

The Beacon

News and views from Leicester Trinity Circuit



Quarterly Newsletter

www.leicestertrinitycircuit.org.uk

Summer 2020

Superintendents Letter

From the Superintendent:



Dear Friends

At the last Circuit Meeting, one of our hard-working Editors mentioned that the last edition of the Beacon was full of reports about things that had happened, but almost no-one had sent information about events that were planned to take place - and she was particularly sorry not to be able to include details of the forthcoming services for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

It seems ironic now, as all the events that we were planning have been cancelled anyway, and we are all getting used to a very different way of life, and new ways of being church.

Although we must be six feet apart, we remain one in the Spirit, one in hope, and one in love. I can see the Holy Spirit guiding us to care for one another, and to show that we are one.

Churches Together invited us to light a candle at 7pm on Mothering Sunday, and place it in the window, as a sign that Christ is the Light of the World, a light that no darkness can quench. And then to offer a prayer for mothers and their children everywhere.

Perhaps we could extend that idea by lighting a candle every evening at 7pm, and praying for those who are ill, those who are struggling with the unaccustomed restrictions, who are afraid for the people they love, and who are separated from their friends and family.

Of course, I have to remind you not to leave a burning candle unattended, and not to put it near to the curtains! Perhaps a battery-operated candle would be a good idea, especially if there are children in your house.

I hope that in this online version of the Beacon, it will help you to find a church service online. Ministers are trying to work out ways of putting services on-line. Please see details via email for details as to how to take part. If you have not been contacted please let your minister have your email address. I'm sure that once they have it 'sorted'; it will work well. There may also be a way off joining in via your phone, although that could be expensive depending on your phone contract.

There are also services on-line from Wesley Hall.

Keep safe and keep trying with the technology.

Let this hymn by Charles Wesley be our prayer:

Christ, from whom all blessings flow
perfecting the saints below,
hear us, who thy nature share -
- who thy mystic Body are?

Join us, in one spirit join,
let us still receive of thine;
still for more on thee we call -
thou who fillest all in all.

Closer knit to thee, our Head,
nourished, Lord, by thee, and fed;
let us daily growth receive,
more in Jesus Christ believe.

Never from thy service move,
needful to each other prove,
use the grace on each bestowed
tempered by the art of God.

Love, like death, has all destroyed,
rendered all distinctions void.
Names, and sects, and parties fall;
thou, O Christ, art all in all.

Singing the Faith 676

God bless you

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paula". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Prayer from the President of Conference, Rev Dr Barbara Glasson:

Loving God
if we are ill
strengthen us

if we are tired
fortify our spirits

if we are anxious
help us to consider the lilies of the field,
and the birds of the air.

Help us not to stockpile the treasures of the supermarkets
in the barns of our larders.

Don't let fear cause us to overlook
the needs of others more vulnerable than ourselves.

Fix our eyes on your story,

and our hearts on your grace.

Help us always to hold fast to the good,
to see the good in others,
and to remember there is just one world,
one hope,
one everlasting love with baskets of bread for everyone.

In Jesus we make our prayer;
the one who suffered,
died,
and was raised to new life;
the one in whom we trust - these days, and all

How to Cope with Social Distancing

It's amazing how new words become so familiar so quickly, isn't it?

Two weeks ago, I don't think I'd ever heard the term "social distancing", and now we're all doing it - and wondering how to stay sane and healthy is we have to stay apart from others for several months.

At times like this, we can learn from others, who have been doing it for years. This is an edited extract from a longer piece by a cloistered nun called Sister Mary Catherine Perry. For 29 years, she has lived in a closed community, and rarely leaves it.

How do they cope? This is her advice:

First, you need to establish structure.

Your normal day-to-day lives have structure imposed on them from the outside; you have to catch the train at a certain time to go to work, you have lunch at school at the same time every day. These things give you a sense of consistency and rhythm.

If you are stuck at home, create a schedule for yourself and your family. At the monastery, we wake up at the same time every day and get fully dressed. We have planned time for prayer, worship, work, eating and fun. Our days usually have a peaceful rhythm. This might take some time to get right; each household is different. If this is the first time you spend an extended period of time with roommates or your family, don't be afraid to try different patterns.

Second, be intentional and love others.

It is easy to get caught up in making sure you and your loved ones are safe and your own needs are met. But we should fight against self-centred urges. Call your older neighbours and ask how they are doing, and if they need anything.

Give the gift of your time. Cook meals with your family and play games. This is a good opportunity for all of us to strengthen those family bonds, and our efforts will have an effect on the wider community.

Don't hide from your family or your roommates under the guise of needing to work; get to know them and learn to enjoy their company. At the monastery, the prayer bell rings, and it forces me to stop working and to focus on why I'm really here. It reminds me to leave the project at hand (whether that is making candles or soap, operating our gift shop, gardening or working in the kitchen), and join my sisters. The projects that I am working on aren't bad; they are good, but sometimes I can allow myself to be too busy.

The monastery is not a block of flats. We are a community, and it takes work to become one. It takes a deliberate way of life. It means learning to listen, forgive and accept each other.

Third, use this time for self-reflection and relaxation.

"I need a holiday to recover from my holiday!" people say. Well, this could be it. These weeks are your opportunity for a more quiet, simple life. Every day after lunch, my sisters and I take a 90-minute break of "profound silence." We don't move around the building or talk. We stay still. We read, pray or reflect. Sometimes, we will do a hobby quietly. Sometimes, we nap.

People say they want peace and quiet. Then when it is thrown in their lap, they panic. They don't know how to be alone. They are afraid to confront their "shadow side," the hard truths about themselves that they don't like. They fill their lives with noise to run away from their emotions. Life isn't meant to be rushed. Use this time to get to know yourself.

Stop. Be still. You can either waste this period of social-distancing and be frustrated, or you can choose to make it the best it can be.

News from churches already sent

COUNTESTHORPE

The Book of Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament tells us that 'for all things there is a season' and we are now well into Spring with the high winds and rain hopefully behind us!

Our kitchen has once again maintained the top food hygiene rating of 5 and, although the hygiene rating isn't a guide to food quality, the food prepared there is also top rate - speaking of which, our Christmas Lunch at the end of January was up to the expected high standard and very festive as usual.

Defying the very inclement weather, some hardy folk turned out to support our Bric-a Brac, Book and Home Made Cake Sale in February and our latest get together was in March for a Sausage, Chips and Mushy Peas Lunch.

We were joined by our friends from St. Andrew's for the World Day of Prayer Service on 28th February.

Easter will soon be with us - a time to reflect that 'God loved the world so much he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life.' (John 3 verse 16)

With climate change in mind, I came across this North American proverb: 'We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children'.

NEW ROOM BRISTOL

I recently visited the New Room in Bristol. Many of you will know that it is the world's oldest Methodist building and is Grade 1 listed.

John Wesley is regarded as the most important religious leader of the 18th century. In 1739 he started preaching in the open air in Bristol and was asked to create a 'new room' where people who wanted to become better Christians could meet. Wesley provided a large clock so there was no excuse for a service going on too long!

The New Room operated a food bank, ran a school to educate children of the poor, organised visits to the local prison and opened one of the first free medical dispensaries in the country. In 1748 the building was rebuilt and it was nicknamed 'John Wesley Chapel'.

Services were held at 5am before people went to work! There are two pulpits, the top one was used by the preacher and Bible readings and hymn singing were led from the lower pulpit. All worship began and ended with singing.

In addition to the chapel the New Room has a café and a shop at ground level. Above the chapel there are twelve rooms where John Wesley and his preachers stayed. These now contain a museum and a library with offices and an education room on the top floor.

Methodists often came under attack from mobs which explains why there are no downstairs windows! If you haven't visited the New Room it's worth a visit - especially as you can get a cup of tea etc.!!

OADBY

Bored with the boards?

Everyone who passes our Church on the A6 now knows beyond doubt that we're "open for business"!

Our new notice boards facing the A6 and also the Shopper's Car Park are in place and they look superb. They give us, as was the plan, a crisp, contemporary feel.

Using Zeph's corporate colours and clear sans-serif typeface they are attractive on the eye, give only the necessary information with a minimum of words and can be read at a glance by the hundreds of drivers, bus-users and pedestrians who pass by daily, from whichever direction they travel.

The old notice boards served their purpose but were of their era. Tired, repetitive and in one instance altered so often it made a patchwork quilt look integrated!

To be effective, a good notice board should have minimal wording. Anyone interested in our Church and its activities can find further information by the main entrance to our premises. This board also sports a much-improved corporate notice board.

Enquirers can find out more at our very useful "Help Desk" in the foyer, or in Zeph's Café. The boards direct those interested to our website which is packed with information about our activities.

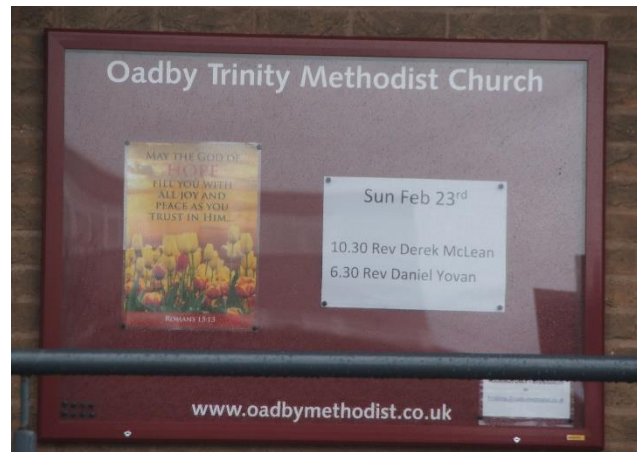
The new boards incorporate both our Church and Café which is as it should be and reflects the long-term purpose of the Café, to be an attractive and "unthreatening" access to the Church and beyond that to possible Discipleship.

Minister Derek, our enlightened Church Council and the hard-working team who put the project into practice deserve our heartfelt thanks.

And after all Jesus did say that "No one lights a lamp and puts it under a bowl; instead he puts it on a lampstand where it gives light for everyone in the house." (Matthew 5 verse 15. Good News Version).

So, we're following our Lord's instructions and no longer are we bored with the boards!

John Aldridge.



Aigburth MHA Residential Care Home and Dementia Unit

Valentine's Day!



Aigburth Gardening Club changes tack for a morning...

salt dough made by Patrick - flour, salt (so much!) cooking oil, red colouring and - voila!

Squishy, squashy dough, perfect for kneading, rolling and...making into heart shapes! Remember to gouge a hole at the top for the ribbons.

Wait for *ages* for them to dry out in the oven then use them to decorate the tables on Valentine's day.



Too messy for you? Let's cut out paper hearts instead!

We can do lots of activities like this with the support people give to our Amenity Fund: perhaps your church could hold a coffee morning/tea party/collection to raise funds for us? Thank you in anticipation!

Our next Fund-raising activity AT Aigburth (21, Manor Road, Oadby, LE2 2LL) is a Coffee Morning on Saturday 18 April 2020 when we hope to exceed the £500 total we made in February!!

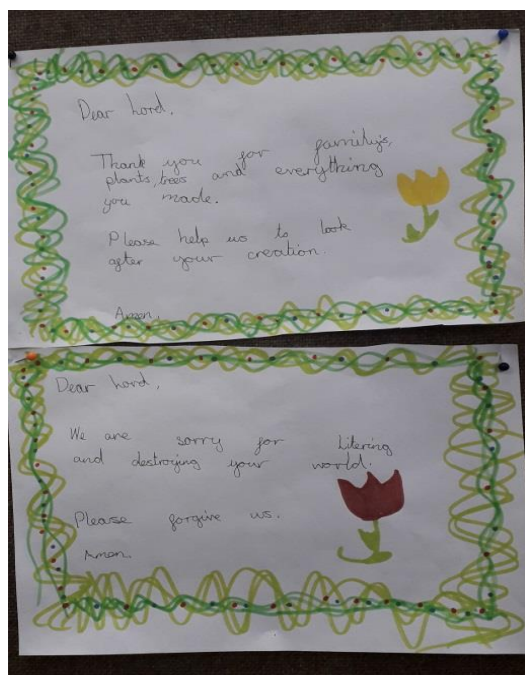
Sorry this will have to be cancelled. We will try again later in the year!

Thank you very much to all our loyal supporters who remember us with practical love.

Marilyn Bowles, volunteer gardener.

Uppingham Road

After the wettest February since records began, it was good to see signs of spring. Cheerful daffodils and primulas brighten up the front of our church and are enjoyed by everyone passing by. We are very grateful to Jenny for keeping the front of our church looking so attractive.



Our Junior Church wrote prayers about our environment.

Our ladies' group, Reflection, continue to meet and enjoy a very varied programme. Last month we reflected on the lives of two Biblical Women. At the beginning of March we enjoyed a games evening. We were looking forward to going to the theatre in April, however since our last meeting the situation with the Coronavirus has really escalated. Many of our members will now have to self-isolate. Everyone's lives are affected and this is a time when we need to care for each other.



Reflection ladies in action with the egg and spoon race during a games evening!

Bishop St.

What is a Quiet Garden Day?

Some people reading this will know the answer and have enjoyed them over the years. But for those who don't:

In our busy world many busy people feel the need for space and time to relax and recharge. Indeed Jesus himself often 'went away to a quiet space' to do just that. Following his example the Christian Church has a long tradition of encouraging 'retreat' in order to spend time alone with God. Away from the hurly burly of our everyday lives we may listen to Him speak to us and hear ourselves think!

Quiet Gardens in Leicestershire is an interdenominational group that seeks to meet this need through a programme of Quiet Garden Days held during the summer months. The days are very informal, appealing to many already experienced in spending time in quietness. However, we also aim to reach out to those just beginning their journey of silence seeking and the Gardens aim to provide accessible space where people may come and try the idea of being quiet, which may at first seem strange. Thanks to the generosity of our hosts and leaders, who give freely of their hospitality and time, at private Gardens there is no charge; just a small donation is requested to cover costs.

A typical Quiet Garden Day begins with a welcome that aims to put everyone at their ease. Then the leader will gently introduce the theme of the Day and follow this with two short talks, interspersed with periods of silence. Everyone is free to decide how the quiet time is spent. Some are helped in their quietness and contemplation by reading, writing or painting and others find that just considering the natural world around them is enough. The Day ends with an act of Christian worship.

All are very welcome and the programme can be found on our website at www.quietgardensinleicestershire.wordpress.com

I am a member of Bishop Street and part of the organising Core Group. I am very happy to talk to anyone about the days or answer any queries on email.

Yes I know you can't at the moment but please keep for future reference

Dee Brunning 0116 241 8742 deebunning@yahoo.co.uk

Christchurch

Charity 2019/2020

Christchurch will be supporting Leicester YMCA's supported housing for unaccompanied asylum seeking children. The house is on Portland Road some 50 yards from the church and offers a temporary home to up to 5 children who are under the age of 18 when they arrive in the UK. Many young people have travelled across a number of continents immediately before coming to Leicester and may be confused, apprehensive and traumatised. The project's aim is to provide them with support while they are pursuing their

applications for leave to remain in the UK. At Christchurch we hope to raise money for clothing toiletries etc but also act as good neighbours to the residents helping them to become familiar with the neighbourhood, support in learning new skills and encouraging them to participate in church activities such as the Wild Honey Project.

The congregation here at Christchurch are sad to be losing our minister Edson Dube, his wife Sam and the 'Girls'. We have been blessed by their presence with us and we wish them all well in whatever the Lord has planned for them.

'Each friend represents a world in us, a world possibly not born until they arrive' (Anais Nin)

South Wigston

Our café-style worship on Sunday 23rd February used materials from the World Day of Prayer service written by the women of Zimbabwe. The theme was "Rise! Take your mat and walk" (**John 5:2-9a**). We used the lively music CD for some of the hymns and occasional music, and adapted the prayers. Our craft activity, for children and adults, was weaving paper mats which resulted in a colourful display. Some artefacts from Zimbabwe were on show. During a talk about conditions in Zimbabwe a photo of the almost dry Victoria Falls produced a shocked gasp from the congregation.

Utilising the WDoP materials in this way extended their use and brought them to a wider 'audience'. Some church members took part in the South Wigston united WDoP service which was held at St Thomas' Anglican church.

At our café-style worship on Sunday 28th June we will be welcoming Laura Johnson from the St Phillip's Centre – coincidentally she is the wife of the Associate Vicar at St Thomas. Laura has previously made annual visits to our Ladies' Circle bringing with her women from some of the other faith communities in Leicester.

On Saturday 6th June we are hoping to have another Big Lunch when we serve food and drinks outside the church for passers by.

Hopefully these may still happen depending on circumstances! Let's hope and pray that things will have settled by then!

Cosby

Upcoming events at Cosby "The New Year has brought new enthusiasm to our Church – aiming to have a social / outreach event most months – reaching out to the village"

Saturday May 16th AFTERNOON TEA 2.30pm – 4.30pm – come along and enjoy a fabulous tea, and good company!

Friday June 12th – Christian Aid Tea, Coffee & Cakes 10 – 11.30am

August 21st – September 21st – Cosby will be Yarn Bombed! After a very successful village event last year the theme this year is "Stories" and we will be displaying the Story of Noah's Ark using knitted figures, and collage.

Saturday September 26th – 10am – 12pm - Open Church to view Harvest Festival displays and enjoy a cuppa!

(whilst in Cosby, visit the Parish Church, and Community Church and enjoy their displays)

7pm Come and enjoy a Harvest Supper @ 7pm



Sorry but the highlighted events will not take place. Hopefully they can be arranged later in the year. If you wish to still contribute to Christian Aid please make a donation on their web site.

Claire Orton

Musings on a Sunday Stroll

Today is the fifth Sunday of Lent (Passion Sunday) and after a wonderful morning worshipping online with Wesley's Chapel and then BBC, followed by a substantial lunch, it's time to take my daily dose of exercise. The wind is bitterly cold, so I wrap up warm, take binoculars and mobile phone and set off, rejoicing in the steadily increasing blue sky and sunshine.

My route varies day by day as I get to know more of ways round the fairly recent and large housing estates around Syston. Lincoln Drive - Thank You God for statesmen of integrity and vision like Abraham Lincoln, and for the beauty of Lincoln Cathedral. Montague, Pembroke, Balliol, - reminders of places of learning and those who teach us today. St Anne's Close - reputed to be the mother of Mary who mothered Jesus. Thank you for Jesus upbringing and all who nurture children today.

In many windows there are pictures of rainbows. It looks as if schools have been busy. They tell me to Stay in and Stay Safe. Out of the mouths of babes..... wonderful sign of hope.

Across the road there's John Frear Drive and Greetham Way (must find out who these refer to) Streets named after delightful villages - Empingham, Whissendine, Langham, Thank you God for places of beauty and sense of Community.

The fields are now dry, the imprints of cows still obvious, and its uneven underfoot. Take care, don't want to have to use that phone!

One or two people like me enjoying the breeze and sun. I think I heard a sky lark briefly, otherwise very few birds today. But they'll be back! Blackthorn is rioting in the hedges, the green of hawthorn is so green. I'm reminded of David Hockney " Do remember, they can't cancel the Spring! "

Sadly there is rubbish in the hedgerows and roads everywhere. Dear Lord, help us to get rid of the rubbish and excess baggage in our lives.

I'm nearing the end of the walk. Just one or two dead ends. Had to scramble through a hedge and get back onto the road. The traffic lights remind me to GO, so I do and am glad to see a bus stop (very few buses use it now) As I sit for a while, voices hail me from a safe distance across the road to ask if I'm alright and need any help. We live quite near to each other and tell me of their 93 year old mother who is alone in another town being helped by neighbours. Dear Lord, thank you for the kindness of strangers, please bless all who are lonely and in need. May their needs be met.

Back home now with feet up and a cuppa; filled with gratitude and looking forward to tomorrow.

Dorothy Hutchinson

Prayers received from various sources sent to me. Anne Dodge

Prayer for a Pandemic

May we who are merely inconvenienced

Remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors

Remember those most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home

Remember those who must chose between
preserving their health or making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children
when their schools close

Remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips

Remember those that have no safe place to go.

May we who are losing our margin money
in the tumult of the economic market

Remember those who have no margin at all.

May we who settle in for a quarantine at home

Remember those who have no home.

As fear grips our country,

Let us choose love.

During this time when we cannot physically

wrap our arms around each other,
Let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace
of God to our neighbours.
Amen.

Lockdown

by Br. Richard Hendrick, priest-friar of the Irish branch of the Capuchin Franciscan Order

Yes there is fear.
Yes there is isolation.
Yes there is panic buying.
Yes there is sickness.
Yes there is even death.
But,
They say that in Wuhan after so many years of noise
You can hear the birds again.
They say that after just a few weeks of quiet
The sky is no longer thick with fumes
But blue and grey and clear.
They say that in the streets of Assisi
People are singing to each other
Across the empty squares,
Keeping their windows open
So that those who are alone
May hear the sounds of family around them.
They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland
Is offering free meals and delivery to the housebound.
Today a young woman I know
Is busy spreading fliers with her number
Through the neighbourhood
So that the elders may have someone to call on.
Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and Temples
Are preparing to welcome
And shelter the homeless, the sick, the weary
All over the world people are slowing down and reflecting
All over the world people are looking at their neighbours in a New way
All over the world people are waking up to a new reality
To how big we really are.
To how little control we really have.
To what really matters.
To Love.
So we pray and we remember that
Yes there is fear.
But there does not have to be hate.
Yes there is isolation.

But there does not have to be loneliness.
Yes there is panic buying.
But there does not have to be meanness.
Yes there is sickness.
But there does not have to be disease of the soul
Yes there is even death.
But there can always be a rebirth of love.
Wake to the choices you make as to how to live now.
Today, breathe.
Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic
The birds are singing again
The sky is clearing,
Spring is coming,
And we are always encompassed by Love.
Open the windows of your soul
And though you may not be able
To touch across the empty square,
Sing.

This is just a start! If you would like to send me any items NOW I will try to put them together for another on-line Beacon.

It would be good to keep in touch circuit wise.

Let's keep trying to be in touch with each other via various means.

God Bless and keep safe.

Anne Dodge