



**TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH  
WOKING  
Weekly Newsletter  
Sunday 4 October 2020**

**Message from Rev Sam Funnell**

Dear Friends,

How was your week? It certainly feels like summer has departed and autumn has definitely arrived; I finally had to give in and put the central heating on yesterday and an extra layer has gone on my bed too – and I don't mean Daisy Dog!

I'm conscious that, as a new month arrives, we have celebrated our first Harvest together (well, sort of!) and we are now looking towards the first Communion service. Some of you have been able to share with me in church and others have been sharing at home. I do hope that those of you who are sharing via YouTube feel really close to those of us who are in the building at Trinity – we are one fellowship and we share in the one service of worship and seek to serve the one God.

Communion presents a whole host of possibilities and other challenges – not least how we try to share that sense of 'togetherness', when some of us will be in church sharing bread and wine and others at home will not be able to.

For those of us in church, we will be using some pre-packed communion cups called 'The Miracle Meal', which David Emmerson kindly obtained for us. They consist of a little plastic cup filled with non-alcoholic communion wine with a silver seal over that, there's a communion wafer on top of that which is sealed with its own see-through plastic cover.

They look a little like the milk pots you get on some hospitality trays in cafes or hotels. We hope they offer us a safe and hygienic way to share – we'll see how we get on with them!

For those of you who will be at home, my aim will be to help you to share in the sense of 'Spiritual Communion' – have a look on the Methodist Church website, if you want to know a little more:  
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/16700/spiritual-communion.pdf>

Basically, it's about holding on to the truth that, even when we can't all share together in church in an actual Communion service, that the bigger issue than bread and wine (or even little Miracle Meal pots!) is our shared sense of God's presence with us, God's power and grace offered to us and God's love holding us as one.

I would therefore encourage those of you who will be sharing with us online on the 4<sup>th</sup> October to find an item that has some significance for you in terms of your faith and relationship with God. It might be your bible, a hymn or prayer book, this newsletter, a cross, a plant from your garden or just a picture that speaks to you of God – and to have that with you on Sunday morning. When we get to sharing the bread and wine in church, I will invite those of you at home to focus on your special item, to feel a sense of God's closeness and a connection to the worship in church. There will be some special words displayed for you to reflect on, that we may all feel 'united in one body', the body of Christ. In that moment of sharing, whoever we are, wherever we are - in church, at home, members of Trinity, the Wey Valley Methodist Circuit, the Methodist world-wide family and the whole Christian family across the globe – we are held as ONE in God's love, redeemed by our Saviour Christ and reassured by the Spirit's presence.

Hope to 'see' you on Sunday!  
Sam

**Leadership team message**

I've been reading a book about data bias written by Caroline Criado Perez called 'Invisible women'.

It exposes data bias in a world designed by men for men. Did you know that safety measures in cars are based on men's measurements and not adjusted for the different size and shape of women? Or that

when architects design public buildings, the footprint for men's and women's toilets are the same but, of course, women take longer in a toilet and need to be provided with more toilets than men. Hence the queues we experience during the intervals of concerts.

In many countries there is a real lack of public women's toilets. In India many poor women are put at risk of attack by having to go out at night to find a place to toilet.

In the ROC work of the Foundry we are aiming to help those invisible people whose needs are hidden. One of these groups are people who are socially isolated and lonely. During lockdown Woking Council staff have been phoning isolated people to check on their welfare supported by a group of volunteers. But many of the volunteers are returning to work and the lonely and socially isolated people are still stuck at home. Hugh Bowerman is co-ordinating a group of people to help continue making contact with them by phone. If you would like to help and give a little time to phoning someone who needs someone to talk then get in touch with Hugh.

*Ruth Taylor*

## **A Word in Season 28 – Harvest**

***To you, O Lord, our hearts we raise in hymns of adoration, to you bring sacrifice of praise with shouts of exultation.***

***Bright robes of gold the fields adorn, the hills with joy are ringing, the valleys stand so thick with corn that even they are singing.*** (William Chatter Dix StF 129, H&P 362 from Ps 65:12-13)

Since our canal holiday in August and seeing those cornfields ripening in the hot sun, I have been waiting for Harvest Festival. My love of Harvest services goes back a long way...

Please come back in time with me to Summer 1956 when, at the age of eight, we moved from a suburban council estate in Bromley, Kent, to the tiny Dorset hamlet of Cripplestyle. As I have written previously, that move changed my life.

Two of the most vivid memories I have of those childhood years were haymaking and harvest. Haymaking - coming home from the village school and joining my friends out in the sunlit fields to help turn the hay with long wooden rakes, then when the 'modern' bailer appeared, helping to stack the bales.

On one long summer evening in my early teens my 3 brothers and I were helping Wilf the farmer to bring in the bales (he had no help as his son was in the RAF). Towards dusk he asked us if we could finish clearing the field as he had to go and milk the cows, by hand! Geoff, who was about seventeen, drove the tractor - an old grey Ferguson 15, while Mike and Paul threw the bales up. Wilf had shown me how to load the bales. Four long ways down the centre of the trailer and then the others sideways across, the second layer the opposite, to tie in the layer below and so on, but no more than five or six layers high or the load could split. Mike and Paul had fun throwing them up so quickly that I struggled to keep up. Dusk was coming when we set off with the loaded trailer down the bumpy cart track, I sat on top and suddenly realised the top layer was starting to split in the middle. I threw myself across the load using fingers and toes to hold the bales in place. Fortunately, it wasn't far, and we got the load home safely!

That was fun, but Harvest Festival was magnificent! On the Friday evening the men would lay out the tables, and with the rick ladders to reach the cross beams of the chapel. Dad and Geoff fixed sheaves of corn and bundles of Golden Rod to the supporting beams. On Saturday we children would bring the gifts from the porch to the ladies to decorate the tables and window ledges. There were flowers, vegetables, fruit (minus a few), and jars of chutney, pickled onions, homemade cakes, pies and jams. Space was left in the centre for the enormous Harvest Loaf, home baked, in the shape of a sheaf of corn. I remember as we helped Mum and Dad, who cared for the Chapel, to tidy up and lock up in the evening, there was always a small space at the front in the centre of the splendid display. On Sunday morning before the service, Dad would bring a

piece of coal (as the coalfields were harvest fields of sort back then) and Mum a glass of fresh water (to remind us all how precious water is) and put them in that space.



*Some of the 'harvest' from our garden this year.*

The Service was special because we were joined by the congregation from the Methodist Chapel three quarters of a mile away down the hill in Crendell.

The Fosters, Ings, and Baileys were the main families in the area and were all related in some way or another. The Fosters and half the Baileys attended the Congregational Chapel at Cripplestyle, where we lived and worshipped. The Ing's and the other half of the Baileys' worshipped at the Methodist Chapel. As the Methodists had no morning service but met in the afternoons, for Harvest Festival our afternoon Sunday School was cancelled so we could all join together. There was no sense of competition, just a large family get together and joint celebrations. I preferred the Methodist Service because it was different, and there I discovered some hymns I had never heard before:

*'Yes, God is good in earth and sky'  
(363 H&P)*

*'O Lord of heaven and earth and sea'  
(337 H&P).*

Sadly, they are not included in Singing the Faith, but my third favourite is. It is the one that heads this article. As we sang these and other hymns lustily, followed by a Harvest Tea, I had no idea the significance Methodism would have in my life!

But enough of all this nostalgia, good though it is to have those happy memories, things have changed. I've grown up, life is different.

But, there are some things about Harvest that have not changed. The most important is that God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit have not changed. The promises are sure:

***'As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.'*** (Genesis 8:22)

***'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today and forever'*** (Hebrews 13:8)

The second thing that has not changed is our need to say, 'Thank you' to God for all his love and mercies, as Estelle White reminds us:

*Autumn Days, Grass, Chestnuts, Jet Planes, Loved Treasures, Clouds, Frost, Moon, Bacon, Songs, Delivery People, Sea Spray, Rainbows, Swallows, Comfy Shoes, Apple Pie, Garden Scents, Falling Rain, Minnows, Streams, Cars Starting, Sport; So, I mustn't forget, no, I mustn't forget to say a great big thank-you, I mustn't forget. (from StF 121)*

I will never forget the thrill of singing that many years later as a teacher, in an Assembly with three hundred children at a Junior School adjacent to Heathrow, accompanied on the piano by my colleague Helen who was also a Methodist. Even the short haul jets taking off couldn't drown the singing!

Finally, the simplest, but so significant, thing that has not changed in the sixty-four years these memories go back is that almost without exception I have had at least three good meals every day. Mum would never let us go to school without a proper breakfast. We always had a midday and evening meal too. I didn't know for years what it had cost Mum and Dad in the period before we moved to Dorset, to feed us all. Many years later Mum told me that when Dad went to work at Holborn Viaduct station he would take a packed lunch and just enough money in

his pocket for a cup of tea and if there wasn't enough money he would drink water, even on freezing cold days. At least in Dorset we had a large garden and Dad grew fruit and vegetables.

I discovered what it really meant as a parent, when Christine and I moved from tied accommodation at the Children's Home out into the unprotected world. In order to make ends meet we took extra jobs.

But the real effect upon me was through teaching, in all 'my' schools, but particularly in South London on the edge of Brixton where I saw so much poverty, and children coming to school hungry with only a free school lunch, if they qualified, or a totally inadequate packed lunch as the staple food of the day. One unemployed single-parent Dad explained how he could only get cash-in-hand work and frequently struggled to have a loaf of bread for the children to have breakfast.

As a school we were able to help them through breakfast clubs and after-school clubs, and free school dinners, but that is not possible for millions.

As I look out on the world I see children, families, adults - old and young, starving, yes even dying from starvation and a lack of clean, fresh water. I recognise how fortunate many of us are.

One of the tasks Jesus asks us to do is to feed the hungry, but I know first-hand how difficult it is to find extra resources to support the many charities that contact us for funds, and how guilty we can feel if we can't afford to support more. So we have to be realistic. What we can do?

This morning, Monday, I was struck by the daily reading in 'Fresh from the Word' which followed the incidents of the disciples picking and eating corn grains and Jesus healing a man with a 'withered hand' on the Sabbath. As far as the majority of religious leaders and Pharisees were concerned this was labour and was therefore banned by the Law, *Torah*.

Eric Fairbrother sums up Jesus' position and the relevance for us in her final comments,

*'Jesus doesn't avoid the debate; by making acts of mercy a priority he showed what argument could not: that neither hunger nor healthcare can be put off until later... Both are acts of mercy, both require our attention and for both there is 'no time like the present.'* (Eric Fairbrother, p275 *Fresh from the Word*, 2020, IBRA)

We can do practical things like trying to prevent waste, agitating for local and national government to take positive action on food poverty, to support organisations and agencies like the York Road Project, MHA, and others. We can use our church resources by developing our relationship and mission with ROC (*Redeeming Our Communities*). We can also pray for guidance to lead us in the way God needs us to go.

As Eric put it: *'God of mercy, give me compassion to stand with those whose need is great, and the courage to advocate for change that will make a difference.'* (ibid)

On Sunday, I found the words sung at our Harvest Festival service so relevant,

*In the darkness of the still night, in the dawning of the daylight, in the mystery of creation,  
In the breath of every being, in the birthing and the growing, in the earth and all its fullness,  
Creator God, you are there.  
In the homeless and the hungry, in the broken and the lonely, in the grieving of your people,  
In the tears and in the heartache, in the love through which we serve you, in the anguish of the dying,  
Creator God you are there.  
In our hearts and in our thinking, in the longing and the dreaming, in the yearning of our heartbeat,  
In the love for one another, in the sharing of our being, in receiving and forgiving,  
Creator God you are there.  
In our joys, our hopes, our healing, in awakening to revealing, in your call and our responding,  
In our prayer and in our service, in our praise and in our worship, in your love that is eternal,*

*Creator God, my God, you are there.*  
(Margaret Rizza StF 109)

We return to those Harvest Festivals at Crendell and that simple song I first heard there, and the final verse:

*For all your gifts we bless you, Lord, but chiefly for our heavenly food, your pardoning grace, your quickening word, these prompt our song, that you, our God, is good.* (H&P 363v5 John Hampden Gurney)

God bless us all this week, and all we do for our Lord.  
*Graham*

### **Christmas Edition of TNV**

At the time of writing this, Christmas arrangements are still unknown, but we do know nothing will stop us celebrating the birth of Jesus. David Lander and I had a discussion and we intend to produce a Christmas edition of TNV which will be edited by David, and I am sure he will start requesting articles soon. Please note the new email address for TNV articles is [TNV@trinitywoking.org](mailto:TNV@trinitywoking.org)

We would like to include a gift of a knitted prayer cross in each magazine, so this is an appeal for all you knitters out there to get started. We intend to tie a prayer or quote from the bible to each cross and we also want to make them available for any tenants who (hopefully) are using the building. **So we need LOTS!** We will advise you nearer the time of where and when to bring them in so please keep them stored at home to start with.

*Many thanks to Barbara Phillips for suggesting this and supplying the pattern.*

#### Prayer Cross for Christmas

Cast on 9 stitches

Work 26 rows in moss stitch

Next row, cast on 8 stitches (17)

Next row, cast on 8 stitches (25)

Work 8 rows

Next row, cast off 8 stitches and work to end

Next row, cast off 8 stitches and work to end

Work 9 rows

Cast off.



*Jean Normington & David Lander*

### **Emma Kendall (nee Sergeant)**

Many of you will remember Emma, who used to worship at Trinity some years ago. She was ordained in Wells Cathedral on Saturday. We pray for her in her new ordained life!



Photo from Emma's Facebook page.  
*Allison Jackson*

### **Valerie's Quiz Corner is back!**

- What colour are the petals on a Rudbeckia flower?
- What is a crumhorn?
- Tzatziki is a traditional dish of which country?
- How many corona virus particles can you get on the head of a pin?
- Of which country is Harare the capital?
- Who invented the sewing machine in 1846?
- How many images commonly depict the Stations of the Cross?
- Blue, green with heavy black

spotting over the length of the body, broad red stripe from the gills to the tail depicts which fish? Two words.

- The name of which university preceded the words 'bags' to denote a type of broad trousers?
- What is the capital of Mexico?
- What element has the symbol *Si*?
- French painter Eduard..... 1832-83
- What is the habitat of the plant mangrove?
- Which planet in the solar system is named after the Roman messenger of the gods?
- In which TV series did Jack Warner appear between 1955-1976?

### **Blast from the past and balm for the soul**

24 years ago Trinity Players staged a production of 'Jesus Christ Superstar.' My then 17 year old little brother Bernhard played Jesus, Glen Penfold was Judas, Miriam Windsor as she was then - Mary Magdalene, Barrie Tabraham - Pontius Pilate. Dad and lots of other current Trinity folk were also in the cast or involved in the staging.

On Sunday, Bern (as he is now) and I went to see the last night of 'Jesus Christ Superstar' at the Regents Park Open Air Theatre. The rapidly re-worked and socially distanced production got a 5 star review on 'WHATSONSTAGE' and was closing the theatre's very short 2020 season. For those of you who haven't been, the theatre is a magical space in the heart of Regents Park, very 'Midsummer Night's Dream' surrounded by tall trees and adorned with twinkly lights. It seats 1000, but social distancing limited capacity to 390. The opening bass notes thrummed and the cast danced on stage, all wearing face coverings, and as the first twangy high chords of the famous chorus rung out in the overture, and bright white light momentarily flared, they pulled the masks from their faces and turned them skyward, arms up and out.

The audience spontaneously burst into whoops and cheers and claps of joy: at being back at live theatre, at the liberation of a mask being ripped off, at the obvious exuberance of the cast. It was a hair up on the back of your arm moment!

Love or loath Andrew Lloyd Webber's score, I believe the song 'Gethsemane', sung by Jesus as the apostles' sleep around him, transcends the genre of "musical theatre", and becomes, for me at least, a meditation on loss, fear, grief, faith, love. If it's sung well, the final anguished notes move folk of any faith or none, to consider the very real fear of a human being in those, or similar, circumstances.

On Sunday it was sung exceptionally well and as the music faded there was a tiny moment of silence, the wind rustling in the trees and the faint noise of traffic in the distance all you could hear. It was only a few seconds, and the audience came to life again, whooping and cheering. There was an impromptu standing ovation and it took a few moments for the atmosphere to settle. Some might say it was a "God moment."

Here are Bern and I wrapped up with masks, coats and woolly hats. The picnic rug on our knees is fortunately out of shot, we looked like a cliché of a couple of 'old folk' at the seaside!



*Daniela*