

Wednesday 3 May Holy Communion at 11 am, followed by a light lunch
 Wednesday 3 May Joint Homegroup meeting in church, 8 pm
 Saturday 6 May Springs Dance Company perform, 7.30 pm (£5)
 Monday 8 May Men's Fellowship Annual Service, AGM and Closing Supper
 Monday 8-13 May Annual Week of Prayer
 Tuesday 9-12 May Christian Resources Exhibition at Sandown Park
 Wednesday 10 May Monthly Prayer Meeting in church, 8 pm
 Monday 15 May Anchor: Jeneen Thomson on the Rainbow Trust
 Monday 15 May New Baptism course begins, 8.15 pm
 Saturday 20 May Parish Walk (leaving Somerfield car park at 9.30 am)
 Thursday 25 May Ascension Day
 Wednesday 7 June Holy Communion at 11 am, followed by a light lunch
 Wednesday 14 June Monthly Prayer Meeting in church, 8 pm.
 Monday 19 June Anchor: Catherine Winchcombe on the Jonas Trust
 Wednesday 19 July Institution of Philip Plyming as Vicar of Holy Trinity
 Friday 28 July-7 August Summer Mission to Ukraine

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 with baptisms	Evening Prayer 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 2 pm: Toddlers' Praise (in the Church Hall)
 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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and lots more to keep
you in touch with Holy
Trinity's life and work

SPRINGS DANCE COMPANY COMES TO HOLY TRINITY

Europe's foremost professional Christian dance company is headed for Claygate this month. Springs Dance Company has been in existence since 1979, emerging from part of the Arts Centre Group, which brings together Christians in the arts and the media. The main aim of the Company is to communicate the Christian faith through dance.

Just back from a tour of France, the Company will be performing in Holy Trinity on Saturday 6th May at 7.30 pm. This performance will be of *Without Words*, an evening of lively, accessible and thought-provoking dance including a humorous look at the temptations, a dramatic and moving crucifixion and resurrection, Bob Geldof's *Song of Indifference*, *God of Moon and Stars*, and the brand new *Magnificat*, based on Rob Lacey's book.

Tickets are available from the Church Office at £5 (children and students £4).

VICAR DESIGNATE: THE REVD PHILIP PLYMING
CURATE: THE REVD DAVID KING

LAY ASSISTANT MINISTER: VALERIE BAGLEY
NON-STIPENDIARY MINISTER: THE REVD PROF LINDA MORGAN
COMMUNITY WORKER: STUART WRIGHT
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As a church we have just been celebrating the great Good News of Easter. Christ is risen from the dead! The stranglehold of death, our greatest enemy, has been broken. Death no longer has the last word in the human story.

This year Easter has coincided with the long-awaited coming of Spring, when the new life of the natural world is finally bursting forth. We knew it would all happen, although it has seemed a long time coming! The earth holds within itself the Creator's promise of the ever-renewing seasons, and this promise is always fulfilled. It never lets us down. Wonderful! And yet this predictability has a down-side. We take it all very much for granted. We fail to allow the wonder of this ongoing miracle of life to amaze us and fill us with thankfulness. But then there is the question – Who or What are we to be thankful to? We need to see beyond the wonders and beauties of the world, to the character of the One who made it all, and who loves and sustains what he has made.

What can we see of his character in the ever-renewing world? One of the things that we can see, is that God is a God of life. His nature is life-giving. He is a God of new beginnings, of fresh starts, of renewed hope. As we put our trust in him, we will discover this truth: 'Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.' (Lamentations 3:23). This was written by someone going through enormous suffering, whose faith was really tested. So it is not a pious platitude. It is a statement of great trust, born out of the writer's knowledge of God's powerful and undying love. A trust that could sustain him through the hardest of times.

And what about the resurrection of Jesus, his rising from the grave to never die again? This is the cornerstone of everything that we believe about God. It is the ultimate proof of God as life - not only bringing life, but being life. It reveals Jesus as Son of God, bringing new life to us. It shows us God's power and love as nothing else. Death, the greatest symptom of a diseased world, is defeated. What a cataclysm - no wonder there was an earthquake when Jesus rose from the tomb! This is truly the climax and turning-point of our earthly history.

Once, some while ago, when I was going through a time of painful struggle, someone read me the poem by Gerard Manley Hopkins, called 'God's Grandeur'. It really helped me, reminding me forcefully that there is always new life and hope in God, because that is what he is about. The poet speaks about the things that depress us – the destruction of so much that is good in the world – and then says:

'And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs –
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent

World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.'

Because of God, there is Spring after Winter, there is dawn after the night, there is resurrection after death.

Valerio



From the Parish Registers

We welcome into the family of the Church:

Cameron Hunter
(baptised on 26th March)
Alexa Newton
(baptised on 9th April)

We offer sympathy to the relatives and friends of:

Eleanor Sabine Hardern
(21st February)
Richard Melville Gascoigne
(31st March)



The new Sunday School teacher from Hamelin had a mesmerising effect on the children

Parish Personalities

Roger Marsden is the subject of this month's Insight Inquisition.

Where were you brought up?

In Ceylon, Wiltshire, Singapore and Cambridge-shire.

How long have you been at Holy Trinity?

Since 1978 when we moved to Claygate.

What do you like most about it?

The sermons.

*And if there was one thing you could change?
'Hymns for Today's Church'.*

Where would you locate your ideal home?

In some hills.

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

Early morning.

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

Procrastination.

What food are you most partial to?

South and South-east Asian.

And leave on the side of your plate?

Parsley, parsnips and celery.

What do you watch on television?

News, Have I Got News for You?, Bremner, Bird and Fortune, and Newsnight.

What would your desert island book be?

Bill Bryson Compendium.

What is your favourite music?

English folk songs.

And your favourite hymn?

"How Great Thou Art".

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

Galatians chapter 3, verse 28: "For you are all one in Jesus Christ".

Do you have an unfulfilled ambition?

To ride in a hot air balloon.

The Seven Last Words

Jem Salter is a veteran of the three hour meditation held every Good Friday

For a number of years now I have been "on duty" with the sound system for the Good Friday three hour meditation service. I recall my concern the first year – back in Bob Hyatt's time - as to whether or not I would be like a fish out of water. I mean to say "meditation" was hardly my scene – would I really be expected to take up some awkward squatting position?

Well, having established that yoga has little to do with Christian meditation, I have to admit that I now look forward to this annual sharing of various aspects of the Good Friday story. Like no other time in the Church's calendar this service provides an opportunity to consider God's sacrifice of His only son and with such clarity and conviction that I leave the Church at the end of the three hours, not exhausted but refreshed!

For me, the service this year was even more helpful than usual. The theme was the last seven words of Jesus as recorded

in scripture. As usual the three hours were divided into six half hour sessions with carefully selected hymns ending and beginning each session. Each half hour period included a "Meditation on the Word" (beautifully read by Valerie), a choral or Taize-style musical item sung by the six-strong choir with great sensitivity, the symbolic extinguishing of a candle and ten minutes or so of silence for our meditation and personal prayer. As each new Meditation was introduced an appropriate and quite evocative picture was projected on to a screen.

David led the service and we have him, Valerie, Linda and John Alpass to thank for the huge amount of careful preparation and research that went into the planning. They provided this wonderful opportunity for us to reflect on the death of Jesus Christ; we are privileged indeed that our leaders at Holy Trinity have a passion to make this essential precursor to the Good News of Easter so very special.

Fellowship hears about a life in show business

It was all his mother's doing. That was why Eric Fowler's talk to the Men's Fellowship on 3rd April was entitled "My Eric sings". Repeatedly, from when he was seven, it was his mother's use of that phrase which led the young Eric to a further stage of a burgeoning career.

In the first instance, it was sufficient to persuade a dancing teacher to give singing lessons as well. Later, it explained why the Welsh accordion band took on a boy vocalist and how Eric won talent competitions, even if Carroll Levis could not give a

radio slot to someone below the age threshold.

National Service in the RAF found him producing drama, but he then found that his taste for the theatre could be satisfied only by starting in the cinema. Entertainment management for various local authorities followed, but Eric eventually gave that up in order to write, with 25 pantomimes and plays to his credit. It was an entertaining story, with many celebrities along the way - even if Eric avoided getting married wearing Max Miller's suit!

A George Cross winner from Claygate

A visitor to the parish was researching Captain Jenkin Thompson GC

It was indeed co-incidental that I should be visiting your parish on the 24th March as the national press carried the news that the George Cross had just been awarded to Captain Peter Norton. Why was it co-incidental you may ask? Well, simply because Claygate can lay claim to its very own George Cross recipient: Captain Jenkin Robert Oswald Thompson was posthumously awarded the GC in February 1945.

The citation as published in *The Times* on 3rd February 1945 read:

"The award is for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty on board hospital ships since the start of the war, notably on the Paris at Dunkirk in May, 1940, and on the St. David at Sicily, Salerno, and at Anzio, when in each instance, in spite of repeated dive-bombing attacks and enemy shell-fire, he showed indifference to danger and physical exhaustion in the care of his patients. At Anzio on the night of January 24, 1944, when the St. David was sinking rapidly as the result of a direct bomb-hit, he organised parties to carry the seriously wounded to safety in the boats and was thus instrumental in saving many lives. When the ship was obviously about to

founder and all were ordered to save themselves, he returned alone in a last effort to save the one remaining helpless patient still lying trapped below. It is presumed that Captain Thompson went down with the ship."

Capt Thompson is commemorated on your parish memorial, minus his post-nominal 'GC'. The reason for my visit was to capture this tribute with my digital camera. It was surprising to see that his story is not mentioned in *The Book of Claygate*, but perhaps this could be amended in a future edition? He was married in your church in December 1939 and his parents lived in The Larches, Claremont Road during the war. Does anyone in the parish know where this house stood?

The story of this gallant officer of the Royal Army Medical Corps will be told later this year in a book on GC recipients presently under preparation. If anyone can assist me with my research, I would be delighted to hear from them.

Terry Hissey
terryhissey@talk21.com

Who's there?

The Vicar decided he should get better acquainted with the family who had just joined the congregation, so he made a visit to their home early one evening.

After he rang the bell, a voice from within called out "Is that you, Angel?"

No", replied the Vicar, "but I'm from the same department."

*If you pray,
you will have faith.
If you have faith,
you will have love.
If you have love,
you will serve.
If you serve,
you will have peace.*

A week with the Iona Community

Linda Morgan came to speak at the March meeting of the Anchor group to tell us about the week that she and David spent at the Abbey on Iona last summer. Iona is a small island off the west coast of Scotland where in 563 Columba established the first Christian settlement.

The Community, which was founded in 1938 by the Revd George Macleod, is an ecumenical Christian movement seeking new ways of living the gospel in today's world through working for peace and social justice. The members of the Community are men and women from many different backgrounds and many different church traditions, but all share a common Rule of daily prayer and Bible study, mutual accountability for their use of time and money, and regular meeting together.

Linda told us that she and David were there for music week and were fortunately staying in the beautifully reconstructed Abbey where their group lived as a community for the week - sharing worship, praise, chores and island life. In this beautiful, wild setting, the group's spirituality deepened as they discovered God in the midst of life.

The May meeting of Anchor will be held on Monday the 15th, 7.30 for 8 pm in the church foyer as usual. Jeneen Thomson will be speaking about the Rainbow Trust.

Insight

Contributions to the June issue of the parish magazine should reach the Editor by Wednesday 17th May please.

Prayer Week

It has been Holy Trinity's practice for a number of years to designate one week in the spring during which we can focus on the importance of prayer and have a structured programme within which we can meet together at different times of the day to pray for different areas of need.

This year's Prayer Week will begin on Monday 8th May. That week will see our regular monthly time of prayer in the Church on Wednesday evening at 8 pm. Do look out for the full programme of events and support as much of it as you can.

Taking tea with us

Two occasions for tea in the Church Hall on Sunday afternoon are in the offing. The first is a tea for the bereaved on Sunday 14th May, and those who would like to attend are invited to speak to Valerie.

Our traditional Trinity Tea, followed by the ever-popular Songs of Praise service, marking Trinity Sunday, will be held on Sunday 11th June.

Men's Fellowship

Members of the Men's Fellowship should need no reminder that the season's final meeting takes place on Monday 8th May. The Annual Service will be led by David at 7.30 pm and this will be followed by the AGM - at which a successor to Keith Havelock as Chairman is needed - and the Closing Supper in the Church Hall.

Bereavement Support Group: Following last month's article, a reminder that the first evening meeting of the Group will take place at 7 pm on Tuesday 23rd May.

Makeover for Holy Trinity's website

In the fast-moving world of the internet nothing lasts for ever. Holy Trinity's website was launched in December 2002 and has served us well in its present incarnation, attracting 300 to 400 visitors a month. Our website drew plaudits from prospective applicants during the interregnum and the 'how to find us' page was a big hit just prior to the interviews!

So why change? Over the last year much has been added to the site: the weekly newsheet, forthcoming events, the parish profile and most recently, recordings of Sunday sermons. The design of the website is now reaching the limits of what it can hold, so the site has been redeveloped.

The purpose of the website has always been to introduce Holy Trinity to those who are yet to visit us and to provide an information resource to church members. A 'New to Holy Trinity' section has been created to make it easier for new visitors to find things of interest to them. New pages have been added to promote pastoral activities, such as home groups, and to make existing printed material available online, such as the weekly prayer diary.

I encourage everyone to visit the site and to explore what it has to offer. The intention is to continue to expand the site wherever it can assist the work of our church, for example to give publicity for new initiatives or provide resources, such as forms, letters and web-based material, to support existing activities. Please contact me if you have any suggestions (webmaster@holytrinityclaygate.org.uk).

Mark Chapman

The World Cup at Holy Trinity

Opportunities to get together and cheer on England's footballers will be on offer at Holy Trinity this summer as the World Cup finally arrives. The Evangelism Team is again organising the 'cinema style' big screen presentation of games in the blacked-out Church Hall.

The idea will be to follow England's relentless progress to the Final. The series will begin with England's opening match against Paraguay on Saturday 10th June, starting at 1.45 pm.

The strategy devised by the Evangelism Team sees our putting televised sports events on a big screen as a good way of bringing non-Christians into our buildings and enjoying the company of Christians. So please do make a point of inviting your friends to join you for the World Cup.



Learning from the Bible

Mankind's quest for knowledge is never-ending. Men and women go to extraordinary lengths to find out more and more. Research projects become increasingly esoteric and invariably when their tentative conclusions are announced, they are accompanied by a statement that more research is needed.

Our curiosity is rarely sated. Advances in technology, communications and travel mean that we have access to information and knowledge, and first-hand experience, in a way unimaginable to previous generations. But there is always something else to enquire about. We are intrigued, and may speculate in the face of uncertainty, but it is all because we *want to know*.

So when Philip said to Jesus that they would ask no more if only he could show them the Father, it might have been self-deception. Would they really have no more questions? Even if they were immediately satisfied, it seems inevitable that before very long the cries of "But what about...." would be in the air.

That Philip made the request at all illustrates the difficulty that the disciples experienced in getting to grips with what Jesus was and what he was teaching them. Look at the words that Jesus had just spoken to them: "If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

That represented a test of understanding

"Philip said, 'Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.'"

John chap. 14, verse 8.

which put a strain on the disciples, probably more so than it does on us, because we have not lived an ordinary day-to-day life with this man and we know what was yet to come in the lives of Jesus and his immediate followers. Philip wanted a more direct indication of the nature of God, a vision he could appreciate instantly, without having to interpret God from what he knew of Jesus.

But the truth is that the disciples had seen and known as much of God as is possible in this human world. God became human in the person of Jesus, and it is his life, his words and his deeds, his death and his resurrection, which provide us with the evidence on which we must base our knowledge of and faith in God. It may be natural to want a clearer view, to know with greater certainty, but here is an instance where we have to accept that there are limits to the evidence we can expect. That is why we call it faith.

Jesus said to Philip "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. I am in the Father and the Father is in me." The authority we attach to the words of Jesus derives from his closeness to God. And we can thank God that Jesus' contemporaries so recognised this that what he said was faithfully recorded and passed down to future generations, so that we too can be confident in knowing God.

Scribatus

*What God's Son has told me, take for true I do;
Truth himself speaks truly or there's nothing true.
(St Thomas Aquinas)*

Young people today....

Well, as exam revision swirls and tightens around our young people this month in a new noose of tension and fatigue and coursework deadlines approach with dreadful rapidity, you'd be forgiven for thinking that the importance of faith for our young people would start to fall by the wayside.

It is true that attendance does suffer as a number of 9am Monday exams loom, but other than that you would be mistaken. By the time that you read this many of our young people will have stood up in front of their friends and families at Christ Church Esher and declared and confirmed their faith in Jesus together, before celebrating their first communion together.

For some of our young people this is a decision that has taken a good few years, and for some, involves a good few nerves even still. Over the last two and a half months, Gareth Jones, Chris Greaves and I have been running confirmation classes every other Wednesday evening, taking this group of young people through the very basics of faith and offering them each the chance to choose for themselves.

A month ago the chance was offered for people to decide whether they could stand up in front of friends and family and say that they are happy to be known as a follower of Jesus. It is brilliant that all these in attendance said yes, but the best bit for me is the time in which they took to say so.

Now, this was not as you would maybe imagine something they all agreed to straight away. Some of them kept us

guessing until very close to the service itself. And this is why it is so exciting; because this delay showed that each one of them thought about it hugely and understood the importance of the decision being taken. Some knew straight away that they wanted to be confirmed, but some have taken that decision for the first time and have done so after a good long hard think about it.

It is this steadfastness and thoughtful approach which will stand each one of these young people in good stead in the future. Over the last term I have been in touch, as ever, with many of those young people who are studying at university and the Easter services provided a very good chance for me to catch up with a lot of them together.

It is in environments such as school and university where the thoughtful reflection upon the value of following comes into sharp focus. We should be encouraged as a church that several of these returning students brought friends to church at Easter, so that they could hear the good news proclaimed.

These two occasions show two sides of the same coin, a walk being started with thought and recognition of its importance despite outstanding questions and a walk being continued despite turmoil and stress, with consideration and ongoing recognition of its value and ever increasingly difficult questions. These bookends to the youth ministry at HTC are placed by the Author of Life, and when we glimpse the life in between, we can be encouraged and rejoice.

Asa

Reviewing the last year at Holy Trinity

Church membership and Sunday services

The current number of adults on Holy Trinity's Electoral Roll is 535, four fewer than this time last year, the first time we have seen a drop for some years.

On the average Sunday, 62% of those members attend Sunday services; adding children brings the average Sunday attendance in 2005 to 414, an increase over the previous year.

The PCC discussed during the year whether there is a need for a more contemporary service than Holy Trinity presently provides. David King also offers his own feeling that the 10 am service is too full, so raising the question of what ought to be done to meet such concerns.

Holy Trinity's prayer life

There is a comprehensive explanation of what the Evangelism Team had been doing - and will continue to do - and why it was brought to the conclusion that the church was not embracing the Evangelism Strategy in the way that had been hoped. This led in turn to the belief that we had done too much in our own strength without committing things to God, and that Holy Trinity's prayer life needed to be strengthened. So the Evangelism Team became the Prayer Co-ordination Team, and we now have, in addition to existing meetings, a monthly prayer meeting for everyone.

Reaching adults in the community

START, initiated for those in the community who would not normally attend church, has developed during the year to hold informal START celebrations (or '10 Commandments Nights') in the church every other Friday, and to set up a Cell Group for women, getting them away from the blokes for Bible study and prayer and more intimate fellowship in a Christian home.

Holy Trinity's Annual Report was published before Easter, and gives an excellent overview of what is going on in the Church. There is no substitute for reading the 46 pages of the Report, but here are some highlights for those of our readers who have not seen it.

Children and young people

Apart from describing the last year, the Report contains some thoughts from David on how our children's work might evolve. Perhaps recognising that he is due to move on before long, he stresses the need for Holy Trinity to employ a dedicated Children's Worker in the near future. Such a person could do more to bring the children who attend the Holiday Club into more regular contact with the church, and this might in turn mean a restructuring of children's work on Sundays, perhaps with a weekly Megamix.

The Jigsaw Playgroup had a very successful OFSTED inspection and has developed its strategies and practices in various ways to enhance its service.

Toddlers' Praise continues to thrive and a new development is a Toddlers' Praise lunch twice a term.

Many Sunday groups report increases in numbers, and even if this poses some challenges, the overall positive tone of the individual reports reflects

the enthusiasm and commitment of their leaders.

Asa is able to report increasing help with our youth work, and notes that the current preponderance of girls - meaning more pressure on the female leaders - should be mitigated by a large group of boys moving from Pathfinders. He also comments that the popularity of the monthly Eternal group still provides the opportunity for additional help to be offered.

Stu's work with community youth saw the end of the DV8 meetings during the year and the decision instead to engage local lads through football, with the establishment of the 'Claygate Saints'. A group of 12 continue to meet for Bible study and prayer with Stu, but the challenges remain to engage girls as well as boys, to reach some of the younger age groups who hang around the village, and to address the bad behaviour that had marred not only the DV8 group but the camps away which had been popular among local youth.

Pastoral Care

Holy Trinity's Crisis Support is now in operation, and the first cases have seen needs met, normally through vouchers or payment of bills rather than the giving of money.

Bereavement Support, bereavement visiting, the Care Team and the Credit Union continue their valuable work, but Valerie describes this as a difficult year for parenting courses. This is because the Practical Parenting organisation has had leaders move on, and has been unable to offer Holy Trinity continuing help and training. Nevertheless other ways are being pursued to offer future courses to parents.

The Report details some of the benefits which participants on the last Marriage Course (the latest one is now under way) derived from their attendance, emphasizing the value of this means of bolstering the institution of marriage.

Homegroups

Twentytwo groups are currently meeting, embracing 230 members of the church. Three of the groups are post-Alpha, and almost half of the groups meet weekly rather than fortnightly. The Homegroup Coordination Team has been enlarged to provide support for leaders, feedback and ideas.

Finance

The Treasurer reports that 'normal' PCC income, with voluntary giving keeping pace with inflation, amounted to £344,000. This was £6,000 more than expenditure, but the budget for 2006 anticipates a shortfall of income against expenditure of £24,000, due largely to our parish share of the Diocesan budget increasing by £19,000. The PCC hopes to return to break-even in 2007.