



January 2003

The Recorder

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Trinity - A Family Church

Worshipping together - Caring for one another - Sharing with others

‘God’s Questions’

from the Minister of Trinity United Reformed Church

In his book: ‘Change Directions’ by Dr. David Cormack there are a list of six questions that God asked Old Testament leaders. As we start a new year you might like to ask the same questions of yourself.

“Where are you?” (Genesis 3:8) First asked of Adam as he hid from God. Describe and assess your current situation. What have you made of yourself? What have you made out of all that life has thrown at you? Are you proud or ashamed of yourself? And do you have a relationship with God that enables you to be open and honest in your prayers about your failures and successes?

“What is in your hand?” (Exodus 4:2) First asked of Moses when he lacked confidence. What assets do you have? How might you offer them to God for his use? Are you sitting on talents, skills, time, assets that you are reluctant to use? If you offered such things to God are you willing to be surprised by the way he could transform them, and you, and others?

“What are you doing here?” (1 Kings 19:9) First asked of Elijah when hiding out of fear. What do you do in the life of the church? What do you do for God? What do you do for others? Elijah fell into the trap of telling God what he used to do, what he had been doing before he ran away and hid. Don’t dwell on the past, concentrate on the present and how it might lead on into the future.

“What can you see?” (Zechariah 4:2) First asked of Zechariah, encouraging him to dream and envision. Look ahead and imagine your future in 10 years time. What about the future of your family in 10 years time? Where do you see our church in 10 years time? Think of the teenagers in the church, what kind of a church do you dream of for them in 10 years time? Are you ready to work to help bring into reality the best of your dreams?

“Can these bones live?” (Ezekiel 37:3) First asked of Ezekiel when he dreams of his people of Israel looking like a vast pile of dried up bones – lifeless and powerless; but the question is asked to encourage Ezekiel to take a positive view of God’s transforming power. Can you see the potential in others around you? Will you be loyal to your struggling people? Can you trust God to work with unlikely building materials? What do you have doubts and pessimistic thoughts about? Are you willing to let God prove you wrong?

“Who will go for us?” (Isaiah 6:8) First asked of Isaiah. And if God were to ask you the same question what would you say? “Here I am. Send me!” or “Here I am. Send someone else!” Are you a willing volunteer for God?

I wish you all the very best for the coming year. I have an uncomfortable New Year wish for you, that as you face the future, you too may hear God asking you his awkward little questions.

Mike

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January Services

Morning Worship at 10.30 a.m.

Children of all ages meet for part of morning worship using the SALT material from Scripture Union. Adult worship usually follows the texts of the Revised Common Lectionary.

5th Jan - Morning Worship - Epiphany Preacher Mrs. Shirley Knibbs. Is 60:1-6,
Eph 3:2-6, Matt 2:1-12

12th Jan - Morning Worship - Communion¹ Sam 3:3-19, 1 Cor 6:13-15, John 1:35-42

19th Jan - All age Worship - Jonah 3:1-10, 1 Cor 7:29-31, Mark 1:14-20

26th Jan - Morning Worship - Led by the Elders. Deut 18:15-20, 1 Cor 7:32-35,
Mark 1:21-28

Evening Worship at 6.30pm

As an experiment we will be exploring the use of different communion liturgies over the next few months. Orders of Service will be taken from our own traditions and from other denominations, some will be old and some will be new. What will different formulae of words bring to our experience of sharing together in communion? Come and find out.

19th Jan Communion - URC Order of Worship 1989.

What's on in January

Monday 13th January - New Year's Celebrations



Monday 27th January - Anecdotes from Margaret

Both meetings start at 8pm

WOMEN'S MEETING

Tuesday 7th January	The Minister
Tuesday 14th January	Readings and Music for "Winter"
Tuesday 21st January	David Griffin - Shopmobility
Tuesday 28th January	AGM



All meetings start at 2.30 in the Lower Schoolroom

Scrabble

Atrophied brains?

Get them back to work after the Christmas break

*2pm
on January 10th and 24th*

CHURCH WALKS

SATURDAY 25th JANUARY

Meet at Bradenham Manor NT Car Park (grid ref 828969) at 10.30am for a walk of about 3 miles round Bradenham Woods. It is likely to be muddy!



This section has been removed because of the very personal nature of it.

Christian Pages
The Classified Directory of Christian Businesses

Do you have a service or a business that you would like to advertise to other Christians? Do you want to find out about Christian-run businesses in your area? Contact Christian Pages for local information.

Address: Christian Pages, PO Box 266, Staines, Middlesex, TW18 4GP
Tel: 01784 460080 Fax: 01784 462219

e-mail: info@christianpages.org.uk Web site: www.christianpages.org.uk

Brain teaser

$$62 - 63 = 1$$

Move one digit to make the sum work. Answer next month.

[Don't try to work out what the Editor's devious mind has been up to here. It has nothing to do with him!]

Church Meeting

January Church Meeting will be on Tuesday 21st at 8.00pm in the Schoolroom. All welcome. Do please try to come along and participate in the news sharing and decision making life of the church.

Commitment for Life

Working with Christian Aid and the World Development Movement to enable local churches to play their full part in tackling poverty.

Trade Justice Movement

No 3 in the series of leaflets, **Going Global**, presented by *Commitment for Life* and World Church programmes of the United Reformed Church, September 2002.

Trade is one of the most powerful forces linking our lives, and a source of unprecedented wealth. World trade could be a powerful motor to reduce poverty, and support economic growth, but that potential is being lost. Millions of the world's poorest people are being left behind. Increased prosperity has gone hand in hand with mass poverty. Inequalities between rich and poor are widening. The rules that govern international trade are rigged in favour of the richest nations and global corporations, and are tending to lock poor nations into agreements that are not in their long-term development interests.

The Trade Justice Movement – a broad alliance of people and organisations – believes that trade should be a means by which poor people can lift themselves out of poverty. It also argues that trade should be environmentally sustainable - ensuring the environment is preserved for the benefit of all. In short, it says that the rules and practices governing international trade need to be changed.

Through the campaign to cancel poor countries' debts, a commitment to cancel \$100 billion worth of debt was won – though not yet delivered on. Changing the international rules and practices that govern trade could result in an extra \$100 billion for poor countries every 8 weeks (according to United Nations estimates).

The Trade Justice Movement formed to campaign for these rules to be rewritten, with poverty reduction and environmental protection as their highest priority. That way, the formidable power of trade can be harnessed to create a fairer, safer world for all.

In a world of great inequality, it is morally wrong to expect the poorest to compete on equal terms with wealthy and well-established international traders. Trade rules have enshrined the idea of free trade in the belief that this creates wealth, but the evidence from free trade measures introduced in the 1995 Uruguay Round shows that many of the poorest countries have not shared in the new wealth, indeed the United Nations estimates that Sub-Saharan Africa is losing £400 million a year from free trade measures introduced then.

Protectionism prevents poor countries competing on equal terms. Rich countries spend \$1 bn every day on agricultural subsidies. The resulting surpluses are dumped on world markets, undermining the livelihoods of millions of smallholder farmers in poor nations.

When developing countries export to rich-country markets, they face tariff barriers that are four times higher than those encountered by rich countries. Those barriers cost them \$100 bn year – twice as much as they receive in aid.

While rich countries keep their markets closed, poor countries have been pressurised by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to speedily open their markets, with damaging consequences for the poor.

The international community has failed to address the problem of low and unstable commodity prices, on which many poorer nations depend. Coffee prices, for example, are at a 30 year low, fetching prices below the price of production in many cases.

Powerful transnational companies (TNCs) have been left free to engage in investment and employment practices which contribute to poverty and insecurity, constrained only by weak voluntary guidelines.

Many of the rules of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on trade in services (GATS), on intellectual property (TRIPS) and on investment protect the interests of corporations from rich countries, while imposing huge costs on developing countries.

[cont on next page]

The way rules are drawn up at the WTO has been called into question. Rich countries are able to field large delegations of trade lawyers and experts, while many poorer nations have neither the technical know-how nor the people power to participate fully. Half of least developed countries do not have a single representative at WTO headquarters in Geneva. At the WTO Ministerial Meeting in Doha (November 2001) the EU had 502 representatives. Haiti had none. Bullying tactics were used to pressurise poor nations into signing the agreement. These included threats to reduce aid and withdraw trade contracts.

The Trade Justice Movement argues that the international rules and practices that govern trade must give the weakest and most vulnerable special help, until they are strong enough to compete without it. The Trade Justice rally concentrated on three areas of special help that poor countries need:

1. Their governments need to be allowed to support and, where necessary, protect their vulnerable traders and people.
2. Their traders need to be allowed to sell the things they produce in the markets of rich countries.
3. Their governments need help to regulate the activities of large transnational companies.

A moral issue

No-one must feel they should remain silent because they do not understand the complex economic issues that surround trade. There is probably no-one in the world who understands them all! Detailed trade issues can and should be debated by those interested in or responsible for them. But all of us can consider the morality upon which the economic debate is based.

Should poor countries have to follow trade policies laid down for them by an international community dominated by the rich, or should they be allowed the freedom to choose policies they believe will reduce poverty.

When lives depend on the outcome, should weak and strong compete on equal terms?

The Trade Justice Movement was launched in 2001 and by June 2002 some 40 organisations had signed up to its objectives. The **United Reformed Church** is the first church to have signed up and given a grant of £4000 to the small secretariat. The Methodist Relief and Development Fund is also a member. Other key members are: Christian Aid, CAFOD, the Fairtrade Foundation, OXFAM, WDM.

The first major action in 2002 was the Mass Lobby of Parliament on June 19th. 12,000 people converged on Westminster in a peaceful lobby and an unprecedented 327 MPs were lobbied, many coming out to meet their constituents. In the Commons, MPs debated world poverty. The lobby's influence on the speeches was evident.

The next action is a campaign to Dr Superchai Panitchpakdi, incoming Director General of the World Trade Organisation, to ask him to stop the bullying and pressure tactics being applied to developing countries. You are encouraged to send a card to him.

What can we do:

Find out more. Get copies of Christian Aid's 'Trade Justice: a campaign handbook'; WDM's Tricks of the Trade leaflet; OXFAM's 'Rigged Rules and Double Standards – Summary.

Get involved. Register with Christian Aid as a campaigner – and receive mailings about the campaign five times a year.

Get your church involved. Order the latest church action pack from Christian Aid. Distribute information coming in the CforL newsletters. Put articles in the church magazine.

Wear the trade campaign badge

Pray for those trapped by unfair trade rules; pray for the campaign that it might achieve results for the sake of all poor communities.

Snippets

Recorded Services

A reminder that we have recently upgraded the sound recording equipment in the church (with money given in memory of O B) and together with some additional effort at improving wiring and placing microphones more accurately, we are now able to make very good recordings of morning worship indeed. All speech is crystal clear and the sound of the organ and congregational singing are also both picked up with reasonable clarity. The tapes are a pleasure to listen to and understand. If you are housebound, or if you miss a service for any reason, perhaps being on duty with Junior Church or Crèche, then these tapes are available for you. Copies of tapes can be provided on a regular weekly basis, or in response to occasional one-off requests.

This is a free service, just contact G E and ask him for a copy of the week's tape. It's as simple as that. (M.S.)

Sale of Christmas Cards and Gifts

This year's Profit amounted to £280 and a cheque has been handed to the Treasurer accordingly. Thank you to all our customers - we start again in July 2003.

J and R S

2003 Reform Magazines

Just a reminder to subscribers that I will be collecting money for the 2003 Reform Magazines at the beginning of January. The subscription for the year is £10.75. Please make any cheques payable to Trinity URC. Thank you.

KE

Heroes and heroines

At the end of every month, as surely as night follows day, we all receive our copy of the Recorder, well printed, collated, stapled, and well designed. It gives us invitations, thoughts to think about, dates for diaries and miscellaneous information and all sorts of contributions - and all for nothing, It is worth passing on to a friend or neighbour, and you might get their church magazine back - a good way of getting new thoughts and fresh ideas.

So this is to give a big thank you to our Editor for the great part he plays in Trinity life and to his valiant team who help to make it all happen each month. About 200 copies are printed and nearly all delivered by hand.

O P

[The editor would like to endorse the comments above relating to the "valiant team". Without the effort put in each month by the "production team", no amount of material, however good, would ever get to the readers. It is a genuine Team Effort, and each plays their part.]

Wycombe Prayer – January Meeting Calling all Intercessors

Prayers for those who wish to intercede for local issues concerning church and community. All welcome.

Venue this month: 6.00-9.00a.m. Saturday 4th January, at St. Paul's, West Wycombe.

The Scrabblers . . .

have so far raised £574 for the Restoration Fund. They are always ready to welcome new players.

*The next edition of the Recorder will be published on 26th January.
Closing date for contributions is Friday 17th January.*

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Church web site: <http://www.trinity-urc.org.uk>

**AN INVITATION TO ALL
an opportunity to invite your friends**

A NEARLY - NEW YEAR PARTY – IN FEBRUARY

**Saturday 1st February 2003
5.00 – 7.00 p.m.**

A chance for all of us to get together and have fun. A party for all ages, young and old with plenty of games and activities for all different ages.

This has always been a great fun event.

Please bring some 'finger food' for a shared buffet supper.

Tea, coffee and cold drinks provided.

Organised by Junior Church. See Louise for further details or offer of help.

Monday mornings

The Bible Study Group which meets on Monday mornings is coming to the end of this session **and** we have used with great pleasure a small book called 'All Change' and with the Minister's great help and using our wits we have read, talked, and discussed at length the nuggets we have encountered and you would be astonished if you heard just a few of them - the Kingdom of God, one's own personal beliefs, reaching out to other communities giving and taking, welcoming strangers, love/compassion and praying and listening. Previously we have 'done' the Ten Commandments and the Book of Revelation. Inevitably Trinity matters have arisen. We think carefully, comment frequently and ask questions often. We couldn't have such an interesting and worth-while time of it without our minister who has guided us and taught us so patiently and wisely.

So this is a good way to start the week and much to be recommended. Why don't you join us? -We will always find another chair and mug of coffee.

Don't forget the Wednesday evening Group either. We're starting another of these Groups on January 6th 2003, Come and join us - you will benefit and so shall we.

0 P

A word of thanks - from the Organist

This January I step down from being your full time organist, and move to the reserve list! Can you believe I've been up there in the gallery for four years!

I would like to record my thanks to everyone for putting up with my occasional "Les Dawson" notes, and turning a blind eye, to the "biggie" mistakes. Especially I am grateful to AB, who asked me to come to Trinity, back in 1997.

For the last year, I have not been in good health, and found the services quite a strain. Also, my wife and I have an ambition to travel more, and this we hope to do in the New Year. Perhaps even, we will "winter" abroad, migrating like the swallows. We look for God's leading in our plans.

Our church is in a period of change, and I'm honoured to be part of the evolution. I believe that our corporate prayer will strengthen us and lead us forward.

My final comment is a tribute to the choir, a group of lovely Christians. They bring joy to our music, and have touched my life indelibly.

Praying for our Future

**Sunday Prayer Meetings
5.00-6.00pm
in the Church Sanctuary
This month: January 12th and 26th
(Normally on 2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays)**

At these meetings we gather to pray about our lack of clarity concerning the future of our church buildings, and seek God's guidance so that we may discern his kingdom way for us. You are all encouraged to attend. Our Church Meeting has indicated that this ought to be an important time of praying and seeking after God for us all. (M.S.)

**Wild Fire – Notes of the Spirit
The Life and Witness of Stephen
with Roger Jones – musician and composer
A National GEAR Conference
Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick
14-16 February 2003**

A musical and spiritual weekend with teaching, worship and prayer.

Adults £70, generous discounts for children.

See leaflets at back of church for more details.

or contact Conference Secretary: Mrs Heather Cadoux Tel: 020 8868 9002

TRINITY TUESDAY

Come and join us for our very first Trinity Tuesday on 14th January at 7.30 pm. We are launching this brand new idea (a brainchild of the Open Forum Meeting) with a Cheese and Wine Social. There will be a nominal charge to cover expenses.

We hope that this will be the first of many regular social evenings on Tuesdays in Crendon Hall, so come along and bring your friends. We look forward to hearing your ideas for future Trinity Tuesdays. If you require transport, please contact the Church Secretary.

THE SMALLEST FIREMAN

Here is a sad but sweet story of kindness. Read it if you have some time - sometimes a little thought to others less fortunate can make a whole difference I had to send you this one as it touched my heart. Just remember that the one nice thing you do for one person may be all they need!!

A 26-year-old mother stared down at her son who was dying of terminal leukaemia. Although her heart was filled with sadness, she also had a strong feeling of determination. Like any parent she wanted her son to grow up and fulfil all his dreams. Now that was no longer possible. The leukaemia would see to that. But she still wanted her son's dreams to come true. She took her son's hand and asked, "Billy, did you ever think about what you wanted to be once you grew up? Did you ever dream and wish what you would do with your life?"

"Mommy, I always wanted to be a fireman when I grew up." Mom smiled back and said, "Let's see if we can make your wish come true." Later that day she went to her local fire department in Phoenix, Arizona, where she met Fireman Billy, who had a heart as big as Phoenix. She explained her son's final wish and asked if it might be possible to give her six-year-old son a ride around the block on fire engine. Fireman Bob said, "Look, we can do better than that. If you'll have your son ready at seven o'clock Wednesday morning, we'll make him an honorary fireman for the whole day. He can come down to the fire station, eat with us, go out all the fire calls, the whole nine yards! And if you'll give us his sizes, we'll get a real fire uniform for him, with a real fire hat-not a toy one-with the emblem of the Phoenix Fire Department on it, a yellow slicker like we wear and rubber boots. They're all manufactured right here in Phoenix, so we can get them fast." Three days later Fireman Bob picked up Billy, dressed him in his fire uniform and escorted him from his hospital bed to the waiting hook and ladder truck. Billy got to sit on the back of the truck and help steer it back to the fire station. He was in heaven. There were three fire calls in Phoenix that day and Billy got to go out on all three calls. He rode in the different fire engines, the paramedic's van, and even the fire chief's car. He was also videotaped for the local news program. Having his dream come true, with all the love and attention that was lavished upon him, so deeply touched Billy that he lived three months longer than any doctor thought possible. One night all of his vital signs began to drop dramatically and the head nurse, who believed in the hospice concept that no one should die alone, began to call the family members to the hospital. Then she remembered the day Billy had spent as a fireman, so she called the Fire Chief and asked if it would be possible to send a fireman in uniform to the hospital to be with Billy as he made his transition.

The chief replied, "We can do better than that. We'll be there in five minutes. Will you please do me a favour? When you hear the sirens screaming and see the lights flashing, will you announce over the PA system that there is not fire? It's just the fire department coming to see one of its finest members one more time. And will you open the window to his room?" About five minutes later a hook and ladder truck arrived at the hospital and extended its ladder up to Billy's third floor open window. 16 fire fighters climbed up the ladder into Billy's room. With his mother's permission, they hugged him and held him and told him how much they loved him. With his dying breath, Billy looked up at the fire chief and said, "Chief, am I really a fireman now?"

"Billy, you are, and the Head Chief, Jesus, is holding your hand," the chief said. With those words, Billy smiled and said, "I know, He's been holding my hand all day, and the angels have been singing." He closed his eyes one last time.

Organist

We have had no responses at all in our search for a new regular organist for Trinity Church. Can you think of anyone to show this advert to? As the advert says, further details are available, and either the Church Secretary or Minister would be happy to have a conversation with anyone who would like to know more.

Wanted

Church Organist

Trinity United Reformed Church
London Road, High Wycombe

Sunday morning worship, weddings and funerals, friendly family atmosphere to worship, diversity of musical influences appreciated, come and help lead and inspire us in our worship.

For further details contact:

E-mail: minister@trinity-urc.org.uk

Prayer spot

J
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As we start a New Year, it is an appropriate time to reflect on the Old one just passed. It has given each of us many memories - some of joy, and some of sadness. We will all have something to be thankful for, and doubtless in other matters also be left wondering "why?"

In the absence of the normal Prayer Page this month, readers are invited to be creative, and come up with their own form of words or thoughts for personal prayer.

2003

May the Peace of the Lord be with you all at this time.

