

**All Saints Church, Boyne Hill Maidenhead**  
**Sounds of Worship**

**Trinity Sunday**

Today's gospel is taken from the final section of the book of Matthew. It describes how Jesus tells his disciples to teach to the world; "Go forth therefore and make all nations my disciples; baptise men everywhere in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all that I have commanded you."

This reading emphasises the power of teaching in the name of the Trinity and the importance of baptism as the route to following Jesus. It also reminds us of the eternal and combined nature of the Trinity itself.

The music I have chosen interprets some of these themes particularly around the nature of the Trinity and the importance of teaching.

The first hymn is the classic Trinity hymn "Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord God Almighty! (AM 276). the text of which was written by Reginald Heber (1783 -1826) and the music is by John Bacchus Dykes (1823-1876).

Heber wrote this hymn in the early 1800s during his time as vicar in Hodnet, Shropshire, a period when he wrote more than 100 hymns, many having survived to modern times.

Holy! Holy! Holy! was first published posthumously in "A Selection of Psalms and Hymns for the Parish Church of Banbury (Third Edition, 1826)", and thereafter by the writer's widow in "Hymns Written and Adapted to the Weekly Church Service of the Year (1827)", one of the first hymnals to group the hymns by the liturgical occasion within the church's year.

The opening line (Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!) references Isaiah 6:3 and Revelation 4:8 and mirrors the opening line of the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts). The text does not "initiate praise", but rather invites to join in an endless song. It is notable that every line throughout the hymn ends with an "ee" vowel which rhymes with the second syllable of "holy".

The hymn's four verses successively reference humans, saints, angels and all living creatures. The second stanza magnifies the opening idea, with saints joining "in adoring the Majesty in heaven". The third stanza describes some attributes of the Christian deity, while the final stanza is a climax of the preceding with "earth and sky and sea" joining in praising the divine.

The tune for this hymn, Nicaea, was composed by John Bacchus Dykes for the first edition of Hymns Ancient and Modern in 1861. The tune's name is a tribute to the First Council of Nicaea – held by the Roman Emperor Constantine I in 325 – which formalized the doctrine of the Trinity.

The tune begins with an ascending triad, which can be seen as symbolizing the Trinity. The second line of the tune acts as a counterpoint to the first one. From then on, the first line is repeated and the final line of music brings us back to the home key.

Bacchus Dykes was not only a noted musician but also a priest and held the living of St Oswald's Durham from 1862 until his death fourteen years later.

1. Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!  
early in the morning our song shall rise to thee;  
holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!  
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!

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2. Holy, Holy, Holy! all the saints adore thee,  
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;  
cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,  
which wert and art and evermore shalt be.
  
3. Holy, Holy, Holy! though the darkness hide thee,  
though the eye of sinful man thy glory may not see:  
only thou art holy, there is none beside thee  
perfect in power, in love, and purity.
  
4. Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!  
all thy works shall praise thy name in earth and sky and sea;  
holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty,  
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!



*Figure 1 "Holy Holy Holy"*

The anthem that the choir would have sung this morning is "Praise to the Trinity" by Hildegard von Bingen (1098 -1179) who was a German Benedictine abbess, writer, composer, philosopher, Christian Mystic, visionary and polymath. She is one of the best-known composers of sacred monody (a single melodic line) and has been considered by many to be the founder of scientific Natural History In Germany.

She wrote theological, botanical and medicinal texts as well as letters, liturgical songs for women choirs to sing and poems. There are more surviving chants by Hildegard than by any other composer from the entire Middle Ages and she is one of the few known composers to have written both the music and the words.

Hildegard uses single line melodies that have a bigger range and jumps between notes which leads to a more expressive use of melody than more traditional Gregorian chant.

The recording of this anthem is sung in Latin and I provide the English translation below. It is interesting to note that in the original Latin, Hildegard uses the word *creatrix*, that is, a female creator in the second line of words.

Praise to the Trinity, which is sound and life,  
creator of all beings in their own lives;  
and the praise of the angelic host,  
and wondrous splendour of the mysteries  
that are unknown to all humankind  
and which in everything is life, is life.

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Figure 2 "Praise to the Trinity" Hildegard von Bingen

The final hymn is "Thou, who's almighty word" (AM 810). The words were written by John Marriott (1780 -1825) and set to the tune "Moscow" by Felice De Giardini (1716 -1796).

Marriott was an English poet and clergyman who was educated at Rugby school and Christchurch Oxford. He was initially rector of the Church of Lawford in Warwickshire, a living which he retained to his death. However, due to his wife's ill health, he and his wife lived in Devon where he was successively curate of Saint Lawrence and other parishes in Exeter and of Broadclyst near Exeter where he died in 1825. His published works include a volume of "Sermons" which he issued in 1818, and a posthumous volume of "Sermons", published by his sons in 1828. His hymns were never published but despite the lack of publication, the words to "Thou, whose almighty word" have achieved a lasting place in modern hymnals.

The composer of the tune, Giardini was born in Turin. He was a child musical prodigy and studied singing, harpsichord and violin in Milan. He excelled as a violinist and became a virtuoso performer. He spent the early part of his career performing in orchestras in Italy. During the 1750s Giardini toured Europe as a violinist and became well known in Paris, Berlin and England where eventually he settled. In 1784 he returned to Naples to run a Theatre, but it was financially unsuccessful, so he returned to England in 1793. However, his fame had faded and he subsequently moved to Russia and died in poverty in 1796.

Although a prolific composer specialising in opera and chamber music his work is largely out of print and little-known today.

Giardini composed the tune at the request of Selina Shirley, Countess of Huntingdon. Giardini was living in London at the time and contributed this tune and three others to Martin Madan's Collection of "Psalm and Hymn Tunes" (1769), published to benefit the Lock Hospital in London where Madan was chaplain. Originally known as the Italian Hymn, it has been subsequently given the title "Moscow" after the city where Giardini died.

1. Thou, whose almighty word  
chaos and darkness heard,  
and took their flight;  
hear us, we humbly pray,  
and where the gospel- day  
sheds not its glorious ray,  
let there be light.

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2. Thou, who didst come to bring  
on thy redeeming wing  
healing and sight,  
health to the sick in mind,  
sight to the inly blind,  
O now to all mankind  
Let there be light.
  
3. Spirit of truth and love,  
Life-giving, holy Dove,  
speed forth Thy flight;  
move on the water's face,  
bearing the lamp of grace,  
And, in earth's darkest place  
let there be light.
  
4. Holy and blessèd Three,  
Glorious Trinity,  
Wisdom, Love, Might!  
boundless as ocean's tide,  
rolling in fullest pride,  
through the world far and wide,  
let there be light.



*Figure 3 "Thou, whose almighty word" AM 810*