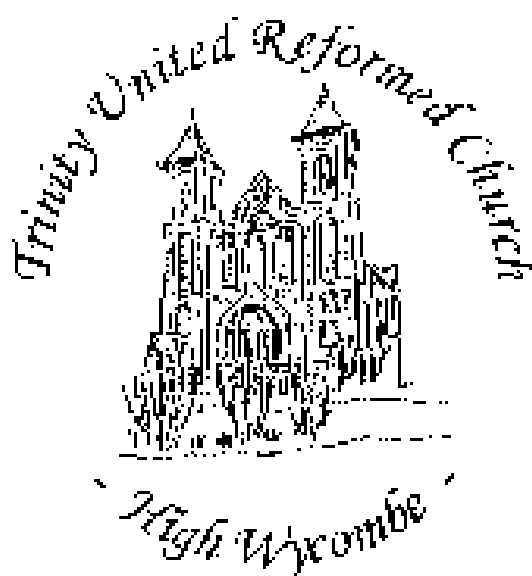


And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.  
*Luke:9:62*



*January 2007*

# *The Recorder*

## **Inside - this month . . .**

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*An edited version of this magazine is now available on the Church Web-site.  
(Personal details are NOT included.)*

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

**Trinity - A Family Church**

Worshipping together - Caring for one another - Sharing with others

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! 2007 has (almost) arrived. Let us welcome it with faith and hope, confident that God is with us and we are held in God’s love. This is to be a year of discovery and adventure, laughter and tears, surprises and comfortable familiarities. How do I know that? Well, every one of my years so far has been like that and that seems a reasonable basis for prediction! I am very much looking forward to sharing it with you all at Trinity.

My favourite cracker joke this Christmas was:

*What do you call a penguin in the Sahara desert?  
Lost*

The prospect of a new year and what it may bring can make us feel a bit like that! The unknown Sahara of global uncertainties stretches before us. Dry, threatening wildernesses lurk within each of us, unexplored. Even parts of our own town, workplace, church or family can make us feel like a fish out of water – or a penguin in the Sahara desert.

Penguins, it seems to me, have very endearing qualities. They cuddle together to keep warm. They walk incredible distances to get food for their young. They are models of gracefulness as they swim in the ocean and doggedly persistent as they waddle on land. They are creatures of colonies, of community. They know where and with whom they belong. And it isn’t in the Sahara desert. Or is it?

What if we were to change the joke a little?

*What do you call a Spirit-filled penguin in the Sahara desert?  
A missionary*

Mission is our business, God-sent ness. Love beckons us into the Sahara: Acting beyond the normal to help build a more equitable and sustainable world; Daring to open our inner selves up just a little bit more to the searching, healing, gentle touch of the Lord; Risking sharing the treasures Jesus gives us, in appropriate ways with unlikely people. So here we are, penguins together. A family church – wanting to grow into our God-given Vision.

Is it possible to tell one penguin from another? Well, I’ll stand out as obvious in my newness for awhile. By the end of 2007 I aim to know you also as the unique and special people you each are. It may take the year to visit everyone – in your church groups, homes, over a coffee in town, or in my home. Be patient with me and we’ll get there. Thank you for calling me to be your minister. May the Lord bless and guide us, forgive us our sins, and cover us with LOVE.



Minister :  
*There is no minister in post at present*

Church Secretary :Mrs Marian Mole,  
21 Freemantle Road,  
High Wycombe,  
HP13 7PQ ☎ 01494 528041  
e-mail: secretary@trinity-urc.org.uk

## January Services

### Morning Worship at 10:30am

Jan 7th            Communion - Revd Jack Ramsbottom

January 7th - 3pm Induction of Rev Dr Gwen Collins

Jan 14th	] Rev Dr Gwen Collins
Jan 21st	
Jan 28th	

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### Rotas for January

**Not included in this version**

# What's on in January



Monday 8th January - 8pm New Year Quiz  
(Hostess: José B)

Monday 22nd January - 8pm Planning for Pam Rhodes Evening  
(Hostess: Bettine F)

## WOMEN'S MEETING

Tuesday 9th Jan	Welcome to 2007. Bring & Buy
Tuesday 16th Jan	Quiz - hymns
Tuesday 23rd Jan	Women in the Book of Acts
Tuesday 30th Jan	AGM. Bring & Buy



*All meetings start at 2.30 in the Lower Schoolroom*

January 5th and 19th . . .

Scrabble

*Shake off the New Year blues.  
Settle down and get your brains in gear*

## Diary Dates

7 January	3pm - Induction of Rev Dr Gwen Collins
9 January	8pm - Elders' Meeting
10 January	8pm - Revive Committee Meeting
23 January	8pm - Church Meeting
29 January	10am - Prayer Circle For Healing meet
6 February	8pm - Elders' Meeting
6 March	8pm - Elders' Meeting
13 March	8pm - Church AGM
17 March	Evening With Pam Rhodes in aid of Revive

**Not included in this version**

**Ruby Wallis**

We would like to thank all those who expressed their sympathy, who sent us cards and who attended Ruby's Thanksgiving Service. Also thanks to anyone who gave donations to Trinity's "Revive" Fund in Ruby's memory. A special thanks to Revd Andrew Busby for all his help and support.

Kay, Sue and Families

**Thank you**

As we look forward to Gwen's induction on 7<sup>th</sup> January and to having our own minister once again, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have helped me with pulpit supply.

**This version heavily edited**

It has been a great privilege meeting so many different people and to have had so much support from within the church.

*Maureen B*

# Commitment for Life

## Zimbabwe

Catholic Archbishop Pius Ncube of Bulawayo of Zimbabwe has been in London on a three day visit. He says that the humanitarian situation in his country is critical - and is largely being overlooked by the world as it focuses on other more visible crises.

Each week an estimated 3,500 Zimbabweans die from a unique convergence of malnutrition, poverty and AIDS. This figure suggests that far away from the media spotlight, more people die in Zimbabwe each week than in Darfur. World Health Organisation figures released earlier this year place life expectancy in Zimbabwe at just 34 years for women and 37 years for men. This is the lowest in the world conflict. Archbishop Ncube says that although Zimbabwe has one of the highest HIV infection rates on earth, with over 24 per cent of the population infected, these life expectancy figures cannot just be blamed on AIDS. Zimbabwe's neighbouring countries have the same incidence of AIDS but their life expectancy figures are better (some substantially better). For example, life expectancy in South Africa is 47 years for men and 49 years for women.

Archbishop Ncube declared: "Zimbabwe is not a nation at war. It used to be able to feed itself and its neighbours. Zimbabwe used to have one of the highest life expectancy rates in Africa, up with South Africa." He continued: "Now hunger, illness and desperation stalk our land. Cemeteries are filling up throughout the country. But no blood is being spilt. People are just fading away, dying quietly and being buried quietly with no fanfare - and so there is little international media attention."

"These deaths are largely preventable yet without significant intervention, the situation threatens to develop into a humanitarian crisis of biblical proportions. The UN has recently warned that 6.1 million Zimbabweans now face starvation," said the Archbishop.

© Ecumenical News International

**In Zimbabwe** a large number of women are unable to afford sanitary products. This issue has been raised in Parliament by Kate Hoey MP

## Bangladesh

Mazeda Begum, from northern Bangladesh has lived on a raised embankment for the last six years after they lost their house and land due to river erosion. Erosion in Bangladesh isn't just a gradual process it is happening daily, large slices of land disappear into rivers as floods are getting worse. The poorest people are always those who are most likely to be forced to live on the most vulnerable land. As populations increase people begin to live on land that is vulnerable to flooding and erosion. Because she lost her land, Mazeda has been unable to send her daughter to school. Instead her daughter will work as a servant and probably be trapped in poverty for the rest of her life. Millions of people are in the same position. They become refugees because of the environmental changes, often living in temporary shacks by the roadside on raised embankments. Frequent flooding can mean they lose all their possessions or have their harvests ruined many times. Every year CCDB helps thousands of poor families affected by disaster such as flooding, cyclones or land erosion. Since the 2004 floods CCDB has acted as the lead agency among Christian Aid partners, helping to organise a coordinated response to emergencies.

*The articles included each month on this page are supplied by Commitment for Life. They usually cover Bangladesh, Jamaica and Zimbabwe. Since Trinity has traditionally tended to be more involved in support for African activities rather than in other areas, I tend to restrict coverage to Zimbabwe for reasons of space. However, if readers would like coverage extended to the full information supplied, I will be happy to make room for it. Just let me know! - Ed*

Several members have raised questions in recent months regarding Gift Aid. As a result, the Finance Committee has asked me to prepare an article explaining what it is, and how it works. Unfortunately, it is to do with TAX – and is therefore a far from simple concept! However, here goes!

Let me start at the beginning. The scheme is called “Gift Aid”. The **Aid** is given by the Government as a refund of tax – and is attached to qualifying **Gifts**. The dictionary defines a gift as a “*voluntary transference of property without consideration*”. (My underlining.) This very simple definition makes it quite clear that Gift Aid can only apply to donations made purely out of the kindness of the giver’s heart. If the donor receives anything in return for the financial contribution to the charitable organisation (in our case, the Church,) it cannot be considered to be a Gift.

The secondary thing to bear in mind is that the payment made from the Government to the Church is, in effect, a refund of tax. Again, a look at the dictionary will make it clear that before there can be a refund, there must have been a payment (of tax) in the first place.

In a nutshell, two criteria must be met -

- The donation must be just that – a payment made out of the kindness of the giver’s heart with nothing in return
- The donation must be made from income that has already been taxed.

The latter is not such a simple point, however. Even if the donor is a taxpayer, we need to consider whether the donation was subjected to tax in the hands of the donor. Let me give an example, in the context of raising money for the church:-

I decide to sow some seeds. I pay for them, and the compost, out of my own pocket. They germinate – by the hundreds. I see an opportunity to sell them on behalf of the Church. My efforts result in cash receipts of, say, £50. The money has been given to me in exchange for some seedlings – so is not a **donation** by the person/people who gave it to the church, through me. At this point, this “income” in my hands has not been taxed. It therefore fails to qualify for Gift Aid on both counts.

To continue on the scenario of selling the seedlings, as I am making a profit, I ought to declare this **and be taxed on it**. This would leave me with £39 net. If I gave that sum to the Church, our Gift Aid co-ordinator would be able to claim a tax refund of £11 (bringing the total amount received by the Church up to £50 – the figure I started with.) In reality, however, I would probably simply not “declare” it, and give the £50 to the Church. However, although this is quite properly considered to be a donation, it does not qualify for Gift Aid, since it is not being made from taxed income. I could make the payment of £50 straight from my pay packet, which will have been subjected to tax. (However, I still need to notify the Tax Inspector of my untaxed income from growing seeds. He will send me a bill for £11, and we are almost back to where we started. The Church will have received £50, but I will be an additional £11 “out of pocket” (plus the cost of the compost!))

There is no “way round this”. The present system is a lot easier to handle than the previous one, which involved making formal Deeds of Covenant, but is also easier to get wrong. If we do, our Gift Aid Co-ordinator is put in the unenviable position of making claims for refunds which may be invalid. Let us not make things difficult for Tony; make your donations with the benefit of Gift Aid – but make sure you are entitled to do so. If you are in any doubt, please feel free to discuss this with either Tony or myself.

*(Just to complicate matters, there are some special provisions which were introduced in the 2005 Budget to enable some charitable institutions to claim Gift Aid in respect of (for example) admission to stately homes. There are, however, specific conditions which must be satisfied to allow these claims to succeed. Simply bear this in mind if you come across what appears to be a situation which does not follow my general principles set out above!)*

*Angus*

Chairman, Finance Committee



## Fundraising report

### Funds raised

Audrey Bruton's afternoon teas continue to raise funds for REVIVE, as do the monthly church lunches. Thanks to all who contribute, both financially and with their time.

The St Andrew's Dinner Dance raised £1530 and was well-supported and very enjoyed by all who attended.

### Future event dates

The next date for your diary is a supper/dinner evening with Pam Rhodes on **Saturday 17 March 2007**. Trinity Nightbirds are organising this and more details will follow next month.

### Funds needed

We still need over £36,000 to be able to start any work. Some of you may be asking whether we should step out in faith and begin the redevelopment ... the REVIVE committee have discussed this and strongly believe this would not be right apart from being fraudulent!

It may be that you want to support the redevelopment project financially but don't want to make a further gift until we have a definite start date or until you can see visible evidence of work starting. The difficulty is that we cannot begin work until we have the funds – the old chicken and egg scenario!

I would like to offer a suggestion for your prayerful consideration:

**Would you be willing to make a 'promise of intent' for a specified sum or an interest-free loan for REVIVE?** This would enable us to make an informed decision about actual and promised funds, and as importantly, to avoid further delays. The longer we take to raise the funds and start the work, the more expensive it will be. Our architect Jeremy Bell was clear that inflation increases for building work far outstrip standard inflation rises. Part of our good stewardship for the redevelopment involves minimising this.

*Kate Y*

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## THANK YOU SIMON!

Simon does a great deal each week for Trinity but recently he has excelled himself by masterminding the preparations at the manse for the arrival of Gwen and Bernie. He not only arranged all the workforces ie. decorators, kitchen and bathroom fitters, glaziers, carpet fitters, etc. but he and Sarah did some of the work, too. The transformation in such a short time was phenomenal and no small feat of achievement. The schedule was so tight that the last workmen left the manse 15 minutes before Gwen and Bernie arrived! Many people thought it couldn't be done but you did it Simon and we are deeply grateful for all your efforts, hard work and late nights.

Thanks also, to Sarah for her part and all the people who helped clean up after the workmen. Gwen and Bernie were really thrilled with the new kitchen, bathroom, front & back doors, paintwork, etc. and also pass on their thanks to everyone.

MM



**Trinity Nightbirds**  
**Present**  
**An**  
**EVENING WITH PAM RHODES**  
**Presenter of Songs of Praise**  
**on**  
**Saturday 17 March**  
**Crendon Hall**  
**In aid of Revive Development Fund**

*(More details in February's Recorder)*

## Definitions

**ADULT:** A person who has stopped growing at both ends and now grows in the middle.

**BEAUTY PARLOUR:** A place where women curl up and dye.

**CANNIBAL:** Someone who is fed up with people.

**CHICKENS:** The only creatures you eat before they are born and after they are dead.

**COMMITTEE:** A body that keeps minutes and wastes hours.

**DUST:** Mud with the juice squeezed out.

**EGOTIST:** Someone who is usually me-deep in conversation.

**GOSSIP:** A person who will never tell a lie if the truth will do more damage.

**HANDKERCHIEF:** Cold Storage.

**INFLATION:** Cutting money in half without damaging the paper.

**MOSQUITO:** An insect that makes you like flies better.

**RAISIN:** Grape with sunburn.

**SECRET:** Something you tell to one person at a time.

**TOOTHACHE:** The pain that drives you to extraction.

**TOMORROW:** One of the greatest labour saving devices of today.

**YAWN:** An honest opinion openly expressed.

**WRINKLES:** Something other people have. You have character lines.

## ***The Computer swallowed Grandma***

The computer's swallowed grandma  
Yes honestly it's true  
She pressed control and enter and  
Disappeared from view

It's devoured her completely  
The thought just makes me squirm.  
Maybe she's caught a virus  
Or been eaten by a worm.

I've searched through the Recycle bin  
And files of every kind,  
I've even used the Internet  
but nothing did I find.

In desperation I asked Jeeves  
My searches to refine.  
The reply from him was negative  
Not a thing was found on line.

So if inside your Inbox  
My Grandma you should see  
Please Scan, Copy and Paste her,  
And send her back to me.

*["Found" by Margaret L who wanted to share this sad tale!]*

---

A priest died and waited in line at the Pearly Gates. Ahead of him was a guy dressed in sunglasses, a loud shirt, leather jacket and jeans.

Saint Peter addressed him, "Who are you, so that I may know whether or not to admit you into the Kingdom of Heaven?"

The guy replied, "I'm Joe Cohen, taxi driver, from New York."

Saint Peter consulted his list. He smiled and said to the taxi driver, "Take this silken robe and golden staff and enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

Then it was the priest's turn. He stood erect and boomed out, "I am the Right Reverend Joseph Snow, pastor of Saint Mary's for the last forty-three years."

Saint Peter again consulted his list. He said to the priest, "Take this cotton robe and wooden staff and enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

"Just a minute," says the priest. "That man was a taxi driver. Why does he get a silken robe and golden staff?"

"Results," shrugged Saint Peter. "While you preached, people slept. When he drove, people prayed."

Moral of the story: - It's Performance, not position, that counts.

### **CHURCH FUND RAISING OFFER**

Learn to play the piano from scratch in one 2 hour lesson using a well established American method.

Play "When The Saints Go Marching In" with 2 hands whilst reading the music.

You do not need to have your own piano .

You do not need to have "learnt music" previously. (You won't be barred if you did once have lessons - you could find this American approach interesting.)

Telephone to make your appointment (01494) 443629 - Margaret Rigelsford.

The lesson will take place at 106 Brands Hill Avenue in February 2007

COST : Any donation direct to the Church Fund Secretary - Norma Garden - after your lesson.

No age limit - either upper or lower - applies.

## **SOME THINGS DON'T CHANGE!**

A short while ago whilst going through files in the church vestry, I came across this article which I thought might be of interest and amusement to some of you! Rev Auty was inducted in July 1920.

MM

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### **Trinity Congregational Church, High Wycombe.**

DEAR FRIEND,

We hope to see Mr. G. S. Auty settled as Pastor of the Church on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in July, and we trust you will be with us on that occasion.

In order to meet the extra expense that will be incurred, together with the increased cost of lighting, heating, repairs, insurances, &c., it is necessary for us to raise a considerable larger amount per annum than we are doing at present.

At a recent Meeting of members and Subscribers it was resolved that a circular be sent to all Subscribers, inviting them to revise their gifts, and if possible, increase them. Some of our friends are giving to the utmost in their power; we cannot ask them to do more, but others might be able to increase their subscriptions, and we trust that they will feel it a privilege to support the good work which, we believe, is being done at Trinity.

We are hoping to have friends settling with us in increasing numbers, and in order that we may provide them with suitable seats in the Church we ask friends to say how many Sittings they will require.

No Pew Rent is charged for Seats, and we are glad to allot Sittings to friends as far as it is possible for us to do so.

In order that the Church Council may know what is the financial position we shall be obliged if you will fill up the enclosed form and place it in the box in the front of the Church, or return it to the Secretary, 19, Castle Street, not later than June 14<sup>th</sup>.

Yours sincerely on behalf of the Church,

JOHN RUTTY, Treasurer, )  
R. P. BRISTOW, )  
ED. WHITE, ) Deacons  
JOHN COLES, Secretary. )

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*The next edition of the Recorder will be published on 28th January.  
Closing date for contributions is Friday 19th January*

Recorder Editor : e-mail : [editor@trinity-urc.org.uk](mailto:editor@trinity-urc.org.uk)

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

## prayer page

Lord God, forgive everything that stands in the way of international understanding

Forgive our fears of one another that lead us to use our vast resources of power for potential destruction rather than dealing with the areas of human need.

Forgive our nationalist and racist posturings that make difficult for us to work comfortably together.

Forgive our contempt for imperfect institutions in an imperfect world.

Lord, deliver us from fear,  
deliver us from arrogance,  
deliver us from the search for perfect solutions.

*From Further Everyday Prayers*

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Father, I pray for all who work closely with nature:  
for farmers and gardeners who grow our food,  
for scientists and technicians who probe the secrets of the earth,  
for foresters who plant and harvest the trees,  
for those who forecast the weather,  
for photographers and artists who capture the beauty for others to see,  
for conservationists and all who guard the precious heritage of the earth.  
Amen.

*From More Everyday Prayers*

Lord, you told us that a person's life does not consist of the things he possesses. Help us not to judge others by what they own. Help us not to want more and more things for ourselves but to spend our lives seeking the true riches that will endure to life everlasting.  
Amen.

Help me, O God, to spend wisely and to buy fairly, remembering that money and the things of this world are a trust for which I shall have to give an account to you.

*Malcolm L Playfoot*



To you before the end of day,  
Creator of the world, we pray:  
In love unending hear our prayer,  
Enfold us in your watchful care.

Keep all disturbing dreams away,  
And hold the evil foe at bay.  
Repose untroubled let us find  
For soul and body, heart and mind.

Almighty Father, this accord  
Through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord:  
Who reigns with you eternally  
in your blest Spirit's unity. Amen.

*From the Office of Compline – an Alternative Order*