

## **TRINITY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, WIMBLEDON**

### **Church Secretaries' Annual Review – for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017**

**The Minister** As always we are sincerely grateful for the ministry of the Revd Dominic Grant both within Trinity and in the wider community. He has continued to lead Trinity's worship life with insight and care, to be attentive in pastoral care, and to challenge us to be witnesses to our faith through service to our local and global community. Our thanks also go to Miriam for her share in Dominic's ministry and, in particular, for the considerable contribution she makes to Trinity's music.

**Associate Minister** The Chinese-speaking group in particular, but all at Trinity, greatly value the ministry of Revd Ernest Yu. In late 2017 Southern Synod conducted a review of Ernest's ministry that we hope will equip him and Trinity for his continued work.

A very regular attendance of around eleven gathers every Sunday morning in the Old Hall for worship in Cantonese, with Mandarin translation. We are very blessed to have this group as part of our Trinity fellowship.

**Membership** During the year we celebrated the baptisms of one infant (Carter Stirling-Currin) and one adult (Eric Chau).

We received five new members during the year. A number of visitors were welcomed throughout 2017, some of whom are now worshipping with us regularly.

No marriages were celebrated during 2017.

We record with sadness the death during the year of two members, Eric Hunt and Alan Need, and also of former Trinity members Harry Hinson, John Mason and John Melrose.

The number on the roll at 31 December 2017 was 185 (a decrease of 3 over 2016).

**The Eldership** The pastoral care of Trinity's members and adherents is shared between the Ministers and Elders. The Elders' Meeting before each morning Communion Service offers an opportunity to share pastoral news.

We learned with sadness of the death of Emeritus Elder, Alan Need in November. For many years before retirement to the South Coast, Alan had played a very full and active part in Trinity's life.

The Elders met in September for a one-day conference focussed on the need for boldness in our church life. They were challenged in one session to take on leadership of morning worship, and in another to focus on our mission and priorities and to establish a clear direction for the next period. Work on both these areas is ongoing.

Several Elders also attended the "Make A Difference" training day in September for Elders and others led by Southern Synod's Training & Development Officer, Revd Andy Twilley.

We are grateful to Andrew Sutton, Elders' Secretary, who has continued to ensure the smooth organisation of Elders' Sunday duties each week, and of our Communion services.

**Elders' Council** The Council met eleven times during the year. In March, under the agreed procedure for the election of Elders, Ian Henning and Andrew Melrose were ordained to the eldership and they, along with Mark Dennis and Kwame Sarpong were inducted to serve on the Elders' Council for a term of three years. Robin Ingram and Pam Rostron were elected for a second three-year term.

**Trustees** The Elders' Council (the Minister and elected elders) acting as the Trustees of Trinity United Reformed Church (Wimbledon) Charity, were responsible for the general oversight of all Church objectives and activities and specifically for the financial administration of the Church,

together with the care and maintenance of the Church premises and the manse. They met once during the year, with Elders' Council meetings also dealing with Trustee matters.

**Teams** The work of our eight Teams (Children & Youth Work; Communications & Publicity; Finance; Lettings; Mission & Outreach; Pastoral & Membership; Property; Worship & Faith Development) continues week by week. They have each met quarterly.

Last year we reported that a number of Teams are in urgent need of new members and in some cases new leadership. It continues to be a major concern for the Church Secretaries that we have been unable to find new leadership. Without dedicated people willing to undertake these roles the work of our church is severely disadvantaged. We would ask all members to give serious consideration to any requests for help; in most cases this will not represent a big demand on your time.

The Roll Review Group and a Calendar Planning Group also each met twice during the year.

**Church Meetings** Amongst the promises made by every church member on joining Trinity was a promise to participate in the 'full privileges and responsibilities' of the URC. One important way in which members can do this is by their attendance at Church Meeting. Our low attendance continues to concern the Minister and Elders' Council, and attempts are continually being made to encourage members take seriously their full responsibility of membership.

Five Church Meetings were held during the year (one on a Sunday morning and four mid-week), with attendances of 21, 68, 17, 23 and 24 – hardly representative of the total Trinity membership.

A proposal to install an audio-visual system in the church was approved (February), an organ project group was established (May), and it was agreed to discontinue monthly Sunday Evening Services (September).

**Worship & faith development** Communion Services were held monthly on the first Sunday morning of each month, on Maundy Thursday, Easter Sunday and Christmas Eve.

There was All-Age worship on seven Sunday mornings, with Junior Church involvement especially on Mothering Sunday and at Harvest.

We are grateful to Mark Dennis who led two services during the year.

Average adult attendance at morning worship was 90. The largest congregations of the year were for Easter Day (142), Carols and Readings by Candlelight (137), the Dedication of the Ceri Lewis window (134), and Carols Among the Trees at the close of the Christmas Tree Festival (120).

Members of the congregation have continued to provide our Prayers of Intercession each week and our appreciation goes to all of them for the preparation and thought they put into their prayers. Similarly, a rota of Bible readers provides participation by a good number of members of the congregation each Sunday. Our thanks go to them and to Pam Rostron and Joyce Sarpong who organise the respective rotas.

Numbers attending Sunday evening services had declined over many years, and in September, Church Meeting agreed a recommendation from Worship Team and Elders' Council to discontinue the regular evening services.

Dominic led our Lent course, Holy Week evening meditations and inspirational services for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Day.

In July, Colin Lambert led a Morning Service and was presented with his Certificate of Recognition as a Lay Preacher.

In September we marked 'Creation Time' – a time of prayer for the protection of Creation and the promotion of sustainable lifestyles that reverse our contribution to climate change.

Also in September, Revd Roger Jones was inducted to serve as Minister of the pastorate of Ewell & Tolworth URC.

2017 saw a new venture for Trinity with the first of our Messy Church sessions. With the theme of Noah's Ark, 31 children and adults enjoyed a time of worship, craft activities, fellowship and a meal together and the event was a real success. Thanks must go to Susan Collins and her team of helpers for introducing welcome addition to Trinity's calendar. We look forward to further sessions.

A group of ten from Trinity attended an ecumenical Service at Westminster Abbey in October to mark 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation

Rededication Sunday, held annually on the first Sunday of October, was as always an opportunity to celebrate and renew our shared participation in Trinity's work and witness.

Over three evenings in Advent, Dominic led us in an exploration of traditional Advent themes as they are currently experienced in partner-regions of the URC's global development partnership, Commitment for Life (Hope in Zimbabwe, Peace in Central America, and Love in Bangladesh).

Christmas is always a particularly busy time at Trinity. This year's celebration Services began with 'Carols Among the Trees' at the close of the Christmas Tree Festival, and continued the following Sunday with the customary children's nativity play, Carols & Readings by Candlelight, Christingle Service, Communion by Candlelight, and Christmas Day Celebration Worship. All were very well attended and inspirational services.

During the year it was encouraging to hear of an increasing number of Trinity people reading the URC's free Daily Devotions online.

The Queens Road house group (studying the Sermon on the Mount) and the Church & Society group (addressing a wide variety of topical issues) have continued to meet monthly. Both these groups would welcome new members.

In the Autumn, a series of four well-attended training seminars was led by Revd Andy Twilley, Training & Development Officer for Southern Synod, with the aim of equipping existing and potential leaders of small groups, as well as exploring what small groups can offer to the life of a local church. The Elders' Council will be encouraging further development in 2018.

**Music** Music plays an important part in the worship at Trinity. We are most grateful to everyone who has been part of this year's music making, and especially to our Director of Music, Andrew Davies.

Over the year, in addition to his regular commitment to choir and organ, and to the young people through Supersonic, Andrew has led all aspects of our music, not least in the musical, 'Son of Encouragement', 'Trinity's Got Talent', the choir's participation in Merton SingFest, and the Christmas Tree Festival. His enthusiasm and energy seem boundless, but he would be greatly encouraged to hear of anyone interested in joining the choir!

**Outreach & Ecumenical links** This year's musical production, 'The Son of Encouragement', based on the life of Barnabas, with script and songs written by Roger Jones and directed by Katrina Clifford, was once again a highlight of the year and was performed at Trinity and at Tolworth URC.

Our third Christmas Tree Festival, entitled 'Christmas Around the World' and held over four days in December, involved a good number of Trinity folk in the planning and organisation. We attracted a large number of visitors from the local community and beyond. Sponsorship for the Festival was obtained from church individuals and organisations local businesses and our premises hirers, enabling us to donate £3,500 to Save the Children.

On Sunday nights from January to March we again hosted the Merton Winter Night Shelter. A good team from Trinity helped to complete our sixth annual shift, and fourteen guests were given a hot meal, overnight accommodation, and a cooked breakfast. Our thanks to all who organised and took part in this very worthwhile project.

Christian Aid was supported by the annual house-to-house collection and car boot sale during Christian Aid week, and by carol singing at Raynes Park station. We again supported the URC's Commitment for Life collections during Lent.

In May, Trinity hosted the 'listening launch' meeting of the Merton chapter of Citizens UK, an alliance of eighteen faith, education and community institutions working together for the common good.

We continued to support the work of Faith in Action and the Wimbledon Foodbank throughout the year. Our Harvest giving was again devoted to the Foodbank and we welcomed a speaker from the Wimbledon Foodbank to our Morning Worship, giving us a better insight into their work.

As has been our custom for several years, our choir and congregation joined those of St Mark's Anglican Church for an Ash Wednesday service, this year held at Trinity.

In July we welcomed Pastor Johann Riedel and a party of young people from north-east Germany who stayed at Trinity for a week and took part in our worship one Sunday.

**Children's and Youth Work** 2017 has proved to be a year of some change for Children & Youth Work at Trinity. Hannah Jones resigned as Youth Worker in August to continue her studies, and Roger Jones, having been called to serve as Minister at Tolworth & Ewell stepped down as Children and Youth Work Team Leader. Cathy Dundee agreed to take on the role of Safeguarding Coordinator from Gillian Jones.

As a result, in the Autumn, Claire Wood was appointed as Children & Youth Work Team Leader in succession to Roger, and Sarah Elliot took over as Junior Church Leader. We were very grateful to Gillian Jones for continuing to volunteer for the Autumn term in Junior Church and lead Pilots. Katrina Clifford and Barbara Nunoo were welcomed to the Junior Church team.

Despite the changes, provision and activities for the children and young people continued apace across the year. The Junior Church children continued to meet together with an average number of 11 children (aged 0-18 years) worshipping on Sunday mornings across the year, as well as participating in All-Age Worship. Junior Church also had a visit to the Pantomime, followed by their annual New Year Party in January and Fireworks Party in November, both of which are firm favourites in the calendar and were well-attended.

Pilots enjoyed another busy year, following the Feast & Festivals programme and organising their own festival in July. In May, a number of Trinity families joined hundreds of other URC visitors and Pilot companies for the 'Big Day Out' to Warwick Castle. Pilots also held a cake sale in November aid of Save the Children.

Supersonic, running on alternate Saturdays to Pilots during the Spring and Summer, had another busy year. Their activities included a live Saturday morning radio show at Surrey Hills Radio; participation in Trinity's Got Talent and the musical 'Son of Encouragement'; video workshops; recording a Christmas CD; singing with the adult choir at Merton's SingFest and at Centre Court, raising £220 for Save the Children; and performing their Christmas pantomime at the Christmas Tree Festival.

Trinity Toddlers, meeting on Friday mornings in the Old Hall, continues to thrive, run by Janet Young, Susan Collins and Miriam Grant with their helpers. With an attendance of 20 to 25 children and their carers, there is now a waiting list. Bible-based stories and crafts have been introduced.

Friday Fellowship, led by Hannah Jones until the Summer and thereafter by a rota of valued volunteers, continued to meet regularly. Activities included cooking and baking; board games; mini-Olympics; DVD nights and much more.

Film Club, organised and led by Pam Rostron, continued to provide a welcome opportunity for 15+ young people to come together at Trinity. Trinity is producing some excellent film critics and two of the members have been inspired to take a course on how to make films on a smartphone.

An excellent Jazz Evening was organised by one of our young people, Matthew Grant. Unfortunately, due to low numbers, the summer Synod Youth Camp did not take place.

The first of two Safeguarding training events took place in October with the second planned for Spring 2018.

The year was rounded off with an delightful Nativity Play, written and directed by Katrina Clifford. It was performed by over twenty Junior Church children, YPs and adults, who sang, narrated and created the tableaux to tell the Christmas story during a morning service. As ever, the Christingle service continued to prove popular on Christmas Eve.

Our thanks to all who give their time and energy to children's and youth work at Trinity, a key part of the life and work of the church.

**Property matters** In May, Church Meeting agreed to the creation of an Organ Project Group to undertake an assessment of our current 1927 Foskett organ and to obtain costings for necessary remedial work; to investigate options of a rebuild, redundant or new organ; and to bring a proposal to Church Meeting in due course. The Group has employed the services of an independent organ adviser to work with us to achieve the most appropriate recommendation for Trinity.

On Trinity Sunday in June we celebrated the dedication of a new rose window in the Old Hall, commemorating the ministries of our former Minister, Revd D Ceri Lewis and Sue Lewis, and funded by a special appeal. It was a very happy occasion, attended by members of the Lewis family, and by present and former members of Trinity.

During the Summer a new audio-visual system was installed in the church which has greatly added to the worship and singing on Sundays, along with a digital screen, new sliding doors and a defibrillator in the Mansel Road Centre.

We are fortunate that we have such a versatile building that many external groups also use, but this means we need to maintain and update it so that people can continue to use and enjoy it. Our caretakers carry out a lot of regular maintenance to keep it in good order.

Unfortunately the Property Team is not active now, and we have had no Property Team Leader during the year. This area of our church life represents a considerable concern for us and for the Trustees.

**Social activities** During the year we held a number of social events: Chinese New Year Supper (February); 'Trinity's Got Talent' (April); Zoo Night at London Zoo (June); Hampton Court river boat trip (July); Celebrity organ recital at St Paul's Cathedral (August); Summer walk in Surrey (August); Trinity Afternoon Tea (October) and Richmond Park cycle ride and picnic (September). These were arranged for no other reason than to bring people together, and they were enjoyed by those who participated. Our thanks to Dodie Khurshid and others who were involved in the organisation of social events.

For the same reason, coffee time after Sunday morning worship offers an opportunity to catch up with each other. We are always keen to hear from anyone who is interested in helping with these events.

Monday evening is Badminton Night for an enthusiastic small group playing in the Old Hall. New players are always very welcome.

The Wednesday Social Group, meeting on the first afternoon of most months, again provided a varied programme of speakers and music, together with excellent teas.

**Publicity & communications** Our membership and those beyond our doors are kept in contact with our life and events through a variety of communications. The weekly Notice Papers, Church Directory and Calendars of Services and Events were published during the year. Our thanks go to Anne Broadbridge who works diligently each month to produce *Trinity News*. A new notice board at the front of the church enables us to better advertise our services and events.

A significant number find us via our website ([www.trinitywimbledon.org](http://www.trinitywimbledon.org)). Twitter (@TrinityWimbledn) and our two Facebook pages (trinitywimbledon and manselroadcentre) have all been active this year. Do watch them for up-to-date church news and comment.

**Mansel Road Centre** The Centre continued to be used extensively by church organisations and by private, commercial and community hirers. Despite the loss of one major hirer, our lettings income remained unchanged under Elizabeth Scharinger's administration and the Centre remains a

very popular venue in great demand by local organisations. Income from lettings now represents 48% of our total income.

Although our two part-time caretakers cover much of the load, we are indebted to our small band of volunteer stewards without whom we would be unable to let our facilities and continue to raise vital income.

We are grateful to the many volunteers who give so much time to the church: -

Team leaders & members; door stewards; all those involved in children's and youth work; choir and musicians; minute takers; organisers of social events; church archivist; safeguarding; health and safety coordination; church gardens maintenance; those on the Sunday rotas for opening the church, Communion washing up, morning coffee, transport, arranging and distributing flowers; 'Reform' distribution; Traidcraft stall; and women's book club..... The list is endless and all roles, 'front of house' or behind the scenes, contribute hugely to the life and ministry of Trinity.

**Our thanks to all those who make possible all aspects of the work of our church. We pray for God's blessing on the worship of our church, on its witness, and on its wide ranging work that all may be to His Greater Glory.**

Catherine Paul & Sam Elliot  
May 2018