

HOLY TRINITY UTRECHT
ALL SAINTS AMERSFOORT
ANGLICAN CHURCH ZWOLLE
AND
GRACE CHURCH GRONINGEN

February 2016



Madonna in the Church (detail), Jan van Eyck, 1426

February 2016 Newsletter

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If you have contributions for the next Newsletter we need to receive them by the middle of the previous month.

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If you would like to make a contribution to support the work of our churches:

Holy Trinity Utrecht and All Saints' Amersfoort

General Giving: NL84INGB0000132950 – tnv Holy Trinity Church Utrecht
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2 February	Student Alpha 6:30pm in the Parsonage Hall All are welcome.	p. 7
9 February	Student Alpha 6:30pm in the Parsonage Hall All are welcome.	p. 7
9 February	Bible Study 7:45pm Upstairs in the Parsonage We look at the Letter to the Laodiceans Rev 3:14-22	p. 14
16 February	Student Alpha 6:30pm in the Parsonage Hall All are welcome.	p. 7
16 February	Lent Bible Study 7:45pm Upstairs in the Parsonage: John 13:1-30 with Prayer and Meditation	p. 14
20 February	Evening Prayer and Praise 7:30pm The Focus of the Sermon and Readings is the Student Bible Study (not yet determined)	
23 February	Student Alpha 6:30pm in the Parsonage Hall All are welcome.	p. 7
23 February	Lent Bible Study 7:45pm Upstairs in the Parsonage: John 13:31-14:14 + Prayer & Meditation	p. 14
29 February	Thomas Fink-Jensen begins Bishop's Advisory Panel interviews. Please hold Thomas and the Panel in your prayers for this very important discernment.	p. 8-9

Letter from our Amersfoort Chaplain



Candlemas

On February 2nd, the Christian church celebrates the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (also known as Candlemas) – as

recorded in Luke 2:22-40. It is a key festival – it completes the forty days of Christmas and Epiphany; it is a event rich in its layers of meaning; and it is a pivotal day when, having looked back one last time to Christmas (Jesus is only 40 days old), we turn towards Lent (as Ash

Wednesday is on February 10th) and the Passion of our Lord.

There are many things to consider. The witness of old Simeon and Anna, the old order welcoming the new. The theme of the gospel for all peoples as Jesus is to be the one to enlighten the

nations. The message to Mary, how her son will cause the fall and rise of many and how a sword will pierce her own soul. But consider the person of the Spirit. Luke tells us: Simeon was a man *“righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel and the Holy Spirit was upon him.”*

In fact, we read further of the Spirit - how the Spirit revealed to him that he would see

the Messiah; how on that day, he was guided by the Spirit into temple.

In these first two chapters of Luke, the Holy Spirit has been very active! How Zechariah is told that his son John will be *“filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth.”* The angel Gabriel tells Mary that the *“Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.”* When Mary visits Elizabeth days later, the baby John leaps in his mother’s womb and Elizabeth is filled with the Spirit. And when John is to be circumcised, Zechariah is filled with the

Spirit and he declares what we know as the *Benedictus*. Such activity by the third person of the Trinity!

We remember another period of forty days – the forty days after the resurrection – Jesus tells his followers: *“wait for the gift my Father promised ... in a few days you will*

be baptised with the Holy Spirit.” As Christians we have each received the Spirit but Simeon’s example is a model for us: someone who was guided by the Spirit and someone who listened to the Spirit of God. Let us seek to become more like Simeon. ✂

In the love of Christ,



Signs of Grace upon Grace in Groningen

Our plan is to have an update from Grace Church Groningen and All Saints Amersfoort every month in our Newsletter. The Rev'd Sam Van Leer provides us with this first contribution.



'May Christ, who sends us to the nations, give us the power of his Spirit. Amen. Let us bless the Lord. Thanks be to God!'

This conclusion of Morning Prayer in Epiphany season speaks to us in Groningen. We've much to be thankful for, not least Holy Trinity's prayerful and gracious support of us, including a substantial donation of offerings that is helping this church plant grow. We are thankful for our lovely Carols services with the Old Catholics which drew large numbers, and also for our very first and very merry All-Age Christmas Day service.



We are blessed by the many new people, from the Netherlands and all over the world, who come, week by week, to our services and events, and choose to become part of our fellowship in Christ.

In Epiphany season, we remember the magi coming from afar to worship the baby Jesus

and offer Him their treasures. And we recall the mission of the Church to all nations. In Groningen, as elsewhere in this land, we actually find the nations coming to us. So we welcome them, particularly



those who are drawn to God in Christ in a new and special way, and we seek to journey with them deeper into faith.

A highlight for us on 10 January (Baptism of Christ) was the baptism of a young asylum seeker who had had a vision of the light of Christ one day, and felt compelled to walk into a local church. The pastor of said church asked me if I might teach the man the Christian faith in English, which I did over 2 ^{1/2} months. At his baptism, he gave an incredibly inspiring testimony to his struggles and how he had come to Christ. We couldn't have anticipated a more compelling sign that the Lord is indeed here and his Spirit is with us. We continue to bless the Lord for all the signs of grace we see. ✠

Yours in Christ, Sam

A Year Offering Service and Praise! Holy Trinity Choir



Our church relies on so many people who give freely of their time to bring the core message of Christian faith to as many as possible. We forget sometimes that there are actually only three who are paid to do this, so the added value of all who contribute so willingly is immeasurable. However, it is unusual for an unsolicited mail to arrive about our Choir at Holy Trinity, still less with such kindness and regard. An extract of this mail is shown below:



“My Heartfelt thanks for all your hard work throughout the past year. By hard work I mean the offers that had to be made for regular rehearsals and weekly appearances on Sunday mornings at Church Services. Not to mention the other special functions where you so readily take part. It is not easy when one also has a family.

I admire and respect the Steadfastness and Faithfull attendance in order to bring Joy and Inspiration to the hearts of the Congregation, some of whom may, for all we know, be sitting there with heavy hearts and just listening to the choir giving their all, would ease the heaviness they feel. I'm sure there are many members of the Congregation who feel the same as I do.”

Some of you may have experienced the full programme of the Christmas and Epiphany services and the singing that went with it but

perhaps you did not appreciate the amount of sheer hard work that goes into making this music happen. Now don't misunderstand this; we love to sing and always have before us that it is to a glory greater than just our own pleasure and we certainly do not have a monopoly on giving time and effort in church. Just gaze on the beautiful floral decorations, the cleaning, stewardship and warmth that is evident. I understand that the Anglican musical tradition we do our best to uphold at Holy Trinity is not always to everyone's taste, but it is special in our worship. With the period of Lent and Easter approaching, this will be even more evident.

We are few in number in the Choir, and would dearly love others to join us, both as an uplifting experience and to lighten the load a little. With a full year ahead in our worship and praise, you be would be valued. We are all amateurs, learning together and from each other, usually in good humour! It's not just for oldies either, some of us started at a very tender age; I reflected at yesterday's Choral Evensong that it was the 61st anniversary of my first one as a treble!

So in this year ahead, when are looking at so many changes, challenges and opportunities in the regeneration and growth of Holy Trinity and the establishment of All Saints in Amersfoort, come and join us at our weekly rehearsals on Thursdays, 8pm in the Hall. You'll get a real welcome and maybe hit some high notes! ✂

Simon

Student Alpha at Holy Trinity Utrecht

Erik Heemskerk, our Student Ministry Coordinator, is organizing a Student Alpha Course at Holy Trinity during Lent with a number of other students and inviting guest speakers.



Holy Trinity Anglican Church has hosted over the past two years and is planning to host a Student Alpha Course in February, March and April 2016. The course consists of seven consecutive evenings

and a weekend.

Typical Evening:

We have supper together beginning at **6:30pm**, then listen to a 30 minute talk about some core aspect of the Christian faith and we follow that with an open discussion where all questions and thoughts are welcome. The expectation is to wrap up each night around 9pm, after which you are free to stay for a drink.

Location:

Holy Trinity Parsonage Hall
Van Hogendorpstraat 26, Utrecht.


What is Student Alpha?

Student Alpha is a seven week course introducing people to the Christian faith. Over the last ten years Student Alpha has proved to be one of the best tools for adults to explore the Christian faith, with over 600 courses now running worldwide. Its simple format contains the same material as 'classic' Alpha, except that it's been 'squeezed' (into seven weeks), 'squashed' (into thirty minute talks) and 'spiced' (with multi-media ingredients).



The subjects and dates for each of the 8 weeks are as follows:

- 1) 2 February – Free informal drink
- 2) 9 February – Talk 1: Who is Jesus?
- 3) 16 February – Talk 2: Why did Jesus die?
- 4) 23 February – Talk 3: How can I have faith?
- 5) 1 March – Talk 4: Why and how should I pray?
- 6) 8 March – Talk 5: Why and how should I read the Bible?
- 7) 11-12 March – Alpha weekend on the Holy Spirit and Gods guidance (Talk 6, 7 and 8)
- 8) 15 March – Talk 9: What about evil and does God heal today?
- 9) 22 March Talk 10: What about the Church and telling others?

Contact Erik Heemskerk for more information or if you would like to attend: 06 311 845 90 or heemskerk.erik@gmail.com
All students are most welcome!
For more information and a video on Alpha go to: www.alpha.org 

A Very Special Couple

Here is this month's poem from Oeke Kruythof in Dutch, the English translation / transcreation is by Jenny Narraway.



PAAR APART

Zij is bijna eenennegentig
van hem is de leeftijd onbestemd
kwiek loopt hij nog in 't rond
dagelijks duwt hij haar in
haar karretje voort
van terras naar terras
gezellig hier
gezellig daar
bus in bus uit
jaar op jaar –

Zijn er meer woorden nodig voor
een definitie van de trouw –

A VERY SPECIAL COUPLE

She is almost ninety-one
his age is difficult to guess
his walk is still sprightly
while pushing her daily
in her chair from
one terrace to another
cosy togetherness
here and there
bus in bus out
year after year –

are there more words to
define this faithfulness –

Update from our Man in Oxford

Thomas Fink-Jensen is a parishioner from Holy Trinity Utrecht who has been doing lay pastoral ministry in Oxford between Pusey House and St Barnabas Jericho Road.



Dear friends, after my
visit to the Netherlands
in the days after
Christmas, it is about
time to send you an
update on how things
are going here in
Oxford. Generally

speaking: they are well, but these are also
exciting times on many fronts.

As you may know I'm currently in the
discernment process for the priesthood. By
the time you read this, I will have had a
vocation day with the Diocese in Europe,
where I formally met both bishops and was
interviewed by them and their advisors
throughout the day. *[ed. note: this article is
published following his meeting and we are
informed that all went very well!]* This is
all in preparation for my BAP – bishops'
advisory panel. Mine is planned for 29
February to 2 March in Ely.

In preparation for a BAP you are requested
to fill in a lot of forms. I'm happy just to
have finished all of mine. Various people
have been writing references for me and
preparing me for my BAP, where I will
again be interviewed a couple of times,
have to do a pastoral exercise, give a
presentation, lead a discussion group, and
will be generally observed to see whether I
would be suitable for training for ordained
ministry in the Church of England. The
BAP panel will then give advice to the
bishop somewhere in March on whether or
not they recommend me for training. The
Bishop usually accepts their advice.

Whether or not I get through these final
stages will have a big impact on the
choices I make for the coming years, if not
the rest of my life. Please do pray for
wisdom on behalf of all those involved, not
least of all the advisors and Bishop to judge
rightly. But also for me, please.



St Barnabas Jericho Road, a 19th century church built in the style of the great Roman churches.

At St Barnabas, where I spend most of my time nowadays, times are changing rapidly. In the autumn, the parish of St Barnabas was joined with that of St Thomas the Martyr. St Thomas' had been struggling for years and is now a chapel-of-ease within the parish and a place where we envisage doing a lot of mission in the coming years and are making a start with that.



Thomas's current residence beside St Thomas' Church

Having the parishes united raises huge questions of money, time and energy and how to invest those best. I'm involved in organising an away day for the whole congregation later this month and consequently we will celebrate the new parish on various occasions for the wider parish and community. Hopefully these moments will help us towards a sense of

direction, building up of community and clarity for us all.

We have started a lot of new initiatives in recent years: we now have a regular and popular youth group; have toddlers and their parents / carers playing in church every Friday for Toddlers Time; have started a holiday club for all the children of the parish; and have regular children's work happening on Sundays and weekdays



at church and at the local school. There is enough to do to keep us entertained, and it seems to have a positive impact on the local community and church.

Other than that I am doing quite a bit of pastoral visiting and home communion visits, both of which are a privilege. I now also preach regularly, take every opportunity I can to go to the most interesting lectures here in Oxford, see as much of Sarah as I can, meet up with friends, and enjoy visitors from the Netherlands.

As stated at the beginning of this letter: the bottom line is that I am well, but these are also exciting times on many fronts. Please do keep up your continual prayers.

With my very best wishes and prayers,

Thomas 

The Anglican-Lutheran Society Annual Get-together



**When: 10-16 h, Saturday
12 March 2016**

**Where: Holy Trinity
pro-Cathedral, Brussels**

***'Is Europe a Christian
continent - should it be?'***

That will be our theme
this year when we come
together for the Society's yearly AGM and
Event.

We will be meeting at Holy Trinity Pro-
Cathedral, Kapitein Crespelstraat/Rue
Capitaine Crespel 29, Brussels.

Registration will start at 10am with tea and
coffee. Lunch will be provided.

We will round up the day with a service of
Holy Eucharist and depart around 3.30-
4pm.

Our principal speaker will be The Rt Revd
Dr Robert Innes, Bishop of Gibraltar in
Europe.

Spread the news, invite your friends and
come to a great day of discussion,
socialising and worship! ✂

Sandra Sue

News from the Coptic Christians

Maya, who has been organizing in Utrecht a clothing ministry to the Coptic Christians in Egypt has a short message for us this month.



The Coptic Christians are
always very grateful for
the shoes and clothes folk
are able to offer but
transport continues to be a
serious problem to get the
contributions out to Egypt.

Until this problem can be rectified Maya
will take our clothing contributions to
Mensen in Nood, close to where she lives.

In this way we are supporting refugees who
have come to the Netherlands. The Coptic
Christians send us all best wishes and a
Blessed New Year. ✂

The Prayer Chain Ministries

Our chaplaincy reaches out to God in prayer to hold up the chaplaincy and its members in particular need. We offer this ministry both in Utrecht and Zwolle. If you have requests for the prayer chain, or if feel called be a part in this ministry of intercession, please contact:



Anne Miechielsen (left)
organizes and participates
in this ministry at
Holy Trinity in Utrecht:
anne@miechielsen.nl

Margreet de Roo (right)
organizes and participates
in this ministry at
Zwolle Anglican Church:
margreetderoo@gmail.com



February / March Ecumenical Events

This contribution from Judith Riet, our ecumenical representative.



Refugee crisis in Utrecht

The ongoing refugee crisis remains the most important news in the city. It has now become clear the temporary refugee centre in

Kanaleneiland will close in May 2016. There are plans for two new refugee centres. Especially in Overvecht this news has caused some unrest and protest. Overvecht is a neighbourhood with considerable problems of its own, and there is a lot of fear in people. On one information night, the police were called to be present to ensure that protests would remain peaceful. The USRK is calling for prayer for a more civil dialogue between the city council and the residents. They are also contemplating how churches can make a difference in this heated debate.

Leading in this process is the Salvation Army in Utrecht, who has provided the much needed professional help to coordinate the volunteer initiatives. The Salvation Army asks for financial support to be able to continue this. This request has been brought to the different member churches via the USRK and Holy Trinity has made a contribution.

Boredom is one of the main problems in the group of refugees. The juridical process of the refugees can take months, and in the mean time they are not entitled or even allowed to start any official activities like courses, classes or volunteer work. In combination with past trauma, uncertainty about the future, and worry about family left at home, a lot of refugees suffer from anxiety and some need psychological help.

The activities that are offered to refugees are getting into shape. Huis van Vrede in Kanaleneiland, and the Triumfatorkerk have started open house activities. Classes in a lot of topics are offered by Dutch people and by

the refugees themselves. There is need for more volunteers. They especially are looking for:

- People giving workshops (Wed 11-13h)
- Hosts during the open house (Mon 13-16h)
- Knitting experts who want to teach knitting (Thurs 19.15-21.45h)
- People who can give teach or help with language classes (several days and times)

If you want more information, let me know or get in contact with info@dputrecht.nl




Christian Study centre L'Abri

A small but very interesting study centre in Utrecht is L'Abri (French for shelter). It is an international organisation for Christian Studies. Their location in Eck and Wiel is used for study weekends or longer study programmes and has housing opportunities. They sometimes provide shelter for people who have nowhere else to go. Their location in Utrecht mainly offers lectures and movie nights. The movies are followed by a discussion. They provide an interesting programme the next few weeks

Activities February-March, Location Utrecht (Kromme Nieuwegracht 90)

- February 2 Lecture: 'Ambition or vanity?'
- February 12 Movie night: 'The Martian'
- February 16 Lecture: 'Hope and Sacrifice'
- March 4 Movie night: 'The 100-year old man who climbed out of the window'
- March 8 Lecture: 'Fear, hope and humiliation'

The language during these activities is usually Dutch but translation is provided, if you can let them know in advance you are coming. More information can be found on www.labri.nl 

Limitations

This contribution is from Ruth Alkema who contributes articles regularly both at Holy Trinity and Jerusalemkerk in Utrecht. For the Dutch version of this article please see our website.



*In returning and rest
you shall be saved,
in quietness and in
trust shall be your
strength. (Isa 30:15)*

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, lately I've been thinking about death. But don't worry, this is not going to be a sombre text, just so you know. The thing is, I've been reading some texts by Russian orthodox priests, because what they say interests me, and their love for Jesus shines so beautifully through all their texts, and they promise healing for the soul, so I'm really interested. But, they also say some strange things, like that you should constantly feel deep sorrow over your sins, and think of death daily. This makes me suspicious, it smells like salvation by works, and not at all like the joyful message of the gospel. Nor could I understand how such seemingly morbid and depressing advices can bring healing.

When Jelmer, my husband, and I were taking a walk in the beautiful surroundings of the Grebbeberg, a place with a history that naturally reminds one of death, I asked him what his thoughts were on this. I



explained all my objections and said: 'It makes me think of the Gereformeerde Gemeente¹ with their black stockings and sombre faces and all the things that are forbidden.' After some thought, Jelmer said: 'But that is different. For they are sad because they are unsure of their eternal salvation.' And then I realized that this makes all the difference! All this thinking of death and sins and need for repentance will naturally lead to sadness if we forget about the security of eternal life. But *not* if we start with that! We *know* we are sure, we *have* been saved, Jesus *does* love us, and therefore, as in helicopter view, from the safe height of Jesus' hands, we can have a look at our earthly life, and see the temporariness and flaws in it without fear.

So now I'm going to rest assured that Jesus loves me, and then face my limitations with courage. What are these limitations? Well, first of all, I am limited in space and time. When we were standing on top of that mountain (only according to Dutch standards of course, other people would call it a hill at best), we could see fields, the river, some towns... all very nice places, and it occurred to me that I couldn't be at all those places at the same time. Now that's a silly observation of course, but I confess I needed to realize again that we cannot do everything. We *must* choose. So, what do we do, and what do we leave?

First of all, ditch the sins, that's the easy part. After all, who wants pride? Keeping up appearances is really a drain on our energy. Same for vainglory. Envy is totally useless, and wrath just eats back into yourself. I leave the rest of the vices as an exercise² for the reader, shouldn't be too

¹ A Dutch church denomination.

² For those who want to cheat, all the answers are in the book *Glittering Vices* by Rebekka Konyndyk DeYoung.

difficult, apart from gluttony. Once that's done, we get to the difficult part, which is the *good* things. Unfortunately for the perfectionists amongst us, we cannot do all those either. This is frustrating, especially when you're good at remembering that we are called to love everyone, and that loving is not an abstract feeling but actual action, and therefore ignoring anyone's need is wrong, right? There is a famous quote of St. Augustine that says that we should pray as if everything depends on God, and work as if everything depends on us. But of course that doesn't mean *everything*. Because, really, if I work as if every thing depends on me, that is asking for a burnout³ (as I have experimentally determined). God obviously doesn't intend us to do everything, and we have been given a brain, so I think we need to learn to figure out what has most priority. My advice stops here, because I'm actually still trying to figure it out. But I'm considering to put myself on top of the list. This may seem a bit selfish, but it's also the most practical, since I know best what I need, and then you all can cross me from your to-do list, deal? Anyway, the fact that I am safe in Jesus gives me the freedom to experiment and make mistakes to figure out a workable balance between work and rest.

Pondering on the theme of death a bit more, it occurred to me that it is pointless to try and improve the old life that is on its way to death. Using the descriptions of

virtues and vices to improve our character is like nailing up the corpse in the upright position. Soldiers used to do that in the war to fool the enemy into thinking that their dead colleagues were still alive, so that their army seemed larger⁴. But in our case it's more like the enemy fooling *us* that we are still alive! This will only divert our energy into useless channels. I think we *can* use these lists as a tool to help us see how much our old life is still alive and causing trouble and then we're even more motivated to turn to Jesus. Here is where all the contrition and repentance comes in. John the Baptist already said that we are saved by the remission of sin⁵, and this is really all there is to it. By repentance we make room for the new life that Jesus gives us. It is not difficult and brings great joy. One verse in Isaiah that is always comforting me, seems applicable here. It's *In returning and rest you shall be saved, in quietness and in trust shall be your strength* (Is. 30:15). I think there is a chronological order in this. After we've opened our eyes, and seen how we messed up, we first return to the Lord, and take the rest that we so desperately need. Then, (much) later, we will become quiet, and open to see what God will do, and trust in His guidance. We really cannot and should not try to improve ourselves in our own strength, all we need to do is continually try to become more open for the Lord, for He fights for us, and in us. ✂



³ Luckily, I stumbled on the very helpful book *When God tells you to rest* by Flor Ulan Taylor. This was very much like a gift from God, because I wasn't looking for it at all, I was only in that bookshop to buy some gifts for Sinterklaas. Just mentioning it, in case anyone recognizes my sentiments in this paragraph.

⁴ Or so I've been told, but after some research I think that it's just a joke that we programmers use to indicate the state of a software application that has crashed but we're not telling the user.

⁵ Luke 1:77

Lent Bible Study with Meditation and Prayer (Utrecht)



Tuesday February 9 we hope to conclude Christ's seven letters to the churches with the one sent to Laodicea (Revelations 3:14-22)

Then we start a **Lent series** (every week) in which we will read the gospel of St John 12: 20 -16:15 in combination with guided Christian meditation and prayer led by Madeleine de Boer.

1. Tues Feb 16 – John 12: 20-47
2. Tues Feb 23 – John 13: 1-30
3. Tues March 1 – John 13: 31-14:14
4. Tues March 8 – John 14: 15 -15: 8
5. Tues March 15 – John 15:9 16:15

After Lent (April 12 & 26) we intend to close Christ prayer and lessons with John 16: 16 – 17: end (the promise of the Holy Spirit and his prayers for his disciples and the ones who will believe in Him).

The Holy Trinity Church Bible study evenings will include instruction in Christian meditation and prayer. During meditation and prayer you turn inward, in silence, and let go of physical tensions and the rush of every day's life to be open to the voice and enjoyment of God.

Saint Augustine says: *“God waits on the threshold of your heart”*.

For more information about meditation and prayer you can contact:
madeleinedeboer@gmail.com

All of you are most welcome to join the Bible Study.

Starting time is 20 hours. Coffee or tea at 19.45, end time is 21.45.

May it be a blessed Lent for all of us. ✂

Danielle Los - 030 236 8572
Hans Baars, ebaars@planet

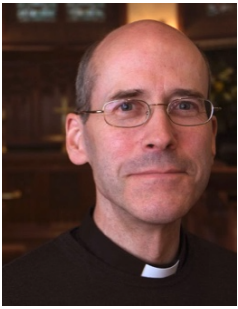
Charity News



Priya Mobach, a member of Holy Trinity congregation, runs her own charity 'Kids in Sri Lanka' to help the less fortunate children in Sri Lanka. They assist with the children's education and other needs so that they have a better tomorrow. Currently she is collecting funds to clothe 75 handicapped children.

Check out "Kids in Sri Lanka" on Facebook! Their official Chamber of Commerce number is: k.v.k. Flevoland 39088765. ✂

Surprise visit to Holy Trinity by the Vicar of Bagdad



On January 21 there was a secret meeting held here at the Parsonage Hall – I'm sorry that I was not able to invite you all. It was organized by Open Doors – an international charity, which was founded in the

Netherlands, to support and encourage especially the persecuted Church throughout the world. The gathering was not given any publicity because of the possible danger to Canon White and some of those who attended the meeting.

Canon Andrew White, the Vicar of Bagdad, was here to speak with clergy – Anglican and otherwise – to share with us something of the experience of the persecuted Iraqi Christians and his ministry to them and among them. It was a powerful witness to us. He is going around privately, to raise funds for those who have fled to the North of Iraq or to Jordan.

He does so, while struggling with MS – so his speech is a little laboured, and he has trouble with his balance – he has a personal assistant to help him in his travels. But he shared with us his joy in these labours for the flock in his care.



When he first went to Bagdad, the church was closed and empty – the only noise was



the rats scurrying in the empty hall. The first service had a hundred people come, and the following week 200, then 300 then 800 and within the first year there were over 6000 Christians worshipping at that church.

He spoke of the evangelization that is going on in Iraq amongst Muslims – it is not they who are speaking about Christ to others – that would almost certainly bring about their quick deaths – but it is a story being seen again and again – a Man in white appears in a dream or in a vision at the foot of the bed who calls on the person

to “Follow me” – and they are seeking out the Church to tell them about Jesus – Canon White spoke about how this happened recently with a former ISIS commander. (see also the article from Grace Church on page 5!) At our gathering, a former Muslim spoke of his own conversion, of seeking out the church and finding the worshipping Christians – seeing their joy in the midst of such great terror and suffering. He said he wanted that joy and gave himself to Christ and he now knows it.



Listening to Canon White’s testimony on Thursday was a real inspiration. The persecuted Church is alive and is fleeing but it is also growing. Those who have fled to the North of Iraq or to Jordan, are picking up their lives having brought nothing – and yet thousands of children are now receiving an education. Schools have been set up, supported not by the Jordanian or Iraqi governments but by Christians around the world, supporting the persecuted church. His call and ministry now reminded me very much of the sharing that happened in the early Church when St Paul brought significant financial support to the churches in Jerusalem that were suffering from famine. [e.g. Rom 15:25-27;

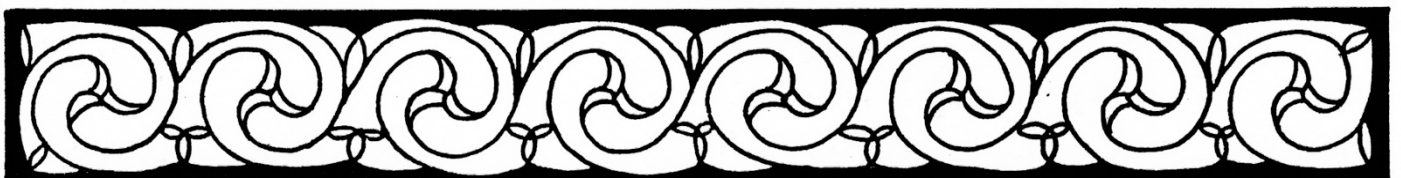
1 Corinthians 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8—9]

One ministry they have is supplying Iraqi Christians with electronic Bibles in their own language. The small devices are made in Israel, are battery operated and have a solar cell so can be recharged in the sun. (It was used to read the Gospel on Septuagesima Sunday at Holy Trinity Utrecht.)

They are bearing “the burden of the day and the scorching heat” and yet they are not resentful at all. Entering more fully into the work of the vineyard has its own rewards – they know a closeness to the Lord, they are alive to what is most important. It made me wonder about my faithfulness, and about the controversies we can become so easily engrossed in the West, or our petty personal trials that we can focus on and that can take us away from greater work in the Lord’s vineyard.

There is a very full article in the Independent that describes something of Canon White’s ministry and that contains some of the stories he told:

www.independent.co.uk/news/people/canon-andrew-white-vicar-of-baghdad-on-leading-a-church-in-iraq-and-being-in-the-crosshairs-of-isis-a6716616.html





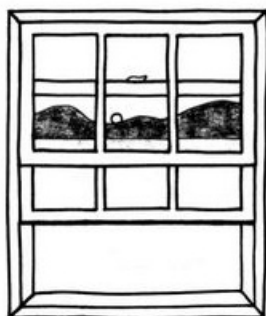
HYMNS

When you come to church you hear hymns. Hymns are songs of praise to God. Some are very old and some, like the ones you may sing at school, are new.

Have you ever wondered who wrote the hymns we sing? For example, one hymn writer was Mrs Cecil Frances Alexander, the wife of the Bishop of Londonderry. She wrote a book called 'Hymns for Little Children' which was dedicated to her godchildren. The book was published in 1848 and contained hymns that we know well today; 'All Things Bright and Beautiful', 'Once in Royal David's City' and 'There is a Green Hill Far Away'.

It is said that she wrote the last hymn because of the view from the Bishop's palace. The house looked out over the city walls to the green hills in the distance.

So the words we sing today come from the view that Mrs Alexander had from her window.



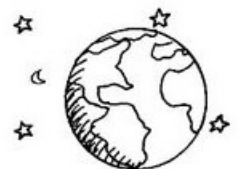
HYMN TITLES

All the following hymn titles have some words missing – can you fill in the blanks. All the hymns are from Mission Praise and the answers are below.

1. While ____ watched
2. Lead us, ____ ____, lead us.
3. Away in a ____
4. Forty days and ____ ____
5. Hark! The ____ ____ sing
6. ____ has broken
7. ____ night, ____ night
8. There is a ____ ____ far away
9. We plough the ____ and scatter
10. Amazing ____

Didn't your teacher say your singing was heavenly?

Well, she did say it was like nothing on earth.



- Answers:** 1. While shepherds watched
 2. Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us
 3. Away in a manger 4. Forty days and forty nights 5. Hark, the herald angels sing 6. Morning has broken 7. Silent night, holy night 8. There is a green hill far away
 9. We plough the fields and scatter
 10. Amazing Grace.

Drinking from the Well of Life

In Pre-Lent and Lent we follow in the Old Testament the books of Genesis and Exodus, as did the Church in ancient times. We read about our Creation and Fall, the enslavement and then liberation of God's people Israel from bondage in Egypt, through the Red Sea, their wilderness wandering, and God's provisions for uniting them with the gift of the Law and the Tabernacle. We think of how these shadows point to and are fulfilled for us in the gift of God's Son Jesus Christ: our recreation in Him; deliverance from the power of Satan by the Lamb that was slain for us on the Cross; led through the waters of baptism, the sea of Christ's blood; given the gift of the Spirit to write the Law in our hearts; provided with the bread from heaven Jesus gives us to lead us to the Promised Land. That Promised Land is entering into God's rest, both in our own souls before Him and enjoying even now new life in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Sexagesima – February 1 to 6

*O LORD God, who sees that we do not put our trust in any thing that we do:
Mercifully grant that by your power we may be defended against all adversity;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

	Morning Prayer		Evening Prayer	
Monday	Genesis 17:1-22	Matt 19:16—20:16	Genesis 18	Romans 7
Tuesday	Gen 19:1-3,12-29	Matthew 20:17-end	Genesis 21	Romans 8:1-17
Wednesday	Genesis 22:1-19	Matthew 21:1-22	Genesis 23	Romans 8:18-end
Thursday	Genesis 24:1-28	Matthew 21:23-end	Genesis 24:29-end	Romans 9
Friday	Gen 25:7-11,19-end	Matthew 22:1-33	Gen 26:1-5,12-end	Romans 10
Saturday	Genesis 27:1-40	Matt 22:34—23:12	Gen 27:41—28 end	Romans 11

Quinquagesima – February 8 to 13

*O LORD, who has taught us that all our doings without charity are worth nothing:
Send your Holy Spirit, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity,
the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever lives is counted dead
before you: Grant this for your only Son Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.*

	Morning Prayer		Evening Prayer	
Monday	Genesis 29:1-20	Matthew 23:13-end	Gen 31:1-9,14-21	Romans 12
Tuesday	Gen 31:22-32:2	Matthew 24:1-28	Genesis 32:3-30	Romans 13
Ash Wednesday	Isaiah 58	Mark 2:13-22	Jonah 3	Hebrews 3:12-4:13
Thursday	Genesis 33	Matthew 24:29-end	Genesis 35:1-20	Romans 14
Friday	Genesis 37	Matthew 25:1-30	Genesis 40	Romans 15
Saturday	Genesis 41:1-40	Matthew 25:31-end	Genesis 41:41-end	Romans 16

First Sunday in Lent – February 15 to 20

O LORD, who for our sake did fast forty days and forty nights:

Give us grace to use such abstinence, that, our flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we may ever obey your godly motions in righteousness and true holiness, to your honour and glory, who is alive and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

	Morning Prayer		Evening Prayer	
Monday	Genesis 42	Matthew 26:1-30	Genesis 43	Philippians 1
Tuesday	Genesis 44	Matthew 26:31-56	Genesis 45:1-15	Philippians 2
Wednesday	Gen 45:16—46:7	Matthew 26:57-end	Gen 46:26—47:12	Philippians 3
Thursday	Genesis 47:13-end	Matthew 27:1-26	Genesis 48	Philippians 4
Friday	Genesis 49:1-32	Matthew 27:27-56	Gen 49:33—50 end	Colossians 1:1-20
Saturday	Exodus 1:1-14,22-2:10	Matt 27:57—28 end	Exodus 2:11-22	Col 1:21—2:7

Second Sunday in Lent – February 22 to 27

Almighty God, who sees that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves:

Keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

	Morning Prayer		Evening Prayer	
Monday	Ex 2:23—3 end	John 1:1-28	Exodus 4:1-23	Colossians 2:8—3:11
Tuesday	Ex 4:27—6:1	John 1:29-end	Ex 6:2-13 & 7:1-7	Colossians 3:12—4:1
Wednesday	Exodus 7:8-end	John 2	Exodus 8:1-19	Colossians 4:2-end
Thursday	Ex 8:20—9:12	John 3:1-21	Exodus 9:13-end	Philemon
Friday	Exodus 10:1-20	John 3:22-end	Ex 10:21—11 end	Ephesians 1
Saturday	Exodus 12:1-20	John 4:1-26	Exodus 12:21-36	Ephesians 2

Third Sunday in Lent – February 29 to March 5

WE beseech you, Almighty God, look upon the hearty desires of your humble servants, and stretch forth the right hand of your Majesty, to be our defence against all our enemies; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

	Morning Prayer		Evening Prayer	
Monday	Ex. 12:37-end	Jn. 4:27-end	Ex. 13:1-16	Eph. 3
Tuesday	Ex. 13:17-14:14	Jn. 5:1-23	Ex. 14:15-end	Eph. 4:1-16
Wednesday	Ex. 15:1-26	Jn. 5:24-end	Ex. 15:27-16:35	Eph. 4:17-30
Thursday	Ex. 17	Jn. 6:1-21	Ex. 18	Eph. 4:31-5:21
Friday	Ex. 19	Jn. 6:22-40	Ex. 20:1-21	Eph. 5:22-6:9
Saturday	Ex. 22:20-23:17	Jn. 6:41-end	Ex. 23:18-end	Eph. 6:10-end

WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY

All Saints' Amersfoort

Every Sunday at 9:30am and 8pm Thursday night Holy Communion
(*Holy Communion every Sunday except Fifth Sunday of the Month is Morning Prayer*)

Heilige Geestkerk, Mozartweg 54, Amersfoort

Anglican Church Zwolle

4pm 1st and 5th Sunday (Holy Communion) and Third Sunday (Evensong) every Month

Grace Church Groningen

10:30am 2nd Sunday (Service of the Word) and 4th Sunday (Holy Communion) every Month

Holy Trinity Utrecht

Services are in English unless otherwise specified.

Tuesday 2nd February **The Purification of the BVM (Presentation of Christ, Candlemas)**
20:00 Sung Communion

Sunday 7th February **Quinquagesima**
9:00 Sung Communion
11:00 All Age Worship - Sung Communion

Wednesday 10th February **Ash Wednesday**
20:00 Sung Communion with Imposition of Ashes

Sunday 14th February **The First Sunday in Lent**
9:00 Sung Communion (Dutch/Eng)
11:00 Sung Communion
14:30 Choral Evensong

Saturday 20th February **Evening Prayer and Praise Service**
19:30 Service of the Word with Gospel Band

Sunday 21st February **The Second Sunday in Lent**
9:00 Sung Communion (Dutch/Eng)
11:00 Choral Communion

Wednesday 24th February **St Matthias – Apostle and Martyr**
19:00 Holy Communion

Sunday 28th February **The Third Sunday in Lent**
9:00 Sung Communion (Dutch/Eng)
11:00 Choral Communion

In addition to the above services, we have these regular midweek services at Holy Trinity Utrecht:

Daily: Morning Prayer (Tuesday to Friday 8.00; Saturday 9.00) and
Evening Prayer (Tuesday to Friday 17.30; Saturday 17.00)

Weekly: Holy Communion (said) (Wednesday at 19.00 except Feb 10th is at 20.00)