

Trinity News

No. 498

May 2020



*Trinity United Reformed Church,
Mansel Road, Wimbledon*

Minister's Letter



Dear Friends

"By the rivers of Babylon – there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion."

I suspect that for many of us the opening lament of Psalm 137 is now indelibly linked to the pop/reggae setting popularised by Boney M in 1978; indeed Trinity's choir still has Peter Gritton's arrangement of this in their repertoire! Meanwhile a quite different musical setting, simpler yet more

haunting, was recorded by Don McLean in 1971 – well worth a listen.

The Psalm expresses the pain of exile, an enforced absence from the writer's home city of Jerusalem – and thus also from its Temple, seen as the place of God's special presence. There's a palpable sense of disorientation: "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?". Indeed so heart-breaking is the experience that it gives rise, in the final verse of the Psalm, to one of the most troublingly violent thoughts in the Bible – an angry desire for retribution which, whilst we won't feel able to share or endorse it, still serves to emphasize the depth of trauma felt by the psalmist.

In terms of the historical narrative recounted by our Old Testament as a whole, the Exile to Babylon comes relatively late in the story – many centuries after the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the exodus from slavery in Egypt, the days of the Judges and the rise and fall of Israel's monarchy. But it's thought that the *compilation* of the Old Testament, the way the earlier history has been recorded and interpreted, was hugely shaped by the experience of exile. It's as if the ancient bards have chosen to sing the Lord's song precisely through the lens of the strange land they now inhabit – to discover with hindsight the mistakes and missed opportunities that may have led to this disaster, and to express their hope for liberation by means of re-telling the ancient story of God's protection and deliverance. Crucially, this has enabled them to perceive and

magnify God's continuing summons to them and to their whole community: to become a beacon of justice, righteousness, and truth.

Clearly, the restrictions we're living through at present are nowhere near equivalent to the displacement and exile suffered by the psalmists and their community. Nevertheless, the sense of disorientation and trauma in our generation is real and cannot be overlooked. So perhaps we need to give ourselves and one another permission to respond as the psalmists did: to lament, to sit down and weep as we remember.

But let's not leave things there. Instead, let's borrow the ancient wisdom of nameless Hebrew scribes who saw, in the times they were living through, an interpretive key for the history they needed to remember and re-tell.

For the time will come when we can return to our church building, indeed to all our familiar places. A time will come when "we will meet again".

With every blessing



Trinity's website: www.trinitywimbledon.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/trinitywimbledon.org

Twitter: www.twitter.com/TrinityWimbledn

Subscription email service: sign up via the Trinity website (as above):
follow the link in the left-hand column of the home page

Worship "At Home"

Sunday 3 May

11:00 Morning worship
The Good Shepherd (Psalm 23; John 10.1-10)

Sunday 10 May

11:00 Morning worship
Many rooms, one Lord (John 14.1-14)

Sunday 17 May

11:00 Morning worship
Parting promise (John 14.15-21)

Sunday 24 May

11:00 Morning worship
Ascension (Acts 1.6-14)

Sunday 31 May - *Pentecost*

**11:00 Morning worship led by Revd Dominic Grant
with address by Revd Richard Church
(URC Deputy General Secretary – Discipleship)**

Induction & ordination of elders

In April, Alissa White was ordained to the eldership, and along with Cathy Dundee, Andrew Melrose and Kwame Sarpong was inducted to serve for a 3-year term on Elders' Council.

Our congratulations and God's blessing on them all in the work they have been called to do at Trinity.

In these strange times when we are unable to meet in person, ordination and induction was carried out by video conference on Friday 17 April, and the recording was shown as part of the following Sunday's service.

Wednesday Social Group

We were sorry that we had to postpone our April meeting when we were looking forward to a musical entertainment provided by Dominic and Miriam. That was also going to be our farewell to them both but, of course, their departure has been postponed and we hope that their visit can be rearranged.

We have also postponed the visit in May of the "Sweet and Low" musicians and we hope to be able to welcome them later in the year.

It has been disappointing not to be able to meet as usual, and we look forward to a return to normality whenever that is possible.

Christian Aid week (10-16 May)

Under the current circumstances, sadly, house-to-house collections and the annual car boot sale for Christian Aid Week will not go ahead. Christian Aid week is the major source of income for Christian Aid, so this will be a massive blow to Christian Aid and the projects it supports.



Instead, Christian Aid Week is moving online! Christian Aid have planned a virtual CA week.

During the week Christian Aid will be live-streaming worship with guest speakers each day. You can sign up on –

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/christian-aid-week/daily-live-streaming>

There will also be a fun daily quiz. You can sign up here –
<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/christian-aid-week/daily-quiz>

There will also be an e-envelope for donations. More information will follow.

A message from the Director of Christian Aid is on the next page.

- Mike and Margaret Tulloch

Message from the Director of Christian Aid

Our global response

Christian Aid and our partners already have experience of limiting the spread of infection during the Ebola crisis, and we will build on this experience to continue to stand together with communities living in poverty during this period. If infection rates start to develop as they are in Europe, then people in poorer countries will be hit even harder. Many are already living with reduced health resilience because of extreme poverty, or in overcrowded humanitarian camps and in countries which do not have the healthcare infrastructures needed to combat widespread disease. We will be working on the ground to help prepare communities to limit the impact of Covid-19. Please pray for us in this vital work, and support us where you can by making an online donation.

We are praying for all those affected by this new virus, both in Britain and overseas, for all those working on the frontline and for wisdom for our leaders. We will continue to monitor the situation as it evolves. During this challenging time, we all need to take seriously the science and advice being offered, remaining calm but vigilant. If you have any specific concerns or questions, please email us at info@christian-aid.org or call our helpline on (020) 7620 4444.

I am keeping you all in my prayers.

With every blessing,

Amanda Khozi Mukwashi
Director of Christian Aid

Commitment
for **Life**

So far, including Gift Aid, our Commitment for Life collection has raised £832 so thank you to everyone who has donated. I am sure the funds are badly needed.

- Margaret Tulloch

From the archives

Trinity Celebrates VE Day!

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

Church Services

At last we have come to the hour of victory in Europe and our first impulse has been to give God thanks for His wondrous deliverances and for the complete victory granted to the United Nations. Two services were held on VE-day, May 8th, and a third service on May 9th. The Thanksgiving Service on Sunday, May 13th, was excellently attended, and will remain a fragrant memory through all the years to come. We look forward now to the day when we shall be celebrating the complete victory over Japan and in one sense it will be an even happier occasion, for we hope that it will mean the cessation of war throughout the entire world and besides it will assure the speedier return home of our men and women on service.

From 'Wimbledon Presbyterian', June 1945

This month we remember the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day (VE Day)

The Prime Minister's announcement that 8 May 1945 would be VE Day set off celebrations all over the country and Wimbledon was no exception. Street parties were quickly organised for the children, the pubs were thronged, people danced in the streets and sellers of rosettes and VE ribbons did a roaring trade at Wimbledon Station.

At Trinity two special services were held on VE Day itself and another on 9 May. On the following Sunday there was a special Thanksgiving Service attended by the returning Prisoners of War, two of whom arrived home on VE Day and the following Thursday respectively.

Japan had still to be defeated, the end there came sooner than expected.....

Our local partnerships during the coronavirus pandemic

While we are in lockdown there is a lot going on behind the scenes to help those who are vulnerable. Here are a few of the highlights.



FAITH IN ACTION
helping with homelessness

All the street sleepers that were willing, have been put up in hotels in Hammersmith and Acton. They are receiving three meals a day. Initially there was not much support with their other issues, but the Government has set up a new drug and alcohol team working with them to link them to local services and offer advice and help 24 hours a day.

If you have concerns about anyone that you see sleeping out please do notify streetlink at <http://www.streetlink.org.uk>, or phone 0300 500 0914.

The Homelessness team working with the LB Merton and the Winter Night Shelter teams have been working hard. They have been driving around London providing hampers of essential items and food boxes for those in need, and delivering personal packages prepared by the Merton Night Shelter venues to their guests who are now in hotels.

The FiA staff team have been in contact with both vulnerably housed service users and those placed in hotels, and those in need have been referred to the Foodbank and other support services.

The Polish-speaking staff have been keeping up with Polish service users, one said that this is working for them like a detox because they are not able to get hold of alcohol. So at least some good may come out of this painful situation!

The outreach worker from the DWP who is normally at the drop-in on Wednesdays worked over the Easter weekend to resolve problems and ensure that everyone is getting an income



The Foodbank is now open at Elim Church on Kingston Road from Monday to Friday. As the church is closed, we have been able to take over the whole downstairs area. Only six volunteers are allowed on the premises at one time, so it is difficult to keep up with the incoming donations and sort them to make up food parcels. The Foodbank opened on Good Friday and Easter Monday, and in one week we gave out more than 6 tonnes of food. We are now also delivering parcels in order to try to reduce the number of visitors to the church.

Financial donations would be most welcome as we are able to buy the things we most need at wholesale prices.

If you would like to make a donation the easiest way is online at <https://wimbledon.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money/>.

Want to help?

Merton Voluntary Service Council (MVSC) is organising a team of volunteers to offer help and food supplies to anyone in need in the Borough. If you know anyone who needs help please call (020) 8685 2272 or if you want to put yourself forward to help with this the link is: volunteer@mvsc.co.uk.

News from abroad – our extended church family



From the Le Roux family in South Africa

Hello everyone from a still sunny and warm South Africa. We are now entering the 4th week of complete lockdown in South Africa due the COVID 19 pandemic – here that means that we have not been able to leave the house even once!! Mum and Dad have still had to work part-time but they are also at home most of the time. We are all healthy and well. Both of us celebrated our birthdays (12th and 10th) during this period which was very strange as we could not have friends or family round for a party. We have not been able to go to church, but luckily we were able to watch a service on Easter Sunday which our church streamed on television.

Keeping busy has been challenging. We have only been able to play in the garden (luckily we have lots of space outside) or in our rooms. We have kept ourselves busy playing playstation and boardgames, doing a daily exercise routine, watching television and speaking to our friends.



For the past two weeks our school has also sent all our schoolwork online, so we have had to spend at least four hours a day completing assignments and projects. Schoolwork isn't always fun but at least it helps to pass the time.

We were planning to visit everyone in England again in June 2020, but obviously we have had to change our plans.

If there are two things that we have learnt from our period in isolation it would be the following:

1. It is important to have a good relationship with your family members as they are the ones who will always be there no matter what the circumstances
2. Value your time and always try to use your time effectively, not only when you are forced into a situation like the one we are facing at the moment

We miss Sunday mornings at Trinity and hope that everyone there is safe and well!!

Best wishes,
Jacques & Milla le Roux



From Gayle & John Derrick in Australia

Our thanks to all at Trinity for streaming your services - particularly the Easter service.

Every cloud has a silver lining and this current crisis has necessitated different ways to get the message out.

We never dreamed of being able to be part of a Trinity service from our lounge room in Australia - it was truly wonderful. Thank you so much.

With all our love to everyone at Trinity at this difficult time.

Gayle & John



From Michael Kyle in Australia

I am now here until July at least. I had intended to return in May for a month and then back again in June as my daughter is due to have her fourth (a daughter) in June. It is all probably better than being confined to my house in West Sussex and I can help with the children and the house

My plans were changed by the virus since such travel would have been questionable, plus the isolation rules and then Emirate Airlines cancelled all their flights, so here I am. The children's school closed a week early for the Easter holidays and we are all isolated - me especially as the government has given the same strong advice to over 70s as in the UK. And they have closed the tennis club!

Rural Australia is actually a good place to be. We have very low infection rates and they have not started to rise, except in the cities. All state borders, except the border between NSW and Victoria, are closed (although how they will enforce that is not clear) and the national borders are completely closed with all arrivals being put into hotels for two weeks. It is easy here to stay isolated since we are on a twenty acre farm but I fear the children will find it stressful as the weeks pass and they cannot see their friends.

I read Trinity News!

Keep safe & very best wishes
Michael



From Sean and Megan Mayes in Canada

Meghan and I are well and safe. We left New York on 20th March. I had been set to do a job in Toronto prior to that, and had flown to the city on 11th, only to have the work I was set to be doing for six weeks cancelled the next day. I ended up flying back on the 13th. We stayed in quarantine for another week in New York, during which time Meghan found out that the City's schools were closed. She went into school for a couple of days to receive training on how to do things virtually, and then we left. Some good friends of ours

extended an offer for us to leave the city. Her family has a house in rural Connecticut that has been empty for months, and so they extended the invite for us to quarantine and isolate here, which we've been doing for just over four weeks now.

Life has seemingly changed very quickly, and seems to do so hour by hour, although hopefully getting better. Meghan knows that virtual learning will take place through the rest of the school year, so she will not be returning. There are doubts about whether her non-profit company will survive this enormous uncertainty to be able to operate next year, so we will see what happens there. On the positive side, her yoga teaching has all moved online and seems to be largely successful. So, that is some good news amongst everything. On my end, we have received the news that Broadway is shut until at least June, although there are talks of that being longer.

Thinking of all at Trinity with love and concern at this time.
Stay safe!

Sean & Meghan

Church Office & Mansel Road Centre enquiries during closure

While we have had to suspend our worship services at Trinity for the time being, we are still keeping in touch with everyone.

The Church Office will be staffed from home.

Office Hours 9:30am to 2pm.

Tel: 020 8946 9281 E-mail: office@trinitywimbledon.org

Website: www.trinitywimbledon.org

Facebook: [trinitywimbledon.org](https://www.facebook.com/trinitywimbledon.org)

Twitter: [@trinitywimbledn](https://twitter.com/trinitywimbledn)

Only 9% of Britons want life to return to "normal" after the coronavirus outbreak is over, a survey suggests.

People have noticed significant changes during the lockdown, including cleaner air, more wildlife and stronger communities.

More than half (54%) of 4,343 people who took part in the YouGov poll hope they will make some changes in their own lives and for the country as a whole to learn from the crisis.

And 42% of participants said they value food and other essentials more since the pandemic, with 38% cooking from scratch more.

The survey found that 61% of people are spending less money and 51% noticed cleaner air outdoors, while 27% think there is more wildlife.

Two-fifths said there is a stronger sense of community in their area since the outbreak began and 39% say they are catching up with friends and family more.

