

This Month's Worship in Churches Uniting in Central Sutton

Sunday 7th March

- 9.00am Holy Communion (BCP) - St N
10.30am Family Worship -SBC
Preacher Revd. Mike Dales
Holy Communion - Trinity
Preacher Revd. Martin Camroux
Morning Worship with Communion - St N
- 6.30pm **United Service at SBC:**
A preview of The Easter Experience, a Sutton Churches Together production

Sunday 14th March Mothering Sunday

- 9.00am Holy Communion (BCP) - St N
10.30am Morning Worship with Communion - SBC
Preacher Revd. Mike Dales
Morning Worship -Trinity
Preacher Revd. Martin Camroux
Morning Worship with Church Parade-St N
- 6.30pm **United Service at Trinity:**
Is the Bible literally true?

Sunday 21st March Passion Sunday

- 9.00am Holy Communion (BCP) - St N
10.30am **UNITED MORNING WORSHIP AT ST NICHOLAS CHURCH**
- 6.30pm **United Service at SBC:**
Celebrating the 75th anniversary of SBC with the wider Baptist family
Preacher Chris Andre-Watson

Sunday 28th March Palm Sunday

- 9.00am Holy Communion (BCP) - St N
10.30am Morning Worship - SBC
Preacher Revd. Mike Dales
Morning Worship with distribution of palm crosses - Trinity
Preacher Revd Martin Camroux
Morning Worship with Communion - St N
- 6.30pm **United Service at SBC:**
Service of anthems and readings for Passiontide with the Trinity choir

CUCS is St Nicholas, Sutton Baptist and Trinity Methodist/URC who are churches uniting in central Sutton, and meet regularly for prayer, worship and shared activities.

... for help or information please contact

Rev. Mike Dales (Sutton Baptist)	07952 231723 mg.dales@blueyonder.co.uk
Rev. Sarah Mullally (St Nicholas)	020 8642 3499 sarah.mullally@btinternet.com
Rev. Mark Pullinger (St Nicholas)	020 8642 2757 mplarksong@aol.co.uk
Rev. Martin Camroux (Trinity)	020 8643 0963 m.camroux@talk21



March 2010

Any Questions?

Anyone with children will know that the first questions any child asks will usually begin "Why?" - "Why is the sky blue?", "Why are carrots orange?" Very often the reply is "Just because", indicating that the parent has no real idea of the answer!

The questions don't cease when we are adults. They just get harder. "Why do innocent people suffer?", "What happens when we die?" And, often, the reply is still "Just because". Sometimes the questions we have are unanswerable and it is little comfort to realise that human beings have been asking them, and failing to come up with satisfactory answers, since the very beginning.

Indeed, theologians frequently refer to such questions as "mysteries" knowing that, with our limited human understanding, some things are quite simply beyond us. There are those who claim to know the answers - fundamentalists, whether religious or secular, often claim to have penetrated the mysteries. But they are only fooling themselves, or over-simplifying complex questions. The tragedy is that such a simplistic approach to the big questions can leave people unable to cope when the impact is personal. Coming to terms with these issues may lie in recognising that we will not always know the full story.

However, some sensible things can be said about the questions that vex us. This is the theme behind our current series of Lent Talks at St Nicholas Church on Wednesday evenings. **'Hard questions in the shadow of the cross'** is designed to help us think through some of these issues. We cannot promise to provide definitive answers - such things do not always exist. But perhaps we can discover something new about the God who is with us even when we are perplexed.

I personally find great hope in Jesus' words from the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" If even he, the Son of God, faced times of confusion and perplexity, then I know I am understood when I feel the same.

Your friend,

Mike Dales

Sermons aren't dead but do they motivate?

A key finding of a survey carried out for the College of Preachers has discovered that sermons are not doing enough to motivate the congregations who listen to them.

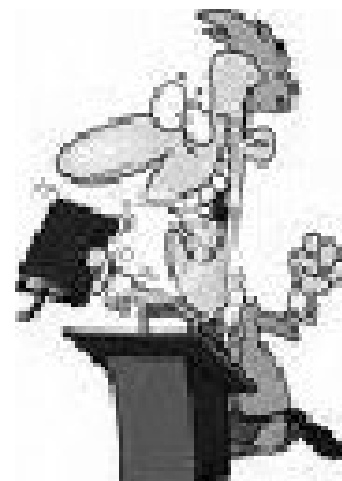
Nearly 200 people, drawn from 16 different churches, were questioned but fewer than 17 percent of these said that sermons frequently change the way they live. An even smaller number said that sermons helped them look with fresh eyes at controversial issues or events in the news. Even so, the majority said that they looked forward to the sermon, the majority claiming that the sermons often gave them a sense of God's love and helped them to understand Jesus.

Sermons, it seems, are therefore "better at helping people to reflect than at challenging them to act," according to the College of Preachers.

Its director, Paul Johns, said, "The digital age isn't killing off preaching, but what the survey suggests is that too much preaching is doing too little to motivate people to look at the world differently and therefore live in it differently.

"If that's so, we have to question what we preachers are actually saying about the Bible and contemporary issues, and how we're engaging with our congregations."

The College of Preachers have officially launched a national "Good Preaching Pledge" from Wesley's Chapel in City Road, London. The pledge has the support of Christian leaders across the country.



A five minute interview with Jane Cresswell

What brought you to Sutton and how long ago?

I came to Sutton two and half years ago to begin my curacy in the Sutton Team Ministry.



With whom do you share your home? (including pets!)

There are four of us living here - myself and three teenagers! My oldest son, who is nearly 20, doesn't live with us but visits regularly so then there are five!

What do you find the most enjoyable part of your job?

That's hard to answer! I enjoy the variety.

Favourite book and piece of music?

*My favourite book in 2009 was *The Shack* which I read twice, and my favourite music is *Pachelbel's Canon in D*. I've heard it played in so many different ways and never tire of hearing it.*

Favourite book of the Bible?

*It's a tough call between *Isaiah* and *John's gospel*!*

I'm surprisingly good at *cooking considering I tend to throw things into the pot in a haphazard fashion!*

I'm surprisingly bad at *waiting! God is still trying to teach me patience!*

One day I would like to *travel round the world.*

Do you have a quotation to share?

Funnily enough the phrase I look at the most is a Buddhist one! "Each day we are born again to start our life anew ... what we do today is what matters most." It reminds me to focus on today and not to worry about yesterday or tomorrow.

Jane contributes the devotions to Unite! Magazine. *The Shack* by William P. Young is published by Hodder and Stoughton.

From the Editor

Thank you to everyone who has commented on the magazine. I welcome feedback to deb.wroe@btinternet.com. Copy date for the April issue is 7 March.

News from the Churches

The united evening service at SBC on **Palm Sunday, 28 March** will take the form of a Choral Evening. As usual on these occasions, singers from all our churches are warmly invited to join **Trinity Choir**. Further details are available from Stephen Haylett, 020 8643 3416.

The 75th Anniversary Celebrations of SBC on its current site will culminate at the evening service on 21 March when we will be joined by members and friends from the other Baptist churches in the region. The service will be conducted by Chris Andre-Watson who is the London area coordinator for the Baptist Missionary Society.

The **SBC Christmas appeal** was on behalf of a special project in Mozambique organised by The Leprosy Mission. Funds were raised to provide stationery, school uniform, sandals, etc. for children affected by leprosy in their families. Over £1265 was raised for which we are very thankful.

The Civic Service for this year was held at **St Nicholas** on Sunday, 17 February. Over fifty Councillors and Officers of the Council were present. During the service the collection was for the Haiti Emergency Appeal, and raised over £400.

Trinity Church renovation means the church is full of slightly unsightly scaffolding! The work is due to be completed on 23 April and the scaffolding to begin to come down on 12 April. There will be a special service to mark the completion of the work on 30 May.

Every Thursday, **St Nicholas** is open from 9.30am to 2pm, and each week people walk in saying they have often passed the church, but this is the first time they have ventured inside. Every week there is Matins at 10am, and Story-time for the very young at 11.15am. Also, on the first Thursday of each month there is an informal Communion Service at 12.45pm, and on the fourth Thursday a Bible Study at 2pm. All

Children at the United service

At the united morning service at St Nicholas on 21 March the Junior Church teachers from our three churches will be holding a joint Children's Church with groups for all ages. They will use a theme from the reading of the week about the woman who anointed the feet of Jesus with perfume. Activities include a 'smellathon'!

are very welcome, and refreshments are served.

Julianne Wren and Ben Crowley were at one time regular worshippers at St Nicholas before moving to Ringwood. They chose St Nicholas for their wedding on 21 January, which was conducted by Revd Sarah Sewell. We wish them well in their marriage.

Trinity has two new young members **Bernard Sisay and Ceejay Hazeley** who were confirmed on 7 February, and welcomes **Carl and Tanya Foster** by transfer from Trinity Lutheran Church in Evanston, Wyoming.

The Shin family (*Tr*) left the UK for Korea on 24 February after the Immigration Minister refused to allow them to stay on humanitarian grounds. This is a great blow to Trinity, where **Revd. Shin** had established a Korean congregation, and is very hard on the family, especially the teenage sons, **Joon Suk and Hyun**. We must hope and believe that God will open up new possibilities for them in Korea or elsewhere.

Trinity has recorded two deaths of members: **Jill Hodgkinson** loved books and her family and had been head of the literature section at Sutton library.

Margaret Fyall devoted her life to her husband who was in the murder squad. She herself discovered an IRA bomb at Harrods.

During Lent, **SBC** is mounting an appeal to all those considering membership and/or baptism. SBC have a fair number of very loyal adherents and hope that some of these will prayerfully consider this additional step of commitment.

Did you know that in 100 years **Trinity** has had 28 ministers and only 10 organists? Find out more intriguing facts from **Colin Howard's** history of Trinity which is on sale at the Church for £10. It tells the remarkable story of 100 years of the life of this Church and its people. Postal copies are available from **Sheila Greenslade** at 12 Village Row, Mulgrave Road, Sutton, Surrey SM2 6JZ (£11.50 by post).

Lent Quiet Day

Friday 19 March

10am - 2pm, at St Nicholas Church

A time to be still with God, to reflect and pray.

All welcome. Lunch will be provided at the end of the morning. For more details please contact Revd Jane Cresswell 020 8642 8371.

Lent Course 2010

HARD QUESTIONS in the SHADOW of the CROSS

The series will be held at St Nicholas at 8.00pm on five consecutive Wednesdays commencing on 24 Feb. The programme is:

24 Feb 'What are the Old Testament Messianic Predictions that lead to Jesus?'

(Mike Dales)

3 Mar 'If Jesus was a Jew how did he become a Christian?' (Mark Pullinger)

10 Mar 'Why did Jesus have to die for our sins?' (Martin Camroux)

17 Mar 'Is heaven a reality for those who die?' (Jane Cresswell)

24 Mar 'Why does God allow disasters such as the earthquake in Haiti?'

(Sarah Mullally)

We appreciate that some prefer an afternoon meeting, so there will be a parallel series at Trinity Oasis on Thursdays at 2.30pm from 25 February.

The Road to Jerusalem

As we move through Lent towards Holy Week and Easter the gospel stories we hear each Sunday give us snapshots of Jesus' journey towards Jerusalem. A road that would place him into the hands of those who hated him and wanted him out of the way; a road which led him inexorably towards the cross, to vulnerability, pain and death. This is how God overcomes evil and death.

Gandhi describes such a strategy like this: *"To refuse to struggle against the evil of the world is to surrender your humanity; to struggle against the evil of the world with the weapons of the evil-doer is to enter into your humanity; to struggle against the evil of the world with the weapons of God is to enter into your divinity."*

Christians are called to be prophetic, to resist the evil of the world, not with the world's weapons but with God's. *"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."* We pray for God's grace to follow the way of the cross.

Jesus our brother,
You followed the necessary path
And were broken on our behalf.
May we neither cling to our pain
Where it is futile,
Nor refuse to embrace the cost
When it is required of us:
That in losing ourselves for your sake,
We may be brought to new life.
Amen

Regular Events

Christian Meditation Group meets alternate Mondays at 3pm and 7.45pm. Contact Pamela Ford on 8642 5914. 1 Mar - 7.45pm. 8 Mar 3pm. 15 Mar -7.45pm. 22 Mar - 3pm. 29 Mar-7.45pm

Saturday Prayer Meeting meets 10am - 11am at Sutton Baptist Church. If you have a prayer request, please contact: Jenny Brearley 8643 1952, or Janet Likeman 8643 6474.

Trinity Women's Fellowship Club meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month from 2.30 pm until 4 pm in the Minor Hall of Trinity Church - entrance via the side door in Hill Road. For further information ring Ann Williams 8647 0370 or Sylvia Robinson 8642 3434. 10 Mar Spring Festival Tea with talk by Surrey Air Ambulance Service 24 Mar 'An Easter Meditation'

Sutton Baptist Women's Friendship meets Monday afternoons at 2.15 p.m. in the John Clifford Hall at Sutton Baptist Church.

The Growing Group meets twice a month at 10.30am in the John Clifford Hall, Sutton Baptist Church. Informal ladies' coffee mornings and activities. 15 Mar Desert Island Discs. 22 Mar Anniversary outing.

Sutton Men's Friendship Centre meets at SBC. Contact: Jim Clark 01306 884364 or Colin Steward 8647 7382. 5 Mar - 2.30 for 3pm, John Clifford Hall at SBC. 19 Mar - 12.00 for 12.15, lunch at The Belmont.

Mothers' Union meets at St Nicholas. Contact Janet Little 8715 6843.

Bunker, the youth club for CUCS, meets in Trinity Hall on Sunday evenings. It is open at 6pm until 7.45pm for 11 to 13 year olds and for 14 to 18 year olds from 7.15pm to 9pm. A chance to get to know other young people in CUCS and have fun together.

Poetry Circle meets once a month on a Tuesday evening with a diverse and stimulating programme. Contact Lionel Griffiths - 020 8715 1218. This month: Gillian Clarke, a Welsh poet.

Badminton Club meets 7.45-10pm on Mondays and Thursdays in Trinity Hall.

All members of the Churches Uniting in Central Sutton are warmly welcomed at these activities.

Oasis at Trinity Church is open Monday to Friday from 10am to 2pm for refreshments, light lunches and a chance to chat.