

TRINITY NEWS & VIEWS



*Love came down at Christmas, love all lovely, love Divine....
Love shall be our token; love be yours and love be mine;
Love to God and others, love for plea and gift and sign.*

Christmas/Winter 2024

Issue 65

A message from Rev Sam Funnell

Dear Friends,

*Overwhelmed by love,
deeper than oceans,
high as the heavens.
Ever living God,
your love has rescued me.*

These song words by Noel Richard have been a constant accompaniment to my last couple of months: reaching through the shock of sudden illness, the enforced but necessary time of recovery and the frustration and bewilderment of unexpected frailty of body, and at times, mind too.

These words have sung their way through all of that, and been expressed and 'enfleshed' by the loving kindness, support, prayer and sheer grace of so many people as they/you have sent me messages of good wishes, dropped off surprise packages in the manse porch, offered to help me – if I needed shopping, or cleaning or anything really, covered for my absence in the life of our church, the Circuit and the wider District.

I'm so grateful and those three words can't express that deeply enough – I have truly been 'overwhelmed by love'! At this time of year, as Advent unfolds and another Christmas approaches, perhaps we sometimes feel overwhelmed by God's love, maybe even to the point where we struggle to see how the Almighty, God of all-time and space, would contract Themselves to the point where They choose, freely and lovingly, to inhabit the confines of a

human body and be born of a human parent in that small town of Bethlehem – to come ‘enfleshed’, as Immanuel – meaning ‘God-With-Us’, to come as Jesus – to show us what true love really looks like and lives like.



That’s a lot to take on board, a lot to process; a whole ‘heap of grace’ to contend with – and yet this is the truth of our faith, the hope we profess...

‘Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God...

God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his [God’s/Their] only Son into the world so that we might live through him [Jesus].

In this is love, not that we loved God but that he [God/They] loved us and sent his [God’s/Their] Son...’

(1 John 4:7 & 9-10a: New Revised Standard Version – Updated Edition, with [additions by SF])

God’s overflowing, overwhelming love, is offered to us freely, graciously and constantly – perhaps it’s good, vital even, that we have the season of preparation that is Advent, to give us the time and space to ponder this wonder; that we might be more ready, more open, more understanding of all that God offers us, through Jesus, this Christmas and always!

A Prayer:

Generous God –

in the face of your immense grace, and love, and compassion

– for each one of us,

*revealed so profoundly in Jesus:
the baby in Bethlehem,
the self-giving Saviour of the Cross;
help us, this Advent, this Christmas,
to open ourselves up more completely,
to an inner, deeper, understanding and acceptance
of all that you 'do', all that you 'are'
and all that you offer us. AMEN.*

Every blessing!

Sam.

P.S. Just in case you're wondering about my use of pronouns for God, as above (e.g. Their/They/Them), I've been enjoying toying with the idea that non-gendered pronouns, as well as not defining God as either female or male, can also be understood as encompassing the idea of God as Trinity, God as Community, God as plural not singular – or, if you like – GOD AS LOVE!

So I share this thought with you – partly so you don't think I've just done a lot of 'typos' in my writing but also to get you thinking too! 😊



As we approach Christmas we remember members and friends in our church family as well as others known to us who are ill or struggling in any way, and for whom this Christmas will be a difficult time.

The Methodist Church's Advent and Christmas campaign for 2024 is called **Hush the Noise: Join the love song this Christmas.**

"Christmas is loud, isn't it? So much expectation. So many voices. Telling us how to celebrate, what to wear, what to eat and drink, what to watch and what to buy.

Instead, this Christmas we're inviting everyone to hush the noise. To listen for the love song that the angels bring, this and every year. They sang it for the first time more than 2,000 years ago, on the midnight clear. They're just waiting for us to join in."



Dates for your diary



There are a number of special events at Trinity leading up to Christmas. As these have all been well-publicised here are some future dates to note.

Sunday 29th December	United Circuit Service at Trinity and on Livestream @ 10.30am
Friday 3 rd January	Circuit Mission Prayer hour (5-6pm) Join Zoom Meeting https://zoom.us/j/96385163972?pwd=vVgb7q04oMZE6FjZKlbEUdRmKbe7e2.1 Meeting ID: 963 8516 3972 Passcode: 011092
Sunday 5 th January	Covenant Service @ 10.30am
Sunday 2 nd February	Joint Communion Service (English and Chinese congregations) to celebrate Chinese New Year (Year of the Snake)
Monday 3 rd February	Church Council @ 7.30pm
Saturday 8 th March	Circuit Mission Supper (<i>see page 20</i>)
Saturday 12 th April	Neighbourhood Party (2-4pm)
Sunday 15 th June	60 th Anniversary Celebration (<i>see page 12</i>)

Christmas Greetings
To all our friends at Trinity from.....



Doreen Lee	Wendy & Geoff Eaton
Daphne & David Lander	Lyn & David Lorberg
Jean Normington	Jim Chisholm
Allison Jackson	Mike & Sue Tozer
Sue Waddell	David & Ruth
Enid Burman	David Reeve & Rachel
Jenny Jackson	Valerie Slyfield & Lufe
Wendy Rockhill	Ildi Johnson
John & Joyce Nelson	Liz & Glen Penfold
Leonora Salter	Sue Wetherell
Carole Hymers	Ian McIntosh
Wendy Coope	Jill Willis
Lorna Fry	Rev Sam & Daisy
Peggy Boorman	Mike Cope
Shirley Turner	Hugh & Helen Bowerman
Jenny & David Broadley	Eunice Bunting
Brenda Wilson	Lee & Elaine Slatter
Deirdre Cooke	Carol McKinney
Ruth Taylor	Daniela, and Graham
Ann Whale	Sheila Card
Gill Edwards	Kevin Bown
Mary & Trevor Ledger	Samantha Cudby
Jo Farmer	Pauline & Keith Robson
Sue Waddington & family	

Trinity Mission Statement



When Trinity's application for a District Grant was declined and it became obvious that some significant changes were necessary, the Stewards did not just start with the money, we went right back to consider just what is it that we are striving to achieve here in Woking. What is God's Mission here that we could join in and support. What is our Mission and our Vision?

We have had a Mission Statement for many years and whilst we agreed that the sentiment remains as valid today as it did 5/10 years ago, it needed to be brought up to date. We presented the revised version to Church Council which adopted it without question. It now appears on the opening page of our website, but here it is anyway.

We do encourage you to read this, think about it and what it means and also think about how you could support Trinity as it strives to fulfil and maintain these objectives and behaviours.

**Trinity Methodist Church:
Connecting People and God**

**We are a welcoming Church seeking to live in the love of God
and share the message of Jesus Christ**

We do this by:

- offering a warm and genuine welcome to all those using our premises and in our local community, sharing the love of and talking about Jesus
- being more intentional about these connections we make with people, organisations, Church life and worship, basing them on our faith perspective
- underpinning all we do with prayer, seeking God's guidance to walk in Christ's way
- being guided and inspired by the Holy Spirit.

We believe God loves us unconditionally and therefore we love everyone unconditionally, regardless of age, gender, culture or ability, with a love that overrides everything

- We will never judge a person for who they are
- We will encourage ourselves and others to make better and more loving choices in life
- We will ensure everyone has an equal right to speak up and have their needs met, whatever their age, position or length of membership
- We will always seek to help people to belong to the community of the Church.

ROC Update



On 24th October, 111 people met at Trinity to take part in the ROC Woking conversation run by a steering group from Trinity and other local churches. It brought together individuals from the local Council, Police, other statutory agencies, education, faith and community groups, businesses and community-minded residents. The aim of the evening was to identify all the good community work taking place within the Borough, join some dots and identify gaps in provision.

The Mayor, Cllr. Louise Morales and Will Forster, M.P. welcomed guests to the evening, including the Lord Lieutenant, Michael More-Molyneux and High Sheriff, Shahid Azeem. During the event, leading figures in Woking including Leader of Woking Council, Cllr. Ann-Marie Barker and Head of Woking College, Bret Freeman shared their perspectives. Also speaking were Woking Community Hospice Clinical Operations Director, Tammy Stracey, Head of Woking Environmental Action, Ellen Pirie, lead at Woking Food Bank, Alison Buckland, CEO of Methodist Care Homes, Sam Monaghan, and Luke Greening, Police Community Support Officer for Woking.



It was a structured conversation following the pattern of the first ROC conversation in Woking four years ago and similar community conversations held up

and down the country by national charity, Redeeming Our Communities. Delegates were gathered around tables of eight with table hosts who facilitated the conversation and scribes to capture everything that was shared.

There is already so much amazing community support work taking place within Woking and good working relationships between the statutory and voluntary sector. Our aim was for this 'conversation' to build on these links and maximise the effectiveness of community support being offered to Woking as well as exploring where the gaps in activity and greatest needs are. There was a real buzz about the evening and we are hoping to see new connections made and new collaborations to support our community.

The next step will be to produce a report from all the information gathered during the conversation, which will identify key issues facing Woking's communities and offer possible solutions. Needs coming out so far from the analysis show young people, mental health and isolation coming high on the list followed by elderly people and the need for suitable buildings for activities and organisations needing more volunteers.

If you would like to get involved in an action group or receive the report please contact admin@rocwoking.org.uk

Ruth Taylor



Refreshments Donations



Recently we have been donating to Anazao, the charity linked to Trinity's long-standing support for our work in The Gambia. Sue Waddington, Kevin Bown and Julie Callin spent two weeks there supporting local projects in November. Here are the charities our donations will be going to in the next few months.



[December] Inspired by St Francis of Assisi the St Francis Leprosy Guild has cared for

people with leprosy for over 129 years. They operate in thirteen countries in Africa, Asia and in Brazil where leprosy is endemic, funding research projects, hospitals, rehabilitation centres and capital equipment. Around 200,000 people are still diagnosed with leprosy every year. Millions are living with leprosy's preventable effects - fear, blindness, amputated limbs, stigma and discrimination.



[January] Combat Stress provides clinical treatment and support for veterans from the British Armed Forces. Founded as the Ex-Servicemen's Welfare Society and now based in Leatherhead their first 'recuperative home'

opened in Putney in 1919. The focus is on the complex mental health issues that many military personnel face and which impact not only themselves but their families. Combat Stress is the UK's leading veterans' mental health charity. In their own words the work they do "is life-changing and often life-saving. No one else does what we do."



[February] Mercy Ships is a faith-based international organisation that deploys hospital ships to some of the poorest countries in the world. As well as delivering vital, free healthcare to

people in desperate need, they help train healthcare professionals and improve related infrastructure.

Founded in 1978 they have worked in more than 50 countries but are currently focused on sub-Saharan Africa where up to 69% of people live on less than £2 a day. Healthcare in these countries either doesn't exist or is unaffordable to the vast majority of the population.



2025 marks the 60th Anniversary of Trinity. There will be a special service on 15th June where we are planning to invite a former minister to lead our worship. We will be launching a fundraising campaign to try and raise £60k for 60 years, more details to follow. Please let the leadership team have any ideas you have to help us to celebrate this event.

**Reflections on the
"Ocean of the Heart: A Traveller's
Bundle" by Indy Lee**



As 2024 comes to an end, it has been over two years since my family moved from Hong Kong to the UK. As we approach our third Christmas here, I find myself reflecting on a meaningful event held over the past few months at Chinese Congregation Methodist Church Woking —the **"Ocean of the Heart: A Traveler's Bundle"**.

This activity is like a journey of our heart steering along an ocean. The ocean is vast and deep, full of stories and emotions waiting to be uncovered and shared. As a theatre director, performer, and drama educator, I always believe that theatre is more than performing—it is a way to inspire creativity and express feelings. Through movement, speech, and storytelling, we can share our inner thoughts and emotions with others.

Since moving abroad, when people ask me if I have adapted to life in the UK, I often find it hard to answer. It feels like I'm both settled and yet still adjusting. I believe many in the Hong Kong community here feel the same way. That is why I organized this activity —not only to create a safe space for others to express their experiences but also as a way for me to listen and connect with others who share this journey.

"Ocean of the Heart: A Traveler's Bundle" is a journey to explore the inner self, searching for identity and belonging. Participants came with their own stories, sharing experiences of life in a new place—whether the pain of separation or the struggle to establish appropriate identity. These stories became bridges, deeply connecting us all.

Over four sessions, each gathering centred on a Cantonese Pop song, a biblical figure, and a unique theme:

1 "Similarities and Differences" – The Lives of Hong Konger in the UK

In this session, we followed the story of Joseph, reflecting on how his life transformed through his colourful robe, servant's garment, prisoner's clothing, and royal attire. Participants explored the "similarities" and "differences" between each other, recalling the struggles and uncertainties of their early days in the UK and rediscovering the resilience that carried them through. One participant shared, "Even in a strange environment, we must hold on to our self-worth, just like Joseph standing firm on his faith even in prison."

2 "Stay or Leave" – The Possibilities and Impossibilities of Hong Konger in the UK

Inspired by Jeremiah 29, we discussed building a new life in a foreign land—constructing homes, planting gardens, and putting down roots. Participants shared memories of life in Hong Kong and compared them with their present experiences in the UK. The story of Jackie Pullinger and her ministry in Hong Kong's Kowloon Walled City inspired discussions on how things that seemed impossible in Hong Kong could become a reality in the UK. "Although we're far from home, new opportunities and hopes have emerged," said one participant.

3 "Goodbye and Not Goodbye" – The Gain and Loss of Hong Konger in the UK

In this session, everyone brought along an item with special significance and shared its story. These objects allowed us to revisit cherished relationships and memories that are hard to let go of. Through the story of Abraham offering Isaac, we reflected on the struggles of sacrifice and the inner strength it can bring. One participant shared, "Each time we let go, it becomes a chance to grow, helping us

better appreciate the people and things in our lives." Another said, "The hardest part to leave behind is the family I couldn't bring with me."

4 "Inheritance and Legacy" – The Present and Future of Hong Konger in the UK

In the final session, we explored Jesus's story to imagine the possibilities for identity and legacy. Using image theatre, we portrayed the past, present, and future, discussing the transformations we've undergone and how to bring our new hopes to life. Whether contributing to the community or retaining family and cultural traditions, participants found that their past experiences, while challenging, were gifts that helped them discover their place and meaning in this new environment.

Throughout the activity, there was laughter, tears, and moments of mutual comfort and encouragement. Everyone felt heard and understood. This wasn't just an activity—it was a haven for meaningful connections, a place to find warmth and belonging.

The "**Ocean of the Heart: A Traveler's Bundle**" reminds us that, like an ocean, our stories and emotions are vast and deep, connecting us in profound ways. I truly believe that sharing these stories can enrich our lives. I look forward to more opportunities in the future to journey with others, letting the spirit of "Ocean of the Heart: A Traveler's Bundle" continue to ripple through and inspire many more.



Trinity- Moving Forward



As most readers will already know, Trinity has recently had a tough time, needing to make difficult decisions about the staff we have employed and relied upon for many years. The need for redundancies arose from a financial difficulty that had been developing for a few years but particularly because we needed to replace fixed price contracts for energy supplies and the cost rose almost 300%. At the same time, the District Grants Committee which had supported our Mission for 5 years, felt their scarce money had to go elsewhere this year and so our grant application was rejected leaving a big hole in our finances. This process has been hard for all concerned, particularly the staff. We are celebrating their work over many years, in the coming weeks.

From the beginning of January, we will only have paid support from Daniela 4 mornings each week, and the office will be closed on Fridays. So, we have got to change what we do, how we do it and who does it! Remember that in our letter in September, we pointed to a great future ahead of us as Trinity is still a very good Church with a Mission, but that we would need your help. Whilst we undoubtedly face challenges, they can be overcome and we can look forward positively to continuing much of the good work going on at the moment, although perhaps we will do it differently. For example, plans are already in place to continue Friday Messy Fun Church, more help would be useful even on an occasional basis. It's great to see 3 or 4 toddlers plus mums worshipping with us regularly and so Sunday Junior Church is to continue but more obviously part of the Church by using the Family Room and spending part of

their time with the main congregation. We have always had an excellent Pastoral System that cares for every member and adherent, led by Shirley and Allison. With a few tweaks that essential work will continue.

Foundry Worship is really well established now with up to 40 regular people coming each time. For some it is an additional service as they support a different church, but that does not dampen their enthusiasm. They led our worship last Sunday, what a great service that was. Full of life and enthusiasm.



Daniela and I are working hard together to reduce the sheer volume of administrative work that needs to be done as we cannot handle it all with a much smaller team. That involves some hard decisions about which groups we can continue to accommodate and which ones we cannot. We have some great opportunities for cross cultural development and supporting those with learning or mental health (or both) needs, through some of the groups we will retain as tenants, but some other groups will be asked to find a new venue.

The key to our future is a wider involvement of our congregation as volunteers. No matter who you are, whatever specific talents you have (or think you don't have) and how much spare time you might have, we need your help. I read an article in *The Horsell Resident*, about the Lightbox, listing all the different things they offer, but how they rely totally on a team of 200 volunteers! Some give a lot of time, some very little time, some have special skills to offer, others are simply there to talk to people and help in a simple way, wherever help is needed. The good news is that some Trinity people have already agreed to help and others are thinking about helping in a specific way, and so we are learning how to better

manage a wide range of volunteer offers. Please join the team! We don't expect you to be a Traffic Warden in the car park or to be always moving furniture, although that would be useful! But could you smile at people as they arrive, say hello and help them to find out where their meeting is. Perhaps you could clear away some mugs into the kitchen, do a bit of washing up and perhaps empty an occasional bin. Anything would be helpful; we just need to learn about flexibility and how to manage a team of volunteers.

Looking further ahead, we continue our conversations with leaders of the Chinese Church, about us working more closely together towards full integration in due course. In relation to this here is a reminder of two dates for your diary:

- *Sunday 15th December 6pm* – Joint Carol Service with our Chinese friends: Lots of lovely music and carols to sing and readings to hear and think about;
- *Sunday 2nd February 11am* – Joint Communion Service with Chinese friends to celebrate the Chinese New Year of the Snake followed by Chinese Banquet

There are other positive things on our Agenda such as creating a dedicated Prayer Space. This will be the room originally called The Creche, more recently The Family Room at the back of the Sanctuary. Since we created the larger office by combining what had been 2 Vestries, we have not had a space set up for informal prayer or for Sam to use as she prepares to lead worship or has confidential one-to-one meetings. We hope to start that in Spring next year.

We are already starting to plan the celebration of 60 years in this building over the weekend of June 14th and 15th. Note that in your diary, NOW! That is something we can

all do together, not only on the weekend but also in the months before it. We can work together over various events generating fellowship, sharing some of the stories we have from years gone by and yes, raising lots of money to support our future and keep Trinity going for the next generation. These celebrations will create opportunities to involve the other regular users of the building as we invite them to worship with us. If you are still in touch with someone who has moved away, tell them about it. How lovely it would be to see them again.

The big thing for next year is of course that God willing and the skills of medical people, Rev Sam will be back in our midst, leading worship and everything else that we do. Until that happy day, be assured that the Stewards are all committed to lead us forward but we will need your help and support through prayer and sometimes your physical effort.

So, lots to be thankful for, lots to pray about, lots for us all to get involved with as we strive to live our declared Vision: **to be a welcoming Church seeking to live in the love of God and share the message of Jesus Christ** by offering a warm and genuine welcome, being more intentional about the people and organisations we meet, by underpinning everything we do in prayer and so importantly, being guided and inspired by the Holy Spirit.

John Nelson



Circuit Mission Supper Saturday 8th March 2025

Save the date

At Trinity Methodist Church Woking 6 for 6.30

Speaker

Trey Hall



Trey Hall is a Methodist pioneer, church planting strategist, and evangelist. Since 2000 he has established and led churches in the United Kingdom and the United States, served as Mission Advisor for the Birmingham District of the Methodist Church in Britain, and coached scores of practitioners renewing inherited forms of church or launching fresh expressions of church.

Fish & Chip supper – cost TBA

Bring your own crockery & cutlery

Esther Fellowship



Greetings in Christ!

We are the Chinese congregation meeting at Woking Trinity Methodist Church. Over the past three years, many of us have migrated from Hong Kong to the UK, joining this wonderful church community. As part of this journey, we would like to share more about our experiences and introduce a new fellowship we have formed.

Our congregation is made up of young couples with children as well as retired couples. For many of the women in our group, moving to the UK has brought significant and drastic changes to our roles and daily lives. In Hong Kong, many of us worked full-time and were financially independent. Household chores, such as cooking, cleaning, and childcare, were often supported by helpers from the Philippines or Indonesia. However, life in the UK is very different. Most of us are now full-time homemakers, caring for our children and families without external help. Many of us have never cooked or cleaned

extensively before, which has been a steep learning curve. Becoming financially dependent on our husbands has also brought new challenges, along with the sense of isolation from leaving behind our parents, churches, and support networks in Hong Kong.

In response to these needs, we have started the **Esther Fellowship**, a ministry dedicated to supporting the women in our congregation. Through studying the Bible and praying together, we aim to walk alongside one another in Jesus' love, encouraging each other to face these challenges with faith and hope. Our goal is not only to strengthen ourselves but also to bring our families closer to Jesus. Our first meeting on 27 October 2024 was a blessing, with over 30 attendees.

We plan to meet monthly and ask for your prayers as we continue to grow together in Christ. Thank you for your support and love.

Tammy Tam



Neighbourhood Party



It's very rewarding when you put effort into something and it is really appreciated. October's party involved a lot of effort by a lot of people – a wonderful coming together of our wider church community. And it was ***really*** appreciated, evidenced by comments as people left and letters of thanks received. It has also stimulated a flurry of new guest names to be added to our mailing list.

For those not at the party, we started with a short tribute to Dorothy Kirkman who had died the previous week. Recently she had been our pianist and she had hoped to be playing at the party. Sadly that was not to be, so her one time pupil Graham Kirby Smith did the honours. Dorothy would have very much approved of that. As it happens, Graham brought along some limericks Dorothy had written about some of the challenges and more amusing aspects of aging. I am so thankful to Elaine Slatter (a long time friend of Dorothy's) who read a few of these out, despite only being given a few minutes' warning. Thank you Elaine, and thank you Dorothy.



The party's entertainment was led by Graham, Shona and Mike. They had stood in at very short notice. They are a class act, to such an extent that several of the guests asked me whether they were professionals. We are so blessed to have such an abundance of talent linked to Trinity.

After grace, tea was served. There were over 60 guests at table to be served. Pauline Robson and her team had

everything ready, and ably assisted by the Guides and table hosts, everyone was fed and watered with time allowed for each table to work out the answers to the quiz. Quizmaster Marian then revealed the answers. There is a bit of a running joke at the parties that someone will dispute one of the answers. I'd note that no table got all the answers correct – which suggests the level of complexity was right. A huge thank you to Marian.

We end our parties with a sing along. This was ably led by our musicians. Our guests were then collected by their chauffeurs. Thank you for all those who volunteered to give our guests a lift. Despite being the largest party for a while, we only needed to hire one taxi. We had a small surplus from the donated taxi fund which we have re-purposed towards the flowers on a Sunday morning.



It was a busy afternoon, but full of joy and fun. Whilst many of our guests come from various churches, many don't and I hope they take away from the party a sense of the Christian love and care which goes into the planning and delivery and which makes these parties a little bit special. I estimate about 40 people were involved in delivering the party, so a huge thank you all round.

And so to an advance notice of the next party. This will be on Saturday 12th April 2025 at 4pm. If I'm not mistaken, our entertainment will be led by a Ukelele Band. If you know of anyone in the local community who might appreciate being on the invite list, please let us know.

Hugh Bowerman on behalf of the Neighbourhood Party Team

'Lord teach us to pray' (Luke 11:1b) Part Two



In the September 2023 issue of TNV I wrote the first part of this article and promised to follow that up by considering praying in times of difficulty.

At this point in time as a church community at Trinity we are going through a time of examination and re-examination of the role and purpose of our Mission; difficult decisions need to be made about reducing costs and developing the role of volunteers to ensure the continuity of our Mission to meet the needs of both congregation and community.



**Simple Prayer Window
at Holy Trinity Church
Bladon, Oxfordshire**

At critical times in his ministry Jesus faced real difficulties and threats but he always found time and a place to pray to his Abba Father. Often on his own, sometimes with his disciples. Today, we all need to pray earnestly for inspiration and vision for the future!

Some of you may be unsure how to go about this. There are two basic levels of approach, individually or collectively. You may say that I do pray individually at home and collectively in Worship and that is right and good. But in times like now we need to pray with a focus

on a regular basis – as a church we need to focus our prayers on the future of Trinity and its Mission.

Prayer can be both a personal and corporate conversation with our 'Lord' guided by the Holy Spirit, as we bring our personal prayers and those of a wider scope in petition.

You may not be aware that we have a small number of people who belong to the Trinity Church Prayer Group – in order to focus our prayers, we pray to a regular pattern. We want to expand the group to enable focused prayer to be undertaken by more people in a group and/or individually.

At the moment we meet face to face, on the first and third Fridays of the month in the Prayer Room, adjacent to the Narthex. We share Coffee/Tea and a biscuit and fellowship.

We open with a Prayer of the Day from the Circuit Prayer Diary and the Methodist Prayer Handbook. This is followed by a short devotional Reading and Prayer. Prayer topics are arranged in groups –

- Prayers of Thanksgiving – where members share their personal thanks for whatever is laid on their hearts.
- Requests from the Prayer Tree which have asked for specific prayers
- Prayers from Pastoral Visits and direct requests are shared.
- Prayers for the Worship, Ministry and Mission of the Church including those involved in leading it and the group activities, throughout the week,
- We pray for our tenants and their role in our Mission:

- The Local Community – Woking Churches Together and Woking People of Faith, World Day of Prayer, also various organisations eg Foodbank, Citizen’s Advice, Borough Council activities, ROC Woking.
- For our Government and the wider world and its needs.



**The Prayer Chapel in the Crypt
of St Martins Parish Church
Bosham, West Sussex**

Members contribute as they feel led by the Holy Spirit; and total confidentiality is maintained. The session closes with a Prayer and the Grace.

Weeks 2 and 5 of our corporate time of Prayer are on WhatsApp and anyone who wishes to join in that Group should contact Jean Normington. On Weeks 4 in 5 Friday Bible Study meets. For more information contact Peggy Boorman.

Prayer topics are also displayed on the Notice Boards and tables around the Church and a relevant topic is screened around the East Entrance and ‘Café’ area - eg Spring, - Easter - Pentecost – Harvest – Remembrance - Advent – Christmas. Every contribution is respected and supported

– as a church we need you to pray with us for the future Mission of our Church and Circuit

Please feel free to join us, as a taster. *There is only one prerequisite for prayer: that you come as you are – as we all do!* (Victoria Lorenzato). God bless you all in this coming New Year and we look forward to meeting you and sharing prayer together

Graham Warr for the Prayer Group

The Unity Band – 20 Year Anniversary
Abridged / updated version of words shared by Graham Kirby-Smith at Foundry Worship, on 29th Sept 2024

Back in 1997 in Canterbury, Martin and Gina Graham ran their first **free street barbecue** and, to quote from onthemoveeast.org, "*discovered a whole new way of reaching people. It was effective and fun. They wrote about it in their book 'Sizzling Faith'*".

At some point they decided to take this initiative to other towns and cities, and so in 2001, they set up a charity called '**On The Move**'. Here's how it worked, according to the On The Move East website: "*We partner with local churches (of any denomination) to make it happen. Church volunteers become part of our team, giving out invitations, serving food, playing or singing in the bands, or as table hosts, chatting and befriending. Often conversations will end up being about faith, personal issues and sometimes end with prayer*".

One of the things I really like about this is that it was **ecumenical** – people from different churches serving together.

In 2004, '**On The Move**' came to **Woking**! The free BBQ was held in the town square, and there were several bands around the town, including town square, Peacocks food court, the old bandstand next to Toys R Us, we were on Commercial Way, and I believe Mike Cope was in a band at Wolsey shopping centre outside Sainsburys.

From the musical point of view, someone must have gathered up all the names of the



instrumentalists and singers who wanted to take part, and separated them out into the different bands. And so I found myself put in a band with people I didn't know – from Woking Vineyard, New Life, Christ Church, Salvation Army and St Marks Westfield. Quite an age range too – from 12 to 60s!

The band was led by Annie, who now often plays at Foundry Worship. We really gelled – I believe we were the only band who stuck together after the event. At some point, we decided to call ourselves the '**Unity**' band, and I have found a possible printed vision statement:

"Woking Christians seeking to enhance Woking worship on behalf of Woking churches to express Woking unity".

It was during those early rehearsals that I discovered **prayer** can include **laughter**, and talking to God just sounded natural – no need to use fancy words. We often used to have a pray in the middle of our rehearsals, and laughter was quite common! I always think there should

be **more joy** in worship, in prayer, in services. (At 'Spring Harvest' this year, I experienced a very loud communal prayer session, with growing music behind it. I felt I engaged in prayer much better that way!)

Over the years, some band members have come and gone, some have stayed – I believe we've had about **20 people** from at least **10 churches** involved in the band, including Woking URC, St Andrews & The Coign / Welcome Church and the churches I mentioned earlier.

There have been many highlights across the years. We're probably best known for leading worship at the **Good Friday Act of Witness** in the town square, from 2005 to



2023! We also played at various **Churches Together** services, **Street Angels** Commissioning Services, local church services (including one 'Unity' themed morning service at Trinity), and we've done a couple of **album recordings** – there are still some CDs available!

One that stands out to me is from 2014, on the year of our 10th anniversary. In commemoration of a time when the goodness of God was shining out of the darkness from 100 years earlier, during the 1st World War, when soldiers from both sides sang carols and played football together at Christmas time, *Churches Together in Woking* organised and asked us to play at an event called '**Silent Night**', at Woking Football Stadium.

On this, our 20th anniversary, we have decided to come to the end of our time playing together as a band, by playing at a great fundraising event in August for Annie's charity '**Be More Josie**', and finally a wonderful celebration at **Foundry Worship** here at Trinity.



Being a part of the '**Unity**' band for 20 years has been such a blessing. So much has happened in those years – highs and lows – and the Unity band has always been a safe, joyful place. I hope we have been a vessel for blessing to others.

The power of Prayer by Ildi Johnson

The abundance of rackets and rowdy thoughts is echoing through my mind; and
The noise-filled and chaotic brain cells are running high and wild.
Leaving my body with no rest, my mouth's desire is to shout 'Stop!'
And so, bouncing between the mountains of insanity and balance, my brain is ready to pop.

Continued over.....

Some find it easy to navigate through life's
busyness and the clutters of their brain,
But I find myself deep in a gorge of darkening
visions that bring me anxiety, fear and pain.
So how shall I escape this throbbing sound that
makes me insane?
And how shall I seize the agony of the brain
that chains me to this mental pain?

I could certainly try to defeat these rotting
thoughts by waving the wand of LOGIC.
Or I could listen to the WISE WORDS of a famous
person on YouTube on the relevant topic.
Or I could use my sense of HUMOUR and try to
think about my life as both ironic and comic.
Or I could PRAY with all my heart and sing a song
of praise that is so melodic.

Well, I have tried to soothe the torments of my
cluttered mind in many various ways,
But there are times when no logic, wise words or
humour can clear up the heavy haze.
So what's left? The wisest and most effective way
to pacify what's torturing me inside,
Is a sincere PRAYER, through which I receive
comfort only GOD can provide.



Knitted squares



A friend in North Staffordshire made a request in the Methodist Recorder for knitted squares. She has a team of ladies who knit or crochet squares and then sew them together to make blankets, which she and her husband



take to Dunkirk twice a year. Their destination is a Refuge for Women and Children; refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, Eritrea and Bangladesh. The gift of a colourful blanket made with love and care brings a little light

into their bleak lives. As well as taking the blankets to keep them warm, Sue takes wet wipes as they have no running water. The wet wipes not only help them to keep clean, but also help them to maintain their dignity. I sent a parcel of knitted squares to Sue (*see right*). She wrote back to thank me for them. She and Norman took 100 blankets to Refuge in Dunkirk on 4th November.



Barbara Phillips

Thanks from the Cathedral



My thanks, and those of Guildford Cathedral, to all who helped contribute an amazing weight of coin (with a few banknotes) to the collecting jar in the East Entrance. It was almost exactly one kilo. I have now sorted it by country, and in due course, when country accumulations are higher, it will be turned into Sterling for the Cathedral's funds. This collection is now in its nineteenth year, and in all £29,500 has been raised. The jar in the East Entrance welcomes coins new and old; banknotes new and old; and the piggy-bank collections of UK coppers, 5ps, and indeed anything else. Coin collections found in house clearances are also welcome. Please contact me, John Mitchell, on 37petherwin@gmail.com for further information. I am happy to collect if amounts are heavy to carry to the church. A wonderful help! Thank you.

John Mitchell

From the Editor

Thanks to all who have helped with the preparation and distribution of this issue of TNV. We are planning that the next issue will be published in time for Easter 2025. The deadline for copy will be announced in due course.

David Lander

**TRINITY NEWS & VIEWS is the magazine of
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**“Trinity is a welcoming Church seeking to live
in the love of God and share the message of
Jesus Christ”**

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