

## The Foundation of Community 5-5-20 Community week

A divine foundation of relationship is what all religion, spirituality, and perhaps even politics, is aiming for. The Trinity offers us this precise gift—a grounded connection with God, self, others, and the world. This ancient doctrine dared to affirm that *God is relationship itself*. The way of Jesus therefore is an invitation to a way of living, loving, and relating—on earth as it is in God. We are intrinsically like the Trinity, living in absolute relatedness. While we may not always recognize it, we are all together in a web of mutual interdependence. When we recognize it on a spiritual level, we call it *love*.

The 12th-century mystic Richard of St. Victor (1123–1173) wrote about the Trinity as a mutual, loving companionship of friends—a community, if you will. In my book *The Divine Dance*, I summarized some of his thinking: For God to be good, God can be one. For God to be loving, God has to be two, because love is always a relationship. But for God to share “excellent joy” and “delight” God has to be three, because supreme happiness is when two persons share their common delight in a third something—together. [1] All we need to do is witness a couple after the birth of their new baby, and we know this is true.

The people I have loved with great abandon and freedom were not just the people who loved me, but people who loved what I loved. People who cared about community, the Gospel, the poor, justice, honesty—this is where the flow was easy, natural, and life-giving. Two people excited about the same thing are the beginning of almost everything new, creative, and risky in our world. Surely this is what Jesus meant by his first and most basic definition of church as “two or three gathered” (Matthew 18:20).

A community inspired by the Trinity will be a community of people who treat each other as subjects and not objects. Just as the persons of the Trinity know and love one another, from God’s side we are always known and loved *subject to subject*. God and the human person must know one another center to center, subject to subject, and never subject to object. This is why there is no seeking of power *over* in the Trinity, but only *power with*—a giving away, a sharing, a letting go, and thus an infinity of trust and mutuality. This has the power to change all relationships: in marriage, in culture, and even in international relations.

If we believe in a Trinitarian God, then we must hold fast to the truth that God is community—a completely loving, mutually self-giving, endlessly generative relationship between equal partners. We are included in that community and so is everyone else! A Trinitarian image of God should have changed our politics, our gender relationships, all power differentials, and friendship itself. But most of Christian history was never practically Trinitarian.

# Welcome

*To an ancient new way of understanding the reality of nature*



*Beneath the complex surface of reality lies a simple truth: a love story  
between receptive spatial void and responsive, energetic motion.*

This site introduces you to a fresh understanding of the reality of nature emerging from original scientific enquiry combined with ancient wisdom traditions. What emerges is a more realistic, sustainable, compassionate and creative vision of nature than many of us have been led to believe is possible. And unlike more abstract theories it is based entirely on reasoning from actual life experience.

Underlying the formation and diversity of all material bodies is a universal organising principle of energy flow in continuous space. This principle of natural inclusion explains phenomena more comprehensively than traditional concepts like natural selection, which are based on a partial view of nature. It frees us from the pervasive belief that life is a competitive 'struggle for existence', which chips away at our social organisation and is open to malign interpretation. It allows us instead to value our co-creative companionship.

Many have an intuition of this fundamental principle, but do not consciously acknowledge it, and may suppress it in order to fit in with cultural expectations, particularly in the West. Suppression causes conflict and mental disturbance that we interpret as 'something wrong with us', rather than our psyche awakening to what is truly amiss: the treatment of nature and one another as objects.

Becoming aware of natural inclusion does not require any special intelligence, technical knowledge or skill. It does, however, require an open mind. Once developed, this awareness transforms once complex subjects and daily struggles into a simple, flowing and beautiful continuum.

Alan Rayner