

## This Month's Worship in Churches Uniting in Central Sutton

### Sunday 1 March

9.00am	<b>St N</b>	Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am	<b>SBC</b>	Morning Worship <i>Revd Mike Dales</i>
	<b>Trinity</b>	Morning Worship Communion <i>Revd Dr David Dickinson</i>
	<b>St N</b>	Morning Worship Communion <i>Revd Beverly Fraser</i> <i>Jeff Richards (assist and pr)</i>
6.30pm	<b>Trinity</b>	<b>United Service</b> Darkness at Noon

Evening Services in March are inspired by 2015's York Lent Course and will be centred on aspects of the Cross of Christ.

### Sunday 8 March

9.00am	<b>St N</b>	Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am	<b>SBC</b>	Morning Worship Communion <i>Revd Mike Dales</i>
	<b>Trinity</b>	Morning Worship <i>Revd Dr David Dickinson</i>
	<b>St N</b>	Morning Worship <i>Revd Justine Middlemiss</i>
6.30pm	<b>Trinity</b>	<b>United Service</b> The Great Silence

### Sunday 15 March Mothering Sunday

9.00am	<b>St N</b>	Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am	<b>SBC</b>	Morning Worship
	<b>Trinity</b>	Morning Worship <i>Revd Dr David Dickinson</i>
	<b>St N</b>	Parade Service <i>Revd Mark Pullinger</i> <i>Jeff Richards (assist)</i>
6.30pm	<b>Trinity</b>	<b>United Service</b> The Child on the Cross

### Sunday 22 March Passion Sunday

9.00am	<b>St N</b>	Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am	<b>St N</b>	<b>United Morning Worship</b>
6.30pm	<b>Trinity</b>	<b>United Service</b> Outside a City Wall

### Sunday 29 March Palm Sunday

9.00am	<b>St N</b>	Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am	<b>SBC</b>	Morning Worship <i>Revd Mike Dales</i>
	<b>Trinity</b>	Morning Worship <i>Revd Dr David Dickinson</i>
	<b>St N</b>	<b>Team Service Christ Church</b>
6.30pm	<b>Trinity</b>	<b>St Luke's Passion J S Bach</b> <b>Trinity Festival Choir</b>

... for help or information please contact

<b>Revd Mike Dales</b> (Sutton Baptist)	07952 231723 mg.dales@blueyonder.co.uk
<b>Revd Dr David Dickinson</b> (Trinity)	Office: 020 8643 6884 Home: 020 8643 0963 todaviddickinson@gmail.com
<b>Revd Justine Middlemiss</b> (St Nicholas)	020 8642 3499 rector@suttonteamministry.org
<b>Revd Mark Pullinger</b> (St Nicholas)	020 8642 2757 mplarksong@aol.co.uk



March 2015

Dear friends

Many years ago I attended a course held at the home of a local Anglican priest. As we met fortnightly for a whole year we got to know each other very well. I was the only Baptist, others were Anglican, Methodist, Catholic, Quaker and one or two who weren't at all sure what they were! In other words, it was about as much a mixed bag of Christians as you could find.

The funny thing is that I can barely remember what the course was about; the real learning experience was in growing closer to Christians from traditions different from my own and, to my surprise and joy, discovering they had things to share with me and, hopefully, things I could share with them. I understood, for the first time, why Jesus himself had prayed that his people *would be one*.

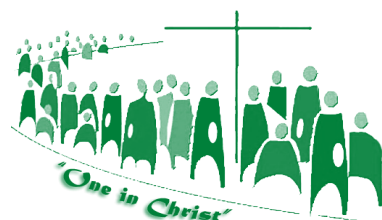
Since that experience, long ago, I have never been able to conceive of working any way except ecumenically. Indeed, the ecumenical landscape was one of the things that attracted me to Sutton. Since then we have become a Local Ecumenical Partnership, and we do lots and lots of things together; even as you read this, our churches will be engaged in our joint Lent talks, and planning for a joint Maundy Thursday service.

The problem with working together is that it can become little more than a habit. From time to time, therefore, it is good to stand back and reassess where our ecumenical endeavours have taken us, and where we sense God is leading us to go. This is a process we have now embarked on, beginning with a *Day Apart* for some of our church leaders (Justine reflects on this event elsewhere in this issue). Where this might take us in our ecumenical work I cannot tell.

But I can say that the lessons I learned long ago at my course have never been forgotten. We really and truly have much to learn from each other, and Jesus' prayer for unity among his people is as valid as ever it was.

*Mike*

Revd Mike Dales



## Devotions

### A Lenten Prayer

by Bernard Thorogood

Fast



Give



Prepare



Pray



You, Lord Jesus, knew great power,  
to heal, to transform,  
to proclaim the reign of God.  
So you met great temptations.  
The wrong way, glittering and possible, was open;  
you could rule if you chose,  
in majesty and wonder,  
more victorious than Alexander,  
more imperial than Caesar.  
But you said No,  
simply, decisively, for ever, for us.

We pray for the Church, tempted like its Head.  
When the Church seeks political power,  
*Jesus, stay with us.*  
When the Church longs to become wealthy,  
*Jesus, speak to us.*  
When the Church strives to impress with splendour,  
*Jesus, give us simplicity.*  
When the Church wanders from the way of sacrifice,  
*Jesus, hold us.*  
When the Church listens to the call for cheap grace,  
*Jesus, keep us always in your way.*

Holy Spirit of God,  
enable us to respond to temptation  
with the strength of your Word within us,  
so that we may hold firm to our calling  
and take your better way in faithfulness.

Amen.

### Have you ever studied at Scola?

Why not enrol for one (or all!) of the three sessions in the

series **Poetry at Twilight**. Dave Dickinson will be leading the groups through the **Poetry of the Passion** on Thursday afternoons 4-6pm.

12 March	Early Passion Poems
19 March	17th Century Passion Poems
26 March	Recent Passion Poems

Register at Scola or online ([www.scola.ac.uk](http://www.scola.ac.uk))  
There is a course fee of £5 for each session.



## Regular Events

**All members of CUCS are warmly welcomed at these activities**

**Christian Meditation Groups** meet twice a month.

Contact Pamela Ford: 8642 5914

Monday	9 March	3.00pm
Monday	16 March:	7.45pm

### Saturday Prayer Meeting

10.00am - 11.00am at Sutton Baptist Church.

**Trinity Women's Fellowship Club** meets twice a month on Wednesday afternoons. For further information ring Sylvia Robinson 8642 1391 or Margaret Jeffery 8874 7108

**The Growing Group** meets twice a month at 10.30am in the John Clifford Hall, Sutton Baptist Church. Ladies' informal coffee mornings and activities. For details speak to Carole Adams 07711 879645.

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

**Trinity Toddler Group** meets on Tuesdays in term time in Trinity Hall, 9.00-11.00am. Contact Paula Tidy 8642 2026.

**Bunker**, the youth club for CUCS, meets in Trinity Hall on Sunday evening in term time. It is open from 6.30pm until 8.00pm for 11 to 18 year olds. A chance to get to know other young people in CUCS and have fun together. Contact Jane Oliver 01883 346261.

**Badminton Club** meets 7.45-10.00pm on Mondays and Thursdays in Trinity Hall.

**Sutton Churches Tennis Club** can be found between 99 and 101 Gander Green Lane, Sutton. All ages and abilities are welcome. See our website at [www.clubtennis.co.uk](http://www.clubtennis.co.uk)

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



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

# News from the Churches

## Celebrating Lent Together in 2015

### Lent Talks 2015 *This is my body ...*

All the talks will take place at St Nicholas at 8.00pm and all except the final talk will be repeated the following day at 2.00pm.

- 25 February **This Is My Body**  
Revd Dr David Dickinson
- 4 March **The Confessing Body**  
Rev Mike Dales
- 11 March **The Thankful Body**  
Revd Justine Middlemiss
- 18 March **The Broken Body**  
Revd Mark Pullinger
- 25 March **The Gathered Body**  
**An Agape Meal**

### Holy Week

- 29 March **Trinity 6.30pm Palm Sunday**  
St Luke's Passion JS Bach  
Trinity Festival Choir
- 2 April **SBC 8.00pm Maundy Thursday**  
Service of Meditation and Prayer
- 3 April **10.00am Good Friday**  
Good Friday Walk of Witness  
(beginning at Asda)  
followed by a time of Meditation.  
at St Nicholas Church.



### Two Book Groups!

Join a group at 2.00pm in the Oasis on **Wednesday 1 April** to discuss ***A Change of Climate*** by Hilary Mantel. Read Dave's recommendation on the review page of *Unite!*

Are you reading our Lent Study book? We will meet in the Oasis at Trinity on **Tuesday 21 April** at 2.00pm to discuss ***Lent is for Loving*** by Sheila Cassidy (1.30 for lunch). Some things to think about as you read:

- identify one thing that stands out and makes the book memorable.
- one part you found helpful.
- one question that puzzles you, which you would like discussed for clarification.
- one aspect of the book about which you would like to hear other people's views.

### Dementia Action Alliance

Sutton Community Works has signed up to the Dementia Action Alliance and has arranged training by the local Alzheimer's Society specifically for members of faith groups:

**Tuesday 10 March 2.00-4.00pm** at Sutton Vineyard Offices, 93 Stayton Road SM1 2PS. For more information contact Mark Tomlinson: [m.tomlinson@talk21.com](mailto:m.tomlinson@talk21.com)

### Sunday Afternoon Outings

**15 March The London Docklands Museum**



Learn about the story of London as one of the world's great trading cities.

Meet at the back of Trinity Church in the coffee area at the slightly later time of **12.15pm** after morning service. Bring a packed lunch and you will need an Oyster Travelcard or equivalent.

For more information contact:  
John and Deborah Wroe on 8642 9064  
or [john.p.wroe@btinternet.com](mailto:john.p.wroe@btinternet.com).

### Bible Study at SBC

Sutton Baptist Church has begun a new series of studies on ***The Apostles' Creed*** which will run at roughly monthly intervals for the rest of the year. The next study is on Tuesday 7 April from 7.30pm to about 9.00pm. As we have only had one so far, any new friends will not have missed too much.

If anyone is interested in giving these friendly and interactive studies a try, please contact Mike Dales on 07952 231723 for further information.

### News from Bunker!

Bunker is growing—but there's still room for you if you are at High School! (Trinity 6.30-8.00pm)

- 1 March: New Games Evening.  
8 March: Baking Simnel Cakes for Mothering Sunday.  
15 March: Preparing and cooking a meal for your mothers.  
22 March: Easter Craft Night.  
29 March: Picnic in the Park.





## Conversations About Conversations

by Justine Middlemiss

The Churches Uniting in Central Sutton Day Apart (from the pressures of the rest of the world, that is, not each other) was a day of conversations. From discovering more about our neighbours, making new friendships and rekindling old ones to conversations about the nature and the purpose of the Church we spent a great deal of time talking and listening to each other. And I think we came away with a deeper awareness and understanding of the range and depth of feeling around our ecumenical life together as individuals and as three separate churches with four traditions, seeking to live and walk in the way of Christ.



If anyone was hoping to walk away from the day with a blueprint or plan of action they were going to be disappointed. Rather, what I certainly came away with was a sense of the lived reality of working and walking together, a sense of the dreams and aspirations as well as the fears and red lines that surround our future steps. What seemed to be clear is that people want our life together to be real and living; a witness to those in the community of Sutton that the Church is not dead but relevant. Nor is it about three buildings that are ideal for heritage purposes but about living, breathing and hopefully growing communities of concern, well-being, and hope for all. I came away with a sense that those of us who were there wanted to be a witness to the community that God is good, that God cares for all people and for creation and that we are not simply a club that exists merely for the good of its members.

But it was, in many ways, a day of conversations about conversations, the start of a discussion, not the end. And if it is to make a difference to the way that we demonstrate that we are Churches Uniting in Central Sutton then we need to take the conversation forward; discover more about our shared values, visions and dreams, not being afraid to recognize and respect our differences and distinctive visions, but praying that as the Body of Christ we really can show the world that there is, as St Paul puts it *a more excellent way*.

*The CUCS banner was a focus for meditation and discussion during the day.*

## **A Change of Climate: Hilary Mantel (Penguin: 1994)**

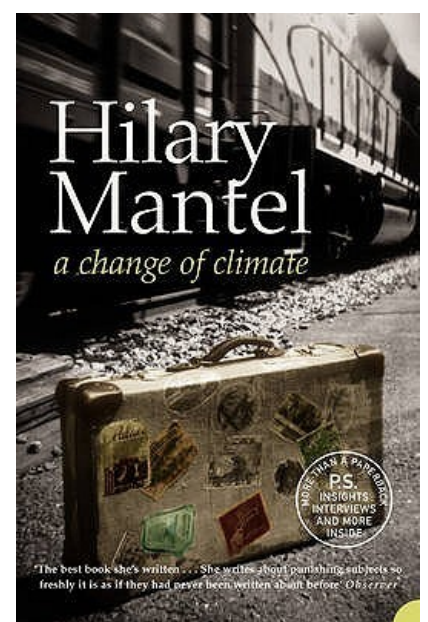
reviewed by Dave Dickinson

The dinosaurs died out because of a change of climate; their habitat altered. In Hilary Mantel's pre-*Wolf Hall* novel, *A Change of Climate*, Ralph and Anna Eldred's habitat alters when they go as missionaries to southern Africa. Do they or their faith, like the dinosaurs, die out?

Recently, Mantel has gained a formidable reputation as an historical novelist. It is well-deserved, but it disguises her interest in religion as a novelist. Before the acclaim and popularity of *Wolf Hall*, Mantel was already recognised as a stylish writer who seemed to want to try something new with every novel she wrote. I worry now that her other work, where theology and religious belief are often explored in interesting ways, might be overlooked. She's no one-trick pony.

One of the characters in *A Change of Climate* thinks of the church as a "bauble shop" from which she can pick and choose whatever she finds personally helpful. Another sees churchgoers as narrow-minded people who have no sense of adventure, always preferring to stay at home rather than test out their faith in the cut and thrust of real life. Not surprisingly, Ralph, who experiences a change of climate when he moves to Africa, wants to put into practice a different, non-dinosauric form of Christianity – one that passes no judgment on others.

I am tempted to invite you to buy or borrow a copy, read it and meet with me at **2 o'clock on Wednesday 1 April in Trinity's Oasis Cafe** where we can share our thoughts about this *page-turner with a profound moral dimension*. I can't resist the temptation! So shall we make it a date?



**From the Editor** I would be delighted to receive comments and suggestions on the future of *Unite!*. Contact me by email: [olwenstewart@hotmail.com](mailto:olwenstewart@hotmail.com) or by phone: **8643 2525**. Copy date for the April issue is 18 March. *Unite!* is also available online at [www.trinitychurchsutton.org.uk](http://www.trinitychurchsutton.org.uk)