

## **Who Does What**

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

Church Wardens	David Bean and Angela Labaisse- Brodie
Church Council Secretary	Rachel Meuriot
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	
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	Rev'd. Joy Van Staalduinen and Johanna Devlin	
Bible Study		
Tuesday a.m.	Nancy Huguet	
Wednesday evening by Zoom	8.00 pm: Bible study 9.15 pm: Compline.	

## **Chaplain's Corner**



Dear friends,

I wanted to take this opportunity to share an update on the Vicarage Suppers. As many of you know, these suppers began in January 2024, inspired by an initiative from our Advent course. In Rachel Billups' book, *An Unlikely Advent*, she recounts a story where she received a Christmas gift, a wooden sign that read "Jesus eats with everyone." This sign inspired her to create monthly "Open table" nights in her home.

This story deeply moved me for two reasons. First it reminded me of the large gatherings my husband and I hosted at our home in the Dordogne. One year we ran a

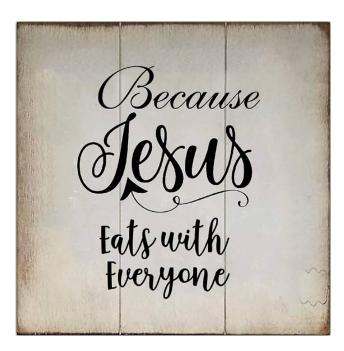
weekly Alpha course for 30 people from the local golf course. It was beautifully chaotic but God used it and eight people went on to be confirmed following that course. It also reminded me that often the most interesting and meaningful conversations take place in a relaxed setting over a plate of food and a glass of wine.

My goal was to host a monthly meal where everyone is welcome, fostering a relaxed atmosphere with minimal focus on food organisation (one night, we ended up with a table full of desserts!) but with a full emphasis on hospitality and building relationships. I know there are many in our church who, even after attending for many years, still do not know some people.

The suppers have been well attended, with an average of 15 people, and participants of all age ranges. A cherished tradition at the Vicarage Suppers has been playing the "Getting to Know You" game. If you're curious about what that is, please come and join us!

Initially planned as a six-month initiative, that time is nearly up. I would greatly appreciate your feedback about the suppers. Although they're hosted in my home, my hope is for this to become a true community initiative with increased involvement from everyone. If you have any ideas to help this grow, please share them with me.

Jesus welcomed everyone to His table, emphasising the importance of love and inclusion. As we enter into the next six months of our Vicarage Suppers, let's embody this spirit. It's about more than just sharing food; it's about creating a community where everyone feels valued and accepted. May our gatherings be blessed with fellowship and grace.





Rev'd. Charlotte Sullivan

#### Vivian shares the church's new vision statement with us

Holy Trinity's new Vision Statement for the next five years is the fruit of this year's Vision & Strategy process. This started with the Church Survey in November, and so far in 2024 Council has dedicated two Saturdays for in-person conversation on our heritage, who we are today, and what God is calling us to be specifically in our 2020s west-of-Paris situation for the remainder of this decade.

The fruit of this ongoing process has been an increased sense of clarity and curiosity about the future, and the steps we can be taking now as Jesus' light, especially within the English-speaking communities of which we are a part.

Before the summer, the Council and the Strategy Committee will be meeting again to see how this Vision will work itself out for HTC from the rentrée 2024, so stay tuned for the specifics... and some merchandise!

V.S.

"A church where God is glorified, all are loved, and purpose is found as we follow Jesus and share His life-changing message of love, joy and hope."

## **Church Council meeting**

The focus has mainly been on the following things:

- Survey findings and the resulting work towards drawing up our Vision Statement and defining our strategy.
   This is ongoing.
- Various ministry and outreach initiatives (meals / suppers / Buncoeur / food banks...).
- Future development of the Youth and Sunday groups.
- Eco-church and redefining of environmental initiatives.

A full Chaplaincy Council Report will be published in the next issue.

R.M.



## Members of Holy Trinity, Maisons-Laffitte Chaplaincy Council, 2024—2025 Terms of Office

Clergy	Revd. Charlotte Sullivan (Chair)
Curate	Revd. Vivian Sockett
Church Wardens - elected annually	David Bean Angela Labaisse-Brodie
Archdeaconry Synod Representatives (until 2026)	David Bean Robbie Gibson (Vice Chair) (one seat vacant)
Ex-officio Member	Richard Medcalf (Licensed Lay Minister)

### **Elected Members (with years of service):**

Continuing until 2027	Johanna Devlin (Youth Officer)
	Katrin Dubreuil
	Bob Hughes (Treasurer)
	Beth Jusseaume
	Henry Marshall
	Christine Salisbury
	Didier Trufanow
Continuing until 2026	Anna-Danute Dobrovolskis
	Jackie Gale
	Rachel Meuriot (Secretary)
Continuing until 2025	Alice Aupérin (Safeguarding Officer)
	Jenni Gibson
	Sylvaine Hughes
	Hesry Marshall
	Adrian Parr (Buildings / Grounds Coordinator)
Co-opted until AGM in 2025	None

Katrin tells us about the wonderful women in the Bible.

## 30 years of women's ordination

On 12 March 1994, the Church of England ordained 32 women priests—the first in Anglican history. In honour of the 30th anniversary of this historic occasion, let us take a brief look at some of the mighty women who grace the pages of the Bible with their faith, their love, and their leadership.

#### The Old Testament

The first woman of Scripture, **Eve** was Adam's *ezer kenegdo*—his ally, his equal, his partner, and the mother of all humanity. She was tasked alongside Adam to be God's image-bearer and steward of creation. And while she made the fatal choice to believe the serpent instead of her Maker, His promise to her—that from her descendants would come One who would crush the serpent's head—offers us a first glimpse of God's merciful plan of redemption: a child born of a woman.

Skipping ahead to the time of the Exodus, we often forget that without the strong women in his life, Moses could never have fulfilled God's mission. From his mother **Jochebed's** desperate plan to save his life by hiding him among the reeds of the Nile, to the caring gaze of his sister **Miriam**, who watched as **Pharaoh's daughter** picked him up, little Moses was cradled with feminine love and protection. Later, when Moses embarked on his great calling, his wife **Zipporah's** swift thinking and deft handling of a flint knife saved his life again. And when the Israelites left Egypt, passing through the parted waters of death and onto the shores of new life, **Miriam**, by then a prophetess, led them in jubilant song.

At the time of the Judges, a period of great darkness and suffering, the judge and prophetess **Deborah** was a shining example of righteous leadership in a world gone mad, while **Ruth**, one of five women mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus, is remembered as a paradigm of loyalty, declaring to her widowed mother-in-law Naomi, "Whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people and thy God my God" (Ruth 1:16, KJV).

#### The New Testament

Continuing in the footsteps of their illustrious forebears, the women of the New Testament left the world enduring examples of true allegiance. Who but God would have chosen an unwed teenager from a remote village to bear the One who would save us all? But when Archangel Gabriel appeared to her, the **Virgin Mary** responded with jaw-dropping faith: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38, NAB).

When Jesus began to teach publicly, women were among the first to see, believe, and spread the word: many female disciples like **Joanna** and **Susanna** helped finance His ministry out of their own pockets; a woman who had been bleeding for 12 years (whom tradition remembers as **Veronica**) was so convinced of Jesus' ability to heal her that she braved humiliation in hopes of simply touching the fringe of His garment; and it was a **Samaritan woman**, drawing water in the heat of the day, who was the first to receive and share Jesus' great messianic declaration, "I am He."

Swimming against the current of the age and culture, Jesus systematically affirmed women—and their devotion to Him was all the stronger for it. From the **Syrophoenician woman**, whose great faith caused Jesus to marvel, to the **woman caught in adultery**, whom Jesus famously defended, to **Mary of Bethany**, whose tearful anointing moved Him to declare that she would be remembered forever, the women who sought and followed Jesus did so with fierce conviction. It is therefore little wonder that, when the hour of His agony came, most of those who stayed by Jesus' side were women: as He walked the Via Dolorosa, the women were there; as He hung upon the Cross, the women were there; and on that first dawn of a world reborn, the women were there.

Just as **Mary of Nazareth** had the honour of bearing the Word made flesh, so **Mary of Magdala** had the honour of hearing the first words Christ spoke on Easter morning: "Woman, why are you crying?" How great must have been her relief, as she evidently held Jesus so tightly that He said (undoubtedly with a smile) that she must not cling to Him, for He needed her to go and speak words of joy to those in hiding. Thus, she who had once been possessed by seven demons became the Apostle to the Apostles—the first to exclaim, "I have seen the Lord!"

With the coming of the Holy Spirit (a feminine noun in Hebrew, but that's a topic for another day), the great prophecy of Joel was fulfilled: "In the last days,' God says, 'I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams" (Acts 2:17, NLT). Christianity spread like wildfire, and women fanned the flames. **Phoebe** the deacon delivered and may even have sponsored the Epistle to the Romans. **Junia** the apostle was so effective that she landed in prison alongside Saint Paul. **Priscilla** and her husband Aquila were pillars of the early Church and hosted a congregation in their own home, as did both **Lydia** and **Nympha**.

As the centuries rolled by, saints and martyrs, mystics and desert mothers answered God's call to serve and in so doing helped shape the faith. Sadly, history tells us that the spirit of equality championed by the early Church was gradually lost over time as female voices were muffled or even silenced. And while we in the Church of England are greatly blessed to have both men and women in the pulpit today, such equality is far from universal. As we give thanks to God for all of our leaders, may we strive with faith and fortitude to further His Kingdom, where, in the words of Saint Paul, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for [we] are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

K.D.

Fresco of Cerula in the catacombs of San Gennaro in Naples, Italy. Late 5th - early 6th century. Image depicting a woman with a prominent leadership role.



## My sponsored run for Buncœur Damoclès



On the afternoon of Friday 3rd May, my school, Collège Jean Cocteau in Maisons-Laffitte, organised a sponsored run for the charity "Buncœur Damoclès". All the 6ème and 5ème students of the school took part: 200 students in total. We had to run for one hour and do as many laps as possible of a circular 1km in the Saint Germain Forest near the Collège. The point of the run was to get sponsors to give a certain amount of money per lap, or just for taking part. I had 10 family sponsorships, and an amazing 21 sponsors from Holy Trinity Church, and managed to run eight laps (8km) out of a maximum possible number of 10. Pierre and some volunteers from Buncoeur were there cheering us on, as well as my mum and Sylvaine Hughes.

Thanks to everyone who sponsored me, I managed to raise a total of €800. At the end of the run, everybody got a snack and a free reuseable water bottle, and there were even some prizes for the people who were the fastest. It was a lovely afternoon, and it was great to do something for such a worthy cause. A HUGE thank you to all my sponsors!

C.G.

### **Congratulations Caitlin!**

Buncoeur Damoclès is a charity which provides food and support to homeless people: https://buncoeurdamocles.fr/



Rachel describes her recent visit to the Giant's Causeway.

## How a sightseeing trip became an encounter with God.



The first chapters of the Bible tell us of God's created ideal, a place where the heavenly and earthly realms are united. After this ideal becomes tainted in chapter 3, the Bible is one long story of how God is putting this situation right again. Time after time, God gives humans access to moments where heaven and earth come together. Think of Mount Sinai, the tabernacle, the temple ... and how many of the humans in question really recognise the gift they are being given? How often do they need to be told to take off their shoes because they are standing on Holy ground? (Exodus 3:5, Joshua 5:15) How often do they disregard God's precise instructions regarding these places? (Leviticus 10:1-2, 2 Samuel 6:6-7).

The Bible recounts mankind's ongoing spectacular failure to recognise heaven when confronted with it. Even when God sent His only son to embody heaven on earth in our own human form, we still failed to understand that we were being given a way to transform our lives in order to unite our tainted earthly realm with the heavenly realm. We

can forget that God has gifted us 66 books full of wisdom to reflect on and from which we can learn to see, hear and understand the language of heaven which He is constantly speaking to us.

For over 40 years, I have wanted to visit the Giant's Causeway on the Antrim coast in Northern Ireland. In my twenties, it was my "driftwood and incense" phase that pulled me there. In my thirties, I had more of an "interesting geological feature" approach. Once I hit my forties eco-anxiety had become an issue and I found myself feeling that I should see as many amazing and wonderful parts of our beautiful planet as soon as possible. But still I never went.

Then in my fifties, I began to open my Bible with new application, every single day, sometimes several times a day. I started to read and read and read. And I learnt about things like "heaven on earth" and "liminal spaces" and "Holy ground". Never did I think for a moment that I would find myself in the middle of one.

On February 13th of this year, a cold and blustery but gloriously sunny day, I finally walked down the hill and rounded the headland that pulls back the temple curtain on the Giant's Causeway. I had expected just about everything except what I was about to experience. Geology, history, legend, nature, ecology...these were all forgotten as I suddenly realised that I was meeting with God. Resisting the urge to take off my boots was difficult. Perhaps I should have done so.

I have still not found any words to describe what I experienced. The National Trust guidebook does it quite well, using perfectly inadequate words like "imposing" and "spectacular"; and there's always Google photos for those who like to see an image. But I found myself standing face to face with something outside of language and far beyond what our eyes can discern; something very distant from the beauty of the scenery, and something which our human language has struggled to name for several thousand years.

I'm convinced that standing on the rocks on that February day was a random bunch of people divided by strong faith, weak faith, a different faith or no faith at all. Despite this, and however unlikely it may sound in our noisy 21st century world, for just a few Holy moments, we were united by an impenetrably thick and reverent silence. The only sound was the waves crashing onto the rocks, in an otherworldly and incessant intoning of the words of Psalm 8.

So I stayed. And I stayed. And it was so hard to leave.

I understand now why Peter wanted to set up a tent on the mountain top. As I finally and reluctantly wound my way back up the hill, I also knew why Moses' face had shone so brightly when he came down from the mountain.

I'm sure many of you will already have visited the Giant's Causeway without having anything like this experience. I suppose that in the middle of August, when surrounded by coaches full of foreign tourists doing the "Game of Thrones" tour, God might feel more distant. I am also convinced that many bushes had caught fire in the scorching sun of southwestern Israel before Moses' encounter with God on Holy ground, and many have burned since. These "mountain top moments" are just that: moments rather than places. So perhaps, just like the writer of Psalm 139 we need to remind ourselves that there is nowhere we can go where God is not present, and then open our hearts to encounter Him.

When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I was not aware of it." He was afraid and said "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven." Genesis 28: 16-17.

R.M.



### Nancy and Sarah suggest some cultural events for the summer.

## 150 years of Impressionism



2024 is not only the year of the Paris Olympics, it also celebrates the 150th anniversary of the first Impressionist exhibition.

In the 1860s and 1870s several young artists began to turn away from the classic style of painting and experiment with a new, more spontaneous style. They often worked outside in the country or by the sea, where they could capture a fleeting moment of light and atmosphere.

Although Manet, Monet, Renoir, Sisley, Morisot and Degas are now of course world famous, at the time they found it difficult to exhibit their art through the usual channel of "le Salon Officiel". Therefore, in 1874, they decided to hold an exhibition entirely devoted to Impressionism.

Several museums are celebrating this anniversary:

Paris: Musée d'Orsay "Inventer Impressionnisme" until 14th July.

Giverny: Musée des Impressionnismes "L'impressionnisme et la Mer" until 30th June.

Rouen: Musée des Beaux Arts "David Hockney, Normandism" until 22nd September (Hockney explains that he was influenced by the Impressionists).

The Musée Marmottan in Paris also has a wonderful permanent collection of Monet and Morisot paintings and L'Orangerie in the Tuilerie Gardens is home to Monet's superb panels "The Water Lilies".

Details can be found on the museums' internet sites.

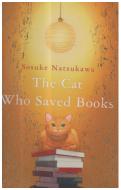
The festivities to celebrate 150 years of Impressionism can be found throughout Normandy, and are listed on the site <a href="www.normandie-impressionniste.fr">www.normandie-impressionniste.fr</a>. Activities include not only exhibitions and guided visits but picnics, river cruises, sound and light shows and family activities.

Closer to home, the Saint-Germain / Boucles de Seine tourist office <a href="www.seine-saintgermain.fr">www.seine-saintgermain.fr</a> also has a special calendar for this event, right through the summer and into October 2024. These include theatre, giant Cluedo and an impressionist painting atelier.

There is something for everyone and every age, so don't miss out!

N.H. & S.M.

# The Cat Who Saved Books by Sosuke Natsukawa



In the book group of which I am a member, books by Japanese authors are well-received but for me this was the first Japanese novel I'd listened to. (I'm a fan of audiobooks, as is our dear Charlotte!) The "Cat Who Saved Books" is so very different from the books to which I usually listen. As is so often the case with novels, I enjoyed a good story whilst also learning something new.

The protagonist of the story is not in fact a cat but a young man named Rintaro. Nevertheless, the cat (who has no name) is an important character. Rintaro lives with his grandfather, who is the owner of a second-hand bookstore. Grandfather frequently says that "books have enormous power". That's true, I think!

The story begins with the death of the grandfather, so Rintaro now faces a future where he is alone in the world. He is a schoolboy but he is not often at school. Fortunately for Rintaro, the doctor who knows the family well has found an aunt with whom Rintaro can go to live. Before he does so, he has to close the shop but for now, it's open. One morning Rintaro is alone there when a ginger cat appears. He addresses Rintaro as "Mr. Proprietor". Rintaro's reaction when he first sees the cat is to say "You are a cat". The cat answers, "Do you have a problem with that?" Rintaro is not at all worldly so understandably he is a little anxious when he first meets the cat but he obeys when the cat asks that he follow him. They go together to the rear of the shop whereupon the back wall disappears and a long corridor is revealed. Each of their adventures starts in this manner. The three adventures cat and boy have together are described as "labyrinths".

The first adventure is a confrontation with an elderly man, dressed in white clothes, who lives in a white room. His only purpose in life is to read as many books as possible. He has no interest in the books' content. He never reads the same book again. The second adventure is an encounter with a professor who has written a book on fast reading. He thinks that books are too long, they need to be shorter so people can read more of them. His activities are accompanied by a recording of symphony music. Rintaro shows him that it is also possible to make music shorter by increasing the speed of playback. The professor becomes very agitated! During this adventure Rintaro and the cat are accompanied by Sayo, a fellow student who regularly visits him. She had arrived at the bookstore early that morning and had seen the cat. The cat tells Rintaro that because Sayo feels empathy for Rintaro, she too can see him, the cat. The third adventure involves Rintaro, Sayo and the cat having a confrontation with a man who wants to publish as many books as he can, despite their poor quality or poverty of content. He focuses only on publishing books that will sell well.

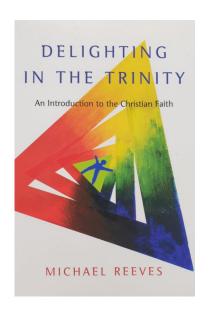
At the end of the third adventure the cat says goodbye to Rintaro but three days later he returns. Sayo has been kidnapped and Rintaro has to save her. Rintaro and the cat set out on a lengthy walk through the corridor. Finally a carriage arrives and in it they travel a long way. When they arrive at their destination, the cat again says goodbye and Rintaro is left on his own. He sees a facsimile of his grandfather's bookshop where he meets a rather strange woman. She speaks as if she were the guardian of books: she says she is almost two thousand years old! This old woman shows Rintaro the consequences of his meetings with the three men. For all three, life has changed. Then she leaves but Rintaro follows her because he has to save his friend. He shouts that he is hikikomori and that he is not brave. He pursues the woman who eventually takes pity on him. She says that she appreciates that he is a person who feels empathy. The next thing is that Rintaro finds himself back in the real bookshop together with Sayo.

The epilogue, written by the translator of the book, was so helpful. She explains that in the Japanese language pronouns are not often used. The word "hikikomori", which he uses to describe himself, is difficult to translate. It is a description of a tendency for young Japanese people to reduce their lives to the point where they become reclusive, which apparently is a big problem for Japanese parents.

I'm so glad that I listened to this amazing book. It's also available in a print edition, of course.

E.B.

If you would like to learn more about the Trinity, we recommend you read this book (which is published under two different titles):





Enjoying Father, Son and Spirit



Michael Reeves



The long standing Tuesday morning Bible study meets every second week at Nigel and Caroline's home.
All are welcome.

We will miss Diane Murray, who passed away on 13 May and who joined us via zoom. She was an attentive listener. Her comments were always pertinent, sometimes pushing us to extend our thinking beyond our comfort zone, all the time respecting others' beliefs.

Our deepest condolences go out to John.



## Aubergine, tomato and pepper tray bake

#### **Ingredients**

1 aubergine, red onion, 1 red pepper, 1 tin tomatoes, 1 courgette, chilli sauce, 2 sugar lumps.

#### **Preparation**

- 1. Preheat oven to 180°C.
- 2. Chop the ends off the aubergine then slice thinly.
- 3. Peel and finely slice the onion.
- 4. Chop the ends off the courgette then slice thinly.
- 5. Chop the stalk end off the pepper then slice thinly.
- 6. Layer the vegetables into the baking tray.
- 7. Add the tomatoes and chilli and season to taste.
- 8. Put in oven and cook until soft.

Serve with baguette. Alternatively, sprinkle breadcrumbs on the top before putting in the oven.

#### Serves 3-4



## **Faux Ferrero Rocher Chocolates**

These are truly delicious and take just a few minutes to make!

#### **Ingredients**

160g hazelnuts, 4 tsps cocoa powder, 6-7 Medjool dates (or other).

#### **Preparation**

Place all ingredients into a blender and mix until all are combined and form a ball.

Measure out 2 tsps of the mixture and shape into balls in your hands.

Cover and store in the fridge for several weeks if you can resist.

Makes about 30 chocolates depending on how large you want them.



N.B.

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.

# Theo Devlin was christened at Holy Trinity on Easter Sunday.







## **Dates for your Diary**

On Saturday 6 July at 2.30 pm we will celebrate Rev'd. Vivian Sockett's ordination.

Sunday services are usually at 9.15 am and 11.00 am.

During the summer, from 14 July to 25 August, there will be one service on Sunday mornings at 10.30 am.

Keep an eye on our website: https://htcml.com/



The Trinity Times committee would like to thank Jane Drew for the beautiful cover design of this issue.