

Trinity News



No. 492 December 2019 - January 2020

**Trinity United Reformed Church,
Mansel Road, Wimbledon**

Minister's Letter



Dear Friends,

There's a kind of 'reset button' that's metaphorically pressed in churches as we reach the final month of one year and the first month of the next. It's all to do with the Lectionary: the table of Bible readings appointed for each Sunday. Across the denominations some congregations follow the Lectionary studiously, some only sparingly if at all; and many, including Trinity, will observe the Lectionary most of the time but will depart from it for particular sermon series from time to time.

The 'reset button' comes into play on Advent Sunday (which in 2019 falls on 1 December), as this actually marks the change of Lectionary Year. There are three Years in the cycle; each of the three focuses in particular on following one Gospel (Matthew, Mark, or Luke) through the course of the twelve months (with readings from the fourth Gospel, John, interspersed in all three Lectionary Years).

On this occasion, we're embarking now upon Lectionary Year A – for which Matthew's Gospel will be our companion and guide. So, by way of brief introduction, here are some of the things we can expect as we journey through Matthew's account of Jesus' life, teaching and ministry:

- *A presentation of Jesus as the culmination of God's purposes and as the true interpreter of God's teaching.* Matthew takes every opportunity to show how the Hebrew Scriptures point to Christ (the term 'fulfil' occurs more in his Gospel than in any of the others). And he gathers Jesus' instruction into five long addresses or 'discourses': this is thought to be a deliberate allusion to the first five Books of the Old Testament – the books associated with Moses the 'Law-giver'. Thus, Matthew's Gospel urges us to be rooted in Christ.

- *Some stories and perspectives you won't find anywhere else.* That'll be especially noticeable in these two months as we celebrate Christmas-time and Epiphany: the narrative of Jesus' birth is told from Joseph's angle rather than Mary's, and it's Matthew alone who tells us of the Star and the Magi ('Wise Men'). Later in the Gospel, we'll find the way of God described as "like hidden treasure... a pearl of great price". And it's solely Matthew who relays Jesus' invitation "Come to me, all you who are weary... for my yoke is easy, my burden is light". The unique insights in Matthew's Gospel can keep us growing in faith.
- *A particular concern for the community.* Matthew is the only Gospel-writer to use the word 'church' (*ekklesia*), and a whole chapter is devoted to instruction about how disciples of Jesus should deal with one another: nurturing and maintaining respectful and loving relationships, handling tensions and disagreements sensitively and positively (chapter 18). Not that Matthew only has the community of the church in his sights: he alone gives us Jesus' parable of judgement known as 'the sheep and the goats', to impress upon us the importance of caring for the most marginalised or vulnerable in society. In Matthew's Gospel we find strong encouragement to continue sharing and serving in love.

'Rooted in Christ... growing in faith... sharing and serving in love' – a familiar set of principles to us at Trinity! Of course, it's a programme by no means unique to Matthew among the Biblical writers. But as we embark upon this Lectionary year in which his Gospel is featured, it's an agenda worth repeating and remembering.

Every Blessing

Dominic

DECEMBER 2019



1	SUN	<i>Advent Sunday</i>	10:30 Elders' Meeting 11:00 Morning worship with Holy Communion (to include speaker from London's Air Ambulance Charity)
3	Tue	10:30- 20:00 14:30	Preparation for Christmas Tree Festival Pastoral Team
4	Wed	10:30- 20:00	Preparation for Christmas Tree Festival
5	Thu	10:30- 20:00	Preparation for Christmas Tree Festival
6	Fri	10:30- 19:00 20:00	<i>Christmas Tree Festival open</i> Friday Fellowship
7	Sat	10:30- 19:00 11:00- 15:00	<i>Christmas Tree Festival open</i> <i>Craft & Gift Fair</i>
8	SUN	11:00 12:30 16:30	Morning worship <i>Christmas Tree Festival open</i> <i>Carols Among the Trees</i>

10	Tue	19:30	Lectio Divina
11	Wed	14:30	Wednesday Social Group – Festive Afternoon Tea & Christmas music
		20:00	Elders' Council
12	Thu	20:00	Church & Society
13	Fri	20:00	Friday Fellowship
15	SUN	11:00	All-age worship & Children's Nativity play
22	SUN	11:00 18:30	Morning worship Carols & Readings by Candlelight followed by mulled wine & mince pies
24	Tue	Christmas Eve 17:30 23:15	Christingle service Communion by Candlelight
25	Wed	Christmas Day 10:30	Christmas Day celebration
26	Thu	Boxing Day holiday	
29	SUN	11:00	Morning worship led by Trinity elders

This year's Nativity at the 11 am service on 15 December will be a traditional affair, with the children taking on the well-loved, classic roles, accompanied by narration from Sarah Elliot and biblical readings from the young people. Songs which we have enjoyed over the last few years will also feature. If your children would like to take part, please e-mail Sarah on sarahelliott278@gmail.com.



JANUARY

2020



1	Wed	New Year's Day - Bank Holiday	
2	Thu	10:00	Christmas Tree Festival dismantling
5	SUN	Epiphany Sunday	
		10:30	Elders' meeting
		11:00	Morning Worship with Holy Communion
8	Wed	20:00	Elders' Council
9	Thu	20:00	Church & Society
10	Fri	10:00	Trinity Toddlers
		20:00	Friday Fellowship
12	SUN	11:00	Morning Worship
16	Thu	10:30	Lettings Team
17	Fri	10:00	Trinity Toddlers
		20:00	Friday Fellowship
18	Sat	16:00	Junior Church & Pilots New Year party
18-25		Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	
19	SUN	11:00	Morning Worship
23	Thu	20:00	Finance Team
24	Fri	10:00	Trinity Toddlers
		20:00	Friday Fellowship
26	SUN	11:00	Morning Worship
		13:00	Merton Winter Night Shelter begins
30	Thu	20:00	Communications & Publicity Team
31	Fri	10:00	Trinity Toddlers
		20:00	Friday Fellowship

Message from the Southern Synod

O, Come let us adore Him

Christmas 2019



Dear Friends,

All I want for Christmas is my two front teeth! At the October Synod Together meeting in October we said farewell to Revd Nicola Furley-Smith after 8 ½ years as Moderator of Southern Synod. We wish her well as she takes up her new role as Secretary to Ministries in the URC nationally. She has certainly left a gap in our lives and for now that gap is being filled by the two of us (Revd Bridget Banks and Revd George Watt) supported by Revd Paul Dean covering the Ecumenical work of the Synod. We hope that someone will be in post by the summer next year. Please pray that the right person would be found to permanently fill the gap.

But there is something endearing about the smile of someone missing their two front teeth! It makes you aware of the other teeth which are every bit as important as the front ones. And we would remind you that the Synod is also made up of the Office and Field Staff, the Ministers, Local Church Leaders, Elders and all the members and adherents of our local churches – all playing our part in the mission of the Church. Let us smile broadly and celebrate each other.

As Christians what we long for isn't shiny new incisors but more of God's kingdom. At Christmas we celebrate the coming of Christ to fill the gaps in our lives and in our world. He comes to bring light in our darkness, hope in our despair and peace in our troubled world. We are invited to come and gaze on the baby born in a humble stable. He was the one that had been longed for and wished for to rescue and to save.

But it wasn't a one-off event. Christ comes afresh to the present troubled world to bring light, hope and peace. At the time of writing this letter we are preparing for a General Election and politicians are promising how to cure the ills of the present world. Promises can sound very easy; the hard thing is making it a reality. We rejoice

that God didn't just promise us that he would love us, but he showed it in a very tangible way by sending Jesus into the world. As unbelievable as it may sound this was part of God 's plan to change hearts, minds and the whole world. As John Bell & Graham Maule from Wild Goose put it:

Who would think that what was needed
To transform and save the earth
Might not be a plan or army,
Proud in purpose, proved in worth?
Who would think, despite derision,
That a child should lead the way?
God surprises earth with heaven,
Coming here on Christmas Day.

This is the Good News that we will be celebrating in our churches when there is so many challenges and so much uncertainty in our world today.

But we are also invited to join in with this work. We all have a part to play. At the recent LICC (London Institute of Contemporary Christianity) day we were encouraged to avoid saying 'I am just a...' as though we have no part in God's work. So, we should avoid thinking that we are just a florist, bin man, accountant, grandparent. We all have a part to play in filling the gaps in our world today. We can be the answer to our own prayers 'All I want is...' As we rejoice in God sending his Son into the world may we discover how he sends us to continue the work that he began.

We would like to wish all of you in local churches a happy and peaceful Christmas. And may you faithfully proclaim that Christ has been born amongst us bringing light in our darkness, hope where there is despair and peace where there is unrest.

God bless.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George".

Rev'd George Watt

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bridget".

Rev'd Bridget Banks



Baptism

On Sunday 17 November the Minister baptised **Amelia Rose**, daughter of Bruce and Nirvana Lowe.



Death

Kathleen Shipton (1919-2019)

Kathleen was born at home on Newton Road in Wimbledon; she attended Dundonald Primary School, then Pelham Road Secondary School. After completing her education at Merton Technical College, she undertook a secretarial course and then found work at the Post Office Savings Bank in Kensington. It was at this time that she met Lionel (known to all as Len); their courtship was filled with dancing and laughter.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, Len was called up and deployed to the Gold Coast region of Africa (present-day Ghana); meanwhile Kathleen donned a tin hat to serve as a Warden, whilst working as a civil servant in Putney. For most of the war years they were apart; however, on 19 December 1942, whilst Len was home on leave, they married at the bomb-damaged Congregational Church on Worple Road.

Following the War and after a short period living in Essex, in 1953 Kathleen and Len bought their home on Toynbee Road (a stone's throw from the house where she had been born), and they would both live here for the rest of their lives. Their first child, Phillip, sadly died at only three days old; their daughter Diana was born in 1955. During this time, Kathleen was also caring at home for her widowed father who was suffering with MS.

Kathleen was herself widowed in 1980 at the age of 61, the same year in which she became a member at Trinity, and four years before the birth of her granddaughter Emma with whom she would develop a close bond over the years. Holidays in the West Country became a regular summer feature, and Kathleen also loved following sport especially rugby and cricket – she developed quite a knowledge of these, making sure to keep up-to-date with the latest scores and team news.

In matters of practical organisation Kathleen was known for her firm hand – she knew how she wanted things done! At Trinity she brought this skill in particular to the Coffee and Chat group over many years.

In more recent times, Kathleen was increasingly restricted to home by the frailness of age along with hearing loss. She died in the early hours of 18 October, only a couple of months short of her hundredth birthday; her funeral was held at Trinity on 5 November. We record with thanksgiving her long and faithful association with the Church; and we extend our condolences to her daughter Diana, her granddaughter Emma, and their families.



Canadian Wedding

Trinity people will be interested to see the following photographs from the wedding on 24 August in Cornwall, Ontario, Canada (the hometown of the bride) of Sean Mayes and Meghan Cornett. Sean was our Director of Music, between October 2014 and July 2015 whilst he was a post-graduate student in the UK. Meghan, also a professional musician, accompanied him, and taught in Surrey schools. We took both of them to our hearts.

They live and work now in New York City. Sean is Music Director at the Fourth Universalist Society (Unitarian) which is close to Central Park. Both are busy in their musical careers and with teaching in various roles. Sean and Meghan send love to all at Trinity, and to this charming young couple we reciprocate warmly, and send many congratulations and every good wish for the future. - **AMcL**





Christmas Tree Festival

Friday 6 & Saturday 7 Dec (10:30 to 19:00)
Sunday 8 Dec (12:30 to 16:00)

Craft & Gift Fair
Saturday 7 Dec (11:00 to 15:00)

Carols Among the Trees on Sunday at 16:30

The big day is almost here when our 5th Christmas Tree Festival will be open! A great deal of work has been going on behind the scenes and many of you will be busy preparing to decorate a tree.

It's not too late to get involved. For things to run smoothly, we need many offers of help. During the Festival we need volunteers for a range of jobs – especially to welcome our visitors. Please look out for the flyer with suggestions of ways in which you can help. Let us know as soon as possible what you will do.

Most importantly, tell your friends and neighbours about the Festival and bring them along to see the spectacular trees. Bring the children to meet Father Christmas in his grotto on Saturday, or why not invite everyone to hear the live music on Saturday or Sunday (look out for further details) or 'Carols Among the Trees' on Sunday afternoon?

Admission to the Festival will be free, but we hope to raise a substantial amount for London's Air Ambulance through donations.

London's Air Ambulance speaker

On Sunday 1 December we look forward to welcoming paramedic Rachel Peacock from London's Air Ambulance who will speak during our Morning Worship about the life-saving work of the charity we are supporting at our Christmas Tree Festival.

Further information at:

Website: <http://ctf.trinitywimbledon.org/>
Facebook: [ctf.trinitywimbledon.org](https://www.facebook.com/ctf.trinitywimbledon.org)

Twitter: @tree_trinity
Instagram: @christmastreefest

London's Air Ambulance

our Christmas Tree Festival charity



London's Air Ambulance is the charity that delivers an advanced trauma team to London's most seriously injured patients.

Using a helicopter from 08:00 to sunset, and rapid response cars at night or in adverse weather situations, London's Air Ambulance brings the hospital to the patient when time is critical. We perform innovative and potentially life-saving procedures usually found in the emergency department on-scene. The team, consisting of an advanced trauma doctor, paramedic and consultant on most missions, can perform treatments such as open heart surgery, blood transfusions and general anaesthetic by the roadside.

By providing intervention as quickly as possible after injury, we aim to give patients the best chance of survival, and best quality of life, after trauma.

We serve the 10 million people that live work and travel within the M25, treating an average of five patients every day. The most common incidents we attend include road traffic collisions, stabbings and shootings, falls from height and incidents on the rail network.

For 30 years, London's Air Ambulance Charity has been there for everyone who needs it. And we're still here, right now.

Today our cause is as clear and compelling as ever; to save the lives of critically injured people through rapid response and cutting-edge medical care. Help us to be there for the next 30 years.



Christmas Music at Trinity

Sounds of the Season

Celebrating Christmas at Trinity isn't complete without some seasonal music and this year once again promises to provide some special memories.

There are opportunities for everyone to get involved, so why sit in the pews when you could sing with the choir or, if you play an instrument, play with the band? Please do support.

Christmas Tree Festival 6 – 8 December

Saturday 7 December

13:10-14:00 A classical Trio lunchtime concert by Kathleen Gilbert, Jayne Ross and Miriam Grant (piano, violin and viola) playing Mozart, Brahms and Gershwin.

17:30-18:30 Concert by The Barnes Concert Band and a Sax Quartet who will play a mixture of seasonal and non-seasonal pieces including some congregational carols, they will be joined by member of Wimbledon High Junior School Choir.

Sunday 8 December

14:00-15:00 Austėja Paulauskiene (13yr old pianist and winner of the International Young Talent Competition for the instrumentalist category in London).

Carols Among the Trees concludes the Christmas Tree Festival Programme with a family-friendly selection of lighter carols, accompanied by our own Trinity Band.

December's Wednesday Social Group - 11 December

This month's Social Group will be a Christmas celebration - we will have seasonal music from Miriam Grant and Andrew Davies, followed by a Christmas tea. We will meet on the 11 December, at 2.30 pm which is the second Wednesday of December and, as always, any member or friend of the congregation will be very welcome to join us.

Service of Carols & Readings by Candlelight - 22 December

The highlight of the festive season is our carol service at 18:30 on the Sunday before Christmas. Accompanied as usual by a brass quintet and the Christmas debut of our new Johannus organ, our choir will lead a beautiful selection of Rutter, Chilcott, Carter, Arnesen and Willcocks, in the glow of candlelight and our many festival Christmas trees.

Trinity's Christmas Services 15, 24 & 25 December

Our band will also feature at the children's Nativity service on Sunday 15 December, Christingle Service on Christmas Eve and our Christmas Day morning service as well.

If you enjoy singing, and feel comfortable with a musical score, please do consider joining our enhanced choir for our Service of Carols and readings by Candlelight. It's even more special when you're singing it with us rather than just in the congregation. Rehearsals are on Friday nights at 20:00 on 13 and 20 December, along with a rehearsal on Sunday 22 itself at 15:00 followed by a festive choir tea.

If you play an instrument of any description, please don't leave it at home! Our band welcomes instrumentalists of all ages and abilities to join in, and we can provide music that's accessible or challenging in equal measure, whichever you'd prefer.

If you'd like to be involved in any of our Christmas events at Trinity this December, please contact Andrew Davies at andrew.davies888@btinternet.com or 07584 811605.

For Your Diaries!



Chinese New Year Celebration Supper

2020 is the Year of the Rat. We will be holding a church supper to celebrate the Chinese New Year on Saturday 8 February at 6.30pm in the Mansel Road Centre. Look out for more details in the Notice Paper.



Our Messy Church Lights Party was a huge success on Sunday 3rd November. More people than ever joined us to celebrate and have fun. We welcomed some well-known faces and some new families too, and people of all ages. We decorated tea lights, made firework paintings with glue, paint and plenty of glitter! We cut out paper lanterns and decorated them, iced light and dark scenes on some cupcakes (which we enjoyed eating later) and cut and stuck our own handmade sparklers.

Our informal worship time led by Dominic is always good fun, and Andrew's music time was enjoyed by all (the horns and inflatable microphones were a huge hit!). The fireworks, viewed from the upstairs terrace, went off with a bang, and we ended the afternoon with hot dogs. It was wonderful to see so many faces enjoying themselves together.

Don't miss our next Messy Church on 15 March 2020 when we hope to welcome even more people!

Commitment for Life

Recently Kevin Snyman the programme officer for Commitment for Life visited Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. He writes that the Palestinians are desperate, feeling that the international community has for all practical purposes turned a deaf ear to their cry.

At www.bit.ly/IOPTalbum you can see some photos of the trip. And in particular do search Youtube for Kevin Snyman where you will find two short videos about the IOPT trip of 22 URC members. The trip is a result of the decision taken at Synod that we should know more about the situation in this area and about the people living there.

Margaret Tulloch



From Anni Struthers

The London Air Ambulance charity abseil raised £128,719, (sufficient to fund 55 missions). Once again thanks to all who supported and encouraged me and helped me to raise £723.



Walking in Nepal - Cathy Dundee

I'd like to say a huge thank you on behalf of the Church in Kathmandu for the clothes so generously donated by members of the congregation. I managed to squeeze them all into my rucksack.

The holiday was wonderful, I've never been an early riser but getting up at 4:30 to trek the final 500 metres up Poon Hill to watch the sunrise was well worth it. There were 27 in our group and over the course of the two weeks our leader, a vicar from Salisbury, took us on a whistlestop journey through the gospel of Mark. Reading Psalms in the morning with the view of the Himalayas is something I shall never forget.

Although Christianity is not illegal in Nepal, they can be imprisoned for attempting to spread the Word. It is difficult for Christians to get employment or to rent housing. The church, which now has 40 members, struggles to rent a floor in a mixed purpose block where they have one room and a small kitchen. For a long time, they were only allowed to use half of a room even though the other half was unused. They are growing slowly and often meet in people's homes and other places in the city.

Some children from the Church performed local dances for us and following worship (in a mixture of English and Nepalese), we shared in a wonderful meal which they had prepared for us.

They were truly delighted with the clothing and gifts which we brought, and they are saving them to use as Christmas gifts for the children. To hear about the work, they do with such limited resources and to see their passion and enthusiasm was truly humbling.



We made it!
Photos from Nepal



From the archives

Through the decades No10: 1970s



The congregation leaves church one Sunday in the late 1970s. These were days before 'Sunday coffee' became part of church life and members and friends met and socialised on the church forecourt before making their way home.

In the porch Revd John Weller is meeting the leaving congregation. An erudite but friendly man, John Weller led Trinity for five years between two long ministries. He encouraged the church in a period of self-examination, recognising that changes were necessary in the church's outlook and structure. During his time in Wimbledon, Trinity welcomed many of the members from the closing St Mark's URC.

Alan Young

Election to Elders' Council



Church members are invited to nominate candidates to serve as elders within this congregation. In the United Reformed Church, elders are called and ordained from among the local membership to be leaders within the congregation: to share with ministers the responsibility for the church's spiritual life, and to be at the forefront in giving their time, talents and energy to the church. Those elected (whether they are existing elders or joining the eldership for the first time) will serve on our Elders' Council, a role which also includes being a trustee of the local church. More broadly, elders may undertake roles of pastoral care, leading of worship, Christian education or serving on the committees that have specific responsibilities within the life of Trinity.

Being an elder is a demanding but vital and rewarding role; no one-size-fits-all. Ideally, the eldership represents a broad spectrum from within the congregation, but its strength depends on its unity.

In January, as a Trinity member you will receive a paper detailing the process for the election of new elders, together with a list of all church members eligible to serve in this way (the nomination paper). You are asked to consider prayerfully the names on the nomination paper, and to nominate **four** members whom you consider would best serve the church at this time. The closing date for receipt of nomination papers is **Sunday 26 January 2020**.

The election to the Elders' Council will take place at the Church Meeting on **Sunday 29 March**.

If you have any questions about the nominations or election process, or would like to know more about eldership, please speak with the Minister or Church Secretary (Catherine Paul).

Merton Winter Night Shelter

This year's Winter Night Shelter programme opened on Monday 25 November when the first of fourteen faith-based organisations in Merton welcomed into its premises some selected homeless people in the borough. Trinity will be hosting in the second phase and our first session will be on Sunday 26 January. We will open every Sunday thereafter to 8 March.

There will be one major change to the project as the organisers are planning to recruit a further 7 organisations to host the group so that the shelter can remain open until 26 April. In the past, we have had the difficult challenge of putting the group back on the street because we hosted the last Shelter session. That session should be much easier this year.

We have an excellent team of volunteers, but we can never have too many, so do let us know if you would be interested in taking part. New volunteers need to attend a training session, and this will take place on Sunday 12 January. More experienced volunteers are encouraged to attend too, especially if they have not been to the training before.

There are the four shifts – the afternoon, evening and supper, overnight, and morning + breakfast. Most centres open at 18.00 but, as there are few places where the homeless can go on a Sunday, we open at 14.00. Volunteers are needed for all shifts. Chefs are also most welcome (cooking for around 20 people) especially if you have a special pork dish because that is what we are asked to serve. The menu is coordinated to ensure guests receive a balanced diet. We also provide a vegetarian option and have to be mindful of any allergies among our guests.

There are two other roles that do not involve the same time commitment/dealing with our guests, but which are still very important contributions. These are first, collecting laundry on Monday mornings (tea-towels and tablecloths) and returning it in time for the following week, and second, transporting our guests' luggage from Trinity to the next venue (Wimbledon Methodist Church on Merton Road) on Monday mornings.

This year, in part because of the great loss of Rosalie Bolland, who played a big role in the Night Shelter project, as well as many others involving the homeless - typically quietly, we are especially in need of volunteers able to help on Monday mornings.

Thanks to Gift Day, we are well financed but donations of pillows and pillowcases are most welcome. We probably have enough spare blankets and sleeping bags but will let you know if we do need any. Small ruck sacks and 'hotel' slippers would be appreciated as our guests find them very helpful.

We hope as many people as possible will get involved in what is a most rewarding and worthwhile experience. If you are interested, please do contact either of us.

Ralph Goodchild (07531 428750 or ralphgoodchild@gmail.com),
Robin Goodchild (0771 4095007 or robin.goodchild@sky.com)



Junior Church Birthdays

Happy Birthday in December to

2	Yaw Sarpong	(16)
2	Kwabena Sarpong	(16)
6	Dena-Jo Nunoo	(12)
17	Harry Khurshid	(16)
17	Sophia Van der Walt	(5)
17	Johannes Van der Walt	(5)

And in January to

3	Adashe Siva	(5)
13	Katy Collins	(9)
15	Madeline Vary	(10)
16	Emmeline Eales	(7)
25	Harriet Vary	(15)



