

TRINITY NEWS & VIEWS



*"All my hope on God is founded, who does still my
trust renew; through all change and chance God
guides me, only good and only true."*

Spring-Easter 2022 Issue 57

A Message from Rev Sam Funnell

Dear Friends,

As I write this Easter message we find ourselves in the midst of yet another crisis – that of the invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces. At the same time we are still dealing with the global impact of Covid-19, the ongoing challenges of Climate Change and the increased frequency of natural disasters that people on this earth face, along with other conflicts, warfare and natural disasters that affect countless numbers of people – often the most vulnerable and least able to cope.

One might be tempted to ask, as I'm sure many of us have – where is God in this? What does my faith have to say to all of this? How can these poor people cope with the complete devastation of their homes, communities, livelihoods? What on earth can I do?

By the time you read this message – things may have changed considerably – for good (I fervently pray!) or for ill but one thing is for certain – people will still be struggling, as we struggle to understand how we can be in situations like these; how people can be so cruel, so sure of themselves that their desire for power, authority, land, control, access to vaccinations at any cost, profit for business regardless of the impact on the natural world – overrides other peoples' right to safety, security, a decent job with a fair wage, enough food, clean water, a roof over their heads and sufficient agency over their own lives.

It can leave us feeling extremely anxious; uncertain of what to do – wondering what/who can ever make this all right.

There are no easy answers and it would be wrong of me to suggest that there are....BUT...

In all of this chaos, pain, disaster and hatred – I believe we still need to strive to be people of hope. Our God does not desire peoples' suffering, or seek to cause these horrendous things to come about but hurts, when people hurt; weeps with people that weep; stands aghast as homes are bombed or swept away in floods – our God is a God that does not turn away but stands and faces these awful things with us, and with those that suffer so much more than we do.

This is our Christ – the Jesus that showed us just how deeply we are and have always been loved – that travels from the mountain tops, to the depths of human despair and seeks to carry us through to the quiet garden of an Easter morning, an empty tomb and the promise of new life beyond.

It doesn't mean that life will always be easy – we know that's not true and Jesus never said it would be – but it does mean we are NEVER alone. And neither are those that face immense challenges, today, tomorrow and in the days to come – GOD IS THERE! Sometimes that might be in the face of a kind person who shares your concerns and listens to your troubles, or in the organisations that work to support refugees, migrants and other displaced persons, NGO's and other environmental groups that keep the issue of Climate Change in the public domain, or the soldier that helps an elderly person walk across a wooden plank to safety, the crowds on a station platform holding a pushchair aloft to help a family escape.

We are not alone; God is with us, and all those that need love.

Easter says that love will dare to walk the hardest path and ultimately, death and darkness and evil will not win – *'In the Word was life, and that life was humanity's light – a Light that shines in the darkness, a Light that the darkness has never overtaken.'* (John 1:4-5, *The Inclusive Bible*).

Yours in hope, in prayer, in light and in love,

Sam x

A Prayer for Ukraine

Holy and Gracious God,
We pray for the people of Ukraine and the people of
Russia;

for their countries and their leaders.

We pray for all those who are afraid;
that your everlasting arms hold them in this
time of great fear.

We pray for all those who have the power over life
and death;

that they will choose for all people life, and
life in all its fullness.

We pray for those who choose war;
that they will remember that you direct your
people to turn our swords into ploughshares
and seek for peace.

We pray for leaders on the world stage;
that they are inspired by the wisdom and
courage of Christ.

Above all, Lord, today we pray for peace for Ukraine.
And we ask this in the name of your blessed Son.
Lord have mercy. Amen

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Dates for your diary

Sunday 3 rd April	Annual Church Meeting after Morning Service
Saturday 9 th April	Artaban film @ 6pm (fund-raising for The Gambia)
Maundy Thursday 14 th April	Tenebrae Service @ 8pm
Good Friday 15 th April	Service at 10am before the Act of Witness in the Town Square
Sunday 17 th April	Easter Day – 10.30am service with Holy Communion
15 – 21 May	Christian Aid Week
Saturday 14 th May	Plant and craft sale in aid of Christian Aid (see page 11)
Sunday 12 th June	Methodist Homes Sunday (see page 29)
Saturday 19 th June	St Mary's, Guildford - Circuit Farewell for Rev Keith Beckingham
Sunday 4 th September	Welcome service for our new Superintendent, Rev Dr Paul Glass

From the Editors

With the regular flow of news and information we get via the weekly newsheets it seems timely to review the role of TNV. We have already switched to a quarterly publication and would welcome views as to whether you would like to see TNV continue, whether on this or any alternative basis. Either email [**tnv@trinitywoking.org**](mailto:tnv@trinitywoking.org) or speak to one of us.

Margaret Chisholm and Margaret Davies

In January Trinity lost two of its longest-serving Members – Margaret Chisholm and Margaret Davies. The tributes to them both which follow are abridged from eulogies given at the respective Thanksgiving Services.



Born in 1931 Margaret Chisholm was evacuated to the Isle of Bute at the age of nine, when Glasgow started to be targeted for bombing. Her Mother had died when she was eight and she and her sister Nancy were sent to live with the rather forbidding Aunt Annie, who had no experience of bringing up

children, and their father came to visit them once a week, taking the train and the ferry from Glasgow on Saturdays. They returned home after two years.

She grew up with a powerful resilience and independence, which meant that by the age of 28 she was a headteacher in Nigeria. Margaret and Jim married in 1961 and settled in Freetown, Sierra Leone where Jim had been based. Malcolm was born in 1966 and the family returned to UK in 1970, settling first in Essex where Margaret obtained a teaching post at the same school where Malcolm became a pupil. Moving to Woking, she

taught first at Lindvale School and then at Flexlands in Chobham.

Margaret had considerable sporting prowess. She was a talented table tennis and golf player and in her youth a county hockey and tennis player. She had a wide range of skills and abilities; among other things she was a very good and very skilled knitter. In retirement she taught disabled adults for many years and, at Trinity, taught English to one lady from overseas who presumably acquired a Scottish accent with which to speak the language! For over 40 years the family had a house in Ayrshire, regularly holidaying there. In latter years infirmity prevented trips back but Margaret never lost her love for Scotland where her heart truly lay.

At the well-attended Thanksgiving Service at Trinity on 22nd February Malcolm spoke movingly of Margaret's life, her devotion to Jim and the rest of the family, and her faith. She read her Bible every day right up to the end. A member of Trinity for 47 years, she was a loyal and faithful servant of the church and her God.



Margaret Davies was in her 94th year when she died. She was born in Waltham near Grimsby. When she was 6 the family moved 60 miles south to Holbeach. She was 11 when war broke out but with a father slightly too old and a brother too young she was saved some of the heartbreak that impacted many others. Her memories were of a huge amount of freedom. At Spalding High School she loved history, biology,

art and music and these interests would follow her throughout her life.

She completed teacher training at Southlands College and her first teaching post was at a tiny village school in Northamptonshire from where she moved to a larger school in Peterborough before relocating to Woking with a post at Knaphill. It was on the bus to work there that she met her future husband, Ogwen – a widower with two sons - and they married in October 1958. Their own children were born in 1959 (Gareth) and 1962 (Gwenda). Once Gwenda started school Margaret took up full-time teaching again, finally retiring as head teacher of Holly Lodge Primary School in Ash Vale in 1988.

After Ogwen's death in 1992 Margaret was able to give more time to her interests – music (including Epworth Choir), recorder playing, city and guilds courses, painting, travel, crosswords and needlework and gardening.

Margaret was passionate about her family, devoting time and energy to the children and grandchildren and teaching them to be self-reliant, sharing her own creativity with them whenever possible. She was passionate too about her faith and was devoted to Methodism and Trinity. Though she came from a generation who regarded faith as personal, it was still something she talked about and it deepened throughout her life, expressed most readily through music and her steadfastness of character.



Angels' Song

At our morning service on 6 March we were able to listen to a particularly powerful song written by Glen "ANGEL'S SONG". Glen explained that he had been moved to write the song in 2020 at the time of the prodemocracy protests in Myanmar (Burma), the land of his birth. But the song has particular poignancy now in light of the terrifying and tragic situation in Ukraine.

'Angel' was the nickname of 19-year-old Kyal Sin, called Angel because of her kind heart. She was shot dead on 3rd March 2020 attending a peaceful protest in Myanmar. One particular line in the song stands out as we watch with horror and desperate sadness the wilful killing of innocent men, women and children caught up in the evil of war in Ukraine. The line reads "*the Devil has prompted (and) you've taken his bait*".

With Glen's permission the lyrics are printed in full below.

He sees you line up with your helmets and shields
Guns pointed at children as a gentle Sister kneels
To face you so gently with tears down her face
Yet you fire without heeding in spite of such grace

Your planes scream above them, in show of your power
Just shows your weakness as you make the people cower
He sees every hurting each sparrow that fell
And watches you closely turn heaven to hell

An Angel before you a youngster of love
You see a protester not the eyes of a dove
You fire in your anger you shoot in your hate
The devil has prompted, you've taken his bait

*When you kill an Angel – ah you've killed an Angel
Sweet child of His - sweet child of grace
Sweet child of hopefulness that no one can replace
So do you feel the poison burn deep in your soul
When you've killed an Angel
Ah you've killed an Angel*

You use tears as weapons, tears intended to heal
On peaceful protesters even those who will kneel
Humbly begging before you to show some restraint
Yet you spray your toxin in the eyes of the saints

An Angel before you a youngster of love
You see a protester not the eyes of a dove
You fire in your anger you shoot in your hate
The devil has prompted, you've taken his bait

*When you kill an Angel – ah you've killed an Angel
Sweet child of His - sweet child of grace
Sweet child of hopefulness that no one can replace
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*When you've killed an Angel
Ah you've killed an Angel.*

CCLI Song No: 7181052
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Devoted to Daffodils



March each year when the Spring blooms appear in gardens and occasionally over acres of countryside is the time when gardeners, flower arrangers and ordinary folk think of daffodils. Wordsworth, living in Cumberland where Winters can be harsh, welcomed them with enthusiasm –

*"Ten thousand saw I at a glance
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance."*

So I was fascinated to read in the March edition of "The Garden" an article detailing the career of George H Engleheart, Rector of Appleshaw in Hampshire. He stayed there over the last twenty years of the 19th century (1880-1900), exactly the years of a revival of interest in narcissus/daffodil growing. And it was in these years that Rev Engleheart came to the attention of the Royal

Horticultural Society. Two of his hybrids "Albatross" and "Seagull" were highly commended for Awards - 1st Class from the R.H.S.

It is difficult to imagine any 21st century clergy finding time to spend on what would now be termed 'extra-curricular' activity. By 1900 Engleheart, the talented gardener, hybridiser and no doubt popular parish priest, retired to Wiltshire. He had much more land there so continued to grow and produce new hybrids, providing enjoyment and many new Spring narcissus – both for those who want to plant and those "just looking."

Margot Craig

Plant and Craft Sale

Our annual plant and craft sale in aid of Christian Aid will be held on **Saturday 14th May**. After having to cancel the event in 2020 because of lockdown, last year the sale returned, bigger and better than ever! As well as the usual display of home-grown plants we were able to add craft, bric-a-brac and cakes and raised over £750.00. This year we are hoping to do even better so please – gardeners get sowing, knitters get knitting, hoarders prepare to let go and cooks get out the recipe books (you get the idea!).



Praying together

Ann Dawson has adapted a series of prayers for the Easter season from *Everyday Prayers* (Allen Birtwhistle, Bernard Thorogood and Michael Walker, IBRA 1990)



Palm Sunday

We praise you Lord.
Jesus is praised as he enters Jerusalem by the crowds. Help us to join in with the praise.

On the first Palm Sunday the crowds laid down palm branches and sang songs.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Jesus, you came in peace humbly on a donkey. You came in peace armed with love for all mankind.

Help us as we find words of praise maybe from a hymn and join in the praise.

Let us be at work with you; work to bring peace where there is war, healing in places of division and compassion where there is hatred.

Help us loving Lord to work for the good of everyone.

Amen

Monday before Easter

Lord, you worked to make the temple in your day a house of prayer. Help us to join in this to make our church a house of prayer. Help us not to put business before prayer. We need your help to drive out things unworthy of God's calling. Cleanse us from status seeking, from

activity that is neglectful of worship and prayer. May our church be a house of prayer open and welcoming for all.
Amen

Tuesday before Easter

Lord, may our homes be open to you as the home of Martha and Mary and Lazarus was open in Bethany. May every guest be welcomed as an honoured guest – may every guest be received as if they were an angel, a messenger from God. May we live together in the harmony of those who are privileged to serve you like Martha and also to take time like Mary to sit at your feet and listen, listen to every word. May we be a refuge to one another in times of distress and an encouragement in times of adversity.

Amen

Wednesday before Easter

Help us to be loyal to the truth in which we believe.

Lord, in that last week of your life here on earth you said many brave things. You seemed unconcerned for your own safety. In dispute you held on to the truth, you did not silence the truth in the face of those who threatened you.

May no fear of scorn, indifference or hostility keep us from saying what sometimes has to be said.

May the uncertainty of what others might say or do not determine what we in turn may say or do.

You called us to carry the cross, Lord; help us to carry our cross, help us when it is heavy.

Amen

Maundy Thursday

We thank you for giving us Maundy Thursday. Help us remember the different ways we have celebrated this day.

It is a day to remember you Lord. It is a day to share your love.

You invite us to gather at your table to break bread and drink wine; to taste the bread and the wine, and remember Jesus.



And in the breaking of the bread and the drinking of the wine we as Christians remember your body was broken for us on the cross and recall that our sins are forgiven and our hurts are healed through the offering of your life for us.

May we come to Communion expectantly, gratefully and full of adoration and love.

Give us faith that we may discern your presence in broken bread and in drinking the wine and in being among the gathered body of your people.

Let each Communion bring us close to you loving Lord.

Grant that we that have known you in the simplicity of the broken bread and the wine may see you and discern you in every part of life.

Amen

Good Friday

What a difficult day Good Friday can be as we remember Jesus on the cross.

Words can be hard to find on Good Friday.

What words can measure the height, depth and breadth of the love of Jesus?

What words can begin to contemplate the forgiveness that welled up:

Father forgive them.

Before your agony what can we say? What prayer can we offer?

Accept our prayers Lord - For all who suffer today,
For all who are in pain,
For all who hurt,
For all who find it hard to forgive,
For all who are unjustly condemned,
For all who feel unloved and
forsaken,
For all who are dying,
For all who are with the dying.
By the cross, Lord, you are
present in the darkness, you bring
light in the dark.
May the dark be penetrated by
the light of your loving presence.
Bring those for whom we pray
through the darkness to your
everlasting day.



Amen

Holy Saturday

This is the day after Good Friday and before Easter.
This is the day we wait.
Yesterday on Good Friday we sat and we died with you,
we saw the dark.
Today we wait.
Tomorrow we shall rise with you.
Today we wait.
Be with us Lord as we wait. We have not yet found the
peace and assurance and faith of Easter Day.
Keep us strong in hope and trust as we wait and think
about what is lost - we have lost our Lord.
Today we wait.
Do not forsake us, Lord.
Now is the time in between.
Today we wait.
Amen

Easter Day

This is the third day

The day all creation has been waiting for.

Christ is risen. Alleluia!

He is risen indeed. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Christ is risen!

We pray that the Easter good news that Christ is risen may reach the ears of all people in every part of the world. May all see good all over the world and good triumph over evil.

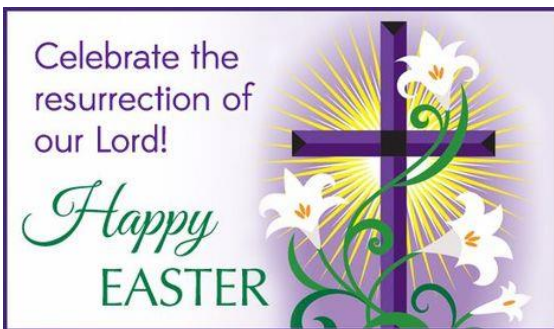
Light overcomes dark. Love is stronger than hatred.

Forgive us Father for all that denies the resurrection: our moods of despair, our worry over disease and death.

Forgive us our timid nature when we lock faith behind doors of fear or tradition, refusing to face the world as it is and the challenge it brings.

Bless all churches on Easter Day.

Bless our church this Easter.



May people grow in faith as they listen and recount the story of the resurrection of Christ. Out of singing the Easter hymns, reading the pages of the Bible and hearing the

Easter story may there be new confidence in the joy of the resurrection.

Christ is risen. Alleluia!

He is risen indeed. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Amen

Ann Dawson

Intergenerational Music Making

Following our successful six week trial in July 2021 with the children from Horsell Junior School, residents of Horsell Lodge and some of our 'Coffee & Chat' members, and the very successful Gala Concert in November much has been happening behind the scenes.

IMM have now moved into the new Curtis Suite, within Trinity, as their main office. Plans are being made to start an eight week series of Intergenerational Music Making for May this year. It will incorporate a variety of participants from local Schools, Care Homes and 'Coffee & Chat' members, along with other groups and individuals interested in participating in this new and exciting way of music making.



Training for Leaders and Volunteers is planned for April, with the sessions starting in May, with further sessions starting in July and January 2023. Full details will be available within the next few weeks. We are very much looking forward to getting started.

Graham Warr - Woking Trinity
Grace Watkins – IMM (Intergenerational Music Making)

Chinese New Year

We celebrate the growing Chinese congregation at Trinity, swelled over the past year by Methodists from Hong Kong. More and more they are becoming an integral part of the Trinity community and are contributing in many ways to the life of the church.

Chinese New Year was celebrated on 15th February and on the next page Simon Che explains about the year of the Tiger.



Year of the Tiger arrived on 1 February this year.



According to Chinese tradition, most people born under the sign of Tiger are believed to be strong, brave, and independent. In the wild, tigers are not afraid of entering swamps or climbing rocks to follow their prey, so Tiger individuals are fearless and relentless. On the other hand, Tigers might be prone to boasting about their achievements, which irritates others around them. Also, they are not very flexible and tolerant in their views, which may create problems at work or at home. Do you know of any tiger person?

China has a good range of tiger, with different sizes, in different localities. The animal has its position in Chinese classics and legends, a symbol for a good variety of meanings. Once Confucius enquired of a woman mourning at a tomb near a forest. The poor woman replied that her uncle, husband, and her only son had been devoured at different times, by a tiger nearby. Yet she insisted to live on with the tiger than move to a nearby village and suffer under the maladministration of the government. Between the devil and the deep blue sea, she made her choice to escape from tyranny. Nowadays, many people are in a similar situation and have to leave their homeland. 'Exodus' has become a universal concern.

Tiger is also a well-accepted symbol for bravery and leadership, adopted by many military figures in decorations for uniform, costume, equipment and weapons, hopefully to enhance courage and spirit. On the other hand, expressions like 'paper tiger', 'tiger-head, snake-tail' are self-explanatory, quite common in many languages. It is also considered extreme courage to play with the whiskers of the animal, not to say plucking its teeth. So much so, without the presence of tiger, many stories and legends would have lost much colour. Of course, the most tragic scene is to see the king of the forest being kept inside a cage in a zoo.



As for the Chinese congregation, Year of the Tiger is another quiet one following the Year of Ox, no firecrackers, no lion dance, no celebrations at London China Town. Yet we still celebrate in our own ways, tidying and renovating household stuff, exchanging greetings on Zoom, email, text messages, enjoying family dinner, and the like. At church, children had fun in their creativity to design posters of blessings. Hand-written ones were distributed to the congregation. We held our worship on 6th February, the sixth day of New Year, with thanksgiving. Posters in red, with words of blessing, were put up on the occasion for festivity. Striking couplets were placed at the entrance to remind us of our gathering to

worship at Trinity Woking as a family, and to put on a new self in the image of God in the coming year.

We look forward to next year, Year of Rabbit, to celebrate together with Trinity friends, sharing Chinese dishes, western delicacies and many more. May the good Lord bless our church family with faith, wisdom and courage in the Year of Tiger and beyond.

Simon Che



"You don't have to become something you're not to be better than you were"

(Sidney Poitier, who died in January 2022)

Who said: "There are decades where nothing happens, and weeks where decades happen."

(Answer on page 30)

Circuit Mission Supper



What a pleasure it was to join with friends from other churches at the 2022 Circuit Mission Supper – held at Trinity on Saturday 5th March. The Sanctuary was again transformed into a lovely entertaining space, and it was good to sit down to a lovely meal and see each other face to face after such a long time. Our guest speaker for the evening needed little introduction. Rev. Conrad Hicks is the former Assistant Chair of the District and is now Director of Global Relationships in the Methodist Church of Great Britain. The team works to keep the Methodist Church in Britain connected with its global partners and share in God's mission throughout the world. The theme of Conrad's talk was 'What is the place of global mission in the 21st century?'

The Methodist Church has 107 Mission partners who are initially trained in this country at Cliff College and invited to serve for periods of at least one year by partner churches in the Caribbean, South & Central America, Africa, The Pacific, Asia and Europe. There are many opportunities to get involved in ministry around the world,

as long-term Mission Partners or in various voluntary roles. People may also serve in their own country, and some come to Britain from overseas to support the work of the church here.

Overseas mission has needed to adapt and change over the years. There is a need to avoid mistakes of the past when mission had a more 'colonial' approach, tending to export our own cultural beliefs and practices rather than working with and alongside the people the church sought to serve. Short-term programmes have also brought their own problems and have occasionally ended badly. Young people who have benefitted from good education have left their home countries to go on to universities elsewhere where they have remained. This bleeding of educated young people has led to shortages of ministers, teachers and health professionals. Global Missions seeks to balance this problem by working jointly with mission partners in countries such as Zambia, Angola, Mozambique, Jerusalem and Haiti.

So where does this leave Global Mission in the 21st century?

Firstly, it offers enrichment in an interconnected world. We all face similar global problems, for example climate change. Climate Justice for all (CJ4A) is a climate focused, youth-led, global campaign which seeks to mobilise the Methodist family on issues of climate justice. It calls and resources Methodist communities across the world to listen and learn from each other, and to strive for world climate justice through a focus on equipping and fairness, nationally and within our own church communities. This will look different in each of the countries which are involved in the campaign, but the goals of equipping and fairness remain the same. The Global Mission team in the UK is addressing some of these problems in a practical way. It aims to reduce its carbon footprint by having

longer but less frequent overseas visits to reduce travel, adopting overland travel rather than flights, planting trees, and more use of solar panels, aiming to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Secondly, Global Mission offers a model for effective collaboration with other partners through mutual learning and cooperative action. A growing number of churches and circuits are twinning with Methodist partner churches around the world. The aim is to share and learn in mission, understanding, culture and worship across Methodist communities. One way is through producing shared worship resources from a global perspective.

The pandemic affected many partners economically. This resulted in schools and churches closing. In the UK 79 percent of the population have received COVID vaccinations. In Nigeria this number is 7.4%, and in Haiti, one of the world's poorest countries, this number is only 1.3%. Our global mission partners have been responsible for bringing relief to many local communities during this difficult time. Campaigns advocating vaccine take-up were supported and grants were given to churches and projects. Resources were shared through the World Mission Fund, for example providing £750,000 to support the Methodist Church of Malaysia, and in practical ways such as providing PPE for clinics in Zambia and face masks to India during the COVID crisis.

Thirdly, Global Mission enables us to learn from churches in other countries. One example of this is from churches in Germany which has received 1.2 million refugees fleeing from the crisis in the Middle East, mainly Muslims. The Methodist Church played an important role in welcoming them and through this many became Christians. New churches were planted and now there are Arabic and Farsi speaking Methodist churches in Germany. What does this say to us in the UK? Did you know that 60% of refugees arriving in boats to the UK have a right

to come and stay? And how can this help the Methodist church as we seek to support refugees from the current war in Ukraine? We have much to learn in developing good interfaith relationships and patterns of working together.

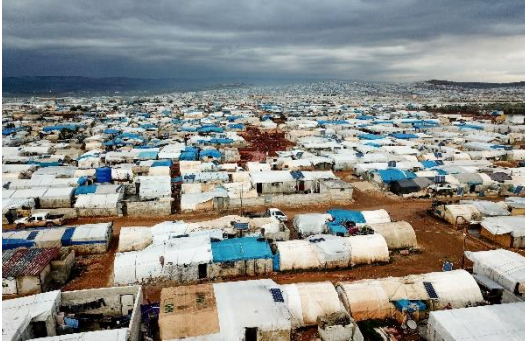
Conrad has a real heart for overseas mission, having lived and served in Mexico and Jamaica and his passion and enthusiasm was clearly evident as he spoke to us. He has seen God's guiding hand in the opportunities he has personally received for service, and in the wider mission field of the Methodist church.

Changes in the Charity Commission requirements mean that the financial organisation of the global mission fund must change. To implement these changes, a committee has been formed from a number of partners from different countries. Conversations about the future of global missions must embrace but not control our partners worldwide as we share common challenges. In response to the question 'What is the place of global mission in the 21st century? The answer must be - we still have much to learn, much to give and much to receive.

Helen Bowerman

Refugees

I don't have access to a smart phone let alone an "App" so I have resorted to a concise Oxford Dictionary (1950) for a definition for refugees: "*persons escaped to foreign country from religious or political persecution*". I suppose that covers it although it begs all sorts of questions that are the subject of fierce debate in this and other recipient countries.



One question often asked is "Are the refugees able to cope with the change of circumstance or culture that they encounter"? For Ukrainians it should be possible ("they are Europeans just

like us"!)

but for immigrants from the Middle East there are religious and cultural divides to overcome.

Our family has some first-hand experience of providing accommodation to refugees. We have a small house in West Wales which we have used as a "Ty Haf" (summer house). When refugees from Syria started arriving in this country a group in the town "Croeso Abergwaun"



(Welcome to Fishguard) decided to provide help. The house was empty at the time and they took it over but not before asking the local residents in the street if they would cooperate. Guardedly they would. I checked with the next door neighbours and again guardedly they would.

The Kurdish family, father, mother and four children turned up at Birmingham airport with only the clothes they stood up in. They had spent the last four years in a camp in Iraq, spoke no English and the children had not attended school since they had fled Syria in 2014. The

whole town got together to welcome them and Croeso Abergwaun organised a support network. The children went into the local school and were greeted with a welcome banner in Arabic (The Croeso group included the wife of a diplomat who had served in the Middle East and she was able to help them accommodate to English).

How have they got on in the six years since they arrived? The children, with the help of the school staff settled down almost immediately and eventually were able to converse in their native Kurdish, English and Welsh. The Croeso group ran classes for the parents and assisted them in accessing the health and other services. The father has been working in a local kebab shop whilst he trains to become a barber and the mother volunteers at a local hospice shop. The school recognised that the second eldest girl was bright as very soon after arriving she was helping her local classmates with their maths! She is now of an age to prepare for university and as one of the outstanding pupils in her class, she is being tutored for entry to "a top university"

How was all this financed? Unexpectedly, Pembrokeshire County council paid me a rent for the house and the support group built up a substantial fund derived from local contributions. As this was a community sponsored family the Home Office required the support group to raise £24,500 before they would allocate them a family. This was to fund them for the first few months until their benefits came through and it was also required to give them £1,200 on arrival to buy clothes and personal items. Many items had been donated but they appreciated being able to choose some items of clothing themselves. The kitchen cupboards were stocked with food in keeping with the Syrian culture/preferences

What about their religion? The family are Kurdish and the father did not wish to attend the local mosque. Mother, however, observed the fasting for Ramadan meaning she cooked for the family their daily meals but she herself fasted until dark. She does not visit the mosque as the local one only allows men and boys.

Our house has only two bedrooms and eventually the family was moved to a larger house in the town. There they were provided with all the furniture they needed and all the white goods for the kitchen and utensils they would need. They were followed by a Syrian family who spoke some English which made it easier for them to settle. The father is a stonemason and has enjoyed showing off his stonewalling skills whilst attending Pembrokeshire College to acquire building qualifications. After some months they decided to move to Swansea to be closer to the Syrian refugee community there

Gareth and Sheila Davies

Barbara

The recent appalling scenes on television of Ukrainian women and children fighting to board trains to take them to safety have reminded me of a friend I had when I was a student.

Barbara was a cheerful and out-going girl up from Wales to study dentistry in London. She spoke with a slight Welsh accent, so it was only after knowing her for some time and querying her unusual surname that she told me that she was Polish. She later told me a little of her early life.

Born at the beginning of the Second World War, she was only a few weeks old when her father, a pilot, was killed. I do not know in which city her family lived, but there was a mass evacuation of women and children to Russia. In the pandemonium to board a train at the station, Barbara, a small baby, was separated from her mother (I can imagine friends, trying to help each other - "I'll take the baby, you get the bags"), so Barbara was on the packed train and her frantic mother on the platform. It was only by the neighbour holding Barbara up to the window that they were reunited.

Barbara spent the next six years in Russia and appeared to have happy memories of a childhood playing in the snow. How she and her mother came eventually to live on a small-holding in a remote part of Wales, I do not know, but their war-time experiences finally had a calm ending.

It is tragic and really unbelievable that this whole scenario is being played out again, within the lifetime of my generation. I do not have words to express my horror of this catastrophic situation.

Elaine Slatter

Methodist Homes Sunday

Our morning service on 12th June will be led by Rev Julia Monaghan with her husband Sam who is Chief Executive of Methodist Homes. Julia and Sam are regular visitors to Trinity but we are privileged that they are able to be with us to lead the service on this special occasion.

A note to contributors

It is our practice to publish each edition of TNV on the Trinity website. It is an important source of information about church life at Trinity and something we want to share with others. At the same time we recognise that some contributors may be uncomfortable for their personal details to appear on the internet in this way. We will be happy to omit names and any other personal details in any future issue if requested to do so.

'Who said?' (from page 21): Lenin. (Sadly ironic in current circumstances.)

From the Editor

Thanks to all who have helped with the preparation and distribution of this issue of TNV. We are reviewing future arrangements for TNV and would welcome readers' views - see page 4.

David Lander



**TRINITY NEWS & VIEWS is the magazine of
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**“Trinity is a welcoming Church seeking to live
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