

# TRINITY NEWS & VIEWS



*"He leads me beside still waters;  
He restores my soul."*

**September 2025    Issue 67**

## A message from Rev Sam Funnell

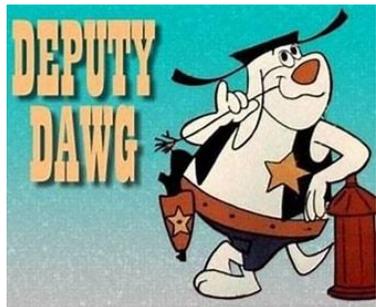
Dear Friends,

'What's in a Name?'

This is the first edition of TNV in this new Methodist Church year, which runs in a similar fashion to academic years: September through to August. This will be our 6<sup>th</sup> year together and the commencement of my second period of 5 years in this Circuit appointment; I can honestly say, I am delighted to still be here, in more ways than one! 😊

One of the things about this new Church year that you might not necessarily know or note, is that my role with the South East District has changed: from a decision at Conference back in June, all 'Assistant Chairs of District' are now 'Deputy Chairs'.

*(Does this mean I get a badge? 'Deputy Sam'? Sorry – I'm going off at a tangent and remembering a childhood TV programme 'Deputy Dawg' – anyone remember him?)*



Now, where was I? Oh yes, a new name for my District role.

You might ask, in fact I've done so myself - Does this make any difference? And most of the time the answer is, not really. One thing it does mean, however, is that if, for any reason, Conrad Hicks our new Chair of the South East District, is prevented from being able to attend an event, especially in terms of chairing meetings and attending



To end – here's a little mantra that I wrote on my previous sabbatical, I hope it brings you reassurance that the GREAT 'I AM' is with you, through it all, whatever your name!

*God is...*

*I am...*

*Life happens...*

*God is...*

Yours in the love of God: Creator, Christ and Comforter,

**Sam x**



Since publication of the previous issue of TNV at Easter three members or former members of the Trinity family have sadly passed away: Jim Chisholm, Sheila Davies and Barbara Jones, the widow of a former Minister of Trinity, Revd Wilfred Jones. As we remember them please continue to pray for others in the Trinity family who are suffering in any way at this time.

After an initial interim period Sarah Anderson has now been formally appointed as our Administrator.  
*Welcome Sarah (again!).*

[Office hours: Monday – Thursday 9am-1pm]

## Dates for your diary

Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup> October	Harvest Cream Tea (4pm)
Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> October	Harvest Festival Service Circuit Service at Godalming (3pm)
Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> October	Neighbourhood Party (see page 5)
Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November	All Souls Service (4pm)
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November	Church Council (7.30pm)
Saturday 15 <sup>th</sup> November	Tearfund Big Quiz (7.30pm)
Sunday 30 <sup>th</sup> November	First Sunday in Advent
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> December	Nativity Service
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> December	Carol Service (6pm)
Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> December	Midnight Communion Service (11.15pm)
Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Day Service (10am)
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> December	Circuit Service – details to follow
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> January	Covenant Service



# NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTY

**SATURDAY**  
**18TH OCTOBER 2025**  
**4:00 - 6:00pm**  
**Trinity Methodist Church**  
Brewery Road, Woking



There will be high tea, entertainment and a fun quiz.  
Invitations will be sent out soon.



If you know someone  
who'd appreciate an **invitation**

**CONTACT** Marian (07749 094064)  
Pauline (07729 301713)



**Volunteers** would be welcome to...  
Help on the day or bake a cake

**CONTACT** Pauline (07729 301713)



To give someone a **lift** or sponsor a **taxi**  
**CONTACT** David Reeve (01483 715462)  
Hugh Bowerman



The Methodist Church



**Thank you for your continued support.**

The Neighbourhood Party Team

## Methodist Conference appointments

At this year's Conference held in Telford at the end of June. Rev. Richard Andrew was inducted and elected President for 2025-26 with Matthew Forsyth as Vice President.



Richard Andrew is currently chair of the Darlington District. He studied philosophy and theology in London and his ministry has included a focus on education: training ministers and teaching theology in his role as Director of York Institute and working in the Connexional Team as Director of Learning and Development.



Matt Forsyth is a local preacher and steward based in Peterborough and is the Mission Team Leader in the Northampton Methodist District. Before his calling to lay leadership Matt worked as an estate agent and spent time working as a fundraiser for All We Can to name a few roles.

The designated appointments for 2026-27 are Rev. Mark Slaney as President and Caroline Stead as Vice President. Mark Slaney currently serves as Chair of the Scotland District and the Shetland District and Caroline Stead is a local preacher in the Yorkshire West District.

Rev. Conrad Hicks takes over from Rev. David Hinchliffe as Chair for the South East District from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025.

## Outreach in Woking town centre

This year the Chinese congregation has started our yearly theme - Reach out to families and neighbours beyond our church families. Part of the action is a regular outreach in Woking town centre. We will aim at Hong Kong families that have not yet learnt about



the church and to get to talk to them. Meanwhile we have prepared gospel tracts and introduction of our Chinese church regular meetings, worship, bible study groups and our elderly fellowship (Silver Pine). We will have briefing and prayer before we start off to the town centre; in groups we will prayerfully meet with Hong Kongers.

Participants' feedback:

*'We went 3 times to Woking town centre, even though some of our Hong Kong friends may not be interested in our tracts and sometimes a cold response, we will still continue to put effort into reaching out. "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season 2 Tim 4:2" (Mr and Mrs So)*

*'I am grateful to see the positive reactions of good responses. The town people: Muslims, locals, they all need the love of Christ, churches should join and extend the love of Christ to our neighbours.'* (Shirley)

*'Actions speak louder than words, as we continue to reach out and put in our effort. "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us."' (Tony)*

## **Come, true light**

Come. life eternal. Come, hidden mystery.  
Come, treasure without name. Come, reality  
beyond all words. Come, person beyond all  
understanding. Come, rejoicing without end.  
Come, light that knows no evening. Come,  
unfailing expectation of the saved. Come, the  
raising of the fallen. Come, the resurrection of  
the dead.

Come, all-powerful, for unceasingly you create,  
refashion and change all things by your will  
alone.

Come, invisible, whom none may touch and  
handle.

Come, for you continue always unmoved, yet at  
every instant you are wholly in movement; you  
draw near to us who lie in hell, yet you remain  
higher than the heavens.

Come, for your Name fills our hearts with  
longing and is ever on our lips; yet who you are  
and what your nature is, we cannot say or know.

Come Alone to the alone. Come, for you are  
yourself the desire that is within me.

Come, the consolation of my humble soul. Come,  
my joy, my glory, my endless delight.

*(Symeon the New Theologian (949-1022))*

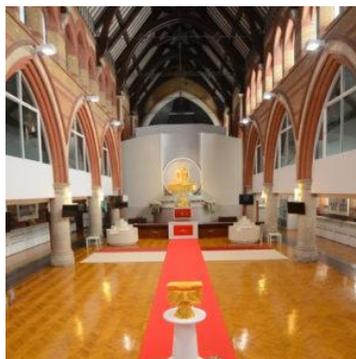
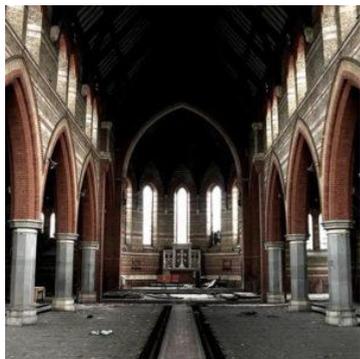
## Working People of Faith

WPoF continues to organise and participate in inter-faith events around the town. On 15th May, around 40 women from different faiths and ethnic backgrounds gathered at Trinity for a coffee morning, co-organised with the Shifa Network group based at Trinity. It proved to be a thoroughly enjoyable and interesting opportunity to share experiences between wide-ranging cultural backgrounds.



Later in the month a small group took part in a conducted tour at the Buddhist Temple at Brookwood. The Dhammakaya Movement, a distinct tradition of Buddhism practiced in England since 1954, acquired the former hospital chapel in 2004 and have converted the premises into a spectacular Buddhist centre. The

photographs show the old hospital chapel before and after conversion.



On 9th August a group met by the New Inn at Send to remember the horrifying events at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. This gentle ceremony, organised by Woking Action for Peace included readings and comments followed by the lighting of candles to float on the water.



This year the event had particular significance, marking the 80th anniversary of the dropping of the nuclear bombs, whilst today the world faces an increasing proliferation of lethal warheads.



**Daphne Lander**

## God's path to happiness

The week before Easter, I was fortunate enough to have a last-minute space at Spring Harvest in Minehead, where 40+ Trinity-associated people experienced worship and teaching with a few thousand others. I felt that God was calling me to go, for reasons I wasn't fully aware of at the time.



SPRING HARVEST

I've been a number of times before, but this one was different. And wow, I felt the Holy Spirit working its magic – to the extent that at a seminar, it really did come into the room, where about 100 of us experienced it in various shapes and forms. That morning, at 7.30, I wrote a poem in about 10 minutes (my poetry skills have returned in abundance recently, after a number of years of writer's block) and read it out to everyone in the room, touching hearts in different ways.

I read this poem at the Easter Sunday service in church also. But for those of you who missed it, or want to read it again, exploring the various levels of interpretation it may reveal, here it is in full:

**David Emmerson**

## God's path to happiness

God is amazing,  
No limit to His power,  
Creating such wonders,  
A tree or a flower.  
But that's just His  
sideshow  
Of what He can do,  
His greatest of wonders  
Is creating me and you.  
He views us as His  
children  
And gives us free-will  
To do as we choose to,  
Play hard or be still.  
He doesn't insist that we  
Follow his way  
We can do what we want  
to  
By both night and by  
day.  
But for those that shun  
Him  
Life isn't that of ease,  
Short term joy  
(perhaps?)  
It really doesn't please  
Our God and creator  
Who offers His path,  
He's shown us His way,  
A way that will last.

Kindness and goodness,  
Happiness and peace,  
Follow His Way and  
Love will never cease  
To wrap you and cloak  
you,  
Shield you from harm  
No matter what life  
throws you  
You'll always remain calm,  
Calm with His Spirit  
Coursing through your  
veins  
Such incredible power  
In you He remains  
So spread the good word  
Of His might and his  
power  
Tell all around you  
Whatever the hour  
That with Jesus beside  
you  
Life couldn't get better  
He'll always provide you  
With the power to help  
others.  
He knows you are perfect  
In every way  
So live out His life  
Every single day.

## **Refugee Tales – A walk around the Capital Ring**

On a very hot day in July, Allison, Sue, James and I headed for Kenton tube station and then St Mary the Virgin church to start the day 4 walk with Refugee Tales. This is an event that happens every year over five days where we walk in solidarity for people who have experienced immigration detention and hear their voices through story and poems. Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group (GDWG) has been calling on the Government to end the indefinite detention of refugees and we are now the only country in Western Europe that detains people indefinitely under immigration rules. We were walking part of the Capital Ring from Kenton to Brentford, a distance of around 12 miles.

About 120 people were divided into groups of 20 to walk the route and we were all allotted to the green group leading the walk. We had two leaders and two back markers for each group, who were also the road traffic wardens at each road crossing (very necessary when you have 20 people crossing the road at one time!).

We left Kenton and walked through a park up towards Harrow on the Hill, the highest point of the walk. This was the furthest point from Central London and weaved between the red brick buildings of the famous public school where Winston Churchill, Byron and Trollope were educated. We saw spectacular views across London. The road then curved downhill and we crossed playing fields before entering North Greenford. We were soon in the



Horsenden Hill Green Space, another natural area bordering the Grand Union Canal. This is a remnant of ancient woodland and a conservation area. One of the highlights of the walk was walking through the Ealing Urban Beaver project here in Paradise fields- although we saw no beavers.

Our lunch stop was at the Holy Trinity URC in Perivale where we heard a talk about the work of GDWP.

After lunch we crossed Western Avenue before turning into Pear Tree Park. At the end of this park, was the River Brent. We went past Hanwell Zoo and had a welcome ice cream and rest. Then there was the spectacular Wharncliffe viaduct (constructed 1836-7) built by Isambard Kingdom Brunel that crossed over the path, now home to a colony of bats. We then continued beside the River Brent, past Osterley Island and across the M4, where we saw the beginning of the Grand Union Canal. We followed the River Brent until we reached Brentford and the School for Girls.



A lot of the walk was through parks and with good shade from trees which we were very grateful for. Along the way we met and talked to many Refugee Tales supporters and people who had experienced detention. We finally stopped for a welcome cup of tea and food at the Brentford Free church

after walking 12 miles, then moved onto Brentford school for Girls for the evening entertainment.

Shobu Kapoor was our compere for the night, with a great sense of humour. We first heard from Pious Keku who had been supported in detention from visits by Mary Barrett. They are now firm friends but Pious described how he had found it hard to communicate with Mary initially as he had become quite ill while in detention. He described being taken to hospital with handcuffs on and the doctors refusing to treat him unless the restraints were removed. As the guards would not remove the restraints he had to be taken back to the detention centre without treatment. Pious was finally able to study law and is now a Trustee of GDWG.

Hannah Lowe then read a poem she had written from an interview with a detainee, 'The Thirteen Year Tale'. The man had suffered many hardships, including being released and finding a partner then losing his partner because they were both accused of lying about their relationship. His experience of detention had lasted 13 years before he could regain his life.

We had some amazing uplifting music by the Awale Jant Band and danced around the hall in Brentford School for Girls to round off a thought-provoking evening.

Thank you to all the people who prayed for us and the detainees before our walk and also to those who donated to GDWG. £180 was raised through charity of the month coffee donations in July.

**Ruth Taylor**

*Refugee Tales*

## Encounters at the Cross



[This installation and the inscription that follows can be seen at the church of Notre-Dame in La Roche-Bernard in western France]

*"The hollow becomes a portal which reveals Jesus Christ in the light of the Resurrection. He welcomes and His arms guide along the path of life. This tells of the encounter with the death of Jesus crucified on the Cross, represented by the void at the centre of the world, at the heart of humanity. Rust tells of the passing of time. The shape of the breath tells of the Holy Spirit which touches the world."*

## **'LORD TEACH US TO PRAY'**

### **Part Five: Unanswered Prayer**

At times I find it difficult to understand what is God's plan - when it appears that God has not answered prayer. I look at the violence, hunger, poverty, suffering shown on the television news every day and I do not seem to see any positive action taking place and I don't understand why all the prayers for peace don't appear to be heard.

It clashes with the promises I find in scripture: *'Ask, and it will be given to you; search and you will find; knock and the door will be opened for you. For every one who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. How much more will your Abba Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask.'* (from Luke 11:5-11)

In the first article I wrote on, 'Lord teach us to pray' in TNV September 2023, I referred to a comment by Nick Fawcett in his book *'Praying without pretence - being honest in prayer (Kevin Mayhew Ltd, 2021)*. In prayer 32, entitled *'When struggling to trust in God'*, I found these words: *"My spirit cries out to you; How can you let it happen? Why don't you hear our prayers? How can these things be? Does that shock you, Lord? I'm sorry if it does, but I can't help it, for all this and so much else leaves me reeling, wondering, questioning, trying to make sense of what I'm trusting you to do, when it appears you don't do anything at all. I know it's not as simple as that, faith is not about expecting you to deliver everything I ask for, and I know the strength and help you promise comes in many shapes and forms, but I have to be honest with myself and with you, or else my prayers will end up being an empty ritual. Lord, today, my plea to you is - I want to*

*trust, I really do, but sometimes I find it so very hard. Help me. Amen."*

To be honest I struggle with these situations too but find these words of St Paul (writing to the Church in Corinth) about unanswered prayer challenge my faith, but are helpful: *'A thorn was given to me in the flesh. Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, but the Lord said to me – **"My Grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."*** ' (2 Corinthians 12:7b-9a)

The Lord's words to Paul are, for me, a starting point, as I can only explain through my own experiences what God has done for me and how it appears that my prayers were unanswered – but were they? It is at times of uncertainty or desperate need we can pray to our Abba Father for answers, even miracles. We must trust in God and recognise that though it may appear God did not listen or answer them, that there are/were alternative answers we missed - and only see them when we look back.

When we read the stories of Jesus praying, they are deeply personal and soul searching. In Gethsemane – *'Jesus came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. When he reached the place, he said to them. "Pray that you may not come into the time of trial."* Then he withdrew from them, about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed. (Abba) *Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet not my will but yours be done.'* (Luke 22:39-43)



*[continued page 28]*

## Trinity 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

June 15-16 proved to be quite a weekend at Trinity - from the Saturday evening concert (see below), through the Sunday morning anniversary service which was so inspiringly led by Rev Anna Carrington and the family lunch that followed.



What follows are two reviews of the Anniversary Concert – first by Graham Kirby Smith and then by Indy Lee.

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On the Saturday we had **Trinity's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show**, and what a great night it was! It was a truly **collaborative** event, featuring and involving people from Trinity's morning,

Chinese and Foundry communities – including past members, some of whom travelled some distance!

Special thanks must go to **Daphne Lander** and **Indy Lee**, who choreographed and directed the group songs, and to



**Graham Warr** who hosted the evening so well. Also to the unsung heroes – the tech team. **Bharati Rajput** had so much to keep on top of on sound with such a busy fast paced programme, and **David Lorberg** turned up at least half an hour early to most of the rehearsals to set things up and keep on top of things throughout. (As he does almost every Sunday morning – more than half an hour before the musicians start rehearsing!)

My vision for this show was to **celebrate** the last 60 years at Trinity by looking back at many of the past shows, as well as bringing in new items that recognise the many things we have to be thankful for in the here and now, and looking forward to the future. We had singers and actors reprising their songs and roles from shows as far back as the 1990s – from **Glen Penfold** as Judas in *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1996) and then as Jesus in *Godspell* (2000) with **David Emmerson's** Judas, to **Helen Richardson & Miriam Chapman** reprising their roles by performing a wonderfully humorous scene from *The Importance Of Being Earnest* (1993).



There were many really interesting and unique performances, including Tai-Chi from **Mrs Leung**, 'The Frozen Logger' comedy song from **Dave Ingoldby**, Fur Elise and Auld Lang Syne played on the piano by brothers **Ian & Colin Kong**, interpretive dance by **Mabel**

**Opoku**, a *Lion Rocks* medley by the **Bauhina Beats** band, **Indy Lee**'s 'Circle of Life' pantomime... and who can forget **Langton Chipangula** getting everyone on their feet to join in with his fun action-song version of 'Singing in the rain'? And a couple of little videos from our current minister Rev **Sam Funnell** and former minister Rev Dr **Mike Long** (1998-2006). There were so many highlights – not least the song that **Mike Cope** wrote specifically for this 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary – 'Sixty Years'. And something quite special and unexpected – when former minister Rev Barrie Tabraham was sadly unable to be there to reprise Pilate's song from *Jesus Christ Superstar*, who stepped up from the audience to sing in his place but **Bernhard Warr**, who played Jesus in that production back in 1996!



**Thanks so much** to everyone who took part, helped in the organising and helped off stage. And thanks also to everyone who donated on the night, to help raise much needed funds to keep things going at Trinity.



**Graham Kirby Smith**

## ✨ **Sixty Years of Grace**

### **Trinity Methodist Church's Anniversary Variety Show**

In Chinese tradition, the age of sixty is known as "*the ear obeys*"—a stage of life when one listens with clarity, discernment, and peace. As Confucius reflected:

*"At thirty, I stood firm; at forty, I had no doubts; at fifty, I understood the will of Heaven; and at sixty, my ear was obedient."*

### **A Legacy of Art and Worship**

What moved me most, as both a performer and theatre maker, was discovering Trinity's long-standing embrace of the arts as a vital part of its ministry. From the 1970s to the early 2000s, the church regularly staged musicals and dramas—Jesus Christ Superstar, Godspell, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, The Jungle Book, The Importance of Being Earnest, and more. These weren't just performances — they cherished community rituals, blending spiritual reflection with artistic exploration. They brought together people of all ages and backgrounds, creating shared memories that still echo in the hearts of those who took part.

These productions took place in the church's own theatre — a sacred space where creativity and worship met. As I stood in that theatre preparing for this year's anniversary show, I felt deep reverence. This was more than a stage—it was a vessel of grace, where God-given gifts were shared in joy and vulnerability. It became a living altar, where stories of faith, hope, and humanity were offered back to the community and to God.

## A Multicultural Celebration

A highlight of the evening was the contribution from the Working Chinese Church, whose performances brought cultural richness and spiritual depth. Their presence reflected Trinity's evolving identity as a multicultural and multilingual community of faith.

**Frankie** opened with ***Can I Breakthrough***, a Cantonese rock anthem by Hong Kong band Beyond. Its message—of shedding loneliness, confronting inner conflict, and standing strong—resonated deeply.

**Ian** and **Colin**, two gifted brothers, performed ***Für Elise*** and ***Auld Lang Syne***, bridging generations with music and memory. Their piano duet invited the audience to reflect on the passage of time and the enduring bonds of community.



**Mrs. Leung** offered a serene ***Taichi*** demonstration, inviting calm and introspection after the energetic musical numbers. Her graceful movements reminded us of the spiritual balance that underpins both worship and daily life.

**Astor**, accompanied by **Graham K-Smith**, sang ***Think of Me*** from *The Phantom of the Opera*, blending theatrical elegance with devotional sincerity. Her voice filled the sanctuary with emotion, drawing listeners into a moment of shared beauty.

**The Lionrock Band**, formed by members of the Chinese Church, shared original songs telling stories of the Hong Kong diaspora—of displacement, longing, and ultimately, peace found through God’s guiding hand. Their music resonated deeply, offering a collective reflection on identity, migration, and divine providence.



### **The Circle of Life**

As part of the programme, I contributed a solo mime titled **The Circle of Life**. Through silent movement and symbolic gesture, I explored the arc of human existence—birth, growth, family, and death—as manifestations of God’s grace. The performance was a meditation on the sacred rhythms of life: how time is marked, how relationships form, how loss transforms, and how faith carries us through. It was deeply personal, yet universally resonant, and I felt humbled to share it within such a spiritually rich and artistically generous gathering.

### **Looking Ahead**

As the evening drew to a close, I was reminded of Confucius’s final reflection:

*“At seventy, I could follow my heart’s desire without overstepping the bounds of propriety.”*

May Trinity Methodist Church, as it journeys beyond sixty, continue to follow its heart—faithfully, creatively, and compassionately. May it remain a place where stories are shared, gifts are nurtured, and Heaven’s rhythm is joyfully fulfilled.

**Indy Lee**

### **Memories that haunt**

*In the year in which we have commemorated the end of World War II, Peggy recalls what it was actually like to live through those days as a child.....*

I was five years old when we left our home in Greenford, Middlesex after a bomb dropped at the end of our road. We spent a short time in Bourton on the Water, then a short time in Little Rissington but until I was almost eleven years old we lived in Stow on the Wold. At Little Rissington it was the custom for us school children to line the road as airmen passed by on the way to the cemetery.

One night something woke me up and I went into my Mother’s room which was at the side of our bungalow, looking out over nearby fields. Dawn was yawning but it was still dark. The light came from an upturned flaming plane in the near field.

I stood by my Mother and saw that tears were falling over her cheeks. I thought I could see a German Swastika in part of the plane and said , “Mum, it is a German”. Mother put her arm round me and said, “That was some Mother’s boy”.

One day, walking home from school, I found my Mother and Grand-Mother in scouting fashion serving tea from a table in front of our set back gate, using big jugs and teapots, filling one large mug for each of the American Jeeps. The Americans were in charge of the prisoner of war camp a short distance from our home.

Several jeeps were escorting a long line of shuffling prisoners. There was no hint of marching – clothes were tatty, feet shuffled weakly, sullenly, maybe dejected. There seemed to be a never-ending line of sullen men – not soldiers. In retrospect I can imagine their dejection after the zealous eagerness promised by the much trusted leader.

The Americans left quite bad memories of their time in the village due to the fights between their fellow soldier brothers of different coloured skin.

One day, coming home from school, I could feel the ground shaking and was scared - I thought that the enemy had found out where we were living. At the side of me an enormous tank stopped as I leaned against the flat stone wall behind me. The lid of the tank suddenly lifted to reveal a man so black only his teeth and eyes were visible. He called, "Want some gum girlie?". We had been warned not to touch anything that could be poison.

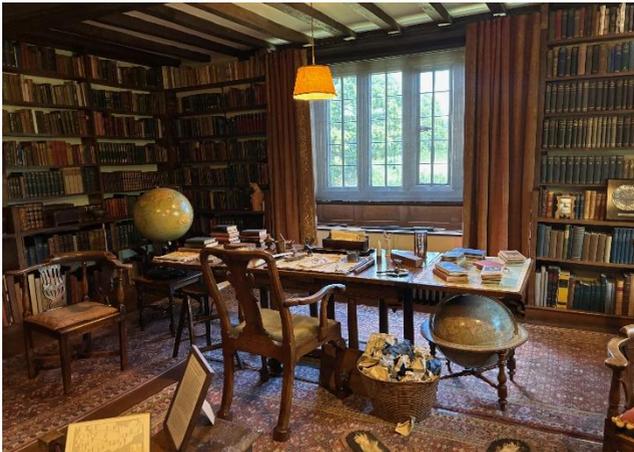
It was not until I was about 17 years old and a student Nursery Nurse, when little Ronnie Morgan grazed his knee in a fall, I discovered black skin is just very thin skin deep and not all the way to the bone!

**Peggy Boorman**





***In May we were delighted to share with Lee and Elaine as they celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary***



***Whose writing desk is this? It is in a National Trust property in the South of England. (See page 34)***

[continued from page 18: **Unanswered Prayer**]

How does God hear us and respond? Our loving Abba Father wants us to talk in plain words; they may be garbled or full of sadness and worry; but God knows our needs and wants us to share them.

I refer back to the words of Paul, as God says to him. – **“My Grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”** In spite of what is going on in our hearts and minds and around us our Abba Father is listening and communicating with us through the Holy Spirit and Jesus the Son, our Saviour. I accept that sometimes we don't hear the answer or understand it.

Today, as I look back over the past seventy plus years, I can see the pattern of God's plan for me and the doors that didn't open and the windows that did and I realise that God's grace was sufficient for me.

However, leaving school at fifteen I had no qualifications and failed to get onto the GCE course at Salisbury Tech, but I did get onto the Commerce Course from which I gained knowledge and skills that I realise now God needed me to have in order to undertake the work intended for me to do. When I believed I was 'called' by God in a variety of situations, and after prayer, the result was not expected. I could see that there was an alternative in place for me, but it took me a while to understand. Yet God never gave up on me.

Sometimes we have deeply personal needs, and we pray to God for help or guidance, and when they do not appear to be met it is then we need the Lord's help to trust and believe. In 2015 when Christine was diagnosed with cancer I was distressed and my prayers were of course for

a recovery, and for a few months her condition stabilised. Then in early March 2016 her health suddenly deteriorated, and she was taken into the Royal Surrey. We had to queue in a waiting area for a long while until finally she was admitted to a ward. I prayed that she would not suffer too much as the painkillers slowly dealt with her pain. It was still a shock when the lovely Consultant gently warned us to expect the end within hours.

I didn't get much sleep that night and left for the hospital early in the morning but sadly, arrived two minutes too late as Christine had slipped away as I was coming up the stairs to the ward. I was distraught, as were Dan and Bern. The following few weeks were a bit of a blur. I felt guilty that I wasn't there at the end but was kept busy sorting out the funeral arrangements and was lovingly supported by Dan, Bern, Jessica, my sister Sue and friends from Trinity and School. I spent a lot of time talking to God but still grieved and struggled to cope.

Then in August the Holy Spirit prompted me to go and visit two Cathedrals I had not ticked off on my lifelong bucket list of visiting every Anglican Cathedral in Britain. Consequently, I booked a weekend to go by train to Blackburn and then via Liverpool to Chester.

I planned to attend Choral Evensong at Blackburn, but it was holiday time and the Choir was not on duty. Consequently, it was Evening Prayer instead. The officiating Priest and I were the only people there. He suggested we share the reading antiphonally and we did. The New Testament reading was from Matthew 5:1-11

## Blackburn Cathedral



The large disc on the wall, symbolises the healing of the nations through God's love for us as shown through the sacrificial love of Jesus.

In the forecourt there is a statue of a Grandmother holding a child's hand as they reach out to rescue a teddy bear. A symbol of God reaching out through Jesus to rescue us.



The Beatitudes. He started, and read: *'Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven'*; then I read: *'Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted'*. The release I felt was amazing as I realised that my God had been with me, and *'God's Grace had been sufficient for me.'*

This reminded me of some words of Joachim Neander and Catherine Winkworth which in 1974 Christine and I had chosen as one of our wedding hymns. They have such a deep meaning for me today; particularly these -

***Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of Creation! O my soul, praise God, for God is my health and salvation! All you who hear brothers and sisters draw near, praise God in glad adoration.***

***Praise to the Lord, who does prosper your work and defend you, surely God's goodness and mercy here daily attend you, ponder anew all the Almighty can do, who with God's love does befriend you.***

***Praise to the Lord, who does nourish your life and restore you, fitting you well for the tasks that are ever before you, then, to your need God like a mother does speed, spreading the wings of grace over you.***

*(from StF 88 amended)*

These words became even more significant last September when I had acute Pancreatitis, and was rushed into hospital, where I had painkillers administered intravenously. I awoke at 4.00 am on the third morning in a terribly confused state. As I sat and shivered on the end of the bed, befuddled and at my wits end, some words from Deuteronomy came into my mind – *'The Eternal God is your dwelling place and underneath are the everlasting arms.'* (King James Version Chapter 33:27). My heart was suddenly filled with reassurance. Even with a nasty bout of pneumonia, causing a spell in hospital over Christmas and finally my gall bladder being successfully removed, as St Paul discovered, God's grace was sufficient for me too.

I am deeply concerned about the issues around the world, and I know I have to do what I can by showing my support and continuing to pray in faith and leave it in God's hands; trusting that God will reply - for our Lord really does care and responds with love and grace.

***Lord, as we kneel, here as we pray, here as we plead, so many words to say, so you are here, never to leave, pouring peace into the hollows of our hearts. You give the strength for coping, not just for today, and you grant us peace in following in your way. Your power flows in where faith is faltering, never weakening, never altering. Lord, I believe that your grace is sufficient for me today and every day.***

*(Clare Stainsby, StF 521, amended)*

I pray for God’s blessing on you all, particularly if things are really tough at the moment, for the promise to Paul and us is true – the Lord is saying to us all: ***‘My Grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’*** Amen.

**Graham Warr**

**Sunday coffee charities**

In recent months the money we have collected has been donated as follows:

January	Combat Stress	£85.00
February	Mercy Ships	£125.00
March	Brigitte Trust	£92.00
April	Engage	£120.00
May	Christian Aid (inc. Plant Sale)	£1,535.00
June	Open Doors	£120.00
July	Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group/Refugee Tales	£180.00



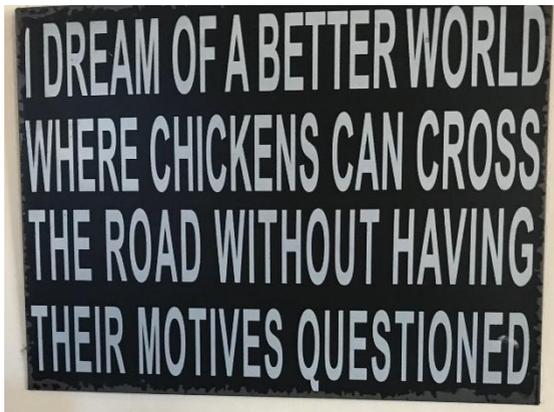
## Miscellany

+ Two letters spotted in the correspondence column of a national newspaper:

*"Dear Sir, Churches, both Anglican and Catholic, can often seem more like battlefields than sacred spaces, with rows, feuds and walkouts about music, style of worship, money and changes being wreaked by newly arrived clergy. At one Catholic church, a new parish priest wanted a musical repertoire of Palestrina, Mozart and Verdi, only to be told by his church's 85-year-old organist that she would stick to the dozen hymns she knew."*

*"Dear Sir, When I was in the sixth form of my school in Leicestershire, three friends and I would go to Sunday morning church services and meet afterwards at a suitable watering hole. When challenged about this, we quoted Matthew 5:6, which says we should 'thirst after righteousness'."*

+ And on the wall of a hotel in Kent:



## **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

***From page 27: Rudyard Kipling's House  
Batemans at Burwash, East Sussex***

## **From the Editor**

Thanks to all who have helped with the preparation and distribution of this issue of TNV. We are planning that the next issue will be published in time for Christmas. The deadline for copy will be announced in due course.

**David Lander**



**The Methodist Church**



**TRINITY NEWS & VIEWS is the magazine of  
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