



Trinity Times

March 2019

Issue No 218

Diary for March		
Wednesday 6th	7.30 pm	Elders Meeting
Sunday 10th	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Rev'd Steven Cooper, including Service of Holy Communion
	12.30 pm	Christian Aid Frugal Lunch at Trinity Church
	5.30 pm	Evening Worship led by Katherine Harrison
Saturday 16th	10.00 am	KFC Coffee Morning at St Martin's Parish Centre
Sunday 17th	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Sarah Peacock
	5.30 pm	KFC Taize Service at St Thomas More
	7.00 pm	One Truth Youth
Sunday 24th	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Rev'd Steven Cooper
	5.30 pm	Evening Worship led by Christine Warren
Friday 29th	12.00 pm	Pub Lunch at The Red Lion, Woolmer Green
Saturday 30th	2.00 pm	"Singing Our Faith" accompanied by Victor de Paula
Sunday 31st	10.45 am	Joint Morning Worship with Stevenage URC at Cutty's Lane
	5.30 pm	Evening Worship led by Rev'd Malcolm Peacock
Diary for April		
Wednesday 3rd	7.30 pm	Elders Meeting with the Property Group
Sunday 7th	10.30 am	Team Worship led by Maureen Bodden
	12.00 pm	Formal Church Meeting after Morning Worship
	5.30 pm	Evening Worship led by Rev'd Steven Cooper, including Service of Holy Communion
	7.00 pm	One Truth Youth
Sunday 14th	10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Rev'd Steven Cooper, including Service of Holy Communion
	5.30 pm	Evening Worship led by Rosie Berry and Mel Mitchell
Tuesday 16th	10.00 am	Good Egg Club
Wednesday 17th	10.00 am	Good Egg Club
<p>Minister's Drop-in Time on Thursdays at 4.30 pm in the Vestry Meeting Point meets on Thursdays: 10.30 am. See below for venues during March Time for Prayer is held in the Vestry on Friday mornings from 9.30 – 10.00 am Youth Club Meetings at Trinity during term times – Friday evenings - School years 7 – 9</p>		

Trinity Times is the newsletter of Trinity Church, Park Lane, Knebworth, Herts, SG3 6PD

Minister: Rev'd Steven Cooper

Church Website: www.trinitychurchknebworth.org.uk Tel: 01438 210321

Opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the United Reformed and Methodist Churches. Similarly, they do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

With the approach of Lent, leading into the Easter period, there will be a number of significant events in the church calendar and some of the earlier ones are mentioned in this newsletter. However, because of space limitations, details of the Good Friday and Easter Sunday events will have to be held over until the April issue of Trinity Times.

Meanwhile, I have to apologise profusely to Kate Dickinson for not doing justice last month to her excellent article on the changing face of church services. Only the first four paragraphs appeared in February, representing just about one-third of the article. It's there in full now (Pages 4 - 6) and I would like to draw your attention to the final sentence. Please do read what she has to say and try to give her your views and some feedback!

Graham Fothergill

PARISH NEWS ARTICLE

This is the text of the Trinity article which was prepared by Jackie Hall for the March edition of the Knebworth Parish News. (*Ed.*)

In January we made all sorts of resolutions or promises and, whether we kept them or not, we can restart at any time. March is a time for new beginnings as a new season beckons. Spring officially starts on 21st March and yes, we lose an hour of sleep, but we spring forward towards lighter and, hopefully, warmer days. Gardens are growing with enthusiasm, colour is emerging in hedgerows, bird and animals are doing what they do in spring, and most folk feel their moods lifting as the year rolls onwards.

For the church it's also a time of change. Lent starts on 6th March. We will have munched our pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, traditionally using up all the good things in our food stores and now settle for a journey of, for some, denial. Some Christians give the money they save from their acts of denial to charity so others may benefit as well as themselves. For all it's a time of deep reflection and change as we remember Jesus' time in the Wilderness. In Lent we journey with Jesus towards the cross on Good Friday and the Triumph of Easter Day (21st April) when he rose from the dead. Lent is journey of change and we should emerge deeper, wiser and better than when we started. It may not be an easy journey, but it is always worth the walk with Jesus. Who knows what we will find in the new season if we dare to look?

Best wishes

Jackie Hall, Trinity Elder

FAMILY NEWS

This month we share in great sadness with our editor, Graham, as he experiences the grief of losing Maureen after a long and devoted marriage. Graham has been drawn into our fellowship over the years, and especially since taking on the challenge of producing this magazine. Maureen became a member of the United Reformed Church in Park Lane in 1975 during the ministry of Rev Gordon Bellamy (they spoke the same language, sharing Sheffield roots). Maureen was actively involved in all the practicalities of church life of that era, and others will recall many of those, perhaps including the elaborate Centenary celebrations in 1987. Maureen was a faithful member of Trinity Church as it evolved, and she was never afraid to admit to her deeply held preference for the traditional in worship, especially when it came to Harvest and other major festivals in the calendar. Through her church, her working life and her engagement in the local community, Maureen developed many close and long term friendships which did not end when people moved away. But family – Martin and his wife Nicola – and a wider network spread around the country were always at the heart of Maureen's life.

Maureen faced the challenges of her health with much courage and determination, especially over recent years when they meant Maureen moving to Broad Oak Manor Nursing Home in Hertford. Once there, both she and Graham fully embraced a new community, perhaps exchanging the care she needed for the personal gifts and talents they could both share with staff and residents alike.

Maureen leaves many gaps in family and community and we especially hold Graham, Martin and Nicola in prayer as we prepare to meet in Trinity on Friday, 15th March at 10.45, when we seek God's help in the grief and give thanks for all that Maureen's life has achieved.

Prayers continue for those undergoing or facing hospital treatments, and thanksgiving for Gill Atkinson's operation, successfully completed.

Gill Hughes

REVEREND'S REFLECTIONS

At our Café worship on 24th February we shared together around the theme of grace. The idea of grace is at the very heart of our Christian faith. Grace is the receiving of goodness freely offered - irrespective of whether we 'deserve' it; indeed it is goodness that often utterly defies all notions of what we might 'deserve'. It is a hugely powerful thing, and it is at the heart of God's character. And it's something that Jesus calls on us to exemplify in our own lives too, in all of our relationships to others and to the world.

This month sees the beginning of Lent, a period each year in which we are each, perhaps, moved to reflect with a special intensity upon what our Christian faith means, and on what kind of life we are called to live in response to that faith. In this vein, for us to reflect on the idea of grace is not a bad place to start. Lent is ultimately leading us towards our commemoration on Good Friday of God's supreme act of grace, when God gave of God's own life, suffering the horror of death on the cross, in order that, following in the footsteps of the resurrection, we all might have life in abundance, life in eternity - absolutely irrespective of whether we could possibly deserve it.

Of course, central in all this is our Christian worship. It is one of the primary occasions though which we engage with what our faith is about. It is fitting then, this month, that our director of music, Victor de Paula, will be sharing with me in leading a special event on the afternoon of Saturday 30th March; “**Singing Our Faith**”. All are invited to come, at 2.00 pm that day, for what will be a joyful and praise-filled opportunity to share in the riches, both old and new, of the church’s main hymnbook, *Singing the Faith*. Come to sing, or to hear! It will be an opportunity to learn new songs that will enhance and enrich our weekly worship at Trinity, as well as to join in many of the classic favourite hymns that we know and love.

This month we are also invited to affirm God’s grace as we bid a warm farewell to our friend Maureen Fothergill, who by that abundant grace has now entered into the glorious fullness of life with God. Maureen’s funeral at Trinity will be at 10.45am on Friday, 15th March, and all are invited to the service. Our prayers are with our esteemed editor, Graham, as he comes to terms with Maureen’s loss from our company here.

A reminder, once again that I am always available to share with you in whatever situations or challenges life presents you with. You can find me in the church each Thursday between 4.30pm and 6.30pm; or just invite me round for a cup of tea, any time - there is nothing that I value more! You can reach me on 01438 221678, or 07340 148339, and at steven.cooper@methodist.org.uk

I wish you every blessing this month, as always.

Steven

THE CHANGING FACE OF CHURCH SERVICES

Unfortunately, through an oversight on the part of the editor, only the first four paragraphs of this article appeared in last month’s issue of Trinity Times. Here now is the complete piece. Sorry, Kate, my fault entirely! (Ed.)

Over the last thirty years, preaching has changed and I am sure you all have your own stories of how preaching has changed over time. I can recall sitting in the hard wooden pews of Walsworth Road Baptist Church listening to preachers who were predominately male and often over fifty. Their preaching was very theologically based with lots of bible references and rarely any illustrations or stories. There was no interaction with the congregation and you were expected to remain silent throughout.

An American theologian named Troeger has studied the art of preaching over the years and I agree with his current findings. Preachers are no longer predominately male and I have found at Trinity that we have preachers from both sexes and of all ages. Sermons seem to have become shorter, although this may be because I have a lot more interest in what is being said, whereas as a teenager I had no interest and spent the sermon adding up the hymn numbers!

Sermons now vary in their type. Although they are all usually based on one or more bible readings, the message is put across in different ways. Some may take the form of the traditional three point sermon but others may be told as a narrative from the point of view of a certain biblical character, others may be interactive and involve the congregation. Many preachers are now embracing technology and using images and power-point to illustrate their preaching.

I feel that these changes are on the whole positive. Having preachers of both sexes and different ages means that preachers are coming from a more diverse background which means that there will be more variety in preaching styles and the way sermons are delivered. For instance, the course that I am following looks at different ways of presenting God's word, so I try and incorporate these things into my services. This emphasis on creativity in preaching was not as prominent in previous training courses so there may be a difference in styles between those who recently trained and those who trained many years ago.

One thing I would worry about, and this occurs with all types of changes in the church, not just preaching, is that there may be some people in the congregation who have been used to a certain style of preaching for many years and so may find it difficult and unfamiliar when other styles are used. It may be helpful for changes to perhaps be introduced gradually so that everyone can embrace the changes, so that no-one is left behind and everyone continues to feel part of the congregation.

A lot has changed in the past twenty-five years and it will be interesting to see how preaching changes in the next five years. A glimpse at how things are changing can be seen at Café Worship services at Trinity, as the congregation are given the opportunity to comment on the service using twitter. I think that with the rise in technology of smartphones, tablets and also smart watches, this will become more common-place.

I must be honest though, and although I do use a smartphone and tablet, I would find it rather disconcerting if my phone pinged during a sermon with someone making a comment on what I was saying. However, I hope to be preaching for many years to come so I will need to embrace changes such as these.

Technology now allows for church services to be recorded and streamed live on the internet or watched later. Cliff College streams their Tuesday night service, which I do enjoy watching live or later in the evening. But the person preaching does need to make sure that their voice and body language come across just as well to those who are watching on the internet as it does to those who are in the congregation.

Having services available on the internet may also allow more people to listen to sermons, including those who for various reasons, such as health, work or family commitments, cannot usually attend worship. The difficulty with this is that when you watch from home, you can be easily distracted by noise and other people wanting your attention.

I also wonder if those watching a service from home are missing out by not being part of a congregation. They can hear the message from God being preached by the preacher but miss out on interaction with the congregation. To me, the person is engaging in more of a devotional activity focussing on listening to God's word rather than worshipping with the whole congregation. In Corinthians, Paul talks about being the body of Christ, and I think if a person does not physically attend services then they are missing out on being part of the body of Christ and the feeling of belonging to God and God's family which comes with it.

You may have found over the years, that congregations that you have been part of have become smaller and, with new technology allowing people to watch from home, congregations may become even smaller in size. I have preached at churches that only have ten or so in the congregation and although there can be a feeling of intimacy, it can also be harder trying to engage and involve people, especially if you are wanting them to take part in some way.

If I was to imagine preaching in ten years' time, I believe that technology will have developed even further and so in turn will impact on preaching. Preaching could become more interactive with people following the bible passages on their phones, perhaps even their smart watches and commenting via twitter. There may be websites where people can type in a topic they want to hear being preached about and up will come a range of sermons for them to view. If I was to think very creatively, I could imagine that if I was not well enough to take a service, I could deliver the service to my webcam and I could then be beamed onto the screen at Trinity.

Whatever changes do occur, I think it is important for all of us not too get so carried away with technology that we miss the meaning of hearing the word of God spoken through others. I would be really interested to have your feedback and views.

Kate Dickinson

MISSION AND CHARITY NEWS

Soup and Cheese Lunch in Aid of Samaritans

We were delighted, firstly that the day of the Trinity Soup Lunch managed to steer clear of the worst weather of that last week of January so that the house was once again filled with customers. Most must have visited Gill Atkinson's Bring and Buy Bonanza on their way to or from the kitchen for a bowl of soup as she raised over £150. The bucket for donations was very generously filled during the day, and some who were unable to join us also gave before or after the event. The resulting total which has been very gratefully received by the North Herts & Stevenage Samaritans exceeded £840, including the Gift Aid recovered on donations.

Thank you so much to all who supported the event in any way, including of course those who helped between front door, kitchen and tables, not to mention Gill with her market trader money belt! We are very grateful for the enthusiasm with which people support this each year.

Gill and Brian Hughes

Christian Aid News

We will begin our fund-raising for Christian Aid this year with a 'Frugal Lunch' at the beginning of Lent. This will be held on Sunday, 10th March at 12 noon for 12.30 pm at Trinity Church – tickets are now available.

A further opportunity to enjoy food and fellowship will be afforded by another 'Big Brekkie' at Trinity on Saturday, 11th May. Our thanks to Kathy Cole for organising this event.

Christian Aid Week begins on 12th May and, as usual, there will be a house to house collection in the village for the charity. Last year we had the help of 38 collectors for this task and raised £2,610, plus an additional £300 in Gift Aid. However, we still need a few more people willing to collect this year. If you feel you could help by delivering/collecting envelopes, please speak to John Whittle or Hilary Dyster.

Thank you!

Hilary Dyster

Mission News

This month our designated charity is Bridge Builders Christian Trust. Bridge Builders is a local charity based in Stevenage, of which Steven, our minister, is a trustee. Its vision is that every child within our local communities will have opportunities to explore the values of the Christian faith, so that they may look forward with hope and confidence, as they experience Christian love in action. The charity works in partnership with primary school teachers, church leaders and many committed volunteers in Stevenage and the surrounding area to provide:

- opportunities for children to explore the Christian faith through schools projects such as assemblies and class work
- opportunities for class visits to local churches for themed events such as The Easter Journey and The Christmas Journey.

We welcome your support towards our charitable giving to this cause.

For full information about Bridge Builders, see www.bridgebuilderstrust.org.uk

Steven

DIARY INFORMATION

World Day of Prayer – Friday, 1st March

A service entitled “Praying for Slovenia” is being held at Holy Trinity Church, High Street, Stevenage, SG1 3DB. Refreshments will be served from 1.00 pm and the service commences at 2.00 pm. The leader is Rev'd John Whittle.

The service will be followed by further refreshments and there will be a Bring and Buy stall to cover expenses. Please call 01438 215091 if you require further information.

John Whittle

Meeting Point

This month, each of the four meetings will be held at Hilary's home at 8 St Martin's Road. The dates are 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th March.

The meetings start at 10.30 am and usually finish around 12 noon.

Hilary Dyster

KNEBWORTH FAMILY OF CHURCHES

Lent 2019

This year, Ash Wednesday is on 6th March. The **Christian Aid Frugal Lunch**, which is always held on the first Sunday of Lent, will be at **Trinity at 12.30 on Sunday, 10th March.**

Our Lent Groups will start in the week beginning 11th March. We are following the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland course called “The Mystery of God”; if you didn't sign up for a Lent Group but would like to have a look at the material, you can find all the information on the ctbi.org.uk website.

KFC Coffee Morning: Saturday 16th March, 10.00 am – 12 noon

This is always a good opportunity to meet up for a chat over a drink and cake. There will be the usual Traidcraft Stall – as well as the regular items, you will be able to order your Fair Trade Easter Eggs.

United Taize Service

This will be held at **St Thomas More** on **Sunday, 17th March at 5.30 pm**. It is an opportunity for reflection and prayer with chants, readings and silence.

You will be very welcome at all of these events.

If you would like any more information, you can contact me at christine.goodwin51@btinternet.com or on 01438 365918

Christine Goodwin, Secretary: The Knebworth Family of Churches

SOCIAL NEWS AND EVENTS

On **Friday, 29th March**, there will be Pub Lunch at The Red Lion, Woolmer Green at 12.00 pm. Please note that this was originally scheduled for 15th March but has had to be put back to the new date.

Due to circumstance beyond our control, the Men's Breakfast that was arranged for Saturday, 23rd February, had to be postponed. A new date has not yet been fixed but it is likely to be towards the end of April (after Easter) or during early May.

METHODIST NEWS

Looking Ahead

Sunday, 19th May - an event to involve young people from the Circuit sharing with us something of what they did at 3Generate. This time together will also include tea and worship. Venue and time to be confirmed; posters will be sent round to the churches in the next month.

Saturday, 31st August - the Welcome Service for Rev'd Val Reid, who is joining the Circuit in September with special responsibility for Christchurch and Pirton will take place at Christchurch at 4.00 pm. The service will be led by Rev'd David Chapman, Chair of Beds, Essex and Herts District.

Christine Warren, on behalf of the Circuit Stewards

Malcolm's Message

Dear Friends,

We have had the first snow of the new year. Nothing remarkable, nothing to be anxious about, in many ways we have had a very slight inconvenience.

There is nothing really unexpected in the news reports about the weather - the scale might cause comment but by and large we expect cold and snow in winter. If I am honest, I have welcomed the news about the weather, not because I like the weather news particularly but because it takes some focus away from Brexit.

I suspect that for many of us, Brexit has become difficult. The ongoing debate on the whole has confirmed people in their views and has sharpened divisions. The ongoing debate has allowed both sides to use extravagant and often vitriolic language when engaging in exchange of opinions.

The Brexit question has polarised society and many people are expressing concerns about safety and welcome - on both sides of the debate. The issue has polarised households and has made things difficult, to the extent that many people prefer silence rather than share views - it is as if we know what we think, and we won't change our minds.

Churches have been as divided and split as any other part of the wider community. I don't think that there is a view which should be adopted because we are a Church - diversity of opinion and practice has long been a part of the reality of Church life. What is important is that we as Christians do not lose sight of the importance and place of our faith in how we relate to each other.

Words like respect, acceptance of difference, tolerance of each other, listening to each other, even love, have to be part of our ongoing life together. We have to accept the biblical and theological imperatives that mean we welcome the stranger, feed the hungry, house the homeless, care for the prisoner, do what we can to heal the sick. These are not political slogans, they are theological and faith imperatives. They have nothing to do with how we relate to Europe; they have everything to do with how we relate to each other.

The Brexit debate may have heightened divisions and given some an opportunity to share in ways that are unpleasant and to express opinions that at the best are intolerant. The Christian response is to affirm the nature of the love of God and to insist that debate be done in a way that is respectful. There is also something deeply profound about the need for truth in the way we talk and express opinions.

Sadly, the Brexit debate has led to the sacrifice of tolerance and truth in public debate. The place of the Church is to affirm God's love, affirm the need for truth and to want respect and decency from all people. We will need to be one nation, as the church we can share in the task of healing so we can make the best of whatever happens over Brexit.

Wishing you every blessing
Malcolm

{The above items were reproduced from the February edition of the North Herts Methodist Circuit Newsletter}

Bradwell Gathering and Pilgrimage; Saturday, 6th July

This will be a free day of pilgrimage, worship, activities and talks for the whole family beginning at 10.30 am at St Thomas' Church in Bradwell-on-Sea for the Pilgrimage walk.

See the website for full information: www.bradwellpilgrimage.co.uk

On behalf of Margaret Noble

**You are invited to attend
A Free Church Services
In the Lady Chapel on:**



THE CATHEDRAL AND
ABBEY CHURCH OF
SĀINT ĀLBĀN

Wednesday, 6th March at 11.00 am
Preacher: **The Reverend Dr Paul Goodcliff**
General Secretary, Churches Together in England

Wednesday, 3rd April at 11.00 am
Preacher: **Major David Evans**
Territorial Ecumenical Officer, The Salvation Army

The services will be followed by a fellowship lunch in the Abbots Kitchen and all are welcome

Free Church Ecumenical Chaplain: Reverend Simon Carver,
Email: simoncarver@btinternet.com

KNEBORTH FAMILY OF CHURCHES

EASTER GOOD EGG CLUB



Fun !!

TRINITY CHURCH, PARK LANE

Tues. 16th April 10am-12pm

Wed. 17th April 10am-2.15pm

(Wednesday includes lunch for all ages)

Years R-6

Games, Quizzes, Drama, Craft, Cookery

No charge (donations welcome)

We advise early booking (by 24th March if possible)

For more information/to book a place contact

Gill Hughes 01438 813049

GoodEggClubBookings@gmail.com



Join us as our director of music, Victor de Paula, and minister Steven Cooper lead this special event at Trinity Church starting at 2.00 pm on Saturday 30th March. All are invited, for what will be a joyful and praise-filled opportunity to share in the riches, both old and new, of the church's main hymnbook *Singing the Faith*. Come to sing, or to hear! It will be an opportunity to learn new songs that will enhance and enrich our weekly worship at Trinity, as well as to join in many of the classic favourite hymns that we know and love. The event will run until about 4.00 pm; refreshments will be provided, and all are welcome!

Please send items for the April issue of Trinity Times to Graham Fothergill by Thursday, 21st March:

E-mail gafothergill@gmail.com

Telephone 01438 813371

or drop them in at 7 Stockens Dell, Knebworth
