

# Trinity News

**50**  
Faith – Hope – Love –  
Since 1972

**October 2023**

**No.533**



**Trinity United Reformed Church**

Mansel Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 4AA

[www.trinitywimbledon.org](http://www.trinitywimbledon.org)

# October Reflection

Greetings Friends,

This is the first of what I hope will be regular reflections, and as we move into a season of change, I would like to share a few words.

As the leaves fall and litter the pavements with shades of green, yellow, orange, and crimson. As squirrels forage for food and farmers harvest the fields, there is no doubt that autumn is upon us. These past few weeks, churches across the nation have given thanks for this harvest season and have given produce to charities for those in need. Yet, as the leaves fall and the squirrels forage and the farmers harvest, many of us feel busy; busy with work, school and life; busy preparing our gardens for winter and the year to come.

During a busy spell, the famous reformer Martin Luther wrote '*Work, work, from morning until late at night. In fact, I have so much to do that I shall have to spend the first three hours in prayer.*'

Three hours... that is 180 minutes or 10800 seconds, in prayer alone! For many of us, the thought of spending three hours in prayer when we have things to do may feel like a waste of time. In fact, for many people prayer is the last thing we think of when we are busy. A last resort, after we have already tried to do everything we can do in our own strength.

This is the way many of us see it and the idea of dedicating our first hours to prayer seems like foolishness, but the Bible reminds us that '*...God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength*' (1 Corinthians 1:25). This month, when life seems overwhelming, rather than seeing prayer as the last thing we can do, it may be helpful to try to think of prayer as the first and most productive thing we can do.

With every blessing,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jacob Bali". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Jacob" and "Bali" being capitalized and prominent.

Revd Jacob Bali

## Sunday worship

|    |     |       |   |
|----|-----|-------|---|
| 1  | SUN | 11:00 | <b>Morning worship with Holy Communion</b> led by Sandy McLeish (Trinity Elder) |
| 8  | SUN | 11:00 | <b>Morning worship</b> led by the Worship & Faith Development Team              |
| 15 | SUN | 11:00 | <b>Morning worship</b> led by The Revd Jacob Bali (Minister)                    |
| 22 | SUN | 11:00 | <b>Morning worship</b> led by The Revd Jacob Bali (Minister)                    |
| 29 | SUN | 11:00 | <b>Morning worship</b> led by The Revd Jacob Bali (Minister)                    |

## *.....and other dates*

|           |            |              |  |
|-----------|------------|--------------|--|
| 1         | Sun        | 10:30        | Elders' meeting                                    |
| 2         | Mon        | 20:00        | Queens Road housegroup                             |
| 4         | Wed        | 20:00        | Elders Council                                     |
| 5         | Thu        | 20:00        | Property Team                                      |
| 7         | Sat        | 09:30        | Church 'spring-clean'                              |
| 12        | Thu        | 20:00        | Finance Team                                       |
| <b>14</b> | <b>Sat</b> | <b>14:30</b> | <b>Service of Induction of the Revd Jacob Bali</b> |
| 17        | Tue        | 20:00        | Worship & Faith Development Team                   |
| 19        | Thu        | 20:00        | Outreach & Witness Team                            |
| 21        | Sat        | 10:00        | Synod Together                                     |



# Church Family News

## In memoriam - Mrs Gillian Swain

We were sorry to learn of the death on 20 August of Mrs Gill Swain at the age of 98. Gill, who for many years had lived in Merton Park, joined Trinity in 1999, and although she was by this time gradually becoming more disabled, she regularly attended Coffee & Chat for as long as she was able.

For the last six years she has lived in Kew House, where she became very frail but still amazingly bright and cheerful despite having long been confined to one room. Gill enjoyed receiving *Trinity News* each month and was happy to be a member of Trinity.

We extend our love and sympathy to Gill's family - her son and daughter David and Ann, and their families.



## October birthdays

A very happy birthday to those celebrating this month, including:

Matilda Henning, Su Lambert, Kate Mansfield, Catherine Paul, Guy Rostron, Pam Rostron and Elijah Siphika.

## Legacy

Trinity is very grateful indeed to have received a legacy of £15,000 from the estate of the late Margaret Noble.





## Celebrate the Induction

**The waiting is nearly over...** Just a month to go until Trinity and its people will have a minister again!

It is three months since Church Meeting decided overwhelmingly to invite the Revd Jacob Bali to be Trinity's ninth minister in our 140<sup>th</sup> year of existence, and when Jacob accepted the call. It was a day full of hope and expectation.

We look forward prayerfully but expectantly to Jacob's Induction Service at 2.30pm on Saturday 14 October, when it is hoped that all of our congregation will join with representatives of Synod, other nearby URC congregations and local churches of other denominations, civic officials, as well as friends and colleagues of Jacob in an act of worship, dedication and celebration. Invitations to attend have been sent out, and it would be most helpful to have prompt responses about attendance.

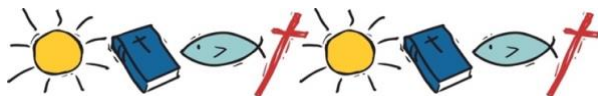
Alongside Jacob will be his charming wife Esther and their young son Iwan, whom we will be welcoming also on 14 October. The Bali family are unlikely to move into the Trinity manse in Copse Hill (which is let currently) until the new year. In the meantime, they will travel to Trinity from their current address.

We are in the final stages of agreeing with Jacob the Terms of Settlement, practicalities for their occupation of the Manse, and the format and content of the Induction Service.

If you have any questions about the above, please do ask me or one of the Joint Church Secretaries.

Finally, I would like to express personal thanks, and I feel sure the gratitude of the congregation, to all members of the Vacancy Team for their insights, efforts and support over the last three and a half years.

*Sandy McLeish, Vacancy Team Leader*



## Preparing the church



We all want the Church and Mansel Road Centre to look their best for the Induction service, so on **Saturday 7 October** (09:30-13:00) we will be holding a work party to spring-clean, tidy up and ensure everything is sparkling and bright for the occasion. If you are able to help on this day, please come along. We do need your help!

# Welcome



**If you are visiting Trinity,  
we extend a very warm welcome to  
you and hope to see you again soon.**



We have made good progress with our study of Matthew's Gospel. We will meet on **Monday 2 October** (8pm) at 217 Queens Road, and all will be very welcome.



## Gift Day 'For Others' – Sunday 5 November

As many of you will be aware, each year we conduct a ballot for Gift Day nominations and we now need to decide which charities will benefit in 2023.

The ten charities selected will comprise 4 local, 3 national and 3 international organisations. There is further information at the bottom of the Voting Form.

I should be grateful if you would complete the [Voting Form](#) and return it to me at [robin.h.ingram@gmail.com](mailto:robin.h.ingram@gmail.com), or put a printed copy in the ballot box in the vestibule at Trinity on Sundays, or post it to me at the Trinity office by **1 October**.

Do contact either Robin Goodchild or me if you need any further information.

When the Gift Day appeal is launched later in October the charities receiving most support in the ballot will be highlighted.

Please take the time to vote in this important fundraising event in the Trinity calendar.

*Robin Ingram, 'For Others' Secretary*



It is six months since I wrote about the Merton Winter Night Shelter (MWNS). Then we were just about to deliver our seven Sunday nights as a venue providing overnight accommodation, an evening meal and breakfast for up to eleven guests, who would otherwise have been on the streets. That second block, from 23 January to 13 March, was a great success. Together with the first block, from 5 December to 23 January, almost 1,100 consecutive bed space nights were provided for homeless people, at no cost to public funds, thanks to the efforts of over 350 volunteers from over 15 faith groups in Merton – an amazing collective achievement. A full report of proceedings can be found on Trinity's website, including what happened to some of the guests.

Preparations for this coming winter are gathering pace and MWNS 2023/24 should open on 4 December, running through to 11 March. For the organisers, there are fewer challenges than twelve months ago, as MWNS doesn't need to recruit a Project Coordinator; Ashling Flannery continues in post and now has a year's experience of operations. Merton Council are a lot less hostile and the fund-raising challenge, while still significant, is helped by the Wimbledon Foundation's continuing support.

Arrangements for Christmas are coming together. Last year, Trinity played a key role by accommodating the guests for 48 hours over Christmas Day and Boxing Day, with volunteers from over eight different faith groups providing on site care. This year Everyday Church, the Wimbledon Synagogue and Wimbledon Mosque are going to accommodate the guests then, but they may well need some extra volunteers from other venues. In any event, the first training session for volunteers will be at Trinity on Sunday afternoon on 19 November.

I shall be providing further updates in *Trinity News* as we go through the autumn. If you are interested in knowing how you might get involved, do please contact Ralph Goodchild at [ralphgoodchild@gmail.com](mailto:ralphgoodchild@gmail.com) or May Nicol ([maymbnicol@aol.com](mailto:maymbnicol@aol.com)) or me.



To volunteer at Trinity, you would need to be available for a couple of hours on a Sunday afternoon or evening (including overnight), or on a Monday morning for the breakfast shift. However, if you are only available on other days of the week, we can introduce you to venues that operate on those dates. Nearly every venue, including Trinity, has volunteers who aren't otherwise involved with their group.

Involvement is hugely uplifting. The hospitality provided by volunteers is, literally, a life saver; many of the guests have never experienced the normal kindness on offer and it helps restore their faith in human nature, as well as building up their own self-confidence. We would be delighted to discuss any aspect of MWNS with you.

Robin Goodchild ([robinnapiergoodchild@gmail.com](mailto:robinnapiergoodchild@gmail.com))



The 2024 URC Diary includes the following: calendars to 2026, year planners to 2026, notable dates for the URC and the wider Church, metric measures, Assembly officers and URC staff, useful addresses, Assembly committee details, Synod information, 2023 diary one week to a page, 2024 diary one week over two pages, 2025 diary one week to a page, year planner 2025-2026 for advanced engagement and various maps.

Pocket Diary £7.99, available with a yellow or green cover;  
A5 Diary, £9.99, blue cover. Order now from the [URC Bookshop](#).



## Ministry And Mission Fund - Annual Letter to Local Churches

**To: All members and adherents of United Reformed Churches and our Local Ecumenical Partnerships**

Dear Friends,

When will normal service be resumed?

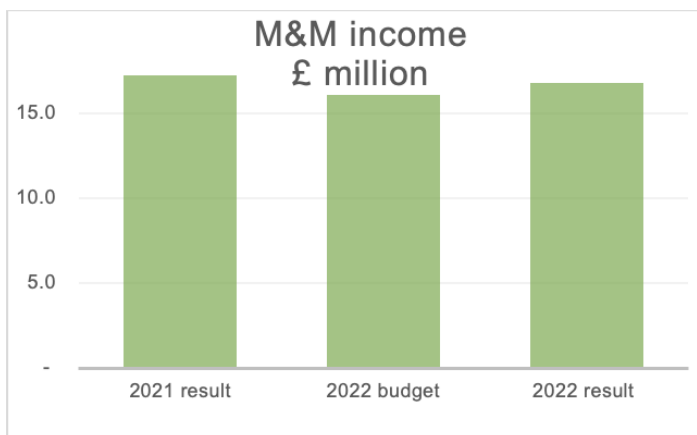
As we are writing this letter and closing off the URC's accounts for 2022, the country is still torn with industrial disputes, most notably with Health Service workers, rail industry workers, teachers etc. etc. Whatever your view as to the wisdom or justice of such action, we suspect all of us are affected by the disruption to some degree.

In church life too, are we back to "normal life"? Some churches no doubt have returned to something like their pre-Covid level of activity and attendance numbers. Quite a few have recommenced their activity but find their numbers have reduced. Some churches have found re-opening too difficult and have decided to close.

Whatever the "new normal" was to be, we suggest its arrival has (like many trains) been disrupted, delayed, or cancelled all together.

The URC's finance officers had concerns that the late arrival of the return to normality would impact very significantly on the giving to the M&M Fund in 2022. However, the churches responded magnificently and the giving to M&M was £600,000 ahead of budget. It was also only 2.5% down on 2021's result.

So, thank you to all who continued to contribute to your local church, thank you to all those churches who met their commitment for 2022 in full, and thank you to all those who, in adversity, continued to treat the M&M Fund as the first priority and paid what they could.



With normal service not yet resumed, 2023 is not going to be an easy year either. We now have the added disruption of high inflation, pushing up wages and overhead costs. As the Spirit directs and as our means allow, can the churches once more respond to the call of our gracious, loving and ever-generous God?

Again, thank you all!

If you have any questions or comments arising from this letter, please speak to your church treasurer who has been provided with more detailed information. If they are not able to help directly then they can get in touch with the finance team at Church House.

Yours in Christ,

Ian Hardie (Treasurer)

Vaughan Griffiths (Deputy Treasurer)



**Final copy date for the November edition of  
*Trinity News* is Tuesday 17 October.  
Please send items to  
[catherine.f.paul@btinternet.com](mailto:catherine.f.paul@btinternet.com)**

# **Eco Day**

## **Saturday 9 December 2023**

### **11am-3pm**

How much do you know about sustainable living?  
Don't know where to start?  
Want to do more?

Come along to shop for sustainable lifestyle products,  
natural Christmas presents, handmade goods, learn how  
to look after the planet, have fun at Messy Church  
or make your own natural decorations.



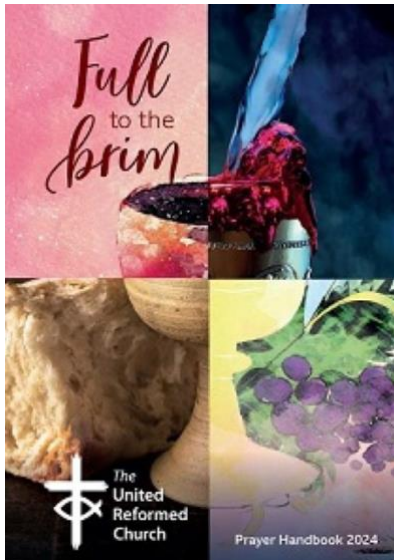
Craft & Gift Fair  
Christmas Decorations & Herbal Tea Making Workshops  
Messy Church  
Refreshments and Light Lunches

## **Supporting Sustainable Merton**



As has been our recent custom, our Harvest thanksgiving gifts are being taken to Wimbledon Foodbank where they will be gratefully received. If you were unable to bring a gift on Harvest Sunday it's not too late - the trolley in the Mansel Road Centre is always available!

The Foodbank aims to provide emergency food and support to people locked in poverty. The aim is to provide three days nutritionally balanced emergency food to local people who have been referred in crisis, as well as support to help people resolve the crises they face.



***Full To The Brim, The 2024 United Reformed Church (URC) Prayer Handbook is now available to order (price £5.99) from the [URC Bookshop](#).***

The book is edited by the Revd Stephen Ansa-Addo and the Revd Sue McCoan, and its themes of fullness and emptiness run throughout the Bible.

The prayers gathered in this book speak of different kinds of fullness – fullness of blessing, fullness of being too busy – and of the need, sometimes, to empty ourselves in order to be filled afresh.

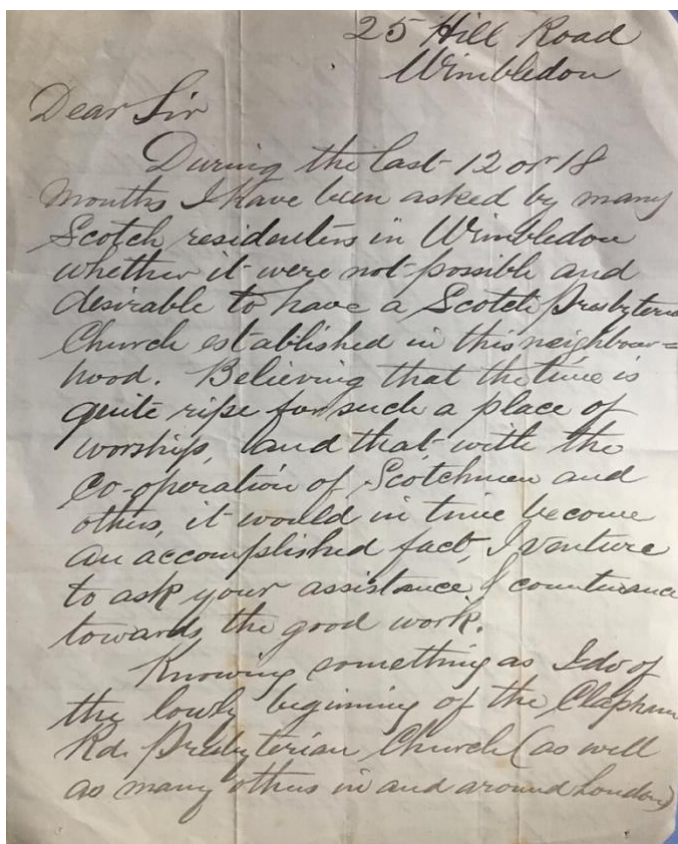
The first section follows the lectionary, with a prayer based on one or more of the set readings for each week. For the second section, people were invited to interpret the idea of 'full to the brim' in whatever way resonated with them.

## From the archives

### Trinity's 140th birthday this October

This letter is the oldest item in Trinity's archive collection. It is a letter sent, by Mr Patrick Straton Kidd, a Wimbledon bookseller, stationer and music seller who traded from, and lived above, 25 Hill Road (now the 'Hand and Racquet') to Scots and other potentially interested parties in Wimbledon inviting them to attend a meeting at his home on 30 October 1883 - 140 years ago this month - to discuss the possibility of forming a Presbyterian church in the town.

Below is the text of Mr Kidd's letter. I'm happy to show it to anybody who is interested. Next month we'll look at how the meeting went!



25 Hill Road  
Wimbledon

Dear Sir

During the last 12 or 18  
Months I have been asked by many  
Scotch residents in Wimbledon  
whether it were not possible and  
desirable to have a Scotch Presbyterian  
Church established in this neighbour-  
hood. Believing that the time is  
quite ripe for such a place of  
worship, and that with the  
co-operation of Scotchmen and  
others, it would in time become  
an accomplished fact, I venture  
to ask your assistance & countenance  
towards the good work.

Knowing something as I do of  
the lowly beginning of the Chesham  
Rd. Presbyterian Church (as well  
as many others in and around London)

25 Hill Road  
Wimbledon

Dear Sir

*During the last 12 or 18 months I have been asked by many Scotch residents in Wimbledon whether it were not possible and desirable to have a Scotch Presbyterian church established in this neighbourhood. Believing that the time is quite ripe for such a place of worship and that, with the cooperation of Scotchmen and others, it would in time become an established fact, I venture to ask your assistance and countenance towards the good work.*

*Knowing something as I do of the lowly beginning of the Clapham Road Presbyterian Church (as well as many others in and around London) and its present prosperous condition I venture to predict that Wimbledon - following such an example - will have a similar blessing attending its efforts.*

*As a preliminary step I desire to ask you to attend a meeting at this address on Tuesday 30 Oct at 7.30pm to confer on the subject and to give your advice or make any suggestions that would further the object in view.*

*In sending you this note I disclaim any notion of taking initiative action in this matter. My sole desire is to be able to attend a place of worship such as I have been accustomed to in my native land and such I believe would be the desire of many others situated like myself in Wimbledon.*

*While this day and hour have been fixed to suit, as far as possible, the convenience of all, it is proposed that, should you be unable to attend it you will acknowledge this note and make any suggestions that occur to you.*

*I remain, dear sir, very sincerely yours,  
P Straton Kidd*



Photo by [Brian Yurasits](#) on [Unsplash](#)

## Why should we not use single-use plastic – is it that bad?

- 1) It is made from fossil fuels.
- 2) Plastic has a huge carbon footprint.
- 3) All plastic ever made will still be here in 100's of years.
- 4) Only a tiny percentage of it is actually recycled.
- 5) It leaches toxins into our food and drink which in turn can cause hormone disruption and cancer.
- 6) It pollutes our oceans, kills our marine life and then enters our own food chain.
- 7) Microplastics which are a result of larger plastic items breaking down (tyres, synthetic clothes) and consumed by us. It is estimated that we consume up to 20kg of microplastic in our lifetimes.

### What can we do as individuals:

- 1) Don't buy it!
- 2) Select loose products in the supermarkets.
- 3) Own a reusable water bottle and coffee cup.
- 4) Litter pick when you see it on beaches – once you start looking, it is everywhere.
- 5) Take your own shopping bag everywhere you go.
- 6) Store leftovers in glass or with a reusable, washable seal.

**Visit the Eco Living Stall after church in the Old Hall for help, advice and to make a start on your plastic free living.**