

The Lord shall preserve thee from all  
evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

[Psalm 121: 7]



*January 2015*

# *The Recorder*

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An edited version of this magazine is available on the Church Website.

(Personal details are NOT included)

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

**Trinity - a place to belong**

**Spirituality - Prayer – Community – Welcome**

**It's okay to fail but it's not good not even to try!**

In my early working life at an estate agent's, I distinctly recall my boss saying that it was more important that we made the wrong decision than no decision at all. Yes, even in the 1980s it was okay to fail!

We live in a success-driven and target-driven society. Our schoolchildren have homework from infant school age and are constantly tested. I won't go into the traumas that can be caused by that, particularly for those less academically gifted or not good at doing tests, but I still have hang-ups about "doing numbers".

I'm sure that one of the outcomes of such constant aiming for high standards (although quality is important) is that many adults fear trying something in case they fail. I'm also sure I'm not the only one whose calculation of the risk is sometimes very highly exaggerated. Sometimes I have actually learnt new and exciting skills by being prepared to fail. Choosing to cultivate an attitude of "it's okay to fail – I can shrug my shoulders and say at least I tried" takes some degree of determination in itself.

**So where is God in all this?**

How many of us have made a conscious or even unconscious decision not to invite someone to church because we fear they will reject us or think us silly or deluded? Or do we worry that the worship won't be their style or that we won't be welcoming and inclusive enough?

At September's Synod meeting, Michael Harvey who began "Back to Church Sunday" challenged us to remember that we need to invite (i.e. plant and nurture the seeds), but it is God's work to harvest.

"Success" is one person **INVITING** one person – they don't have to say yes! The measure of success is that someone has actually **been invited!**

So I would like to challenge myself and you to invite one person to one of our Easter season services – Maundy Thursday, Good Friday or Easter Sunday. They may say no, but that doesn't mean you can't ask again at some time in the future.

Who knows what God will do once we begin to act faithfully rather than playing it safe (which is certainly not something Jesus could ever be accused of doing!). Let us pray that the Holy Spirit will prompt us to ask, encourage us to ask again, and challenge us to never give up.

*Kate*

Minister :
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Church Secretary : Kate Yates ☎ 01494 672799 e-mail: <a href="mailto:secretary@trinity-urc.org.uk">secretary@trinity-urc.org.uk</a>
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☎ 01494 520365 (answer phone) ☎ 07853 854623 (mobile)

## January Services

### Morning Worship at 10:30am unless otherwise stated

- Jan. 4            Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Revd Angela Singleton
- Jan. 11           Morning Worship led by Pastor Mike Burmingham  
12 noon    Prayer ministry in vestry
- Jan. 18           All Age Worship led by The Amersham Free Church Worship Team
- Jan. 25           Morning Worship with speaker Lesley Roberts from The Leprosy Mission  
4.30pm    Praise service

**Not included in this version**

# What's on in January



Monday 19th January at 10.30am

New Year Quiz (*Hostess - Marian M*)

## WOMEN'S MEETING

Tuesday 6th Jan Preparations for the New Year Party  
 Tuesday 13th Jan New Year Party - Sanctuary  
 Tuesday 20th Jan Winter Quiz  
 Tuesday 27th Jan AGM. Bring & Buy



*All meetings start at 2.30 in the Lower Schoolroom unless otherwise stated*

## Diary Dates

Event	Day	Date	Time
Women's Meeting	Tuesday	6th	2:30 – 4:30 pm
Vision2020 prayer	Wednesday	7th	9:30 – 10:00 am
Trinity Elders' meeting	Wednesday	7th	8 – 10 pm
Coffee Morning	Saturday	10th	10:30am – noon
Women's meeting New Year Tea	Monday	12th	2:30 – 5:00 pm
Women's Meeting	Tuesday	20th	2:30 pm – 4:30 pm
Trinity Church Meeting	Tuesday	20th	8.pm
Vision 2020 prayer	Wednesday	21st	9:30 am – 10:00 am
Churches Together in Wycombe Town Centre meeting at Wesley Methodist	Thursday	22nd	7:30 pm – 9:00 pm
Coffee Morning	Saturday	24th	10:30 am – noon
Women's Meeting	Tuesday	27th	2:30 – 4:30 pm
Chiltern Area gathering "Our plans for your future"	Tuesday	27th	7:30 – 9:30 pm

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**Not included in this version**

## **DATE FOR YOUR DIARY!**

The induction service of our new minister for Trinity and Cores End – the Revd Terry Hinks – will be at Trinity on Saturday 25th April at 3 pm, followed by a shared buffet tea.

The Cores End congregation will be joining us and we hope that representatives from other URCs in the Chiltern Area and the Wycombe and Bourne End Churches Together groups will also be able to join us to welcome Terry. We hope too that members from Terry's churches in Romsey and Braishfield as well as members from Terry & Elizabeth's family will be able to join the celebrations.

We will be seeking offers of food and practical help on the day.

*Vate*

## **Carols By Candlelight**

Could I thank everyone who so kindly supplied food for the above service. You are always so generous. It is much appreciated.

Good wishes for 2015 to all.

*Anne x*



Trinity Bookworms meet on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> January. The venue has not yet been decided.  
We shall be discussing "Touching the Void" by Joe Simpson

## Reports for Church AGM

Those who have the unenviable task of preparing an Annual Report for the AGM should consider starting to think about it NOW. Watch this space next month for final details - but by then there will not be a lot of time left!!



## **Wycombe Homeless Connection Appeal**

Recent nights have turned bitterly cold, so please consider giving a donation (of any size) to help support the work of Wycombe Homeless Connection. Our annual night shelter starts in January (Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> January is Trinity's first night) so now is a great time to help us.

Do look at the WHC website for more information about donation or volunteering opportunities – [www.wyhoc.org.uk](http://www.wyhoc.org.uk). A fast and easy way is to give a text donation. Just text 70070 with the letters WYHC08 (that's WYHC zero eight) and the amount you'd like to give, e.g. WYHC08£5. An acknowledgement comes by return, and every penny goes straight to helping those without a warm, safe home of their own this winter.

Thank you!

### **Churches Together Lent Talks 2014**

Churches Together in Wycombe Town Centre will again be holding joint Lent Talks at All Saints' Parish Church on Wednesday evenings during Lent.

The talks will begin at 7.30 pm with several churches providing speakers for the evenings.

Trinity's speaker for the evening of Wednesday 11th March will be Jeremy Moodey of Embrace the Middle East. Jeremy is known to Trinity having led services for us in the past. He will have been in Israel the previous week so his talk will be very topical. The Lent theme is "The Challenge of the Cross" and speakers will reflect on the challenges of Christian life and the cost of discipleship.

Dates of the talks are:

Wednesday 25th February at 7.30 pm

Wednesday 4th March at 7.30 pm

Wednesday 18th March at 7.30 pm

Wednesday 25th March at 7.30 pm

Trinity has been asked to serve refreshments after the talk so if you would be willing to volunteer please see Kate.

The **World Day of Prayer** takes place on Friday 6th March 2015 and Trinity is hosting the evening prayer session at 7.30pm.

I will need 11 ladies, one gentleman and an organist for the event. I would also appreciate anyone else who has experience of this responsibility to assist me, and I will need a few "props" for the event.

Please get in touch with me if you can help.

The prayer has been prepared by the women of the Bahamas, and promises to be a colourful evening.

It would be nice to offer some refreshments after the service, so help with this would also be appreciated.

Thank you in anticipation,

*Janet R*

**An edited version of the e-mail received from Papua New Guinea  
NEWS UPDATE FROM  
GWEN & BERNIE COLLINS**

at: School of Theology and Mission – Rarongo  
United Church College of Higher Education

29<sup>th</sup> November 2014

**Graduation yesterday!**

Great celebrations! And just time for us to tell you some of what we have been celebrating and plans for next year.

Four women gained the Certificate in Practical Ministry, who were taught Keyboard Skills and Micro-enterprise by Wande Ebofin. Gwen and I gave them more practice in use of English for church responsibilities.

The first 3 graduates of the Master of Theology programme at Rarongo are STM Faculty members who teach Biblical Studies, Theology and Church History. Bachelor of Divinity students were encouraged by the variety and number of responses to their statement on climate change. Thank you.

Four men from Highlands and Hela Regions graduated. David (BD) and Rex (Advanced Diploma in Theology) prepared a pig feast for their supporters. So did Matthew and Lowen (Diploma) who then were given mats, money and other presents by people from their practical placement churches. Rex, who had already worked as a pastor in the Lai Valley, has been invited to continue for a BD, and his wife to do the wives' study programme, while the others will take up ministry in their home regions.

Through my extra responsibility to help the Librarian develop the facilities, we have worked out how to tabulate and sort the catalogue list; catalogued and labelled recently received church history and theology books, downloaded some journals for reading on the computers; investigated possible internet connection for library computers and submitted a proposal for funding; and checked all shelves to ensure books are in the right places. The Librarian can continue to get things ready for next year.

From next weekend till early February we'll be in the UK, for time with family and preparing lessons for 2015. Gwen's main job is to organise the Masters programme: 1 student now and 3 or 4 expected in the new year. In addition to this Gwen will be teaching Research Methods, New Religious Movements, and the Social World of Paul's Mission. The subjects for me are Bible Study Methods, Homiletics, Gospel & Culture, Social Anthropology for Church Workers, and Church, Ministry & Sacraments.

With our Christmas greetings and prayers for God's guidance and blessings for you throughout the coming year,

*Bernie*



Are you ready for Fairtrade Fortnight?

**23 February  
to  
8 March 2015**



## CENTRAL AMERICA – EL SALVADOR

### How do you break down the barriers?

Cecibel Roldan is the coordinator of a women's organisation from Santa Tecla in El Salvador. They work on violence against women, rape and economic growth. This women's group is just one of 1200 organisations who represent the 13 local municipalities in El Salvador. The groups meet nationally as a congress to make decisions on future strategy. Incentive for Social Democracy (ISD), a Christian Aid partner, supports them with whatever training the committee feel is needed to become active citizens. In Cecibel's group they have started small income generating projects, such as jewellery and handicrafts, to raise money for travel to these meetings as many can't afford to go but want to participate. The people of El Salvador are keen to have a voice in their own future and are beginning to understand the need to make their local and national government accountable to the people they serve.

Cecibel is 43, married with a son, 23, and daughter, 16. Much of her work is with the Catholic Church but she finds raising the issues surrounding gender inequality and violence very difficult.

Central America, of which El Salvador is a part, has become the most violent region in Latin America and the Caribbean. 'Femicide' (the intentional killing of women because they are female) is prevalent. Violence towards women is increasing and is often alcohol fuelled. El Salvador is a male dominated society where machismo, or the sense of power or the right to dominate, is held by men. Boys are encouraged to see themselves as better than women so girls grow up being subservient. Women feel voiceless and less educated, with their role in the home as little more than baby-making machines. There is much resistance to women's groups, especially when they want to change things and it can also cause friction in the home. Although change is beginning to happen (mostly in the middle and upper classes) it is far harder in rural society and in some church communities.

Cecibel knows that talking about gender issues means breaking down long held traditions. She has asked the church to reflect on these issues and finds it hard when they object. It makes it difficult for change to happen when many are fearful about such issues.

She is outspoken on the issue, a rarity amongst El Salvadoran women.

"Women are scrutinised in all they do. Our lives are controlled through many pregnancies. If a girl is raped, it is considered her sin. She is not allowed an abortion even if there is danger to her life. The law on femicide is hard to enforce and there are those who want it repealed. So how do you break down these barriers?"

"You need to empower women to take leadership roles. They need to have a vision. Gender is mentioned in schools but only a minimum. I believe change needs to happen there and within the family. "I believe that the violence can be changed."

Cecibel was just one of many who praised the excellent support from ISD to help make change. Using the training she received from ISD, she was able to speak honestly to her own daughter, as well as her group, about the many dangers they could face as women in a machismo society and give them strategies to deal with situations. This preparation came in very useful when someone attempted to rape her daughter. The training on social health, gender and leadership had enabled her to talk to her daughter and provide the right support when it happened. Cecibel had a heartfelt thanks to those that support Commitment for Life which has enabled ISD to give the training they do.

"Thank you, because you supported me through this training. I was able to stop my daughter being raped. You have created a woman's rights defender."

## **ZIMBABWE**

Lord Jesus, We ask that when we are tired and weary and longing for rest, you come and provide for us. When we cannot find your peace in our country and long for your blessing, provide for us. As we join the great circle of prayer with all the saints, we ask you to come into our lives. When there seems to be no hope, Lord Jesus you are our hope and our future. Amen

Rev Garikai Mufanebadza



# Chiltern Area Committee Newsletter - November 2014 (Edited)

*Readers may wonder why there is no reference to Trinity in the report below. This has been edited out on the basis that our own membership will already be aware of the matters reported, and the space can therefore be devoted to other neighbouring churches.*

## Re-visioning Synod: important news

At the November Synod meeting the Moderator talked about his paper proposing restructuring the Synod's committees and for churches to be grouped with ministers working in teams. Your Synod Rep, church secretary and minister should all have more information about the proposals.

PROPOSAL: Synod agrees to take forward the principles and content as outlined in the paper "Re-visioning the Synod's Future" for implementation, taking account of the comments from Synod and Children's Synod, and asks the Synod Moderator to continue further work as may be necessary and report progress to the March 2015 Synod Meeting. DECISION: motion carried.

"Our plans for your future": exploring how we group churches and ministers as per Synod resolution – 7.30-9.30 pm Tuesday 27th January at Trinity High Wycombe

In the light of this Synod resolution, Area Committee would like to invite each church in Chiltern Area to send 3-4 representatives – including church secretaries and ministers/interim moderators – to the above event to explore together what this might mean in practice – what might be the difficulties, opportunities, etc.?

Church Secretaries have also been asked by the Moderator for their churches to respond direct to Synod office by 20th December or soon after to some questions he has asked about the proposals. Please feel free to respond and attend our event!

Please let Kate Yates know who will be attending on 27th January (parking is free of charge) – [trinitykate1@gmail.com](mailto:trinitykate1@gmail.com) or 01494 672799.

## News from the churches

### Chesham

Church life continues to be busy with several new people joining us during the year. We welcomed a new member at Easter by transfer and are delighted that she is an experienced URC Elder and has agreed to take two services since joining us. Services have also been taken by our Elders, our Pilots group, Junior Church, the Choir and our World Mission Group and been very well received. Four Elders have started to train to take communion services.

In July we had a Dedication Service and in September during our Harvest celebration an infant Baptism service. We also welcomed a new baby at the end of August. It has been good to have a full church for several services especially at Easter and at Harvest when we had to use the balcony!

The church joined in the town events for the commemoration of the anniversary of WW1 on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> August. On the Sunday we held an earlier service so that we could join in the rededication of the town bell and the reading of the names of those who died in the war. Our minister was one of the faith representatives who read prayers. In the evening we held a peace vigil in the URC from 7 pm until midnight. The Monday evening we joined in the candlelit procession through the town to the war memorial where a short service was held. After this everyone came into the URC for tea and biscuits – a small team of ladies dressed suitably for WW1 served at least 250 teas!

Unfortunately we are still waiting for some minor defects to be completed from our building work, so have not managed to say farewell to the builders yet. Also having had a quinquennial inspection this summer there will be other work to look at when they have gone, which could prove expensive.

*Bridget P*

### Gerrards Cross

Like so many churches with mostly elderly members the number of regular worshippers has decreased. A side-effect is the shortage of children attending junior church.

The ministry of David Henry is appreciated by our members and others who listen to the recording of the service on our website.

Bible study on every Friday is well attended.

Talks are ongoing with a local Anglican church (St James' on the A40) about future collaboration and ways to take advantage of the location of St Andrew's in the high street.

# URC - Mission Council

## What Is Mission Council?

Mission Council is the executive of the United Reformed Church and attends to our business in between sessions of General Assembly. It meets, residentially, twice a year and is made up of the Moderators and three members of each Synod, Convenors of Assembly Committees and the Assembly Officers (Assembly Moderators, General Secretary, Clerk of Assembly, and Convenor of the Assembly Arrangements Committee). The 70 or so members met in Swanwick between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> November. Sadly, the Revs David Grosch Miller (Moderator) Carla Grosch Miller (chaplain), were unable to attend due to the death of Carla's father.

## Worship

Worship punctuated each day and was led by the chaplain, the Revd Nigel Uden. We opened Mission Council with a service of Holy Communion at which the Revd John Proctor, General Secretary, preached. John preached on the beatitudes, where he called on us to shape our lives by Jesus' teaching. John urged us to be a community of Golgotha that lives life in the light of the Cross, where the love of God is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Evening and morning prayer each day used reflections by Susan Durber on material from the *Book of Common Prayer*.

## Standing Orders

A long, and rather complex, discussion took place on the Standing Orders used at both Mission Council and General Assembly. We made various changes to them; the most significant changes allow the Moderator to move an item from Consensus Decision Making to Majority voting if he deems it is urgent and if he gives his reasons, and tests them, with Assembly/Mission Council.

## Greenbelt Festival

It was noted that the Communications and Missions departments wish to apply for a grant to allow the URC to attend Greenbelt as a festival partner. It is hoped this will offer an opportunity to connect with festival goers who share our passions as the URC.

## Non-Stipendiary Minister Age Limit

A resolution removing the age limit for NSMs failed to achieve consensus or pass with disagreement so the matter has been referred to the Ministries Committee, who will consult with various other bodies, and report back in due course.

## Development of Church House

We broke into small groups to discuss various options with regard to the development of Church House. Various views were expressed – two groups felt it should be moved out of London. It was clear that we need to do more thinking on this and further feedback will be given in due course.

## Joint Property Strategy Group

Bearing in mind Churchill's maxim - "We shape our buildings thereafter they shape us" – we asked the JPSG to consult further regarding a church buildings forum and developing a church building theology. It will report back in 2015.

## Recall of General Assembly

After a briefing from John Proctor on the consultation process on Same Sex Marriage currently underway within the URC, we noted that contingency arrangements were in hand to recall General Assembly for a one-day session on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June in Birmingham. We will decide, in May, whether or not to recall Assembly.

[continued on page 11]

## **Mission Council - [continued from page 10]**

### **Education and Learning**

We recognised the funding priority of training for stipendiary service and increased the education and learning budget for the next three years. The Education and Learning Committee was instructed to research areas where they could make savings.

### **Communications and Editorial**

We were pleased that good progress is being made on the Year Book – and that we made a small profit on this! We agreed to continue funding Reform, up to £90,000 a year for the next three years, noting that it appeals to people across the theological spectrum, is relevant to its core URC audience and that it is, increasingly, a tool local churches can use and a form of our outreach. An ecumenical partner told us that Reform was “the envy of other denominations” as it is “creative, communicative and interesting.” Up to date subscription numbers will be reported to us in 2016.

### **Moderator’s Reflection**

John Ellis offered a fascinating reflection entitled “Archbishop, there’s a baby elephant on my trampoline”. He shared his recent experiences investigating copper mining: Anglo-American mining corporation asked to meet with church representatives involved in ethical investment, including John, asking advice on how to meet the social concerns of the communities where they mine. They visited a large copper mine in Chile and spent time with local people, followed by a large consultation on mining at Lambeth Palace. The key problem was how to make dialogue between the corporations and local people just, when the corporations have so much greater power and size - like a baby elephant trying to join in at a children’s trampoline party, who can only disrupt it. The corporations sensed that they had come to the end of their skill set and were trying to find what the Bible calls wisdom. John suggested some lessons for us: that the doctrine of creation is more complex than we might think, the inevitable destruction caused by mining being part of it; that capitalism can deliver, bringing new prosperity to Chile; that our standard of living depends on others far away, such as miners, taking risks; that the balance of world powers is changing, with Chile now a developed country which recently gave aid to Spain; and that the URC is confronted with the question: are we more concerned in our discussions with preserving the structures of the church than engaging in the work of the kingdom?

### **The Synod of Scotland and Same Sex Marriage**

Much time was spent considering Scots law that authorises marriage celebrants not church buildings (which is the case in England and Wales). This hadn’t been recognised in our discussions at General Assembly and we struggled with balancing the Scottish legal situation with the need to honour our current consultation process. This balancing act was compared, by the Revd Roy Lowes, as being like the tricky process of keeping a caravan from veering off in either direction when it is reversed. As a result of a long and careful debate we noted:

- the Synod of Scotland lives with differences on this issue as a convinced party to the 2007
- Commitment to stay, work and pray together and treat each other with respect as we seek God’s gift of unity, harmony, wisdom and understanding.
- the different legal situation means that Church Meeting decisions in Scotland in relation to marriage are subject to fewer constraints of civil law than in England..
- that church buildings held for the purposes of the URC are subject to trust constraints on their use.
- in Scotland it is for local churches, and their trustees, to decide on the use of their buildings within the applicable trusts. This will enable them to extend ecumenical hospitality to ministers of other religious traditions who are approved celebrants within Scots Law to solemnise same-sex marriages in those buildings.
- Mission Council trusts that local churches in Scotland will make any such decision with sensitivity in the light of the consultation now under way throughout the church.
- Mission Council agrees that if a future Assembly allows for ministers or members of the United Reformed Church to solemnise same-sex marriages under Scots Law, the Synod of Scotland would be the appropriate council of the URC to approach the Registrar General for Scotland.

## POSTHOLDERS LIST FOR MARCH AGM

### **Not included in this version**

This page, and the two following pages of the printed edition are not included in the public web version of the magazine.



# Happy Birthday



We would like to wish

Win G (4<sup>th</sup>)

Se (31<sup>st</sup>)

Barbara R (9<sup>th</sup>)

Xavier (31<sup>st</sup>)

Linda C (12<sup>th</sup>)

a Very Happy Birthday

with love from us all at Trinity

And congratulations to Joan S who becomes a  
nonagenarian on the 16<sup>th</sup> January

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There's a new name for the

## World Development Movement.

WDM has been fighting the root causes of poverty and inequality since 1970. The world has changed a lot in that time, but our mission remains just as urgent. That's why from January 2015 we'll be known as **Global Justice Now**.



This isn't about changing who we are, but about expressing it more effectively in that changed world. About building a bigger movement and stepping up to the challenge of the times.

If we really want to tackle global inequality, the world's resources need to be controlled by the many, not by the few. The needs of people have to come before profit in the global economy.

URC has supported WDM since 1972. Through Commitment for Life you've helped us win numerous campaigns, from stopping UK aid being used to secure arms contracts, to halting one-sided trade deals that harm the poorest. We'll need your support more than ever as we work with global partners to bring about a just democratic and sustainable world.

Find out more at [www.globaljustice.org.uk](http://www.globaljustice.org.uk) - or get in touch with Matthew Bramall by email at [matthew.bramall@globaljustice.org.uk](mailto:matthew.bramall@globaljustice.org.uk) or on 020 78204900.

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Closing date for contributions is Friday 16th January*

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

# prayer page



**Behold I make all things new,**  
*Revelation Chapter 21 verse 5 KJB*

That's a good saying, Lord. I hope it includes me.

Going to smooth my rough edges,  
Polish up my dull surfaces,  
Is that it?

No, I hear you say, make is create not  
fiddle with

Oh, I know

Remould the clay to make a new pot  
Melt the metal to make a new thing of  
beauty,

Well, I like that. Yes, make me new, Lord.

Then I'll be

All sparkly, shiny,

No chips or cracks,

No rough edges,

Fit for your top shelf,

I'll look good there.

Not your top shelf?

Then your middle shelf surely.

I'm not for display!

What are you going to do with  
me, lord,

Hide me, keep me in the dark?

I don't think I heard that right-

You're going to USE me,

But I shall get dull and chipped  
and cracked and have rough  
edges-,

Of course, you say, and then tell  
me

Not to worry, you'll polish me up

And when I feel I'm falling apart

You'll make me new again.

All I have to do is trust you.

That's a big ask, Lord.

I'm not a very trusting person,

But you are a trustworthy God

You won't let me down

So, yes, **use me.**

J  
A  
N  
U  
A  
R  
Y

2015

Heavenly Father, as we enter this New Year, we pray that we may use its precious moments wisely as it is in moments only that we live. Because we are human we often lose those moments in thinking of the big things that we plan and look forward to, so we pray

- that when all our plans work as we wish we remember to thank you
- that when things go wrong we trust you
- that when disasters strike we know the comfort of your everlasting arms
- that when the way ahead is uncertain we remember to grasp your hand held out to us.

We rely on you for guidance and strength, Father, and know that you will never let us down. Thank you for the past, the present and the future. We pray in the name of your son, our brother and Saviour, Jesus. Amen

Lord of the universe and beyond, Alpha and Omega, who looks with love on your earthly creatures who have invented time to help them understand their finite lives, give them hope for this New Year. The earth is struggling with climate change; disease, war and violence tear people apart; poverty stalks even the richest lands. Keep your worshippers and church praying and working, Lord, so that change happens and your kingdom grows here like the mustard seed. In Jesus' name, Amen