

T RINITY NEWS & VIEWS



And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. *Luke 2:v7*

December/January 2020 Issue 50

A message from Rev. Jackie Case



Dear Friends

As Christmas approaches many individuals and families turn their minds to preparations for 'the big day'. Many of us have personal or family traditions which have developed over the years and been passed down from one generation to the next: a particular festive recipe; attendance at Christingle, Carol or midnight Communion services; the timing of the opening of presents; the digging out of old, and if we're honest, rather tatty decorations whose nostalgic value makes them difficult to replace. These traditions have a history of development: they originated in a particular group or circumstance and often grew up under the influence of key figures whose significance within past family life gives them added poignancy and significance as the years go by.

The Christmas story which is told in numerous nativity and carol services, and performed, often with the addition of Santa and his elves, in pre-school and primary school plays, is an amalgamation of several different traditions around the birth of Jesus. We often forget that in the early centuries of the development of the Christian faith, there was far less communication between church communities in different places, since for most travel and the sending of messages and letters was difficult, expensive and time consuming. As a result churches in different places did not have access to the amount of material about Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection that has been gathered together for our use in the New Testament. Whatever stories and teachings each community possessed depended upon the narratives known and passed on to them by their founding missionaries and subsequent travelling preachers and teachers, very few of whom had actual first-hand knowledge of the events and teachings described, some who had actually heard it from the lips of eye witnesses, while most were several times removed from the original events.

It is not surprising then that the birth stories so familiar to us today were not universally known throughout the early church. Paul, the most prolific of the New Testament writers makes no mention of

how Jesus actually came to be born at all. The writers of Mark and John's gospels record no birth stories, either because they didn't consider these details relevant for the purposes of their writings, or, more likely, they and their communities didn't possess any specific birth traditions. Both the writers of Matthew and Luke were aware that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the ancestral village of King David, and yet grew up in Nazareth many miles north of there, but they give very different explanations of how this came about. The church for which Matthew's gospel was written did possess a tradition of learned foreign astrologers travelling from afar to seek a new king whose birth was heralded by the appearance of a new star in the heavens. But Matthew and his congregation knew nothing of local shepherds, prompted by the appearance of a host of angels, finding the child sleeping in a manger in a Bethlehem stable on the night of his birth. This was the tradition known and cherished by Luke's churches.

So what are we to make of these differences in early church traditions? Should we dismiss some or all of them because their historical accuracy is in question? Surely not, because these traditions, grew up and were recorded under the inspiration of early church reflection on the life and person of Jesus, reflection nourished and guided by the Holy Spirit. They have something deeply meaningful to say about who Jesus was and the purpose of his coming into the world. I cannot help but think, however that by ignoring the differences and mashing together the two different traditions as though they were always intended to be a coherent whole, we are in danger of obscuring the intended message of each one: a message about to whom and for whom the Christ child came into the world, and about what kind of King, Saviour, Messiah he was born to be.

Dare I challenge you at some point this Christmas to set aside the business, take EITHER Matthew's OR Luke's version, put the other out of your mind as far as possible, and read it as though it was the only story you have. By doing this you may find that very familiar narrative refreshed, and gain new insight into the true meaning of the coming of Christ into the world.



Every Blessing

Jackie

Church Family News

Funerals - May light perpetual shine on them

24th October Kieran Meldrum

28th October Bill Londop

7th November Molly Bathhurst



It is with sadness that we report the death of Vera Salisbury on 15th November. We understand her funeral will be on 2nd December. Please remember her family and friends in your prayers.

Congratulations

To Hugh Bowerman on his appointment as our
Community Development Missioner.

Hugh will start his work with us in January 2020.

Christmas & Other Services at Trinity



Dec 14th	3.30pm and 7.30pm	Epworth Choir Christmas Concerts
Dec 15th	10.30am	Nativity & Christingle Service
Dec 22nd	5.00pm	Carol Service
Dec 24th	11.15pm	Midnight Communion
Dec 25th	10.00am	Christmas Day Family Worship
Dec 29th	NO service at Trinity Circuit Services will be at Byfleet, Merrow & Walton	
Jan 5th	10.30am	Covenant Service
Jan 12th	10.30am	Morning Worship followed by Church Lunch - tbc
Jan 19th	6.30pm	Prayers for Christian Unity

Changes to Communion Services in February

Feb 2nd	10.30am	NO Communion Baptism
Feb 9th	10.30am	Communion



BILL LINDOP (1926-2019)

*Eulogy given by Rev. Barrie Tabraham at Bill's
funeral
on 28th October 2019*

I first met Bill in June 1989 at Philip & Kate Stevens' house in Hook Heath, when Joan and I came down from Merseyside for a 1st 'look' at Trinity. I'd been told earlier that he'd been in Burma in WW2, was an engineer who could fix practically anything and was, among other things, a qualified football referee.

Among the 20 or so gathered there, I remember noting from the very beginning Bill's energy and probing questions and saying to Joan as we journeyed back and reflected on the day, "*I'll have to watch him!*" I'm glad I did, because – although I was his minister for 8 years, I was his friend for over 30. So, what can I say? I want to share with you some personal snapshots – a token, because they hardly do justice to his long and eventful life.

Five 'thank-you's', then:

(1) For all that Bill did in The Gambia:

Our visit in August 2000 with 20 young people from two different circuits. It was 40°C – Bill wore no hat, no suntan cream, and carried no water. How did he do it? He said to us the previous November: "*You will never forget what you see*" and he was right, but he was so wrong in another respect, because he also said, "*This (Makumba-yah) will be my last project in The Gambia*" (!!)

I'm only sorry that it took 2 attempts at getting his efforts recognised (the 1st with Lt. Col. Richard Wallis, the 2nd with John Craig) before he was finally awarded his MBE – richly deserved and long overdue. Incidentally, although I managed 80 of the 120 miles of the Pilgrims Way to fund-raise for The Gambia, typically, Bill finished the lot.

I've known many people who have fought against cancer – some with unrealistic hopes of surviving. Bill was, above all, a realist, and when he was fighting those brain tumours, wasn't afraid to talk about death – most of the content of this service was chosen by him. But his amazing tenacity in his last year of life showed itself in the way he endured the effects of chemotherapy and still managed a final trip to his beloved Gambia in March of this year!!! – even though by then he was a very sick man.

He went there nearly 90 times. They should erect a statue of him in Banjul or Marakissa – but the 1000's who have benefited from new classroom blocks, clean water, maternity units, dental surgeries and so on and so on – they are his true legacy and a fitting monument to his efforts over more than a quarter of a century.

(2) For his golf at Chobham:

You'll forgive me for this. Bill was a founder member and we played there together for over 20 years. Once we persuaded Joan and Irene to accompany us over half a dozen holes, lured by the promise of supper at the nearby hostelry.

[Incidentally, Bill and Irene were happily married for 62 years – and Julie let me have sight of something that Bill wrote:

In 1942, I first met Irene – she was wearing a black, lace-like dress with lime green underskirt, which showed through the small holes in her dress Well, after all, Bill was an engineer and believed in being precise!]

At Chobham on this particular evening, the girls found it all too amusing and though their giggling had me going, it was one of those rare times when Bill couldn't see the funny side of things, and his shots got more and more erratic with every snigger.

Of his golf, I will always cherish 3 things:

a) His uncanny knack of finding lost balls – anyone's, not just his own. Once he emerged from the undergrowth with no fewer than 7 in his hands.

- b) His ability to recover from a difficult situation. This was no surprise to anyone who knew him, because his '*never give in*' attitude was something that was part of his approach to life.
- c) Enlisted support from his fellow golfers with a special golf day to raise money for – yes – The Gambia.

(3) I thank God for His energy and courage:

Is something we all envied and marvelled at. He once asked me, "*Barrie, what would you do if you retired?*" I could have asked Bill a variation of that question: *What haven't you done since you retired?*"

Sometimes someone would ask, "*Where's Bill? He's not in The Gambia or at Whitmore Vale*" – the answer would probably have been, that he was speaking in Stoke, Salisbury and in a score of places around the country. He was never trained as a public speaker, as far as I know, but the results of his talks were hearts melted, consciences stirred and lives changed.

He also kept up his allotment until he was past 90, and over the years a steady stream of beans, leeks, courgettes and tomato plants came our way – and to many of you here today.

(4) I thank God for his Faith and love for the Church:

Bill was a man of unshakeable faith. When he had to bear the loss of Irene and Anthony in the same year (2011) – unlike one or two people I've come across over the years – far from weakening his faith, it only seemed to make it stronger.

He saw each stage of his life as an opportunity to serve God – and John Wesley's concern for 'social holiness' exactly fitted Bill's sense of vocation.

I never mentioned to Bill that his first 2 names ('William Arthur') were the same as one of the outstanding Methodist ministers of the 19th century – William Arthur, who combined a traditional approach to theology and politics with a progressive attitude towards education and social issues - which exactly describes Bill's churchmanship!

Bill's love of the Church and Methodism took the form of a 'fierce loyalty' – whether all those years ago in his work with MAYC, or at the LEP at Sheerwater – St Michael's.

Of course, I remember '**Trinity 2000**' because, although I set the ball rolling, with Bill and John Nelson the project would never have succeeded – and, though it wasn't always easy, I like to think I helped two such different characters make such an effective and happy partnership.

Unlike some Methodists, by the way, Bill worshipped at Trinity whoever was preaching!

He was a **fierce critic**, however, of anything silly or faddish in the church, and I love him for that. And sometimes, when there was just the two of us playing golf on a Friday morning at Chobham, he would love to have a running conversation about Trinity, the future of Methodism, and the wider Church in general.

(5) I thank God for his friendship:

Joan said once, "*He's more like family than some of our family*" and in our private conversations referred to him as "Uncle Bill".

Of course he could be infuriating at times – his single-mindedness, directness and passion made him a difficult person to work with at times. But his charm, integrity and willingness to see the funny side of things made him utterly endearing.

Whatever the nature of heaven is – and I believe that nothing has or will separate our dear friend from the love of God – whatever the nature of heaven, it will surely be a livelier place with Bill there!

Bill was more than a friend, and **cared for me** – particularly at times when my health was problematical – almost like a father. People sometimes forget that ministers need ministering to, too!

And Bill – for that, and the countless other ways in which you have enriched our lives, we thank you.

Barrie Tabraham

**Trinity is hosting
Woking's ROC
Conversation on
12th March 2020,
and we need your
prayers.**



What is a ROC Conversation?

For those of you who are not familiar with the organisation, ROC stands for Redeeming Our Communities and is a Christian community engagement charity, formed in 2004 and based in Manchester. A ROC Conversation is a 2 hour evening discussion involving representatives from local Churches, other faith groups, local Charities, agencies and front line groups such as Police, Paramedics, Local Council, and Schools, amongst others. The discussion is facilitated by the Charity. Our Woking ROC Conversation will initially look at all the good things which are already happening in Woking, before moving on to identify where the gaps are, with input from everyone present. ROC will then produce a report for us based on the evening, which will at the very least give us the context for everything happening in Woking, but will also allow us to produce targeted action groups comprising members of relevant organisations to carry forward work to fill gaps identified. The Conversation is being held here at Trinity and at this stage we are inviting people to attend.

Those who are attending the ROC Conversation in March 2020 will be selected based on their experience and outreaching role both within the church and the wider community. Because there will be representation from the major churches and community groups as well as social services, emergency services and other related professions and bodies, the number attending from each group has to be limited or the event will be unmanageable, but we are hoping that all Trinity members

will be able to submit their view to the Conversation via the Trinity reps.

It is also important to note that the ROC Conversation has been invoked in parallel with The Foundry as our hope (& prayer!) is that this will inform (in part) the initial outreach focus for Trinity.

The entire process needs to be covered in prayer, and so we are asking if you would please pray for Trinity and the Woking ROC Conversation:

- **For the Woking ROC Conversation Steering Committee - that they will be given wisdom.**
- **For wisdom to invite those that God wants at the Conversation.**
- **That those who God wants to attend will be available and willing to take part.**
- **That the practical aspects of the evening will fall into place.**
- **That the Spirit will govern the conversation on the night itself.**
- **That any outcomes that arise from the evening will be of God.**

Thank you for your prayers.



Hugh Bowerman.

If you would like to know more about the ROC Conversation, or if you know of any organisations that you would like to see included on the night, please speak to myself, Ruth Taylor or Daniela Warr Schori

Charity of the Month

The amounts raised in recent months for our refreshment charities are:

September - Air Ambulance Surrey £95.

October - Compassion £415.00

December - Action for Children



"Without Action for Children I don't know where I'd be. Me and my children would have been homeless. But my support worker, she helped us in so many ways. I am so grateful."

Our vision is that every child and young person in the UK has a safe and happy childhood, and the foundations they need to thrive. We do this by working closely with children and their families, from before they're born until their twenties.

Our work is split into three main areas:

Best start in life

We know how important the early years are - and we're here to help. From parenting advice to education and early intervention, we focus on improving children's life chances.

Good mental health

Everyone has ups and downs in life. Our mental and emotional well-being experts work with families and schools to make sure children and parents feel able to cope with challenges when they arise.

A safe and loving home

We make sure more children feel part of a family that cares for them. We find homes for those without, protect children who have been abused or neglected, and help ensure young carers don't miss out on childhood.

Our work changes lives

We've been doing this for 150 years. In that time, we've seen a lot of hardship - but we've also seen what a huge difference the right support can make. Last year, we helped more than 387,000 children and their families in the UK.

If you would like to do more visit: actionforchildren.org.uk/how-to-help

January - Parkinson's

Parkinson's UK is a national Charity which offers support both to people with Parkinson's Disease and to their families or other carers. It also campaigns for more research into the causes of PD and its treatment. PD is a long term degenerative disorder of the central nervous system. The medical treatment of PD is a matter for the NHS. In the Woking area we are well served by a consultant from St Peters and two specialist nurses.



Part of the work of the national Charity is to back up the NHS by staffing a telephone help, by having a quarterly magazine which has the latest news on best practice and on current research, organising a web site, by publishing booklets, by issuing a 23 page catalogue of goods that may be helpful ranging from cutlery to voice amplifiers. Then there are local advisers who will visit people and check that they are getting the help they need from the different agencies. Also at the local level are self-funding groups. For Trinity this is a lively Woking and Weybridge group. This runs a monthly evening meeting, a monthly lunch at The Cricketers (Horsell) and occasional outings to places of interest. It also runs a weekly exercise group and a monthly singing group.

Another role for the national charity is fund raising which means encouraging and helping individuals and groups to run money raising events. The charity also sponsors some research and lets members know when volunteers are needed for a project. Finally the charity publicises the need for society to be aware of the large number of individuals either with PD or caring for someone with it. Incidentally PD was identified as a specific condition over 200 years ago by a London doctor called James Parkinson.



DINGBATS



1.

LIVING
Baguette Cob Sourdough

2.

SPELL

3.

pr_ cey

4.

ABCDEFGHIJMO
PQRSTUVWXYZ

5.

SA+LT JUZY

6.

worker
honey
queen
bumble
drones

7.

ci ii

8.

BOW 2 BEAU 2

9.

Equines
Appetiser
Entrée
Dessert
Chasse

10.

IT
BUNSEN

11.

I QEZ

12.

Jekyll Edict
Zhivago Decree
Who Command

Answers on page 33



Passion Play 2020

Back in 1633, a bubonic plague was sweeping through Europe. In the village of Oberammergau in Bavaria, in a desperate attempt to save themselves, the villagers made a vow that if God spared them they would organise a play every ten years, telling the story of Jesus Christ's arrest, crucifixion and resurrection. As if by a miracle Oberammergau survived unscathed and villagers already afflicted recovered, so they have put on a Passion Play every decade apart from a brief break in the Second World War.

The first play was performed in 1634, and now it is performed when the year ends in a nought.

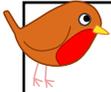


To be part of the Passion Play the cast have to be born in Oberammergau or have lived there for at least 20 years. According to tradition on Ash Wednesday 2019 the men of the village were requested to start growing their hair and beards. Even policemen are allowed to grow beards in case they are chosen to act.

Originally the play was performed in the parish church, but with increasing numbers of people wanting to see the performance, a large purpose built theatre was built with comfortable seating, underfloor heating, wheelchair access and toilet facilities. Today the theatre can seat over 4,700 people, in a covered auditorium, but the stage is outdoors, with a beautiful backdrop of Germany's Bavarian Alps.

Barbara Phillips

(Note from editor - I am visiting Oberammergau in June next year and look forward to seeing this play!)



Top Ten

The BBC Songs of Praise programme asked viewers to send in their favourite hymn. The results are:

- 10 Here I am Lord
- 9 Be still for the Presence of the Lord
- 8 Amazing Grace
- 7 Guide me O Thou Great Redeemer
- 6 I vow to Thee my Country
- 5 Abide with me
- 4 Dear Lord and Father of Mankind
- 3 In Christ Alone
- 2 How Great Thou Art



And the nations' favourite hymn is.....**JERUSALEM**

NAME THE CHRISTMAS CAROLS

1. SNHN

11. LCDAC

2. OCAYF

12. AFTROG

3. HTHAS

13. CASTHM

4. AIAM

14. ITBM

5. OLTOB

15. JBJBJATW

6. WSWTFBN

16. GCMR

7. WTKOOA

17. SATWS

8. ICUTMC

18. TFN

9. OIRDC

19. AWGMOO

10. ISTSCSI

Answers on page 33



A cryptic brain teaser.....



My garden is very crowded!
There are some sheep in it;
The local Minister has left his congregation there;
There are flowers;
Beds stuffed with mattresses;
And some rolls of wallpaper;
Now the students have all left and there is just one
animal remaining.

What is it? *Answer on page 33*

Epworth Choir's 
Family Christmas Concert

Saturday 14 December 2019
3.30pm & 7.30pm
Trinity Methodist Church, Woking



Epworth Choir & Brass
Horsell Junior School
Michael Waldron conductor

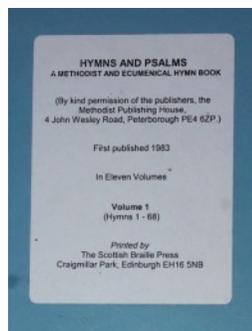
£5/10 afternoon
£5/15 evening
Discounted family tickets available
www.epworthchoir.org



York Road Project

News from the archives

We have recently had a big clear out at Trinity, checking all our rooms and cupboards to make way for the new office. In one of the cupboards in the East Entrance we came across a set of 11 volumes of Hymns & Psalms in Braille. I'm sure someone here will remember where they came from and who used them, but in the eleven years I have been at Trinity I am not aware of them being used. Added to this we now use Singing the Faith.



As the Church archivist, I didn't want to see them consigned to the skip, so through Jon Purcell the liaison office for Methodist Archives, I enquired as to whether there could be a home for them somewhere. I was almost immediately contacted by Jane Gallagher of the Methodist Archive and Research Centre at the John Rylands Library Manchester. They did already have a copy of a set of H&P in Braille but wanted to see ours. So I sent some photos and it turned out that ours was a different edition, and yes please they would like them.

So they have been sent to Manchester, and after cataloguing they will grace a space on the library shelves there.



In the clearing out of the resources room, this bible stand was found. I did a very brief amount of research as to who the family were. Frank Churchman Weygang was the son of Louis Gustav Weygang and Sarah Ann Churchman. They lived at 225

Walton Road Woking, so the family possibly attended the early Methodist Church in Walton Road. At some time prior to this the family lived in Guernsey and it was from there that Frank emigrated to Australia and joined the 19th Battalion of the Australian Infantry. Sadly he was killed in WW1 on 14th November 1916 at the age of 22.

The stand is now in our East Entrance and makes a fitting place for the daily bible reading notes,

Jean Normington

Neighbourhood Tea Party

Please note in your diaries that the next Neighbourhood Party will be on Sunday 29th March 2020 from 4 to 6 pm. Please pass the address details of potential guests (your relatives, friends and/or neighbours) to Dan at the Trinity Office, so that we can send them an invite nearer the time.



This year Trinity has sponsored 10 meals for Crisis at Christmas. Why not consider this charity in your Christmas giving?



Molly Bathurst 1924 - 2019

I have been Molly's pastoral visitor for many years; she was a great character with strong opinions and views on pretty well anything you could mention and I shall miss our chats very much.



She grew up in London during the war years and worked for Midland Bank where she met Phil her husband. They moved to Woking in the 1950's and had the house built for them

on Kettlewell Hill. They had two children Lawrence and Paula. Lawrence sadly died of cancer three years ago. The family used to spend many happy holidays in Swanage where they had a beach hut, ideal for grand children.

Molly was blessed with good health pretty well all of her life. She made a remarkable recovery from bowel cancer and just got on with her life with the help of marvellous friends, neighbours and latterly carers coming in twice a day so she could stay in the home she loved. She especially liked Shirley visiting with Freya her guide dog who she had watched grow from a puppy.

She was a lady of many talents. She loved her garden and she always had a crossword on the go. She belonged to The League of Health and Beauty now called the Flexercise Club. During the 1960's she performed at the Royal Albert Hall in their dancing displays, and loved showing me pictures of those days. She was a member of the Horsell W.I. She loved painting with the U3A and was a member of the line dancing group. She belonged to a flower club in Chobham and arranged the church flowers at Trinity for many years. She was also a member of the Badminton group. She was very keen on exercise, always walked tall and said never forget your pelvic floor exercises, which are most important!

When I saw her just 10 days before she died, she said to tell the Flexercise Club I am doing my exercises while I am in bed.

She was one determined positive lady, and I shall miss her very much indeed.

Carol McKinney.



*Christmas Greetings to all our friends at
Trinity from:*

Graham & Daniela Warr	David Reeve
Deirdre Cook	John & Margot Craig
The Kozlowski family	Valerie & Basil Slyfield
Liz & Glen Penfold	Shirley Turner
John & Joyce Nelson	Gill Hockley
Jean Normington	Barbara Jones
Helen, Stuart, Adam & Paul Best	Jenny & David Broadley
Ann & Jeff Dawson	Henk & Gerda Innemee
Lyn & David Lorberg	Kevin Bown
David & Daphne Lander	Sue Wetherell
Allison Jackson	Ian McIntosh
Sue Waddell	Evelyn McMullen
David Emmerson & Ruth	Margaret Davies
Leonora Salter	Peggy Boorman
Ruth Taylor	Enid & David Pullen
Elaine & Lee Slatter	Jo Farmer
Wendy & Geoff Eaton	Helen & Hugh Bowerman
Pam McCallum	Eunice Bunting
Mike & Sue Tozer	Lorna Fry
Gareth & Sheila Davies	Carole Hymers
Janet Atterbury	Margaret & Jim Chisholm

Break forth O beauteous heavenly light

Anyone familiar with J.S. Bach's Christmas Oratorio will know the words and tune of this Chorale:

Break forth, O beauteous heavenly light,
And usher in the morning;
O shepherds, shrink not with afright,
But hear the angel's warning.
This Child, now weak in infancy,
Our confidence and joy shall be,
The power of Satan breaking,
Our peace eternal making.

The *Oratorio*, which was first presented in 1734, is in six parts, each part being intended for performance on one of the major feast days of the Christmas period. The first part (for Christmas Day) describes the Birth of Jesus, the second (for December 26) the annunciation to the shepherds, the third (for December 27) the adoration of the shepherds, the fourth (for New Year's Day) the circumcision and naming of Jesus, the fifth (for the first Sunday after New Year) the journey of the Magi, and the sixth (for Epiphany) the adoration of the Magi.

This familiar Chorale appears in the first part and the lyrics are attributed to one Johann Rist, a seventeenth century hymn writer and dramatist. I have recently discovered that Fred Pratt Green, our highly regarded Methodist minister, poet and hymn writer – perhaps the most prolific hymn writer of the twentieth century, wrote two further stanzas to be sung to the same music. They use the everyday language and contemporary themes characteristic of all his work and offer a timely message for this Christmas season. Here they are:



This night of wonder, night of joy,
was born the Christ, our brother;
he comes, not mighty to destroy,
to bid us love each other.
How could he quit his kingly state
for such a world of greed and hate?
What deep humiliation
secured the world's salvation!

Come, dearest child, into our hearts,
and leave your crib behind you!
Let this be where the new life starts
for all who seek and find you.
To you the honour, thanks, and praise,
for all your gifts this time of grace;
come, conquer and deliver
this world, and us, forever.

David Lander



Thank you so much for the wonderful support care and love I have received over the last few months during treatment at St Peters Hospital. Your prayers of intercession for me together with many other friends have been answered beyond measure. Jesus has been with me all the time keeping me calm and unafraid, an amazing experience. The medical care has been brilliant. Blessings are indeed all mine with ten thousand beside.

Enid Pullen



Christmas or Xmas?

Christmas is also sometimes known as Xmas. Some people don't think it's correct to call Christmas 'Xmas' as that takes the 'Christ' (Jesus) out of Christmas. (As Christmas comes from Christ-Mass, the Church service that celebrated the birth of Jesus.)

But that is not quite right! In the Greek language and alphabet, the letter that looks like an X is the Greek letter chi / X (pronounced 'kye' - it rhymes with 'eye') which is the first letter of the Greek word for Christ, Christos.



The early church used the first two letters of Christos in the Greek alphabet 'chi' and 'rho' to create a monogram (symbol) to represent the name of Jesus. This looks like an X with a small p on the top:

The symbol of a fish is sometimes used by Christians (you might see a fish sticker on a car or someone wearing a little fish badge). This comes from the time when the first Christians had to meet in secret, as the Romans wanted to kill them (before Emperor Constantine became a Christian). Jesus had said that he wanted to make his followers 'Fishers of Men', so people started to use that symbol.

When two Christians met, one person drew half a basic fish shape (often using their foot in the dust on the ground) and the other person drew the other half of the fish. The Greek word for fish is 'Ikthus' or 'Ichthys'. There are five Greek letters in the word.



It can also make up a sentence of Christian beliefs 'Ie-sous Christos Theou Huios So-te-r' which in English means "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour". The second letter of these five letter is X or Christos!

So Xmas can also mean Christmas; but it should also be pronounced 'Christmas' rather than 'ex-mas'!

©www.whychristmas.com

Brief Encounters

(Some thoughts for Christmas and the New Year)

In the middle of October, I visited the West Coast Railway, Depot and Sidings in Carnforth. Those of you who don't have an interest in the railway aspect of the town may well remember that the station was the location for the filming of 'Brief Encounter' starring Celia Johnstone and Trevor Howard. There is a museum and exhibition at the station and a replica of the 'Refreshment Room' featured in the film.

On the train to Lancaster (where I had to change for Carnforth) I had a 'brief encounter' with a young couple. It all started because I overheard a quiz question they didn't know the answer to and I suggested an answer, which was correct. They shared the remaining questions with me, and in discussions discovered that he had grown up in the New Forest close to where I did much of my early preaching and he knew many of the little chapels. I discovered that his father had a deep interest in church organs and had played in many British and Continental churches and cathedrals. They showed me a photograph of his Organ Room complete with a beautifully restored, chapel organ. By the time we got to Lancaster, where I had to change trains for Carnforth, we had shared names and I was able to wish them both God's blessing as we shook hands.

That night in the hotel this 'brief encounter' reminded me of the number of 'Brief Encounters' we find in the Bible, particularly those of Jesus. I started thinking about the 'Brief Encounters' in the Christmas story.

Mary and the Angel: At that time in history it was accepted that girls usually married from about 14 years old and babies quickly followed. Mary was about that age when the Angel

appeared to her - she was betrothed to Joseph, but not yet married. Yet the Angel declares she will carry a child – God’s Son, and must call him Jesus. This is her brief encounter with an Angel.

How she must have felt – worried about the shame in bearing an illegitimate child, barely prepared for childbirth. She had visited her cousin who was pregnant and having a child. As a child she would have learned about angels as God’s messengers but this was astonishing – What could she say? Mary could have said no, but she didn’t.

Joseph and the Angel: Joseph as a carpenter would probably have been about 20 years old already into his working life – the average life expectancy of a man living in that region was about 30. He was a devout Jew and knew the ‘Law’. Mary his betrothed is carrying a child. He knows it is not his, yet this Angel tells him that God’s was him to marry Mary and help in bringing up God’s own Son who must be named Jesus..

He had the right to refuse and have Mary publicly shamed – but he didn’t. Joseph too had a brief encounter, with an Angel.



The Innkeeper and Young Couple:

The journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem was a long journey, about four days and Mary was heavily pregnant – tired, uncomfortable either walking or on a donkey. Imagine their feelings when the ‘little’ town of Bethlehem was packed. No decent place to stay and have a baby was available. How many times they must have been rejected?

Yet someone found a place for them, even if it was only a stable, probably a cave in the rock behind the house. Mary and Joseph must have taken it gladly; and the ‘swaddling clothes’ Mary had carried with her, were used to wrap God’s Son and he slept in a manger, thanks to their brief encounter with the innkeeper.

The Shepherds and the Angels:

Shepherds were largely a group of 'labourers' - most of them unqualified and unlearned. Many would have been asleep around the fire built to scare wild animals away as much as to keep them warm.

Then suddenly an Angel appears, they too knew about angels as God's messengers. But this was something extraordinary and terrifying. The Angel tells them not to fear but to celebrate because God's Son is born - the promised Messiah. Then out of nowhere the sky is filled with a 'host' of angels singing, 'Glory to God and Peace of Earth to all people.' The Angel told them to go to Bethlehem and find the 'New-born King'. They took time to discuss the matter, it could have been an 'optical illusion'. Yet they went to find the baby, because of their brief encounter.

Mary, Joseph and Jesus, and Simeon and Anna.

In accordance with the Jewish Law the baby was taken to the priest after eight days to be circumcised and named Jesus. Then in due time to the Temple to present Jesus, as the first born male, as holy to God.

Here they met Simeon and Anna who confirmed Jesus was Lord and as Isaiah had prophesied he was Immanuel - God with Us, Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace, the Light of the World. We never meet Simeon and Anna again.

As we move from Christmas to Epiphany and reflect on the other 'Brief Encounters' with the Magi we think of resolutions. As this is regarded as the Year of Testimony in the Methodist Church what about this for a New Year's Resolution? To seek the 'brief encounters' God has set up for you and respond as Mary, Joseph, the Innkeeper, the Shepherds, Anna and Simeon did and share God's Blessing and the story of his love shown to you.

God bless you all this Christmas.

Graham Warr

Introducing our Community Development Missioner - Hugh Bowerman

After much effort by many people, I find myself on the verge of starting a very different chapter in my life – as Community Development Missioner. Working with Daniela and others, I will be responsible for taking The Foundry forward. I will be working 4 days at Trinity and in my current job for 1 day each week. I start at the beginning of January. I am looking forward to working with everyone as we devise ways of reaching out into the community. That said, I anticipate much of my early focus will be around ROC, see separate article. For those who don't know me, a quick summary of who I am and what makes me tick.

I was born in Worthing at the beginning of the 60's into a Christian family. I am one of five - 3 girls and 2 boys. Sadly my brother died about 10 years ago. At age 6 we moved to Sutton. I was a shy boy who struggled to cope with the change of schools. The move also saw the family change from being Anglican to Baptist. Our local church at that time was very active. Through the church, and especially the Boy's Brigade, I was able to enjoy a wide range of activities – drama, youth club, football, badminton, cross-country, playing in a band, Duke of Edinburgh, youth fellowship. I decided to own my Christian faith at age 14 - my faith and passion for the Kingdom has not really wavered since. I was always going to pursue a technical career, so I found myself at Manchester University reading Civil Engineering. Helen and I also met there, and we married as soon as her course finished. At the time I was working in North London and Helen in Frimley, and so Woking more or less chose itself as a place to live. Helen has a Congregational/URC background, so church wise we could have ended up anywhere. As it was we were living opposite Trinity Methodist, and decided we would start looking at the closest church first

and work outwards. We received such a welcome that we never looked anywhere else.

Career wise I have been fortunate. I have had opportunity to work in a range of engineering disciplines. The scope of what I have designed ranges from North Sea structures to subsea control systems to friction welding machines to steel castings to writing industry guidance on fire & explosion to tall buildings. I've even worked on pig launchers! The work has involved a lot of innovation – there is certainly an inventor streak in me.

Family is important. We have 4 children – Hannah, Sarah, David and Claire. They are all now married, though all live near. So far we have 5 grandchildren, with number 6 imminent! The children have their role in keeping me in order. For my new role I'd note they also give me a window on what it is like to be a young adult/family in today's society. I'm hoping the grandchildren will keep me young, though after an afternoon with them I'm not so sure

Having been at Trinity for 38years, I have sat on (or chaired) most committee's and had two stints as a church steward. However, if I were to pick the three things that mean most to me they would be (i) the work with the young people, specifically the Sunday evening fellowship group; (ii) training to be and then being a local preacher; (iii) candidating for the ministry and not being selected (self-examination, challenge, acceptance – learning an institution!). There is a common theme here – all involve being in a position (or wanting to be in a position) to help others grow their faith in Jesus.

And so to my new role. Sometimes it seems totally contrary to my life so far, yet when I reflect on the task ahead there are many strands from my past that fit. Has God been preparing me for this? I certainly hope and pray so, but I also hope God has been preparing us all. The challenge ahead is great, but together with God we can turn the impossible into the possible.

Hugh

Foundry News

ROC Conversation

The steering group is now meeting. Ruth Taylor is chairing and Daniela Warr Schori is secretary. I also attend on behalf of Trinity. We also have reps from 4 other churches. (See the separate article for more information.) This includes an invite for you to give us the names of any people or organisations you think should be represented at the event.

Foundry Worship

We have been meeting at 5pm every other Sunday for over a year now. On Sunday 8th December in the afternoon we will be meeting to discuss and pray about where we go from here - what works well; what new directions; what is practical. How often we meet (there is a demand for weekly meetings) and at what time are hot topics, so if anyone feels excluded by current arrangements please let me know. Incidentally, this is not a closed discussion – anyone is welcome. Further details to follow.

Logo

As I write some logo options are on display in the East Entrance along with some explanations. They should still be there when TNV is published, so feel free to add comments. The logo and Foundry name will be the identity through which we engage with the wider community. It will help us to be seen as new and different, allowing us a bit of freedom from the pre-conceived ideas many people have about 'church'.

Getting out (York Road, 6th January 2020) We have been keen to see some new initiatives that involve going out

and serving our local community. Denzel has delivered! I quote extracts from him:

"The goal . . . is to make 'Christ-like' contact with York Road. Sue will be joining us and will be providing a haircutting service, this was actually a delight for the YRP as their in-house hairdresser had actually left to go and complete her masters. By the grace of God we're able to fill a need within the charity.

Alongside cutting hair, Ruth, Patrick and I, will be helping by providing warm food such as sandwiches and soups for the rest of the guests, and our prayer here is that we can establish a relationship of friendship and fellowship which may lead to the curiosity of Jesus.

The time will be from 10:30am to 1pm, and we would really welcome anyone that feels prompted in their heart to give, to come and join us."

Contact Denzel for more information (tel. 07823 442958,
denzel_1@hotmail.co.uk)

Hugh Bowerman, Foundry Missioner



Mince Pies, like Christmas Puddings, were originally filled with meat, such as lamb, rather than the dried fruits and spices mix as they are today.

They were also first made in an oval shape to represent the manger that Jesus slept in as a baby, with the top representing his swaddling clothes. Sometimes they even had a 'pastry baby Jesus' on the top! A custom from the middle ages says that if you eat a mince pie on every day from Christmas to Twelfth Night (evening of the 5th January) you will have happiness for the next 12 months!



Boxing Day takes place on December 26th and is only celebrated in a few countries; mainly ones historically connected to the UK (such as Canada, Australia, South Africa and

New Zealand) and in some European countries. In Germany it is known as "Zweite Feiertag" (which means 'second celebration') and also "Zweiter Weihnachtsfeiertag" which translates as Boxing Day (although it doesn't literally mean that)!

It was started in the UK about 800 years ago, during the Middle Ages. It was the day when the alms box, collection boxes for the poor often kept in churches, were traditionally opened so that the contents could be distributed to poor people. Some churches still open these boxes on Boxing Day.

It might have been the Romans that first brought this type of collecting box to the UK, but they used them to collect money for the betting games which they played during their winter celebrations!

In The Netherlands some collection boxes were made out of a rough pottery called 'earthenware' and were shaped like pigs. Perhaps this is where we get the term 'Piggy Bank'!

It was also traditional that servants got the day off to celebrate Christmas with their families on Boxing Day. Before World War II, it was common for working people (such as milkmen and butchers) to travel round their delivery places and collect their Christmas box or tip. This tradition has now mostly stopped and any Christmas tips, given to people such as postal workers and newspaper delivery children, are not normally given or collected on Boxing Day.

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Answers to Dingbats

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Living on the
breadline | 7. See eye to eye |
| 2. Lean spell | 8. Bow tie |
| 3. No idea | 9. Horses for courses |
| 4. Missing link | 10. Put it on the back
burner |
| 5. Add insult to injury | 11. Eyeliner |
| 6. The bee's knees | 12. Doctor's orders |

Answers to Name the Christmas Carols

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Silent night holy night. | 11. Love came down at
Christmas. |
| 2. O come all ye faithful. | 12. Angels from the realms of
glory. |
| 3. Hark the herald angels sing. | 13. Christians awake salute the
happy morn. |
| 4. Away in a manger | 14. In the bleak mid winter. |
| 5. O little town of Bethlehem. | 15. Jingle bells jingle bells
jingle all the way. |
| 6. While shepherds watched
their flocks by night. | 16. Good Christian men
rejoice. |
| 7. We three king of orient are. | 17. See amid the winter snow. |
| 8. It came upon a midnight
clear. | 18. The first noel. |
| 9. Once in royal David's city. | 19. As with gladness men of
old. |
| 10. I saw three ships come
sailing in. | |

Answer to cryptic brain teaser FOX



What's on at Trinity

Prayer Group	Friday (weekly) 9.45am	Ann, W 770400
Y Group	Monday (1 st & 3 rd) 8pm	Allison W 725439
Coffee & Chat	Weds (weekly) 10.30am	Margot, W 762059
Bible Study Fellowship	Weds (weekly) 10.30am	Sarah Jo W 892067
Wednesday House Group	Weds (fortnightly) 8pm	Ruth 07772 305106 Samantha W 835521
Bible Study	Friday (monthly) 10.30am	Peggy, W 763605
Phoenix	Friday (fortnightly) 8pm	Joyce, 722457
Quest Group	Sat (monthly) 9.30am	John, W 762059
Family Club	Friday (weekly) 5pm	Sue Waddington, 01932 859636
Junior Church	10:30am	Sue Waddington, 01932 859636
Messy Church	3 rd Sunday 10am	Sue Waddington, 01932 859636
Trinity Toddlers	09:30:00	Kim Wilson,, 07791 763241





A note to contributors

It is our practice to publish each edition of TNV on the Trinity website. It is an important source of information about church life at Trinity and something we want to share with others. At the same time we recognise that some contributors may be uncomfortable for their personal details to appear on the internet in this way. We will be happy to omit names and any other personal details in any future issue if requested to do so.

From the Editor

Thank you to all who have helped with the preparation and distribution of this **50th** issue of TNV and to all those who have helped since the 1st issue in 2011. David Lander will be editing the next issue.

Jean Normington

Articles for the February/March issue should be submitted by

19th January 2020





**TRINITY NEWS & VIEWS is the magazine of
TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH WOKING**

**"Trinity is a welcoming Church seeking to live
in the love of God and share the message of
Jesus Christ**

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pigeonhole at the Church or emailed to
tnv@trinitywoking.org.uk**

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