

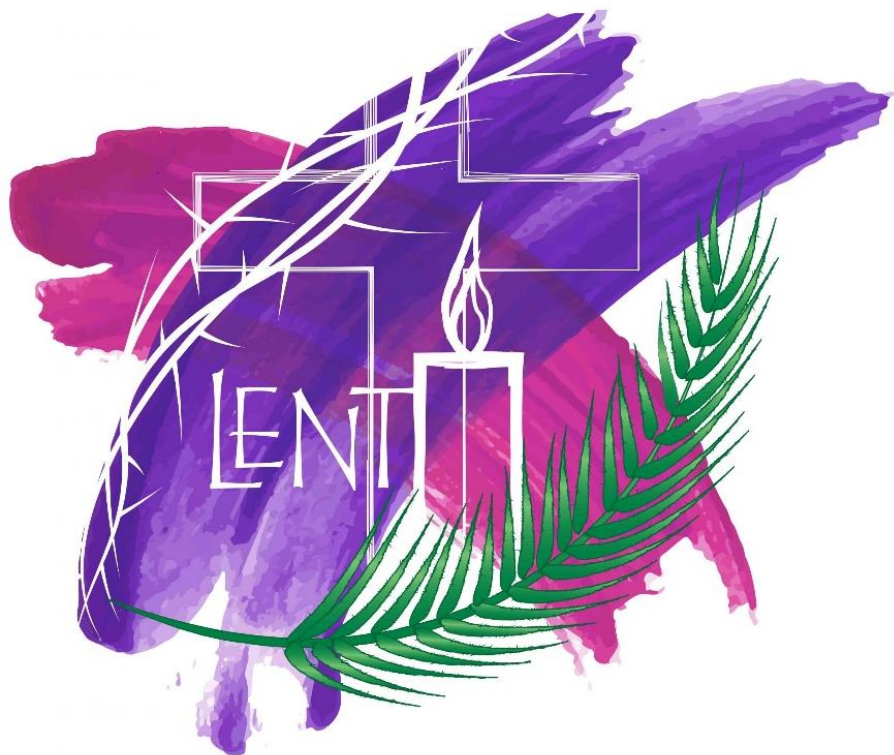
Trinity News

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Faith – Hope – Love –
Since 1972

February 2024

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Trinity United Reformed Church

Mansel Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 4AA

www.trinitywimbledon.org

February Reflection

Greetings Friends,

If someone asked you to explain what you think God considers to be the most important thing that we should do, what would you say?

We needn't look far because the Bible gives us the answer. When questioned about what the greatest law is, Jesus said to '*love the Lord your God... and love your neighbour as yourself*' (Matthew 22:35-40, Mark 12:28-31, Luke 10:25-28) — a direct quote from Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Leviticus 19:17-18.

In February, much of the world celebrates a whole day dedicated to love... Valentine's Day. Whether we meet this day with open arms or envisage cheap chocolates and sappy films on TV, the fact remains that for millions of people in Britain, Valentine's Day is significant as a day of love. However, the question remains, '*What's love got to do with it?*' — Tina Turner.

We throw around the word 'love' like it is going out of fashion, but is this the kind of love that God meant when He said, '*Love one another just as I have loved you?*' (John 13:31-35).

Greek has six words to our single English word, love. They are: *philia* (φιλία) friendship love, *érōs* (ἔρως) romantic love, *storgē* (στοργή) family love, *philautia* (φιλαυτία) self-love, *xenia* (ξενία) hospitality love, and *agápē* (ἀγάπη) unconditional love/charity.

It is the last word *agápē* that Christ used in the gospel passages, and it is this unconditional charity by which we are to love one another. Yet, how do we love people if we do not feel like it or if they do not love us back? Well, *agápē* love is not based on our emotions but is a choice we make by God's grace. It is the choice to be with those whom society considers to be untouchable, the choice to come alongside charities like Merton Winter Night Shelter, the choice to have the difficult conversations, to take the unpopular position, to speak out for the voiceless, to remember the forgotten and to serve behind the scenes.

There is a countless myriad of ways for *agápē* love to be expressed, but the most challenging part is not only sharing God's love when we

do not feel like it; it is also having the willingness to set our pride aside to receive the love of others too.

God's love for creation is not just for a single day in February; rather, it is a love that endures for eternity, and it is this love that we are to share with one another. As Valentine's Day comes and goes, may we be willing to extend *agápē* love to everyone we meet all year round and may we have the humility to receive *agápē* love from other people, too.

With every blessing,

Jacob Bali

Revd Jacob Bali



Church Family News

In memoriam

Jane Elizabeth Middleton (1932-2023)

We are sad to announce the death of Jane Middleton on 27 December. Jane had been a member of Trinity since 2003 and was ordained to the eldership two years later. For many years she was a house group member and a much-loved member of our congregation, with a wicked sense of humour.

Jane was a psychotherapist and worked for many years, ending up working from home until well after retirement age. In her youth she was a keen tennis player at Roehampton Club where she met her dear friend Mary Hunt.

She was a very keen gardener and had a beautiful garden where she hosted a summer garden party for Trinity. Even when very ill in bed she still enjoyed looking at her garden and her birds on the bird table

outside her window. Jane lived in the same house in Roehampton all her life, having looked after both her parents there, and she died there as she wished, peacefully and well looked after.

Jane's funeral will take place on Friday 9 February at 12 noon when all will be welcome, followed by interment in Suffolk.

Anniversary - It was ten years ago on 26 January that our former minister, Revd Ceri Lewis, died. We remember him, and Sue, with affection.

Congratulations - to Mike and Margaret Tulloch who, in January, completed fifty years as members of Trinity.

Thank you - to Chris Jeffery

For very many years, Chris Jeffery played an important part in our services, although many would not have been aware of his role at the back of the church. With great loyalty and regularity, seldom having a Sunday off duty, he was the person who made sure the sound system was working properly and, more recently, he controlled the laptop and projection on the screens which we have come to accept as essential to our worship.

Chris moved to the Kent coast last Summer and we have missed him and his cheerful presence week by week. We are so grateful to him for all that he has contributed to Trinity over many years - as Management/Deacons Secretary, member of Finance Team, Elders' Council and Property Team, and for the Sunday duties - and wish him and Adrian all the best for their new location. We are delighted that they are still managing to return to Trinity quite frequently.

February birthdays

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

Graham Angus, Esther Bali, Joan Dennis, Edelweiss Dunfield-Prayero, Martha Khurshid and Tara Yu.

The Minister's day off is Monday

February

4	SUN	10:30 11:00	Elders' meeting Morning worship with Holy Communion
7	Wed	20:00	Elders' Council
9	Fri	12:00	Funeral service for Jane Middleton
11	SUN	11:00	Morning worship
14	Wed	Ash Wednesday 19:30	Service with Holy Communion
18	SUN	1st Sunday of Lent 11:00	Morning worship followed by Church Meeting (arrangements to be announced)
21	Wed	20:00	Queens Road housegroup
22	Thu	20:00	Lenten Bible Study (1)
25	SUN	2nd Sunday of Lent 11:00	Morning worship
27	Tue	20:00	Children & Youth Work Team
29	Thu	20:00	Lenten Bible study (2)



Final copy date for the March edition of *Trinity News* is 19 February. Please send items to catherine.f.paul@btinternet.com

Lenten Bible Studies 2024

“FELLOWSHIP”

Join us on Thursday evenings at 8pm
in the Mansel Road Centre



- | | | |
|-------------|---|--------------------------------|
| 22 February | – | The Disciples in Formation |
| 29 February | – | The Disciples in Jerusalem |
| 7 March | – | The Disciples in Consternation |
| 14 March | – | The Disciples in Reorientation |
| 21 March | – | The Disciples in Re-Formation |

Lent is a season of the Christian Year where everyone is invited to focus on simple living, prayer, fasting and giving in order to grow closer to God and each other.

You are more than welcome to join our group where we will be reflecting on the journey of Christ's disciples.



Queens Road House Group

The Group's February meeting will be on Wednesday 21 February (8pm) at 217 Queens Road. We will continue our study of St Matthew's Gospel at chapter 9 verse 14 and we will be thinking about some more of Jesus' healing miracles.

Everybody is welcome to join us. Please speak to Andrew Sutton for further information.



Our 'For Others' Secretary, Robin Ingram, is pleased to report that the total raised for Gift Day in November 2023 has reached £10,759 including Gift Aid.

The following charities will receive £500 each:-
Merton Winter Night Shelter, Salvation Army,
St Raphael's Hospice, Wimbledon Foodbank,
Alzheimer's Research, Cancer Research UK, Macmillan Cancer,
Médecins sans Frontières, British Red Cross and Save the Children.

Following provision of £2,000 for Disaster Relief, the remaining funds will be split 2/3rds to Faith-In-Action and 1/3rd to Water Aid.



Election to Elders' Council

The closing date for nominations to Elders' Council is Sunday 28 January.

If you are nominated, please give careful and serious consideration to this calling. It would mean that at least five Trinity members have nominated you and believe you possess these gifts and would make a valuable contribution to the Elders' Council. It is understandable to be daunted, but the Elders' Council works as a team, with each member bringing their distinctive abilities to work together for the church and for God.

Those nominated for election to serve as members of the Elders' Council will be advised by the Minister and invited to meet with members of the Elders' Council to learn more about the role.

The election of Elders will take place at the Church Meeting on Sunday 17 March.

Christian CARE Christmas hampers

What a wonderful sight it was to see Martin Way Methodist Church completely full of bags, stuffed with Christmas treats for struggling families in Merton. I had delivered nine bags to the church from Trinity members the week before, and was ready to do my regular monthly delivery to two families in Morden, which means my car was already laden with bags of shopping. Inside the church I was given yet more bags – hampers of Christmas goodies, presents for the children, and supermarket vouchers for fresh food. I could barely fit in my car, it was so full. Over forty families were supported, and all were delighted with their hampers and gifts.

My grateful thanks to everyone at Trinity who provided a hamper, particularly when the cost of living has gone up for all of us. I hope we will be able support the charity again this year – the work they do with vulnerable families is a wonderful example of Christian Care.



- Pam Rostron



Eco Day 2023

On Saturday 9 December 2023 we held our second successful Eco Day.

A Craft and Gift Fair, selling a very wide range of handmade goods, from wood turned bowls and ornaments to silver jewellery, was held in the Old Hall.

We also saw eco-friendly lifestyle products from Eco Living and new companies which wanted to spread the word, such as Qookee who rent beautiful baby clothes from sustainable brands.

During the morning a Christmas wreath-making workshop was run by Kate Ray from Guided Wellbeing and, at a Messy Church for the younger visitors, the children were able to make their own Christmas decorations and gifts, followed by a short act of worship led by the Minister.

The refreshments and light lunches were very popular and had a good crowd sitting and chatting throughout the day.

The Eco Day raised £1,554.70 for Sustainable Merton (Merton's local environmental charity). Thank you to everyone who helped on the day and to those who came along to support it.





"A BIG thank you to everyone who supported our Foodbank this Christmas. We would usually see up to 120 residents in a week. These numbers doubled.

845 local residents were given emergency food parcels
340 of them were children
= 7,557 meals provided to people in need

"We wouldn't be able to continue our work without the amazing community and volunteers."

- From the Foodbank

Please continue to put contributions in the Mansel Road Centre trolley. Just one item whenever you come to the church would be gratefully received! Suggested items are....

Food

- UHT milk
- Tinned meat (hotdogs, meatballs etc.)
- Tinned fish
- Tinned fruit
- Sponge/rice puddings
- Coffee (small jars)
- Long-life juice
- Pasta sauce
- Tinned veg (potatoes, carrots, green beans, tomatoes)
- Tinned meals (spaghetti, chicken or veg curries, chilli)
- Tinned soup
- Jam and spreads

Non-food items

- Shower gel
- Shampoo/conditioner
- Deodorant
- Toilet rolls
- Washing up liquid
- Laundry detergent pods



From the archives

Trinity in the 1950s: Part 1

Few of us in Trinity today remember the 1950s and even fewer of us were sharing in Trinity's life during those years. We will look back at a busy and exciting time in the life of our Church.

In Trinity the late 1940s had been times of rapid recovery from the problems posed by the War, and Revd Douglas McRitchie worked tirelessly to rebuild the congregation. So hard did he labour, however, that he suffered a series of heart attacks and, for the first time, the Church employed an Assistant minister, Revd Edward Sawers, a young man who was just leaving Westminster College, to assist him.



Sadly, Mr McRitchie was forced to retire early - with effect from the end of January 1951. Mr Sawers stayed on for a while, in effect as minister-in-charge, during the vacancy. This was a big job, though good experience, for a young man, ministering to a church with a large membership. As the vacancy ended he accepted a call from the church at Carcroft near Doncaster.



The vacancy was comparatively short. In April 1951 Revd (Arthur) William Bruce, (known to close friends as 'Willy' but to most of the congregation as 'Mr Bruce'), the 35-year old minister of John Knox Church in Aberdeen came to 'preach with a view'. A subsequent congregational meeting voted to call Mr Bruce to be Trinity's fourth minister and he and his family moved into a recently purchased manse in Devas Road. Married to Ray, he had two young children, Elspeth and Alastair. The induction took place in September 1951 and was followed a few days later by a 'welcome evening', attended by about 350 people, in the Marlborough Hall (now part of the Library).

The Church was still suffering from unrepaired War damage with several roof leaks and no decorations had been carried out since before the War. It showed! The interior walls of the Church were a gloomy yellow brick with red brick trimmings. The chancel carpets and pew cushions were red (there were no aisle carpets). Lighting was poor. The building was in urgent need of repair and redecoration, but permission was needed from the War damage authorities before this could be carried out.

Yet the Trinity to which Mr Bruce came was large and thriving. Sunday congregations numbered about 200 in the mornings and 100 or so in the evenings. The Sunday School, with over a hundred children, and the Fellowship of Youth, were growing rapidly (leading to a serious shortage of accommodation). The choir, under the direction of Robert Anderson, led the praise at both Sunday services. The Guild met monthly and there were regular Women's Guild meetings and an offshoot for 'young wives'. This was a be a lively decade!

CARBON FAST

FOR CREATION

KIDS EDITION



VISIT YOUR LOCAL PARK AND COUNT THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF TREES YOU CAN FIND

☐

TRY VEGAN SAUSAGES OR BURGERS FOR DINNER THIS WEEK

☐

TRY A FAIRLY TRADED CHOCOLATE BAR INSTEAD OF YOUR USUAL FAVOURITE

☐

WRITE A PRAYER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND PRAY IT THIS WEEK

☐

SAVE YOUR FOOD SCRAPS TO FEED TO THE WILDLIFE IN YOUR GARDEN

☐

WALK OR CYCLE SOMEWHERE THAT YOU WOULD USUALLY DRIVE TO

☐

FIND OUT WHY SINGLE USE PLASTIC IS BAD AND TALK TO YOUR FAMILY ABOUT IT

☐

CHECK WHETHER YOUR FAMILY IS USING RECYCLED TOILET PAPER - GET SOME IF NOT!

☐

FIND SOME CLOTHES YOU HAVE GROWN OUT OF & GIVE TO SOMEONE THEY WILL FIT

☐

TRY EATING THREE DIFFERENT TYPES OF RAW VEGETABLE TODAY

☐

LOOK AROUND THE HOUSE FOR DISPOSABLE ITEMS AND FIND REUSABLE ALTERNATIVES

☐

FIND A WAY TO RE-USE CONTAINERS INSTEAD OF RECYCLING THEM

☐

SEE HOW MANY OF THESE CHALLENGES YOU CAN COMPLETE DURING LENT!

Trinity's former pipe organ: a second resurrection

After some years of research and deliberation, Trinity decided in 2018 to replace its 90-year old pipe organ (which had served us well since 1965) since it had become less reliable, and the cost of a complete restoration prohibitive. An order was placed for its replacement by the splendid and versatile digital Johannes Ecclesia instrument that we have enjoyed now for more than four years. We had to investigate means of removing the instrument and hoped to find a suitable new home for it. Thankfully, we were contacted by a Polish organ builder searching for a suitably sized redundant pipe organ to renovate and rebuild for a church in Warsaw, the Polish capital.



Trinity gifted its instrument to the large Catholic parish church of St Michael the Archangel - *photo above* - located in Mokotów, a district in the south of Warsaw. During two weeks in March 2019, the organ builder, assisted by a group of members of that church including their



priest (Jan Konarski) and young organist (Karol Szwach), worked very hard indeed - *see photo left* - to dismantle the complete contents of the organ chamber: blower, windchest, pipes, wiring etc, and then to reinstate the ornamental fascia and pipes, which remain behind the pulpit. The related organ console also was dismantled and removed.

In Poland, various delays arose in beginning the reconstruction of the pipe organ, not least due to the Covid-19 epidemic. We were

delighted to learn in December last that the extensive repair, reconstruction and commissioning work had been completed, and that the pipe organ had been brought into use soon before Christmas. It was gladdening to know that our 'old' organ had begun a third existence – *see photo below*.



An invitation to Trinity members was received to attend a service of consecration of the reconstructed organ followed by an inaugural concert on 7 January, but with recognition that the amount of notice of the date was short. A video recording of that service and concert is available, which reveals the sound of the organ on that day at St Michael the Archangel Church to be most impressive.

The Warsaw church has offered to organise another organ concert in the Spring of this year and hopes that some Trinity members may wish to attend, not least to provide an opportunity to thank us for donating our former pipe organ for use in yet another place of Christian worship.

I have begun discussions with Jan Konarski about possible dates for such a visit, possibly in mid-April 2024. A sizeable number of members has expressed interest already. If any member who has not already done so, would like further information with a view to joining a visiting group, please contact or speak with me as soon as possible.

- *Sandy McLeish*



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