

Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

[Matthew 24 v32]



July 2014

The Recorder

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

(Personal details are NOT included)

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

Trinity - a place to belong

Spirituality - Prayer – Community – Welcome

A practising Christian?

If someone asked you to describe your faith, what would your answer be? And what might it mean to the hearer?

It sounds a little old-fashioned for me to say that I am a practising Christian but I do believe that is a good explanation. However, I think I would have to explain to someone what I actually mean by it!

Being a practising Christian means that I do something with my faith. I have to practise it because I'm not very good at it and practise is the only way to improve. For me, to have any real meaning and impact in the world, the expression of Christian faith has to be alive and active, not just a notional "code of conduct" or a general belief in Jesus being the son of God and the source of my salvation (i.e. ultimate spiritual healing and reconciliation with God). From my reading of the Bible it means that I have a responsibility to be part of a faith community, not only for my personal benefit, but for the benefit of the wider community too. Whether we recognise it or not, we are connected to each other in many different ways, and this is important.

The other aspect of being a practising Christian is in aspiring to be more like Jesus. I have to practise – very much!! Every day is a battle with myself in trying to follow Christ but often failing. I console myself that I also follow in the footsteps of Peter, Paul and the other apostles, who all experienced such challenges. It would have been lovely if upon becoming a Christian in my 20s the Holy Spirit had filled me so full that I had no capacity for sin. But that is not God's way. God wants us to choose life, to choose God, and to choose for ourselves whether we respond in one way or the other to any given situation. But God does want to be involved in our decision-making and doesn't expect us to face this alone. We have the Bible and prayer for guidance plus the wisdom and experience of our fellow Christians, for me another reason why I cannot be a "stand-alone Christian".

I recently had a chance conversation with a young man who served me at a till in a local shop. He was clearly in a chatty mood and was bemoaning his lack of long-term success in a relationship. I could easily have just smiled and nodded and walked off, but something made me listen more actively. I replied that what I thought women looked for in a man was character, integrity and a good sense of humour. He said that he had the sense of humour but didn't have integrity. After further conversation I felt prompted to ask if he was religious and was surprised when he said he was a Christian. I suggested he prayed about it and also looked in the Bible to see what it meant to have good character and integrity. Whether or not he decides to do that and find out more about his faith and practise it is his choice, but my hope and prayer is that he will do so and that in finding out more about Jesus and God's ways he will find meaning in life other than in superficial relationships, and also develop the character and integrity that he's not sure he currently possesses. And that in turn could have a bigger impact on the local community as well as his everyday relationships.

God is always looking at the bigger picture, weaving us all into the canvas of life, building the kingdom of heaven. We each have a part to play but, just like musicians, we need to practise the skills God has given us, the faith he has imparted to us, and the gifts he has bestowed on us, so that the church can thrive and grow and the kingdom of God can be built

Kate

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July Services

Sunday Morning Worship at 10:30am unless otherwise stated

- July 6 Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Revd Angela Singleton
(Retired Methodist Minister)
- July 13 Morning Worship led by David Scott (Retired Major in Salvation Army)
- July 20 All Age Worship led by Barbara and David Sparks
- July 27 Morning Worship led by Revd Jack Ramsbottom (Retired Baptist Minister)
- 4.00pm Praise Service

Rotas for July

Not included in this version

What's on in July

WOMEN'S MEETING

July 15th - 2.30pm

Garden Party at Wood View,

Summer break until the next meeting on 9th September



The Nightbirds are resting for the summer - but expect to see everyone at their Cream Tea event. See page 6 for details.

Diary Dates

July

Vision 2020 prayer meeting	Wednesday	2nd	9.30-10 am	Sanctuary
Elders' meeting	Wednesday	2nd	8.00pm	Lower School Rm
Coffee morning	Saturday	12th	10:30am	Lower School Rm
Nightbirds Cream Tea at Marian Mole's – open to all £5 per ticket	Saturday	12th	2:30pm	
Prayer ministry	Sunday	13th	12 noon	Vestry
Church Meeting	Tuesday	15th	8:00pm	Lower School Rm
Vision 2020 prayer meeting	Wednesday	16th	9.30-10 am	Sanctuary
Coffee morning	Saturday	26th	10::30am	Lower School Rm

August

Churches Together in Wycombe Civic service to mark 100 years since World War 1	Sunday	3rd	tbc	All Saints Church
Churches Together in Wycombe service to mark 100 years since World War 1	Monday	4th	tbc	War Memorial

July 2014						
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

Trinity Bookworms

At our next meeting we shall be discussing *To the Lighthouse*, by Virginia Woolf. Date and time to be decided in due course.



TRINITY NIGHTBIRDS

invite you all to a

CREAM TEA

on

Saturday 12th July

2.30pm to 4.30pm

Tickets £5 available from Nightbirds

All profits will go towards the Quinquennial Fund

Churches Together – news

AGM - The next meeting of Churches Together will be on Thursday 4th September at 7.30 pm Wesley Methodist Church, and will also be the AGM.

Celebrate Wycombe – Autumn 2015

There are plans to hold a Celebration in the autumn of 2015. To that end a Little Planning Group (LPG2) is being set up with representatives from the churches to plan, co-ordinate, publicise *Celebrate Wycombe* autumn 2015. There is no detail at present, but it is anticipated this would be a high profile event, including involving all aspects of the High Wycombe town community to celebrate the town.

If anyone from Trinity is passionate about the *Celebrate Wycombe* event in 2015 and would be willing to be on the planning group and to help this event happen, please let me know.

Lent course 2015

Plans are in hand to hold another course over Lent 2015, and the current Little Planning Group 1 (LPG1) will continue to put plans together for this and for Good Friday 2015 as well.

The Church Together in High Wycombe

LPG1 will also continue to work on bringing together the two groups of Churches Together in the Town Centre and Wycombe Churches Together with a suggested name being "The Church Together in High Wycombe". Watch this space!

Angel Trail

There will be an Angel Trail in the shops this Christmas following the success of the Sheep Trail. Details for the creation of angels will appear at the AGM.

Kate Yates



Coffee makers reminder:- Can I just remind everyone to bring 1 litre of milk and 2 packs of biscuits. Also, if I am not around to give the collection to, please leave in marked box in the safe. Thank you.

Anne x

SUMMARY OF CHURCH MEETING HELD 20TH MAY 2014 (edited)

The meeting was well-attended and we were well over our required quorum to vote on the Constitution changes.

- **Revised Budget for 2014** was presented and accepted.
- **Non-active members and resignation of members** – church meeting voted to accept the proposal that the following be formally moved to the non-active membership roll. All have had a letter asking them to prayerfully reflect on their membership, along with a copy of our church membership leaflet which sets out what we promise as church members:

Not included in this version

- **Membership** – Our membership roll now has 49 active and 14 non-active members.
- **Constitution** – the proposed changes which included one necessary change in order to call a minister to our joint pastorate were agreed.
- **Revision to our Child Protection Policy** – some changes were agreed.
- **Feedback on recent worship leaders** – members are invited to give feedback (through their Elder, or to Kay E or at church meeting).
- **Prayers for Peace – Remembrance Day, Tuesday 11th November 2014** – there will be an afternoon communion service at 2.30 pm and we hope to have the church open for people to come in and pray until 6 pm.
- **“Talkback 2” representative to talk about their work at next church meeting** – Alex Britton will come to tell us about her involvement with one of our community partnership groups.
- **Has Trinity Got Talent? – you bet!** - this went very well and was a good social event raising £355 for the quinquennial (essential repairs) fund. Margaret L was thanked for her work on this, and Valerie L for organising the food.
- **Ride & Stride, Saturday 13th September** – we will welcome and register participants for this national sponsored cycle ride and walk from 10 am to 6 pm. Rota to be available.
- **Nightbirds Cream Tea** – Saturday July 12 to raise funds for external repairs, to be held at Marian Mole’s house. Tickets from Marian M or Barbara M.
- **Church-Related Community Worker (CRCW) funding update** – we have had two rejections for applications but the Beatrice Laing Trust would make a £2,500 one-off donation when we have other funding in place and can make an appointment.
- **Crown House School** – they will leave Crendon Hall on 13th November. Arrangements are in hand. We will look at possibilities for the future of Crendon Hall and our loss of income.
- **Offer from Shanly Homes for part of manse garden** –discussed and agreed that the Elders will explore negotiations. Discussions on use of the income if it goes ahead will go to church meeting.

Date of next Church Meeting Tuesday 15 July 2014



ZIMBABWE:

Making every drop count

When water is scarce you have to make every drop count. That simple principle lies at the heart of conservation farming, a set of agricultural techniques designed especially to grow food in near-drought conditions.

Grandparents Pauline and Kenneth Ndlovu, from Gekwa village in Zimbabwe, have been reaping the benefits of conservation farming for five years now. It's proved so successful for them that last year, Christian Aid partner Dabane Trust chose to host their field school on Pauline and Kenneth's land, using it to showcase the techniques to other trainee farmers. But the couple still remember when they first began to make the changes themselves, which took a big leap of faith.

Imagine, when you have been farming one way all your life, daring to risk a dramatically different approach. You are gambling with your family's food, and the stakes are very high.

Like many newcomers to conservation farming, when Pauline and Kenneth first started out, they didn't dare risk their whole harvest. So they divided their field into two evenly sized plots. On one, they continued to use an ox-drawn plough, just as they had done for decades. On the other, they put the new techniques into practice.

The results spoke for themselves: the conservation farming plot produced five times as much maize and 25 times as many groundnuts as their traditional farming plot. Since then, they haven't looked back.

Pauline and Kenneth's family is just one of thousands whose lives have been transformed by conservation farming. Alongside local partners, Christian Aid Zimbabwe has been championing this technique for years. We have developed a conservation farming manual with the Food and Agriculture Organisation, and this manual is now in use in every agricultural college in Zimbabwe. Thanks to conservation farming, Pauline and Kenneth can provide for their four grandchildren.

A prayer from Zimbabwe (slightly adapted)

Lord God,

You are a God not of the dead but of the living.

We give thanks that you send your only Son to give us life.

In the midst of wealth we are crushed by poverty, and while we are offered Christ-life in all its fullness, we are surrounded by disease, death and destruction.

We are tempted to despair, and yet keep hoping, knowing that you care.

At times we weep silent tears, and cry out with deep emotion. We come to you, our only hope and refuge.

Thank you for the gift of laughter, even when the going is tough.

With you, O Lord, we may be troubled but not destroyed.

There is concern over the health of President Mugabe and the number of trips abroad he is making. There has been rumour that the government could pass a law to stop discussion on both the succession issue and Mugabe's health. This has been viewed in many quarters as an indication there is concern in the ruling party that their leader's health is failing.

This concern is growing at a time when the economy in the country is collapsing. His protracted absence is exacerbating the country's problems as, whilst he is away, key policy issues are not discussed.

In Western countries the health of the leader is on official record. If the leader dies or is incapacitated there are rules and systems in place to assure the smooth running of the country. Most African countries, including Zimbabwe, lack that.

Can we grow? Is it important?

In looking at our current congregation (membership and adherents) who are actively involved in the life of the church in some way, it made me realise afresh our age demographics.

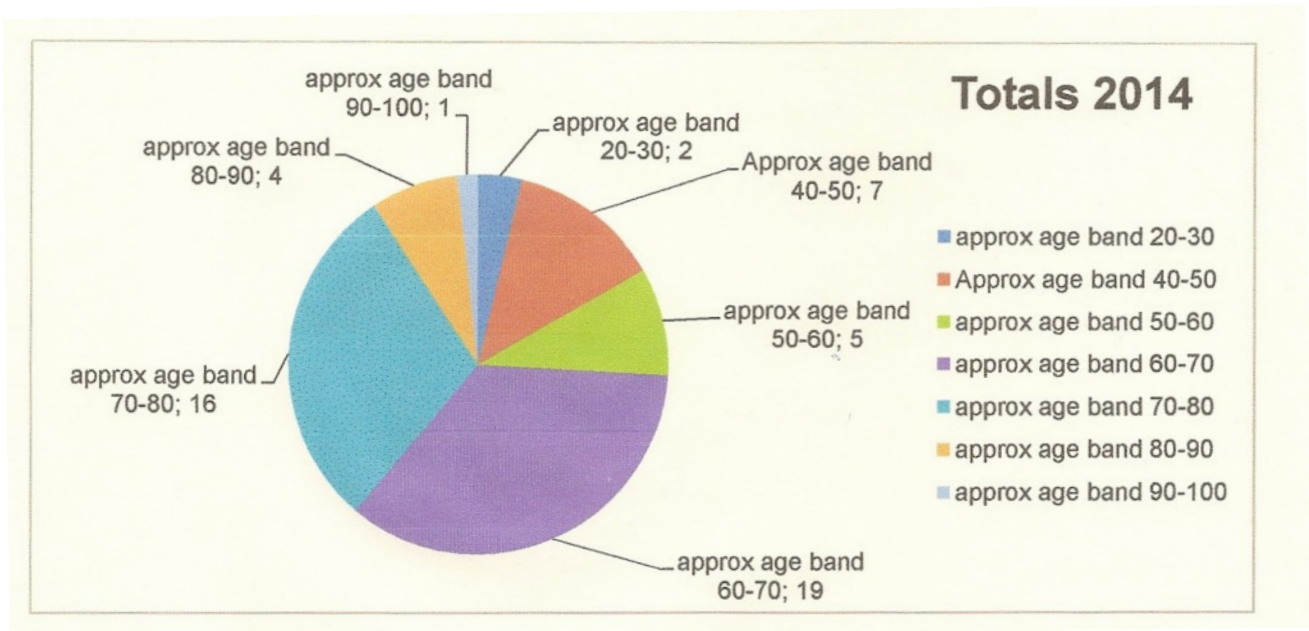
It's a bit scary to see that in 2014 our regular congregation is made up of the following age bands (roughly), and what this might mean for us in 10 years' time if we don't grow in numbers and also across the age ranges. We have 14 people actively involved in the church within the 20-60 age range, and 29 in the 60-90 age range.

Our main goal should be mission – making Christ known – but there are also practical considerations in having enough people to do the jobs needed for the church congregation and building to function effectively. By the time the July Recorder is published the Synod's "Growth Day" will have taken place, giving all churches the opportunity to explore growing our spiritual life, growing the kingdom and growing our churches – aims we all share.

We have blessed in having some new folk join us – not all as members yet, and this gives us hope for our future.

Underpinning prayer

In 2014 as our Synod focuses on growth, let us join together in prayer that we too may experience growth – in our own spirituality and in our congregation. Those of us who meet regularly for the Vision2020 prayer time on a Wednesday morning from 9.30-10.00 to pray around our three Vision2020 priorities (spirituality & prayer; hospitality & diversity; community partnerships) would welcome others to join us. The dates for these prayer times are included in the Sunday notices and are on our website.



Kate Yates, Church Secretary

CHILTERN AREA COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER – May 2014 *[Edited]*

News from the churches

Beaconsfield

The new joint pastorate has led to discussions with Nigel about reducing his workload to be able to cover Burnham. One member has volunteered to take over Bible studies at the old people's home. The Elders are also looking at reducing Nigel's obligations for leading meetings. More needs to be done as Nigel has taken on a lot of new things.

The activity of the church has been focused on reaching out into the community:

- Concerts preceded by a light buffet lunch have been well supported.
- Men's breakfast attendance is good, held monthly.
- Messy Church takes place monthly in Beaconsfield as well as in Holtspur, both run by Nigel. Numbers attending the Beaconsfield sessions have picked up dramatically.
- Church conducts a monthly service at the local Abbeyfield home.
- Plans for another Lighthouse Christian holiday club week in the summer, working with the other Beaconsfield churches. It was very successful last year, followed by a packed-out service of young families. The intention is to repeat that this summer. Nigel is chairman of Churches Together in Beaconsfield.

John Hoar

Aylesbury St Mark's

The URC congregation that was meeting at Aylesbury St Mark's is no longer doing so. The process for formally closing the church is being followed and a proposal to do so will be tabled at September's Synod meeting.

Chiltern Area deployment of ministers

1. On Saturday 19th April, the Revd Nigel Douglas was inducted as minister of Burnham URC in addition to Beaconsfield and Holtspur.
2. Trinity Slough, Kingsway and Iver are in discussions about becoming a joint pastorate.
3. Wendover Free Church is now in vacancy, and the Revd Peter Wortley (Baptist) is their Interim Moderator

“Committed to making a difference: church growth”

Last year's Synod meeting endorsed the paper on church growth and agreed to:

1. urge the churches and Synod Committees/Groups to pray and to engage in church growth by making it a core priority in their decisions and actions
2. consolidate its work around church growth investing its resources of people, staff, money and structures; this to be reviewed in three years
3. commit the Mission Fund in 2014 for church growth
4. ask the Mission Initiative Group to work with the churches and Committees to implement 1, 2 and 3.

Area Committees can help signpost to churches to appropriate help. The Moderator would like to remind churches that the Synod's Mission Project Fund (total of £300,000 a year for 2013, 2014 and 2015) is available for churches to apply for grants for mission projects. Church secretaries should have documentation, or do ask Area Secretary. There are also smaller grants available from £1,000-£3,000 via MIG (Mission Initiatives Group).

And lastly, churches are encouraged to pray for church growth. Be realistic - church growth is an ethos not a set programme. The Synod's Mission Enabler can provide help and support.



Happy Birthday



to

Jan L (14th)

Sue T (24th)

§

Olivia P who will be celebrating her
100th birthday on 24th July

Congratulations



and best wishes to

Julia § Tim S (21st)

Anne § Richard H (25th)

on celebrating their Wedding Anniversary

with love from us all at Trinity

200 not out. No - not an unexpected cricket score, but simply another milestone. This edition of the Recorder is the 200th that I have produced - with the help of my background team. To all those who, over the years, have helped in the production in any way, from contributions to printing and distribution, I extend my grateful thanks.

Angus

*The next edition of the Recorder will be published on 27th July.
Closing date for contributions is Friday 18th July*

Recorder Editor : e-mail : editor@trinity-urc.org.uk

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prayer page

The heavens declare the glory of God. *[Psalm 19 verse 1 KJB]*

This is a wonderful Psalm and the following prayers/meditations are based on it.

Verses 1-5

Look up at the skies!

The arching blue sky and the golden sun tell of God's glory.

The fluffy white clouds show his care in stopping that glory from blinding human eyes.

When the dome of the sky is grey it is God's blanket over everyday work and anxieties.

The thunderclouds proclaim God's power and strength. He is a mighty God.

The moon and the stars at night are God's light shining in our darkest times.

The sky covers the whole earth. God's glory, care, might and light are there for all people.

Thanks be to God.

J

U

L

Y

2014

Verses 7-11

Thank you, Lord, that your law is perfect, not like human law shot through with imperfections however hard the lawmakers try.

Thank you, Lord, that your judgements are true and just, that you see clearly and wisely without any of the legal quibbles and loopholes which can frustrate human justice. You are without the prejudice and limited knowledge and understanding which can overshadow the desire to be fair and impartial.

Thank you, Lord, for your clear commandments.

Thank you, Lord, that wisdom comes from awe and reverence for your almighty greatness and not from cringing fear.

Thank you, Lord, for these gifts to treasure and reflect upon.

Verses 12-13

It is easy to say, "I have full self-knowledge; I know my strengths and weaknesses," but only God knows what is hidden deep in the human heart and only he can wipe out hidden sins. Only he can save from false pride and insincere humility and bring his servant back to true service.



Verse 14

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O lord, my strength, and my redeemer.