

Trinity Times 2023

Holy Trinity Church
Maisons Laffitte



joyeux Noël

3euros donation

Who Does What

Chaplain	Rev'd. Charlotte Sullivan 06 83 08 59 67
Curate	Rev'd. Vivian Sockett
Reader	Richard Medcalf
Youth Worker	Joy Van Staalduinien

Church Wardens	Christine Salisbury David Bean
Church Council Secretary	Didier Trufanow
Chaplaincy Assistant	Jenni Gibson

Activity	Contact person
Address List	Jenni Gibson
Book Stall	Sarah Masset
Buildings/ Grounds	Adrian Parr
Charitable Giving	Hesry Marshall
Choir	Rachel Meuriot
Coffee Rota	tinyurl.com/ TeaCoffeeHTCML
Ecumenical Group	Christine Salisbury
Electoral Roll	Elizabeth Bean
Flower Rota	Fiona Dabas
Guiding	Christine Salisbury
Intercessions	Elizabeth Bean
Lesson Readers	Elizabeth Bean
Little Fishes	office@htcml.com Coffee morning every Tuesday at 9.30 am for pre-school children.
Organist	Joan Bauman

Activity	Contact person
Planned Giving	Robert Manterfield
Prayer Net	Edith Briard
Safeguarding	Alice Auperin
Scouting	contact@maisons- laffitte-scouts.fr
Sidespeople	Patrick Gautier- Lynham
Sunday Groups	LJ Desmeulles
Treasurer	Bob Hughes
Trinity English School (TES)	trinityenglishml @gmail.com
Trinity Times	Nancy Huguet
Web Site	office@htcml.com
Youth Group	Joy Van Staalduinien & Johanna Devlin

Bible Study

For women: Monday evening by Zoom	Jenni Gibson
Tuesday a.m.	Nancy Huguet
Wednesday evening by Zoom	8.00 pm: Bible study 9.15 pm: Compline

Chaplain's Corner



Dear friends

As some of you may know I have just returned from a trip to the Normandy beaches. While there I visited several memorials and museums all telling the heart-wrenching story of D-Day. On 6 June 1944, Allied forces landed on the shores of Normandy, marking the beginning of the end of World War II. As the mother of a soldier, I found the whole experience very thought-provoking and at times deeply emotional.

I am writing just one week away from 11th November, a time when we remember and mark the sacrifice of so many. Despite the cost paid by so many, we are not at peace, and conflict continues to rage throughout our world. Our newspapers, televisions, and the internet are filled with horrific stories of war, ongoing throughout the world, with eyes currently fixed on the conflict between Gaza and Israel.

It's difficult to hold all of that in one's mind and sit down and write a message for Christmas! However, when better than in the midst of all this horror to remind ourselves that Jesus Christ came to bring light to a world shrouded in darkness. His teachings emphasised love, forgiveness and reconciliation, offering a path to healing divisions and conflicts.

The Normandy landings were a beacon of hope and the beginning of reconciliation for Europe. Similarly, Christmas reminds us of the potential for change and renewal, offering hope for peace in conflict-ridden areas. Just as D-Day marked a turning point, we can but hope, and of course pray, for a turning point in the Israel and Gaza conflict, where diplomacy, compassion, and understanding can pave the way for reconciliation.

The Christmas season presents an opportunity to extend goodwill and compassion to those affected by conflict. Acts of kindness, support for humanitarian organizations and prayers for peaceful resolutions are ways where we can all make a difference.

As we come to the end of another year may we all strive to be agents of peace and reconciliation, no matter where in the world we find ourselves, and may the message of Christmas shine as a beacon of hope in troubled times.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very peaceful Christmas and also thank you for your love and support throughout 2023.

Much love

Charlotte



*"The Braves" on Omaha beach consists of three elements:
 The wings of Hope
 so that the spirit which carried these men on 6 June 1944 continues to inspire us,
 reminding us that together it is always possible to change the future.
 Rise, Freedom!
 so that the example of those who rose against barbarity helps us remain standing strong
 against all forms of inhumanity.
 The Wings of Fraternity
 so that this surge of brotherhood always reminds us of our responsibility towards others
 as well as ourselves.*

On 6 June 1944 these man were more than soldiers, they were our brothers.



***Some of our Youth attended
 the Service of Remembrance
 at Les Invalides on 11 November.***



Highlights of Recent Council Meetings

Since the last issue of Trinity Times, the Chaplaincy Council met once via Zoom on 11 September 2023.

As you certainly remember, all Council meetings have regular updates about spiritual development matters, Eco-Church initiatives, safeguarding and our financial situation.

The different matters were also raised during the meeting in September, including the following:

Welcome to our new Council member - The Chaplain welcomed Rev'd. Vivian Sockett to her initial Council meeting at Holy Trinity! Rev'd. Vivian Sockett then said that she was indeed greatly looking forward to taking part both in our Council meetings and church community.

Eco-Church - It was reported that the position of Environmental Officer in our church was still vacant. Given the importance of this matter, it was agreed that it was becoming relatively urgent for Holy Trinity to find either a single person or a group of congregation members to perform the necessary environmental tasks. "Green Lantern" (the previous environmental group) could be recreated should no congregation member volunteer to become the Environmental Link Officer.

Council members were reminded that the purpose of our environmental work is three-fold:

- (i) identify our priority issues and discuss the implementation of possible actions,
- (ii) communicate with both the Chaplaincy Council and church congregation regarding the environmental plan and possible actions and
- (iii) liaise with the Diocesan Environmental Officer and other churches taking actions.

If you would like to help our church contribute to protecting God's creation and improving our practices regarding the environment, please speak to the Chaplain or to a Council member. Thank you very much!

Strategy Report for Future Actions – As you may remember, Rev’d. Vivian Sockett will undoubtedly become a fully ordained minister in June 2024. This means that as from September 2024 Holy Trinity should have two full-time ministers. This will have a wonderful effect on the actions and organisation of Holy Trinity in the future.

Given this future situation, both the Chaplain and Rev’d. Vivian Sockett have been reflecting on the development of our strategy for the near and mid-term future.

A summary of their ideas was presented to Council members in the form of an interesting presentation. This presentation included several subjects such as the recently completed Church Survey as well as the discussions and interviews which will be held about our church activities (spiritual development, children and youth, pastoral care, church fabric, environment ...). Stay tuned as this process will prove to be very interesting for the future of our church life!

Food Parcel Distribution – Holy Trinity had decided to experiment this initiative and collect several types of non-fresh food for a *Food Parcel Distribution* which was planned to take place on 4 November. Following this food distribution, Holy Trinity would consider how it could continue this type of support.

Youth Group Update - The Youth Group is continuing to meet on both Thursday evenings (both remotely and in person) and on some Sunday mornings at church. The Thursday evening Youth Group is now based on a 12-lesson curriculum related to the “*Holy Troublemakers & Unconventional Saints*” book. For the Sunday morning sessions, the Youth Group members have expressed their thoughts and motivation about the present sessions.

Date of next Chaplaincy Council meeting:

Monday 6 November

D.T.

*The Trinity Times committee would like to thank
Shantha Delaunay for the beautiful cover design of this issue
and wish her well in her new life in Luxembourg.*

Nancy discovers some original santons.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph in Betlenheim



When you think of santons, you may naturally think of Provence, or perhaps of St Francis of Assisi in the 12th century. But a few days after the terrible events in Israel, I came across an article about a santonnier located in a town in Alsace which spoke to me of tolerance and living together in peace. About 35 years ago, Pascale Delorme was visiting a santon market in the south of France

which gave her the idea of making santons from her own region of Alsace. As they had in the south, she would show the traditions, legends and costumes of Alsace.

The first three figures she made were Christkindel (Jesus), Maria and Zepele (Joseph in Alsatian). They were soon visited by the Kutchemarie, the kouglof lady and the man with the umbrella. Each year, one or two more figures are added to the group, now well over 60 figures. There are the local artisans – the potter of Betschdorf and the potter of Soufflenheim, the miner from St Marie aux Mines and the market gardener from Robertsau. Add to that St. Nicolas and the three children. There are different santons with local 19th century costume, often identified by the typical headpiece or cap. A recent addition is the Bredele seller (special biscuits made around Christmas).

Pascale decides which new santon to create. Then she researches the costumes and the colors and makes the original terracotta sculpture. Then her sculptor husband, Thierry, takes over. He makes the plaster moulds needed to make the new santon. The plaster comes from their neighboring potter. Once the liquid plaster is poured into the mould, it must dry for 12 hours. Everyone in the family puts their hand to painting the santons, but the details are all done by Pascale.

Each new santon has a history, some closely related to the creators. The stonecutter is a representation of Thierry. The ‘maries de Seebach’ were made for Pascale and Thierry’s 20th wedding anniversary (some 25 years ago). The godmother of Scheithal was made to commemorate the birth of their grandson.

But you may be asking, where does the idea of living together in peace come in? There are four santons that may surprise you. Perhaps not the first, the priest. However, the rabbi, the iman and the pastor are more unusual. What a beautiful sign of ecumenical harmony!

Green Christmas Gifts and Wrapping

How can we make Christmas greener, more sustainable, more ecological?

Let's start with gifts and wrapping. First rule of thumb is - less is more. There are so many choices for non-plastic reusable wrapping which can still be festive. Here are some ideas:

- wicker baskets,
- pretty tins,
- all types of kitchen containers – salad bowl, pie plate, cake tin, baking dish, cutting board, mug, mason jar, flour tin, plate, tea pot,
- garden containers – flower pot,
- fabric – pieces of fabric, tea towels, scarves, socks, toiletries bag, tote bag,
- paper – newspaper, Kraft paper, old music scores, old maps, old gift bags,
- tags – cut out holiday shapes from old Christmas cards, old maps, music scores,
- decoration – forage for leaves, small fir branches, ivy, pine cones, branch with berries, cinnamon sticks, reuse ribbons and bows, use strips of cloth from holiday attire too worn to repair eg aprons or other clothing.

Now, what to put in the wrapping.

- Experiences:
 - concert tickets, theatre tickets,
 - membership for sports club,
 - spa voucher,
 - voucher for making an object, learning – eg Wecandoo,
 - restaurant voucher,
 - garden centre voucher.



Books: book voucher or try Book Off in Paris—3 locations which have practically new books at extremely reasonable prices, from 1 euro, and, of course, HTC Christmas fete!

Food hamper: make your own, or buy at HTC Christmas fete: jam, lemon curd, Christmas pudding, mince pies, chocolate, coffee & tea, fudge, wine/champagne/spirits/beer, biscuits, nuts, peppermints.

Advent calendar: reusable, of course. Several choices—fabric, boxes. What to put in the calendar: quiz questions, jokes, chocolates, fudge.

An Overview of the Day

On 14 October more than twenty women met at Holy Trinity for a day-long retreat, led by Katrin Dubreuil and our curate Rev'd. Vivian Sockett, to reflect on the question: *Is it reasonable to believe in the Christian God?* Throughout the day Katrin illustrated our time together with an amazing power point presentation to give us plenty of food for thought as well as quotes from French philosophers, authors, scientists and mathematicians.

Our day, divided into three parts, included: listening, learning, talking, sharing, laughing, crying, eating, drinking, reflecting, praying, writing and doing art therapy (aka Play-doh). Three tables were set up in the church hall to encourage us to sit with different people for each part of the day.

As an introduction we thought about how the people who share our lives with us are doing at the moment, coming to the general conclusion: "not great", then we wondered *Why do we bother with the question of God?* thinking about how non-believers might respond and the questions they might ask.

"Qu'est-ce donc que nous crie cette avidité et cette impuissance [...] ce gouffre infini ne peut être rempli que par un objet infini et immuable, c'est-à-dire que par Dieu même" Blaise Pascal.

In the first part of the day we looked at how amazing God's creation is and discussed the question *What do I experience of God around me?* We gave examples of God's creation: from the enormity of the universe (sky, stars, majestic mountains and vast oceans) to the tiniest parts of His work (such as a cell under a microscope or the diversity of insects), whilst also examining the beauty of the world (favourites included maple leaves and rainbows). We then wondered together: how is it possible to not believe in God when we gaze at such works as these?

After lunch, in part two, we reflected on the things that make us human (answers included: empathy, reason, emotions, longing, creativity...) and wondered *Why does it matter if I have a Heart and Soul?* and *What do I make of the co-existence of God and Evil?* We studied our emotional responses to beautiful things such as art and music and agreed that the awe with which we appreciate something beautiful or incredible is unique to us as humans and comes from God; we respond with our heart and our soul. We went on to discuss why there is so much evil in the world and agreed that this happens when we, as humans, choose to turn away from God, His love and peace. We also saw that God's ultimate answer to evil and suffering lies in Jesus and the hope that His resurrection offers to all of creation.

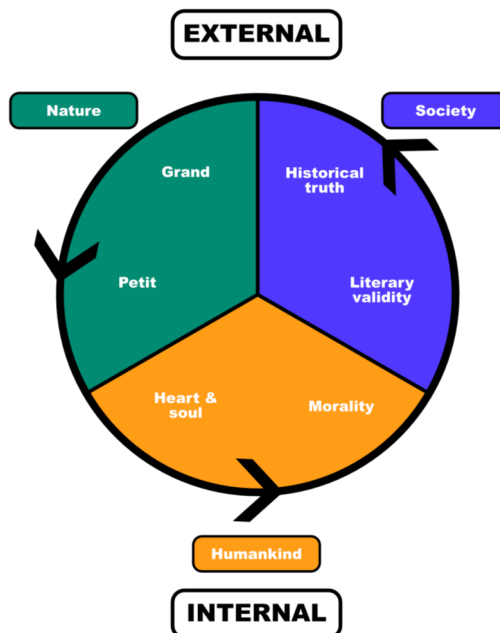
Finally we saw how Christian teachings have influenced many parts of history and society.

We looked at *If God exists, is it reasonable to trust the Bible as a way to know Him?* then *Is it cognitively rational to believe in a historical Jesus?* and were shown different historical proof that the writings in the Bible are true, as well as the influences on society of Christian teaching. We agreed that our moral code – knowing what is right versus what is wrong – is based on the Christian code. The way we refer to years (BC / AD) has a Christian basis, and the French motto – Liberty, Fraternity, Equality – could even be said to derive from Christian values.

At the end of the day we had completed a three part pie-chart (below) and our thoughts from the day were displayed on the wall. Before leaving, we were asked to note *What difference will today's reflections make in my tomorrow?* What better way to spend a Saturday?

Thank you to Jenni, Katrin and Vivian for all the hard work that went into preparing this day, for your infectious enthusiasm and for being so inspirational. Thank you also to Hesyry for the delicious soup.

C.F.



What I learned at the Women's Retreat

Our God made the extremely large universe, with all its unfathomable expanses, and He also made the infinitely small organisms that can only be observed by powerful microscopes.

Humanity is still discovering both. They were designed by an Intelligent Being, they're not random, they're finely and precisely tuned to allow life.

This same God came to live on earth like a man in order to procure our salvation. We're all free to accept or reject Him.

Concerning evil, God made his angels and us, humanity, and gave us the freedom to choose or reject Him, and bear the consequences. God doesn't want us to love Him out of obligation, he didn't create robots, He wants us to choose to love Him, or not. Those that choose not to love Him, open themselves to evil that is evident in our world.

Finally suffering refines us as an ore is refined to produce a pure metal.

(And Uber drivers in 78 think that all French people believe in God but won't admit it publicly!)

Thanks Katrin & Vivian.

L.M



A poem contributed by Jan.

Christmas Time

I have a list of folks I know
All written in a book
And every year at Christmas time
I go and take a look
And that is when I realise
That these names are a part
Not of the book they're written in
But of my very heart

Each name stands for someone
Whose path has touched mine and then
Left such a print of friendship
That I want to touch again
And while it sounds fantastic
For me to make this claim,
I really feel I am composed
Of each and every name

So never think of Christmas cards
As just a mere routine
Of names upon a Christmas list
Forgotten in between
For when I send a Christmas card
That is addressed to you
It's because you're on that list
Of folks I am indebted to

And every year when Christmas comes
I realise anew
The Biggest Gift life can give
Is Meeting Folks like you
And may the Spirit of Christmas
That forever and ever endures
Leave its richest blessings
In the hearts of you and yours.

J.M.

Eric shares with us some thoughts about light.

Light and Christmas

Light is our origin! Our origin is in the light, and the original Light is still around us, and within us.

The Light is both far and near; It is everywhere in this vast universe.

Christmas is about Light! It brings comfort to humanity.

We don't have to feel lonely and lost on this small piece of rock, in such a gigantic universe!

We are not separated from the original creative intelligence. In fact, we are indeed part of it.

Light and Love go together! We were created by and from the Light, out of Love.

A love that has no time and no distance, and encompasses all.

And this great Love continues to pour into our beings, like the particles of Light still around from the beginnings of Time and Space; and IT is the link between now and then, between far and near, between Earth and Heavens!

The good news of Christmas is that each one of us can feel a special connection with Light and Love.

But it is a very tender and thin connection, so small we can miss seeing it, and yet so big that it surrounds the whole of creation! So small as a poor little child being born, so big that it can be alive in all Humanity.

Christmas shows us we can be small and big at the same time. However small each of us is, we are part of the big Light. However small is the smile, the gift, the word, the act made out of love, it brings us in closer connection with this Great Creative Universal Love, thus making all of us humans, no longer separated from each other, but unified in the Great Light. The light of Christmas!

Merry Christmas!!

E.A.

A vegan recipe for Christmas: Kanelbullar

Ingredients for 10 rolls:

300 g flour T45

1 teaspoon dry yeast

80 g sugar (canne blond)

¼ teaspoon salt

180 ml warm soja milk

45 ml oil (not olive)

vegetal margarine

cinnamon

sucre perle also called Swedish pearl sugar (optional).



Mix the dry ingredients. Add the milk and start to knead by hand, or with the hook attachment of your robot. Add the oil little by little, kneading after each addition. Knead energetically for 5-10 minutes to get a smooth dough. It may be a bit sticky. Form a ball and place it in the salad bowl, covering with a wet cloth. Leave the dough in a warm spot to rise for 3 hours (25 degrees minimum).

On a floured surface, spread the dough into a rectangle. Using a spatula, spread the margarine on the entire surface of the dough. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon. Fold into three and roll out.

Cut out about 10 strips lengthwise. Roll them around your thumb and index finger to form the Kanelbullar. Sprinkle with pearl sugar if you wish. Place on paper on a baking tray and bake at 180 degrees (th 6) for 15 minutes.

Eat warm or cool.



Carolyn, Edith, Nancy and Sarah would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.



The policy of this magazine is to publish articles of interest provided they are neither illegal nor immoral. The content of the magazine does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editorial committee.

Dates for your Diary



Christmas Services at
HOLY TRINITY CHURCH
MAISONS-LAFFITTE

Saturday 9th December

5.30pm - Service of Nine Lessons & Carols
(followed by mince pies & mulled wine)

Sunday 17th December

11am - All Age Nativity Service

Sunday 24th December

10.30am - Morning Holy Communion Service
5pm - All Age Christmas Eve Crib Service
11.30pm - Midnight Holy Communion Service

Monday 25th December

10.30am - Christmas Day Holy Communion Service

Sunday 31st December

10.30am - Morning Holy Communion Service

htcml.com

We are looking for someone to design the cover of the Easter issue of Trinity Times (or to do this every quarter). Please get in touch if you are interested!

The deadline for your contributions for the Easter magazine is 10 March 2024.