New Faces at Trinity

INSIDE:
What does it mean to forgive?
A tribute to Alex Motyer
...and lots more

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In the New Testament, Paul prays for the Philippians: ‘And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that on the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God’ (Phil 1:9-11).

We hope and pray this as well on behalf of our students—that their studies here would deepen their love for God and neighbour, and that God would be preparing them here to serve him well and faithfully.

But what can this vision mean in reality, as we attempt to put this into practice at Trinity?

Kingdom Living: We believe in the importance of learning together in community. As I talk with the many students who have joined us this autumn, overwhelmingly they say they wanted to study at Trinity because they valued the ways in which the Trinity community would deepen their experience here, and benefit their families as well. But community also means the challenge of being real with one another. It’s not easy. We’re all human with differences—our community includes people who are married and single, male and female, younger and older, ordinands and independent students, coming from different regions with different stories and callings. We need to allow the Holy Spirit to build us, in all our similarities and differences, into the kind of community the world is longing to see, that in our commitment and love for one another we would bear witness to Christ’s coming kingdom.

Kingdom Learning: We also believe in the importance of knowing and engaging deeply with the Bible. While we often have fun together, we are here to learn—in the classrooms and in context—so that we might serve God to the best of our abilities. The first principal of Trinity, Alec Motyer (whose life we celebrate on page 18) was an impressive biblical scholar who said simply of himself, ‘I am just a man who loves the word of God.’ His love for God’s word motivated him to understand the Bible as deeply as possible and to help others do the same. We aspire to honour his legacy of deep and thoughtful biblical scholarship today.

Kingdom Leading: It can be tempting to focus on the ‘gloom and doom’ talk about the future of the church and declining church attendance figures, but sometimes I wish everyone could see our dining room when all of our students and their families meet to eat lunch together, or our chapel as passionate disciples worship and pray together. We had a record number of new students join us this year, and that means lots more people to influence the church, the world, and society for the Kingdom of God. God is working in the lives of these men and women, and I see such excitement among them, and that excitement is contagious. May God reap a harvest of righteousness through Christ in them to his praise and glory.

Rev Dr Emma Ineson
Principal
School of Leadership Completes First Year

Last spring, the School of Leadership completed its first year, offering students two leadership tracks, one for first-year students, and another for second-year students. During their two years of training, students gather in the chapel fortnightly for the sessions, which run between September and April and cover topics in the areas of leading yourself, leading people, leading change, and leading mission. Topics could range from personal development issues, such as 'Developing courage,' to practical topics that include 'Handling conflict' and 'Pioneering as a leader—church planting and fresh expressions.' The majority of the sessions are led by CPAS Leadership Specialist Ian Parkinson, who is passionate about coaching and mentoring leaders, especially those involved in turning around less promising church situations and those who want to see a missional culture develop in their churches. 'It has been great having the theory combined with Ian's practical experiences in turning churches toward growth,' says Bristol ordinand Neil Shepherd.

New Women’s Rugby Team

This autumn, a squad of fifteen Trinity students have formed a new rugby women’s seven’s team. In its early stages, the squad is coached by missiology tutor Rev Dr Howard Worsley, who had previously been a player and then chaplain at a semi-professional rugby team in the Midlands. He is joined by Trinity’s Property and Facilities Manager Malcolm Bourne, who is a rugby sevens specialist. ‘We were chatting at meal time, and they were talking about my background,’ says Howard. ‘One of the students said, “We could put up a team.” I said I’d hold them to that.’ The squad includes two women who’ve served in the British army, a university rower, and many for whom this is their first time playing rugby. The team meets at lunchtime on Wednesdays to work on ball handling and basic training exercises before learning touch rugby and how to play proper seven-a-side. They hope ultimately to get a fixture with a local team. ‘Life at Trinity is holistic—training the body, mind, and the soul—so it is a fitting and exciting beginning to integrate women’s sport into the rhythms here. Oh, and it’s a good excuse to have a laugh together!’ says Thea Smith, a first-year ordinand from Coventry Diocese.

Trinity on Instagram

Are you on Instagram? You can now follow us at ‘trinity_bristol’ for regular photos from Trinity. We continue to post news, blog posts, and photos on Twitter at ‘trinity_bristol’ and on our Facebook ‘Trinity College Bristol’ page.

Postgraduate Conference

From 22-24 June 2016, we hosted our annual postgraduate research (PGR) conference, an event during which Trinity College and Bristol Baptist College welcome our postgraduate researchers for three days of presentations, discussion, workshops, and interaction with a noted senior scholar. This year, thirty students travelled from around the world to Trinity, twenty-three of whom presented papers related to their current research topic. Rev Dr Walter Moberly (pictured, right), who is professor of theology and biblical interpretation at Durham University, delivered a lecture titled ‘More Jesus or Another Jesus? A New New Testament and Questions of Canon and Religious Truth.’ He also participated in a panel discussion on his recent book Old Testament Theology (Baker, 2013), a book with which the PGR community had engaged during the spring term’s research seminar. Student Michael Rhodes was awarded the annual paper prize for his essay ‘Forward Unto Virtue: Formative Practices and 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.’ The conference also included a book launch and reception to honour New Testament tutor Dr Jamie Davies’s new book, Paul Among the Apocalypses? At the end of the conference, PGR students travelled to London to view the fourth century Codex Sinaiticus at the British Library and eat lunch at the historic Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese pub. ‘It’s been a pleasure to get to build new relationships with faculty, staff, and fellow students, who have inspired and humbled me as they’ve shared their research and passion for thoughtful discipleship,’ said attendee Trevor Neill, a Baptist minister from Birmingham.

Valedictory

On 27 May, students, faculty, staff, and their families spent all afternoon on Trinity’s lawn celebrating the end of the academic year with a barbecue, bouncy castles, sumo wrestling, a magic show, and other games. The next morning, the Trinity community gathered again at St Mary Magdalene Church in Stoke Bishop for its Valedictory service. The Rt Revd Ruth Worsley, Bishop of Taunton, preached on Colossians 1:9-20, in a sermon titled ‘Be prayerful. Be prepared.’ For the formal farewell at the end of the service, Trinity’s forty leavers each received a gift from the principal before their pastoral group tutors laid hands on them to pray for each of them and for their future ministries.
Trinity Tigers

Congratulations to the Trinity Tigers, who competed in the Bristol University League last spring in Division 2. Just hoping to remain in the league, in the end the team finished in fifth place of ten teams, and the five-a-side team won their league. ‘We were competitive but played with integrity and honesty,’ says Trinity FC Captain and ordinand Rob Smith.

Trinity Students Release EP

Last spring, three of our leaving ordinands, Joel Mennie, Denis Adide, and Dave Hendra, worked together to create a three-track EP titled Bless the King, which was picked up and released by a record label in June on iTunes. ‘In addition to working very hard on our essays and placements, we’d been thinking a lot about the expression of Christian thought in the context of spoken/musical creativity,’ explains Joel. ‘Using the community theme of the Kingdom and Beatitudes as our base, we committed time to transfer our thoughts into pieces of work. There were many reasons why we wanted to undertake this project, but perhaps most important is our desire that this EP might somehow be a parting gift to our community.’

A Trinity Book

Our former artist-in-residence Sheona Beaumont has created a book that includes fascinating historical images of Stoke House, contributions from Trinity faculty members and students, as well as colour plates of all her artwork created at Trinity. For more information or to buy a copy, visit www.shospace.co.uk.

Students Travel to Israel

Last May, Trinity students participated in a joint trip with Baptist Bible College students to Israel under the leadership of Rev Peter Hatton from the Baptist College and former Trinity chaplain Rev Dr Brett Cane. ‘People tell you that going to the Holy Land would open the Bible to you,’ says Trinity student Shakeel Nurmah, ‘but I was blown away by how much this was true. I personally found it a defining experience in my life and faith.’

Ordinand in Interfaith Cricket Match

Last September, ordinand Sam Rylands was selected for the Archbishop of Canterbury’s cricket team for an interfaith cricket match between Anglicans, the Vatican, and a Muslim team from Yorkshire. The week-long tournament included a trip to Canterbury before the three-way match in Edgbaston, which the Archbishop’s team won. Team members, who included ordained Anglicans, Catholic seminarians and a priest, and practising Muslims, spent time before the tournament sharing together about the outworking of faith in communities. ‘It was mainly a way of using sport to create friendship, to build relationships across faiths,’ says Sam. ‘There was a real sense of fun, and it was a great starting point to build relationships.’

Student Ministers in India

Last Easter, ordinand Adam Pitt was invited on a mission trip to Bangalore, India, to see the work of Touch India International Ministries and its founder Sister Josna Anthony. ‘Our visit there was preaching and prayer from beginning to end,’ says Adam. ‘On several occasions I was asked “You will share the gospel now, brother?” by the mischievous sister, delighting in pushing us out unprepared. In each instance, whether a remote village filled with Hindu shrines or an urban Baptist church, my greatest asset was the content of the doctrine in focus module I’d just completed at Trinity. The time spent in this module to understand the different perspectives on the death and resurrection of Christ, to see the whole story of the gospel in the Old and New Testament, and to have multiple metaphors at my disposal was invaluable. I turned up at each new location with my Swiss Army gospel, with a tool for every job. I learnt a huge amount on this trip about the power of prayer and praise in the face of suffering. But I also learned that knowing your doctrine is not the dry study of theories about God, it is the foundation of being able to share the gospel anytime, anywhere.’

Staff NEWS

Andrew Lucas Celebrates 25 Years

This year our executive director, Andrew Lucas, celebrated twenty-five years of service to the college, and staff and faculty gathered to celebrate the occasion with Andrew and his wife, Mel, who assists Trinity students as disability advisor and study support tutor. ‘Andrew has been at the heart of the life of Trinity College for a quarter of a century,’ says Principal Emma Ineson. ‘His deep wisdom, careful dedication, and pastoral heart have impacted a generation of students, faculty, and staff. It is a joy to work with him, and with Mel, and I am deeply grateful for their commitment to the work of God in this place.’

New Staff

We have recently welcomed a few new members into our kitchen team: Ian MacIntosh as Catering Assistant and Audrey Husson as Hospitality Assistant. The nursery also welcomed nursery nurse Sarah Hawes last September. We hope they enjoy their time here!

Farewells

Roy Bailey retired last summer from his work as maintenance officer after fifteen years at Trinity. This November, Donna Drinkwater, who has worked at Trinity for nearly six years as a domestic assistant, will be leaving the college. We are grateful to Roy and to Donna for all they have contributed to Trinity.
In September, Tutor in New Testament Dr Jamie Davies presented a paper on salvation history and revelation in Markan apocalyptic epistemology at the British New Testament Society’s annual conference at the University of Chester. In June, he presented a paper on ‘Son of God’ and apocalyptic epistemology in Mark’s gospel at the Symposium for Biblical and Early Christian Studies at the University of St Andrews. He also worked with the British Sign Language Translation Project as a translation consultant, providing linguistic and theological advice on their translation of the Greek text.

In October, Principal Rev Dr Emma Ineson spoke at the Willesden Episcopal Area clergy conference in Lille, France, on ‘Priesthood in a Democratic City’, and also preached at the consecration service for the Bishops of Berwick and Bolton at York Minster. She wrote two weeks’ content for the Church of England Daily Lectionary Reflections. In September, Emma traveled to her first meeting with the Church of England’s Faith and Order Commission in Mirfield. During the summer, she led several leadership sessions at New Wine United 2016, and, in her role as Queen’s Chaplain met to share communion with fellow Queen’s Chaplains and the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace. She spoke last April at the Bristol Diocese conference about ‘Connecting with God’, and also led the Bristol Diocese Deacons and Priests Ordination Retreat and preached at both ordination services in July.

Tutor in Church History Rev Dr Nigel Scotland published The New Passover: Rethinking the Lord’s Supper for Today.

In May 2016, Tutor in Missiology Rev Dr Howard Worsley spoke at the European Conference in Christian Education (ECCE), a biannual gathering of Christian children’s workers and thinkers on ‘Children’s Spirituality and Faith Development’ and led a workshop on ‘The Child as Theologian’. In June, he addressed the Lancashire and Cumbria Theological Partnership (LCTP) in Cumbria on ‘Children as Agents in Mission’ and also gave a paper at Liverpool Hope University on ‘Developing RE as Mission’ and a paper at Liverpool Hope University on ‘Developing RE as Mission’. He led a week-long seminar in July on Franciscan missional spirituality at Lee Abbey Devon.

Rev Dr Jon Coutts, who had served at Trinity for six years as tutor in Old Testament, has taken up a new post across the pond at Denver Seminary in the US as professor of Old Testament.

Additional Faculty News

Tutor in Theology and Ethics Rev Dr Jon Coutts has written A Shared Mercy: Karl Barth on Forgiveness and the Church for InterVarsity Press. He wrote an article for The Reader magazine (autumn 2016) titled ‘To learn to love your neighbour must you learn to love yourself?’ In August, he spoke about the importance of God-talk at the British Sign Language ‘Signs of God’ summer school. In September, he attended an editorial board meeting for the Grove Books Pastoral Series, and in July attended the International Bonhoeffer Congress in Basel, Switzerland.

Rev Dr David Firth joined Trinity’s faculty this September as tutor in Old Testament and academic dean. ‘David brings a great combination of significant biblical scholarship, a passion for teaching, a head for organisation, and a heart for community,’ says Principal Emma Ineson. David has previously served six years as lecturer in Old Testament and Director of Studies at St John’s School of Mission in Nottingham. He has a wide range of ministry experience, having served as a pastor in his native Australia as well as spending a number of years working in Zimbabwe and South Africa. He also taught Old Testament for seven years at Cliff College before coming to St John’s. David chairs the Old Testament Study Group of the Tyndale Fellowship for evangelical scholars from around the world, is general editor of the Tyndale Old Testament Commentary, and serves on the International Advisory Board for the journal Old Testament Essays. He preaches regularly in local churches. For his doctoral studies, David focused on the ways in which the Psalms model a response to the experience of violence and considered some of the pastoral and missiological implications of this. He has published popular and academic works on the Old Testament, including commentaries on 1 and 2 Samuel, Esther, and Joshua, along with other books on Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and 1 and 2 Samuel and the Spirit of God in the Old Testament. ‘Trinity’s vision for living like the Kingdom is near is an exciting one that holds together the biblical vision of discipleship and mission,’ David says. ‘We’re delighted to be joining a college that puts this at the heart of its communal life and what it means to study and to serve within the Kingdom.’ We warmly welcome David and his wife, Lynne!

Farewell to Knut Heim

At the end of the academic year, we said goodbye to Dr Knut Heim, who had served at Trinity for six years as tutor in Old Testament. Knut has taken up a new post across the pond at Denver Seminary in the US as professor of Old Testament.

Connect with us online!
For regular updates on Trinity, follow us on Twitter or Facebook.
New Faces at Trinity

This autumn, Trinity welcomed a record intake of new students, with 63 new full-time and 17 new part-time students. Here are a few of their stories.

The Hong Kong Pastor

As Mark Nam stood in front of the 2,000-member Hong Kong church The Vine leading worship, he noticed something that would change the direction of his ministry. From his unique vantage point, he saw the glow of certain faces, separate from the others. He saw foreign domestic workers, refugees from Africa and East Asia, people without homes, the elderly. He realised with a jolt that the church’s Sunday celebration wasn’t necessarily comfortable for them.

Mark knew what it meant to experience the church as family. Born in Wales, he grew up in Hong Kong with his parents. He returned briefly to the UK for secondary school and university, but at the end of his first year of university his mum grew sick with cancer and died only a year later. One of Mark’s first memories of leading worship was when his father asked him to lead them in worship at his mother’s bedside as she passed away on New Year’s Eve in 2001. In the weeks that followed, as Mark grieved, his father suggested a year-long return to Hong Kong, to the place that felt most like home.

In Hong Kong, Mark immersed himself in the community of The Vine, and they became extended family members who ministered to him in his pain. The year passed, and Mark finished his law degree in the UK, then returned to Hong Kong. But before he could begin to practice law, those leading The Vine met with Mark to ask him to join them in church ministry. Mark and his fiancée Kayi sensed the Holy Spirit’s call, and, Mark says, ‘I let go of six years of study and all the money it took to pay for it. I became the associate worship and creative arts director.’ After five years in this role, Mark experienced that moment in worship, saw the glow of those faces before him, and recognised that he wanted to help build the family of God in new ways.

With the support of the church’s leaders, Mark transitioned roles and began to oversee The Vine’s small group ministry, with more than ninety groups meeting across Hong Kong, Kowloon, and the outlying islands—creating teaching materials, investing in leaders, leading mission trips into China and the Philippines, and developing ministries to the Cantonese-speaking community and foreign domestic helpers.

As the church grew, the pastoral issues grew in complexity, and Mark grew in understanding. ‘You can never presume to know what the issues are, let alone what the solutions might be,’ says Mark of the church’s outreach to refugees, foreign domestic workers, and others. ‘Jesus looks at people, he gets into their group, goes into their homes and eats their food. He sits on the street with those on the street who have nowhere to live. He hears their stories and weeps with them. Only once we’d done that could we start to build family and actually be constructive.’

Then one day, as Mark prepared to preach about the Old Testament kings, he thought about Saul. He thought he could identify with that young king in certain respects—and he could see that Saul had relied on his gifts and favour rather than relying on God, which made Saul insecure, trying harder and harder in his own strength. ‘I knew I was running on fumes,’ Mark explains. ‘All I’d learned growing up, through training and seminars, I’d exhausted it. I didn’t want to crash like Saul. I prayed with my wife, and we felt called to pursue a season of sincere theological study and reflection and rest.’ He and the church agreed that if he studied part-time, the church work would become a distraction, so Mark became a full-time independent student at Trinity, living in Bristol to be close to his father again and his wife’s family.

‘Being a full-time independent student can be challenging,’ says Mark. ‘You have to raise funds for yourself. Part of my spiritual formation is learning to surrender and trust—that’s an essential part of our time at Trinity. If I’m going to encourage church members to step out in faith, I can say that I’ve done it. If I’m going to tell them to let go and embrace the new life God has for them, I can say I’ve done that myself.’ Mark pauses and continues, ‘I miss The Vine. I miss it very much. But I’m finding a new family at Trinity. I’m inspired by the other students’ acts of faith, of obedience. I’m inspired by the stories of others around me who are growing in community.’
Laura had spent fifteen years working in Chatham, the second most deprived area of Kent, as a probation officer with forty to fifty people on her caseload. ‘The rewarding thing was when people wanted to change, and being able to give them the skills to change and move on—it’s providing a valuable service both to them and to the community they’re from.’ But increasingly Laura felt like she was only doing half a job; she wanted to help restore people’s souls along with their life skills.

She started to look into a new career in community or youth work. Her friends asked her why she wasn’t training to become a vicar, and after saying no many times, she began to consider it.

Laura gave birth to Levi just two weeks before induction at Trinity, and the newborn has attended a full course load with his mum for the first term. ‘Who on earth would do this?’ Laura says now. ‘But we’ve done really well. There’s no way I could do this without the support of the other members of the family. The walk was very quiet—the same rhythm every day: Walk, then eat lunch. Walk, then have a snack and a drink. Walk, then have supper. It was such a simple way to live; it gave us space to reflect and to walk with God. It was about slowing our minds down so we could think a bit more clearly.’

By the end of their pilgrimage, Tom had recognised a possible interest in pastoral work and deeper theological study, and the Doves were discussing the idea of pastoral ministry, the Doves wait to see the ways in which God may direct them after Trinity. Though Harriet had already secured a place for her GP training in Bristol, the surgery accepted her deferral of the job for the year it would take to complete the Certificate programme full time.

A year ago, medical doctors Tom and Harriet Dove decided that they needed to take a year to step out of the intense pace of their lives and reflect. Married for two years, the Doves were both working at a hospital in Nottingham, where they’d completed medical school.

As part of their year-long break, the Doves travelled to complete a Catholic pilgrimage along the Camino de Santiago, journeying 900 kilometres on foot for five weeks across Spain to Santiago de Compostela. ‘We were taking off from the conveyor belt of medicine that kept going,’ Tom explains, having a break from the system to regain perspective. The walk was very quiet—the same rhythm every day: Walk, then eat lunch. Walk, then have a snack and a drink. Walk, then have supper. It was such a simple way to live; it gave us space to reflect and to walk with God. It was about slowing our minds down so we could think a bit more clearly.’

The Doctors, Stopping to Seek God

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By the end of their pilgrimage, Tom had recognised a possible interest in pastoral work and deeper theological study, and the Doves were discussing the idea of theological college. The couple visited Trinity, with Tom considering the Graduate Diploma programme, because they saw Trinity as a place where they could engage academically while also moving closer to family.

During their interview day, Harriet sat listening with Tom and thought about her own desire to deepen her understanding of the Bible since becoming a Christian a few years earlier. ‘When we visited, I realised I could do this also,’ she remembers. ‘I didn’t have to have a certain background or to have already done certain things. When they talked about spouses doing part-time studies, I thought I’d like to do that. But then when they talked about the community here, and what it can mean to learn in community, I thought, I want to do this.’ Though Harriet had already secured a place for her GP training in Bristol, the surgery accepted her deferral of the job for the year it would take to complete the Certificate programme full time.

‘I want to grow my faith with all these people,’ Harriet adds, ‘with people from all different backgrounds and viewpoints, and to have discussions with people with different experiences.’

With their shared concern for medicine and ministry, the Doves wait to see the ways in which God may direct them after Trinity.
Q: What are the qualities of ‘Christian’ forgiveness?

A: Ten years ago when I left my first pastoral ministry to go to seminary, I must say I was pretty rattled. I wasn’t sure exactly what leading a church was supposed to mean anymore. It wasn’t until a class on reconciliation taught by David Guretzki that I realised a lot of my worries revolved around questions I had not yet thought to ask. Questions about forgiveness, and the difference it makes to church. And the more I looked into the meaning of forgiveness the more I realised how complicated it could be. Does it mean forgetting the past? Does it require an apology from the other person? Does the other person even have to know I’ve forgiven them? As these questions...
crystallised, I realised that a confessing Christian might have very different answers to them than would someone else. To make a long story short, as I studied this under the guidance of John Webster it became clearer and clearer to me that to explain what it meant for a Christian to forgive someone, we were going to have to be able to identify it purely as a gift of God. This means it is not simply an attitude adjustment, and certainly not something I grant from out of my moral superiority (even if in a particular instance I might be in the right). In its truest sense, to forgive another is to share a gift God has given to both the forgiver and the forgiven alike, and to do so in the context of the larger story of God's reconciliation of the whole cosmos to God's self in Christ. Perhaps this sounds obvious, but I'm not sure how often we let it really play out in our approach to broken relationships, let alone in the way we approach church.

Q: What have your studies taught you about the practice of Christian confession?

A: One of the most surprising side effects of studying forgiveness has for me been a richer understanding of confession. I always thought confession was what you did once you figured out what was wrong with you. But what makes us think we know what is wrong with us? What if confession begins and ends with confessing Jesus as Forgiven and Lord, and only then involves the naming of sin? When it comes to our interpersonal relationships this ends up being pretty important. So often we go into a confrontation or a moment of forgiveness with the assumption that we know full well who was right and who was wrong.

But what if confession is what both the offending and the offended party are doing when they seek Christ in their broken situation and come to agree with his appraisal of what has occurred? The offender comes to agree with Christ in the mode of apology, and the offended agrees with Christ in the mode of forgiving. Both are agreeing with what Jesus names as the problem. I suppose this kind of process sounds a bit riskier, a little less self-secure, but I actually find it rather freeing. Truth be told, I've come to see confession as one of the primary acts of Christian life and community—whether we think we've sinned recently or not. In the grace of Christ, there is freedom for a community wherein one can hope to be both helped and held to account. The church is meant to be a community in which such interpersonal confession and forgiveness of sin are most richly and hopefully embedded.

Q: How ought Christian forgiveness to impact both the person wronged and the person who has done something wrong?

A: Obviously we can all think of many situations where the actual speaking of forgiveness to another person seems (and maybe is) downright impossible. The nature of the offense may yet be unclear. The offender may be long gone, unaware, uninterested, or even dangerous. None of these situations is simple. Indeed many of our relationships will in this life always fall short of ideal. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't have the ‘ideal’ in view. Even if our only option is to forgive someone in our heart—no conversation allowed—we ought to at least have in mind what forgiveness hopes for—namely, reconciliation. One of the most important things I learned from my professor in seminary was not to leave forgiveness alone, but to see it in its vital connection to other aspects of Jesus’ ministry of reconciliation. So to answer the question, what forgiveness hopes for is Christ’s correction of the person who has done wrong, and restoration of the person who has been wronged. Even if correction comes in ‘baby steps’, and restoration is only slow or partial—well, as 1 Corinthians 13 says, love always hopes, and this is the goal with forgiveness too. The key in forgiveness is to give these hopes to Christ in prayer and community, so that one is not manipulating the corrections and restorations oneself.

Q: What ought Christian forgiveness to look like in the context of the church body?

A: The truth is I think there’s no one way that forgiveness is going to look at any given moment or in any given situation. For a long time it might look like forbearance (which might look to a passive observer just like tolerance). At another time it might look like speaking the truth in love. Still later it might look like patience in the face of a slow road to restoration. In any case, I think it always ends up looking like community. More often than not we need help to forgive, not to mention to discern what’s wrong and seek correction and restoration. Too often, however, we settle for less than the mutual life of truthful love that is held out for us in Word and Sacrament. We set churches up to be ‘nice’ places for conflict avoidance, and then when the dam bursts we react with gossip and slander until it is all smoothed over and the shallow peace has been restored for the powers that be. This is not pretty. It really isn’t much different than anywhere else. In fact you can probably find football teams and workplaces that are healthier places to be than that. But if we see how central forgiveness is to our life together, we might look less like a ‘nice’ bunch of people with a shared set of interests, and more like a community who is learning to love and live authentically across difference—and thus like a witness to the reign of God.

Rev Dr Jon Coutts is tutor in theology and ethics at Trinity. In addition to working for several years as a pastor in Canada, Jon completed a master’s programme with a thesis on the theology of GK Chesterton’s The Man Who Was Thursday and a PhD at the University of Aberdeen, focusing his research in ecclesiology and the ethics of reconciliation.
A Tribute to John Alexander Motyer
1924 - 2016

In August 2016, Trinity’s first principal, Rev Alec Motyer, passed away just before his 92nd birthday. In 1950, Alec took up his first teaching post at Clifton Theological College; he was named vice-principal in 1954, a position he held for eleven years. After serving as vice-principal of Tyndale Hall, Alec was named principal when Clifton, Tyndale, and Dalton House combined to form the new Trinity College in 1972. We remain deeply grateful for his ministry, and would like to share these reflections on his life.

Rev Canon Dr Herrick Daniel
Trinity alumnus

I was a student at Trinity College approximately forty-three years ago and was fortunate enough to have had Alec Motyer and Jim Packer as associated principals. I have many happy memories of Alec Motyer, whom I consider a modern spiritual giant in our time. When I was at Trinity I chose to study the Hebrew language, which was optional, because of Alec’s great influence on me. He was a man who lectured with tremendous passion on whatever subject he undertook. He had a real conviction in his preaching, and he would present his message with extraordinary accuracy. He believed strongly in the theology of the Old Testament as the foundation on which the New Testament is built. Above all, he declared the totality of the authority of the Bible as the Word of God.

I can remember him saying to us once that if we made a mistake in reading the wrong Collect, for example reading next Sunday’s Collect instead of the present one, not to worry about it. In fact, people would think that you were a forward-looking person. Also, when one preaches the same sermon more than once, it is great because every time it is preached, it becomes more mature. One of the most powerful messages I heard from him was one on Leadership, where he pointed out that God gives a person the quality of leadership, as leadership involves big responsibilities. He gave examples of great leaders like David in the Old Testament, who was called and appointed by God. Finally, during my two happy years at Trinity College, I was richly blessed by Alec Motyer’s teaching, preaching, prayers, examples of godly living, personal encouragement, clarity of thought, fellowship, and thorough knowledge of his subject.

Rev Gervais Angel
Former dean at Trinity

Alec’s principles as a theological educator were:

1. The Word of God, i.e. the Christian Scriptures, as authority on God and on life.
2. The whole of life as response to the authority of the Word of God. This is communicated publicly in speaking, writing and behaviour/obedience. This is absorbed inwardly by constant study and ‘unceasing prayer’. To my knowledge he read the Bible in the original languages for at least an hour each day, and he probably prayed as much as he breathed. I heard him preach at the Southern Counties Convention at Weston on the sin of prayerlessness, and he offered me an opinion that if every Christian studied and prayed aright there would be no need for charismatic renewal. What’s the point, if you’re already walking with the Lord?
3. Community as the environment for being a Christian. He stressed that private daily prayer was necessary for a healthy life as a Christian, but loving one’s neighbour as oneself was for him an odd command if there was no one around to love. On this principle he was an inclusive community former. In 1971 he faced, with the Lord, the task of forming one community out of three distinct components. Alec’s task was to form a community where the love of Christ was shown. When appointed dean of college and principal in 1971, he refused to allow any academic staff member of any of the three colleges to be made redundant by the process of the merger, whatever the financial cost of employing them all.
4. Passion for the Lord. Alec’s style of being and doing could not be typecast into Conservative or Open or Reformed or Charismatic Evangelical. His passion for the Lord gave him an independence from the categories formed by people. Alec’s liberal spirit had to be experienced to be believed. He disagreed with some of his academic colleagues on points of interpretation, but this did not affect his love for them.

5. Passionate about righteousness. Alec had an edge, which came out in his teaching, against sin in all its forms, against destructive forces which led to sickness or disaster, and against heresy which ran directly against the clear teaching of the Word of God. Hierarchical priesthood based on non-biblical asceticism and Old Testament views of priests were anathema to him; his preferred colour for a cassock was blue, like a Reader. His God is no respecter of persons, and his ministers are at best only fellow-members of the Body of Christ. Alec held firm to this New Testament understanding of ministry. My family and I owed him, and Beryl, so much, but that’s another story.
please email m.stratis@trinitycollegebristol.ac.uk

Trinity will host an afternoon tea and memorial gathering for Alec Motyer on the afternoon of 15 May 2017 at Trinity College, following the Association AGM.

More details will be announced in due course. If you are interested in attending, please email m.stratis@trinitycollegebristol.ac.uk.

1950s

Canon Raymond J. Lee (Tyndale 1956) is now 86 years of age, and in September will reach the 60th anniversary of his ordination at Southwark Cathedral.

Drs Gordon and David Wenham

Trinity faculty members

Alec made a massive contribution to the lives of many, many people as a theologian and scholar and theological educator. The awarding of a Lambeth DD to him for 'services to theological education' was well deserved.

When we both began our theological studies in the 1950s, Alec was one of those scholars—a fairly small band at that time—who offered a real and well-thought out alternative to the often sceptical approaches to the Old Testament that were dominant in our universities, breathing life into what others made a dry subject. Other people were strong on questions of language and background. Alec, while being a fine Hebraist, stood out as someone who helped us to appreciate and engage with the theology of the Bible, its themes and message. Unlike some scholars who have expertise either in the Old Testament or the New Testament, he was interested in the big picture of the whole Bible, writing commentaries on Old and New Testament.

He was also a very good teacher: we both benefitted from this, when he kindly gave us some tuition in basic Hebrew before we began our theological studies in Cambridge; we thought he was probably a better teacher than the famous teachers of Cambridge! He inspired and encouraged us, and we and so many others owe him a great debt, and not just academically: he was a family friend; he preached at David and Clare's wedding, and Gordon as a research student lodged for a year with the Motyers in London.

We thank God for his friendship (and for his humour!), and for him as a gracious, humble and kind servant of the Lord.

1960s

The Right Reverend Kenneth Barham (Clifton 1963) celebrated his 80th birthday this year. Ken was born in Uganda, brought up in what is now Burundi, educated in Kenya, farmed in Uganda, was a bishop in the Anglican Church of Rwanda, and is now Hon Assistant Bishop of Chichester in the Church of England. He recently raised funds for a

Lawrence Barham Memorial Trust (LBMT) building project in Cyangugu, a 37-bedroom annexe that will help to provide sustainable local employment, encourage tourists to the area, provide accommodation for business, government, and NGO visitors as well as church and mission teams. You can learn more about their work at lbmt.org.uk.

Dr Henry ('Laurie') Thompson (Trinity 1978), who is currently interim dean/president and associate professor of liturgical studies at Trinity School for Ministry in Pennsylvania, US, recently enjoyed a visit from fellow Trinity alumna Janet Roberts, when she came from Liverpool and preached at Incarnation Church in the Strip District of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He says, 'We had a wonderful reunion and caught up on many Trinity Bristol memories and friends.'
80s

Pixie (Carolyn) Paris Rowe (Trinity 1982) and David B Rowe (Trinity 1983) are now in Winchester, where David is vicar of Christ Church. They loved their rich and fulfilling seven years as leaders of Lee Abbey Devon Christian Community and are now trying to do intentional community in a parish with a fairly eclectic congregation of about 800. David is using his experience from previous diocesan jobs by serving on the Board of Education. ‘We are delighted to be in the same parish as former students at our time in 1980-83, James and Jane Lunn-Rockliffe,’ says Pixie. ‘We are also in touch with James Bruce, who is just south of us in the New Forest. We are just down the road from Clive Hawkins, whom we also trained alongside, and are trying to send many of our large number of ordinands Trinity way! At the moment one of our four children and his wife are training for church leadership, but potentially one more in some capacity, and one son-in-law is exploring his calling. Our number of ordinands Trinity way! At the time of writing, there are 173 ordinands of whom two of whom are grown and in the UK.

Dan Papworth (Trinity 1999) has this year been ordained for seventeen years. Life and ministry have been varied and unexpected, including getting married in the church where he was team vicar and now having two lovely boys, aged 2 and 4. He has recently written a book titled The Lives Around Us: Daily Meditations for Nature Connection, which was published in June, and which makes links between the lives of forty different creatures, all native to the UK, and the Bible, with suggestions about how the reader can take these insights into daily life.

2000s

Revd Andrea Williams (Trinity 2007) died last September after suffering from cancer in recent years. After Andrea studied at Trinity for a year, she was ordained in Chichester Cathedral in 2007 and returned to her home church in Hastings as curate. For the last few years she has been associate priest with Nettlebed and Greys Group of Churches near Henley on Thames.

Liz Angell (Trinity 2008) worshipped at St John’s Egham from 1999 to 2006, during which time she worked as a desk officer with Tearfund, looking after partner organisations and projects in French-speaking Africa. God called her to ordained ministry during her time at St John’s, and she completed her training at Trinity. Her curacy was with the Fosse Team in Leicester Diocese around Syston. While Liz explored where God wanted her next, she received out of the blue a letter from Bishop Alistair Magowan, and since then has been Team Vicar in Bridgnorth, Shropshire, (Hereford Diocese) for four-and-a-half years, looking after two village parishes. ‘God has taught me that he can use every part of us to bring about his purposes, even and perhaps especially the parts of us that are weak and we’re not very fond of! With God’s help and sometimes in his strength!) we have explored together what he is doing in the community and have sought to join in, so that “church” is for some a less weird and off-putting concept—surprise, surprise, we’re people just like them—warts and all! I’m now moving back to Leicester Diocese to be Rector of Whitwick, Thringstone and Swannington—three former coal-mining villages. My licensing was on 15 June. God has given us a shared vision for the communities there. Our heart’s desire is to glorify God through worship, prayers, praise and loving one another within the whole community, under the guidance and leadership of the Holy Spirit.

2010s

Revd Dr Jeanette Sears (Trinity 2011) has written an article for Woman Alive magazine to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the death of children’s author Eve Garnett, a believer and a pioneer in the depiction of the urban poor in fiction. Many have forgotten Eve now, but she managed to beat Tolkien’s The Hobbit to win the Carnegie Medal for best children’s book in 1937 for her novel. The Family from One End Street. Jeanette has also contributed to CS Lewis at Poets’ Corner, edited by Peter Williams and Michael Ward (Wipf & Stock) and has just brought out her third novel, Murder and Mr Rochester.

Dan Papworth (Trinity 1999) has this year been ordained for seventeen years. Life and ministry have been varied and unexpected, including getting married in the church where he was team vicar and now having two lovely boys, aged 2 and 4. He has recently written a book titled The Lives Around Us: Daily Meditations for Nature Connection, which was published in June, and which makes links between the lives of forty different creatures, all native to the UK, and the Bible, with suggestions about how the reader can take these insights into daily life.

Keep in touch!

We'd love to share news from your life and ministry with fellow Trinity alumni. Send your news and photos to m.stratis@trinitycollegebristol.ac.uk or to Melissa Stratis, Trinity College, Stoke Hill, Bristol, BS9 1JP.
“I’ve learned that studying theology is not the dry study of theories about God, but the foundation of being able to share the gospel anytime, anywhere.” - Adam Pitt, ordinand

Do you know someone considering ordination or theological study? Invite them to visit Trinity, to discover the benefits of learning together in community.

Next Open Day - 4 February 2017

Find out more at trinitycollegebristol.ac.uk.