

# Keep Hoping



**June 2018**

## Ministers Muse

Hi everyone,

June is here and with it some better weather and some of you may be planning your holidays. Our churches have been making plans too. What 'state' is our church in? Have we a future? Let me put the 'state' of the church here in comparison to the French Protestant Church.

I have just come back from 4 weeks in France. On our first Sunday there we went to the local United French Protestant Church in Boulogne. There was a 'preacher', who read a sermon from a 'pastor', a 'musician', who played a recorder, and 2 members of the congregation. We, me and Colin, my husband, made an extra two. The church was cold, bare and the plaster on the walls was crumbling. Paint and plaster lay on the floors where it had fallen. The welcome however was very warm. The people were very helpful, enabling me to find the hymn numbers etc. I don't understand much French, I get the gist of some of it, but I do enjoy singing in French. It was an interesting experience. Of course, Colin understood 95% of what was being said as he speaks French quite well, having done it at university and lived in Paris for a year as a student of languages.

On Tuesday we went to a service in Desvres at 6pm. When we arrived at 5.50pm, the doors were locked and there was no one around. We thought perhaps it had been cancelled. At five to six a woman was dropped off at the door and a few minutes later another woman arrived. When it was nearly 6pm a man arrived on a bicycle and unlocked the doors. You wouldn't get that in our churches, there is always someone there early to open up and make people feel welcome. This church was in the same sorry state as the one in Boulogne and we were led to a VERY DUSTY back room. There were 6 people, plus us two, no 'music' and I didn't enjoy it very much at all. I had taken my English Bible so I could read the scriptures in English as they read them in French.

The following Sunday we went back to the church in Boulogne. The welcome was as warm as before, if not more so. The 'preacher' was 'tres bien', very good, very expressive and interesting, although I couldn't understand what she said. There were 4 extra adults and 2 children this time, so quite a congregation. (The following week there were more than a dozen) I thoroughly enjoyed the service and spoke a little to the people afterwards, some of whom could speak a little English. Colin was in his element speaking in French about the music and the preaching.

It struck me how important it is for us to make sure people feel really welcome, which I think we do in our church, and enable them to have a 'good experience' of being in church and sharing in the worship of God. It made me realise that our church is not in that bad a 'state', we can have plans for a future. We are good at making people feel welcome, but do we ensure that people who may not understand the language of 'traditional' worship, or can sing the hymns without really understanding what the words mean, can still 'enjoy' church experience? We don't have to have a degree in theology to make people feel welcome, we do it very well most of the time, but we do have to have a faith in God that lets us share the joys (and sorrows) of life with others and makes them feel part of the family of the church. We need to be interested in each other.

We have churches that are in good condition physically, we are faithful in our duties, we love God and each other. Do not be disheartened, God has work for us to do. It may not continue to be in the building we are in at the moment, but we are called to be his people in the places where we live, work and worship. We are called to love the people we share life

with and we do everything in his name and in his strength. So continue to welcome the stranger in your midst and make them feel not only welcomed but loved.

God bless, your friend and minister. *Janet*

## **Deacons Muse**

Dear Friends

Pray ... in the morning:

New every morning is the love  
our wakening and uprising prove;  
through sleep and darkness safely brought,  
restored to life and power and thought.

*John Keble from Singing the Faith 137*

*Taken from 'Day by Day,' Prayers for a 'Spiritual Five – A – Day.'*

My thoughts turn this morning to God's amazing love for each one of us and how living a daily rhythm of prayer can encourage us in our pilgrimage of discipleship.

I wanted to share with you something of what it means to me to live by a daily rhythm of prayer and to encourage you to follow the pattern as suggested in the Day by Day booklets.

Prayer is an essential part of my daily living and along with reading the Bible enables and encourages me to live out my daily life. The Holy Spirit guides me in the decisions I make. Being able to have a conversation with the living presence of God within me is something that I find hard to describe but, yet I know without it I am nothing. It's not something I always find easy, but it is part of the discipline of following Jesus. Sometimes my prayers seem to go unanswered and then I am reminded that God's plans are for good and that prayer isn't always answered in the way I had hoped. Prayer changes and transforms us. God loves us so much that he wants the best for each of us.

As we move forward with our growth plans please may I encourage and urge you to live out your daily lives as a rhythm of prayer, work and rest and let's be amazed at what God will do.

In fellowship,

*Gail*

## **Faith in the face of danger**

*By Hazel Southam of the Bible Society*

Bible Society of Jordan are doing some incredible work in difficult circumstances. They work with refugee families who have harrowing tales to tell and I had the privilege of meeting Saad and Fida's family during a recent visit to Jordan.

"I have photos" says Saad, getting out his mobile phone. Unlike pictures that you or I might show to our friends, these are not of family outings or pets. The photos I saw were of Saad and his two daughters on a boat in the Mediterranean. The sky was blue and it was a beautiful day.

But it wasn't. Saad and his children were being trafficked from Turkey to Greece, having fled their home in Iraq. "ISIS came to our city and we were forced to leave. If we had stayed there, there would be so much trouble and we would be forced to convert to Islam" So his wife Fida, who stayed in Iraq working as a teacher, sent part of her income to him in order to fund the trafficking.

"It was a very small boat, about 10 m long and there were already about 70 people on there when we got on. After two hours, something went wrong with the motor and it stopped. The water started coming inside the boat. We were wearing life jackets but we didn't have hope" Thinking he was to drown, Saad phoned Fida to say goodbye. Fida said, "God will be with you. God will save you." she started to pray and asked God to help them. Then she put their pictures on Facebook and people started praying for them. She lost the phone connection.

Saad and the girls were rescued by the Turkish police and returned to war-torn Iraq. The family now live as refugees in neighbouring Jordan.

Here, the Bible Society of Jordan has helped tens of thousands of traumatised refugees with Bible-based trauma counselling, as well as practical support through the provision of food, bedding, nappies, stoves, and where appropriate, Bibles. Fida and Saad were welcomed by Bible Society volunteers in Jordan. But instead of asking for the family to undergo trauma counselling, Fida, who is a trained psychologist, volunteered to help other refugees. Today she is part of a team in the country who help refugees talk about their experiences and start to process them, in the light of the Bible.

Today, the children are going to school, but the family are in limbo, waiting to know which country will be their final home. Yet Fida radiates hope. "I am who I am now because of all the things that happened to me and I'm like the clay that Jesus is moulding the way he wants"

In 2007 Fida's first husband was kidnapped by Al Qaeda and they forced him to deny his faith. They gave him two choices; convert or be killed. Because he was scared, he denied his faith, but inside he still believed in Jesus Christ. Then a week later we found out he had cancer. A week after that he passed away.

Then more recently, when we were in Turkey with Saad and our children, we were on a bus and a sheikh came onto the bus and locked the door. He told us that we had to convert to Islam. Some Muslims tried to open the door but he wouldn't let them. We were the only Christians on the bus. We were holding each others hands and praying. My husband was scared because our daughters were young. Fida told him "Don't worry, God will take care of us". The sheikh had a paper for us to read and convert to Islam. We told him we were Christians and he was shocked but didn't do anything. He passed us by. We thank God because he said he would always be with us"

*From Word in Action, the Bible Society's magazine.*

## Love

*Read: 1 John 4:7-21 - God is love, and we love one another through him.*

Some years ago, I baptised a beautiful child. She was nearly three, so a little older than most children who are brought for baptism. She had golden curls and blue eyes and the sweetest smile you could wish to see. But she was unable to sit or stand unaided and she was unable to speak, for she had suffered brain damage at birth.

Her parents had worked so hard on her limbs that they had managed to keep them supple. The consultant had congratulated them, for he said that most children who suffer similar brain damage end up with stiff limbs which not only refuse to work, but also refuse to bend.

The parents wanted to take their child to the Peto Institute in Hungary. They'd seen television documentaries about the Peto Institute and wanted the best possible opportunity for their daughter. It grieved them that she couldn't live life to the full and it grieved them that in this country she was only offered physiotherapy once a month. They were prepared to do anything to raise the money to take their daughter to Hungary, and if she ever got there, they were prepared to spend their days in the future putting their child through the formidable daily exercise programme she needed.

They were aware of the demands such a programme would make on them and on any relatives, friends or neighbours who could be persuaded to help as part of the necessary daily team of adults. And they were aware of the pain and difficulty it would cause their child, but they were still prepared to go through with it because they loved her enough to do anything that was in her best interests. Their long-term goal was the best possible life for their child and they were willing to look well beyond the short-term pain in order to achieve the long-term gain.

That's not such a surprising reaction. Many parents would do the same, although some might falter over the long term, for the treatment would have to go on until the child was grown up. But it's a natural reaction for parents to want the best possible life for their child, and those who are far sighted will be prepared for the child to suffer in the short term in order to gain those long-term benefits.

And this is but a pale reflection of how God feels about each of us. God wants the best possible life for each of us, just as God wanted the best possible life for Jesus. Jesus followed God's guidance throughout his life on earth, never deviating in any way from God's path. Jesus suffered a great deal of agony, but relatively speaking, it was short term agony. It led to the brilliant, transformed, amazing new life revealed by the resurrection, a new life which is very long term since it's forever.

God loves us so much that the God within Jesus took on board the rejection and the agony and the desolation and the death of the crucifixion, in order to show us the long-term results of following God's paths and sticking with God. "God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him," says the writer of the first letter of John.

The writer continues, "Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another." And this links back to his first statement in this passage, "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God. everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love."

Perhaps this is what Jesus was getting at when he hinted that there would be surprises at the Pearly Gates. When he said that those who care for others would be recognised by God and those who fail to care for others would fail to be recognised by God, perhaps he's saying that our recognition of God and by God after physical death, will be determined by the degree of love we've learned during this life. Those who learn to love in this life will find themselves close to God in the next life, living and loving with him.

What is love? It's the sort of dogged determination to do the best for others, that those parents showed for their disabled daughter. It's about caring so much and so deeply for others, that nothing will prevent us from making as certain as we can that they're OK.

Perhaps we might ask ourselves how much we love those in poorer countries? For as the writer of the first letter of John says, "Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also."

*Rev'd Henry Gordon*

## Churchillisms

*Sir Winston Churchill lived from 1874 until 1965. He was a British politician, an army officer, a journalist and a writer, who was Prime Minister from 1940-45 and again from 1951- 55. He is particularly remembered for his indomitable spirit while leading Great Britain to victory in World War 2. The following sayings are attributed to him- and can be judged relevant today.*

- A nation that forgets its past has no future.
- A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.
- Everyone is in favour of free speech. Hardly a day goes by without its being extolled, but some people's idea of it is that they are free to say what they like, but if anyone else says anything back, that is an outrage.
- Fear is a reaction. Courage is a decision.
- In the course of my life I have often had to eat my words, and I must confess that I have always found it a wholesome diet.
- However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results.
- Life can be accepted or changed. If it is not accepted, it must be changed. If it cannot be changed then it must be accepted.
- The positive thinker sees the Invisible, feels the Intangible, and achieves the Impossible.
- There is nothing government can give you that it hasn't already taken from you in the first place.
- You don't make the poor richer by making the rich poorer.
- When you're 20, you care what everyone thinks; when you're 40 you stop caring what everyone thinks; when you're 60 you realise that no one was ever thinking about you in the first place. You have enemies? Good. That means you've stood up for something, sometime in your life.

*From the Internet.*

## **Bible a Month: Mozambique**

*“You, Lord God, are my mighty rock and my fortress. Lead me and guide me, so that your name will be honoured” Psalm 31, 3 (CEV)*

Mozambique is a country on the east coast of Africa. It covers an area three times that of the UK- 799,380 sq km, and it has borders with Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania, as well as the Indian Ocean. It has a population of 26.6 million, which is approx. 41% of that of the UK. The literacy rate- people who can read and write- is 58%. Languages include Portuguese, Emakhuwa, and other local languages.

Mozambique is a huge country. From Maputo, the capital in the south, to Pemba, the main city of the north, it's 1500 miles. Over the last year gifts to Bible a Month have been helping to establish Bible hubs, small regional offices, around the country to run Bible distribution, translation and literacy programmes.

Recently, one opened in Massinga- a coastal city eight hours drive north from Maputo- to scenes of great celebration. “Normally the only person in the church who has a Bible is the pastor” said Pastor Samuel, one of 30 church leaders gathered for the new centre's dedication. “But now, everyone should be able to have a Bible of their own. We need this Bible; this is our time; we want people's minds to be opened to the word of God”

### **Prayer Pointers**

- Thank God for the Bible hubs that have been established this year. May people draw into a closer relationship with Jesus as they are able to read the Bible for themselves.
- Pray that Bible Society's team in Mozambique will be able to open two further Bible hubs by 2020 so more people can be reached.
- Praise God for the Good Samaritan programme and the life changing impact this Bible story is bringing about. May it increase people's hunger to read the word of God.
- Give thanks for the people of Mozambique. May they be blessed as they serve the Lord and help others.

Thank you so much for your support which is bringing the Bible to life at home and around the world. *Bible Society: Stonehill Green, Westlea, Swindon, SN 5 7DG*

## **Eyewitness Report from Mozambique by *Alan Kember***

Mozambique: a land of beautiful beaches and laid-back culture, according to the travel guides. But more than half of the 26.6 million people living here are poor. The country is overwhelmingly Christian but there are pockets of ethnic tension. And it has one of the highest rates of HIV in the world.

My visit took me to Maputo, Mozambique's capital and most densely populated city, and to a small Assemblies of God church. The pastor greeted me with a broad smile and a big hug, and introduced me to 12 women who had come to meet me. We began by singing songs of praise to God- the ladies in the local Xichangana language and me following along as best as I could! It was a joy to worship alongside these women and I wondered if this was a picture of heaven, with people from every tribe, nation and language standing before God.

But I soon learned of the sorrow behind this happy scene. All 12 women I met had HIV, passed onto them by their husbands. Most of the women were also widows; their husbands had died from AIDS-related illnesses. The great tragedy was that this was preventable. The virus was passed on through ignorance, and the stigma prevented people from seeking treatment. It's a downward spiral that I heard about in communities across Mozambique.

The good news is that your support has helped to bring a unique programme of ours to this church- and things are changing. The Good Samaritan unpacks Jesus' famous parable and challenges people to think about what the story means for HIV-affected parts of Africa. The impact is extraordinary. The pastor began running the Good Samaritan programme in their mid week service. By acting out the Bible story, the people with HIV were able to see that they themselves were victims who should not be left "on the side of the road".

Despite the stigma, men and women in the congregation began to open up about their infected status. People were starting to support and care for those with HIV and vitally, people are getting the anti-retroviral drugs they need to survive.

Seeing how the Bible has powerful and direct application to their lives has also made people eager to see what else it has to say. I met one lady, Nora, who told me her story. She knew she was HIV positive after her husband died, but she only told her pastor after attending the Good Samaritan workshops. She realised that God had not abandoned her and there was still hope for her life.

Nora began to read the Bible more regularly, sharing Psalm 31 as a passage of scripture that has spoken to her strongly. I was touched as I read along with her, thinking of her situation, "I will rejoice and be glad in your steadfast love, because you have seen my affliction; you have known the distress of my soul" (Psalm 31, 7- ESV) Nora said, "My heart has gone from despair to hope. I have lost my husband but I still want to be a woman who serves the Lord. Before, I was nothing. Now I am a member of this church community". These days, Nora also helps to run the Good Samaritan programme in the area.

***Thank you for your gifts to Bible a Month. Without them, this life-transforming work would not be possible. From Bible a Month Newsletter, April 2018.***

## **The Methodist Diaconal Convocation**

Someone said to me ...What is convocation?

As a deacon I belong to the Methodist Diaconal Order which is both an Order of Ministry and a Religious Order within the Methodist Church in the UK.

Every year in May from Tuesday to Friday we meet together at what is known as convocation – the gathering of deacons. This year approx. 250 of us met at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick. Amongst our number were deacons from other parts of the world.

We meet together to reflect upon our diaconal calling and to watch over one another in love and to consider what is God calling us to do.

We open convocation with a service of remembrance and praise. We remember those who have died, we greet the deacons who have been ordained last year, which was me and greet those deacons who are seeking permission to become supernumerary.

Then we move on to a Business session.

Each morning we begin the day in prayer and a Bible Study. This reminds me how important it is to live in a rhythm of daily prayer.

This year we were invited to sign up for 'Thy Kingdom Come' prayer spaces taking our theme from the global initiative of encouraging people to explore through prayer how we might courageously witness to God's life – changing work. I went to prayers of lament where we were encouraged to know God even in the darkest of times.

This year we participated in 'Holy conversations and reflection cafes' sharing both as individuals and as a community how God in our midst was calling, leading and guiding us. These conversations all ended up being drawn together through art. I found these conversations both inspiring and challenging as I continue to journey in ordained ministry.

Our closing worship is a Service of Rededication and we greet and promise to pray for those being ordained this year. Deacon Jackie Wright who is based in Seahouses is the District's ordinand for this year.

The week enables and encourages me. I meet and talk with deacons whom I know well and those who I have not talked with before. It is a privilege and a joy to be travelling with my brothers and sisters in the diaconal order.

Please have a chat with me if you want to know anything else.

Deacon Gail Morgan

### **Efficient/Effective?**

This week I heard a quote that was originally written by Peter Drucker, an Austrian born American management consultant. He has been described as the 'founder of modern management'. The quote was: 'Efficiency is doing things right. Effectiveness is doing the right things.' That set me thinking. It's great to be efficient. It gets the job done and done well. But it is imperative that the things that are done are the right things. You can be very efficient at doing the wrong things. So being efficient in itself is not necessarily good.

Some time ago, we had the pleasure of the company of a friend from Latvia. We had some very interesting conversations about many things. We got onto the subject of

people going to other countries within the church setup on particular missions. We both know of people who have gone with a particular project or 'programme' that they intended to put into practice, as though you can programme God. How often do we have plans and ask God to bless our plans when often they are not God's plans at all? I have known people who have been very organised and efficient but not necessarily doing the right things. They arrive full of what they are going to do, set up this meeting and that project and within 2 to 3 years they will have so many converts and will expand to other places when maybe it would be better to identify with the people and place where they intend to work, get to know the real situation and circumstances and what is actually needed. I also read this week about a story of helping those who *need* help as opposed to those that *we think* need our help. There are parts of the world where, instead of organising meetings and setting up Bible classes and teaching programmes, what is really needed is tools to dig a well to save the women from having to walk miles to get a bucket of water. Instead of trying to explain the resurrection it would be more helpful to give seeds or animals or maybe teach them methods of agriculture and business, so the people could feed and fend for themselves. I can't help feeling that much of the work is in order to promote the public standing of the group, charity or denomination that is carrying out the missions. It often seems to be more about adding numbers to their membership or following than sharing the Good News in practical ways.

We can be very efficient in bringing plans to fruition and getting the job done but if we are asking the wrong questions, if we are focusing on the wrong problem, the seriousness of the situation will just continue and get worse. We need to address the cause of problems in order to be effective in bringing about a solution. When we go to the doctor with a health problem, we often get some medication. If the problem continues then often a deeper, more intense and detailed study by x ray, scan or tests needs to be carried out in order to identify the underlying cause of the problem. It's no use taking painkillers if the real problem is a broken leg. The painkillers will alleviate the pain for a while but unless the broken leg is mended, the problem will still exist and cause more pain and problems. Sometimes we might think that we are helping a situation but when we take a closer, more in-depth look at the situation we discover that the real need is something that is not really being addressed. And so, the problem continues. Our carefully thought-out plans and efficiency will get some sort of result, but the real problems are not addressed, and the situation does not change in spite of all our efforts.

It reminds me of the words of Helder Camara, the Brazilian Archbishop who was assassinated in 1999 when he said, 'When I give food to the poor, they call me a saint. When I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a communist'. We can be very efficient but unless we address the root causes of problems and ask the right questions we will never be effective in showing God's love as Jesus taught. Richard Rohr recently in his daily meditations when referring to the Desert Fathers and Mothers said that for them 'faith was first a lifestyle before it was a belief system'. The first followers of Jesus were known as People of the Way (a way of living) before they were known as people who followed a belief system. Maybe it's time to rethink why we do what we do. Are we just efficient or are we effective?

*The blog of Mavis Andradez.*

# Human Rights and Slavery

Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of gender, nationality, place of residency, sex, ethnicity, religion, colour or and other categorization. Thus, human rights are non-discriminatory, meaning that all human beings are entitled to them and cannot be excluded from them. Of course, while all human beings are entitled to human rights, not all human beings experience them equally throughout the world. Many governments and individuals ignore human rights and grossly exploit other human beings.

There are a variety of human rights, including:

- Civil rights (such as the rights to life, liberty and security),
- Political rights (like rights to the protection of the law and equality before the law),
- Economic rights (including rights to work, to own property and to receive equal pay),
- Social rights (like rights to education and consenting marriages),
- Cultural rights (including the right to freely participate in their cultural community), and
- Collective rights (like the right to self-determination).

## Slavery is a Violation of Human Rights

Slavery, forced labour and human trafficking are violations of human rights because these acts strip human beings of their inherent rights. In fact, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights explicitly references slavery, stating in Article 4: No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Slavers and human traffickers grossly violate human rights since they claim ownership, labour and/or the humanity of another human being. The human rights most relevant to trafficking are:

- The prohibition of discrimination on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status;
- The right to life;
- The right to liberty and security;
- The right not to be submitted to slavery, servitude, forced labour or bonded labour;
- The right not to be subjected to torture and/or cruel, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment;
- The right to be free from gendered violence;
- The right to freedom of association;
- The right to freedom of movement;
- The right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health;
- The right to just and favourable conditions of work;
- The right to an adequate standard of living;
- The right to social security; and
- The right of children to special protection.

Hope for Justice is among those organisations taking the lead in addressing the issue of modern day slavery in today's Great Britain. They work from the point of rescue right through to advocacy.

Hope for Justice exists to bring an end to modern slavery by preventing exploitation-rescuing victims, restoring lives and reforming society.

We have all heard of cases of modern day slavery. People who have been exploited and forced to work as servants with little or no wages and no rights; have you ever wondered about people you've met- working in shops, cleaning, gardening, on building sites, or perhaps cleaning your car? Where do they come from and how are they looked after? Many victims can't or won't go to the police, perhaps because they originate from countries with disreputable policing or because they've been instilled with a fear of the UK authorities by their traffickers. It has to be stopped.

Sadly, It is estimated that there are 40 million slaves worldwide, including forced marriages.

Churches can play a part by hosting a speaker, having a Hope Sunday service, being partners in prayer support, being trained to spot the signs of slavery.

For more information go to [www.hopeforjustice.org](http://www.hopeforjustice.org)

## **The Spirit Was There But Where Were You?**

On Pentecost Sunday Wallsend Churches Working Together held a wonderful service at the Holy Cross Ruins. It truly was a service involving the Holy Spirit and our thanks go to Rev Sheila Hamil for the Reflection (with help from husband Bob) and the music, and to Marie Rice and various other people for taking part and organising the event.

But where were you?

WCWT consists of 12 churches and I counted 22 people at the service. Only David Ashley and myself from Trinity, I didn't see anyone from Allen Memorial (my apologies if you were there and I missed you). And only two members of the clergy apart from Sheila who was taking part.

So not even an average of 2 people from each church. I personally think that is terrible and says a lot about our failing churches and gradually reducing numbers.

I get the feeling that our church members think that WCWT is for the "Other" churches in Wallsend and as long as they pay their dues and send a representative, that will be fine.

Well, I'm sorry to say but that's anything but fine. Every member of every church is also a member of Wallsend Churches Working Together (The hint is in the title).

We are all members and adherents of the Christian Church and must work together if we are ever going to really do God's work and bring the gospel to all our neighbours and friends in Wallsend. Eventually – hopefully - there won't be Methodist, Catholic, Anglican etc etc. There will be, one Christian Church where every Christian and non-believer will be welcome where the only rules from On High are from God and not manmade committee.

The next WCWT event is holding a stall at the Wallsend Festival on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June. If you can help with manning the stall for an hour, please let me know.

Alan Barker

Chair of WCWT.

## Hand Prayers

To aid our focus whilst praying, try following these instructions to hold physical positions with our hands. We do this to engage our bodies within our prayers, allowing our minds to focus more freely on what we are praying about.

### ***Praying Hands.***

*First place your palms and fingers flat together, with your hands pointing upwards; in the position traditionally adopted to pray.*

We come to be still before God. Our hands together, stopping us undertaking physical work. We take up the work of an intercessor, bringing our earthly concerns before our Heavenly Father.

Now pray.... **Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness. You set me at liberty when I was in trouble; have mercy on me and hear my prayer** (Psalm 4.1)

### ***Fists***

*Separate your hands and clench them together to form fists. Hold them as tightly as you can, so that your focus is on your fists.*

Now pray.... **We pray for those parts of the world afflicted by violence. We remember those in violent relationships. Where talking has been replaced by fighting. Where peace has been replaced by aggression and unrest.**

### ***Wounded hand***

*Open both your fists. Hold your left hand so your palm faces towards you. take the index finger on your right hand and push it hard into the centre of your left palm.*

*Jesus' hands were pierced as he was crucified. He was wounded to restore our relationship with God. He suffered to bring reconciliation and justice to the world.*

Now pray..... **We pray for situations and places where that reconciliation is needed, both in our own lives, our community and the wider world.**

### ***Open hands***

*Open both of your hands, hold them open in front of you with your palms facing upwards. We recognise that all of humanity needs to receive good things. God provides for each of us physically, emotionally and spiritually.*

Now pray..... **We ask God for the things we need, and the things needed by others.**

### ***Holding hands***

*Turn over your left hand, with your right hand gently take hold of your left as if holding someone else's hand.*

*Jesus embodied God's compassion. He met with the sick and the dying. He promised comfort to those who mourn.*

Now pray..... **We pray for those who are sick, suffering of mourning. We pray that they will know God's healing, comfort, compassion and love.**

### ***Praying Hands***

*We return our hands to the first position we held. Palms and fingers flat together, hands pointing upwards; the position traditionally adopted for prayer.*

Now pray..... **We remember God's promise to hear our prayers. We pray to the Father, in the name of the Son, by the power of the Holy Spirit.**

## **A Prayer for the Stressed (not to be taken too seriously!)**

Grant me the serenity to accept things I cannot change,  
The courage to change the things I cannot accept and  
the wisdom to hide the bodies of those that I had to kill today  
because they got on my nerves.

Also help me to be careful of the toes I step on  
as they may be connected to the feet I have to kiss tomorrow.  
And help me to remember when I'm having a bad day  
and it seems that people are trying to wind me up.

It takes 42 muscles to frown,  
28 muscles to smile ,  
And only 4 to extend my arm and  
Smack someone in the mouth.

*Anonymous.*

## **Psalm 23: Line by Line Meaning**

The LORD is my shepherd = RELATIONSHIP  
I shall not be in want = SUPPLY  
He makes me lie down in green pastures = REST  
He leads me beside quiet waters = REFRESHMENT  
He restores my soul = HEALING  
He guides me in paths of righteousness = GUIDANCE  
For his name's sake = PURPOSE  
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death = TESTING  
I will fear no evil = PROTECTION  
For you are with me = FAITHFULNESS  
Your rod and your staff they comfort me = DISCIPLINE  
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies = HOPE  
You anoint my head with oil = CONSECRATION  
My cup overflows = ABUNDANCE  
Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life = BLESSING  
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord = SECURITY  
Forever = ETERNITY.

*Source unknown. From the Internet*

## **Good News from the Leprosy Mission**

Building work is beginning on a brand new Outpatients Department at Purulia Hospital, India- its doors set to open before Christmas 2018.

Purulia Hospital in West Bengal is such a special place as it is the Leprosy mission's oldest hospital, caring for patients for almost 130 years. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, 29 "outcasts" were first cared for with love and compassion under a tree in Purulia. In 2016 more than 45,000 patients were treated by a small hardworking team headed up by husband and wife Dr Famkima Darlong and Dr Joydeepa Darlong.

Currently, up to 300 patients a day queue in a cramped waiting area to be examined by a doctor with little privacy and just two toilets. Although the care and clinical expertise is outstanding, the facilities are just not fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

But thanks to your help and compassion for these people, many of whom are disowned by their families and arrive in Purulia afraid and alone, they will soon be welcomed into a spacious waiting area and examined in dignity in one of six new consultation rooms. Two minor procedure rooms will be created inside the new Outpatients Dept as well as a pharmacy, toilet block, and two lab areas. What a difference this will make! Once the new Outpatients is open a second phase of the project will begin in 2019. The current Outpatients building will be transformed to include a canteen serving healthy food to staff and patients, as well as creating administration space to house patient records. There are also plans to refurbish old and run-down doctors' homes in the hospital grounds in a bid to attract new doctors to Purulia.

Thank you for your prayers and your support.

*From New Day, the magazine of the Leprosy Mission.*

## **Nicaragua News**

Hello my Trinity & Allen friends

As I write I have literally ten minutes before my meeting and I've just had word from Alan to say if I have anything for the magazine.....It must say it now.

So very briefly:

My fractured foot is healing nicely. Only one more week and I go back to hospital and hopefully get rid of my surgical boot. I now know what a caged animal feels like!!!

I've had word about my missing suitcase.....it can't be found so a compensation claim has now to be made.

Please pray for the political unrest we are suffering here in Nicaragua. It is the worst they have seen the country in. So many lost lives, injured people and destroyed buildings. Our roads are blocked to stop people and foodstuffs coming in or going out. I feel safe where I am and as I've had house arrest for the last month, I am not in any threat .....just might not be able to eat the things we can't buy at the moment.

So sorry that's it, my ten minutes are up. I will write a fuller version in my next newsletter.

Love Margaret

## Prayers for the world

We pray for the reassurance of your presence, Lord Jesus,  
in the hearts of all who are despondent and exhausted,  
in places where there is pressure and strain,  
in places where there is anxiety and fear,  
in places where there is loneliness and regret,  
in places where there is too much doubt and too little peace of mind,  
in places where ventures seem to have failed and confidence has been lost.  
We pray for reassurance of your presence, Lord Jesus,  
in our own hearts and in the hearts of all those we love or care for,  
or for whom we bear responsibility.  
And we ask your blessing on our work, our rest, and our dreams. Amen.  
*From rootsontheweb.com*

## A Prayer of the Church

*When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars that you have established;  
what are human beings that you a remindful of them,  
mortal that you care for them?  
Yet you have made them a little lower than God,  
and crowned them with glory and honour.  
You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;  
you have put all things under their feet. (Psalm 8 3-6 NRSV)*

The greatest and most instructive thing about this psalm is the way it balances pride in what God has made us, with humbleness in the face of the responsibility God has laid on us. Pray to live in a way that is mindful of God and our neighbour, and careful of God's creation, that treads carefully on the earth we steward.

## Prayers for Allen Memorial and Trinity

Living God, We thank you for opportunities to share in the worship of your people and to focus our thoughts on your presence, but save us from mistakenly imagining you are more present in worship than anywhere else. Teach us that you are by our sides wherever we may be, and in whatever we may be doing, involved in every aspect of our lives and in every part of the world. May that knowledge illumine the affairs of each day and enrich each moment as we realise that you are constantly waiting to meet with us, speak to us, lead us and bless us. Teach us to give you not just a few moments each week, but all of our lives, to your service and to your glory.

*The Lord give you ears to hear his call, a heart to respond to his love, and a tongue to tell of the wonders he has done; and the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be upon you always. Amen*

## Points to Ponder

- One of the hardest lessons in life is letting go. Whether it's guilt, anger, love, loss, or betrayal. Change is never easy. We fight to hold on and we fight to let go.
- Let us continue to hope, work and pray that in the future we will live to see a warless world, a better distribution of wealth and a brotherhood that transcends race of colour. This is the gospel that I will preach to the world. *Martin Luther King*
- God doesn't want you just to **GO** to church. God wants you to **BE** the church.
- Did I offer peace today? Did I bring a smile to someone's face? Did I say words of healing? Did I let go of my anger and resentment? Did I forgive? Did I love? These are real questions. *Henri Nouwen*
- Cynicism creeps up on all of us. Let it grow unchecked and you will become the Christian who's seen it all, knows it all, and tells everyone about it. Which also means 2 things; you're no fun to hang out with and you've stopped growing. Curiosity appears to be the antidote to cynicism. The curious ask questions; they're interested; they're learners; they don't think they know it all. *Carey Nieuwhof*
- The gospel is less about how to get into the Kingdom of heaven after you die, and more about how to live in the Kingdom of heaven before you die.
- Resolve to be tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the strong and tolerant with the weak and wrong. Sometime in your life you will have been all of these.
- A good laugh and a long sleep are the two best cures for anything. *Irish Proverb*
- Due to increased brain activity, people with higher intelligence tend to have a harder time falling asleep at night. *SimpleReminders.com*
- Grief never ends....but it changes. It's a passage, not a place to stay. Grief is not a sign of weakness, nor a lack of faith....it's the price of love. *MindfulChristianityToday*
- God is bigger than your past. Your depression. Your pain. Your hate. Your anger. Your doubt. Your fear. Your shame. Your anxiety. Your scars. This world. *Clergycoachingnetwork*

***N.B. Most of the above are freely available on the Internet and cannot be attributed to any particular author.***

## **Time for the sermon.....**

- A sermon should have a good beginning and a good end and they should be as close together as possible. *George Burns, American comedian.*
- A preacher once started his sermon with the words, “I have so much to say I don’t know where to begin”. A little boy piped up, “Could you start somewhere near the end?”
- I don’t mind if people look at their watches while I’m preaching but I get worried if they take them off and shake them.
- When preaching of heaven let your face light up with joy. When preaching of hell your ordinary face will do. *Charles Spurgeon, Baptist preacher.*
- If all the people who fell asleep during sermons were laid out end to end.....they would be a lot more comfortable!
- A young vicar said to his wife, “Do I put enough fire into my sermons?”. “Darling” she replied, “I don’t think you put enough of your sermons in the fire”
- The deeds you do today may be the only sermon some people will hear today. *Francis of Assisi.*
- A mother finally discovered how to get her fidgety 7 year old to sit still and be quiet. About half way through the sermon she leaned over and whispered, “If you don’t be quiet, the pastor is going to lose his place and will have to start his sermon all over again!”
- Remember, to make a speech immortal you don’t have to make it everlasting!

*From “Bloopers and Blessings” published by TLM Trading Limited.*

## **Trinity Shoe Box Appeal 2018**

Each month we are asking for donations of items to go in our Shoe Boxes.

This month we are asking for Face Cloths, Skipping Ropes, Combs/Brushes, Hair Accessories, Dominoes, Colouring Pencils and Balls.

Our continued thanks to everyone who contributes to this very worthy cause.

### **Holiday At Home**

**BOOK THESE DATES**

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> through Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> August.

Trinity is hosting a “Holiday at Home” for those who may be finding it difficult to go away on holiday.

Check it out in next months magazine.

If you can help in any way with this please see Deacon Gail.

## A prayer for hope

Lord, hear our prayers for Syria.  
For people leaving everything behind to flee to safety,  
For those who have lost loved ones,  
For lives interrupted, educations stalled, and families separated.  
Lord, bless your people.

We thank you for the work of partners,  
For the hospitality of neighbours, the generosity of strangers,  
For those who give of themselves to help others  
For those who refuse to be silent in the face of injustice  
Lord, bless your people.

Lord, give the people of Syria hope,  
For peace and justice to prevail,  
For there to be new beginnings for all people living in that land,  
For freedom to replace fear and for there to be a better tomorrow  
Lord, bless your people.

Amen.

*I found this prayer in my magazine hold file. It was dated 2014. No change in 4 years !!!*

## Satan in church

A few minutes before the church service started, the congregation was sitting in their pews and talking. Suddenly, Satan appeared at the front of church. Everyone started screaming and running for the exit, trampling each other in a frantic effort to get away from evil incarnate. Soon the church was empty except for one elderly gentleman, who sat calmly in his pew without moving, seemingly oblivious to the fact that God's ultimate enemy was in his presence. So Satan walked up to the man and said, "Do you know who I am?". The man replied, "Yes, I do". "Aren't you afraid of me?" Satan asked. "No," said the man. "Don't you realise that I can kill you with one word?" asks Satan. "Don't doubt it for a minute" returned the old man, in an even tone. "Did you know that I can cause you profound, horrifying, AGONY for all eternity?" persisted Satan. "Yes" was the calm reply. "And you're still not afraid?" asked Satan. "No" said the old man. More than a little disturbed, Satan asked, "Why aren't you afraid of me?" The man calmly replied, "Been married to your sister for 48 years"

*My apologies if you've read it before, but I just love the ending. Editor*

## The Big “0”

Congratulations to Alan Barker on his big “0” birthday on June 4<sup>th</sup>. (You’ll have to ask him what number it is!!!)

*Dorothy Barker*

### Allen Memorial Prayer Corner

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> June 6:00-7:00pm  
Come along for a time of Prayer.  
All welcome .

Gracious God, you speak of heaven as our inheritance,  
and of ourselves as heirs to the kingdom.  
How easily we hear those words and do not heed them:  
the kingdom of heaven is your gift to your children, not something we are to earn by good deeds.  
May we always thank you by lives of faithful service.

## Allen Memorial Messy Church

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> June 3:30- 5:30pm  
Jonah the Groaner  
Worship, Crafts, Food

### Open the Book

At Richardson Dees School  
Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July 1:00pm

### Trinity Fellowship Meeting

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> June at 2 p.m.  
Everyone is welcome to join us in this friendly, relaxed atmosphere.

### Articles By?

All articles for the July / August edition of AT Church MUST be handed in by Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> June.

## Preachers and Services

### Allen Memorial

### Trinity

June

3 <sup>rd</sup>	10.45 a.m. 6 p.m.	Pastor Tom Leighton. Rev Alison Wilkinson	10.45 a.m.	Mrs Chris Carroll
10 <sup>th</sup>	10.45 a.m. 6 p.m.	Mr Keith Jones. Rev Janet Jackson Communion Service	10.45 a.m.	Rev Janet Jackson Communion Service
17 <sup>th</sup>	10.45 a.m. 6 p.m.	Mr David Thornton. Mrs Margaret Harrison.	10.45 a.m.	Deacon Gail Morgan
24 <sup>th</sup>	10.45 a.m. 6 p.m.	Rev Janet Jackson Communion Service. Rev Gordon Wynne.	10.45 a.m.	Rev Gordon Wynne.
July 1 <sup>st</sup>	10.45 a.m. 6 p.m.	Mr Michael Ball. Local arrangement.	10.45 a.m.	Canon Peter Dodd.

## Trinity Coffee Morning Rota

June  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Susan Bewley &  
 Lynda McQuillan

9<sup>th</sup> Maureen Mills &  
 Lorna Morgan

16<sup>th</sup> Sylvia Aston &  
 Janis Duff

23<sup>rd</sup> Mick & Zoe Watson

30<sup>th</sup> Susan Bewley &  
 Lynda McQuillan

July  
 7<sup>th</sup> Maureen Mills &  
 Lorna Morgan

## Trinity Door Stewards Rota

*(All 10-45 a.m. unless otherwise noted)*

June  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Mrs L Morgan.

10<sup>th</sup> Mrs D Kirkley

17<sup>th</sup> Mrs M Mills

25<sup>th</sup> Mrs M McCullough.

July  
 1<sup>st</sup> Mr R Falcus.

## Allen Memorial Door Stewards

Ann Humphries/Dorothy Kerr

## Trinity Audio Visual      Church Operators      Steward

June 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Alan Barker	Mark Burdon
10 <sup>th</sup>	Susan / Lynda	Bill Filmer
17 <sup>th</sup>	Mark Burdon	Alan Barker
24 <sup>th</sup>	Alan Barker	Susan Bewley
July 1 <sup>st</sup>	Susan / Lynda	Mark Burdon

## Trinity Flower Rota

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> June  
 Dorothy & Alan Barker

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June  
 Olive Lindsay

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> June  
 No donor at time of print

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> June  
 No donor at time of print

Sunday 1st July  
 Janis Duff

## Allen Memorial Steward Rota

June:  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Anne Gallagher  
 10<sup>th</sup> Martin Edworthy  
 17<sup>th</sup> Alan Emery  
 24<sup>th</sup> Anne Gallagher

During the last month our Communion Table Flowers have brought their beauty and our thoughts and prayers to Renata Burley, Christening Party, Zvide Mudekwa and Susan Bewley.