

Trinity Weekly News Sheet 16 October 2020



From the minister ...

First of all can I once again draw your attention to this year's 'Love in a Box' appeal, which we launched last Sunday in our online service. Leaflets are now available in church which you can pick up if you attend the 9.00am service. If you know of people who would like to receive a leaflet but are not able to join us at church in person, please feel free to take extra copies to deliver to them. I'm afraid access to church at other times is very restricted due to Covid, but you should find a copy of part of the leaflet attached to this newsletter which you can use instead of the actual paper leaflet if its more convenient.

The information page gives you ideas for what you might include in your shoebox this year. The label should be printed out, completed and attached to your box as usual. Please note the big change this year, which is that you should seal your box prior to collection, and the £4 contribution should be brought separately (not placed inside the box).

'Shoebox Sunday' is 15 November. Please do not bring boxes to church prior to this date (and please don't leave them on my doorstep!). You may bring shoeboxes to the 9.00am service on 15 November, or alternatively from 2.00pm – 2.30pm that same afternoon. I'm afraid these are the only times that we can receive them this year.

It's not too late to join our Alpha Online course, which will have its third session this Wednesday evening. Simply go to the church Facebook page, find the banner which says 'Stay home – try Alpha Online'. Click on it, which opens up the Alpha group page: click the 'join group' button, then tune in every Wednesday evening at 7.30pm on the group page for my live streamed broadcast. There has been a very good response to this course so far, I'm pleased to say.

Church closures and limited opportunities to meet together in person for worship have really affected our families and children, not just in our church but in every church. However, at Trinity we have 'Kids Catch-up' every Sunday, which is a Zoom-based group for parents and children, which meets immediately after the 10.45am Sunday live streamed service concludes. I would encourage you to get involved if you haven't already, by contacting Susie Shaw on susanne.shaw@hotmail.co.uk

Please continue to pray for the future of our children's and youth work, which have been severely affected by the effects of the pandemic.

It seems to me that we are currently living through times of even less certainty than during the lockdown over the Summer. With local lockdowns being enforced and a rise in Covid cases, the future of our worship and fellowship together is as much in doubt as it was back in March when our church doors closed. So I have no further news for you about church reopening I'm afraid: we are continuing to hold our 9.00am services without singing and of a shorter duration than normal. You are most welcome to attend these services – so far we have had plenty of room for everyone, but I do appreciate it if you could let Pat or me know if you plan to attend each Sunday, as it speeds up registration and helps us to ensure that we can accommodate you. The 10.45am service remains online only, from our church Facebook page.

Please continue to pray for our church, our town and our nation in these difficult times.

God bless

Ralph

*** 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

Pastoral Visitors Scone and Cake Distribution

Last Saturday and Sunday between all the Pastoral Visitors we distributed nearly 50 bags of 'goodies; to people from Trinity who live on their own. The cheese scones and cakes were baked, and, with social distancing and masks etc to make sure we were Covid secure, they were bagged up, and with the verse of the Harvest Hymn 'For the Beauty of the Earth', Pastoral Visitors made doorstep deliveries, and brought smiles to lots of faces! We so enjoyed doing it! Thankful to be able to do a small thing which gave such pleasure.

Rachael, Mary and Alison

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.



Just a thought ... or two

Come let us pity those who are better off than we are.

Come, my friend, and remember

That the rich have butlers and no friends,

And we have friends and no butlers.

Ezra Pound US poet and critic 1885-1972)

Our lives are not problems to be solved
but journeys to be taken with Jesus as our friend and finest guide.

Henri Nouwen

Preachers at Trinity for October

(* - Holy Communion)

18 October	9.00am - Rev Ralph Ward *	10.45am - Rev Ralph Ward
25 October	9.00am - Mrs Jill Brooks	10.45am - Mrs Jill Brooks
01 November	9.00am - Mrs Helen Greaves	10.45am - Mrs Helen Greaves

Please Note: Government restrictions mean we are required to limit numbers for the 9.00am service. If you would like to attend please let Ralph Ward or Pat Oakley know in advance.

A Song You May Enjoy

This video was played during a recent 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.

Care For the Family

Care For the Family has moved their events online this year. Here is some information on events which may interest you. Full information on these and other events can be found on the Care For the Family website.

Free To Be (Wednesday 21 October, Thursday 22 October, Friday 23 October)

What does freedom truly look like? We try to maintain the momentum, but life keeps adding challenge after challenge! With home and family pressures, workplace trials, health and relationships - it's difficult to know what's worth keeping up and what we should let go of. But as Christian women, our identity lies not in the season of our lives, nor in our roles and responsibilities - but in Christ. Join us as we unpack more about what freedom really looks like.

Mum's the Word (Tuesday 17 November, Wednesday 18 November, Thursday 19 November)

We believe mums are a big deal, so we think you've earned a night off! Join Katharine Hill and Cathy Madavan for an evening of fun, encouragement and fresh inspiration.

Primary Parenting (Tuesday 24 November, Wednesday 25 November, Thursday 26 November)

No matter what kind of parent you are, parenthood brings with it so much joy, but it can also feel like you're pulled in every direction. Join us for this light-hearted event about the ups and downs of raising under twelves. Rob Parsons and Katharine Hill with present insights and top tips gathered from their combined experience of working alongside thousands of parents for over thirty years. You may laugh, you may cry, but we hope to leave you feeling uplifted and inspired.

Running the Race

When someone says 'London Marathon', we probably picture Tower Bridge and Big Ben, crowds lining the pavements, and thousands of charity runners spurring one another on through their 26.2 miles. But this year's London Marathon looked very different.

Already postponed from April, the only indication of the race in the capital last Sunday was a barricade of screens around St James' Park. Away from spectators, the world's best marathon runners competed over nineteen laps of a specially designed looped course while 45,000 people covered the distance individually, logging their progress on the event app.

For those who ran last weekend, and those who, like me, always look forward to watching the coverage while safely positioned on the sofa with a cup of tea, the 2020 London Marathon was another reminder of the strangeness of this year. Shura Kitat's sprint finish along an almost empty Mall felt bizarre without the roar of a crowd cheering him on to victory. Those who completed the marathon elsewhere through the grim wind and rain did so without the famous London landmarks, the encouragement of thousands of other runners, the buzz of the crowd or the promise of a glamorous Buckingham Palace finish line.

The New Testament frequently likens the Christian life to a race, testing not our speed but our endurance as we press on towards the goal. In Hebrews, the writer famously exhorts us to '*run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith*' (Hebrews 12:1-2).

Perhaps during the last six months your race has felt rather lonelier and wearier than before. The course has taken a strange and unfamiliar turn; we've been physically separated from our crowd of fellow runners; the churches that fuel and encourage us along the way cannot meet normally. Like those running their marathon last Sunday as a solitary slog through wind and rain, we might think, 'I didn't sign up for these conditions'.

While the past few months have been painful for many of us, suffering, uncertainty and isolation have always been part of the Christian life. The writer of Hebrews knew the cost of persevering through huge trials, and found the secret of doing so: to keep their eyes fixed not on the trials, but on Jesus.

It's only in knowing our saviour Christ as our greatest example, our constant companion, and our glorious prize that we'll keep running to the end, whatever the uncertainties of the course.

Katherine Ladd

Katherine works in communications for the Civil Service and attends Inspire Saint James Clerkenwell (First published by LICC in their 'Connecting With Culture' thread)

A Few Thoughts ... on Food

I want to grow my own food, but I can't find any bacon seeds.

Chocolate comes from cocoa, which is a tree. That makes it a plant. Choc is salad.

I like cooking with wine ... sometimes I even add it to the food.

Thankfulness

*See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.*
Isaiah 43:19

Thankfulness is a powerful and truly transformative act! In Luke 17:11-19 we read of ten lepers who were cleansed and healed by Jesus, but the one who came back to thank Him was told 'your faith has saved you!' Something deep and life-transforming was happening in his heart as he expressed his gratitude to God. He would never be the same again!

The outbreak of Covid 19 earlier this year has been extremely difficult for many people. Yet sometimes it is in those hard times that God can do a deeper transformational, and even new, work in our lives. Yet we have seen God's incredible faithfulness and perceiving the deeper work He has been doing in our lives during this time, as well as the new shoots of ministry that have started to blossom.

We are truly THANKFUL to God for what He is doing amongst us. The apostle Paul encourages us to be thankful IN all circumstances, not FOR all circumstances some of which may not be in God's perfect will. But He is Lord of history, and He indeed can work all things for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28).

Reflections on Thankfulness

- "In ordinary life we hardly realise that we receive a great deal more than we give, and that it is only with gratitude that life becomes rich." Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- It opens our eyes to see ... that life is a gift, and God gives us good gifts.
- It is the first step to come into God's presence, and is the heart of worship – Psalm 100.
- It helps us connect with the giver, including God and other people.
- It is a spiritual discipline.
- It stops us taking people and things for granted, a counter-cultural subversive act in our age of entitlement.
- It gives us a new perspective on life.
- It is an antidote to anxiety and bitterness.
- It opens the door to surprise, wonder and joy.

Do any of these resonate with you?

Notes from a Scandinavian Correspondent - Summer 2020

Episode 4 - Hadersley and Romo



Haderslev to the south is a major regional town with history. Like much of this area it has been a part of Germany and at other times part of Denmark. A plebiscite was held a hundred years ago to determine sovereignty and the area was ceded back to Denmark in 1920. Both sides of the current border hosts populations from the other country, Danes in Germany etc. In recognition of the change in border, funds have always been available to support the alternate population to this day. An example of respect for the 'other side' is the regular German services held in Haderslev Cathedral. This year should have seen major centenary celebrations of the border restoration. These have been sadly thwarted.

Haderslev Cathedral is pre-Reformation. I once noticed a large crucifix hung at the rear of the building and guessed the background. Today Lutheran, it has had a recent major restoration. It has the highest east window of any church in Scandinavia, and the nave is so high that echoes play havoc with a choir singing. Danish choral music is a hidden treat. The choirs here are typically brilliant. The cds I bought have superb harmonies. An early morning visit one day saw the main part of the church roped off, with a singer and an organist at the chancel steps leading a parents and toddlers session. Whatever the spiritual message to parents and toddlers was I've no idea, but I was more than happy to just sit a while and listen to the singer.



Haderslev was a port, going back to around 1300. No longer a port, desirable accommodation is being built on the quayside, an indoor/outdoor skatepark is adjacent to the old grain silo, while many of the old timbers from the quay are re-purposed into up-market dining tables at upmarket prices.



During our second week, we made another visit to the island of Romo. Although the beach attracts many visitors, there is nothing there, it is just sand and more sand and sea and sky. There is a calm and peacefulness, and I can lose myself in my inner thoughts paddling in the water ... it's too cold for anything like swimming! But, it never seems to be too cold to fly a kite, using the breeze coming off the North Sea! Kites of diverse designs, sometimes hundreds, acting as a windsock for a non-existent airfield.

That evening we came back to another sunset which gave way to the moon rising. Mel wanted to take some photos, and focus on both the moon and sea, we finally worked out how to do it. The air held a mixture of wood smoke and honeysuckle, many cottages have log burners. I decided to stay outside wrapped in a woollen blanket, snug, wearing shorts and a short sleeved shirt. The sea looked calm and I could hear the waves lapping on the beach. I watched the moon climb higher, lighting up the whole of the sea, with lights on the distant shore shining from homes and a few factories, warning lights flashing from masts, tall chimneys and wind turbines.



Closer, the street lights cast pools of light on the hill leaving the village to the south, and at a tangent, sticking out into the bay, lights illuminated the yacht jetty. The beach in front of the jetty, visited a fortnight previously by a couple of hundred people, enjoyed temperatures 20 degs C higher than on this night! A small flock of birds makes its way to the local nature reserve, unseen, but the noise of their wings betraying their passing. On other nights we've heard hundreds of Canada Geese squawking away, how the local residents cope with it I don't know. As this night is so cold, the windows stay firmly shut!

Home Thoughts 26

Forager's Delight

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?

*Think not of them, thou hast thy music too -
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river shallows, born aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;*

Winter and Summer woods offer their own special charms. In Spring, woods show us the glorious reawakening of nature. But as the American writer, Jim Bishop put it, Autumn 'carries more gold in its pocket than all the other seasons'. October is the month when we are most likely to see the annual spectacle of leaves changing hue. As the weather turns cooler, green leaves receive less sunlight and previously hidden pigments - reds, yellows and oranges - take centre stage. Despite this explosion of colour, there are plenty of green leaves around, like holly, ivy and yew, butcher's broom and laurel. Bracken is turning a glorious russet-brown, nuts and berries abound in this season of plenty. Jays and squirrels are stashing acorns and cob nuts.

There is a swollen greatness about this Autumn in the abundance of fruits. Every type of berry and nut is prolific, except beech mast, which seems to have been affected by the cold snap in mid-May and elderberries which suffered from lack of rain in the southeast. As we walked, we were accompanied by the 'drumming' of acorns which we crunched under foot, sweet chestnut's spiked balls, conkers. This morning the sky is that wonderful azure blue with fluffy clouds and the air is still. Yew berries looking like blobs of pink wax, and soft magenta spindle berries, soon splitting open to reveal flame orange hearts, scarlet hips and haws adorn our way. Spindles for wool spinning, toothpicks and skewers were made from euonymus trees - spindles. Blue-black Autumn sloes glisten on blackthorn, several people have decided to make sloe gin this year. Hazel catkins are forming and robins are starting to sing as they begin to establish breeding territories. There seems to be an abundance of Corvids - magpies, jays, jackdaws and crows. Small groups of swallows have been seen speeding south, I thought they had long gone. The great white egret I saw last week has been verified. A hoopoe, native to Africa and Asia, with long pinkish-brown crests, dropped in to visit the pitch at a cricket club in West Yorkshire. Redwings and field fares should soon be with us ...



This is the ideal time for fungi to make their presence felt. Suddenly their fruiting bodies are everywhere, sprouting from the woodland floor. Fungi are considered magical and are mistrusted in equal measure. The trees overhead rely on their underground mycelial networks. Walking through woodland yesterday, we came across King Alfred's cake, black knobbly balls on an ash tree; coral spot on dead twigs; bracket fungus; porcelain fungus, translucent white cap attached by a slender stem. Beautiful. There is a fairy-ring on the lawn made up of small pale buff-tan caps forming a circle on the grass and a tiny field mushroom with delicate pink gills.

We walked through peaceful, natural woodland to The Wiremill pub for lunch. The pub offers a pleasant environment with indoor and outside seating areas and newly installed heaters, a comprehensive menu and safe working practices. We sat outside, in the sunlight and marvelled at the antics of a juvenile great crested grebe, still sporting striped cheeks, begging for fish and being fed by a dutiful parent just beginning to acquire its black cap and black-edged chestnut cheek frills. Three Southern hawker dragonflies buzzed us; two buzzards cruised high in the sky; sparrows twittered in the hedge; a tiny wren poked about near the base of the reeds and shrubs beside the lake and we think we spotted a reed bunting nearby; two herons flew over, their long legs trailing behind them and we disturbed another 'viewing' a neighbour's fish pond!

At Weirwood Reservoir, the usual suspects enjoyed the swollen water, a sparrow hawk flew fast, disturbing the Egyptian geese and a kingfisher, at first showing just its orange-chestnut underside, zipped over the water and as it turned, it displayed its unmistakable sapphire blue back. Two youngsters, having just acquired binoculars, were thrilled to spot the kingfisher and a male and female mandarin duck. A grey wagtail potted along the wall beside the weir at Hedgecourt Lake. There are still flowers to be seen as we wandered along, including redshank with pink/red flowers arranged in short spikes, ragwort, and the yellow flowers of hawkweed and sow thistle. Skeletal grasses swayed gently in the breeze, their tiny seeds providing snacks for birds and mice.

In my garden, buff-tailed, re-tailed bumblebees and honey bees are enjoying the purple-blue spikes of salvia. Harvest spiders are weaving webs which shimmer in the hedges and, strung from rose bush to rose bush, catch unwary insects and me. Nasturtiums sprawl along the paths. A great spotted woodpecker is attacking the peanuts, two nuthatches are trying to get a look-in, and failing. Goldfinches, tits, greenfinches, pigeons and nuthatches love to feed on the sunflower seed heads. A green woodpecker probed the soft earth near the bird bath, a female chaffinch with subdued colours piped from the safety of the flowering cherry and an aggressive robin is patrolling the corner where clumps of cyclamen shine like rosy pools of loveliness. Wakehurst Place is famous for swathes of cyclamen and, along with Sheffield Park, will soon be ablaze with Autumn colours. The bird boxes have been cleaned in readiness for Winter roosting and Spring breeding, and I must buy more roosting pockets to 'hide' in the hedges. Next week, I intend to fill the empty, cleaned flowerpots with bulbs, pansies and primroses to brighten the Spring. Sunsets are stunning, brilliant and beautiful. What's not to enjoy?



*And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-cricket sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from the garden croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.*
To Autumn - John Keats

Joan B

And finally ...

A good laugh and a long sleep are the best cure for anything.
Irish Proverb

You can't go back and change the beginning,
but you can start where you are and change the ending.
C S Lewis

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