

Trinity News



March 2025

No.548



Trinity United Reformed Church

Mansel Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 4AA

www.trinitywimbledon.org

March Reflection

Greetings Friends,

In 2024, Merriam-Webster announced their Word of the Year: "Polarization."

Rather ironically, this decision itself proved to be polarising and sparked a media storm. This was namely because, in the previous year, 2023, the word of the year was "Authentic", and the year before that, 2022, it was "Gaslighting". Some people felt that Merriam-Webster was trying to send a hint. However, the 420-year-old dictionary has faced its fair share of controversies over the years and in response to the mixed reactions, they stated, "The basic job of the dictionary is to tell the truth about words".

Looking back, 2024 was a year characterised by polarisation among nations, political parties, celebrities, and even within the worldwide Church. Indeed, Merriam-Webster seems to have chosen the perfect word.

Now, in March 2025, we will celebrate a day known for its polarising nature: Shrove Tuesday, commonly referred to as Pancake Day. You might wonder, what could possibly be so controversial about Pancake Day?

The answer lies in the pancakes themselves, of course!

If you were to ask ten different people how to make the best pancakes, you would receive ten distinct answers. From sweet to savoury, from plain to garnished, pancakes can be found in a variety of forms. Truth be told, the art of making a good pancake is not an exact science; it often depends on what you have left in your fridge and pantry.

But it begs the question: what is the significance of Pancake Day? Why do we even celebrate it? Among all dishes, why are pancakes considered worthy of such an honour of having their own day?

Shrove Tuesday dates back over 1000 years and is a traditional feast day that occurs just before the start of Lent, which begins on Ash Wednesday. Lent is a 40-day period leading up to Easter, traditionally

observed as a time of fasting, echoing the 40 days Christ experienced in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13). Lent is a season marked by austerity, prayer and charitable works.

Historically, on Shrove Tuesday, British Christians would go to confession to be "shriven" or absolved of their sins. This day represented the last opportunity to use up eggs and fats before the Lenten fast. A bell, known as the "Pancake Bell", would ring to call people to confession, and this practice continues to this day. The date of Shrove Tuesday varies each year, as it always falls 47 days before Easter Sunday; in 2025, Shrove Tuesday will be on 4 March. For many, it is a day of thanksgiving for God's provision, communal celebration with loved ones, and preparation for the season of Lent. It is a time in which our physical and spiritual priorities are balanced.

"Jesus declared, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty'."
(John 6:35 NRSV)

This March, as many observe Shrove Tuesday and the season of Lent, may we meet this time of celebration and dedication with humility, remembering the invitation of Christ. May we hold to the truth that just as Christ had overcome his temptations and trials in the wilderness, we too can overcome. Indeed, let us be willing to discard our polarisation and embrace the reconciliation exemplified by Christ.

With every blessing,

Jacob Bali

Revd Dr Jacob Bali
Minister

The Minister's usual day off is Monday





MARCH 2025

2	Sun	<i>Transfiguration Sunday</i> 10.30 Elders Meeting 11:00 Morning Worship with Holy Communion
4	Tues	<i>Shrove Tuesday</i> 20:00 Queens Road housegroup
5	Wed	<i>Ash Wednesday</i> 19:30 Ash Wednesday Service
7	Fri	09:45 Trinity Toddlers 10:30 World Day of Prayer service at Christ Church, Copse Hill, SW20
9	Sun	<i>1st Sunday in Lent</i> 11:00 Morning Worship
11	Tues	10:30 Lettings Team
12	Wed	19:30 Elders' Council
13	Thurs	20:00 Lent Course (1)
14	Fri	09:45 Trinity Toddlers
16	Sun	<i>2nd Sunday in Lent</i> 11:00 Morning Worship
17	Mon	<i>St Patrick's Day</i>
18	Tues	20:00 Property Team
20	Thurs	<i>(First Day of Spring)</i> 20:00 Lent Course (2)
21	Fri	09:45 Trinity Toddlers

March (continued)

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| 23 | Sun | 3rd Sunday in Lent
11:00 Morning Worship
12:15 Church Meeting & Elders' Council
election |
| 27 | Thurs | 20:00 Lent Course (3) |
| 28 | Fri | No Trinity Toddlers |
| 30 | Sun | 4th Sunday in Lent - Mothering Sunday
<i>(British Summer Time begins)</i>
11:00 Morning Worship led by the
Minister with the children & young
people |



World Day of Prayer



World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who welcome you to join in prayer and action for peace and justice. This year's Day will be on Friday 7 March.

Each year a Service is devised and led by Christian women from around the world - this year the Cook Islands. Our local service on 7 March will be at Christ Church, West Wimbledon, SW20 0RZ at 10:30, followed by light refreshments. All are welcome

For further information see:

<https://worlddayofprayer.net/cook-islands-2025.html>

Church Family News

Church membership roll

The membership roll was agreed by Church Meeting last month as standing at 141 on 31 December 2024.

If you would like to discuss membership of Trinity, please speak with the Minister or Church Secretaries who will be delighted to tell you more.

March birthdays

A very happy birthday to those celebrating this month, including Brendan Chung, Gareth Clifford, Katrina Clifford, Penuel Downey, Cathy Dundee, Isaac Or, Kwadwo Sarpong, Alex Woo and Claire Wood.



Lunar New Year celebrations in the Old Hall

Trinity Lent Bible Study 2025

The Wonder and Beauty of the Trinity + Spiritual Formation

Embark on a transformative journey this Lent to deepen your understanding and awe of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In this *Renovaré* Lent course, we will delve into the profound mystery of the Trinity and its practical implications for our spiritual formation. This course is designed to be both intellectually stimulating and accessible for all. Each week will include video lessons, guidebooks, and opportunities for group discussions or personal reflections.

13 March - Week 1: What is God Like?

Focus: Explore the nature and attributes of God.

20 March - Week 2: Understanding the Trinity

Focus: Gain insights into the Triune nature of God.

27 March - Week 3: Revelational, Dimensional Mystery

Focus: Uncover the layers of mystery surrounding the Trinity.

3 April - Week 4: Wrong and Right Thinking on the Trinity

Focus: Correct misconceptions and embrace accurate theological perspectives.

10 April - Week 5: An Eternal Community of Loving Persons & Implications for Spiritual Formation

Focus: Discover the relational aspect of the Trinity and learn how it shapes our spiritual growth.

Whether you are a church member or a curious seeker, this Lent course offers a rich and accessible exploration of the Trinity and its significance for your spiritual formation.



Would you like to try something a bit different for Lent this year?

Reluctant to give something up, but keen to help the environment?

The Carbon Fast (shown on the opposite page) is an initiative that Christ Church, New Malden implemented in Lent 2021. Last year, Olivia Scharinger adapted and slightly modified the idea, undertaking it as a sponsored activity to raise funds for her trip to Zambia.

Try it this year; it's challenging for Lent without being overwhelming.

If you give it a go and, especially if you complete it, please do let Elizabeth Scharinger know at office@trinitywimbledon.org.



The donations trolley remains available in the Mansel Road Centre for contributions to the Wimbledon Foodbank, and we transfer the gifts to the Foodbank depot every two or three weeks, where they are gratefully received.

The Foodbank have asked that no food items containing alcohol be donated, and that all gifts are within their 'use by' date.

This month's urgently needed items are:

tinned fish
tinned vegetables
UHT milk, rice/micro-rice
squash/long-life juice

noodles
toothpaste/toothbrushes
shampoo
shower gel

Week of Prep Week beginning	Share this Climate Fast journey with friends.	Pray for the journey ahead	Research Carbon Footprint	Complete a Carbon Footprint	Watch 'Climate Change, the facts' – A BBC documentary with David Attenborough	
Waste Week Week beginning	Reduce consumer appetite this week Don't buy anything unnecessary or ask for anything unnecessary to bought for me	Dispose of waste responsibly Make a list of items I throw away today. Identify what I could re-use, recycle or reduce. Research why single use plastic is bad	Reduce Food Waste Don't leave food on my plate	Research the 3 R Find places that can help make this possible	Use your own water bottle Plastic water bottles take thousands of years to biodegrade.	Sort out my wardrobe Hand clothes down to people who can use them.
Food Week Week beginning	Eat less dairy Try dairy alternatives – yoghurt, ice cream.	Try something new Try Fairtrade chocolate this week instead of your usual	Shop Ethically Visit a Refill shop or only buy loose, organic or fresh, locally sourced foods.	Eat less meat Eat a veggie or vegan sausage/burger	Cook Try using an Air Fryer to make a cake instead of the oven	Watch a documentary About the meat trade or fishing
Energy Week Week beginning	Check out lights Remove one light bulb and live without it for the next 40 days to remind yourself of your commitment to the fast.	Walk somewhere that I would otherwise drive to.	Conserve Energy Walk around the house turning off lights left on and turn off items left on standby	Solar Look into whether there is a solar powered phone charger available	Save Energy By trying not to charge my phone more than once a day i.e. find other things to do!	Wear more layers If it's cold this week, wear more layers around the house to reduce the amount the heating is on
Water Week Week beginning	Conserve Take shorter showers all this week	Rainwater Collect rainwater so that when I plant seeds next week, I can use it	Save Water Turn off the tap while brushing my teeth	Plan What clothes I need each day to save washing more than necessary	Flush Use the correct flush when using the toilet	Wear clothes more than once To reduce the amount the washing machine is used.
Nature Week Week beginning	Nurture Nature Plant some seeds and watch them grow over the coming weeks	Feed the Birds Make a bird feeder for the garden from old items in the house and use food scraps to fill it.	Litter Pick Take a bag and a grabber to the park and collect all litter	Pick your own Food Visit Garson Farm to see what can be picked at the moment or set a date to pick your own as soon as it's open. Visit the Farm Shop at Garson Farm to see what is in season.	Photograph nature Use photography to take some lovely photos of Spring.	Walk the dog Instead of sitting at home, go for a walk and appreciate nature at the same time. It's Spring so look out for flowers starting to come through.

Do you know the Charterhouse in London?

Over its long history, the Charterhouse in the City of London has witnessed many of the events that have shaped our nation. The story begins in 1348 during the Black Death, when the land was used as a burial ground for victims of plague. In 1371, the Charterhouse was built - a Carthusian monastery, which flourished throughout the later medieval and early Tudor period. With the dissolution of the monasteries, the Charterhouse became a mansion for wealthy noblemen and then a charitable foundation, which it remains today. Tucked away behind Smithfield, Charterhouse is relatively unknown, even to Londoners.



We are planning a group visit there soon. If you are interested in joining the group, please let Catherine Paul know (catherine.f.paul@btinternet.com) *as soon as possible*, with any day or time preferences. (Tuesday-Saturday, morning or afternoon.)

To read more about the Charterhouse go to
<https://thecharterhouse.org/explore-the-charterhouse/>.



Final copy date for the April (Easter) edition of *Trinity News* is Sunday 23 March. Please send items to catherine.f.paul@btinternet.com

Mothering Sunday or Mother's Day? What is the difference?

During the 16th century, people in Britain used to return, on the 4th Sunday in Lent, for a service to their 'mother church'. This was either the church where they were baptised, or the local parish church or, more often, the nearest cathedral. Anyone who did this was commonly said to have gone "*a-mothering*", although whether this term preceded the observance of Mothering Sunday is unclear.



In the Middle Ages, Mothering Sunday evolved into a day to celebrate the Virgin Mary, Jesus' mother. To demonstrate their devotion, people would bring flowers and other offerings to the church. Later, it evolved into a celebration of mothers and other maternal figures.

In later times, 'Mothering Sunday' became a day when domestic servants were given a day off to visit their mother church, usually with their own mothers and other family members. Children and young people would pick wild flowers along the way to place in the church or give to their mothers. Eventually, the religious tradition evolved into the Mothering Sunday secular tradition of giving gifts to mothers.

In the United States, Mother's Day is celebrated on the second Sunday in May and has a more secular origin. The holiday was established in the early 20th century by Anna Jarvis, who held a memorial service to honour her own mother and all mothers around the world. It quickly became a popular holiday, with children giving their mothers gifts and flowers to show their love and appreciation.

Mothering Sunday became more commercialised in the 20th century as greeting cards, chocolates and other gifts gained popularity. However, the custom of going to church and paying respect to mothers and other maternal figures, as well as the presentation of flowers, is still significant. On Mothering Sunday (this year on Sunday 30 March), many churches — including Trinity — hold special services.

Christian Aid & Commitment for Life **– some dates for your diary**



This year our Lent **Commitment for Life** envelopes will be in the pews on Sundays 6 and 13 April. Donations to Commitment for Life go to all the projects Christian Aid supports in Israel and the Occupied Territory, Zimbabwe and Bangladesh. You can also donate online on the Trinity website (www.trinitywimbledon.org).

In 2024, Christian Aid:

1. Worked with 260 partners in 25 countries, from Colombia to South Sudan, Ukraine to Afghanistan.
2. Ran 410 projects, tackling climate change, conflict, and humanitarian disasters.
3. Reached 4.5 million people living in poverty.
4. Met the humanitarian needs of over 3 million people in crisis situations.

In March there are a couple of events for Christian Aid. At St John's church, Waterloo, the launch of the run up to Christian Aid week will be held on Saturday 8 March at 10.30. You can register for this Change-makers event on the Christian Aid website.

On 20 March there is an Israel/Palestine reflection evening where there will be three Christian Aid partners from the Holy Land speaking.

It would be really good if Trinity can be represented at these events (we are unable to attend). If you would like to attend, please contact Joseph Vambe, the South London Christian Aid contact on (020) 7523 2132 or Jvambe@christian-aid.org.

The Christian Aid car boot sale will be in St Mary's field on the morning of Saturday 10 May. If you have bric-a-brac we can sell for Christian Aid do let us know.

Christian Aid Week is from 11 to 18 May. As usual we would be really grateful for volunteers to deliver envelopes.

- Mike and Margaret Tulloch



Queens Road House Group

The March meeting of the Housegroup will be on the 4th, Shrove Tuesday, at 217 Queens Road (8pm). All are welcome to join us.

We will be studying Matthew 17 which begins with the Transfiguration and moves onto the attempts by the disciples to heal the boy suffering from seizures.



RHS Wisley visit

If you would like to join a group visit to RHS Wisley on Tuesday 15 April, Gilli Lewis-Lavender is offering free tickets through her connection with a club for older people at West Barnes Library, Motspur Park. Only a share of the coach fee would be payable (£10 per person). Contact Gilli for further details.



Hate has 4 letters, so does Love.
Enemies has 7 letters, so does Friends.
Lying has 5 letters, so does Truth.
Negative has 8, so does Positive.
Under has 5, so does Above.
Cry has 3 letters, so does Joy.
Anger has 5 letters, so does Happy.
Right has 5 letters, so does Wrong.
Hurt has 4 letters, so does Heal.



The early days of Mansel Road

As you come to church, have you ever wondered what Mansel Road looked like when the Church was founded and how it has changed over the years?

Mansel Road is named after Sir Richard Mansel, the owner of the land on which it was laid out, one of the largest fields in Wimbledon. Known as 'Coppins', it extended from Hill Road to the site of Malcolm Road and had been farmed by the Watney family, farmers, and later, brewers, for grazing their cattle.



*Map showing the Mansel Road area in about 1890
- when Services were held in the Hall and before the Church was built.*

The Hall was, of course, set well back from the road and a gravel path extended up over a grassy area to a porch on the High School side - until the church itself was built in 1891. A row of poplar trees ran up the slope between Trinity and the High School. The roots of these caused damage to the porch of the Hall and its drains, and the School agreed to have the poplars felled.

The road at that time was little more than a muddy pathway. The Local Board installed a connecting sewer and a gas main and agreed to erect a street lamp (it would have been an oil lamp; there was no gas street lighting in Wimbledon). For several years the Board was asked to make up the road - which it finally did in 1894. The Church and High School were asked to share the cost of these improvements and agreed, until they discovered that the Sacred Heart Church had not been asked to contribute to the costs of making up Darlaston Road!

Construction of houses started at the Hill Road end of the road in 1888 and continued in stages until the end of the century. Raymond Road was mainly built in the 1890s. Worple Road Mews extended from Mansel Road to Worple Road until the erection of Swan Court and, later, Mansel Court, closed off the Mansel Road end. In 1898 there were plans for the erection of stables in Mansel Road, possibly adjoining the Mews, to which Trinity strongly objected. This was not mentioned again in the minutes.

Incidentally the High School proposed exchanging some of their frontage for our land behind the Hall. This was all agreed but for some reason the exchange was never finalised - just as well as we could not have built the Mansel Road Centre!

For many years the land now occupied by Mansel Court was the bakery of Johnsons, caterers. There were lovely smells of baking bread as you passed by.

It has all changed significantly since it was a trackway through the field of cows!

