



HOLY TRINITY
ANGLICAN CHURCH
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Sunday, November 25th, 2018

Sutton Cecilia Clouthier



Theo Lloyd Delbert Neuman



Dear Sutton and Theo,

You probably won't remember this day, so I am writing this letter, so that you might know more about it when you are older. It has become my custom to write a letter to the people who I have the privilege of baptizing, and to share the letter with them in place of a sermon during the baptism service, as a way of helping us all to remember the journeys in life that have brought us to today. I pray that this letter might be a blessing for you, just as getting to know both of you and your families has been a blessing to me.

Today is the day when you will be baptized; the day when you will be welcomed into the household of God. Your parents are here, and your grandparents and godparents are here too. Your families are here, and they include people who are with us here on Earth, and people who are with us still in Heaven. Just this past Thursday we were saddened by the death of Sutton's great-grandmother, Shirley, whose funeral will be here in this very same church later this week. Some parts of us today are happy and ready to celebrate, and still other parts of us are sad, and grieving. This is ok. The mystery of life is all about the weaving together of the good bits and the bad bits - the happy and the sad – and in the gift of our baptism God promises us all that out of death always comes new life. Today, Sutton and Theo, you will become new life and new light for your families and for God's world. May your lights brightly shine, so that all on Earth and in Heaven may see God's risen glory.

Lots of other people are with you here at the church today too. For instance, there's George. George is running the overhead slides at the moment, and he spent part of Wednesday afternoon moving boxes and tables in the church hall, just to make sure everything was all "ship-shape" before your very special day. There's also Nancy and Pat. Nancy and Pat spent much of Wednesday morning polishing the brass, and vacuuming the chancel carpets, and setting up the elements on our Lord's table, just to make sure that everything here in Holy Trinity Church would be spick and span and



Parish of the Valley

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help us reflect your very special light. There's Paula playing the organ, and Jen who will serve at communion. There's a choir here to sing, and people here to read, and let's not forget Yvonne, who spent part of this week baking in her kitchen, just to make sure that we would all have a cake to eat and some food to celebrate with afterwards!

There are many more people here with you today to pray and to worship; people who have promised to share their lives with each other, and with you, as part of God's Family. And then there's me: the priest who gets to baptize you. You are the first two people I have ever baptized during my ministry here at Holy Trinity Church, and I will always be grateful to you both for that very special gift.

But there is someone else here today too, and He is the person whom I most want you to remember from your baptism. He was here with George on Wednesday too, as he moved the tables and tidied the hall. He was here with Nancy and Pat as well, as they polished the brass and vacuumed the floors. He was with Yvonne as she baked in her kitchen, and with Paula as she practiced at her keyboard. He is in the bread that we will break, and in the wine that we will drink. He is in the water that I will pour over your heads, and in the chrism that I will use to sign you with the cross.

His name is Jesus, Sutton and Theo, and today and every day, He is in you, and you are in Him.

In this journey that we call life you will have many choices to make, and many dreams to chase. Some will give you joy, and others will break your heart. Some will lead you to laugh so hard that you can't help but cry, and still others will make you hurt so much that your souls can't help but weep.

Through it all, know that He is with you.

Look for Him in your tears, for they are His living water: His way of reminding you of the promise He made to you this day.

Look for Him in the faces of your friends and of your loved ones - and also in the faces of your enemies - for He lives in all of them and loves them all unconditionally.

Look for Him in the faces of the poor, the weak, the vulnerable and the oppressed. Look for Him working to heal our broken yet beautiful world and do your part to help Him as He goes.

Look for Him in the people of His Church Family; in the faces of your brothers and sisters; in the faces of the people who move tables, and vacuum carpets, and bake cakes, and play the organ, and sing songs, and dream dreams.

Look for Him in the depths of your soul, and listen for His voice, in the quietness of your heart.

Look for Him, and as you do, know that He is with you, loving you, more than you could ever ask or imagine.

Today, and every day, we have a new beginning: a new opportunity to journey with Him, and to share with Him as we go. As I continue on my own journey, I leave you with words from another letter, written by a far better writer, many thousands of years ago. I pray that they may be as life-giving for you, as they continue to be for me:

"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you now, and forevermore. Amen."

2 Corinthians 13:13

Welcome to the Church. Welcome to God's family!

Yours in Christ's love,

MATTHEW

The Reverend Matthew J. Brown