



FRIENDS OF TRING CHURCH HERITAGE

MAGAZINE
SPRING 2022



A Church
Tring-ful of life!



**TALES OF
OLD TRING
THE PAGEANT!**



**Piano
& More**



Passion for Fashion

**THE
CHANDOS
ENSEMBLE**



**GARDEN SAFARI
DAY**



*A Musical
Journey through
our History*

**The FOTCH
Family Fun Day**



**CALL MY
BLUFF**
**ANTIQUE
CALL MY
BLUFF!**

OVER LUNCH WITH STEPHEN HEARN



BARN DANCE



A Year
Tring-ful
of Life!

A word from the Editor

The theme for this edition moves away from the subject of Covid-19 – and the themes covered in the last few issues around planning for the future, we are back in business and so on.



The theme of this issue is celebrating the life of the Church – and features articles about how the Church is used by different groups for so many different activities that place it at the centre of our community.

What activities in the Church are you involved with? What events are being planned? What regular activities take place? Are there any plans or ideas for something new that deserve to be publicised? What help and support are provided to the local community?

Our contributors addressed these questions and we can read about what is going on...



We hear about:

- First Saturday lunches
- TRingers Handbell Ringing
- Tring Musical Partnership
- Craft and a Cuppa
- Youth Café
- Book Group
- ... and lots more!

Making the most of life in Tring

As you can tell from the logo on the cover and the above, the theme of this Spring magazine is positive, forward looking and optimistic. Our proposition is that Tring is a community burgeoning with life and activities, and that Tring Church is the place where many of these occasions happen. It is also the place where all kinds of different groups and associations get together to enjoy life in the heart of Tring.

The first logo makes it clear that the Church is a place 'Tring-ful of life' and the second that 2022 is going to be a year 'Tring-ful of life'. In other words, there is lots going on and there's going to be lots to enjoy with our whole community.

We hope you'll enjoy reading all about it in this magazine.

Phil Dowden, Editor

What Is It For... Who Goes There?

Three years ago, we spent the winter months in Central America. In this gloomy worried January that seems a distant dream. We spent most of that time in the abandoned heartland of the (now-disappeared) Mayan Civilisation; Chiapas, Yucatan, Belize. Everywhere the valleys and hilltops were ennobled by magnificent relics of marvellous buildings, their structures still strong and impressive despite the passing years. Many of them had titles like the 'Royal Palace', the 'Ball-Court', the 'Temple of the Sun' etc but their display boards and pamphlets revealed that these titles had more to do with supposition and post-rationalisation than established fact. What became clear is that no-one really knew what these impressive structures were actually for.

Musing rather regretfully on this fact, my mind wanders into a vision of some hopefully distant dystopian future in Tring. I picture future tourists wandering through our beautiful wooded valleys, past quiet streams and lakes and stumbling across a magnificent building, now empty and abandoned but still standing strong. 'The Church of St Peter and St Paul' it says on the sign and the obvious questions will follow: "What was it for?" and "Who used it?"

"Everything" and "Everyone" would be my answer: "used and useful for



everything and used and valued by everyone". I believe that to be the literal truth. It is used and useful for everything and is used and valued by everyone – that should make us all proud.

In this landmark year of recovery when we stop agonising about the difficulties of the recent past and start looking forward positively, FOTCH can rightly celebrate all the benefits and advantages our magnificent heritage asset brings to the whole community.

A Centre of Worship and Spirituality

Of course, for the last thousand years our Church has functioned as a centre of spirituality and worship for our Christian Community – both in our Catholic past and since the Reformation. It has been and continues as a vibrant centre of Christianity and Christian love. Regular services, quiet acts of contemplation, the celebration of major festivals, the countless rites of passage of 'hatching, matching and despatching', acts of contrition and dedication. We have seen the steady development of our faith into a more inclusive, more ecumenical, more open celebration of our relationship with God. All these and more take place in the sacred space that resonates with the prayers of all the souls who have worshipped there. Long may that continue! But there is more to it than that...

A Centre of Culture and Entertainment

St Peter and St Paul Church is a big space. The biggest in Tring. It is also very-well equipped, increasingly

flexible for different formats and able to deliver high-quality production values for performances, concerts, dramatic events and presentations of every kind. Lighting, sound and projection facilities have all be extensively improved. It is the venue of choice for concerts, pageants, and dramatic performances of all kinds. Various grants from FOTCH and other partners, such as the Choral Society, have been instrumental in this development. Whenever some large audience event is planned, St P & P has to be front-of-mind.

A Centre of Civic Pride

Tring is a growing town at the heart of a growing community with a strong sense of identity. The Church is not just a large building, it is also a large green space at the very centre of the town. Great events of national or local importance, from Remembrance Day to the celebration of

milestones in our monarchy to changes in our country's relationship with the wider world; all tend naturally to be organised in this space. It is part of our purpose to be as welcoming and accommodating as possible to all these occasions and operate as the 'Heart of Tring'.



A Centre of Educational Excellence

Tring is fortunate to have one large secondary school for the whole community, as well as a wealth of feeder schools for juniors. This symbiotic relationship is surely beneficial in keeping the community together and these schools use the Church for all the major events that mark each passing year. The Church has a strong ongoing involvement with all the schools – including a very strong link with the excellent and independent Tring Park School – and is used by all of them for concerts, ceremonies and all kinds of cultural activities. As Tring grows we need to ensure that this close link with the future of our community is actively catered for.

A Centre of Heritage and Tourism

Tring is at the heart of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and enjoys an increasing number of leisure visitors. With its two museums, its wealth of varied and independent hospitality provision and its many walking trails, it is a magnet for active and energetic visitors. The Church is at the very heart of the town and we are actively working on improving the ‘interest quotient’ by better interpretation of the heritage assets, better displays and an improved range of catering and visitor provision. We have long conducted guided tours for schools and other special interest groups, and there is plenty of scope for extending these for individual visitors. We are also considering developing a calendar of exhibitions to add further interest.

An Open Church with an Open Welcoming Heart

Over recent years we have followed the practice of having the Church open every day during daylight hours. Despite some interruptions during the Covid pandemic, that has worked well. The Church display and selection of (free) leaflets are well used and there are plans to improve our hospitality space to make it even more visitor-friendly. If you would like to be a part of that vision, please get in touch – and if you haven’t already, please join FOTCH.

Making the most of life in Tring

The theme of this Spring 2022 magazine is positive, forward-looking and optimistic. Our proposition is that Tring is a community burgeoning with life and activities, and that Tring Church is the place where many of these occasions happen. It is also the place where all kinds of different groups and associations get together to enjoy life in the heart of Tring.

There’s lots going on and there’s going to be lots to enjoy with our whole community.

Grahame Senior
President, FOTCH

Getting stuck back in

What a fantastic range of activities and personal connections there are within the Church building and its surroundings, as we can see from the different contributions in this issue of the magazine.



I'm really looking forward this year (all fingers crossed) to getting stuck back in. Dusting off and reinstating regular and new activities and plans – with family and friends, at work and also with FOTCH.

We are very keen to hold Family Fun Day (FFD) in the Churchyard and inside the Church on Saturday May 7th after a two-year enforced absence. It gets more people from our community involved, having fun and performing than any other event we do. I've really missed it! It's also a key fundraiser for FOTCH to help us fund vital improvements and major repairs to the Church building and Churchyard.

We expect FFD 2022 to have familiar stalls, refreshments and activities – and some new ones too. If you have any ideas for stalls or would like to volunteer to help out in some way and join our existing group of helpers, please contact Grahame Senior or myself on info@fotch.co.uk (or alternatively on 07823 535267).

There is also an opportunity to take on a central coordinating role, planning the activities and volunteers outside and/or inside in the lead-up to and on the day. We've got a well-practised template to follow. If that kind of organisational role sounds like something you might like to do, please do let us know in the next few weeks!

One other area the FOTCH Trustees would like to improve is electronic communication, including social media. FOTCH lacks a social media presence and we need someone to volunteer to help us raise our game in this department. If you think you could help, I'd love to hear from you!

Richard Abel
Chair of Trustees



This Community Stuff

I read a letter in a national newspaper a short time ago, saying that Church of England churches need to get back to worship and forget all this community stuff.



What century the writer lives in I do not know, or what kind of church he attends! I can say that at St. Peter and St. Paul's Church we have a good mixture of each. There are many 'clubs' for community activities and every Sunday there are forms of worship, plus Tuesday and Thursday mornings. There are formal Holy Communion services but on the second Sunday it is fun. That does not mean we are not worshipping – Jesus enjoyed himself, so can we.

I would like to say thank you to the gardeners who do not mow (yes, I mean *not* mow) the grass at the West end of the Church. Many years ago Moira Hargreaves and I asked for some areas of the Church grounds to be left, allowing the grass to grow to see what happens. We received wry smiles, and a teeny bit was left to please these eccentric ladies. This of course gave a bigger smile to those who did the mowing – less for them to do!

There is an acceptance that the world is changing and more people realise that perhaps having an area where God's plants and insects can flourish might be worth a go. This does not mean wild areas become just wild – they do need managing, which is just what is happening. Plants have grown including orchids and it is looking magnificent. I believe it was cut last year using traditional scythes. Who wants a lawn to play tennis or golf on? This is a garden to worship. Please if you let your dog have a free run on this area, do clean up after it.

Did you know that every second Sunday of the month, from 3pm to 4pm, a concert is held in the Church? These are entitled 'Piano and More'. Five years ago, Anna Le Hair, a professional concert pianist and member of our congregation, gave the first performance. This was very well received. Huw (the Rector of the Church) then told the appreciative audience that he could see his 'Tea Team' – so up we got and we made tea and coffees with biscuits (luckily there was milk in the fridge). Once again, very much appreciated! The Church was onto a good thing, bringing people of the community together, and in a most enjoyable way.

Anna now persuades her friends to join her in duets, quartets and ensembles of all sizes – many of them travelling long distances to



perform for us. All concerts are of a very high quality. I spoke to a man at the January concert who was going back to London – he had come to Tring just for this performance. They are ‘classical’ concerts with some composers you may have heard of, others new to you. I have not heard the same music twice. It is still a mystery how Anna moves her fingers so fast!

Maybe you are saying you do not like that kind of music? The concerts are only one hour long, so how about giving one a try? You might be surprised! Usually one of the performers will explain what the music is about and also why the composer has written it. Then afterwards,

it’s tea or coffee with cakes. Perhaps you would like to make some small cakes for us to serve, or to join the afternoon Tea Team?

The concerts are free, but if you would like to contribute that is very welcome. All contributions go to the Church and upkeep of the grand piano.

To find out about the next concert go to: <http://www.piano-and-more.org.uk>. From this you can sign up for the mailing list. And to find out what is going on in the Church weekly please email: pewsheets@tringteamparish.org.uk.

Pam Russell
FOTCH member



First Saturday Lunches

Our first Saturday lunches have been going for more years than I can remember. They were started by an ecumenical bereavement group through Churches Together in Tring, championed by Major Sharon King of the Salvation Army and held in the citadel in Albert Street.



For many years Margaret Oram spearheaded them, over the years changing venues to the Tring Parish Hall, changing the name to First Saturday lunches and welcoming anyone living on their own. When Margaret took well-deserved retirement in 2019 and with no-one coming forward, the clergy took over the running of it. Within three months we were in lockdown so it had to be curtailed. But as soon as we were able to have groups of six we opened up in Tring Church with one table of six spaced-out guests. One guest said that it was the first time she had sat down to eat with anyone for six months!

Now back in the Parish Hall, we welcome around twenty guests for

a two-course home-cooked lunch each month and we cater for specialist dietary needs. Our team of cooks have increased but we would like to have a few more kitchen assistants! This will mean with several teams the commitment is not too great. The teams also sit down to eat with the guests – it is lovely to get to know the guests and to hear of the benefit they gain from the fellowship. We have space to have a few more guests, as well as helpers, so please let me or Huw know if this interests you or someone you know.

The highlight of the year was the Christmas lunch which was exceptional. Turkey with all the trimmings, Christmas pudding and mince pies, crackers and chocolates, and a glass of Baileys! Plus presents from Tring Elves and Tring Together, Christmas carols played on the handbells from TRingers and Sally serenading us on the piano. It was so good to be back to celebrate!

Janet Goodyer
FOTCH member



TRingers handbell ringing

The Beginning

I always liked the idea of ringing handbells. I heard about a group in Ivinghoe but had to wait until I had retired from teaching before joining them. We stood in pairs, holding two bells each, and had to follow a long line of numbers. There was no music as in staves, notes, sharps or bar lines, which I found rather odd.

A few years later I was made aware of handbells stored in the tower at St Peter and St Paul Church, Tring. I asked if I might use them if I could find some suitable volunteers, which was not difficult. I transposed some music on to a grid in number format, using the twelve notes from middle C up to G an octave and a half above. We mostly play pieces in C major, but sometimes change to F major as we have a B flat bell too.

We have now been ringing on Monday



mornings in Church, up in the Emmie Hobbs room, for almost nine years. Over the years we have had a few changes of members; we currently have eight.

Entertainment

Once we had reached a good standard of ringing we had our first outing, visiting the Ladies Group at Akeman Street Baptist Church to ring for their carols. They were most welcoming and appreciative, and have invited us back every year (except for 2020!). We also rang in St Peter and St Paul Church for the Tring Christmas Festival, and have since rung for FOTCH regularly. We once rang at Tring Park School, where we learnt how difficult it is to play outdoors. We have also ventured to Ivinghoe, to play at their Musicathon.

As the word has spread we have travelled further, to a stroke group, a visually-impaired group, and a range of other social gatherings. We select well-known pieces of music, including songs with which our audience can sing along. We like to socialise with groups, showing them our bells and music.

Covid has been a sad time for us, with limits on socialising, and for a while no chance to play together. We have been pleased to get back together, now practising in the more spacious and more ventilated nave of Tring Church.

Ringing bells is good fun, and we welcome people to listen to us – or even play with us!

Margaret Gittins, FOTCH member



Tring Music Partnership

Tring Music Partnership was set up in July 2021 to get community music back on its feet following the Covid-19 pandemic.

With a grant from Tring Town Council, and a crowd funder campaign we have:

- Provided musical instrument demonstrations and have-a-go sessions for over 140 primary school children
- Run youth musical theatre workshops that are free for young people to take part in
- Run the Church stage at the Christmas Festival for school choirs and local musicians to perform
- Put on a Big Band concert for Armed Forces Day 2021
- Supported local theatre groups and choirs to get back up and running in a Covid-safe way
- Provided early years music sessions for Tring Tots community playgroup



We are currently planning music and singing sessions for residents at The Furlongs residential home, as well as further youth workshops for young people.

Music benefits everyone's mental health and wellbeing, and we want everyone in our community to have the opportunity to take part in music.

If you are interested in joining the programme as we start planning for 2022-2023, we would love to hear from you: email Trish@tringtogether.org.uk and tell us a bit about yourself.

Rob Schafer
Tring Music Partnership



Fun and Fundraising

St Peter and St Paul's Church has a great tradition of live music and concerts of every persuasion. These are well attended and enjoyed by the audience; however I want to let you into a secret – the performers are having a great time too!



From at least 2009 to 2019, Richard Grylls and I (and others) have orchestrated a series of concerts and evensongs in aid of FOTCH. We have raised over £10,000 over that time, which was much appreciated by FOTCH but probably more so by all of us musicians that took part.

Our *modus operandi* is that our wonderful singers make a small donation to take part and Richard trawls the libraries of the country looking for interesting music to keep us on our toes and to keep costs down. All that activity, plus the ticket money and collection plate has produced some very satisfactory results.

And we have had fun on the way!

I've looked back over the programmes and copious notes from Richard, and here are some of my highlights...

I'd heard of 'Wesley, the writer of hymns' but I had no idea there were so many musicians in the family until our **2010 Festive Celebration** of the life and music of Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810-1876). I think Mr Grylls could write a book on the subject! Every single piece

of music in the evensong was by the composer, who "led an unconventional life and enjoyed fishing".

And I'll never forget the **2013 Candlemas** service that took place on a snowy night in front of a congregation of just 25 people and a choir that was half the size that attended the rehearsal the week before. But it was lovely! Candlelit, and with that quiet, muffled feeling that comes with a blanket of snow.

By November 2013, our autumn concerts were beginning to have themes and refreshments to match. We served apple strudel at Ein Musickalischer Strudel, a concert that featured only German and Austrian music. This ranged from the 'Pilgrim's Hymn' from Tannhäuser by Wagner to our finale of a selection from the 'Sound of Music'.

My favourite was in 2015 to celebrate Tring's Charter 700. Richard assembled the '700 Chorale Choir' to sing his grand, grand finale which was a mash-up of 'Do you hear the people sing?' from 'Les Miserables' and 'You'll never walk alone' by R Rodgers. The instruction to the audience was to "remember to wave your flags!"

Those are my favourites of all those years of music making. I'm hoping Richard will write some more reminiscences for a future edition as I'm sure he has a much better memory than me!

Vivianne Child
FOTCH member

Craft and a Cuppa

Craft and a Cuppa is a social group that meets in Tring Church on Tuesdays at 2pm. We started about four or so years ago in response to the need to have a supportive social group in a building that was underused. We were short of 'welcomers' to sit in the Church and welcome visitors, and to keep an eye on the place. With Huw's agreement, I decided to advertise it – thinking if no-one came I would sit and do some craft happily on my own. The first week Lillian turned up and said, "I've been waiting a long time for this!" My response to her was "Have you brought something to do? Can you knit? Would you like to knit a poppy for the 2018 WW1 centenary?" She duly picked up a pair of needles and started knitting, and the group was born!



Always intended to be a drop-in group, our numbers at the moment are around ten to twelve each week. We have about a sixty years age span, although most of us are in the 'retired' age group, and we have had our children and grandchildren joining us for some sessions as well. The kettle is always on (generally with biscuits, sometimes cake as well) and although we are all female at present we are very happy to welcome all genders!

The social aspect is probably the most important. We have a number living on their own; some

recently bereaved, some new to the area looking to make friends, and we have had one or two with memory problems and dementia which has given their partners a bit of respite time. Most of us are Church members but we welcome anyone who feels comfortable in the building and we are all happy to talk about anything and try to give support to anyone struggling. Lockdown was difficult, but once we got used to Zoom those that had access to the technology joined in from home. But it is so good to be back with everyone!

The craft aspect is always optional – one or two are not into knitting or sewing, but that is fine! We sometimes have some Church projects such as making Christmas tree hearts or repairing kneelers. Some are knitting and crocheting for charity, some are looking for instruction or inspiration and some are wanting to try something new. We are all happy to share ideas and knowledge with each other.

If this tempts you, please join us. Our door is always open, please drop in for a cuppa and a chat. We meet on Tuesdays at Tring Church from 2pm to 4pm.

Janet Goodyer, FOTCH member



Youth Café

Every Monday evening after school, our Youth Café in St Peter and St Paul's Church is open to all those of secondary school age who want a place to come and hang out.

Young people from both Tring School and Aylesbury High School come along and consume huge amounts of snacks (crisps, toast, muffins) and gallons of hot chocolate (usually with cream and marshmallows) whilst sitting around and talking about all sorts of subjects, from politics and world issues to the most recent apps and TikTok videos.

The group meets for around two hours and ranges from ages eleven to sixteen years old. This year we've seen the group grow exponentially from six to now fifteen, with each week seeing someone new join.

The attendees enjoy the space and see it as a chance to relax, hang out and chat with their friends in a safe place, especially when it's cold outside!

Usually after they've had their fill of snacks, the year sevens tend to disappear around the Church for a game of hide and seek, whilst the older ones enjoy the peace and quiet and have a chance to catch up as a smaller group.

Much joy and laughter emanates from this group and over the year we've had tours of the roof and the bell tower



and even the Bishop of Hertford (Rev Dr Michael Beasley) came along to see what all the fuss was about!

Attached is a photo of his visit in January 2022 with some of our less shy members, and this is what he had to say about his time with us (taken from his post on Facebook):

“Conversation, questions, consuming cheese and onion crisps, texting, social media, buttering toast, meditations on life, homework and the universe – these happen simultaneously amongst those gathered when Tring Church's Youth Café opens its doors. Not to mention experiencing the delights of hide and seek inside one of our county's Grade 1 listed buildings. A fantastic atmosphere of discussion, marmite, kindness, musings and hot chocolate. I wish I was in Tring every Monday!”

I think this encapsulates Youth Café in Tring pretty accurately! If you know of anyone of secondary school age who'd like to join us, please do point them our way – they'd be very welcome!

Rev Sarah Marshall, Curate



Past Events at the Church

In the last few years, there have been a number of exciting events that have taken place in and around the Church. Here are some images of a couple of these memorable occasions.



Fashion Show



Church Concert



Spring Fayre



Wedding Fayre



St. Peter & St. Paul, Tring.
Saturday, 7th May 2022, 7.30 p.m.

Spring Concert

A concert of short choral pieces,
sacred and secular,
serious and light-hearted,
something for everyone ...

The Ridgeway Chorale

www.ridgewaychorale.org.uk

Richard Grylls - Musical Director

Colin Stevens - Accompanist

Guest Soloists

Admission **free** (*donations please*)
Proceeds to



&



Tring Parish Book Group

The Church of England is remarkable for keeping records of some things over centuries, especially numbers; who got married, how many people came to services, and so on. However we are quite forgetful of other occurrences, big or small, so we are not quite sure how long the Parish Book Group has been running. It is probably more than a decade, and the list of books we've read is certainly approaching a hundred (but we didn't keep a list to begin with, I understand).



What we do know is that the group meets in the early evening (about 6.30pm) on the fourth Sunday of the month, in the welcome area of St Peter and St Paul's Church. We aim to finish by 8pm. We miss out December and don't meet in Lent. During Lent the members might go off to other groups (e.g. films, study groups) but we do make up for the gap by selecting a longer book for us to discuss in April each year, our 'Lent Classic' as we call it; in 2021 it was 'Les Miserables'. The rest of the time we range widely in the books we read. During 2021 our chosen books included 'To Kill a Mockingbird' by Harper Lee, the Epistle to the Galatians, and 'Remarkable Creatures' by Tracy Chevalier. We were also privileged to welcome a local author and parishioner, Anthea Fraser, as we shared one of the

fifty crime novels that she has written. Generally our books are suggested by group members, and our only criterion is that they have some relevance to our life and faith as Christians. One person introduces the author and the book – why they like it, what they think the book is saying – and then we just have an informal discussion, sharing our reactions to the book. It is very rare for all of us to like the chosen book, or to dislike it, but we try to be gentle and understanding in our disagreements. We're not at all a high-brow group; some of us might have paper qualifications, some of us are more street-wise. What we share is our Christian faith, an enjoyment of reading and a willingness to learn a little from each other.

We've coped with two challenges in recent years. The first challenge was the departure from the Parish in 2019 of Rev Didier Jacquet, who set the Book Group up and led it very warmly and effectively for quite a few years. We decided together that we wanted to continue the group and so have tried to become self-sufficient. The second challenge, of course, was the Covid pandemic which we have survived; indeed, during which we flourished. For months we met only on Zoom. Then we had a hybrid with only six of us in person and experimented with meeting in the Parish Hall. We also had a Facebook group and a forum on the Parish website. Despite the difficulties and irritations, we have kept on without a break and members say we have had some of our best discussions recently. But nothing can match us getting together in St Peter and St Paul!



A couple of photographs depict the nature of our sessions. One from several years ago while Didier was still with us and we were able to enjoy refreshments together. There are normally about a dozen of us attending; on occasion it has stretched towards twenty, while during Covid we once dwindled to six. I am pleased to say that nobody has left the group in recent years. People have left Tring (John and Sylvie, Chris, Margaret, Dorothy) but I don't think it was the Book Group which sent them away! Sadly Leslie Barker died in 2019; he had been a loyal member from the beginning.

The second photograph shows us back in person during the summer in 2021, keeping our distance and limiting our refreshments, wearing masks as appropriate, but pleased to be together.

Though we have tried not to be an extra burden on the clergy, especially during the pandemic, we are indebted to Huw Bellis (Rector) for guiding us through challenging Biblical extracts or other theological works (we've just learnt about 'Revelations of Divine

Love' by Mother Julian of Norwich). We've also been pleased to welcome Sarah Marshall (Curate) as a cheerful and active member.

Where to next? We hope to be meeting regularly in person again after the Omicron diversion to Zoom. We have not run out of books to read and share and we could probably accommodate one or two more members.

So, who should think of joining the Parish Book group, and why? You just need to like books, to be interested in exploring the Christian faith and have a couple of hours to spend once a month on a Sunday evening. You'll learn something, enjoy yourself and make some new friends. Why not give it a try soon? On Sunday 24th April, we'll meet to discuss 'Robert Elsmere' by Mrs Humphry Ward, who lived at Stocks (a posh house near Aldbury) at the end of the 19th century. This is our 2022 Lent Classic, about divisions in the Church of England (fictional, of course...).

Do get in touch to find out more: john@tringteamparish.org.uk

John Whiteman
Tring Team



The Platinum Jubilee

On 6th February 2022, Her Majesty The Queen became the first British monarch to celebrate a platinum jubilee, marking 70 years of service to the people of the United Kingdom, the Realms and the Commonwealth.

To celebrate this unprecedented anniversary, events and initiatives will take place throughout the year, culminating in a four-day UK bank holiday weekend from Thursday 2nd to Sunday 5th June. The bank holiday will provide an opportunity for communities and people throughout the United Kingdom to come together to celebrate this historic milestone.

The four days of celebrations will include public events and community activities, as well as national moments of reflection on the Queen's 70 years of service.

The highlights include the following:

Thursday 2nd June

The Queen's Birthday Parade

(Trooping the Colour) – over 1,400 parading soldiers, 200 horses and 400 musicians will come together in the traditional parade to mark the Queen's official birthday, usually held on the second Saturday in June.

Platinum Jubilee Beacons – over 1,500 beacons will be lit throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and UK Overseas Territories. The principal beacon will be lit in a special ceremony at Buckingham Palace.



Friday 3rd June

Service of Thanksgiving – a Service of Thanksgiving for the Queen's reign will be held at St Paul's Cathedral.

Saturday 4th June

The Derby at Epsom Downs – Her Majesty The Queen, accompanied by members of the Royal Family, will attend the Derby.

Platinum Party at the Palace – the BBC will stage and broadcast a special live concert from Buckingham Palace, also broadcast on a big screen in the grounds of Sandringham.

Sunday 5th June

The Big Jubilee Lunch and The Platinum Jubilee Pageant – this London event will tell the story of the Queen's 70 year reign in an awe-inspiring festival of creativity. The 'River of Hope' section will comprise of 200 silk flags which will process down The Mall, appearing like a moving river. Primary and secondary school children are invited to create a picture of their hopes and aspirations for the planet over the next 70 years.

Further platinum jubilee events are planned:

The Queen's Green Canopy

As the platinum jubilee year begins, over 60,000 trees have already been planted in the UK in the two months since the 'plant a tree for the jubilee' planting season began. Every planting is being recorded on a digital Queen's Green Canopy map which will be presented to Her Majesty at the end of the jubilee year.

Royal Collection Trust

Three special displays marking significant occasions in Her Majesty's reign – the accession, the coronation and jubilees – will be staged at the official royal residences from July 2022.

The Queen's Private Estates

Celebrations will also take place on the Queen's private estates, Sandringham and Balmoral, for local residents and visitors to enjoy. The lighting of the Sandringham beacon will also take place in the Royal Parkland.

The Platinum Jubilee Celebration (Windsor)

From 12th -15th May 2022 the Platinum Jubilee Celebration will see over 500 horses and 1,000 performers create a 90-minute piece of arena theatre that will include actors, artists, musicians, international military displays, dancers and global equestrian displays.

The Platinum Pudding competition

To mark Her Majesty's platinum jubilee a nationwide baking competition sets out to find a brand-new pudding dedicated

to the Queen.

You can read more about the National Plans here <https://www.royal.uk/platinum-jubilee-central-weekend>



How about Tring?

Tring is keen to create a wonderful weekend of memories, right here in our corner of Hertfordshire. Plans are underway for a celebration, based in and around the Church on Friday 3rd June. There will be a Church service in the late afternoon, following by afternoon tea, music, BBQ and beer – something for everyone to enjoy and everyone is very welcome.

I'm hoping we can get the diamond jubilee beacon out of storage (I wonder where we put it?) and light it on the Church roof at some time over the weekend.

On Sunday 5th June, we are all encouraged to host street parties in our own roads, and I know of many people who are already thinking about the art of the possible in that respect. Certainly, St Peter and St Paul Church will host a lunch for anyone that cannot attend a road specific party.

Tring Camera Club will want to capture the weekend for posterity. Trees will be planted. And finally, 'watch this space' for the Local History Society and Museum. I have no doubt they have a plan to involve us all in capturing Tring's history relating to Summer 2022.

Vivianne Child, FOTCH member

What is that door?

And what is a busy day for Tring Church? Maybe it is Remembrance Sunday – we think Remembrance Sunday in 2018 had our single largest congregation of around 700 people. Or maybe



it is Christmas Eve when we have two Crib services and Midnight Mass with a combined total of again maybe 700 people. Well even these big days are dwarfed by the last day of the autumn term each year. On that day we have about 2,000 people through the Church. This is because of our close relationship with the schools. Tring School bring down all 1,500 students and most of the staff, and Bishop Wood School's 240 children, the staff and many parents, grandparents and siblings all come for their end of term Christmas Service. Well in a non-Covid year they do.

There is something absolutely glorious about having all of these young people together in the heart of Tring and the memories of doing this (whether good or bad) are likely to remain with them for a lifetime. Many wedding couples will talk about the importance of getting married in Tring Church because this is where they came for their school services. This week I had an email from someone doing some psychology research and whilst



emphasising more than once that they would call themselves agnostic wanted me to know that "I always enjoyed going to Church throughout my time at Tring School." As we always say to them, this is your Church!

Before the Covid pandemic the children at Bishop Wood School would visit much more regularly (roughly once a month). Nothing would give me greater joy than putting on a hymn as they left and then hearing them sing something like '10,000 Reasons' all the way back to school. The push to get modern

audio-visual provision into the Church was largely driven by needing to engage with the school services. Thank you FOTCH for helping out.

One of the powerful things we would do with Bishop Wood School is to introduce Ash Wednesday. The children all make their own commitments (to do something new or give something up, and not necessarily religious). We burn these promises in Church and we use the ash for our evening Church service. Each year, close to the beginning of the start of the new Church year, just the Year Threes come over. One of the things we do with them is get them to lie on the floor and stare at the ceiling. There is something amazing about being still in the enclosed space which is Tring Church, and to see it from a different perspective. It is even better if we can

then have an organist to give them a quick blast of Widor's 'Tocatta' so they can feel something of the power of music as well (thank you Colin, Cliff and Jenny for the times you have done that).

It is much more logistically difficult to bring Tring School down regularly, but the Church in recent years has been an excellent place for prize giving, and music students have used the Church for their exam pieces. A new development has been to have a Pentecost service spread across all of the churches in the town.

Of course both Tring and Bishop Wood are Church schools, so there is an expectation that we have close links with them.

Equally important is our link with Tring Park School. It is a real privilege to be joined by them for our Worship for All Services and the quality of music at their (two) Christmas Carol Services is outstanding. Grove Road Primary School also like to come to us twice a year for a Harvest Service and for a Christmas service, and Dundale and Goldfield Schools regularly visit to help with their curriculum and understanding of the town. Whenever they visit, we start with a little talk about the Church and what we do. It is hard for young



children to get their heads around the fact that the building is so old. They are then allowed to look anywhere they want – but no running as “the church always wins” when someone trips over. The one question guaranteed to be asked is “what is that door?” I suspect I have now answered that question more often than anything else I have ever been asked!

Revd. Huw Bellis
Rector, Tring Team

A Curate's Reflection

I can't quite believe that nearly three years have passed since

I joined the Tring Team

Parish. It's certainly been eventful and I definitely hadn't factored on there being a global pandemic during my curacy, that's for sure!

Although my time in Tring will be coming to end some time in 2022, I am still here for a little while longer and loving everything that this role and my faith has to offer.

I'd like to think during my time here that I have never taken the amazing buildings I work in for granted. Each time I walk into any of the five parish churches I am filled with a sense of wonder, and almost have to pinch myself as a reminder that it's real.

As many of you know, I ditched my previous career in Human Resources, working in London, for the life of a priest. Gone were the regular commutes on the underground, the busy trains, the hustle and bustle of city life – now exchanged for the rewarding role of pastoral care,



children's ministry, worship and many, many other things!

Life as a curate in Tring is very different from my previous world, but one I would never change. I love it. Just the other day I posted a photograph of St Peter and St Paul's Church on Facebook, stating "I love my office", and received a huge number of 'likes' and 'comments' about what a magnificent place to work it must be. It sure is. But it is more than just bricks and mortar – it is the house of God, where people find faith and hope.

St P & P is the Church where I spend most of my time (which makes sense given it's the largest populated area in the parish), its doors constantly opening as people from the local community (and beyond) wander in and out seeking their own personal comfort. What a blessing it is to have such a well-situated place of worship and even more so a place that is accessible all day for people to visit and pray.

If there's one thing I will take away from my time in Tring (and there are many more things besides), it is that the Church belongs to God and serves the community; and as such should be a safe haven for anyone seeking hospitality, seeking friendship, seeking compassion, seeking joy, seeking comfort, seeking God. As the sign outside the Church states:

"God loves you... we are God's church, and we welcome you.
Amen."

Rev Sarah Marshall, Curate



As it Was

I was always impressed as a child by the central feature of our town, St Peter and Paul's Church. At around the age of seven, I produced this drawing for my much-loved uncle (shown here as 'Dorndy', my name for him) – and somehow it survived among his papers.



Can I assure readers that Tring Church never did have two towers! Otherwise the details are pretty accurate. But a few explanations may be necessary...

On the left is Church Lane, which was lined with tiny cottages. It was one of two lanes that ran from Frogmore Street as a short-cut to the Church. The whole area was cleared in 1980 to make way for the Dolphin Square shopping complex.

'Mr Westron' was a friend of my uncle and fellow Church sidesman. A kindly white-moustached gentleman who owned the plant nursery on Mortimer Hill, he is remembered for his generous legacy to Tring charities, which was used to purchase land on which the 15 bungalows in Westron Gardens now stand. 'B Doody' was a familiar figure all around the town, often to be seen on Church Square. Nowadays he would be described as having learning difficulties, as he shouted continuously while brandishing his stick in the air. His nickname of 'Ba Doody' came about because he was only driving his imaginary sheep home. Even so, I was very frightened of him.

All these years later, some features have disappeared – such as telegraph poles, milk vans and starting handles. But reassuringly though, the buses still stop at Church Square, folk still sit on

the seats, the war memorial occupies the same site and the weathervane remains atop the tower. Long may it be so!

Wendy Austin
FOTCH member



Children's Society

Investing in our children is vital – whatever the future may bring



The Church of England Children's Society is one of our earliest Anglican charities and has arguably seen more changes than most in its long history.

It used to be one of the largest providers of both children's homes and arrangements for adoption. It now runs no homes and deals with no adoptions – yet its services are ever more vital for the wellbeing of our most vulnerable children.

Keeping ahead of the changing needs of society is a considerable challenge. The caring community of Tring has been active in support for many years. Fortunately, the punishing effect of the pandemic has not completely distracted us from this vital cause.

Christingle – Bright Lights in the gloom!

This year our Christingle service went ahead and was well attended and greatly enjoyed. Whilst social distancing was carefully observed and all the Christingles were self-assembled by the children, it was a heart-warming occasion and raised over £470 for the Society.

Looking to the future – meeting the challenges

More than 40 years ago, we (Prue and I) were recruited by Derek and Diane Sandy to 'help out' with a few things. We started by participating and then organising the house-to-house collection which was a very important fundraiser at

that time. It was an enjoyable, if time-consuming, activity (Longfield Road is very well-named and very long indeed!). That style of fundraising has now completely gone and house-to-house collections have been discontinued by almost all charities. The face-to-face contact they provided was, however, a very valuable communications activity and we made many friends for the Society during that period.

For the past 25 years, we have organised the Box-Holders Group. Again, personal contact is a most important part of the 'glue' that binds us together. We still have well over 100 supporters actively contributing to Society funds each year; a very loyal and determined group.

Obviously, recent changes have significantly reduced the use of cash itself and practical changes in how people contribute are moving forward rapidly. However the box-holders are a resilient lot and many cherish their boxes (some even still labelled 'Waifs & Strays' – the original name of the Society). Nowadays, their contributions are mostly made by cheque or electronic transfer rather than coinage. What has not changed is the warmth and companionship that goes into their support. The annual Box-Holders Garden Day is when our supporters come together and we were able to hold this event in 2021 as one of the first occasions on which we were able to physically 'mingle' after last year's lockdown.

Activities even in this challenging year resulted in donations to the Society of almost £4,700 from Tring – a very positive result.

Hopefully the latest flurry of difficulties will be overcome by the time we come to

late Spring 2022. We are planning to hold a Garden Day event on Saturday 18th June here in the garden at Greenways. This will be our 25th Garden Day and will hopefully be both a celebration of the many generous supporters and the events which have been both greatly enjoyed by those who take part and also delivered great benefit to the cause. We look forward to a very jolly occasion in which we celebrate the long-term support of so many active, enthusiastic helpers.

No doubt what happens thereafter will soon become clear...

Caring and Effective support from Head Office

Any charity with a strong supporter base has to foster a good relationship between its Head Office team and its activist members. There have been times when organisations have found themselves out-of-step with their grass-roots support and that can have a rather negative effect.

In recent years we have been fortunate to enjoy the very helpful involvement of Rachel Brockie who has been our Eastern area organiser for the Children's Society. She has done a wonderful job in communicating and empowering the team. Rachel has now moved to take over the West Midlands area and her role with us has been taken on by Hannah Ratcliffe. Hannah has also been with the Society several years and her area has been extended westwards from East Anglia to take in our patch. Hopefully, she will be with us on the 18th June when I am sure she will enjoy meeting our team. We look forward to a continuing strong relationship.

Getting the message across

As well as fundraising, one of the important tasks the Children's Society asks its organisers to undertake is communication. This often takes the form of preaching and presenting during Church services as well as other meeting formats. Over the years, it has been a privilege to be involved in a wide number of Church communities in this role and we have many continuing links. The Children's Society does seem to 'capture' people for life!

What is absolutely clear is that the support for the Children's Society across our whole Church community is vibrant and active. I very much hope that we in Tring will continue to be significant contributors to the Society as its changing role continues to provide active support to our most vulnerable young people.

The recent activities of those youngsters passionate about ecological and environmental matters has certainly caught the imagination. Their energy and fearlessness can be very exciting. Looking after our young people, no matter how punishing the social pressures we and they have to endure, is something the Children's Society is extraordinarily professional and proficient in doing.

Long may we in Tring continue to be active and effective in its support.

If this is something you feel you would like to be more involved with please do get in touch. There is plenty of fun involved as well as fundraising!

Prue & Grahame Senior
FOTCH members

Foodbank

Were you aware that Tring's Foodbank is run from St Peter and St Paul's Church? Each weekday from 10am -12pm the DENS



Foodbank is open for Tring residents who are in need, with a team of twelve or so volunteers. There can be many reasons for this need – loss of income, delay in income, benefit delay, homelessness, domestic abuse and more but they all have the basic need of food.

We are really lucky in Tring that there are lots of people who donate so there are always plenty of foodstuffs and toiletries to deliver to the DENS foodbank office in Hemel Hempstead. There, the foodbank parcels are made up and collected by a volunteer for distribution at Tring Church. A box is outside the Church when foodbank is open to donate foodstuffs and toiletries.

The foodbank is part of The Trussell Trust group and the idea is that a person should only need to receive three boxes in a six month period, as it would be hoped that by that time they will be getting the help they need from social service teams. This is not always the case so our volunteers have to make judgement calls on occasions.

People can be sent to us by various social service groups or they can just turn up and ask for a parcel.

The parcels contain enough food for three days for an adult (single box) or for two adults (family box). Treats are also part of the box but there is no fresh

food in the boxes as we don't have the facility to store fresh food at the Church. Toiletries are also not included in the boxes we give out in Tring, so we keep a small supply of essentials like deodorant, shower gel, shampoo, dish-washing liquid, soap powder etc to supplement the boxes. We also get dog and cat food from DENS to distribute if the clients have pets.

It really is a lifeline to some people and everyone who comes is so grateful to be able to receive this service. During lockdown we saw our foodbank requests increase by 700% due to lots of people being out of work. A lot of people had never been to a foodbank before so sometimes there is an embarrassment factor but all of our volunteers are trained to put clients at ease and not feel awkward. I remember attending a talk from a DENS person who pointed out the few steps we are all away from becoming homeless – it is scary to think about!

DENS have quite a surplus of food at the moment so they really need monetary donations (you can leave them with a volunteer and I make sure they are given to DENS when I collect the food boxes, or you can donate online). If you prefer not to give money, then please do check the high needs list on the website Donate Food & Household Items – DENS. There are only so many things you can do with pasta!

So thank you to everyone who has donated in goods, money or time – it really is a worthwhile thing you are doing.

Trish Dowden
Tring Foodbank Organiser

Fabric Report

Eco Church Bronze Award

In response to the climate emergency, the Fabric Committee at St Peter and St Paul's has been looking into improving the environmental performance of the Church. We are aware that we have a lot to do, as it is challenging to make a medieval church energy-efficient and more environmentally friendly.

With the help of FOTCH, energy-efficient LED lights were recently installed at Tring and we are now developing our plans to improve further. As a first step, we have completed an environmental survey and have been awarded a Bronze Award in the Eco Church's scheme.



What is Eco Church?

Eco Church is an award scheme run by A Rocha UK (a Christian charity) for churches in England and Wales who want to demonstrate that the Gospel is good news for God's earth.

Participating churches complete a unique online eco survey covering different areas of church activity and work, achieving points towards an Eco Church award.

The survey covers five key areas:

- Worship and teaching
- Management of Church buildings
- Management of Church land
- Community and global engagement
- Lifestyle

There are three levels of Eco Church award: Bronze, Silver and Gold. To qualify for an award, it is necessary to attain the required standard in each of the areas covered by the eco survey that apply to the Church.

Having completed the survey for St Peter and St Paul's to record what we are already doing, it offers us the opportunity to reflect on the findings and identify what further steps we can now take.

For more details about the Eco Church scheme please visit <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>, or see this video: <https://youtu.be/vPKxLkjiJM>.



Andrew Kimsey
Fabric Committee Chair

A Big Thank You to our Corporate Members

The Trustees would like to say a big thank you to FOTCH's corporate members.

We are really grateful for their continued support for FOTCH. Our corporate members see the long-term benefit to Tring's commercial and educational attractiveness of our historic Church building and lovely churchyard at the heart of Tring's High Street.

All of the businesses and organisations below will be well known to FOTCH members and friends, and you will know that they are all great and very much worthy of our support in turn.

If any other businesses would be interested in seeing their logo added to those below, please get in touch at info@fotch.co.uk or by calling Richard Abel.



TringMarket Auctions

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Family Fun Day

7th May 2022 – 11.00am-3.00pm

St Peter and St Paul's Church

Annual Friendship Service

8th May 2022 – 6.00pm

St Peter and St Paul's Church

Garden Safari Day

To be confirmed

Summer 2022

Barn Dance or Jolly Jazzers

To be confirmed

Autumn 2022

If you have any ideas for things we could do better or differently, or that you would like to have a go at, please get in touch with Richard Abel (Chair) or Grahame Senior (President).

For more details, visit the website

www.fotch.co.uk

If you have any photos of FOTCH events as they occur, please send them to the Editor.



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We would be pleased to hear from you!

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Ginger Promo

The Friends of Tring Church Heritage
Registered Charity 1005442

The Friends of Tring Church Heritage Proudly Presents

WE'RE BACK!

The Teddies Fly Again!!



The 2022 Family Fun Day



SATURDAY MAY 7TH

11AM - 3PM • ST PETER & ST PAUL CHURCH AND CHURCHYARD

Teddy 'Wings' Zip Wire • Tower Tours • Bouncy Castle
Choirs and Musical Entertainment • Tring Brewery Bar
Lunchtime Barbeque • All Day Refreshments • Big Prize Raffle

OPEN TO EVERYONE • ALL ARE WELCOME

Preserving the heart of Tring for future generations to enjoy

For further information telephone Grahame Senior on 01442 822770 or

Trish Dowden on 07720 836930

ADMISSION FREE

