

Holy Trinity Geneva Magazine



The Chaplain writes

Reorientation

The summer is a good time for rest and reflection, whether we have been fortunate enough to go away or have just enjoyed a quieter time at home with fewer pressures. As the pace of life slows down, it's also a point at which we can take stock of our lives and reflect honestly on how things are going. We can also dream dreams as we start to imagine how things could be different in our lives.

It's worth holding on to these reflections, hard though it can be when we return to the rigours of daily life and a far more pressurized routine. For it's so easy to get caught up again in the treadmill of each day and to end up drifting through life rather than pausing to reflect on those insights and dreams we had in the quiet of summer.

Yet for us to grow and realise our potential to become the full, glorious children of God whom He longs for us to be, we need to listen to our inner reflections, to ask ourselves questions and decide how we will act upon them. How are things going in our relation with God? How

are things with our families and friends? Are we happy with the focus and balance of our lives or are there things we want to change? And if we imagine ourselves ten or twenty years from now, looking back on our lives, are there things we will wish we'd done differently in terms of our priorities, how we've spent our time and how we have tried to live out our Christian faith day by day?

To do this, it's worth taking conscious steps to make this reflection, noting down what we have observed and thinking and praying about how we will act upon it. Find a quiet time to do this, perhaps early in the morning, or on a Sunday or in the context of a hike or peaceful time by the lake.

We may find that our reflections lead us to take some radical steps – for example, it is quite common for people to decide after their summer or Christmas break, that this is the time to look for a new job. But often, it may not be so drastic but just a matter of reorienting ourselves. That means having a vision of those changes we want to see in ourselves and then making sure that we actually commit ourselves to making them happen by the discipline and habits of behaviour we adopt. In this way, we learn to realise the vision we have glimpsed in our own lives.



Often, these may be little changes, for example, taking more exercise, or dedicating a little more time each day to prayer and reading, to living in a more sustainable way or sharing more of what we enjoy with others, especially those in need. What matters is our commitment to developing and embedding these good habits, so that we start to live them out in practice and they guide us particularly when we experience times of pressure.

We are going to do a similar exercise as a church this autumn as we observe the Season of Creation. This runs from Sunday 1 September until St Francis' Day on 4 October. During this time, we will reflect and pray with Christians of all denominations through the world about the beauty and rich diversity of our world, lament

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the terrible damage we have inflicted upon it and commit ourselves to changing our habits and behaviours radically in order to ensure our children do not inherit environmental catastrophe.

As we contemplate with deep grief and shame the many ways we have damaged the world, it is tempting to feel overwhelmed and to feel that there is nothing we can now do. Yet this is deeply wrong – as Christians we know that we have hope and there is a lot we can do, both as individuals and as a church. This autumn at Holy Trinity we are undertaking two things which can help us to make a radical change. We hope that all of you will join in.

The first is that we are committing ourselves to working towards the Arocha Eco Church Silver Award now, building on the bronze award we achieved last year. This requires us to review all the major aspects of our life together as a church including our worship, buildings, land, community and global engagement and lifestyle.

The process of carrying out this very comprehensive audit of how we, as a church, currently care for the environment, is a powerful one, for it sheds a spotlight on where we need to change. Some of these changes are ones which we collectively need to commit to as a church, such as buying and serving locally grown food at our church events, ensuring that we are energy-efficient and that we offer our support to environmental projects in Geneva such as the annual *nettoyage du lac*.

But the area in which we can probably make the most difference is in our own lifestyles – in those little choices we make every day of what we do, how we spend our money, how we travel and how we use our time. During this Season of Creation and throughout the autumn, we're going to explore these in our worship and church events and find out how even little changes we may make, can make such a difference. As an introduction to this, here are just a few which you might like to consider now:

- Undertake a personal carbon footprint audit
- Give your car a rest one Sunday a month and walk, cycle or take public transport to church. Or, if that's not practical, look at a car share.
- Buy locally grown food
- Increase the number of vegetarian meals you eat
- Try to shop without resorting to plastics
- See what you can recycle
- Buying Fairtrade and other ethically – sourced food
- Invest in ethical savings accounts which support the environment.

The second major initiative which we're undertaking this autumn is running an advocacy course. The Season of Creation theme this year is '*To hope and act with creation*' and is rooted in the vision of the first fruits of hope, based on Romans 8.19-25. At the heart of this theme is

our Christian understanding that, whilst we have inflicted terrible damage on the environment, it is God's world and therefore there is hope. We are called as Christians to be advocates for good and sustainable change to protect the world, particularly on behalf of those who have been most affected by the environmental catastrophe.

But to do this, we need to equip ourselves with the necessary skills so that we can campaign for change, both at an international level and locally within our own communities including at the shops where we buy our food. This four-part course, run by Blair Matheson, of Franciscans International and our former Chaplain, the Revd Mike French of the Lutheran World Federation will help to equip us with the skills we need to make a difference. So I do hope that you will attend this course in the autumn, get involved in our campaign for the Eco Church Silver award and enjoy the Season of Creation. I wish you a very blessed and fruitful autumn.

With my love and prayers

Daphne



**The Story of the Icon,
'Marie et l'enfant Jesu.'**

I would like to share with you the story of how the icon came to be given to Holy Trinity. Often on Thursdays when Clare and I are in Geneva, after the

Eucharist in church I take the train to Creux de Genthod and walk up to the restaurant at the Chateau, where I meet for lunch with Phil Thomas and some friends. On one occasion, in November 2022, there was an exhibition of paintings around the walls of the restaurant, and one particularly held my attention, a scene of the harbour of Sanary-sur-Mer near Toulon. I was so attracted by this that I asked the restaurant proprietor who was the artist. I was intrigued to discover his name, Moufid Hana, as that immediately indicated to me that he was a Christian from Syria or Lebanon. We arranged to meet up, and I purchased the painting. To my great surprise, Moufid originates from the town of Qamishli in north-east Syria, which traditionally has been an important centre for the Syrian Orthodox community. Moufid comes from that community. I visited Qamishli when I was teaching in the Syrian Orthodox monastery and seminary in the mountains above Beirut in 1974, and again with Clare in 1979. Most of my students came from Qamishli. It turned out that Moufid and I had many friends and contacts in common, especially Bishop George Saliba, who is now Archbishop of Mount Lebanon for the Syrian Orthodox, and was head of the monastery and seminary in the time when I lived and taught there.

Moufid and I have stayed in touch. He mentioned to me that he also paints icons, and to my surprise and delight he offered to paint and to donate one to our Holy Trinity Church. I am writing this as our festival of the Holy Trinity approaches

when the icon will be dedicated and installed.

There is one special note I would make about this icon: you can see some Arabic script within the halo surrounding the head of the Christ Child. Above the head is the word “Ana” = I, and to the right “Al Aliph” “the first” and to the left (remembering that we follow Arabic script from right to left) “wal Yah” “and the last” - Aleph being the first letter in the Arabic alphabet and Yah the last, so equalling “Alpha and Omega”.

I hope you will enjoy this story as much as I have enjoyed it, unexpectedly, as a participant in it!

Canon Alan Amos



Pandas for peace

What can governments do when diplomatic relations with another country break down? The Chinese have the answer: you just send a pair of pandas as goodwill ambassadors – everybody loves a panda!

A recent example of this occurred back in April when the Premier of China went to visit Australia, after a cooling of relations between the two countries. Mr Li Qiang and Mr Anthony Albanese held talks and then China promised a pair of pandas for the zoo in Adelaide. “Panda diplomacy” has been around for hundreds of years but whereas in the old days the pandas were gifts, they are now sent on loan. There are

a number of these pandas in zoos across the world. At the same time, they are part of a huge programme aimed at saving pandas from extinction. Scientific studies enable monitoring the pandas and their ability to mate and have cubs. Some European zoos have had happy births whilst others have not. In total, 46 were born in 2023, both in China and overseas. For various reasons, which are not yet fully understood, pandas are incredibly fragile and reproduce with difficulty, which is why so many countries are involved, together with their scientific specialists.

In the wild, pandas are discreet and solitary animals, only getting together for a brief period of time (about 48 hours) once a year. They live at high altitudes, hidden in the mists of mountain forests in central China. They are one of the rarest mammals in the world. They belong to the plantigrade family and have five fingers just like we do, plus a little bone on the front paws which acts like a thumb. (Plantigrade means that the whole foot touches the ground when they walk, rather than rolling the foot from heel to toe, and most bears belong to this group.). A male panda can weigh up to 125kg and a female up to 90kg. Here are some more facts for your next family quiz!

Can they climb trees?

Indeed they can! They go up to sleep, far away from the ground, and also enjoy playing high up in the trees.

What do they eat?

Oh, come on – I’m sure everybody knows!



Can they swim?

They are actually good swimmers and are strong enough to cross a river.

Do they sleep a lot?

Contrary to appearances, not much more than we do. But they are nocturnal and become more sprightly as the sun goes down.

Do they hibernate like other bears?

No, because the bamboo they eat doesn't provide the reserves they would need to survive a period of hibernation.

A little-known danger

Every 40 years, bamboo plants burst into flower ... and die. The pandas in that region then have to move on, seeking a new place to live – does that sound familiar?

And today?

The number of wild pandas in China has increased from around 1'100 in the 1980s to nearly 1'900 in 2024, thanks to modern conservation programmes. In 2003, twelve zoo-bred pandas were given wilderness training and released back into the wild. (This is important to ensure diversity in the "genetic pool".). Ten of them survived. From being an "endangered" species, they are now described as "vulnerable".

Where are the nearest pandas to us in Geneva? There are some at Beauval Zoo, St. Aignan in the Loir-et-Cher in

France. From Geneva this is about a 5-hour drive, direction Tours. But I'll leave you to look that up on your SatNav. There, in 2017, Huan-Huan had a male cub called Yuang Meng and in 2017 she had twins – very rare – called Fleur de Coton and Petite Neige.

How can we help?

By going to see them in their zoos. Each visit helps to finance the conservation programme. (Check before going on an arduous drive as pandas come and go, depending on how long their loan is.)

But ... how do they get here?

Believe it or not, they have their own special aircraft called the Panda Express, which takes them wherever they need to go, and brings them back to China at the end of their stay.

Peaceful and totally non-aggressive, these wonderful animals are excellent ambassadors for peace.

It is most unlikely that St Francis of Assisi ever encountered one of these pandas for peace but, if he had, maybe he would have added to his famous "Canticle of the Creatures" something like this:

*All praise be yours, my Lord,
In all your creatures,
Especially Brother Panda
Who brings goodwill
And mends broken
relationships;
And peace you give us, through
him.
How beautiful he is, how
radiant in his splendour!*

Dorinda

Sources:

News report in April 2024 of the visit to Australia
Les Pandas by Emmanuelle Lepetit, ed. Fleurus, France, 2023 (available at the Bibliothèque de la Cité, behind Confédération Centre)
The Prayers of St Francis compiled by W. Bader, New City, London, 2008



Our Northern Correspondent ... reflects upon relics

In his masterful treatise *The Master and his Emissary* which traces the development of the Western mind, Iain McGilchrist – polymath, neuroscientist, psychiatrist, philosopher and more – writes in passing about the Reformation. A decisive moment in the process of becoming who we are today, though not one entirely welcome. McGilchrist's theory is that this moment in European history marked a significant turning towards the predominance of the left hemisphere of the brain in our thinking and relating to the world. And *as such* a wrong turning, since – as his theory goes – we have in the present-day West become more and more people who rely upon the left half of the brain *more than* the right. Which is worse than being half-brained. It is a path, says McGilchrist, towards disaster.

There isn't space here to go into the depths of McGilchrist's theory. At the heart of it he argues that we need both

hemispheres of our brains – the left designed to *apprehend* the world and so manipulate it, the right to *comprehend* the world and so to see it for what it is. His comments about the Reformation are helpful, and particularly so when we come to think about the subject to which the editor of this newsletter asked me to give some thought a while ago. The subject of *holy relics* and of their *veneration*.

Back to the Reformation for a moment. We all know that the Church in the late Middle Ages was in need of reform. In fact, the Church should be *semper reformanda*, continually reforming herself as she is nourished by the Risen Christ through Sacraments and the Word. The giants of the Reformation, in particular Martin Luther and Jean Calvin knew this. Unfortunately, their followers did not. Luther was a rather tragic figure in this respect, conservative, tolerant, scholarly and possessed of a desire to see *experience* rather than *obedience to authority* as a mark of faith. When it came to traditional practices of the faith Luther did not wish to see them suppressed *for their own sake*. So, for instance, with regard to the use of religious images, he encouraged people to see *through* them to the realities portrayed. There was nothing wrong in these outward things *in themselves*. Although he taught that pilgrimages to particular shrines of saints were unnecessary (but then so had S. Jerome centuries before him!) and mockingly condemned the *mercenary* use of relics which was prevalent at the time, he did not condemn such devotional acts *in themselves*. Only later was this to happen when those who followed him destroyed

images and wrecked shrines, as well as removing anything of beauty from the worship of the Church, preaching with such ferocity as to make the gentle humanist Erasmus write *'I have seen them return from hearing the sermon, as if inspired by an evil spirit, the faces of all showing a curious wrath and ferocity.'*

Of course the *veneration of relics* in this period of the Church's life had indeed become suspect like many other aspects of her life at that time. At worst, it encouraged a superstitious belief in magical cures to be achieved through the relics of the saint. The possession of particular relics was seen to confer some superiority upon a church, and of course there was a corrupt financial aspect to all of this as well, relics changing hands for large sums and the poor fleeced for the privilege of seeing or touching them, not to mention the questionable authenticity of some of them.

There is, however, some Biblical precedent for the veneration of relics of holy people. In the Second Book of the Kings, the death of the prophet Elisha is recorded (2 Kings 13²⁰) and on his burial, a dead man is raised to life following contact with Elisha's bones.

Now I must confess here that I am not a great one for relics! Some of the reliquaries that I have come across I find quite distasteful. Yet in this I am exhibiting exactly that trait which earlier I condemned! Looking *at* something rather than *through it*. And there is no doubt that the veneration of relics – in whatever form it takes

– is indeed something that belongs to our basic human instincts. After all, we are inclined to visit the graves of our loved ones, to place flowers there and to remember them in our prayers. All of which is the essence of a kind of veneration and a recognition of the significance that they had in our lives whilst alive.

Our Christian faith is not a purely cerebral affair – though the left hemisphere of the brain is inclined to that particular world view. *Christianity is* – as William Temple famously put it – *'the most avowedly materialistic of all the great religions.'* And so it is neither surprising nor wrong that those whose bodies and lives have been particularly strong witnesses to the faith of Christ will have a special significance, as will the objects that surrounded them during their lifetimes on earth. There is a sense in which a pilgrim coming to a shrine where the relics of a recognised saint reside is seeking a physical encounter with that holy life, one that may indeed be transformative and conducive to the saving act of Christ in their life. To venerate the relic of a saint is to express our physical *solidarity* with that person and to ask of God a share in the sanctifying grace that transformed her or him.

And this desire for a physical contact inspired Christian people from early days to make pilgrimage to the holy places, particularly to the Holy Land where Jesus' earthly ministry was enacted. It was such pilgrimages that brought about those discouraging remarks of S. Jerome in the fourth century mentioned above, though he himself had made a religious

and archaeological pilgrimage to the Holy Land prior to settling in his hermit's cell in Bethlehem!

Back in 2009, the relics of S. Thérèse of Lisieux (1873-1897) were brought to the United Kingdom for veneration in various places, including York Minster. This moved me to think more profoundly about such devotional practice and to preach on this subject in Inverness Cathedral in the September of that year. Any human remains have a sacred nature, those of the saints particularly so, and veneration of them or of objects close to them is fine, *provided that* we always remember the *author of their lives of sanctity*, who is God the Holy Trinity. When it comes to any devotional practice however time-honoured it may be, we must, as Martin Luther would have said, look *through it not at it*.

I will conclude by mentioning an experience which made a huge impact upon my own life when I was an undergraduate. On December 29th 1970, we celebrated the 800th anniversary of the martyrdom of S. Thomas à Becket. I was in Canterbury Cathedral that day for the High Mass in the morning and I returned for a celebration of Vespers in the afternoon, around the time of S. Thomas's martyrdom. His shrine had, of course, been long destroyed but tradition has the place of his death in that part of the transept named the Martyrdom. The physicality of the experience was unlike anything that I have experienced before or since, though at that time there was no relic to venerate. I have often called to mind the power of this

event and its influence in my subsequent life and ministry.

Incidentally, in the intervening years leading up to the 850th anniversary celebrations of S. Thomas's death, a replica of the original shrine at which thousands of pilgrims worshipped until the 15th century, and at which in the first years after his martyrdom 700 documented miracles were recorded, has now been constructed with the aid of computer software. For the Lambeth Conference of 2021, a rare *relic of S. Thomas* was brought to the Cathedral: an answer maybe to our prayer each Easter Vigil, that *{we} may see the fallen lifted up, the old made new, and all things brought to their perfection through him who is their origin*. Or perhaps to put it another way, the restoration of the kind of attention that the right half of our brain can bring: seeing the bigger picture, the reality behind the immediately visible, whilst at the same time recognising the importance of the physical. That is something that would excite Iain McGilchrist.

Alex Gordon



The replica of St Thomas' shrine



R.I.P. Margaret Prandle

Margaret will be remembered by all the older members of the Holy Trinity family with great affection and admiration. She, with husband Arthur, was tremendously hospitable and threw many memorable parties – most notably the Boxing Day tea party which was a highlight of the Christmas season. A talented actress, she appeared in many of the Geneva English Drama Society's productions, often directed by Arthur who was Chairman of the Society for many years. Together they entertained the Holy Trinity family with their Readings from the Great Writers – which was a frequent feature on the church calendar as both entertainment and fund-raiser. Always elegant, always cheerful she was already missed when she returned to the UK and many of us remained in close contact over the intervening years. This was a friendship we will always treasure. Back in the UK, Margaret was the innocent victim of a serious car accident which led to a diminished lifestyle for a person who had always been lively and active. She died on 5 August, just one week before her 90th birthday.

Holy Trinity Bookstall Manel looks back (1991- 2023)

I arrived in Geneva in July 1988 and soon after, chatting with John and Peta Tracey, they found out that I had been helping with the bookstall in my previous Parish of St. John and St. Philip in The Hague (ICS). Mrs Antonia Bruce had

been selling a small stock of books to HTC parishioners for a while, but was ready to relinquish that responsibility. Encouraged by John and Peta, I took it over towards the end of 1991.

So, let me first thank them for encouraging me to take on this task which has provided a service to the congregation all these years. My thanks also to Jean and Manfred Mayer who recognized the need for a secure box to house the growing stock of books and facilitated the carpentry needed for the lockable box which opens out into a display stand, which most of you are familiar with. I must not forget Paul and Susan Kunz who, at some time during that long period, gave of their time, sharing with me the opening-up of the stall and selling books, to relieve me of that duty Sunday after Sunday from 8:30 to 12:30.

Books were ordered from an organisation called 'Send the Light' (STL Distribution) based in Carlisle, Cumbria, who gave us a 35% discount on our purchases. Since our bookstall was a service and not-for-profit, this discount was passed on, resulting in parishioners paying less than they would have in a Christian bookshop in the UK.

Those days, in Geneva, it was well-nigh impossible to obtain any book in English, let alone Christian books. Hence sales were brisk in the 1990s. The children were my best customers, bringing their parents to the bookstall.

The bookstall also placed orders for the La Cote Anglican community which entailed summer drives out to the little

church in Gingins from time to time for the La Cote Anglican community, although not as often as Peta and I would have loved to. We also had contact with the Bookshop at the World Council of Churches.

With the advent of the IT revolution in the early 2000s, new technologies producing Kindles and e-books etc., on top of that monster Amazon.com, which started off by selling books online (the rest is history!), books became more widely accessible to the English community in Geneva. Yet, the children still came, bringing their parents and the HTC bookstall did survive well into the new millennium.

Sadly, our book supplier, STL, was running into financial difficulties and in mid-2011 was bought over by Trans Media Distribution who continued to fill our orders. For historical records I give the two web-links below:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Send_the_Light
<https://tmdistribution.blogspot.com/2011/05/trust-media-distribution-we-have.html>

To my disappointment, in the summer of 2014, Trans Media stopped responding to our requests. Their blog-spot (see above link) stops in January 2014. We still had enough stocks to keep us going for several years, but come 2019 we started looking for options. Sales were slowing down, a victim of the aforementioned IT revolution and its resulting social changes.

One option was to sell the stocks to the Cursillo Community, who ran a bookstall at their bi-annual

events. They declined. The stocks were valued at some CHF 400 at that time. Our Warden, Mary Talbot confirmed in January 2019, "from a financial perspective in HTC we have effectively written off the cost, although it is always welcome to have the revenue when it comes". Hence I continued to reduce the stocks by attrition, opening the bookstall from time to time, with very little interest from parishioners, even carting the books to Cursillo events, where there is usually a much greater interest. The Building Tomorrow project was also becoming a concern given the need to clear out the basement. Hence on email correspondence with Warden Mary and Chaplain Daphne, it was decided to finally close the Bookstall, donating the dozen or so books in stock to the Cursillo community.

The stock value as at 31 October 2023 was CHF 128 for books and some cards.

I proceeded to clear out the lockable book box on wheels and stored away in the tall cupboard in the entrance to the Church hall, a small stock of cards of our Church building in the 1800s, some HTC welcome fridge magnets as well as several copies of the HTC Stained Glass Windows booklet, (put together by Michael Howie), that had been on the stall for sale.

The balance cash in the kitty of 360CHF I handed over to the sidespeople on Sunday 5 November and the remaining books/cards were delivered to the Cursillo the following Saturday, during that very special week-end.

An excel spreadsheet with summary finance details from 1994 to 2023 as well as a list of the 12 books donated to the Cursillo were attached to an email sent to the Chaplain and the Warden on 2 November 2023, together with, more or less this same report. That email was copied to John and Peta Tracey, Jean and Manfred Mayer as well as Paul and Susan Kunz, thanking them.

Relevant bookstall related documents, reports, accounts and emails were scanned for historical purposes; that file (about 30 megabytes of data) was placed on the TransferNow website, (which automatically deletes the data in 7 days) and the link for downloading the documents for archival purposes was sent to the church administration (copied to the Chaplain and Warden) on 2 November 2023.

Manel Kumarakulasinghe



The following article forms part of a series we hope to present on notable members of the Holy Trinity congregation. (The D-Day memoir of Beverley Holloway which we printed in our summer issue came into this category) Ed.



Maya Timmers-Giri (née Giri) (1929-2022)

Maya was born in 1929 and brought up in Eastbourne in East Sussex. She had an international heritage. Her mother, Princess Marina Kassatkin-Rostovski, had emigrated from St Petersburg to Paris during the Russian revolution. There she met Anand Giri, an eye surgeon from Bangalore who had been operating on the French front. After marrying they went to live in Rajasthan where Anand set up a hospital on behalf of Ganga Singh, the modernising Maharaja of Bikaner. They moved to Britain in 1923.

Maya had two older brothers, George and Mishka. Mishka was sadly killed in the Second World War. George joined the Royal Navy during the War while pursuing his studies in tropical diseases, and served full-time from the late 1940s. He retired as a surgeon captain and in 1970 was awarded an OBE. He and his wife Karin were greatly loved by Maya, who often went to stay with them in Sussex and later in Mallorca, where they moved in 1981. George and Karin had three children, Michael,

Christopher and Alexandra Giri, Maya's beloved nephews and niece. Michael is a drummer; Christopher, an artist; and Alexandra, a garden designer and former restaurateur.

Maya was brought up to be a gifted linguist, speaking fluent German, Russian, Spanish and English. This was invaluable when she later became a UN conference interpreter in Geneva. Maya was educated at St. Winifred's School in Eastbourne, but after the War broke out, her mother decided that Maya would be safer in Canada, so she travelled alone by boat to stay with her uncle there.

After the War, Maya returned to England and trained at the Dartford College of Physical Education from 1947-50. The college had been founded by a Swedish lady in the early 1900s and was also known as the Bergman Osterberg Physical Education College. Maya's best friend Natasha said it was like a commando course! Maya excelled in sports, including throwing the discus, putting the shot, climbing and skiing. Once, while demonstrating the discus to her pupils, she inadvertently broke a British record and was co-opted to throw the discus for the English team at the 1950s Commonwealth Games. In later years, Maya remained an excellent skier and astonished younger, accomplished skiers by easily overtaking them on the piste. Her favourite form of transport in the 1950s and '60s was a Vespa.

Because she did not totally enjoy teaching (while brilliant

at sports herself, she was not very good at keeping order), Maya next decided to apply for the School of Slavonic Studies at London University. Here her prowess in languages came into its own, and later led to her becoming a freelance interpreter for the United Nations in Geneva. She specialised in space techno terminology; the conferences she worked for were intended to reach consensus between states about satellite communication. This is how she met her husband, Albert ('Ab') Timmers, also nicknamed 'Timmy'. He had studied at Delft University and later worked as a consultant for satellite tech companies, and later as a senior consultant for various governments. Maya and Timmy were drawn together by their love of nature, the outdoor life and mountains. They were married in Mallorca in 1985, the home of Maya's brother and sister-in-law, George and Karin. They had fun together, but when adversity struck, Maya devoted herself to looking after Timmy during his final illness. He died in 1994. Afterwards, Timmy's niece, Margaret Timmers, remained closely in touch with Maya and her family.

Meanwhile, during the late 1960s, Maya had bought an apartment in the beautiful Alpine village of Arolla. This became her spiritual home, and a favourite place for her family to visit. Timmy loved it too. After Timmy's death, Maya continued to live in Arolla and in their joint flat in the Avenue de Budé in Geneva. She remained as Chairwoman of the Association of UN Interpreters and fought hard for better working conditions, equipment

and salary. After some years these improvements were achieved.

When Maya's memory began to fail a little, she decided to move into the Maison de Retraite du Petit-Saconnex in 2016, first in an independent studio in Colladon. Here, her rebellious side emerged, when she determined to sit up through the night, listening to jazz on the radio. She never liked to rise early and when going to church, would sometimes aim for a morning service, but arrive in time for Evensong! Maya later moved to the Maison de Retraite's medical wing in Cèdres, where she was looked after with great kindness and tenderness by the nurses and other staff, and was also visited regularly by Christine Damary, who knew her through Holy Trinity Church. Maya died peacefully on 15 June 2022 with Alex, Chris and Margaret by her side.

Margaret Timmers



Council Report – May 2024 to July 2024

Council met twice during this period in May and June. There is traditionally no Council meeting in July. May was the first meeting of your new Church Council as elected at the AGM in April. We welcomed three new members of Council, all serving for the first time, Armorel Duncan, Khosi Khumalo and Mark

Faber. They replaced Aidan Liddle, Gill Howie and Clare Amos who had reached the end of their terms. Aidan and his family are moving back to the United Kingdom and will be much missed. Gill had served two three-year terms and we thank her for her dedicated service to Council. Clare was elected as one of our Archdeaconry representatives and so will continue to sit on Council.

Deep Dive into our 2024 Priorities - Building Congregational Capacity

In line with our Vision & Strategy three-year plan, Council had agreed four priorities to work on in 2024. Each of these priorities will be the focus of a dedicated Council meeting. At the May meeting Council considered how we can build our congregational capacity. Council had an in depth discussion on how to develop vocational discernment, foster stewardship and encourage participation in the life of the church. This is about each of us recognizing our gifts and talents and using them to enrich the ministry of our church. Many of you will recognize this theme from Canon Daphne's sermons linking Christ's teaching and message to how we develop our Christian life and action here and now. Mary Talbot drew Council's attention to a tool developed by the Diocese of Oxford, available at the following link: [Personal Discipleship Plan - Diocese of Oxford](#) It provides a diagnostic tool which can be used to help assess your talents and discern to what God might be calling you. Council had a rich discussion which we trust will help us to work towards a

culture of welcome, listening and caring for one another in which each of us plays our part in the life of our Church.

New Sound System

As you may remember from previous reports, Council has been working on improving the sound system in church. We have been working with Lemavisio, the sound architects recommended by our architects, Brodbeck Roulet. At the May meeting, Mary was able to bring forward the proposal from Lemavisio based on their assessment of our current system. There are three principal reasons to consider a new system. Firstly, as a result of the renovation the acoustics in the church have changed, making the transmission of sound uneven, particularly in the nave. Secondly, the wireless frequency that we are using for our microphones is no longer permitted and thirdly, parts of our current system are now obsolete and we would not be able to procure spare parts if needed. The proposal has been divided into two phases. The first and major phase replaces the control system, amplifiers and speakers in the nave. Two of the existing microphones will be replaced, one with a headset microphone, as well as the lectern microphone. The total cost of this first phase is CHF 30'000. We are most fortunate that an anonymous donor has offered to fund 50% of these costs. The other 50% will be funded from our Development fund. On this basis Council approved the proposal. A second phase which would have replaced the microphones in the chancel and provided more microphones, including a second headset was

not considered affordable at present. A member of Council subsequently came forward and offered to pay for a second headset. We are hoping that Lemonvisio will install the new system in September.

The Role of Churchwardens

All good things, sadly, come to an end and after 6 years as one of our Churchwardens, Mary Talbot will be stepping down at the next AGM. As we start the process of identifying candidates to replace her, this seemed a good time to work on clearer definitions on the responsibilities and opportunities for delegation of this central role in our church life. Mary shared her thoughts and experiences on her work as our Churchwarden at our June meeting. The specific responsibilities of Churchwardens in the Diocese in Europe are outlined in a document entitled "Called to be a Churchwarden in the Diocese in Europe" written by Clare Amos and available on the Diocesan website. Below is a quote from Clare's document: "The role of a Churchwarden is extremely varied but generally involves management, maintenance and mission. The Churchwarden's tasks involve leadership, labour and love." Mary referred to Clare's piece, pointing out that the boundaries of the role as extremely broad, although the specific responsibilities are relatively narrow. The Churchwardens are the officers of the Bishop in the Chaplaincy. They represent the laity and promote the unity and peace of the chaplaincy, in co-operation with the Chaplain. They are also charged with maintaining order and decency in the church, especially during services. Mary stressed that

there is considerable latitude in how these responsibilities are carried out and what is delegated to others. She presented to Council some priority areas she will work on prior to handing over to her successor.

An emergency evacuation procedure with the appointment and training of fire marshals.

Completing the handover of church fabric care and maintenance from the Building Tomorrow committee back to the Churchwardens

Establishing the maintenance contracts for the electronic and digital systems in the church

Clarifying the overlaps with the Verger, Christine Damary.

If you are interested in knowing more about being a churchwarden, I highly recommend reading Clare's explanations which can be found at the following link: <https://www.europe.anglican.org/g/being-churchwarden> Clare gives some fascinating background on the historical role of churchwardens in the Church of England. If you want to know what a churchwarden can do with their "wand" this is the reading for you.

Finances

The half year accounts for end June were most encouraging. We are showing a small surplus of around CHF 900. In past years we have tended to show significant deficits at this stage of the year. Our income was boosted by a very successful summer fair. Our thanks go to Ana-Victoria who successfully managed this event and whose sunny smile contributed to the joyous atmosphere of the occasion. We have also

received some very generous donations for which we are most grateful. Expenses are under budget, though we continue to closely monitor our utility expenses. We can now read the electricity meter which will allow us to better anticipate our bills.

Safeguarding

At our June meeting, Carol Brown presented and Council adopted a Chaplaincy Domestic Abuse statement. We all share the responsibility of being aware of the misery caused by domestic abuse and being sensitive to any indication that it may be occurring. If in any doubt, contact Carol, our safeguarding officer.

Carol has been making heroic efforts to ensure that all of us who have roles and responsibilities in our church complete the necessary safeguarding training. She ran a session in May in the church hall at which 14 people completed their basic awareness course. This is the level needed for sidespeople, welcomers, servers and technical teams. Cake was provided as an incentive, the stick part of the equation was that anyone who had not completed this basic awareness course by 30th June would be taken off the rotas. We have to be absolutely compliant on this point. If you still have not completed your basic awareness course for any reason, please contact Carol, myself or a churchwarden and we would be happy to help you in any way we can.

Building Tomorrow

The first phase of our renovation project is winding to a close. The church has been assessed for any safety

concerns and is expected to receive full fire safety certification next month. The vestry cupboards now have handles, an advantage to which I can attest, as a sidesperson. In autumn Council will turn its attention to planning for the second phase which as originally conceived included renovating and upgrading the current hall and creating a second basement level. Council will have a special meeting on Saturday 19th October. There have been many new faces on Council since we first planned our project so we will review in depth the structure and planning of the second phase. We will also do a full financial review of the actual costs of phase one and the revised costings for phase two. We will consider the current funding in hand and the shortfall in funds needed to finance phase two. Council should then be in a position to make decisions and communicate with the congregation on how to proceed. Our current council remains aware of the commitment given by previous Councils to the congregation that we would not proceed with phase two until we were sure of sufficient funding. These are weighty decisions which will impact the generations to come and so we need to give time, careful reflection and prayer to move forward as a community.

Council will reconvene on Monday 26th August, refreshed and ready for a busy autumn programme. Please contact me, or any other member of Council, to ask questions or comment on the issues we are working on. We are your elected representatives to work with our Chaplain, Daphne, to develop and grow our life in

Christ in our church community.

Ursula McGregor



Some highlights for your diary at Holy Trinity this Autumn 2024

Advocacy course – Wednesdays
11 and 25 September and 2
October at 19h in the hall

Trinity Tea
Tuesday 24 September at 14h30 in
the hall

JN Summit of the Future Service
Sunday 22 September at 10h30 in
church

Harvest Festival Service and
Lunch
Sunday 29 September at 10h30

Fundraising Auction & Dinner
Friday 11 October at 18h30 in the
hall

Remembrance Day Service
Sunday 10 November at 10h30 in
church

Community Choir Concert
Sunday 17 November at 17h in
church

Christmas Fair
Saturday 30 November 10h – 15h
in church and hall

Sing Along Messiah
Saturday 7 December
Daytime rehearsal, evening
concert (time TBA)

Nine Lessons and Carols
Christmas Eve
Service at 17h30, organ prelude at
17h in the Cathedral

Church officers

Chaplain: Canon Daphne Green
chaplain@holytrinitygeneva.org
 022 734 3817
 079 945 0605

Assistant Curate: Glen Ruffle
curate@holytrinitygeneva.org

Music Director: Mark Charles
 079 944 5175

Junior Choir Director: Claire Charles

Church Wardens: Mary Talbot
 079 632 4012
 Aylwin Zabula
zabulap@hotmail.com

Verger: Christine Damary
 022 774 2320

Sacristan: Gill Howie
 022 733 83 72

Council Members: Emily Banzet, Nicolas Dériaz, Armorel Duncan, Mike Gunton (Treasurer), Mark Faber, Nicholas Hacking, Makhosazana Khumalo, Ursula McGregor (Secretary), Paul Mondo Ngomba, Rawsette Whyte

Archdeaconry Synod Representatives:
 Clare Amos, Carol Brown, Humberto Henderson, Pierre Ludo Claude

Youth Ministry Coordinator: Armel Ayegnon
ayearmel@yahoo.fr

Safeguarding Officer: Carol Brown
safeguarding@holytrinitygeneva.org

Church Office: Michèle Walker, Secretary
 022 731 5155
admin@holytrinitygeneva.org
 Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri. 8h30 - 12h30

Church activities

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
 079 945 0605

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

Church archives: Valerie Offord 022 777 1858

Development project: Mark Charles 079 944 5175

Pledge fund: Ursula McGregor
 022 342 3227

Editorial committee:

Jane Brooks, Jenny Buffle, Margaret Jacquard, Elizabeth Laravoire, Brenda Stewart

Please send letters or articles for inclusion in the Magazine to The Editor, either by regular post to Jenny Buffle, 12 chemin La Parisaz, 1291 Commugny

or by email - jjbuffle@gmail.com

Please note - deadline for articles for the winter issue is 11 November 2024