

Annual Report

Trinity Methodist Church, Bury St Edmunds

For the year 2014 – 2015

Trinity Methodist Church is registered with the Charity Commission Charity Number 1129116 and is managed under the Constitution Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church of Great Britain. The Church Council is responsible for overseeing the life of the church and delegates its responsibilities to various groups and the leadership team consisting of the minister, treasurer and the stewards. The main groups are World Service and Mission, Pastoral, Finance, Property, Events Co-ordinating Committees and the Worship Consultation which contribute to church life in worship and proclaiming the message of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thanks are expressed to all who exercise leadership and who have served the church in the past year.

The address of the church is Brentgovel Street, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 1EA. Correspondence should be addressed to the church secretary: Dr Barbara Chipperfield, 6 Westbury Avenue, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 3PZ. The Church Council forms the list of trustees of the church and is available from the church secretary.

OUR AIM AND VISION

Our Mission Statement is ... ***To witness to our Christian faith by sharing the love of God with all, through worship, learning and service***

Last October the Church Council adopted this **Vision Statement**.

Mission: Our task is to proclaim and explain the Christian faith and help people to become disciples of Jesus Christ. We do this by showing God's love in the way we care for one another and live our lives both as individuals and as a community.

Worship: We are committed to offering worship which is attractive and joyful; warm and inclusive, thoughtful and reflective; challenging and converting. We want our worship to be full of wonder, love and praise. Our music draws upon the best of traditional and contemporary forms. We value preaching which feeds God's people.

Advocacy: We want to be a church which helps its members and friends to express what we believe as Methodist Christians in an authentic, natural and loving way. This will allow space for honest doubt. Small groups (especially house groups) have an important role to play in building confidence to do this.

Friends of All: We want to be a friendly church where "all are welcome"; caring for children, young people, parents and families whilst ensuring that people of every generation, background and Christian belief are valued and involved.

Generous Life: We want to be a church which recognises and celebrates what God is doing in our lives and respond generously in the use of our time, our abilities and treasure. We recognise that this will take many forms within and beyond the institution of the church. We acknowledge that we have different and special gifts so sometimes we will need to be released from doing something we are doing already to do something new or different.

This annual report describes how we seek to achieve that aim and realise our vision. It has been compiled from submissions made by those organisations which wished to report on what they saw as new work or developments in the past year. The absence of a report in no way diminishes the significance or importance of what has been done in the last year.

The Leadership Team: comprises the minister, the church treasurer and the six church stewards. We meet every month for fellowship, prayer and attend to the business of running the church on a day to day basis. The stewards are responsible for ensuring that the church is prepared each week for the Sunday services and to assist the preacher in the preparation and conduct of worship.

We are very grateful to Richard Hopper who after his year of office as senior steward, stayed on to complete his six years of stewardship. We are pleased to have Eyo Inameti back from his Nigerian sojourn. An extra responsibility on the team has been the planning of Local Arrangements on a Sunday where we are responsible for arranging a service in the absence of a planned preacher. This does however give us the opportunity for more people to take a leading part in worship. We have welcomed Kate Jewell's presence in the vestry/circuit office which came with the return of the superintendency to Trinity. In the summer we shall say farewell to Rob and Sue Hufton when Rob retires as Superintendent Minister and they move to Whitley Bay. And in September we shall be giving a warm Trinity welcome to Rev. Debbie Borda as our new minister and her husband Freddie who are coming to us from Winchester

Phil Colton

WORSHIP

Worship distinguishes us from other organisations where people gather together for the common good. The paragraph in the vision statement aptly describes what we seek to do in worship.

An astonishing number of people are involved in some way or the other in ensuring that worship happens on a Sunday morning or afternoon. The minister or local preacher will know that they are appointed at least a month before the service and preparation can begin from that point. Worship leaders may be asked to share in the conduct of the worship. Those responsible for Trinity Plus and Messy Church also prepare well ahead. A few days before the morning service, the church steward designated to look after the preacher obtains the order of service which is passed on to readers, the projectionist, the choirmaster, the organist and the notice sheet compilers. The choir meets on Fridays to rehearse. The organist also rehearses on her/his own. Flowers are purchased and arranged, the church notices are printed and the heating system programmed. The church stewards arrive early on Sunday morning to prepare the church for worship and every month communion stewards lay out the Lord's Table. Welcome stewards greet those arriving and hand out hymn books, service books and notices. Those responsible for sound amplification and vision play recorded music until the organist takes over. The sound and vision team set up and test the microphones and digital projection. The church steward prays with the preacher and the preacher prays with the choir before worship begins. During the service persons other than the organist, choir, worship leaders and readers may be involved. Stewards take the collection. After worship the offering is counted and flowers prepared for home delivery. During coffee all manner of conversations take place – some about the worship that has just taken place and planning for future services – others about pastoral concerns – and inevitably matters of routine business. Then on the afternoon of the second Sunday of the month, the Messy Church Team welcome children and their families, share craft activities, lead worship and then produce a feast. The following day the church is cleaned. That makes more than sixty people and on top of that there is the congregation! Liturgy means the work of the people – it is a corporate activity. All that follows in this report flows from our worship. It is our reason for being and we are blessed by the willingness of so many people to be involved.

This is an appropriate time to ask other people to consider whether God is calling **you** to be a Local Preacher. *How will they hear without a preacher? [Romans 10:14]* The Bury St Edmunds Methodist Circuit needs more preachers. May also I remind you that the Worship Consultation continues to be a place where we can talk about worship and plan future services? Everyone is invited to the Consultation. Once a month we have a service of prayer on a Sunday evening. This is attended by a handful of people as is the midweek, monthly service of Holy Communion.

After its first year, Trinity Plus has not attracted the support that we hoped for. The attendance has been disappointing as much careful planning has gone into this venture. The group of willing presenters are considering what should be done and would value your prayers.

Rob Hufton

Messy Church: has been operating for almost 5 years. Our working team has remained committed and enthusiastic throughout but this year has been a testing one for staffing due to illness and, with the Friswell's move, we lost 2 vital roles. However, it has given us a chance and the confidence to approach Messy Church adults and we are delighted that 3 have joined our team to help with craft and music. Once again, we are grateful to all those from the church we can call upon, occasionally, who have stepped up to the mark when we have been stretched. The love, support, friendship, fellowship and fun that we receive from each other is vital to us all and the delivery of each successful session.

We continue to develop our pastoral roles, supporting families with particular needs. It allows us to continue our ministry and extend our relationships, beyond the church building. It requires great diplomacy and sensitivity to do this, to avoid alienating cautious parents but most have been very grateful for our concern.

The invitations for our church family to join us, this year, have not been well supported and we have been disappointed by this. Messy Church is not a separate, stand-alone venture but part of the mission of the church to reach out to all who enter the place. We hope with better visual information via our notice board and pre-service screened images we will be more successful in future.

Sue Robinson

CARING AND LEARNING

Pastoral News: Fraser Rist, Catherine and Darragh Schweppe and Clive Morgan were baptised during the year. I had the pleasure and privilege of marrying eight couples at Hengrave Hall. The following members and friends have died: Gladys Davies, Ruth Waldram, David Miller, Bella Forman, Trevor Goodwin, John Bennett. We mourn their passing and thank God for their lives and continue to remember their families in our prayers.

Rob Hufton

Pastoral Committee: The Pastoral Committee continues to meet quarterly seeking to co-ordinate and improve the care the Church offers to its members and others within its life. Membership currently stands at 165 plus six ministers and our "Community Roll" (which includes members) stands at 287. We have 19 Pastoral Visitors with one vacancy. During the year we have continued to review the way we welcome newcomers and new welcome cards should soon be available in the Church. The Committee has tried to offer support to the editors of Forum and help with keeping the distribution list for Forum up to date. We have also thought about House Groups and the way the Prayer Circle works within the Church. At our next meeting we plan to begin looking at "the care of vulnerable adults" as we try to make the support we offer to some of our older members more relevant and effective. The work of pastoral care is constantly under review as we strive to express the love of Christ in the life of his Church.

Vaughan Tong

Adult Learning and Fellowship: There are now two house groups meeting on a regular basis with a hope that another may restart. Tuesday Fellowship decided to stop meeting earlier this year and the few ladies who attended the group have been warmly welcomed to the meeting at Northumberland Avenue on Wednesday afternoons. I ran four sessions exploring some of the big issues about our faith during the autumn. About half a dozen people attended the morning session and a similar number in the evening. However, the Churches Together study series last spring was better supported by about a dozen people from Trinity. The Circuit Quiet Day on prayer attracted a minimal response from Trinity in March. One can only deduce from this there is little desire among most of the congregation to deepen discipleship by any other means than whatever may be incorporated in Sunday worship. Of course this is limited. It is important to place this on record. It may be that the General Church Meeting may wish to consider the implications of this.

Rob Hufton

Forum: We are now into our second year as Editors of Forum, for which we have responsibility for the production, publication and distribution of the bi-monthly Church magazine. We now have an established routine which, along with the increasing amount of copy received by email, is helping considerably with the production process. The costs for publication with SPC Printers have remained unchanged this year and we will continue to be vigilant in this respect, using no more pages in each edition than can be justified. This can fluctuate from 20 to 24 pages, or occasionally, eg. Christmas, to 28 pages. We thank all those who have contributed to Forum in any way and hope that there are some things of interest for everyone. We would welcome comments regarding the contents and organisation, positive or otherwise. We are not sensitive to constructive criticism. We would like to encourage greater interaction and response to issues that are raised and generate ongoing debate. The term, 'Forum' implies that the magazine is more than just for conveying information, although that is of course an important function. We look forward to your contributions.

Keith and Catherine Reynolds – Editors

SERVICE

Tuesday Group: Tuesday Group reverted to the first and third Tuesday evenings again this year, after having one year of only one meeting a month. We had an interesting and varied programme. Soon after the beginning we had a Reunion Evening when we invited as many former members as could be contacted. About 14 came, several from 1970's, and what a good time we had with chat, memorabilia, food of course, and a sing song to remind us of concerts we used to perform (in costume) at the Martins and other clubs.

An invitation was given to all to rejoin us, with a copy of the programme, and some said they would, but haven't yet made it. We were disappointed that some of the more recent members decided they wanted a year off, well that year will be over soon, and we would love to have you back, together with any new ladies in the church. Unfortunately the afternoon meeting is not meeting now so Tuesday Group is the only Independent Ladies' meeting. Do it while you can. Use it or Lose it?

Audrey Hodson

Wednesday Coffee Morning: Wednesday Coffee morning continued under pressure of lack of helpers. We still managed to contribute £5000+ to church funds. Is this an outreach worth continuing with or not? Those of us who do it think it is vital as it reaches the greatest number of church unconnected people of any part of Trinity. Please consider what part you could play.

Audrey Hodson

Trinity Occasional Catering Team (TOCT) has 14 members comprising cooks, bakers, waitresses, welcomers and washers up. Our focus is group catering; in 2014 we looked after 18 different events both in Trinity and in a variety of other venues. There have been five funerals (three at Trinity, one at St Peter's and one at Felsham), lunches for groups from Garland Street Baptist and Southgate churches, and Methodist

Local Preachers at Trinity. Bradfield's harvest supper and Northumberland Avenue's 50th Anniversary lunch were held in their own churches. Two special birthdays were catered for, one at the Hyndman Centre and the other a picnic at Sandringham; St Edmundsbury Cathedral used Trinity and TOCT for three separate training days. Tea was provided for a visiting group of ladies from Harlington (Beds) Methodist church and for the U3A gardening group at the Hyndman Centre. Our own Food and Film Evening was well supported. We have been able to contribute an average of £2,500 a year to Trinity over the past 4 years. I am very grateful to the Team for their unfailing support and enthusiasm.

Anne Dean.

Trinity Luncheon Club 2014: The Luncheon Club has been running since 1978 and we hope with your help we will be able to continue this valuable work which has been described as 'God's Love in Action'.

We run three sessions each year - we do take two months off - April and August - and rely on a minimum of 4 volunteers at every session - two in the kitchen and two to prepare and serve at table (and collect anybody who finds it difficult to get to the Church) and then, clear up afterwards and for some this works out at just 3 times a year. We have about 34 names on our list - a few are church members - but most have no other connection with Trinity. For £3 they get a cooked meal and a sweet plus a cup of tea or coffee, but what they seem to enjoy most is the friendship they find at Trinity. All are pensioners and the eldest is 101 years old!

The annual Christmas Lunch is free of charge but we asked for donations for St. Nicholas Hospice and we sent them a cheque for £79 69p. We also managed to give the church treasurer some cheques throughout the year which amounted to £200.

We could do with some more helpers, so if you are free on Saturday mornings, we would love to see you !

Janice and John Davies

TREATS for All: Trinity Railway Enthusiasts And Travel Society meets during the 'dark months' of the year - September to April - usually on the second Saturday at 7-30pm. We watch a couple of DVD's about rail related items and have a mid session interval for tea, coffee and a biscuit or two. We have a large selection of books and magazines for anyone to borrow. Everything is free of charge and we have had up to 15 people, most have no connection with Trinity, and we just ask for donations for the charity 'Action for Children' and in 2014 we sent them cheques for £118 41p.

You are most welcome to come along and bring your friends!

John and Janice Davies

Events Committee Report. During 2014 the Events Committee has been occupied with the Christmas event "Celebration of Christmas". This was very time consuming and required all our efforts which meant we had little time for other events. It was a wonderful portrayal of the different aspects of Christmas but it was unfortunate that more people did not visit our display, though those who did were I believe impressed. We enjoyed another film and food evening as we watched "Oh What a Lovely War" which gave us a sharp satirical look at the First World War thanks to Anne Dean. We hope in May to have a Sixties themed evening. In June we shall be enjoying Trinity Open Gardens thanks once more to David Wakeford.

Phil Colton

Christian Aid ~ Celebrating 70 Years! Thanks to the support Christian Aid receives from Trinity with people being generous with their time and money, we raised £1134.42 in the Street Collection last year. A further £376 was given in the May communion collection, and, with Gift Aid added a grand total of £1711.44 was raised, up £114.96 on last year.

Over £16,000 was raised all together by Bury churches which will make an amazing difference to people in the developing world and thousands of refugees.

While the Street Collection is the most effective way of raising money, we are always looking for new ways. This year in Christian Aid Week (May 10th to 16th) we are hoping to have a stall in Bury Market on Wednesday, May 13th and Saturday, May 16th, with a "bucket collection" going round the market.

In addition to the General Fund, Christian Aid has a maternal health project for this year in Kenya. As in Nigeria, a high proportion of women die during and after giving birth and many new born babies die too. Bury has been asked to raise £2000 which will pump-prime a grant from the EU to make it £10,000. So far £1500 has been raised and Trinity is hoping to donate half the proceeds from this year's Open Gardens to this project.

Christian Aid Week starts with a United Service at St Peter's at 6.30 on May 10th.

Thank you for your continued support.

Deanna Tong

Circuit Mission Action Team: The Team met on Tuesday 02/09/2014 and again on 09/02/2015. At the September meeting, a key piece of business was planning and publicising the Autumn Circuit event on 18/10/2014. Other matters of business covered recruitment of new Committee members and news from churches around the Circuit.

The Autumn Circuit event took place at Trinity and incorporated promotional displays relating to mission, (e.g. the Nigerian Health Care Project, Messy Church). Sarah Friswell was invited back to speak about her experiences in South Korea at the World Council of Churches meeting. Sarah gave an excellent talk. However, the level of attendance was disappointingly low.

At the recent February meeting, feedback from the Circuit event was given. Other matters of business discussed covered improving the distribution of the World Church Relationships Bulletin, possibly by acquiring or printing off hard copies to distribute around the Circuit.

Future planned events were discussed, such as the Circuit Quiet Day of Prayer at Trinity on 07/03/2015 and a Circuit event on 17/10/2015, featuring a guest speaker from Christian Solidarity Worldwide.

Adrian Romano

Suffolk Historic Churches Trust Annual Sponsored Cycle Ride:

The 2014 SHCT Sponsored Cycle Ride took place on 13/09/2014, the same time as the Bury St Edmunds Heritage Open Day. As 2014 marked the centenary of the outbreak of the Great War, our local Tourist Information Centre encouraged local organisers to highlight memorials, records, etc relating to the war. At Trinity, we were able to put on a display relating to the First World War servicemen whose lives are commemorated on the War Memorial.

Thanks go to all those who made last year's event possible, by staffing the church and signing riders and walkers off, giving generous levels of sponsorship and researching information and setting up the display.

Last year's event was very successful, with a record total raised of over £540.00. As usual, half of the proceeds went to Trinity, and half to support the on-going work of the Trust.

Adrian Romano

Churches Together in Bury St Edmunds and District organises various ecumenical activities in the course of the year. The Passion Play on Good Friday 2014 attracted a lot of interest again and offered an opportunity to present the Easter story in a powerful way. The study series between Easter and Pentecost was well supported again.

David Wakeford

Property Committee: The work of maintaining and enhancing our church building has continued, seeking to accommodate the changing requirements of the membership and support the mission and outreach of the church.

The Minister's vestry now doubles as the circuit office three days a week, complete with telephone/internet connection and a new photocopier shared with the circuit.

The work to resolve the damp problem in the walls to the rear stairs and rooms has been completed and after many years of problems and frustration are now tidy and fully useable.

Concentration of storage in the larger room and understairs cupboard allows the middle ground floor room and the 'Youth Room' on the second floor to be used for small group meetings and other activities.

The original electric blower for our organ finally gave out after some 80 years of stalwart service. Working on the principle of '..they don't build them like that any more..' a newly reconditioned blower has been installed and we are advised that similar long service may be anticipated with a little regular maintenance! We are now turning our attention to future projects which will include a substantial new notice board to be installed to the west side at the front of the church, replacement seals to the metal windows, and the regular range of smaller matters of repair, replacement, maintenance and redecoration.

Our Quinquennial Inspection will take place later in the year and it will be good to have an independent view of the condition of our premises.

Dennis Heath

Room Bookings at Trinity: Trinity continues to welcome a variety of groups and organisations onto its premises each week, as well as providing rooms for church and circuit meetings. There are not many days when rooms at Trinity are not used for some form of gathering which all goes towards Trinity being an alive and working church. We are pleased to continue to welcome to Trinity Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous, Thai Chi, Bury St Edmunds Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society and Bury Fair Ladies Morris Dancers all of whom meet weekly. Many of these groups have met at Trinity for some years now.

Other groups who meet less often include Trefoil Guild, Bury St Edmunds Male Voice Choir, and Amnesty International. We have also been pleased to welcome Ipswich Kettlebells through Sue Hufton this year. The pupils and staff of Priory School are also regular visitors when they meet at Trinity for their end of term service. We hope they feel at home here. Whilst many of these groups will provide some income for Trinity, we should also look at this as an opportunity to raise the profile of Trinity Methodist Church in the town and try in some way to make them feel part of our church community.

Taking into account the heavy use of many of the areas during the week by both outside groups and church and circuit organisations, it is important that anyone wanting to use a room (even the sanctuary area) gets in touch please and not just assume that the room will be free.

Clare De'Ath

Financial Review: In the Financial Year to 31 August 2014 we had a surplus of £1,155, as shown in the accounts published in February FORUM. We also received legacies and gifts of £26,815 and £3,396. Most of the legacies came in the form of £20,300 from Mrs. Josie Larham's estate. £3,396 gift was spent on the new cupboards in the kitchen and back room, to increase tidy storage space. During the first 6 months of the current financial year we have received a Legacy of £3000 from Mrs. Audrey Whitcomb's estate. This was specified for use on the maintenance of the organ as her father Mr. Sneezum, was one of the church members who was responsible for the decision to install the organ in the first place. The legacy arrived providentially - just when we discovered that the organ blower needed replacing.

John Hodson

**Report assembled by the Rev Rob Hufton
Minister of Trinity Methodist Church**

April 2015

Additional items consolidated into the report, May 2015