



The Heartland Bulletin

Issue 19 - 19th April 2018

Surprised

Some say his body was stolen to prevent an uprising,
others say he was resurrected,
leaving behind the cloth he wore,
folded!

People were surprised, astounded,
baffled, bewildered,
angry!

Rather than the end,
here was a glimmer of hope,
light where there ought to be dark.

In our darkest moment that same light offers hope.
Something is better than nothing
and Easter offers something, not to cling on to,
but to live with and for which to live.

Dying to live.

Daring to enter the empty tomb takes courage,
but like the wardrobe in Narnia
this tomb is a doorway
to something beyond.

Easter,
the sign of eternal life.

Heather Whyte 2018

This bulletin has been collated by Gill Elliott of Trinity URC St Albans. If you have news or notices that you wish to be included in the next Bulletin, please email gilldotelliott@gmail.com, or ask your Heartland representative to do so on your behalf.



Photos from **Welwyn Garden City**



On Maundy Thursday people gathered at **Edward Street** from **all five churches in the Luton and Dunstable Pastorate** for Agape led by Revd Heather Whyte.

The evening began with the sharing of music, readings and poems on the theme of the passion. This was followed by a meal. The communion service told the story of the Last Supper. Later a garden was created and the story of Jesus in Gethsemane was told by candlelight before people departed quietly.





Homewood Road's
Easter Garden

Homewood Road held a service for the housebound on 11th April, with a service led by Geoff Lackey and a tea afterwards. About 50 people attended.



Homewood Road's
fundraising barn dance



Trinity's
Easter morning communion. Each ribbon pinned onto the communion cloth represented a prayer



Trinity's Easter Day display following the usual sumptuous Full English cooked breakfast, this year including a vegetarian cheese dish. We were pleased to welcome some people who hadn't quite made it to Messy Church.

Panshanger's initiative for single parent families.

PANSHANGER CHURCH
Oasis – parenting alone group
2nd Saturday of each month
3:30pm till 6pm
Parenting alone can be tough so come along and enjoy some time and support with others.
There are activities for the children and we share a meal together as well.
Contact: oasis@panshangerchurch.com

Parenting alone?
Come along to Oasis this Saturday
3:30pm @ Panshanger Church!
All Welcome!
For info contact: oasis@panshangerchurch.com

The Winter Beds Project

The project has its roots in a meeting of representatives from the six city centre churches at which a request was made that we support the existing services in providing shelter for rough sleepers on the coldest nights of the year. This was in 2015 ... and more than two years later we raced into action! Brexit will have been quicker, but we've not had the benefit of Boris Johnson working on the WBP.

Two public meetings were held in 2016 at which there was considerable support and we began to plan for a rotating programme of shelters. These would be located in six churches around the city - a model used elsewhere in many other towns. However, it became clear that a 'one site' solution would suit us best and after a false start at the end of 2017, we settled on a room at Trinity United Reformed Church.

It became clear that there could be difficulties in a group of churches administering the WBP effectively. The Open Door charity, which supports the night shelter run by Hightown Housing Association, was willing to take the WBP under their wing. A steering group was set up and Lucy Gaygusuz, who is very experienced in the field, agreed to chair this; she subsequently became a trustee of the Open Door Charity. Alistair Reeves, also very experienced in the homelessness sector in London, was appointed as Project Manager in December last year. The shelter finally opened in January this year and ran through until the beginning of April. It was almost as if winter waited for us to start.

The system operates because of a seamless partnership with the night shelter which, in addition to its 12 beds for residents, also provides 5 additional beds when weather conditions are severe. WBP now provides another 5. All applicants are processed at the night shelter which takes the first 5, and the rest move into Trinity. Rough sleepers were passed to Trinity on 19 of the 42 nights declared as severe since the beginning of January. It took a long time coming, a lot of hard work - but we got there in the end.

The trustees of the Open Door charity will review this first year experience asking the volunteers how it went with a view to making improvements for guests and volunteers next winter. One guest said 'it was better than the council car park' - an endorsement!

And from a couple who volunteer together. 'This was something new for both of us, and despite the training we approached the first evening with some trepidation. This evaporated the instant we picked up the keys from Open Door and met the guest for the night. During the times we took our shifts we had detailed discussions about Billy Graham, before and after his death, churches in the district, the quality of mattresses ('much more comfortable here than in Open Door'), problems with motor vehicles and working in Brussels.

'We were very aware that the life of the Church went on regardless. The first night we arrived and set up shop in the office whilst another meeting went on next door - they were clearly a little surprised to see people walking past their door, but at the end of the evening they were kind enough to leave us and the guests some cake! Another evening we coincided with a very enthusiastic and vocal service in the Church, still well under way when we left at 10.30; we know that because we had to creep in and interrupt the sermon in order to ask for a car to be moved to let us out. Trinity clearly became a home, even temporarily - 'No, I have my bed in that corner' - and met a real need this winter.'

However the real endorsement came from the night shelter which said that our extra beds meant no one was turned away during severe weather.



**"PROGRESSIVE
FAITH
AND PRACTICE:
THOU SHALT NOT
STAND IDLY BY"**

**Conference Speaker
Rev Dr Roger Ray**

**Pastor of The Emerging Church
in Springfield, Missouri**

5th May 2018

**At Trinity URC,
1, Beaconsfield Road,
St Albans,
Herts, AL1 3RD.**



9.45 a.m. Registration

**10.15 a.m. Session One:
What do progressives mean
when we say "God"?**

11.45 a.m. Short break

**12 noon Session Two:
Which Jesus do we hold dear?**

1.30 p.m. Lunch
*[Bring your own or Iceland etc. are just outside.
Tea/coffee will be available during the day].*

**2.30 p.m. Session Three:
What do we do when
we gather as a Community?**

4 p.m. Finish

Conference fee: £10
*[Payable on the door. It will help with arrangements if
you can email jchurcher@ntlworld.com if you know in
advance that you plan to attend].*

**Sunday 6th May:
10 a.m. - 11.45 a.m. Morning service**

**Preacher: Rev Dr Roger Ray
Our preference for the poor.**

"The modern church should take its prophetic voice in society seriously. If churches lack the courage and insight to be prophetic, they should at least be of service in an exemplary manner. Having devoted ourselves to seeking the greatest good for the largest number of people, it stands to reason that we will also work to defeat, improve, or replace a system that creates widespread suffering for the comfort of a few in order to evolve towards an economy that puts people back to work and makes the basics of life available to everyone."



*Roger's Emerging Church is
a community for people of
both progressive social justice
interests and progressive
religious beliefs.*

*Roger's weekly sermons can
be viewed at
<http://www.spfcc.org>*

*Trinity URC is 100 yards from St Albans City
Mainline Station. Car parking is available in the
station car parks [charges apply]*

*The people of Trinity are drawn together by a
progressive theology and an open style of worship in
which we share, question and learn from one another.
From this we are sent out*

- * to celebrate diversity*
- * to pursue justice*
- * to try to make a difference in St Albans and the rest
of the world*
- * to follow the example of Jesus Christ in the whole of
life.*

*Further Conference details are available
from Rev John Churcher
Email: jchurcher@ntlworld.com*

Prayer Calendar

April 29 th	Homewood Road	For the Youth and Families worker
May 6 th	St Albans, Trinity	For the Christian Aid events happening this week at Trinity and beyond.
May 13 th	Welwyn	
May 20 th	Wheathampstead	
May 27 th	Heartland Group	

Church and Heartland Events

Date & Time	Location	Event
24 th April 7.15 for 7.30	Trinity	Sustainable Money: Climate Risk and Investment
5 th May 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.	Trinity	Progressive Faith and Practice with Rev Dr Roger Ray
10 th May 7.30 p.m.	tbc	Next Links Group meeting
13 th May 6.30 p.m.	Homewood Road	Christian Aid Ecumenical Service
17 th May 7.30 p.m.	Trinity	John Reardon will speak on the poetry of John Clare.
14 th June 7.30 p.m.	Trinity	John Reardon will speak on the poetry of Edward Thomas
12 th July 7.30 p.m.	Trinity	John Reardon will speak on the poetry of Alice Oswald
14 th July tbc	Harpenden URC	Heartland Day
28 th July 1 p.m.	Homewood Road	Induction of the Revd John Hardaker

Sustainable St Albans Week is THIS WEEK and Trinity is involved!

Sustainable Money: Climate Risk and Investment

Come for powerful insights into climate risk, green finance, and how money and fossil fuels intertwine. Speakers from Helen Wildsmith of CCLA; Mike Wilkins of S & P Global; and a representative from Christian Aid's Big Shift campaign (to be arranged by Adrian Whalley). Chaired by Catherine Ross (Transition Towns). After talks from all the speakers, the panel will take questions from the floor.

Date/time: Tuesday 24th April. Doors 7:15, event 7:30-9:30
(Free event, refreshments provided at beginning)