

Trinity Weekly News Sheet 09 October 2020



From the minister ...

The news each day concerning the pandemic is far from encouraging. An escalating number of cases, local lockdowns being imposed, and as the government measures continue to affect our daily lives and opportunities, the economic consequences are now really beginning to bite. The furlough period is coming to an end and many people are losing their jobs as a result, as businesses struggle to continue in the current climate. We have gone from experiencing a threat to our health to now experiencing a threat to our livelihoods.

Trinity, like most churches, has taken a big hit in its finances as a result of being closed for six months. Praise God that so many of you have been generous and consistent in your giving, for which we thank you wholeheartedly. But this has sadly not prevented us from having to take the difficult decision of saying goodbye to our two paid staff, Jenny Peters and Pauline Collier.

Jenny has already finished her contract with us a couple of weeks ago, and her duties are being taken on by volunteers within our church family. Pauline continues to do our cleaning until the end of October, at which point she will also be finishing. We do intend to continue to employ a part-time cleaner at Trinity, and this contract was initially offered to Pauline. But Pauline needs full time employment which sadly we are no longer able to provide as a result of the economic effects of lockdown.

I'm sure you would like to join me in expressing our sincere thanks and appreciation to both of these wonderful ladies who have worked so hard and contributed so much to the life of our church. On a personal note I will really miss being able to pop into church during the week and have a chat with them both in the church office. We've set the world to rights on many occasions, and had a lot of laughs along the way. I'm sure you're going to miss them both as much as I will.

A number of you have enquired whether the 'Love in a Box' Christmas shoebox appeal will be taking place this year. The answer is that it will, and I'm pleased to be able to announce that the usual leaflets will be available from this Sunday at church, when Adele and I will be launching the appeal in the 10.45am live online service. We are aware that churches are being discouraged from distributing noticesheets, hymn books etc at church services, so we're figuring out how best to achieve this in the most hygienic way. Please go ahead and decorate a shoe box as you normally would; and if you're comfortable with the idea of going to the shops, please go ahead and buy your choice of gifts for a child and pack them in the box as usual.

The difference this year is that because of Covid the depot which receives the boxes prior to delivery to Moldova is being run by a skeleton staff. As such we are requested to **seal our shoeboxes with tape once we have packed them**. We are also asked to **keep the £4 per box contribution separate, and not put it in the box as usual**. This is because the boxes will not be repacked or examined prior to being sent out. Because access to church premises is so restricted at the moment, we are not able to simply pop in to the church café during the week to either pick up 'Love in a Box' leaflets or to drop off shoeboxes. The last thing we want is for the Covid virus to be transmitted from person to person in our fellowship via the shoeboxes. So if you aren't able to attend church on a Sunday for our 9.00am service, you are very welcome to email me direct on rphwrd@gmail.com and I will send you a scan of the leaflet which you can print out at home and attach to your shoebox as you normally would.

We would ask you **not to attempt to bring shoeboxes to church at all until Sunday 15 November**, which is designated as 'Shoebox Sunday'. If you are able to attend the 9.00am service that day please bring your boxes with you. If not then Adele and I will be present at church for half an hour during the afternoon on that day to receive them (times to be confirmed). Sorry we can't give you a bigger window of opportunity

this year, but these are exceptional times. You should bring cash or cheques for your £4 per box contribution, which you can put in a common offering box in the church foyer.

I fully understand if you don't feel able to get involved in the appeal this year. But if you can, please do. We want to see children in Moldova experience that same sense of joy and hope as they have in previous years; and all the more because of what our whole global family is going through right now with the pandemic.

God bless you

Ralph

A prayer ...

Lord, we pray for those who serve our church in all of their many roles
Especially for those who work behind the scenes and whose contribution goes unseen by most of us
Help us to value and celebrate one another's gifts and talents
May we offer all we have to You, Lord Jesus,
Trusting in Your love and faithfulness
In these testing times
Let us not give up on seeking justice and compassion for those in the world
Who need our help
And we pray for all those people in our own nation who face uncertain times ahead
Whose jobs are at risk
Whose livelihoods are threatened
Whose security is undermined
Help us to trust in You for all that we need
And stand firm in our faith
In Jesus' name
AMEN

***** Cleaner Required *****

We require a part-time church cleaner to work 12.5 hours per week from November, cleaning weekdays, times to be negotiated.
Rate of pay will be current Methodist living wage.
Experience preferred but not essential.
Reference required.

If you or anyone you know are interested please contact
Simon Bruce via the church office

admin@trinitymethodist.org.uk or leave a message on 01342 302862

Day of Prayer for Taketime Saturday 17 October, 6.00am - 6.00pm

Taketime listening figures grew by 92% last year, yet the challenge is to continue to hear what God is saying to this pioneering Circuit project and follow where God leads.

There are live broadcasts and prayer briefings and information about fasting if that's what you would like to do.

Just visit www.taketime.org.uk and follow the link for the Day of Prayer on the Home page.

Will you join us for the day or just dip in for five minutes. Whatever time you can spare, your prayers will be much appreciated.



Preachers at Trinity for October

(* - Holy Communion)

11 October	9.00am - Mr Eddie Newton	10.45am - Rev Ralph Ward
18 October	9.00am - Rev Ralph Ward *	10.45am - Rev Ralph Ward
25 October	9.00am - Mrs Jill Brooks	10.45am - Mrs Jill Brooks

Trinity Charity Giving



Following the Biblical principle of tithing, Trinity chooses to give one tenth of our income away. We believe that this is honouring to God. If there are any charities you would like to be included in this year's distribution please either email me jillbrooks67@btinternet.com or ring me (01342 324896) by 6.00pm on 16 October. Thank you.

Jill B

Harvest Festival

For those who were not able to get to church or watch the live stream service last Sunday, there was a small display to celebrate Harvest Festival. We have not forgotten to give thanks to God for His bountiful provision. We never forget to give God the glory!

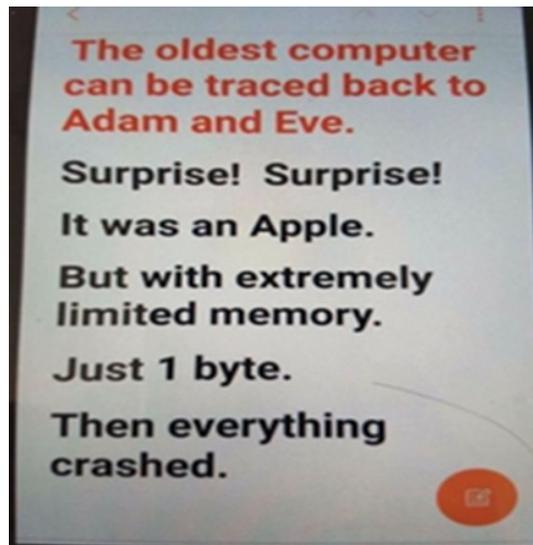


Childrens' Groups at Trinity

The Children's Team very excited to announce that Rockets and JAM groups will be starting again from 18 October via Zoom. These sessions will take place straight after the online Sunday service. Families should have all been emailed details in preparation. If you **did not** receive an email, please contact the church admin (admin@trinitymethodist.org.uk), who will then inform the Children's Team.

We look forward to seeing you all soon.

The Children's Team



Misconnection and our 'Social Dilemma'

Who knows you best? Your family? Your spouse? Your friends? What if, actually, the truth is that soulless algorithms written by Californian tech gurus know us better than we even know ourselves?

That's the contention of *The Social Dilemma*, the latest boat-rocking docu-drama to hit Netflix. It interviews high profile Silicon Valley defectors, and (controversially) intersperses an invented plot about a family ruled by addiction to their devices.

An old cliché states that 'if you're not paying for the product, it's because you are the product'. The film argues that whenever we log on to our social media, or glance at our phone, we add to the pile of data that makes up our online profile. Over time, that profile gets more accurate, more able to predict what we want to see and 'recommend' it to us, whether it's posts designed to persuade us to spend more time online, or adverts urging us to spend more money.

The problem with all this, aside from wasted time and money, is that the algorithms don't just suck us in. They slowly begin to influence us – we become like what we worship. Higher social media use correlates with declines in mental and physical health. Internal Facebook research shows that 64% of those who join extremist groups do so because they're driven there by algorithms. Conspiracy theories abound, because in the online world false stories spread, on average, six times faster than the truth.

But we all know excessive time online isn't good for us – what can we do about it? To ensure that social media remains a tool to serve our purposes, rather than the other way round, we need to think about why we give it our attention in the first place.

We're drawn into this world because we crave interpersonal connection. And social media can, to an extent, meet that need. But the idea that it does so fully is a lie. It's just a lie we keep believing.

Is there another way? As Paul wrote in Galatians 4:9, now we know God – 'or rather are *known by*' Him – how can we turn back to forces that enslave us? Until we grasp just how completely we're known, and fulfil our desire and need for relationship supremely through God, we'll always be vulnerable to searching for connection in the wrong places.

So, let me ask again ... who knows you best?

Matt Jolley

Research Assistant, LICC

(First published by LICC in their 'Connecting with Culture' thread)

A Song You May Enjoy

This video was played during last Sunday's MCHW online service. It really hit the spot for me - I think you might like it as well.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NJEL93ORHaA>

O Lord, the clouds are gathering

Recorded virtually, for Peace Sunday 2020, in partnership with Fellowship of Reconciliation and Joint Public Issues Team.

Words and Music: Graham Kendrick

With thanks to the singers and instrumentalists of the alumni of MAYC Orchestra and Singers / OneSound, and all the singers of the National Methodist Choir of Great Britain.

Notes from a Scandinavian Correspondent - Summer 2020

Episode 3 - South West Denmark



We made the most of trips and shopping opportunities early in our stay, not knowing how Covid 19 might subsequently impact. Our first trip was to the west coast, to Tønder, re-visiting a museum, based around an old water tower, castle and the town jail. The water tower has a lift and a number of galleries.

Previously we had seen an exhibition of around 40 chair designs, celebrating one of the town's sons, Hans Wegner, famous for his contribution to Danish mid-century design. Today a scaled down exhibition, but still a wonderful view from the glazed viewing deck at the top, with views across to Northern Germany and where your mobile phone switches erratically between the two countries!



The museum and cafe were virtually deserted; areas like this rely on tourism and this year has seen a major downturn, as further evidenced by significant shop sales and empty units. Slightly further north is a little town called Bredebro, home to Danish footwear manufacturer, Ecco. If you like quality footwear at 50% of the High Street price, their factory shop is worth a visit! We each made a purchase, for myself a pair of sandals and the assistant wished to talk us about waterproofing the footwear ... which seemed a little pointless for a pair of sandals, although, to be fair, she was also talking about protecting the leather.

The third aspect of this day was to spend the rest of it on Lakolk Beach, on the island of Romo. The island is approached via a causeway, over the Wadden Sea, which is a UNESCO protected area and a haven for wetland birds.



Lakolk Beach is a favourite, a couple of kilometres of solid sand, most often with a hundred plus character kites being flown, whales, octopus, even a donkey this year. This beach normally hosts an annual car show for 30,000 visitors - we avoid it!

Due to a regular tide line and solid sands it is possible to park virtually on the water's edge; this day, several hundred cars, mostly German, and quite a few swimmers, and a number of paddlers like myself. There was quite a cold north east wind, but also a blazing hot sun ... and cold water!

A favourite restaurant just behind the sand dunes is Fru Dax, she never disappoints, with a fabulous menu. I had a 40+ flavour smorgasbord ... an exceptional and inexpensive treat! Ham, sausage, salmon mousse, hot smoked salmon, chicken salad with curry and bacon, prune in bacon, fruit, cheese, and fabulous fresh breads - and more! Followed with an old fashioned ice cream later



The day saw high fluffy white clouds all around, but they stayed away from where we were, diminishing in the afternoon. High tide at 2.30pm came and went, the high tide point just three meters away, marked by a line of seaweed.

We returned to the cottage, with low level mist along the whole east and south horizon, the land and sea, just tinged pink with the setting sun, whilst the sky to the west turned to an orange hue the sun sank away. Shortly after the moon rose in the east, surfacing above the mist, tinted pink, changing to cream as it rose higher and giving a reflection across the sea.

Home Thoughts 25

The Spectacle of Autumn

*Autumn has come again; the falling leaves
Are shed as old men's years, and drift away.
Evening more swiftly steals across the day,
And love in pain for the dead summer grieves.
How quiet are all the old deserted eaves. ...*

Yes, the house martins have flown, but the mystery is this: where do martins go in the Winter? We believe they migrate beyond the Sahara ... but where? Geolocators and tracking devices cannot be attached to these tiny birds - they are too heavy. We are told by experts that they winter on the wing, high in the sky. I enjoyed watching several of these indomitable birds soaring and wheeling over both Hedgecourt and Weirwood, catching the last insects of the Autumn. I shall probably not see house martins, with their glossy blue-black back and pure white underparts, until next year. But God willing I shall enjoy their antics again in April or May. This morning, in a rush to grab my binoculars because I had seen a kestrel perched on the branch they often used in the Spring, I almost tripped on the stairs ... it was a pigeon!

The burnished russet hues of Autumn will intensify throughout October. Jays are busily hiding their cache of fat and protein-rich acorns in readiness for the hungry months of Winter. It may be that jays have an important part to play in the regeneration of oak trees. Acorns falling from the canopy cannot survive in shady woodland or thick grassland, but jays find loose soil in open farmland where cows have disturbed the turf. A family of jays can hoard thousands of acorns.



A green woodpecker has returned to probe for ants in the garden; long-tailed tits are examining the seed heads; a coal tit worked methodically along the pots of fading Summer flowers looking for tiny spiders or insects; nuthatches 'punish' the peanuts in a feeder; as do greenfinches and siskins, lightly built with long pointed dark wings with yellow or yellow-white markings, streaked plumage, black head; goldfinches, tits and pigeons dangle crazily from the sunflower seed heads; male and female blackbird have returned to squabble and bathe in the bird bath and, at 6.50pm on a fine evening, a robin took a leisurely dip, splashing and fluffing out his feathers. In the soft, forgiving light a blackbird and robin serenaded me as I shut the greenhouse. I haven't seen a thrush for a while but I can hear more birdsong morning and evening.

A late, large white butterfly perched on delicate mauve Michaelmas daisies, renamed asters; at Weirwood a small copper and holly blue darted up from the hedge. The wettest February on record followed by the sunniest Spring seems to have reduced the number of butterflies on the wing in July and August, but holly blue, large white and small copper are all doing well - I can confirm that! I must buy some new Royal Mail stamps celebrating British pollinators, which include the elephant hawk-moth, painted lady butterfly, common carder bee, longhorn beetle, marmalade hoverfly and ruby-tailed wasp. A friend spotted 'my' frog and toad near the garden pond and we watched entranced the scurrying antics of small bees, flies and wasps gorging on nectar rich, tiny, green-gold ivy flowers. I disturbed two newts curled up together against the Winter weather under a patch of parsley, so I replaced the leaves and soil I'd removed and hope to find them again on a warm day next year.

At Hedgecourt Lake on a fine afternoon as weak, golden sunlight streamed down I glimpsed a flash of electric blue as a kingfisher zipped beside the reeds and into the trees. Thrilled, I kept my binoculars trained to the spot and was astounded to see three kingfishers whizz along the Lake and dive in to bushes on the opposite side. I wonder if it was a 'family outing'. A grey wagtail bobbed beside the weir. Wonderful. Great crested grebe are beginning to acquire their black-edged chestnut cheek frills; families of coot and moorhen; Canada and greylag geese; swans and six cygnets paddled peacefully over the water.

The following day in the wind and lashing rain, I returned to a very different scene. With the water level so high the sluice gate had been opened and a torrent of water roared into the weir. Once again I was struck by the enormous force of water - used in the past to power the Water Mill. Returning on several occasions, I was

thrilled to spot four pochard, red-brown head, black chest and pale grey body - females are similar but drab beside the males; two kingfishers quartered the Lake and the grey wagtail bobbed along beside the Weir. Walking up the lane I noticed a party of long-tailed and other assorted tits gobbling up the sloes, while a wren searched for insects in the leaf litter below and a robin piped a quiet warning of invasion.

Before the deluge, Weirwood Reservoir was spectacularly rich in bird life. Intrigued by small movements on the opposite side of the water, under the canopy of trees now turning golden, bronze and tawny red, I noticed six mandarin ducks with orange combed whiskers and large orange sails at the rear of back - males are unmistakable, females not so easy to spot. On a sandbank were two common and one green sandpiper; five teal; fourteen lapwings which eddied up and down, when disturbed; eight great crested grebe; pied wagtail and a snipe was probing the mud under the low branches. Walking along the road I saw a grey wagtail; a hawk dragonfly darted alongside the pools of water and I heard, before I saw, a small party of chiffchaffs feeding amongst the seeds on the bushes; a grey wagtail ran about on the exposed mud bank. Then a spotted flycatcher, flicking its tail and watching for insects, made quick sorties and returned to the same place ... rather late for this Summer visitor but I don't know what else it could have been.

After the rain, with the mud banks submerged, there was nothing unusual on the water. Canada and greylag geese patrolled vociferously; a pheasant posed on a fallen branch beside the road; a woodpecker drummed on a dead tree and, just as I was about to go home, a chap with a telescope asked if I had seen the egret perched on a branch the other side of the water. I had noticed a little egret but through his telescope it was obviously a great white egret, a huge pure white heron, much larger than a little egret with a bright yellow beak. I rushed home to look up this unusual bird in the 'Photographic Field Guide to Birds of Britain and Europe'.

In the garden, pink, white and red cosmos flower with ragged beauty, a boon for bees and other pollinators; shepherd's purse pops up everywhere; knapweed now feeding a charm of goldfinches, the empty seed heads providing snug Winter homes for ladybirds and spiders; groundsel; a few hardy daisies, dandelions and buttercups. Dahlias; sedum; salvia; tagetes; rudbeckia; cyclamen; fuchsia are still giving their all in a last burst of glory. A kestrel flew over the garden. Three buzzards circled overhead, riding the thermals, as we walked through the fields and footpaths flanked by majestic oak; ash; beech and lime trees, their flowers feed bees and other insects, branches and trunks providing shelter and eventually the leaves come spiralling down making a colourful carpet. We made our way home blessed with a glorious rainbow arching over the road, as Genesis 9:13 says, "I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth."

*The sky is pale - and the hills are grey
With mist, save where a solitary ray
Of golden light a fading flower deceives.
The lanes are russet with the touch of time
And while the days inspire no song sublime
The tired earth sleeps only to wake again.
'Promise' - Clarence Winchester*

Joan Bateman

Just a thought ...

You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.
CS Lewis

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OUR VISION IS TO KNOW CHRIST AND MAKE CHRIST KNOWN
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