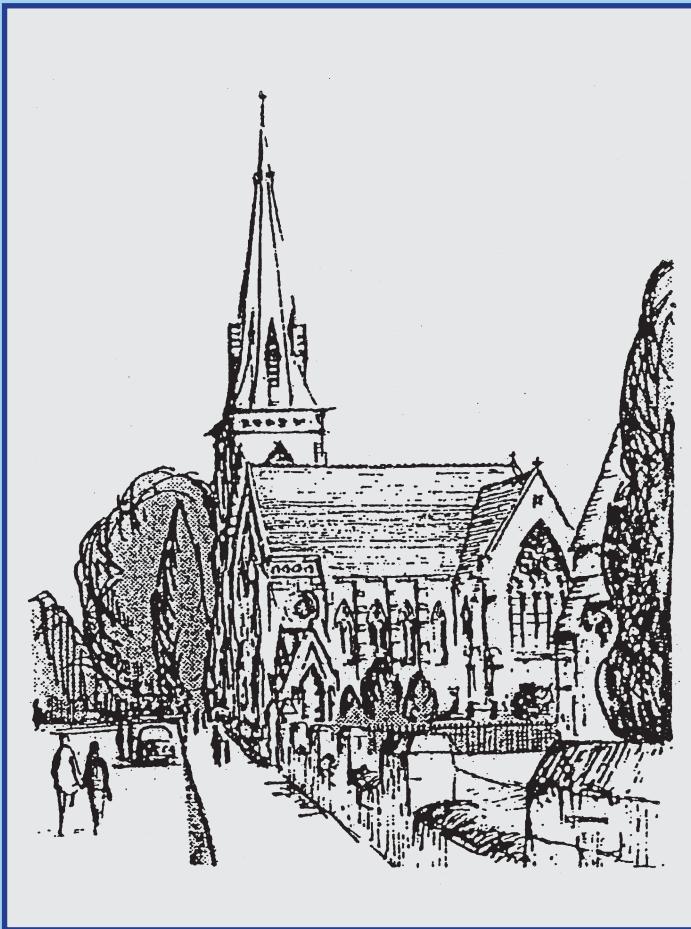
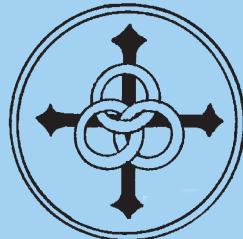


TRINITY TRIANGLE

FEBRUARY 2021



'Serving God, serving each other, serving community'

TRINITY CHURCH

Methodist/United Reformed/Church in Abingdon

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*Light of the World
We need you every hour.
Help us to feel your nearness in
trouble and in joy.*

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MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

One of the things that comes up on my Facebook feed quite regularly is this question: “Where did you find God this weekend?” It is an interesting question. For many of us the answer used to be quite easy. We’d find God as we met with each other to sing, pray, hear the Bible read to us and the thoughts of the preacher. During this pandemic some have been joining in worship through the Circuit Zoom Service, by rediscovering Songs of Praise on the telly or the various services available on the radio as well as those “Worship @ Home” services that are sent out each week.

The wide variety of services that people have been tuning into has been a delight to hear about. It is also very true that some styles and options suit some people better than others. This should not surprise us! Yet I wonder if the question that comes up on my Facebook feed needs changing to: “Where did I find God today?”

God has promised to be with us in all things, so we can expect to find God in our midst whether we feel we can venture out to the shops or whether our food and medicine is delivered to our door. My experience is that the more I seek God the more I find God and can marvel at the way in which God weaves in and through so many people, so many instances, often when and where we least expect it.

On 2nd February we remember the occasion when Jesus was presented in the Temple (Luke 2:22-40). Here we find the lovely story of Simeon and Anna two people who spent a lot of time in the temple and were thought to be very holy and devout. Yet with the help of the Holy Spirit, they recognised this child, Jesus, for who he was. God’s Son. Simeon gave thanks to God for keeping his promise and Anna spoke about what was to happen to the child.

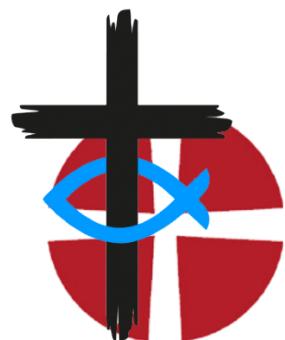
Perhaps we need to learn from Simeon and Anna that we can ask God’s Holy Spirit to help us see what God is doing in our lives and in the lives of those around us. In this story, they glimpsed God by recognising Jesus and they praised God. Where did you glimpse God today? What led you to offer thanks and praise to God today? And do you expect to glimpse God in the everyday? Our church buildings may be closed, but God’s work and the work of his church continues just as it always has. Let us be excited by God as we join in with God in his work today.

Wishing you Every Blessing
Ian



Ways of being Church during lockdown

- Pray Everyday
- Read the Bible Regularly
- Ring a friend to check how they're doing
- Donate to the Foodbank
- Give a gift to a lonely neighbour
- Thank your delivery drivers
- Try and be positive online
- Going on a walk whilst listening to worship music



Church Family News

We send best wishes to all our readers in this first issue of Triangle in 2021 after what has been a challenging year. Our thoughts are with those who have continuing health problems or are waiting for hospital appointments and treatments.

We were saddened to hear of the death of John Cook who died on December 1st after a long period of ill health. John was a valued member of our church family and our thoughts are with Tricia, Michael, Richard and his family in Japan. Our love and prayers are with them all at this sad time.

Funerals

On 15th December, 2020, at South Oxfordshire Crematorium, John Cook who died on December 1st.

On 21st January, 2021 at South Oxfordshire Crematorium, Frederick Elford, who died on December 22nd, aged 86.

On 21st December, 2020 at Trinity Church, Lorna Hartley who died on December 12th, aged 91,

"In You, Father, we are one family in earth and heaven"

Church Meeting

February 2021

As you may remember, we were able to hold Trinity's AGM online in November and this was very successful, providing everyone with information and some food for thought. We were also very grateful for the responses we received in relation to the requests which were made. The Trustees were very pleased to welcome Neil Oastler, Heather Townsend and Stuart Townsend to the recent Trustees' meeting in January.

Following this success, the Trustees will be holding another Church Meeting during the last half of February this year. The agenda and accompanying papers will be sent out to most people by email, but there will be paper copies which Eluned will send out to those who are not using email. Agenda items will include Finance and charitable giving, the Conduit Centre and an update on the work of Pastoral Elders. This time, we are planning to hold a Zoom meeting, following the arrival of the papers, which will enable people to have some discussion and provide responses to the agenda items. Codes/links for the Zoom meeting will be sent in due course. For those not able to 'Zoom', we will enable responses and comments to be given to the Trustees via email or by telephone and details of who to contact will arrive with the papers.

If any Church member has anything they would like to be placed on the agenda for the Church Meeting, please contact Cynthia Bartlett during the first ten days of February. (cynbartlett@yahoo.co.uk 01235 525924)

A Tribute to John Cook

Despite being a resplendent King in many Trinity Nativity Services, John Cook was a very humble man. Many, after his death on December 1st remarked upon his humility; that he was always good company and easy to talk to. He had a lovely smile and a gentle sense of humour. When talking with him, he rarely talked of himself, apart that is, from his passion - his love of cricket, and of Kent cricket in particular. So this article, written by a family friend of over fifty years, seeks to redress the balance. There was a lot to John Cook!!

He was evacuated for the duration of the war from the South East of England to Lancashire. His father was a prisoner of war, and lost an arm before he returned to running a small farm in Kent and John's younger brother Peter was born. Once farming became too difficult, John's father worked in the Civil Service, and family life settled into whatever was 'normal' in post-war Britain.

Leaving school as Head Boy, and with a full bag of sporting successes, John entered the Army. John did National Service, being rapidly promoted and was soon commissioned into the Royal Army Ordnance Corps. A source of amusement, for one not 100% blessed with DIY skills, was that an early posting placed him in charge of small trades within the RAOC, i.e., building, carpentry, plumbing, kilt-making and printing! Though perhaps the latter fine-tuned his life-long skill at proof reading!

In thirty years in the Army, John had 23 postings of one sort or another. Once married to Tricia, herself an Army Officer, they had 20 house moves, and John's work took him to many countries. These included, Singapore, Oman, Germany, Belgium, Australia, Nigeria, Argentina and Papua New Guinea. Many of these postings he shared with Tricia, Michael and Richard, their two sons. His final posting, now as Colonel Cook, was as Commandant of the School of Ordnance. It was said, that when John was in command, the wives and soldiers commented that they had never worked in a happier place.

His Army career enabled John to indulge his love of sport, some hockey, but above all cricket, playing as both batsman and as a very successful wicket keeper. To fulfil an ambition to be elected as a Life Playing Member of the MCC, John had to play the required ten games. Scoring a century for the MCC was something of which he was quietly proud. John continued to play cricket on leaving the Army, mostly for 'wandering' sides. Teams with the wonderful names of The Grannies, The Invalids, The Grasshoppers, but mainly the Stragglers of Asia. These matches

took him and Tricia (adoringly watching from the boundary!!) all over the UK, to many European countries and most memorably India.

On retirement from the Army, John and Tricia came to Abingdon, and to Trinity. Tricia worked in Oxford and John taught at Cothill, both in the classroom and the sports field, and finally as Bursar of both Cothill and Chandlings. Retirement found him training to be a CAB advisor, where for five years, his skills as a compassionate listener, and clear thinker were much appreciated. He was often sent to the more deprived areas of Oxford, which meant dealing with some very stressful situations.

But there was always golf! And he became an umpire in the 7th and 8th Oxfordshire League Cricket. Despite a lifetime of playing, and umpiring in schools, with all the extra training required, Tricia remarked that he was now qualified to umpire at Lords!

After CAB, John worked in the local Oxfam shop, soon taking on the responsibility of several shops' collections of coins and particularly stamps, of which he had an excellent knowledge.

John's diagnosis of Amyloidosis was an especially hard blow, as it meant that he could no longer fly. With Richard in Okinawa in Japan, this meant that visiting him and especially seeing their two adorable grandsons was not possible. In his philosophical way, John accepted this with equanimity, and Tricia made several trips on her own, whilst John delighted in the rare occasions that the family could come to the UK. But holidays were still possible and John and Tricia enjoyed several cruises, rail and coach trips. Here at Trinity, John was Tricia's help and support, and Mover of Chairs. He became one of Ron's Boys in the kitchen on all Fair Days. He was Church Archivist for a time and finally took over the Door Steward rota. Whilst Tricia may have a 'higher profile' within the Church Family, no-one who knew them doubted that they were a real partnership, appreciating each other's gifts.

Above all, John was a calm, reassuring presence and a friend to many. He was incredibly wise and loyal. As someone wrote to Tricia after he died, "John always made me feel better after I had spoken to him". And a younger person confided, "He was the nicest grown-up I knew." He didn't shout about his faith, but it was life-long, sustaining him through many challenging times, not least during the last months of his life.

As Richard put it so succinctly, John was content. And that sums him up.

He will be greatly missed.

Margaret Smith



TrinityLearning volunteer appeal for Experience Easter.

This year, although we are unable to welcome children to Trinity Church for Experience Easter, we are hoping to be able to provide the stories and crafts through simple videos, accessible via our website and craft packs sent out to schools. The videos will be very simple, similar to those our workshop leader Taz created for Advent which were well received by schools and families. These are available on our website at <https://trinitylearning.org.uk/christmas-storytelling/> if you would like to take a look?

If you have led sessions at Experience Easter before, or you never have but are interested in giving it a go, please get in touch and find out more by emailing Nicola at nic.trinitylearning@gmail.com.

TrinityLearning's AGM and Annual Report: 2019 – 2020

On 11th January the TrinityLearning Trustees welcomed volunteers, school representatives and supporters to our first AGM as a standalone charity. Although we were sad not to meet in person, it was lovely to see so many of you join in on Zoom. The full annual report is available from our website at <https://bit.ly/2Mz9GU2> and we have reproduced a few sections below.

About Us

TrinityLearning was developed from a church project set up by Trinity Church, Abingdon in 2009. Its remit was to explore ways in which the church could support and enhance the quality of life for all those working in local schools – both students and staff. Working with head teachers, staff, and children it soon became clear that the area they most needed support in was wellbeing.

Over the last decade, we have provided that wellbeing support through a range of projects including taking groups of children out of the classroom to work on projects such as an assembly or a local newsletter; nature walks for children and their families; Thinking Books to promote children's emotional literacy, and regular advice and support (Including mental health) leaflets for teaching staff.

This work has developed and expanded since we became a registered charity in March 2019.

Our Mission

TrinityLearning believes that every child deserves a calm, positive start in life. We aim to relieve the pressures on busy schools through specially tailored

activities, including practical help for school leaders, regular mentoring for children and workshops for pupils and staff.

Our objectives

Programme

- To develop existing projects and continue to identify areas of need and develop new ways to support wellbeing in school communities.
- To develop new TrinityLearning projects such as Thinking Books.
- To continue ongoing TrinityLearning workshops such as Experience Easter, Prayer Spaces, Hello Abingdon and DiY Assembly.
- To maximise our reach and impact by recruiting and training new staff.

Legal and administrative

- To ensure TrinityLearning functions legally and ethically by creating a consistent set of policies and conducting a risk review of TrinityLearning's organisation and activities.

The Annual Report contains a full breakdown of how these priorities have been met including:

- **To develop existing projects and continue to identify areas of need and develop new ways to support wellbeing in school communities.**

Kingfisher Garden:

Kingfisher school is a local school that caters for young people aged 2 – 19 years who have severe, complex or profound needs, including autism. Our Kingfisher garden project, which consisted of refurbishing the school's sensory garden, began in 2018. It continued to be led by Rosemary Perrow, (TrinityLearning's first Education Development Officer) in a volunteer capacity throughout this reporting period.



*Reburbished
Kingfisher School garden*

We were supported on this project by a number of volunteer groups, most notably a group of 5th formers from the local Radley College who volunteered regularly over a six-month period. TrinityLearning volunteers continued to keep an eye on the garden during lockdown and two TrinityLearning volunteers have now taken over the responsibility of garden maintenance. The garden is now used regularly and is hugely appreciated by both pupils and staff at Kingfisher school.

Peaceful Activity Packs:

After returning from furlough in June, TrinityLearning designed packs for children that volunteers would usually work with weekly as well as those particularly affected by isolation during lockdown. The packs provided peaceful, calming activities for children to do independently or with their families to help reduce anxiety and stress



when many parents were working from home and children were off school. A generous donation from Abingdon Baptist Church allowed us to provide 16 of these trial Peaceful Activity Packs to children from Carswell and Caldecott schools.

We loved this comment from Lorraine as it demonstrates TrinityLearning's mission in action. By improving a school environment for the pupils, we can also help to reduce stress for teaching staff, families and the wider school community.

"THE GARDEN LOOKS AWESOME. THE RAINBOW CHAIN IS GREAT AND THE LANES LOOK AMAZING. I ACTUALLY TOOK SOME THYME FOR MY TEA TONIGHT!" LORRAINE WILSON, HEAD OF KINGFISHER

**"THANK YOU FOR THE PACKS YOU GAVE US, THEY'VE BEEN GIVEN TO CHILDREN WHO WERE OVER THE MOON WITH THEM!"
PAUL CRANDON, HEAD OF CARSWELL SCHOOL**

2nd February is Candlemas Day.

Candlemas is a traditional Christian festival that commemorates the ritual purification of Mary forty days after the birth of her son Jesus.



There is something special about lighting a candle. When candles are lit, we are reminded that Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, guiding us through the darkness. The candles thus came to signify faith, devotion, spirituality, and hope.

**The deadline for the February edition is
Sunday 21st February 2021**

Please send all contributions to both Val Dalby (vadalby17@gmail.com) and Cynthia Bartlett (cynbartlett@yahoo.co.uk) or via the Office. If you have information to share about the Church Family please contact Val Dalby at the email address above or send via the Office. Thank you



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