

Wednesday 3 January Holy Communion at 11 am, followed by a light lunch  
 Saturday 6 January Monthly prayers in the Quiet room, 9 am  
 Saturday 6 January Churchyard gardening party, from 9.30 am  
 Sunday 7 January David King's licensing at Holy Trinity Redhill, 7 pm  
 (No evening service in Claygate)  
 Monday 8 January Men's Fellowship New Year Social (Ladies welcome)  
 Michael Porter as "Not quite Captain Mainwaring"  
 Wednesday 10 January Monthly Time of Prayer in church, 8 pm  
 Monday 15 January Anchor: Lucy Cowie on Women in China  
 Wednesday 17 January Joint Homegroup meeting in church, 8 pm  
 Sunday 21 January Churches Together United Service here, 6.30 pm  
 Monday 5 February Men's Fellowship: Michael Webb-Peploe on Health & Healthcare  
 Wednesday 7 February Holy Communion at 11 am, followed by a light lunch  
 Tuesday 13-16 February Children's Half Term Holiday Club

### REGULAR SUNDAY SERVICES

|            | 8 am                  | 10 am                            | 6.30 pm                                   |
|------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| 1st Sunday | Holy Communion (trad) | Morning Praise                   | Evening Prayer                            |
| 2nd Sunday | Holy Communion (trad) | Morning Praise                   | Holy Communion Ord 1                      |
| 3rd Sunday | Holy Communion (trad) | All Age Service<br>with baptisms | Evening Prayer<br>with prayer for healing |
| 4th Sunday | Holy Communion BCP    | Holy Communion Ord 1             | Evening Prayer                            |
| 5th Sunday | Holy Communion (trad) | Morning Praise                   | Evening Prayer                            |

### WEEKDAY SERVICES

Monthly on a Wednesday (see diary above): Holy Communion (Prayer Book)  
 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, at 10 am: Toddlers' Praise (in Church House)  
 Every Wednesday, at 7 am: Prayers for 30 minutes (in the Quiet Room)  
 Every Thursday, at 3.45 pm: Intercessions (in the Quiet Room)  
 Monthly on a Thursday, at 11.45 am at Wingham Court: Holy Communion  
 4th Thursday in month, at 11.30 am at the Day Centre: Holy Communion

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January 2007

50p

## INSIDE THIS MONTH'S MAGAZINE

OUR NEXT STEPS AHEAD  
Philip's letter - page 2

REACHING OUT ANEW  
Our new staff member talks  
about his tasks - page 4

MISSION BY THE YOUNG  
Asa's report - page 5

A COVENANT WITH GOD  
A January renewal explained  
- in our centre pages

THE BOOK OF DANIEL  
New teaching series - p. 10

and lots more to keep  
you in touch with Holy  
Trinity's life and work

## CLAYGATE HOSTS CHRISTIAN UNITY SERVICE

The annual service organised by Churches Together in Esher and Claygate to celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be held in Holy Trinity on Sunday 21st January at 6.30 pm. Representatives of other churches will be playing a part in the service, and the preacher will be the Revd Dawn Johnson, pastor of Esher Green Baptist Church.

The theme of the Week this year is "Breaking the Silence", based on the words of Mark 7.37: "He even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak". The materials are provided each year by churches from a different part of the world, and this year they come from South Africa.

The different churches of Esher and Claygate will each be hosting a weekday lunchtime service during the Week of Prayer, with a simple lunch provided in addition. Holy Trinity's turn falls on Monday 22nd January, and the service is at 12.30 pm.

VICAR: THE REVD PHILIP PLYMING  
 LAY ASSISTANT MINISTER: VALERIE BAGLEY  
 NON-STIPENDIARY MINISTER: THE REVD PROF LINDA MORGAN  
 COMMUNITY WORKER: STUART WRIGHT  
 YOUTH WORKER: ASA HUMPHREYS  
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As we face the new year I thought I would share some key aspects of our shared life together in 2007.

First, we will be seeking to find out from God about the next chapter for Holy Trinity and what it might involve. I will be explaining this process more fully at the morning services on 7 January, but the key dates are below:

- throughout Lent – opportunities for personal and corporate prayer to prepare our hearts for God to speak to us.
- Sunday 22nd April – Church Vision Meeting. This late morning meeting will incorporate the APCM but will also include a presentation from me and feedback from all of us concerning some of the important questions facing the church and possibilities for the future.
- Saturday 19th May – Leadership Day Away. This is a day for the PCC, MLT and other key leaders from the church to discuss and pray about the results of the Church Vision Meeting and assess priorities for years to come.
- Sunday 17th June – The Next Chapter. During this day there will be an opportunity to hear back about where we sense God is leading us and commit the next steps to Him in prayer and worship.

I sense there is an exciting journey ahead of us, but it is important that we are all part of this process and seek the Lord's will in prayer.

Second, in our Sunday teaching we will be looking at Daniel 1-6. The series, which follows the actions of Daniel and his friends in exile in Babylon, is entitled Faithful Living in a Foreign Land and will hopefully help us think about some of the practical choices facing us as Christians in 21st century Britain. Daniel is a wise and brave believer, and I think there are important lessons for us to learn in this inspired OT book. There is more of an introduction to Daniel on page 10 and, as has become our custom, there will be a range of ways of keeping up with the series and taking the sermons further. The sermons are now the most popular part of our website!

Third, and linking the above two points, our motto for 2007 will be from Romans 12:2 'Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.' This verse picks up on our desire to listen to God and know his will, but alongside this our need to live transformed lives that conform not to what the world wants but instead please God.

I continue to be tremendously grateful to God for the opportunity of serving in Claygate and look forward to what God has in store for us at Holy Trinity in 2007.

With my love and prayers

*Philip*



## From the Parish Registers

### *We welcome into the family of the Church:*

Benjamin Barnaby Dawes  
Evie Elizabeth Dawes  
(baptised on 4th December)

### *We offer sympathy to the relatives and friends of:*

Jacob Daniel Clifton  
(14th November)  
Anthony Peter Davis  
(30th November)  
Harry Kirkham  
(9th December)  
Jessie Coxon Brown  
(11th December)



## Curate's house to let

The house which has been occupied by our curate will be available to rent from 1st February. Enquiries to John Spooner on 01372 463561 or johnbspooner@doctors.org.uk

### *Insight*

As another new year begins, a reminder that the annual subscription to your parish magazine will be collected soon, and remains at £4. Contributions for the February issue should reach the Editor please by Friday 19th January.

## Parish Personalities

This month it is Brian Howells who steps forward as the subject of the Insight Inquisition.

*Where were you brought up?*

In North Pembrokehire.

*How long have you lived in Claygate?*

For 21 years.

*What do you like most about it?*

Its village atmosphere yet its closeness to London.

*And if there was one thing you could change?*

Road bumps in the Avenue.

*Where would you locate your ideal home?*

Claygate.

*What is the least welcome part of your daily round?*

Getting organised.

*Which personal trait do you struggle most to overcome?*

Trying to do too many things at once.

*What food are you most partial to?*

What comes after the main course.

*And leave on the side of your plate?*

Anything that's still bleeding.

*What do you watch on television?*

Sport and CBeebies.

*What would your desert island book be?*

Nelson Mandela's *Long Walk to Freedom*.

*What is your favourite music?*

Traditional Welsh music.

*And your favourite hymn?*

"Guide me, O thou great Redeemer".

*Which passage of the Bible is most telling for you personally?*

John, chapter 3, verse 16.

*Do you have an unfulfilled ambition?*

To play rugby for Wales (it may be too late!)

## Developing our work with children

*Andrew Cowie talks to Insight about his new role on our staff team*

*What does your new role as "Children and Families coordinator" entail?*

My role is to facilitate and support the existing children's work, as well as looking at how we can better reach out to children without any current contact with Holy Trinity. Similarly with families: I will look to support existing work in this area, as well as helping to develop new opportunities.

*What do you have in mind in "reaching out" to children who do not have much contact with Holy Trinity?*

One key area of outreach, which David King has already done much to develop, is the Holiday Club. It's incredibly popular in the wider Claygate community - the kids love it, many of whom don't come to a Sunday service. I'm pleased to be part of the team working on the 2007 Holiday Club - "Claygate Castle Capers". I am learning much working with Jill Griffiths, who is experienced at organising this great event. I'm also keen to see how we can encourage the Holiday Club kids to come back to Holy Trinity more often. Megamix, which is a new style of worship for Sunday school children, led by Simon Botham, could prove an appropriate link as the Megamix style of service is somewhat similar to Holiday Club.

I think we can also build relations with schools and groups involved with children in Claygate. For example, a Beavers group recently came here for a couple of sessions so they could complete their Faith badge. They had a lot of fun playing games, whilst learning about Christian faith. It will be great to do more of this kind of thing - so that children who don't usually come to church can feel comfortable and have a positive experience when they do.

*How will you "reach out" to families?*

The Baptism course is a good first point of contact for many new families. This can then lead onto different courses, such as Alpha and the new Family Time course. I'm excited that we have the opportunity to run this course, as it is relevant to both church families and families from the wider community, giving practical advice on parenting skills and developing core family values.

With Holy Trinity's involvement in so much children's work - for example, the Jigsaw playgroup and the Hub - there is huge potential to contact and support the parents at various stages of family life.

*Will you have any other duties?*

As the newest member of the staff team, I will plan and lead some services, prepare and deliver a few sermons as well as attend staff meetings. I'm really looking forward to taking up this exciting new role in the New Year, and feel it is a great opportunity to serve God in my local community.

*How did you become a Christian?*

I was a chorister at the Hampton Court Palace chapel. Head boys were put forward for confirmation, but my faith was only fully ignited on attending a baptism course at Holy Trinity and then joining a post-baptism home group, as well as doing Alpha. I then joined the music group, as well as becoming a leader at Pathfinders, and latterly worked with Stuart at DV8. After a year as a Christian worker in China, I knew I didn't want to go back into full-time secular work, so when the opportunity to take on this role came up, it felt very much like a God-given opportunity.

## Who is cheating on their claim?

John Alpass, who retired earlier in the year from his post as Head of Fraud Strategy at the Department of Work and Pensions, came in December to a well-attended meeting of the Men's Fellowship and their lady guests to talk about the tackling of benefits fraud.

John began by explaining the range of DWP responsibilities and told us that the benefits bill amounted last year to £116 billion. Inevitably, things went wrong, sometimes because of straightforward mistakes on the part of staff or claimants, but sometimes because of deliberate fraud - and of course there were also cases where people failed to take up the benefits to which they were entitled.

Our guesses as to the extent of fraud ranged around the 5% mark, and John detailed the continual objective sampling - involving the unannounced calling on claimants to assess their true circumstances - by which the Department monitored its real level. This gave the best estimate that fraud represented about 0.8% of the total spend. Steps to combat it led to 15,000 prosecutions in 2005, and had resulted in a 75% reduction over 8 years.

We emerged into the night much better informed and with a deeper understanding.

*By the way.....*

*Three friends were mulling over what they had done with their lives. They ended up thinking about how they'd want to be remembered when they died, and more particularly what they would like to hear from friends standing by their coffin.*

## Anchor meet the Youth Fellowship

Asa Humphreys and four members of Claygate Youth Fellowship came to tell the November meeting of the Anchor Group about their activities, fellowship and worship.

Joel Watkins skilfully manned the computer, putting images up on the screen of Bible worship programmes and fun days out. Lauren Wood, Katherine Shine and Neill Smith told us about their weekly cell group meetings on Sunday evenings which were followed by an all age get together for Youth Fellowship. They emphasised how much they appreciated sharing their faith together and how much it meant to them to know that they could totally depend on each other when, at school for instance, many unbelievers mocked and teased.

Each year there was a house party down in Haslemere where many different youth groups came together for ten days and played and worshipped together. Several day outings and parties were shared during the year and older members of the group helped with general church activities, for instance playing in the music group and helping on the welcome committee.

It was a most impressive presentation!

*Tom said "I'd like to hear them say that no one could possibly have been a better husband and father".*

*Dick said "I'd like them to say that I was a true Christian and a real friend".*

*Harry paused, and then said "I'd like to hear them saying 'Look, he's moving!'"*

## Faithful living in a foreign land

*Our new Sunday teaching series, beginning on 14th January, also for discussion in Home Groups, will study the first six chapters of the book of Daniel.*

The Old Testament book of Daniel is a rich source of dramatic Bible stories: the giant statue with the feet of clay, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace, Belshazzar's feast and the writing on the wall, Daniel in the lions' den. We shall be looking behind the stories for their significance to the people of the time and examining their relevance to us in today's world.

The book of Daniel deals with the period of history when the Israelites were in exile. The loss of their sovereignty came in two stages, with the Northern Kingdom of Israel being conquered by the Assyrians in 721 BC, and many of the people deported; and then, after Assyria was itself conquered by the Babylonians under King Nebuchadnezzar, the Southern Kingdom of Judah found itself overrun in 597 BC, and many of its population deported to Babylon.

Other parts of the Old Testament, like the book of Lamentations and Psalm 137 ("By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept") reflect the despair of the Israelites during this period. But the book of Daniel has a

different purpose: to bolster the morale of the exiles, to encourage them to keep faith and to reassure them that what seemed like the immense power of their captors was in fact of no avail in the face of God's purposes. The kingdoms of the heathen would be short-lived and crumble, and God's rule will prevail.

The first six chapters are centred on the Babylonian court, where Daniel and three other young Israelite men achieve positions of influence through their wisdom and character. All the more reason, it might be expected, for them to conform to the political realities of the time, to trim their sails to the powers around them. But they are role models for all those who follow God. They are not prepared to compromise their faith in any way, and continue to follow it and indeed to proclaim it.

Not even the most extreme penalties will deter them, and we see their faith rewarded by the miraculous protection which God gives them. Their persecutors may wish to put them to death, but it is their God who restores them to life.

### New Year Social

The Men's Fellowship sends a warm welcome to ladies to come along to the Church Hall on Monday 8th January to join in its New Year meeting. It is at 7.45 for 8 pm. There will be a finger buffet table to which those coming are invited to add a plate of food to share.

The evening will feature a talk by Michael Porter entitled "Not quite Captain Mainwaring".

### Home Groups

The introductory evening for the new series of Home Group studies will be held in the church on Wednesday 17th January at 8 pm. All Home Group members - and everyone else - are invited to attend.

### Anchor

Lucy Cowie, back from her family's year in China, will speak to the group on Monday 15th January about Women in China.

## Fine send-off for our curate

It was a real family occasion which said farewell on 10th December to David and Katy King, along with Samuel, William and Georgina. All ages mixed well in a happy and relaxed atmosphere.

A soup lunch was served in the church hall to relays of participants. And with the church cleared of chairs and a bouncy castle installed in the middle of it, there was plenty of room for the children to enjoy themselves. We cannot hide the fact, however, that the vicar and the departing curate felt obliged to have their own bounce, fortunately after small children were safely gathered out of harm's way. *Insight* regrets that it has no space for the photographs.

David was presented with a painting of Telegraph Hill, as a permanent reminder of the Easter egg-rolling which he disclosed in last month's magazine he had most enjoyed during his time in Claygate. In addition to a cheque, Holy Trinity's parting gifts to the family were otherwise a garden bench and a tree-house, the latter a flatpack for self-assembly, which David commented was unlikely, when he had constructed it, to look anything like the picture on the pack.

After the conclusion of the festivities, great teamwork restored the church to a condition which gave the arriving 6.30 congregation no inkling of how it had looked for

## PCC reviews our children's work

The November meeting of the Church Council received a report from David King on Holy Trinity's Children's Ministry. This had been a particular responsibility of David, and he reviewed what had been its highlights - particularly Megamix and the Holiday Clubs - and what lessons had emerged from his experience. He repeated his view that the importance of this work pointed to the need for a new dedicated post which would enable us to develop further the discipling of children and of families.

It was at this meeting that the Council gave its whole-hearted support to Andrew Cowie's appointment to pursue our work among children and families, announced in last month's magazine, and of which you can read more over the page.



*...I wonder if I could have a quick word with the flower arrangers at the end of this service...?*

## Learning from the Bible

Jesus had wanted to get away from the crowds to allow his disciples to rest and have a chance to eat. He had sent them out to preach and to heal, and they had returned, tired and hungry, to report back on what they had done and taught. They set off by boat along the shoreline of the Sea of Galilee, but people had spotted where they were going and the solitary place the disciples were aiming for was already crowded by the time they got there.

They did not carry on elsewhere, however; Jesus's compassion for the people did not allow him to, for they seemed like sheep without a shepherd. This could be a way of describing any aimless multitude, but it is for us a familiar Christian metaphor, with a longer Biblical history.

As Moses approached the end of his life, for example, he asked God to appoint a successor "so that the Lord's people will not be like sheep without a shepherd" (Numbers 27.17). The successor was Joshua but as time went by the leadership of the Israelites weakened and grew corrupt. Eventually they lost their land and were taken into exile, leading the prophet of the time, Ezekiel, to exclaim (and this is an echo of what his predecessor Jeremiah had said - Je 23.1) "Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock? ... So they were scattered because there was no shepherd" (34.2, 5).

Even in the time of Jesus, as he frequently complained, the religious leaders, especially

*"Jesus had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd"*

Mark, chap. 6, verse 34.

the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, were failing to provide the guidance for the people that was expected of them.

But the prophet Isaiah, as part of that familiar passage setting out the good tidings to Zion (chapter 40), saw God himself coming with power to tend his flock like a shepherd, to gather the lambs in his arms and carry them close to his heart. And here is Jesus confronted by a crowd and recognising to what extent they need the shepherding he can offer.

Later, according to John (10.14), Jesus said "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me". The writer to the Hebrews referred to "our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep" (13.20). The story we have in the sixth chapter of Mark's gospel shows how Jesus was fulfilling that role.

He knew that the people were in need of guidance and that he had many things to teach them, and he proceeded to do that. From Matthew's account (in chapter 14) we hear that he also healed their sick. But he was also aware of their other needs, for this is the passage which goes on to tell us how he secured that the multitude of people who had followed him could have their hunger satisfied as well: it was the feeding of the five thousand. And so for us: when we have someone with such concern for our welfare, we need to stay in touch and receive the benefit of his teaching and nourishment.

*Scribatus*

*Science can add years to your life,  
but Christ can add life to your years.*

## Young people today....

What do you think of when you think of a missionary? One of my best friends is a missionary with African Inland Mission in Mozambique, near Chimoio to be precise. Pete studied for two years at All Nations Bible College and has been learning *Chindao*, the language of the local tribe, for the last two years. Next year he is set to finish his study of Portuguese and then return to Chimoio to share the gospel there. Pete is an amazing man who has prayerfully supported me throughout the last nine years of our friendship. I was invited to his commissioning in Porthcawl and we write to each other regularly.

Pete is certainly a missionary; short of taking his own coffin with him to Africa, his outreach for the gospel is a tried and tested model that is well recognised and supported. However, we have some missionaries in Youth Fellowship at the moment as well. Ele Steeds and Fiona Kelly are both shortly to embark on overseas mission in Uganda and Latin America respectively. These trips follow in the long tradition of others who have gone from our Youth Fellowship for short and long term mission placements and are something we as a Church have been aware of for some considerable time. Please do remember both these young adults in your prayers as they depart later this year to share the Good News in word and deed.

But this is not the extent of the missionary outreach being undertaken by those in our Youth Fellowship. Recently one of our number, Lauren Wood, has started up a Christian Union in the Lower School at Tormead in the form of Youth Alpha this

term. Please pray for her as she leads this new outreach venture in her school.

I ask especially for your prayers for our Young People who so bravely share their faith in school. I know from long experience that it is relatively easy talking to people about Jesus when you may not see them ever again: it is much harder to share Jesus consistently with those you see on a regular basis. It is however especially hard to share your faith with your friends at school when there can be so much pressure to conform to the standards of this world from pupils and teachers alike. For those from Youth Fellowship who regularly attend their Christian Unions, and for Lauren who is starting up and leading a new one, let us afford the same depth of acknowledgement that overseas missionaries receive; both those currently serving and those from centuries past.

Mark Greene from the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity was recently talking about who his heroes were. He opened the floor to the Church leaders listening by asking who their heroes were and one voice said, "The teenagers who come to Church each Sunday and then on Monday go and show Jesus to their school friends." Mark Greene was quiet for a moment and then replied that he had a new set of heroes. It remains my prayer that more people both near and far can say amen to this.

*Asa*

*The young boy was visiting his grandmother when he asked, "Granny, do you know how you and God are alike?" Granny, rather chuffed, started mentally polishing her halo, as she asked, "No, how are we alike?"*

*"You're both so old," he replied solemnly.*

# "I am no longer my own, but yours ...."

In fact, most of the other churches embracing a Covenant service will be Methodist, for it is part of a strong Methodist tradition to hold a special service on the first Sunday of each year. Increasingly, however, the value of the concept has been appreciated by the wider church, and many Anglican churches have adopted it, often as part of a united act of worship. Its importance was emphasised when Rowan Williams was enthroned as Archbishop of Canterbury in February 2003, the Covenant Prayer being incorporated in the service to be said by him and the congregation.

## How it started

On Christmas Day 1747, John Wesley strongly urged the Methodists to renew their Covenant with God. His first Covenant Service was held in the French Church at Spitalfields on 11th August 1755, when he recited the words of "that blessed man Richard Alleine", who lived from 1611 to 1681 and as Rector of Batcombe in Somerset had got into trouble in the religious atmosphere of the time for his Puritan writings, and was finally ejected from his living. His most celebrated work was *Heaven Opened: the Riches of God's Covenant Grace*, and it was his emphasis on the idea of a Covenant with God which prompted John Wesley to promote its observance by his followers.

John Wesley issued a form of service as a pamphlet in 1780, but by then the renewal of the Covenant had already become an annual institution among Methodists, celebrated at the beginning of each year. John Wesley's form was used without alteration for nearly a century but since then it has evolved over time, the latest version being prepared for the new Methodist Worship Book in 1999. The Covenant Prayer (*right*) which lies at the heart of the service has remained essentially unchanged.

## The idea of a Covenant

The establishment of a Covenant between God and his people goes back to the early days of the Israelites. We read about it in chapter 24 of the book of Exodus, when Moses returned from his Mount Sinai encounter with God to tell them of the Lord's words and laws. Their response was "Everything the

*At Holy Trinity's main morning service on 7th January, we will be joining thousands of other churches around the country in renewing our Covenant with God – a covenant of the Biblical kind concerned with commitment rather than one related to money. We explain the background.*

## The Covenant Prayer

I am no longer my own but yours.  
Put me to what you will,  
rank me with whom you will;  
put me to doing,  
put me to suffering;  
let me be employed for you  
or laid aside for you,  
exalted for you  
or brought low for you;  
let me be full,  
let me be empty,  
let me have all things,  
let me have nothing;  
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things  
to your pleasure and disposal.  
And now, glorious and blessed God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
you are mine and I am yours.  
So be it.  
And the covenant made on earth,  
let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

Lord has said we will do", and Moses proceeded with a formal ratification of the Covenant. We see that Covenant being renewed in chapter 29 of Deuteronomy.

Our reading of the Old Testament tells us how difficult the Israelites found it to keep the Covenant. In the light of that, we read in chapter 31 of the prophecy of Jeremiah "The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel ... I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people."

It is our understanding as Christians that it was the coming of Jesus which fulfilled that prophecy, allowing us through his life, work, death and resurrection to be set free from sin and its power. In the new Covenant binding us and God, God promises us new life in Christ. For our part, we promise to live no longer for ourselves but for God. The New Testament speaks in many ways of the importance of our maintaining those bonds, as in what Jesus said about the vine and the branches: "If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit" (John 15.5).

## A daunting commitment?

To say the Covenant Prayer undoubtedly requires a deep breath before taking on such a commitment. For some people, it is almost asking too much; their faith may need to grow before they can be whole-hearted about it. But some of the reservations arise from a misunderstanding of the words. When we pray "put me to suffering", for example, we are not asking God to make us suffer but saying that we want with his help to do or patiently to accept whatever is his will for us.

## The Covenant hymn

Charles Wesley, John's brother, wrote a hymn for the occasion, which is now an inseparable part of the Covenant service in Methodist churches. So, in his words

*Come, let us use the grace divine,  
And all, with one accord,  
In a perpetual cov'nant join  
Ourselves to Christ the Lord.*