

# Trinity News



July/August 2024

No.541



**Trinity United Reformed Church**

Mansel Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 4AA

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



# Summer REFLECTION

Greetings Friends,

In 1914, the renowned explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton was on the verge of embarking on a historic journey to become the first human to cross Antarctica. He needed to assemble a team for this daring expedition, and it is believed that he placed the following advertisement in The Times newspaper:



**"Men wanted for hazardous journey, small wages, bitter cold, long months of complete darkness, constant danger, safe return doubtful, honor and recognition in event of success.  
Ernest Shackleton"**

Wow, this must be one of the most bizarre and brazen advertisements in history.

Surely, nobody would be foolish enough to sign up for such a dangerous trip... right?

Wrong!

Contrary to expectations, Shackleton was inundated with thousands of applications from around the world.

As the saying goes, honesty is the best policy, and in this case, Shackleton's honesty had paid off. Thousands of people wanted to go on this perilous journey, but that begs the question: why?

It was a time of exploration, and many people wanted to travel the world—to experience new frontiers, uncharted territory, and the thrill of discovery. This was the period on which fictional adventure stories like Indiana Jones and Tintin were based. However, the harrowing expedition and the achievements of Shackleton and his men were real.

Out of the thousands of applicants, Shackleton handpicked 27 explorers to accompany him on the voyage to Antarctica aboard a ship he named "Endurance". Throughout the nearly two-year expedition, the crew demonstrated unparalleled courage and determination, facing and overcoming extreme weather conditions and various other challenges in an adventure that is almost beyond belief.

Yet, the question remains: why?

What was it that could have motivated these young aspiring explorers to take such a risk?

In the 1776 United States Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson wrote that the Creator has given all humans the right to "Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."

Indeed, beyond the adventure and accolades, these explorers, like all of us, were seeking contentment, fulfillment, and satisfaction with their lives. They were in the pursuit of Happiness, a universal human desire.

In Psalm 23, we read,

*"Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the house of the LORD forever."*

(Psalm 23:6 New Living Translation)

The psalmist reminds us that God's love is not passive but active. It is a love that does not need to be sought out in an expedition; in reality, God's love and true happiness actively pursue us, providing comfort and reassurance.

As we journey, both literally and figuratively, through the summer months of July and August, we are also faced with the unknown, the unexpected, and the uncertainty of new experiences. Yet, amid the excitement and trepidation of our pursuits, may we remember that God's love always pursues us.

With every blessing,

Jacob Bali

Revd Jacob Bali

*The Minister's usual day off is Monday*



## Church Family News

### July birthdays

A very happy birthday to those celebrating this month, including Gary Angus, Jacob Bali, Cynthia Betts, Ellie Chau, Richard Dunfield-Prayero, Ian Henning, Hannah Jones, Dodie Khurshid, Liam Matika, Janet Mutelo, Joshua Scharinger, Gordon Tam and Vernon Williams.

### and in August

Isobel Angus, Iwan Bali, Gayle Derrick, Sarah Elliot, Robin Ingram, Gilli Lewis-Lavender, Cameron Lowe, Maddie Lowe, Andrew Melrose, Barbara Nunoo, Christine van der Walt, Elizabeth Scharinger, Gavin Tam, Marie-Françoise Turrell and Lesley Wilmot.



## Summer diary dates

1	Mon	20:00	Queens Road housegroup
7	<b>SUN</b>	10:30 <b>11:00</b>	Elders' meeting <b>Morning worship with Holy Communion</b>
9	Tue	20:00	Elders' Council
12-15			URC General Assembly at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick
14	<b>SUN</b>	<b>11:00</b>	<b>Morning worship</b>
21	<b>SUN</b>	<b>11:00</b>	<b>Morning worship</b>
28	<b>SUN</b>	<b>11:00</b>	<b>Morning worship</b>



4	<b>SUN</b>	10:30 <b>11:00</b>	Elders' meeting <b>Morning worship with Holy Communion</b>
11	<b>SUN</b>	<b>11:00</b>	<b>Morning worship (leader to be announced)</b>
18	<b>SUN</b>	<b>11:00</b>	<b>Morning worship (leader to be announced)</b>
25	<b>SUN</b>	<b>11:00</b>	<b>Morning worship (leader to be announced)</b>



## Church Secretary

On Sunday 26 May, Trinity Sunday, Catherine Paul stepped down from her role as Joint Church Secretary. For over eleven years, Catherine has served Trinity with dedication and distinction, leading us through times of real challenge, including the difficulties of COVID-19 and our recent ministerial vacancy.

Catherine's achievements and contributions are many. Her leadership of Trinity's Christmas Tree Festivals over five years is just one example of how she has brought our community together, welcomed people into our church and created lasting memories.

I have had the pleasure of working alongside Catherine for much of her time in office, and I have seen firsthand the love and care she has poured into her role. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to Catherine for her friendship, support, and the many hours we have worked together.

As we say farewell to Catherine, I am pleased to welcome Dodie Khurshid as our new Joint Church Secretary. Dodie has extensive experience both as a longstanding member of Elders' Council and recently as Property Team leader. I am sure that he will continue to build upon the strong foundation Catherine has laid.

Please join me in thanking Catherine for her dedication and in welcoming Dodie as he takes on this important role. May God bless Catherine, Dodie and our church family during this time of transition.

With gratitude

Sam Elliot  
Joint Church Secretary

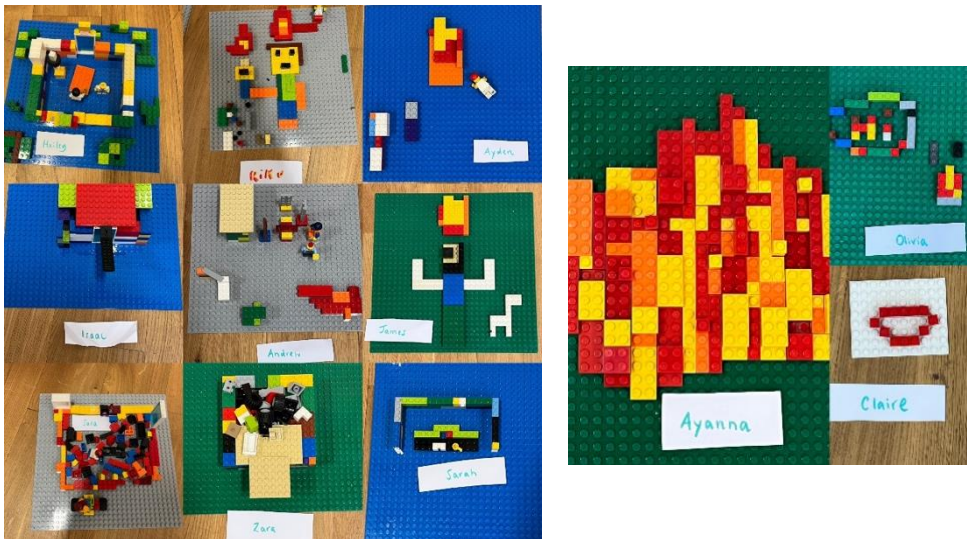


## Holiday Club May 2024

On Tuesday 28 May, during the half-term holiday, we were delighted to welcome ten children to Trinity's Holiday Club, resuming after several years of absence.

Four members of our Junior Church, Isaac, Ayden, Hailey and Elijah, came with friends for a day of stories (recalling the events of Ascension and Pentecost), prayer, games, snacks and lots of building with Lego!

Using a great new resource called *Building Faith Brick by Brick*, we explored the key events of the Ascension of Jesus and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost through building objects and creating scenes from Lego bricks and their equivalent. The children's imagination and creativity were wonderful as you can see from the pictures prompted by the story of Pentecost below.



Once they had made their creations, the children then described them, relating them to the story they had heard; sharing those thoughts with

each other allowed them to talk about God and Jesus in a comfortable way.

We were impressed by the knowledge shown by the children, but also by their imagination. In the Ascension response, heaven definitely featured a swimming pool, more than once! We all loved Ayanna's depiction of the flames which appeared at Pentecost – we think she may have used almost all the red, orange and yellow bricks!



It must be said that it wasn't just the children who enjoyed playing with the bricks and using them to think more deeply about the stories and indeed our faith – the adults loved it too! Here (above) Olivia is talking about her Ascension creation.

We also thoroughly enjoyed our craft activities including making Pentecost candles, moving Ascension models and much more.





The whole day was a lot of fun, for all. You will see from their comments below, Holiday Club also gave the children the chance to deepen existing friendships and develop new ones.

"I liked playing with the Lego and learning about Pentecost." *Elijah*

"I liked being with friends." *Isaac*

"I liked making new friends." *Hailey*

Their parents also had good feedback from their children:

"Thank you for organising such an amazing event for us. The kids had a blast that day."

"Hailey had such an unforgettable experience with other children altogether on 28 May."

My thanks to Sarah Elliot, our Junior Church Leader, for using one of her half-term holiday days to lead the club with me, and preparing the great craft activities, and to Olivia Scharinger, one of our Young People, who similarly gave up a day of her precious half term to help us so well. We do plan to hold more days like these during school holidays – keep your eyes open for further news.

*Claire Wood*  
*Children and Youth Work Team Leader*



## **Queens Road House Group**

Our July meeting will be on Monday 1 July (8pm) at 217 Queens Road as usual.

We are steadily making progress through St Matthew's Gospel and this time will be reading and studying chapter 12 - after tea, coffee, refreshments - and chat!

As always, an invitation is extended to all members of the congregation to join us.

## Plastic-free July

Last year, I took part in Plastic Free July and joined millions of people worldwide in attempting to reduce plastic waste so that we can have cleaner streets, oceans and beautiful communities.

I thought I was very good at consciously not choosing items wrapped in plastic, but taking part in this challenge made me realize that I have a long way to go and that there is a lot more I can be doing.

Why not take part this July and see how **you** fare? There is no commitment to go completely plastic-free – in fact this would be impossible – but why not make an effort to see what you can do to make small changes?

Remember – the Eco Stall in the Old Hall can help.

Some things you can try:

1. Source cleaning products from bulk barrels at refill shops or from the Eco Stall. Companies such as NEAT cleaning, Smol and Splosh can help too.
2. Choose bar soaps in place of liquids in plastic bottles.
3. Avoid pre-packed meat or fish.
4. Avoid pre-packed fruit and vegetables.
5. Use reusable water bottles and coffee cups.
6. Avoid lining bins with plastic bags – the Eco Stall sells paper food waste bags which I use and can vouch for.
7. Pick up litter in public places.
8. Look at [www.plasticfreejuly.org](http://www.plasticfreejuly.org) for more information, to take a quiz and for resources to help you.

Let me know if you are taking part and how you get on.

Good luck!



*Elizabeth Scharinger*  
([office@trinitywimbledon.org](mailto:office@trinitywimbledon.org))

**CHOOSE TO REFUSE SINGLE-USE PLASTIC**  
**PLASTICFREEJULY.ORG**

Communities around the globe are concerned about plastic ending up in landfill and polluting the oceans ... that's why hundreds of millions of people worldwide are choosing to be part of Plastic Free July

**Will you join the challenge?**

Please join our effort to help the environment. Choose to refuse single-use plastic during July.

**Yes, I will join the challenge!**

- 1. Visit our website**  
 [plasticfreejuly.org](http://plasticfreejuly.org)
- 2. Choose what you will do**  
 Avoid single-use plastic packaging  
 Target the takeaway items that could end up in the ocean  
 Go completely plastic free
- 3. Choose the length**  
 1 day  1 week  1 month  Always

AVOID WASTE, PROTECT THE OCEAN, SIGN UP AND BE PART OF THE SOLUTION. [PLASTICFREEJULY.ORG](http://PLASTICFREEJULY.ORG)

## United Reformed Church Daily Devotions

During most of July Revd John Proctor, until his retirement General Secretary of the URC and now a member of Downing Place Church, Cambridge, will be leading a study of the Epistle to the Hebrews. From 29 July and into August, the subject will be the Book of Esther.

The Daily Devotions can be accessed at [devotions.urc.org.uk](http://devotions.urc.org.uk) or via the United Reformed Church Facebook page.



A group of us, including the Minister, visited the Foodbank depot in Morden recently and were shown how our gifts are sorted and then allocated to the bags prior to distribution to the clients. We were told there is always a special need for coffee, pulses and tinned meat products.

We took some large items that had been donated for 'Merton Growbaby'. They would welcome small children's clothes, and small baby equipment such as sterilisers, baby food and nappies. Please note that they do not have storage space for anything large.

## **Merton Winter Night Shelter update**

The report for last winter's Night Shelter is now on Trinity's website. I encourage you all to read it as it gives a fascinating account of the project, in which Trinity plays a significant role.

Nineteen different faith communities were involved in the Shelter this year with the help of over 400 volunteers, up from 350 in 2022/23. While most volunteers unsurprisingly focus on operations at their own venue, it is heartwarming to appreciate that the sum of the individual parts is even greater. In total, almost 1200 bedspaces were provided from 4 December to 10 March that enabled 23 homeless people to have a warm night, in a secure environment and with wonderful hospitality.

The Faith in Action organising team are already working on plans for this coming winter. Trinity is hoping it will have a shower to offer for the first time, so is doing its own preparation too.

Don't hesitate to contact any of us, if you are interested in getting involved this coming winter.

*Ralph Goodchild ([ralph.goodchild@gmail.com](mailto:ralph.goodchild@gmail.com))*

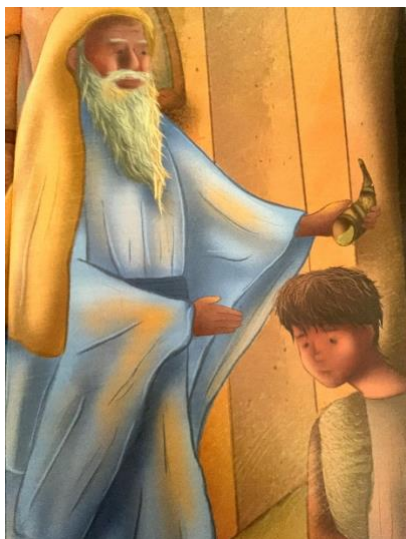
*May Nicol ([maymbnicol@aol.com](mailto:maymbnicol@aol.com))*

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

## A day in the life of Junior Church and YPs

Have you ever wondered what goes on when the children leave after the first part of the service? You may not, just simply watch them go and return your attention to the service. But we thought we would like to give you an idea of what does happen and how it complements the main service.

Each session has a structure, and we will describe that, along with some detail from Sunday 16 June, to give you a flavour of all that we do.



We start each session with a welcome to all and if we have new children always make sure they are introduced to everyone. We then start our opening time of worship together by lighting our candle – reminding us that Jesus is the light of the world. This is accompanied by the leader (Sarah or me) saying the words, “The Lord is here...” and the children following with “His Spirit is with us”.

*Left: Image from Roots (one of our resources)*

Then, usually, the theme or story for the week is introduced; quite often it will be a version of the lectionary readings that Jacob will use but sometimes we use something different to ensure it is accessible to the children. For instance, on 16 June, rather than focusing on Father’s Day, we found out about the choosing and anointing of David as Saul’s successor as King.

We read the story of how, despite all the fine qualities of Jesse’s other sons, it was David who was God’s choice; we particularly liked the focus on the idea that ‘When choosing... God looks at the heart,’ giving us the opportunity to remind us all that we shouldn’t judge people by how they look, where they are from or even what faith they belong to.

We finish our session with a prayer, frequently read by the children, and then break into groups.

We have two groups, unless it is a YP Sunday, when we have three – but more of that later.

Our younger group generally covers those children 5 and under and the second group 6 or 7 years to 11 but we are always flexible. We also, by the way, provide mats and toys for our very youngest children.

In our recent session, in our groups we also talked about how God's decision to choose David may have seemed like a small change, but it had a huge impact on the world and led to the birth of Jesus and Christianity.

So our younger group had great fun seeing the changes they could make in shaving foam by adding paint and making their cutout figures change.



The older group coloured, glued and painted with oil to create a hanging to remind them of how God looks at the heart not the outer appearance.

As always there was also a selection of puzzles, crosswords and wordsearches which not only are fun to do, but also imbed some of the language and detail of the stories we have read. We are also lucky to have access to the courtyard space, because sometimes, the urge to play football is just too great!

Earlier, we mentioned the YPs – our Young People group for those aged 11 and over, or Year 7 and above.



In an ideal world, we would run a YP session each Sunday, but we just do not have enough leaders to offer that. Also, this age group is very busy with sport, extra school activities and, of course, as they get older, exams. So, our compromise was to set a YP Sunday each month, which is usually led by Claire and we usually have two or three young people come along.

Meeting separately from the rest of the Junior Church, it gives us the opportunity to help our young people explore their faith, particularly in the context of the life and world around them, e.g. the environment, school pressures, and other topical issues.

Sunday 16 June was a YP session and, having been present for the opening worship, we continued to look at the idea of change; they were asked to think of changes in their lives they were grateful for, changes in their lives that had been challenging or painful and, finally, changes they would like to see in their future lives and in the world around them. As the young people build their relationships with each other, with the leaders and with God, they find it easier to talk about their faith – or even their lack of it – and are not judged if they are uncertain about it.

Having shared their thinking about changes, they then shaped them into a prayer; Olivia was confident to read her prayer out and with her permission, it is included below.

***Dear Lord,***

***Thank you for helping me make new friends and for helping me with the tricky parts of school. Please help me to get through exams and help me in the future with the transition from secondary school to college.***

***Please forgive me for the times when I sin and for the days that I wake up not wanting to go to church.***

***Lord, I pray for those in Gaza and for all people going through a tough time right now. Please help them to get through it and help them to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Amen***

It is a joy and a privilege to lead Junior Church and YPs. Sarah and I would like to thank Susan Collins, Elizabeth Scharinger, Pam Rostron and Cathy Dundee who willingly support us with enthusiasm and a willingness to get messy with shaving foam etc!



We would love to have more people on our team; if you think God might be calling you to serve Him and Trinity in this way, please don't hesitate to come and chat to either Sarah or me.

We are coming to the last few weeks of 'full' Junior Church. The leaders and helpers take a well-deserved break over the six weeks of the school holidays, along with a chance to enjoy the full Sunday service. So, our last 'proper' session will be on 14 July and we will resume on Sunday 1 September. However, we do provide activity tables during those six weeks, which you will find set up at the front of the church.

We hope that has given you an idea of what we do on a Sunday – you are more than welcome to come and visit us to find out more about this special part of Trinity's ministry.

*Claire Wood*  
Children & Youth Work Team Leader

*Sarah Elliot*  
Junior Church Leader



**General Assembly 2024** takes place at The Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick from 12 to 15 July. Papers for this year's meeting will be available [here](#). A round up of all the discussions and decisions made will be posted on the URC's website's news section at the end of each day and on social media. [Visit the URC's latest news.](#)





**In February this year a 46-year old charity worker, Simon Boas, wrote a letter to the *Jersey Evening Post* titled "A Beginner's Guide to Dying" about his terminal cancer and how there were several reasons not to be too gloomy about it. It touched thousands. His stoicism in the face of death inspired people worldwide. Just three months later he wrote a final missive, part of which is reproduced below, but you can read the full text [here](#).**

First: please don't fret too much about the state of the world. Nature will recover from the indignities we've chucked at it, and humans have kindness and love at their very core. Even those who do terrible things were themselves once innocent children and have been hurt by something they didn't choose. Evil is not a noun, it is an adjective. We should revel in the sheer good fortune of our being here at all, in our pined beauty, and in our extraordinary ingenuity. To steal a line from a recent Reith lecture, we are a species that has created both the Large Hadron Collider and the Eurovision Song Contest! We have so much to appreciate, so many absurdities to laugh about, and so much in common.

Secondly, every single person has made a huge difference to the world. You don't have to have been a philanthropist or a politician or a captain of industry. George Eliot captured it beautifully in *Middlemarch*: 'Her full nature ... spent itself in channels which had no great name on the Earth. But the effect of her being ... was incalculably diffusive: for the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs.'

All our tombs will be unvisited in a few short spins of the rock around the star, but the smile you gave the check-out lady might still be rippling forward. Most films about time travel revolve around people inadvertently altering the present by changing one tiny thing in the past, but project that forward: you might radically change the future by changing one tiny thing in the present.

.....Make smiling eye contact with strangers – particularly if they look miserable or haughty or thuggish. Compliment and thank people. Say kind things about them behind their backs. Play a game the next time someone annoys you in traffic, or says something uncharitable, by imagining the ways in which they've had a terrible day, or the awful news they might just have received. Strike up conversations. I've enjoyed many different highs in my sometimes-rackety life, and this is the only one with no downside. Exercise included!

Finally, please try not to fear death so much. We hide and run from it; we follow joyless diets, or subscribe to transactional belief systems, or try to drown it out with pleasures and purchases. We change the subject. But without death we are not human. I used to think that death was the frame of our brief lives, but now I see it as the canvas on which each of us is painted. Talk about it. Let it help you put your quotidian worries and squabbles into perspective. And accept it.

I happen to think now that death is probably not the end of our truest selves, but it doesn't really matter if I'm wrong about that. We have always been parts of a bigger whole – a pulse in the eternal mind, no less – and consciously or not, as atoms or as angels, we will return to it.

May your own end be decades away, may you people the Earth with your courteous offspring, and may you feast and laugh and voyage and sing! I wish you every joy in all of it.

Simon



**Final copy date for the September edition of *Trinity News* is Sunday 18 August. Please send items to [catherine.f.paul@btinternet.com](mailto:catherine.f.paul@btinternet.com)**



## The chancel changes of 1996

105 years after the Church was built the biggest changes in its history were carried out in May 1996. The photographs show the chancel area as it was before the alterations were carried out. The transept and choir pews were removed and the stage that we know today was constructed.

The chancel was dedicated on 2 June 1996 to the memory of Harry and Betty Gorman whose generous bequest made the refurbishment scheme possible. At the same time a set of chairs was purchased, principally for the Elders and choir, funded by donations from members of the congregation, mostly in memory of loved ones. A small commemoration plaque was fixed to each chair.

