

ALL SAINTS NEWS

4th June 2023
Trinity Sunday

The Doctrine of the Trinity.....is Complicated.

Although early Christian theologians speculated in many ways on the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, no one clearly and fully asserted the doctrine of the Trinity until around the end of the so-called Arian Controversy. Nonetheless, proponents of such theories always claim them to be in some sense founded on, or at least illustrated by, biblical texts.

Sometimes popular antitrinitarian literature paints “the” doctrine as strongly influenced by, or even illicitly poached from some non-Christian religious or philosophical tradition. Divine threesomes abound in the religious writings and art of ancient Europe, Egypt, the near east, and Asia. These include various threesomes of male deities, of female deities, of Father-Mother-Son groups, or of one body with three heads, or three faces on one head. However, similarity alone doesn’t prove Christian copying or even indirect influence, and many of these examples are, because of their time and place, unlikely to have influenced the development of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.

A direct influence on second century Christian theology is the Jewish philosopher and theologian Philo of Alexandria (a.k.a. Philo Judaeus) (ca. 20 BCE–ca. 50 CE), the product of Alexandrian Middle Platonism (with elements of Stoicism and Pythagoreanism). Inspired by the *Timaeus* of Plato, Philo read the Jewish Bible as teaching that God created the cosmos by his Word (*logos*), the first-born son of God. Alternately, or via further emanation from this Word, God creates by means of his creative power and his royal power, conceived of both as his powers, and yet as agents distinct from him, giving him, as it were, metaphysical distance from the material world.



Another influence may have been the Neopythagorean Middle Platonist Numenius, who posited a triad of gods, calling them, alternately, “Father, creator and creature; fore-father, offspring and descendant; and Father, maker and made”, or on one ancient report, Grandfather, Father, and Son. Moderatus taught a similar triad somewhat earlier.

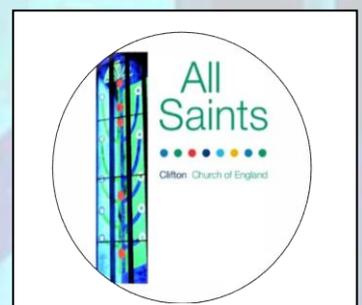
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Justin Martyr (d. ca. 165) describes the origin of the *logos* (= the pre-human Jesus) from God using three metaphors (light from the sun, fire from fire, speaker and his speech), each of which is found in either Philo or Numenius.

Accepting the Philonic thesis that Plato and other Greek philosophers received their wisdom from Moses, he holds that Plato in his dialogue *Timaeus* discussed the Son (*logos*), as, Justin says, “the power next to the first God”. And in Plato’s second letter, Justin finds a mention of a third, the Holy Spirit. As with the Middle Platonists, Justin’s triad is hierarchical or ordered. And Justin’s scheme is not, properly, trinitarian. The one God is not the three, but rather one of them and the primary one, the ultimate source of the second and third.

Justin and later second century Christians influenced by Platonism take over a concept of divine transcendence from Platonism, in light of which

no one with even the slightest intelligence would dare to assert that the Creator of all things left his super-celestial realms to make himself visible in a little spot on earth.
(Justin, *Dialogue*, 92)

Consequently, any biblical theophany (appearance of a god) on earth, as well as the actual labour of creation, can’t have been the action of the highest god, God, but must instead have been done by another one called “God” and “Lord”, namely the *logos*, the pre-human Jesus, also called “the angel of the Lord”.

Another influence may have been the Neoplatonist Plotinus’ (204–70 CE) triad of the One, Intellect, and Soul, in which the latter two mysteriously emanate from the One, and “are the One and not the One; they are the one because they are from it; they are not the One, because it endowed them with what they have while remaining by itself”. Plotinus even describes them as three *hypostases*, and describes their sameness using *homoousios*. Augustine tells us that he and other Christian intellectuals of his day believed that the Neoplatonists had some awareness of the persons of the Trinity.

Many thinkers influential in the development of trinitarian doctrines were steeped in the thought not only of Middle Platonism and Neoplatonism, but also the Stoics, Aristotle, and other currents in Greek philosophy. Whether one sees this background as a providentially supplied and useful tool, or as an unavoidably distorting influence, those developing the doctrine saw themselves as trying to build a systematic Christian theology on the Bible while remaining faithful to earlier post-biblical tradition. Many also had the aim of showing Christianity to be consistent with the best of Greek philosophy.

But even if the doctrine had a non-Christian origin, it would not follow that it is false or unjustified; it could be, that through Philo (or whomever), God revealed the doctrine to the Christian church.

Professor Dale Tuggy (2020)

Cathedral Church of the Holy and Undivided Trinity - Bristol



This week, fittingly, we hold the life and work of Bristol Cathedral in our prayers.

Eight interesting historic items concerning Bristol Cathedral:

- Home of the 'Harrowing of Hell' Saxon stone panel from about 1050
- Abbey church founded in 1140 and consecrated in 1148 as St Augustine's Abbey
- Priest ordained at age of 20 due to Black Death in 1353 (to replace those who died)
- Raised to the rank of 'Cathedral' in 1542 by Henry VIII and Thomas Cranmer
- Partly damaged by 'the mob' in the 1831 Bristol Riots
- Was a joint and equal cathedral to Gloucester Cathedral between 1836 and 1897
- The frivolous statue detail of St Gregory, St Ambrose, St Jerome and St Augustin in the North Porch were 'too catholic' and secretly removed in 1888
- Location of the first 32 woman to be ordained priest in the Church of England 1994



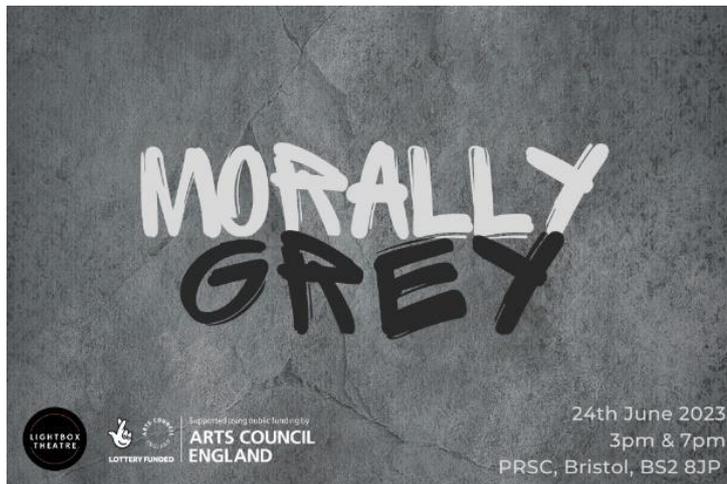
FREE

BEST OF THE
BRISTOL UNIVERSITY SINGERS
CONDUCTOR ELINOR COOPER

*An end-of-year celebration of
the ensemble and its singers*

9TH JUNE - 7.30PM

Free with retiring collection
Interval bar
All Saints, Clifton, BS8 3DE



Performed and written by
The Lightbox Theatre in St Pauls:

Saturday 24 June
at
People's Republic of Stokes Croft
in Jamaica Street
3pm and 7pm
– lasts around 40 minutes
Tickets: £5.00

Performing in the play and co-author is Marcus Hadley (son of Fr John and Rachel). Tickets available through Fr John or on-line from: <https://lightboxtheatre.co.uk/productions/morally-grey/>

Abbots Leigh (Holy Trinity) and Leigh Woods (St Mary)



Abbots Leigh and Leigh Woods (AL&LW) across the river is a United Benefice which is in vacancy. During the vacancy period the pattern of worship will be broadly maintained and they will be 'looked after' by clergy and ministers from across the Deanery.

Here at ASC, we will take on responsibility for at least one Sunday each month with members of our Ministry Team both LLMs and Ordained (and Placement Students).

Brendan Clover
invites you to celebrate the 40th Anniversary
of his Ordination to the Priesthood
at a **Solemn Mass**
on Sunday 25th June
at the
Parish Church of
St John the Evangelist,
Queens Road,
Clevedon
at 10.30am
and to refreshments afterwards

The ASC Saturday morning Walks for Everyone are on the 2nd Saturday of every month.



**Our next Walk is on
Saturday 10th June**

**Meet at ASC for a prompt
10.45 start.**

As it is Clifton Open Gardens weekend, we will walk down to Dowry Square to start our garden visits. There are several lovely, interesting and hidden gardens to visit on our way back up. Tickets (we can buy on our way) cost £5, giving us access to all the gardens for both Saturday and Sunday.

Contact: georginaharford@hotmail.com 07767 746168



Concert Matinée

Saturday June 3rd

Change of programme :

**Charles Matthews- piano &
Naomi Sullivan - saxophone (Royal
Birmingham Conservatoire)**

**will perform a varied programme of music
including pieces by Gershwin and Finzi**

***We are sorry that Lorna Osbon and Matthew Bale are
unable to be with us owing to illness.***

Enjoy sustainable floral designs set to music at two special events.

**'An English Country Garden' on Saturday 17th June,
'Summer Flowers and Music' on Saturday 12th August**



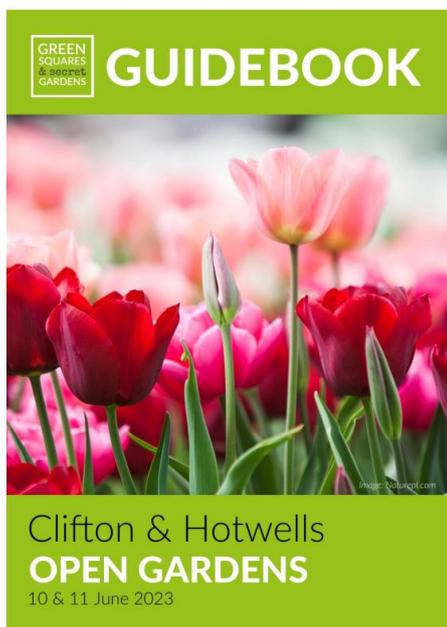
Tickets are available on line at Eventbrite

Search www.eventbrite.com/e/an-english-country-garden

Come and enjoy watching **two talented floral designers, Pam Lewis and Lucy Ellis**, at work whilst listening to a selection of live music played on piano and flute in the beautiful church of All Saints, Clifton in Bristol. Then learn how these designers have **embraced sustainability by using locally grown seasonal English blooms and eco-friendly alternatives to traditional foam and mechanics to create their stunning arrangements.**

'An English Country Garden' will be using **flowers grown by community enterprise Elm Tree Farm in Stapleton, Bristol. Elm Tree Farm is part of Bristol-based charity Brandon**, and provides opportunities for adults with learning disabilities and autism to gain work skills and access vocational training. **All the profits from the day will go to Elm Tree Farm to support their work.**

The demonstration will last from 4 pm to 5 pm. After the performance you will have the opportunity to meet the designers and musicians over drinks and nibbles and learn more about Elm Tree Farm. There will also be stalls to browse both before and after the demonstration. If the weather is good, visitors will also be able to explore All Saints' delightful secret garden.



The beautiful All Saints gardens will be open as usual for the Green Squares and Secret Gardens weekend. The gardens and church will be open between 10am and 5pm each day, with the church closed for Sunday Mass.

The weekend will include a special matinee a by the popular Fitzhardinge Consort on Saturday 10th at 5.00pm. Open Gardens ticket includes the concert but there will be a collection at the end to support the work of the choir.



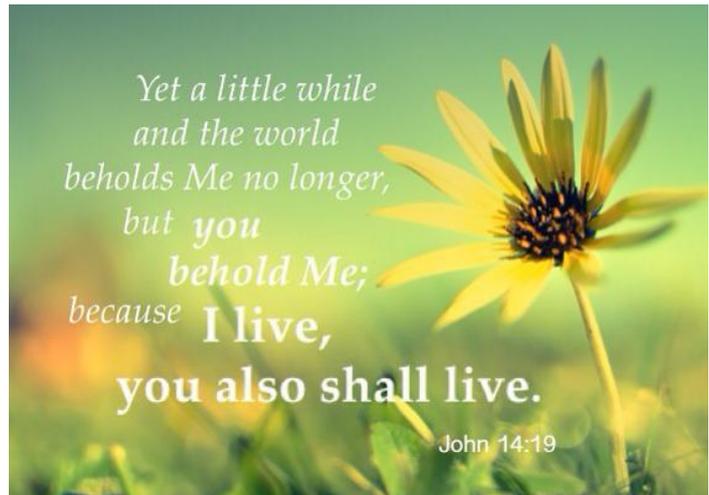
If you are able to offer some time to host during the weekend please sign up on the rota in the porch.

Prayers Requests

'In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live.'

(John 14: 19).

Please let Fr Charles know of anyone who would like to be remembered within the weekly prayer list or anyone who you would like to be remembered in prayer.



Those who we remember in our Prayers.

Sunday Tabitha Clark, Ruth and Richard Harding, Katie Norman, Jocelyn and Jack Neal Gordon, Joyce Shepherd, Cynthia Ashford Sarah Bradley Sue Hilliar Steve Cooper Ruth Marson Ryan Lindsey Joanne Cooper Mary Greenacre Jocelyn and Jack Charlotte Essex Lorna Osbon Nadine Benn.

Monday

Tuesday. Diana Verity

Wednesday , Katrina and Katherine King, Philip Miles, Samantha Tucker, Hugh Farry Shamin Azad

Thursday

Friday Charlotte Hopkins, Andy & Gina Ford, Elisabeth Morgan, Caroline Semon

Saturday

The Departed

Malcolm Davis Jeanne Callow Mileno Graca Rory Young Ros Hawkins Ron Gale Valerie Donkin Hugh Barron Chris Benton Rene Bloxham Hussein Lucus Helen Campbell

Years' Minds - this week we remember

Elizabeth Birch Gwen Hutton John Male Gordon Williams Richard Ndikumana Rosemary Robinson Lisa Mills John Jefferies Lloyd Gordon Pavey (Pr) Diane Wilkins John Dixon

ALL SAINTS PRAYERS

Mon 5	Boniface/Wynfrith, bishop, martyr, 754. Pray for those working and campaigning to raise awareness of action which needs to be taken to protect our environment for future generations.
Tue 6	Ini Kpuria, founder of the Melanesian Brotherhood, 1945. The Melanesian brotherhood remains an Anglican order based in The Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji and Papua New Guinea. Pray for the community who strive to live simply in their communities and for head brother Caulton Waris.
Wed 7	Mass 10.00am Pray for those who will lose loved ones today, for those who offer them immediate support in their grief, and for organisations like CRUSE, who do so on an ongoing basis.
Thurs 8	Festival Mass 7.30pm Corpus Christi Give thanks today for our celebration of the Eucharist and our life at All Saints as a Eucharistic community.
Fri 9	Mass 10.00am Columba, Abbot of Iona 597 Pray for Episcopal Church of Scotland and the Church of Scotland. Pray for Navigators of Faith on their Celtic Pilgrimage
Sat 10	Biro brothers bought and established the 'bic' pen. 774 Million adults are unable to write (2/3 are women) – literacy sits at the heart of learning, personal empowerment and social progress – it is a fundamental human right. Pray for those working for international literacy.
Sunday 11	Barnabas the Apostle Pray that the example of Barnabas "the encourager" will inspire us to encourage those around us, that they may have a sense of value and worth, both in their unique gifts and in themselves Early Worship 9.00am Parish Mass 10.30am

If you would like to give regularly to the Church, please set up a standing order to the church account, details below

Parochial Church Council of All Saints

Account No. 65256747

sort code 08 92 99

Gift Aid forms are available from the office

office@allsaintsclifton.org

