

Holy Trinity Geneva Magazine



The Chaplain writes

When my daughters were young they would be dismayed at the signs which used to appear in the shops in early July proclaiming, 'Get ready for the new school year now'. The last thing they wanted to think about at the start of the long summer holiday was the need to stock up on stationery, books and new school uniform. Yet by the end of August when the school year was about to start in England, they were more than ready to go back to school, although they would probably not have admitted it.

We are at that stage too as the new academic year begins, we are going back to work, new people are moving to Geneva to take up contracts and the various groups in church are resuming after the summer break. Although we may feel a little wistful as the summer draws to a close, there is a new energy and excitement as well. Quite rightly so, as there is a lot that will be happening at Holy Trinity this autumn.

Firstly, our new Curate, the Revd Glen Ruffle, will be coming and will be licensed by Bishop Robert at Holy Trinity on Thursday 7th September. He will be working for part of his time at

Holy Trinity and the rest with the Anglican Communion Office within the United Nations here in Geneva. Glen has recently married Angela and we look forward to welcoming both of them.

There will be a new beginning as well for twelve of our adults and young people who have been preparing for Confirmation. They will be confirmed by Bishop Robert at a special service also on September 7th and we hold them in prayer as they prepare to commit themselves to follow Christ.

We've also seen remarkable progress with our building renovation programme thanks to the sterling work of our indomitable Mark Charles, our Building Tomorrow committee and all who have been involved in the actual carrying out of this work. As a result of all they have done, we have now virtually completed the first phase of this project. We'll be celebrating this with great joy at a special service and concert on Sunday September 17th together with the many others involved, including sponsors, contractors and suppliers and of course our congregation at Holy Trinity who have made this possible.

It's an important milestone for us which opens up all sorts of new opportunities for how we use our church particularly for worship and to serve our local community. At the same time, as we have also recently been

granted permission to start the second phase of the Building Tomorrow project which includes complete renovation of our existing hall as well as the creation of a new level beneath it, we will be able to create something which will radically help the future development of our church.

Also in September we will be launching our new Vision and Strategy which has been prepared by a coordinating group drawn from across the church and working in consultation with our richly diverse congregation. This strategy will help us to focus our worship, mission and outreach for the next few years.

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There will be lots of opportunities here at Holy Trinity this autumn. First of all, to grow as disciples as we follow the Diocesan Lay Discipleship course and reflect in monthly discussion on what this might mean for us in our relationship with God and our life together here. This in turn will lead us to look at vocation and to consider how God is calling each one of us in different ways to use and develop the gifts which He has given us for service.

And there are many areas where we can make a difference. I'll just give a few examples. We are seeking to deepen our commitment to sustainability in every part of our church life including by aiming to achieve the A Rocha Bronze Eco Award and need your help to enable us to do this. Our young people inspire and challenge us and there are exciting opportunities to work with them this autumn.

We will be welcoming a range of new people to Geneva and we need people to befriend and assist them and help those in our own congregation to settle in well. We also hope to increase our ministry of outreach, building on our work providing meals at the Jardin de Montbrillant, by starting to provide food and toiletry packs for those in need. We will also explore how we may use some of the special gifts we can offer at Holy Trinity, for example in the area of music, to help those with specific needs.

Whatever your area of interest and sense of calling, I invite you to get involved at Holy Trinity this autumn. In this, we will seek to be guided by the Holy Spirit for God promises us:

*'I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not
perceive it?
I will make a way in the
wilderness,
and rivers in the desert.'*
(Isaiah 43.19).

Yours in Christ
Daphne



'Walking Together in Faith' is an expression used in the diocesan strategy document drawn up by Bishop Robert for the diocese in Europe, so it seemed an excellent phrase to draw upon for the title for the lay learning course that has been developed for the diocese during the last few years. 'Walking Together in Faith' helps to remind us that we are part of the pilgrim people of God, and I hope a sense of being God's people on pilgrimage together is a vision we have managed to share. Pilgrimage is of course part of the lived experience of Christians in Europe over centuries, and there has been a resurgence of interest in 'walking' such ways in recent years.



The development of this lay learning course came about due to a motion that was passed at the Diocesan Synod in 2019. Brought to the Synod by the French Archdeaconry, it encouraged the diocese to provide opportunities for lay learning – both to equip lay people for specific tasks e.g. as community worship leaders or lay pastoral assistants, but also to enable lay people in the Diocese simply to deepen their understanding of the Christian faith. In several other Church of England dioceses there is offered what is called a 'Bishop's Certificate', and it was something like that which was being asked for.

As Diocesan Director of Lay Discipleship the responsibility for developing such a course fell to me, working both with a creative group of volunteers from around the Diocese to develop the material, and accomplishing the task under the auspices of the diocesan ministry team. Developing the concept, drafting the material, and then editing it into a (sort-of) finished product has been quite a substantial challenge over the last four years, but I believe that the end result is one that we can be proud of, both in terms of how it presents fundamental aspects of our faith, and the way in which it includes reflection on our specific charism as Anglican Christians living and working in continental Europe.

The course is modular. It is divided into four modules each of which it is envisaged should take just under three months to complete.

The titles of the four modules are in turn:

*Knowing God
Growing in Christ
Building Community
Living beyond Ourselves.*

The 'vision' is that from our beginning with 'Knowing God' each of the modules builds in turn upon earlier ones. One way of expressing this is by a series of 'steps', such as are illustrated in the logo designed for the course and used as an illustration for this article: another way would be to imagine throwing a stone into a pond and watching the water ripple outwards in ever-increasing circles.



The course builds people's lived experiences, on the basis that is a vital educational principle. So, for example, in Module One, our starting point for 'Knowing God' is to explore different aspects of prayer, as this is a fundamental basis for our 'knowing God'. Alongside this we look in detail at the Lord's Prayer, since this prayer has been so important in the life of the Church since New Testament times. In Module Two, 'Growing in Christ' we look at what Christians have believed about the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. The twist in the tale is, however, that we begin by thinking about Jesus' resurrection, as it was on the basis of the first disciples' experience of this that they began to explore Jesus' identity. In Module Three 'Building Community' we seek to understand how Christian community has been undergirded by a belief in God as Trinity in Unity, and we look at practical expressions of 'community', in the life of the church and our common worship. Finally in Module Four, 'Living beyond Ourselves', we ask what are the implications for us, as Christians, from what we have learnt, as we seek to engage with some of the pressing issues of our time such

as the care for creation, the need for peace and reconciliation, and large-scale migration, both within Europe, and beyond its borders.

We have been very grateful for the support of the diocesan office and its communications team in the development of the course – and there is now a dedicated section of the diocesan website which gives access to the material – and helpful advice about participation. You can find out more at [Lay Learning course | Diocese in Europe \(anglican.org\)](http://www.europe.anglican.org/lay-learning-course)
www.europe.anglican.org/lay-learning-course

The course was originally conceived in the days before COVID made such a difference to church life, at both chaplaincy and diocesan level. Initially the 'vision' was to provide material and support for groups meeting locally and in person. But the experience of the COVID years taught us that meeting together on Zoom provided opportunities for building connections and relationships across the Diocese – which given its dimensions, stretching from Vladivostock to Madeira and from Helsinki to Morocco, would not otherwise be feasible. So it was decided (at least as a trial during its first year) to offer a version of the course on Zoom, to which anyone in the diocese was welcome to sign up. Over the last year it has been my privilege to be responsible for delivering this 'Zoom' version of the course and it has been a real journey to tune in, on Tuesday evenings, to a varied and loyal group joining us from several countries in Europe (and Morocco!). It has been especially powerful to have a participant who has regularly joined from Ukraine.

We are still working out how to facilitate more smoothly the assessment process of the course (which is optional for those who wish), but we should have good processes in place for the new iteration of the course which begins again in September. We are also aiming to increase the number of 'in person' groups following the course, and are looking for creative ways in which the two methods of delivery can support each other. Last time round a few friends from Holy Trinity Geneva were brave enough to join us online for some of the later modules. Members of Holy Trinity's congregation will be very welcome again to join us for the sessions which will be starting on Tuesday September 26th. If you want to find out more – then either follow the 'link' given above, or drop me an email.

Clare Amos

Diocesan Director of Lay Discipleship.

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An appointment

On 1st August our Diocesan Bishop, Robert, announced the appointment of seven new canons, of whom Clare Amos and one other, a licensed Reader, were the only lay appointments. It is always an honour, but at least triply so for a lay person. Each canon is given a 'stall' in a cathedral, Clare's being – Saint Helena in the Pro-Cathedral of Saint Paul's Malta, where she will be installed in due course. Clare thinks this is because of Saint Helena's close connection with Jerusalem, a place with which she also has a deep bond.



However, Alan also acted as locum at one of Malta's churches in Sliema, where both Christine Damary and I visited, and Clare and I went together to the Pro-Cathedral.

What is a canon? Bishop Robert writes, 'Canons are senior members of the clergy (in this case lay), whom the bishops may call on for advice. Canons meet periodically for fellowship and to discuss matters of theological interest.' We add our congratulations!

The announcement did not give a specific reason, but the award is undoubtedly for Clare's work and contribution in her role as Diocesan Director of Lay Discipleship, which she fills on a voluntary basis. This role is to encourage and empower lay people to explore ways in which their discipleship may be expressed. This is both as part of their own spiritual growth, and for the life and witness of the church. (More details are shown on the Diocesan website.)

At Holy Trinity we have benefited directly from Clare's Bible studies, illuminating parts of the Old Testament and the Gospels, with the next one on Saint Mark, scheduled for 4th

November; and more recently from her preaching. Projects have included the production of a 'Rule of Life' and a guide for Churchwardens and many prayers for special occasions, including our 'vacancy' prayer (see the article above for her latest project).

Another key part of Clare's role, from which we have also benefited, is to run the Ministry Experience Scheme for young people exploring their vocation. Sam Tudor, now going forward for ordination training, and Leone Marangoni were interns as part of that scheme. This year's small cohort will be visiting us on 7th September, the day of the Confirmation.

Mary Talbot



A Licensing

JULIA LACEY licensing in Holy Trinity Widdrington, 24th July, 2023



It seems a long time ago since Julia first told me that she felt she might be called to be a priest, eight maybe ten years ago, when she was still worshipping actively in both the Roman

Catholic and the Anglican Church, adding her stunningly beautiful and musical voice to our choir, often singing solo.

Gradually the conviction grew and she was received into the Anglican Church at Holy Trinity before going through the various hoops that await anyone before they are accepted for training for the ordained ministry. Like Maree Wilson before her, she chose to train through the online Eastern Region Ministry Course, which also involves regular in-person weekend sessions and which she juggled with her teaching job and time spent accompanying a special needs student, both while at school and as a young adult.

Once accepted for training, she became an ordinand, based with us in Geneva for the first two years. She left us in August 2020, but not before the start of the interregnum between Canon Alex and Canon Daphne and the outbreak of Covid, when she was an enormous help as part of the team devising online services along with Alan and Clare Amos, Mark, Aylwin and others. In the absence of a chaplain, Julia was also able to take Arthur Robinson's funeral during the peak of the pandemic.

Her last year of training was combined with a curacy at the Church of Ascension and All Saints in Chelmsford, from where she was ordained Deacon in 2020 and a priest in 2021. After her training incumbent retired, she held the fort for a time at the same church and then moved to the Cathedral.

On 24th July, 2023, she was licensed by the Bishop of Newcastle, Helen-Ann Hartley, as Priest in Charge of the Benefice of Cresswell and Lynemouth and the Benefice of

Widdrington and Assistant Curate to the Benefice of Ulgham close to Morpeth in Northumbria. A small, but representative group of friends from different phases of her journey were there. Myself from Geneva and also one of the MES interns from Europe, her friend, Sally, who had trained with her, the Canon Pastor from Chelmsford Cathedral, a group of four from her church in Chelmsford and a young German organist whom she had met somewhere along the way, and, of course, her husband, Colin. Sally, her daughter, wasn't able to be there, but will visit soon.

It seemed quite fitting that, out of the possible churches, Holy Trinity, Widdrington, was chosen. It is a beautiful church dating back to the late 12th century. The service was friendly and relaxed with people from the different churches bringing up their gifts and they and others, including from the local schools, welcoming Julia, as she made her promises to the Bishop. Typically she had ridden there on her bicycle which she asked the Bishop to bless. The service was followed by a party in the Village Hall with lots of food baked by the congregations, washed down with tea. (We had already met up in the relatively large vicarage, plied with wine by Colin, where there is a large garden, already inhabited by Julia's menagerie of rabbits, guinea pigs and a dog!)

Mary Talbot



Holy Trinity Songs of Praise



Last year, during the choir's summer break Canon Daphne introduced a service of Songs of Praise, held at 18h00 on the first Sunday of August which was well attended and enjoyed. by all present. The same service was held again this year on Sunday 6th August.

Peter Billington, well-known to some of our congregation played the organ for our nine chosen hymns. Each person who chose a hymn was given the opportunity to introduce it with a few words which were very interesting to hear as their reasons varied from personal contact with illness or loss, childhood memories, or memories of a loved one to the beauty of the music or the meaningful words.

Between each hymn a few words of prayer were said.

Artie Raghavan chose the well-known hymn 'Jerusalem' for a slightly different reason which she relates below :

(Do not be disheartened if you do not know the answers, nobody in the congregation could answer any of the questions !).

Artie said:

“ Our penultimate hymn is one that, since the verses were set to music in 1916, has been heard everywhere, at meetings of the Women's Institute, the Labour Party, in films, at weddings, funerals and memorial services, in schools, everywhere indeed except perhaps in Church on

Sundays! I wanted to remedy that this evening, even if this hymn is theologically unsound and historically inaccurate.

Here are four questions for you to see if we know 'Jerusalem' as well as we think:

1. Where exactly do William Blake's verses come from?
2. Whose feet was Blake referring to according to contemporaneous sources?
3. What was the first grouping or association outside the Church that embraced 'Jerusalem' and sang it at all their meetings?
4. Who orchestrated the hymn as we know it?

Answers:

1. *The four verses we sing come from the preface to Blake's epic 'Milton: a poem in two books'*
2. *Joseph of Arimathea's: in John Milton's ' History of Britain', the latter talks about Joseph of Arimathea, wandering Britain alone, preaching to the locals**.*
3. *The suffragist movement, with which both Parry and his wife were in great sympathy.*
4. *Sir Edward Elgar*

William Blake, C.H.H. Parry, Edward Elgar and a nod to John Milton: what more could one ask for?

*(**However, some versions say that the feet were those of the Christ-child who, legend has it, travelled with Joseph of Arimathea, His uncle, who came trading to Britain (notably to Cornwall for tin). This makes more sense of the following lines "And did the Countenance divine shine forth upon our clouded hills?" Ed.)*

As last time, we finished with refreshments; this year delicious finger food prepared by Manel.

Look out for the Songs of Praise 2024 and start reflecting on which hymn you would like to choose, then come to enjoy singing it with everyone.

Elizabeth Laravoire



Outing to Solothurn

Greeted by the happy singing voices of children!

Our coach trip to Solothurn took longer than expected and, as we disembarked beside the cathedral, we heard children singing. What a welcome! The cathedral steps were full of singing and dancing children at an end of term celebration. The plaza and streets were buzzing with their families, friends, tourists and locals too as it was market day.

So we entered St. Ursus cathedral via the rear entrance. Rebuilt in local light marble in neoclassical Italianate style in the eighteenth century, its white and gold décor is striking. It dominates the town and a few brave souls in our party climbed the 249 steps to admire the view.

For over two hundred years Solothurn was the home of the French Embassy to Berne and all those attached to it. The town was run by an oligarchy with rich and powerful families. So there are many beautiful buildings, churches and attractive streets in its mediaeval pedestrianised centre.



After an early lunch in a restaurant beside the cathedral, we went off to the Central Library. We were met by Mr. Ian Holt who explained the surprising importance of the Library and some of the books on display.

The original Municipal Library was founded in 1763 with collections donated by the important local families, such as Besenval, von Roll, vom Stall and Wagner. Then in 1874, following the closure of a number of religious houses, the Cantonal Library was formed to accommodate their libraries. In 1930 the Municipal and Cantonal Libraries united to form the Library.

As you can see from this history, the Library owns an impressive historical collection, with 1,000 manuscripts and incunabula (early printed books). As other religious houses close down in Solothurn due to falling numbers, their libraries will also go to the Central Library. This is a great responsibility and work is ongoing to record all their holdings, many of which are now available online. The Material Evidence in Incunabula (MEI) database contains e-codices and e-manuscripts. There is also the e-rara site. A gargantuan task! Old prints are available on the Swiss Collections platform.

After the talk we went down to the air-conditioned basement and were shown examples of different and wide-reaching books and manuscripts. All quite fascinating, especially one, surprisingly, from early missions in Sri Lanka. The

ceiling was riddled with pipes in case of fire - not to deliver water(!) but a gas that would eliminate oxygen rapidly preventing fire from propagating.

Before leaving Solothurn, we were offered light refreshments in the Library gardens, bringing to an end a great day out and a welcome opportunity to visit this delightful town.

Elizabeth Brown



A Question of Planetary Life and Death

God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. Gen. 1: 31.

That was then, but now? What God has made / is making is indeed very good, but Man seems set on spoiling and destroying this lovely earth and its inhabitants.

I have just finished reading "Wasteland" by Oliver Franklin-Wallis, and, as a member of the very small group looking at our church's ecological footprint, I feel I must urge church members to read this book. Oliver Franklin-Wallis spent several

years visiting various countries and researching different ways in which we get rid of our unwanted “stuff” from clothes to electronics, from sewage to nuclear waste and, of course, plastics.

We rarely think about what happens to our waste. It is something that has been with us from the beginning and, I suppose, began to get troublesome when we started making things. As Franklin-Wallis says, archaeologists get a great deal of their information from ancient rubbish dumps. But mainly since the Industrial Revolution our rubbish has become an enormous problem, and it is getting worse.



Our unwanted clothes end up in giant mountains in Southeast Asia and South America; our sewage is polluting land, rivers and seas world-wide; and we all know about the deadly effects of our discarded plastics.

Franklin-Wallis doesn't come up with miraculous solutions and admits there is no easy answer, but he does suggest ways in which we, as individuals, can play our part in cleaning up the planet. His main suggestion is that we try to stop consuming so much by mending our torn clothes and broken toys, and buying only as much as we need (not want), including food.

As Christians, we should indeed be looking after and taking care of this planet so we do need to be

aware of what we are doing, buying, throwing away. I strongly suggest that you read this book (I will lend it to anyone who can promise to read it within a month!) which is a real eye-opener on the life and death of our rubbish.

By way of a postscript, I would like to encourage anyone who cares about Holy Trinity Geneva's ecological footprint to come and join Mary Talbot, Michael King and me to think about ways in which we can reduce the amount of waste we create and positive actions we can take to care more effectively for our bit of the planet.

Christine Damary

Wasteland, The Dirty Truth About What We Throw Away, Where It Goes, and Why It Matters, by Oliver Franklin-Wallis, published in 2023 by Simon & Schuster UK Ltd.

And, while we're on the subject of life-choices the following was seen in the Tribune de Genève of 29/30 July.....

Stories of hygiene

Sanctity has an odour. Do we need to wrinkle our noses?

We still sometimes use the expression “being in the odour of sanctity” when we mean being “in someone's good books”. But where does this odour come from? In their book *It's dirty! The great history of hygiene* the authors stress the lack of bodily cleanliness of the first Christians. While an absence of modern amenities did make perfect hygiene difficult, certain mystics also displayed a religious



“*Saint Teresa d'Avila: a sweet scent*”

determination not to wash: Saint Agnes (III-IV C) never took a bath, Saint Olympias (IV-V C) only washed on rare occasions. Saint Godric (XI-XII C) reached Jerusalem from England on foot without washing or changing her clothes. Saint Francis of Assisi (XII-XIII C) said of dirtiness that it was ‘a malodorous sign of piety’ and, after his death, his spirit is said to have returned to congratulate his brother monks on the insalubrity of their monastic cells.”

The odour of sanctity cannot be confined to these basely human recollections of smell. Quite to the contrary. A totally different kind of scent – a very lovely and supernatural one – is associated with the bodies of the great mystics. The word *myroblyte*, which sounds like a swearword invented by Captain Haddock [of the Tintin books], is in fact the term used for the saints and blessed ones who smell sweet after their martyrdom and death. *Myroblyte*, in Byzantine Greek, means “from whom emanates myrrhe”. From certain very rare and highly deserving corpses there seeped a sweet-scented liquid. There is clearly a link between the odour of sanctity of these *myroblytes* and the pre-

Christian and Christian tradition of embalming the dead. The aromatic spices without which that delicate operation would have been doomed to failure must have delighted the senses of generations of embalmers. Whether it is myth or reality, the odour of sanctity was born of the use of plants from the Middle East for antiseptic purposes in funerals. The memory of the scent inspired among Catholics the expression “to die in an odour of sanctity”. It applies to a living person whose piety and good works lead us to believe that they may be declared blessed or even canonized after their decease. While the expression “odour of sanctity” seems to have appeared in French after 1650 [the first citation in the Oxford English Dictionary is 1756], examples of the phenomenon date from far longer ago. And there are also some relatively recent ones. For example, the famous Padre Pio, born in 1887, sainted in 2002 by John-Paul II, whose stigmata exhaled, for some a perfume of lilies and magnolia, for others a scent of roses and violets, died in 1968 in an odour of sanctity. And there is the Calabrian Natuzza Evolo, deceased in 2009, whose beatification is at present ongoing. Among the pioneers, there is Saint Teresa of Avila who lived in the XVI century and of whom it is said that a very sweet scent filled her room during her last illness and pervaded the whole house. This fragrance may have had some connection with the diabetes from which she suffered. Longer ago still, at the height of the Middle Ages, the Dutch woman Lydwine or Ludivine of Schiedam became famous for her perfumed stigmata. Their persistent odour – attested to in the tales of her life – would only come to titillate the nostrils of

Pope Leo XIII in 1890, when Lydwine was canonized.

Benjamin Chaix (tr. Jane Brooks)

C'est sale ! La grande histoire de l'hygiène [It's dirty ! The great history of hygiene] by Piotr Socha and Monika Utnik-Stragata, ed. La Martinière Jeunesse, 2021, pp.195.



Council Report May to July 2023

This is a report from your Council covering the period from May to July 2023. Council met twice during this period, on the third Monday of May and June. There is no Council meeting in July to give everyone a month off! The May session was the first meeting of the new Council, as elected at the AGM, and we were pleased to welcome Ludo Claude and Humberto Henderson, who are both serving on Council for the first time.

Council priorities 2023

The four Council priorities for 2023 are, Building Tomorrow, Vision and Strategy, Building Congregational Capacity and Strengthening our Ministry with Young People.

We focused on Vision and Strategy at our May meeting. We are grateful to the Vision and Strategy sub-committee who, on behalf of the Council, have worked on all the inputs from

you, the congregation. The current members of the sub-committee are, the Chaplain, Clare Amos, Emily Banzet, Marc Banzet, Sam Carmalt, Ludo Claude, Amanda Dawson, Lilian Lwantale, Margaret Omumbwa and Mary Talbot. Council had previously adopted the Vision and Strategy statement and now has reviewed the strategic sub-objectives and action plans to achieve our Vision – To make God Visible. The plan is ambitious and Council is aware that lack of access to our hall in 2024 and 2025 will be a limiting factor. Emily Banzet re-worked the plan, taking into account Council's inputs and providing a clearer format. Council formally adopted the Vision and Strategy plan and agreed that it would be launched and communicated to the congregation in the autumn, probably at Michaelmas (29th September). The success of the plan will then depend on us all getting behind it and volunteering to contribute our time and talents.

Our June meeting saw us look deeply into our Ministry to Young People, led by Armel. Armel had prepared a thoughtful document entitled “Duc in Altum” (put out into the deep) sharing his experience as our youth leader. He presented a framework for our Youth Ministry under the following themes: A liturgy-orientated church; family/home ministry; the church as a witness of God on earth; reaching out to young people. Council welcomed the news that numbers are up across all our youth groups. The Junior Church (3-11 year olds) now has about 27 children and the older groups now have 22 young people. They are divided into 11-15 year olds who meet once a week on a Sunday morning and 15-18 year olds who go to

Starbucks once a month, led by Emily Banzet and Bella Beney. We are also very pleased that a couple of generous donors have made it possible for Jaylee Otiono to attend the “World



Youth Day” in Lisbon this August. This event invites young people aged from 18-30 to explore the theme of “rooted in unity”. Our diocese is participating since the event is taking place in Europe this year, in a venue close to our chaplaincy church in central Lisbon.

The children’s participation at the concert on 10th June, singing and enacting scenes from “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat” was greatly appreciated by all. As you can see our Youth Ministry is vibrant and full of potential. The main constraints on developing youth activities further are a lack of volunteers and additional times for groups to meet – so if you could help with our stimulating work with the young, please contact either Arnel or the Chaplain.

“Building Congregational Capacity” is the only 2023 priority that has not yet featured specifically on our Council Agenda but will do so in autumn.

Chaplain’s and Wardens’ reports

Council received regular reports from Daphne and the Wardens. In May we had two major celebratory services, the Coronation service and Nicolas’ and Natalya’s wedding – both on the same weekend!

On Sunday June 25th the young people attending the Saturday First Communion preparation classes were admitted to receive Holy Communion at an all-age service. Bishop Robert will be with us on Thursday 7th September for a Confirmation service, of both young people and adult candidates, at 18.30. In the afternoon of Thursday 7th September at 16.30, Bishop Robert will install our curate, Glen Ruffle at his licensing service. Yes, Glen has passed his French examination and will be joining us at the beginning of September, along with his new bride, Angela. I am sure you will all make Glen and Angela feel welcome on their first Sunday with us, on 3rd September.

The Chaplain has launched a new monthly evening service for working people in Geneva called “On the Way” with support from Ludo Claude and Arnel Ayegnon. The first was held on Wednesday 24th May and was attended by 16 people, some from Holy Trinity, some from other churches and some with no current church affiliation. A Taizé style service was followed by a discussion and refreshments in the hall. Two further “On the Way” services have been held in June and July.

The Chaplain has also been discussing with Council how best to respond to those who come to the church in search of assistance. Now that we again

have direct access to the church through the porch and side door, the number of, mostly, ladies asking for money and food has risen. The Chaplain has worked with Emmanuel Church to provide an up-to-date and comprehensive list of resources available in Geneva and how to access them. She is also working with a small group to have available some dry goods, such as granola bars and nappies which can be provided for immediate relief.

We have been asked to provide memorial services for several people, including a number who died during the Covid pandemic. The Chaplain and Wardens have worked on a schedule of fees to provide a consistency of approach. The suggested fees are CHF 200 for the use of the church, CHF 200 for the Chaplain’s time and CHF 200 for the hall if requested. The organist’s and choir’s services, if required, are in addition and handled separately. There was a discussion on how to handle situations where the person had been a regular worshipper and hardship cases and it was agreed that these situations would be left to the Chaplain. The regular fees as proposed were adopted.

The Wardens were pleased to report that the sound issues which have been experienced during the Zoom transmission of the 10.30 Sunday service have been resolved by the technical team.

Safeguarding

We are pleased to report that Amanda Dawson has completed all the necessary checks as our Safeguarding Officer. The June Council unanimously approved the appointment of Rawsette Whyte as an Assistant Safeguarding Officer. Rawsette

is now going through the checking procedure. We thank both Amanda and Rawsette for volunteering to serve in this way. The formal handover from Helen Liddle took place at the end of June. We remain profoundly grateful to Helen for all her work to keep our young and vulnerable people safe.

Building Tomorrow

The appeal launched in Lent closed at the end of June. In total CHF 65'587.29 was raised from 44 donors. We are hugely grateful to those who contributed. We have now received authorization from the authorities for phase 2 of our project to refurbish the current hall, provide a second external access (fire regulations) and to excavate a second basement level to greatly extend our facilities for meetings and activities. Work has now commenced with the architects on a new set of plans and costings, taking into account both the conditions set by the authorities and price increases since the first cost estimates. Council will be working hard with the Building Tomorrow committee to understand our options and most importantly the financing of the work. You can expect to hear news of the plans and costings over the autumn months.

On Sunday 17th September a celebratory service and concert will take place at 17h00 to give thanks for the work on the church itself. Invitations have been sent to all those who have been involved in the work so far. All members of the congregation are also warmly invited to the service, followed by refreshments. If you wish to attend please RSVP at <http://bit.ly/BuildingTomorrowCelebration>, or call the church office.

Finance

The end-of-May financial report was presented at the June meeting. Basically the trend reported in the last quarterly report remains unchanged. Pledge income continues to track above budget and last year's year-to-date actuals. We are most thankful to those of you who have started or continue to pledge faithfully, in many cases month by month. However this does not entirely offset the loss of income from rentals and events. We continue to show an estimated annual deficit for 2023. We are however planning a number of events in the second half of the year to boost revenue. Now that we have partial use of our forecourt again, there will be a bric-à-brac sale, with accompanying stalls of jams, plants and refreshments, on Saturday 26th August. We are also planning a Christmas mini fair on Saturday 2nd December. Please support these events in any way you can and encourage your friends to come along.

Environment

Thanks largely to the dogged perseverance of Mary Talbot, Council keeps focused on environmental issues. Mary has advised Council of the steps which need to be taken for us to achieve "bronze" status by the end of this year. We need to be more intentional about our commitment to the environment in both our local and community engagement as well as our individual lifestyles. Mary has provided a list of questions to help us make a start. She would welcome volunteers who would like to work on these questions to allow us to progress towards becoming a "bronze" eco-church.

Grand piano

Mark and previous music directors have advocated the purchase of a grand piano. Such a piano would improve the liturgical life of the church, increase the potential of hiring our church for concerts and improve the quality of the choir rehearsals. A 180cm long, Steinway piano has become available for purchase. The piano has been independently assessed by Fuhrer, the Geneva piano experts, as having a market value of CHF 15'000 and needing about CHF 5'000 spent on it for renovation over the next few years. The owner has indicated to Mark that he would accept an offer of CHF 9'000, on the understanding that the church would pay for transport (CHF 1'000). The costs are thus a total of CHF 10'000 now and a further CHF 5'000 for subsequent renovation over the next few years. CHF 5'000 is already secured through the Lindy Carmalt Memorial Fund, which both Lindy's family and the choir are happy to be used for this purpose. It is proposed that the CHF 5'000 needed for renovation could be raised through donations and events over the next few years. Mark requested Council's approval to use CHF 5'000 from the Development Fund to purchase the piano. Council approved Mark's request. Since the June Council meeting, the grand piano has been purchased. It will replace the upright piano under the organ loft.

The Council will reconvene, after the summer break, on Monday 28th August. We expect a busy autumn as we work through the next phase of our Building Tomorrow project, as well as ensuring a rich programme of

worship, music and chaplaincy life through to Christmas. I take this opportunity to thank Daphne for the wonderful pastoral work she does, with support from the dedicated members of the Pastoral Care Team and others. I know that for many of you her pastoral visits and home communions have been deeply healing and meaningful.

Please feel free to let me know whether this quarterly report gives you useful information on the Council's work and give me any suggestions for improvement. I would also be happy to answer any questions you may have on the contents of this report.

Ursula McGregor



We are grateful to Mary Talbot for providing us with the following report, but are somewhat dismayed at the atmosphere which appears to reign in what is supposed to be one of our guiding bodies! Ed.

GENERAL SYNOD – JULY 2023

This was a very tense and divided Synod, so I preface this by saying that this is my personal record and perspective. Full video recordings of all the sessions are available on the Church of England website, as are background papers.

There has been a growing level of mistrust. Mistrust of the Archbishops, Bishops, Archbishops' Council and the Business Committee, which set the agenda, comes from quite a

significant number of Synod members. The main areas of complaint include a feeling that Synod is not being given its legitimate role of scrutiny and decision-making; it is too often presented with a fait-accompli; the Synod agenda is manipulated so that items are pushed through or get squeezed out, without proper debate. This boiled over following the decision of the Archbishops' Council to disband the Independent Safeguarding Board (ISB) and terminate the contracts of the two remaining members.

As this decision over-shadowed the whole of this Synod gathering in York, coupled with the divisions over the next steps in the Living in Love and Faith process, and as space is limited, I am just reporting on three issues. Much else was covered, including positive debates on the inclusion of young people and on the environment. Other debates included National Church Governance, The Clergy Conduct Measure, PCC Elections, Remote Meetings, Parochial Fees for Marriage and some minor changes to our Diocesan Constitution. Prayer and worship played an important part, including the Sunday Eucharist in York Minster.

Safeguarding – ISB

A tense two-hour presentation with time for questions was held on Sunday afternoon to explain the Archbishops' Council (AC) decision to disband the ISB. The first speaker, Jane Chevous, a survivor, expressed her dismay that this has happened, the removal of hope for her and other survivors, and her fears for the ongoing work with survivors which the two board members had started and whose data and contact details were solely with them. This was followed by a

panel of four, led by the Archbishop of York. All the speakers expressed concern for victims and survivors.

Archbishop Stephen said that the fact that the AC had decided to refer the matter to the Charity Commission indicated that they realised that mistakes had been made and there were things to learn. He indicated several times that the AC were committed to independent scrutiny and to an independent review of what had happened with the ISB, which would include all concerned, including the former members of the ISB. A key learning point for him had been, not only the fact that independent scrutiny was necessary, but that the Church of England needed an independent body to design, implement and operate such a system. Another member of the panel outlined the chronology and developments from the AC perspective. The ISB, consisting of three people, was set up as an interim arrangement with one of its key objectives being to make proposals for phase 2, a permanent independent oversight arrangement. One of the early problems was that the Chair of the group, Maggie Atkinson, had to stand down due to breaches of data protection and complaints from survivors, leaving only two members. These two members established helpful relationships with victims and survivors, but the Archbishops' Council became increasingly concerned that no adequate proposal was presented for phase 2. Some time after the first chair stood down, the AC appointed Meg Munn, Independent Chair of the National Safeguarding Team, as interim Chair of the ISB. AC representatives said that initially this had been supported by the other two board members, but subsequently relationships between all parties had broken down to the extent that

terminating their contracts seemed the only viable action. One of the Diocese in Europe lay members, Clive Billenness, raised a point of order, asking that the two former ISB members, present in the Chamber, be given the opportunity to respond to the criticisms made about them. A complicated procedure followed, that finally found a way of allowing them to speak. Steve Reeves, Jasvinder Sanaghera and Meg Munn, were invited to reply to Synod, but the latter declined. Their story differed from the AC account, Steve Reeves saying that they had produced a plan for phase 2 which had not been accepted; he referred to various obstacles he felt had been put in their way by Archbishops' Council. Both claimed that they had not been allowed to act independently with Javinder saying that they had been instructed to accept Meg Munn's appointment and given no alternative.

Outside the building where the Synod were meeting, a protest group called Loudfence, which



campaigns for victims of abuse tied messages of protest and support to the railings.

Safeguarding – Redress

The Synod proceedings moved on to a presentation of the Redress Scheme for survivors and victims, led by Bishop Philip Mountstephen. Again, Jane Chevous was asked to speak first, emphasizing that redress needed to be much more than financial and should include other forms of support. Bishop Philip reiterated this. He outlined the progress that had been made, thanking survivors for the grace with which they were helping to formulate the proposals. He mentioned the grant of £150 million set aside by the Church Commissioners, which was not a cap, but which would underpin the redress scheme. Bishop Philip explained that making sure that the scheme was well constructed was taking time, but it was important to get it right. Questions from a number of people, either made suggestions or sought clarification, but most speakers welcomed the overall direction and the motion, which included looking forward to its further development, was passed.

Living in Love and Faith

This session was again led by Bishop Philip Mountstephen, who stressed that it would be a presentation with a chance for conversation, not a re-run of the eight-hour debate and decisions made by Synod in February. These had expressed an apology and grief at the way some LGBTQ+ people had been treated by the church and affirmed that all people are made in the image of God and welcome in churches; upheld the church's existing doctrine on marriage as between a man and a

woman; but sought to find a way to affirm the good that can come from long-term, faithful monogamous relationships in same sex unions. Bishop Philip also asked that Synod members 'treat each other kindly'. A briefing paper to Synod (GS 2303) sets out the issues that are still being addressed, including requests for further theological underpinning.

Bishop Sarah Mullally opened with a re-cap of the three main areas of follow-up, for which three work streams had been created. The first looked at the Prayers of Love and Faith (PLF), for which they had created rubrics and introductory material after listening to a lot of feedback; the second was working on the Pastoral Guidance, designed to replace 'Issues in Human Sexuality', and which was also looking at how the new guidance would fit into the vocations and discernment process. The third group is considering questions around freedom of conscience, implications for clergy and laity and transparency around using PLF. Work and further consultation is continuing throughout the summer with the intention of bringing proposals to Synod in November. Bishop Sarah also stated several times that the work is not seeking to change the doctrine of holy matrimony, but is a question of finding a pastoral response to people in same-sex unions.

The subject remains divisive. The work does not seek to achieve agreement, but to find a way of enabling those with different views to listen to and accept that others have a different view, and that it is possible to remain in the same church and walk together.

Environment

A presentation from Alan Smith, the First Church Estates the Church's National Investment Bodies (NIBs) was generally welcomed. Their previous strategy had been to use their influence as a significant shareholder to press major oil companies to implement a phased strategy to move out of fossil fuels. They admitted defeat in seeing concrete changes and will divest from investment by the end of 2023. The Chair of the Pensions Board said that they remain proud of Transition Pathway Initiative (TPI) which now had 10,000 companies signed up and a much broader impact. Our Bishop, Robert, asked that the church's leadership role in this area should be effectively communicated. In answer to another question, Mr. Smith said that they had recently hired someone to focus on the human-rights dimension of climate change. 'The Commissioners did not want only their own portfolio to be net zero: they wanted a net-zero world.'

Oxford Diocese brought forward a motion commending the recent disinvestment announcements, but urging all parts of the Church of England to review their policies and procedures to give due priority to creation care. A number of further clauses included more specific areas, including a request that Bishops and the Liturgical Commission encourage confirmation services to include an additional question, 'Will you strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth?' This generated a certain amount of debate. The whole motion was passed by a significant majority.

Mary Talbot

From parable to poem

I am the mustard seed, small and insignificant,
containing a powerful packet of life
may I grow and transform myself into
a shelter for others.

I am a measure of yeast,
I work my miracle making bread for the world,
And leaving nothing of myself behind.

I am hidden treasure, and when I find my true self
I shall also find the Kingdom of God;

I am the pearl of great price
For whom the son of God shed his own blood
to restore me to the crown of his kingdom.

I am the fisherman's net,
Holding a multitude of thoughts, good and bad
Prosper O Lord the good, and defeat through them the bad.

Alan Amos

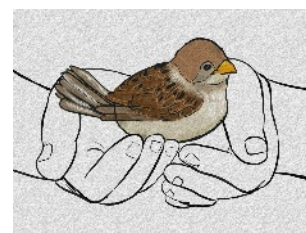
Two-a-Penny ?

On the third day of summer I was sitting by my open balcony door when a great agitation arose in the tree opposite, with birds screeching in alarm. When I went to look, a very young sparrow had dropped onto my balcony floor and was hopping about, flapping its wings in distress. Then it just sat in a corner in the shade of a plant. But this brief rest had given it the strength to fly up to the balustrade and then make a beeline for the tree where its family was waiting. The tweeting and chirping they made as they rejoiced at having their fledgling safely back was quite different to the earlier alarms, but just as

noisy. So yes, in Biblical times sparrows might have been "two-a-penny" but for my little bird's family, and perhaps for God too, this little chappie was worth far more.

Why am I telling you this? Well, as often happens, an extraordinary coincidence occurred which meant that at the early service next day, the Gospel reading contained that very quotation, as our Lord was instructing his disciples, and you can read it in Matthew 10. 24-39.

Dorinda.



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admin@holytrinitygeneva.org
 Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri. 8h30 - 12h30

Church activities

During the present time of the renovation works
 please contact group leaders for any alternative
 arrangements

Holy Trinity choir: practice Thursdays at 20h00
 Mark Charles 079 944 5175

Junior choir: practice Sundays after the
 10h30 service Claire Charles

Young people: (11-13 year-olds) contact
 Innocent Mugabe
mugabeinnocent@yahoo.com

Junior Church: Sundays 1, 2 and 3 contact
 Anitha Beulah 022 731 4211 /
 078 323 8184

Pastoral care: Canon Daphne 022 734 3817
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Bible Study: Tuesdays 12h30-13h30 in church
 Elizabeth Brown 022 778 40 10

Social group: Gill Howie 022 733 8372
 Beryl Allardyce 022 776 1479

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Please note - deadline for articles for the winter issue is 13 November 2023