



TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH WOKING  
Weekly Newsletter  
Sunday 13 September 2020

**Message from Rev Sam Funnell**

Dear Friends,

HOPE seems to be the word at the moment – it cropped up quite a bit in my Welcome service, again in my message last Sunday morning and again in Foundry Worship in the evening (thanks to Helen, Hugh, Jean, Denzel & Joyce for leading us and Rohan for the Tech support).

I think God is really trying to ram this message home – we all know that in God we have a trustworthy and loving companion for our daily living, someone we can put our HOPE in who will not disappoint us (see Romans 5:5), that holding onto this God of HOPE should enable us to move forwards as individuals in discipleship, as a church community of people and in so doing, offer that amazing HOPE to others who desperately need something/someone to be able to HOPE in.

The verse that came into my head comes from 1 Peter 3:15, written to scattered and persecuted Christians across Asia Minor, to encourage them to stand firm, hold fast to what they knew to be true, and good, and godly and share it whenever possible:

*‘..have reverence for Christ in your hearts, and honour him as Lord. Be ready at all times to answer anyone who asks you to explain the hope you have in you..’*

We know HOPE is important and we want to be people of HOPE but I wondered, as I walked through the woods near Wheatsheaf Common yesterday, are we always as ready to speak of the HOPE that is in us? If any of us met someone in the next few minutes after we’d read this latest newsletter, and they asked us why we’re a Christian, or why we go to church, or what this Christian stuff is all about - what would we say?

Perhaps that’s worth a thought.

It doesn’t mean you have to come up with a

carefully prepared, doctrinally-correct statement – you just have to be ready to say something real, from your heart, about God and how a relationship with God, through Jesus Christ, enabled by the Holy Spirit works for you (or me).

HOPE is about:

**H**olding **O**n to the **P**romise of the **E**ternal and **H**aving **O**pportunities to **P**romote the **E**verlasting

May God grant each of us the chance to do just that and then give us the words that will touch someone’s heart and mind with something they need to hear, or know, or feel. Have a good week and always be HOPE-full! Sam.

**Message from the Leadership Team**

The day before our North Devon holiday the forecast was for 7 days of rain. Most of it heavy rain - three drops with 50%+ under the black cloud. As we left Woking, the latest Atlantic storm was named - Francis – an ominous sign. And so it proved. On Sunday we walked the edge of Dartmoor – thankfully, we were only drenched once! Monday we celebrated a significant birthday. We were in and out of our cottages as rain permitted – the weather was not going to upset that day. Next was Tuesday, and a family cycle ride on the Tarka Trail.

Tuesday started with Francis throwing everything at us. We considered aborting the cycling, but the weather app told us the rain would clear mid-morning, and it did. So cycling was on. From Bideford to Barnstable. 16 of us. From 9 months through to 60 years. And it was great. 15km in just over an hour. Easy cycling, pleasant chatting as we progressed. Then a lovely lunch at Barnstable Station. We all looked forward to the return leg, only we hadn’t taken into account the wind. This, it turns out, was increasing to a maximum towards the end of the afternoon. It was sweeping over the Atlantic, up the Bristol channel and straight up the Taw estuary – along the side of which, on a 3m raised bank, runs the Tarka Trail. I don’t think it was possible to be more exposed.

We didn’t all make it back to Bideford, at least not by bicycle. Ten of us persevered, 2.5 hours of hard graft with bicycles locked in the lowest gear. To think that we’d chosen the

Tarka Trail for easy, level cycling. How misguided we were! But we did it.

It strikes me that life is often like this. We set out on a path and everything seems easy, straightforward. We're cruising through life in a high gear – moving onwards with little effort. Everything is going to plan. Then something happens, and our lives are turned around. Suddenly everything is effort, and there seems to be no shelter from what life throws at us. It is not what we expected, nor what we want.

In his letter James tells us (1:2-4) *“My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that we may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing.”* Deep down I think we all recognise the truth in what James is saying. I find that people enduring through difficult times have amazingly mature perspectives on so many things. And I know my need of receiving some of that hard-won wisdom.

The ten of us that completed the return leg of that cycle ride did so with a lot of encouragement from each other. When the winds of life make the going in our lives difficult, I pray that we'll be there to encourage one another. And when we're through the storms? – well, in our case there were smiles all round – we had endured what at times seemed impossible, we'd got back to base. We were sore from our efforts, and I don't think any of us would want to face that wind again, but we had done it, and I'm sure we're all the richer for the experience. As for growth in maturity, we now know to check for wind as well as for rain!



The Bowerman rabble - we're still smiling so definitely the outward leg before lunch!

In each of our lives, may we all be sustained and encouraged through the storms of life, confident that we will get back to base, and that when we do we will find a place where love and joy abound, where we can smile as we hear the words 'well done my good and faithful servant'.

**Hugh Bowerman**

### **Zoom and YouTube**

Over the past few weeks, we have been in a transition period where we have broadcast the Sunday Morning service via both Zoom and YouTube whilst we were evaluating the options open to us.

The feedback we have received from those still not able to join us in person is that the YouTube streaming is by far the best in terms of quality and reliability. It also gives the advantage of being able to be viewed retrospectively if people are unable to view live.

So, the result is that we have decided – at this stage - to discontinue the Zoom for the SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE only. We will continue to monitor any feedback and take actions as appropriate. \*\*\*

The service will now be streamed on Trinity's YouTube channel, the link to which is:-

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsE8kb2QxNnmyrqqBbMQLNg>

(For convenience, you may wish to copy the above link and paste it into your computer rather than trying to search for Trinity's home page.)

From this page you will be able to find all the services that have been recorded as well as any that are being live streamed.

The broadcast of both Foundry and Junior Church services are still under discussion and the relevant people will be discussing the future with those concerned.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with a steward or with one of the technical team.

## **A Word in Season 25 – Thoughts on the future**

**In everything God works for good with those who love him.** (Romans 8:28 RSV)

Having been back from holiday for three weeks I have been discovering that the pandemic and lockdown have made some significant changes to my life. I have spent over fifty years working with microphones in Youth Clubs, Schools and Churches. I have changed the position up or down, right, or left, used roving mics, shown children from four upwards how to use them properly. But now I can't touch them at all. My hands think my brain is confused or my brain thinks my hands are confused. All I can say is 'Things ain't what they used to be! My apologies to those who, rightly, are concerned when it happens because it is very serious and all of us over the months have been made to accept things have changed, what with, masks, social distancing, tricky bubbles, constant hand washing and I believe for many of us who grew up to literally 'sing God's praises, to tell the old, old story in song. Times really have changed! Today I hear there are changes to groups again. How will that affect the arrangements for worship?

I have also found I have lost some confidence. Since we moved to Goldsworth Park, thirty years ago, I have regularly travelled on the 91 bus, but now, not for six months, and I feel very insecure about using the bus again. On Monday I was in Chesham and walked into the town. I usually spend some time wandering, having a Coffee, then catching the little local bus home and easily find a seat. Suddenly, I couldn't face it, and walked back carrying the shopping. In the coffee shop for the first time sitting on my own I couldn't get my phone to read the Track and Trace app. It really threw me! Many of you will know that I am a die-hard railway enthusiast and with only five more Cathedrals on my bucket list to visit by train I investigated taking the train to visit one last Saturday but didn't book any tickets, I couldn't face it.

As a practising Christian shouldn't I have taken the journeys, trusting in God? I have resumed preaching appointments either on Zoom or in church. I will be taking my first full service behind a screen on Sunday at West Horsley. It will be good to establish eye contact and see the congregation altogether. But what of my daily service for my Lord, that has changed or has it? With these thoughts tumbling around in my head about a week ago on my e-reader I came across a little book by Tom Wright, Anglican Bishop and Bible Scholar, called '*God and the Pandemic*' (SPCK 2020) I have found it extremely interesting and helpful. It is easy to read and looks at the Pandemic in three ways for Christians – Why did it happen, where do we go from here and How do we do it? I am currently reading the How and he breaks down a favourite verse of mine, my mum had written it on the flyleaf of a book, she gave me when I left home to go to Teacher Training College.

*In everything God works for good with those who love him.* (Romans 8-28 RSV)

You will find several slightly different translations in many Bibles. For me though this translation put the emphasis on God working with me.

*'It is a call to recognise the truth of what Paul says elsewhere; that we are called to hard work, knowing that God is at work in us.'* (T Wright *ibid*)

God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit are supporting, encouraging, and inspiring us. God is in control; we have to go out and do what the Church of Christ has been doing since the Resurrection. Reaching out to serve the needs of all God's children. Throughout the plagues and pandemics of the past two thousand years of Christian history, Christians have followed Jesus's call to get involved. Many of the medical and social advances of the past, have been initiated and developed by Christians. In this current pandemic where would we have been without the Hospices and Voluntary Care Homes, eg MHA, many of them founded by Christians. Today as Christians we need to follow the example of the disciples and the early church, and those in the past, like Mar-

tin Rinkart- 1586-1649. He was the Lutheran archdeacon in Eilenburg in Saxony which had been sacked by both the Austrians and Swedish armies during the 'Thirty Years' and was then severely affected by plague and famine. He courageously served his flock, using the 'limited' protection available. One of the plague victims was his wife. In the depths of that suffering he wrote the Hymn – 'Now thank we all our God' (StF 81). Verse 2 has a particular significance for today.

*O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us, with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us; and keep us in his grace, and guide us when perplexed, and free us from all ills in this world and the next.*

We need to set up signposts for the way forward starting with prayer. To share in prayer God's grief and tears for the suffering, as Jesus did. To speak out when we know things are not focussing on the real needs, to work on sharing our own and the churches resources to meet those grievous needs for as Alan Dale and Hubert Richards have written –

*God's spirit is in my heart, he has called me and set me apart, this is what I have to do: He sent me to bring the good news to the poor, tell prisoners that they are prisoners no more, Tell blind people that they can see and set the down-trodden free, and go tell everyone the news that the kingdom of God has come. Just as the Father sent me so, I'm sending you out to be my witnesses throughout the world, the whole of the world: Don't worry what you have to say; don't worry because on that day God's spirit will speak in your heart. (StF 404 vv 1,2,4)*

The words of the Psalmist in his Prayer to God in time of trouble, also lifts us up.

*O God send out your light and truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy; and I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God.*

*Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise him, my help, and my God. (Psalm 43:3-5)*

As we face the challenges of the 'new normal' may God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit work with us today and every day. God bless us all.

*Footnote: If you wonder how I knew about Martin Rinkart it is because Christine was a Swiss Lutheran and we were married in Switzerland. We needed two hymns that could be sung in German and English as a result of our research I discovered the history. We chose, 'Now thank we all our God' and one other, not by Martin Rinkart – can you guess as to which one it was?*

Graham

### **Valerie's Quiz Corner This week's quiz**

1. In which U.S. State is Las Vegas situated?
2. What was F Scott Fitzgerald's first name?
3. Pertussis is an alternative name for which bacterial disease?
4. In "A Mid Summer's Night's Dream" what is the profession of Bottom?
5. What is "The old Lady of Threadneedle Street" a nickname for?
6. How did Joan of Arc meet her death?
7. Who was the commander of The American expeditionary forces on the Western front in WWI?
8. Which of the Gospels in the New Testament records Jesus' metaphor concerning a wolf in sheep's clothing?
9. The Aleutian Islands extend southward from which U.S. State?
10. Who was the youngest son of Henry II?
11. In Taoism what are Yin and Yang?
12. What is the port and major industrial city on the west shore of Tokyo Bay?
13. What does Y.M.C.A. stand for?
14. Who were the Mau Mau?

## Answers to last week's quiz

- Anthony Newley
- Spaghetti
- British Red Cross Society
- Inflammation of the liver
- Jordan
- Cheetah
- German measles
- Italy
- Onion like plant
- Shanghai
- Saint Vitus
- A percussion instrument
- Bee hummingbird
- America
- Crustacean

It seems an age since last March when I edited the April/May edition of TNV, so it was quite strange to slip into Dan's shoes and produce this edition of the weekly newsheet.

Dan will be back next week so please resume sending your articles to her on the office email address.

Jean

### **Please Remember:-**

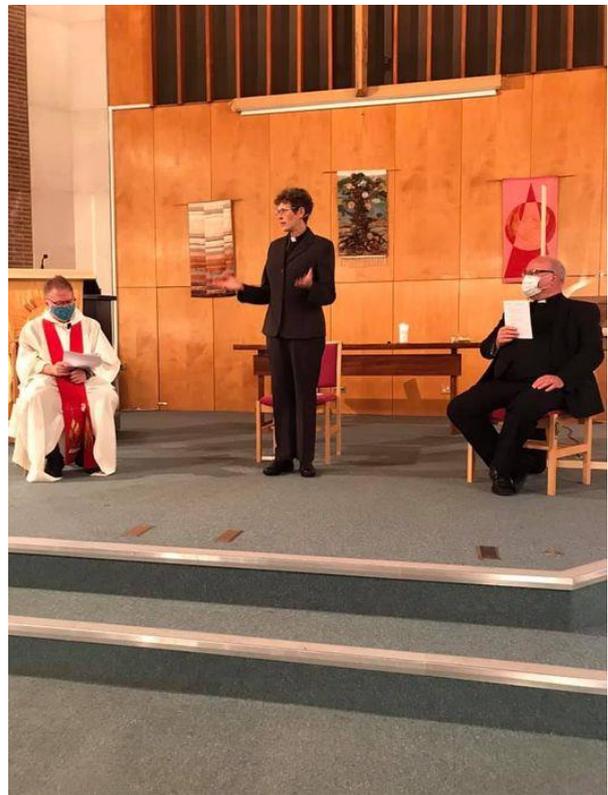
The church email address is

[trinitywoking@btinternet.com](mailto:trinitywoking@btinternet.com)

Please delete all other addresses from your address book to avoid confusion.

*\*\*\*\* Note from the editor- hopefully, the new restrictions on social distancing will not prevent us meeting in Church. At the time of going to press there has been no announcement from Methodist House or the Government clarifying this. We will keep you informed if there are any changes to the way we worship.*

*Jean*



### **Sam's Welcome Service**

Rev Dr David Hinchliffe, Rev Sam Funnell and  
Rev Keith Beckingham