live under God's roof on his terms, whatever those terms may be, we will discover just how generous God is, as he welcomes us with a cloak on our back, a ring on our finger and a feast to celebrate. When we make demands of God and self-righteously insist that because we have worked hard to earn his favour while others are unfairly welcomed into his embrace, we

will discover that while God always loves us unconditionally, oneness with him means that to love God, we must be willing to love all his creation unconditionally.

If we refuse to surrender to God's way of unconditional love, it is us rejecting God and refusing to join in his banquet, rather than God rejecting us. Any delulu we might choose to believe is not going to change that.

God bless, Des Robertson.

READINGS

COLLECT

Almighty God, who in the passion of your blessed Son made an instrument of painful death to be for us the means of life and peace: grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer for his sake; who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

READING FROM THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

Numbers 21: 4-9

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Verses from PSALM 78: 1-2, 34-38

Response: **Never forget the deeds of the Lord!**

Hearken, my people, to my teaching;
incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
I will open my mouth in a parable,
I will utter mysteries from of old.. **R**

While he slew them they sought him
and inquired after God again,
Remembering that God was their rock
and the Most High God, their redeemer. **R**

But they flattered him with their mouths
and lied to him with their tongues,
Though their hearts were not steadfast toward him,
nor were they faithful to his covenant. **R**

But he, being merciful, forgave their sin
and destroyed them not;
Often he turned back his anger
and let none of his wrath be roused. **R**

A READING FROM THE LETTER OF PAUL TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Brothers and sisters: Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:6-11

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia! **Alleluia!**

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world. **Alleluia!**

GOSPEL

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to St John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus said to Nicodemus: "No one has gone up to heaven except the one who has come down from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life." For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

John 3:13-17

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ,
you humbled yourself in taking the form of a servant,
and in obedience died on the cross for our salvation:
give us the mind to follow you and to proclaim you as Lord and King,
to the glory of God the Father. **Amen.**



**ST CADOC'S
CAERLEON**

Welcomes you to our

Rededication Service

Friday 3rd October 2025
7.00pm
St Cadoc's Church


With The Most Reverend
Cherry Vann, Archbishop of
Wales and Bishop of
Monmouth leading and
preaching



Raise Up Conference

Saturday 18th October 2025

Venue: St Marks Church, Cardiff, CF14 3BL
Details to follow





St. Cadoc's Church Caerleon
presents

Ponthir Recorder Harmonies in Concert

20th September 1 p.m.
followed by
Tea and Cakes

Donations to St. Cadoc's Church
Refurbishment Fund



Cwmbran Baroque Singers

Concert in Aid of
St. Cadoc's Church
Restoration Fund

***Tickets* £10**
available at the entrance or
presale from choir members
or Tim Ford
07711683454

St Cadocs Church, Caerleon
Friday, 19th September at 7pm



All proceeds to go to
support
'Research into Multiple
Systems Atrophy MSA'

COME AND JOIN US
AT ST CADOC'S CHURCH, CAERLEON

Tea and Cakes

SAT 20th SEPTEMBER 2025 2pm to 4pm

**Easyfundraising total for
St Cadoc's Refurbishment Fund
has now reached £3166.87**

Please support us today at <http://efraising.org/XW7a62zaYB>.

Thank you for your continuing support.

SERVICES

You are all invited to join us in our worship in person or watch via livestream on Sunday mornings from St Cadoc's.

Sunday 14th September

10.30am Family Eucharist Service, St Cadoc's Church, led by Rev'd Sue Pratten

Tuesday 16th September

1.00pm Funeral, Shirley Reynolds, Gwent Crematorium

Wednesday 17th September

10.30am Said Eucharist at St Cadoc's church
Rev'd Alan Maunder preaching and presiding
10.30am Churches Together Memory Café, Lodge Farm Church
7.00pm Bellringing practice

Thursday 18th September

7.00pm BMA MAC meeting, St Andrew's, Lliswerry
7.00pm St Cadoc's choir practice, St Cadoc's

Saturday 20th September

1.00pm Lunchtime Concert with Ponthir Harmony Recorder Group followed at
2.00pm to 4.00pm Tea and Cakes

Sunday 21st September **Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist**

10.30am Sung Eucharist Service, St Cadoc's, led by Rev'd Alan Maunder

Wednesday 24th September

10.30am Said Eucharist at St Cadoc's church
Rev'd Michael Jarman preaching and presiding
10.30am Churches Together Memory Café, Lodge Farm Church
7.00pm Bellringing practice

Harvest Festival Sunday 5th Oct

10.30am Sung Eucharist, followed by
12.30pm Harvest Lunch



Everyone welcome
Please sign list at the back of
church if you wish to come along.



Supporting the Work of St Cadoc's Church

If you would like to make a donation, we warmly invite you to use the contactless "tap and go" machine located by the south door of the church. Alternatively, you can also give by scanning this QR code.

Thank you for your generous support.

CONTACT

If you have anything you'd like to communicate to the people of St Cadoc's, please let Rev'd Sue know. Also, if Rev'd Sue can be of help to you at any time, please get in touch!

Vicar

Rev'd Sue Pratten 01633 421485/
vicar.stcadocs@gmail.com (Monday is leave day)

Churchwarden

Ralph Wessel: ralph@activethread.net /
07941967166

Safeguarding Officer

Graham Davies 07980 567077
rosebank_davies@hotmail.com

Health and Safety Officer

Tim Ford 07711 683454/
tim@woodsidejoinery.com

Beechwood MA Leader

Father David Matthews:
ssjuliusandaaron@gmail.com



Please use this QR code to
go to St Cadoc's website.