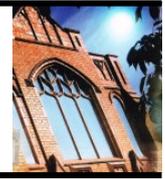




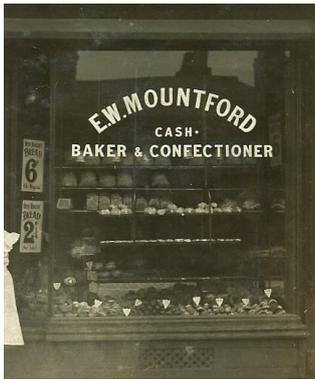
TRINITY, ELLESMERE PORT..... A MISSION IN PROGRESS



MARCH 2018 UPDATE

"To those who have to go without two meals a day, God can only appear as bread"

Mahatma Gandhi, 1931



My grandfather, Eardley Willmot Mountford, was a professional baker based in Aston, Birmingham.. Making bread and cakes was a daily duty that he performed to keep the family business going and I can only imagine the tantalising smells that must have inhabited the building. I recently read some testimonies of people that recall the bakery and have fond memories of the business and its products!

As I lead the weekly bread making session at Trinity, mainly consisting of around fifteen adults with learning difficulties, it reminds me that seventy years after the death of my grandfather we are still very much in the business of making bread and cakes.

Food is a permanent fixture in the evolving world around us. We could never imagine a world without it and yet even in our own locality food has a financial cost which often results in some very stark choices for many individual and families. Healthy diet choices are tempered by whatever is cheap and available. The contemporary tension is not new as every generation has sought to provide food on the table. We also live in a world where millions of people in the world are starving and yet where countless others suffer the consequences of obesity.

This dissonance is a sad reflection of the vast differentiation of power and wealth in our world.

Trinity in recent years has certainly seen food establish itself very much as a central tenet of the ongoing mission; The "Daily Bread" cafe offering a healthier alternative in contrast to the mix of fast food outlets in Ellesmere Port, the West Cheshire Foodbank distribution sessions, Pop Up cooking offering practical cooking advice, weekly bread making sessions, Wednesday Welcome food give away, and Port Grocery food club, along with food preparation in our kitchens. The allotment spaces at the rear to the buildings at Trinity are being cultivated and developed with a continual crop of produce and will soon include a beehive where honey will be collected.





Jesus of course stated that he was the "bread of life". (John 6:35). This declaration was seemingly not a vague reactive statement but very specific and ultimately profound in its nature. Food features regularly throughout his ministry in meals that he shared and in his teaching. Of course the regular act of breaking bread and drinking wine in worship was initiated by Jesus himself and echoes down the centuries in gatherings across the globe. The theology around food is a study in itself and has been embraced by many theologians.

Food obviously has an integral link to health and wellbeing. On any analysis of a hierarchy of needs food is not a luxury, but a basic building block of humanity.

Trinity's renovation was completed following a feasibility study of Ellesmere Port which highlighted key priorities for the wellbeing of Ellesmere Port including; health, education and training. These were identified in an area where social deprivation is a reality and where poverty is compounded by recent welfare changes.

These priorities of health, education and training have obviously driven the development of Trinity and it now stands as a functioning community that clearly is seeking to address these wider social issues.



As followers of Christ we recognise that if we are to address issues around health and wellbeing any initiatives have to include the physical, emotional and spiritual side of life. It is encouraging that Trinity is a place of diverse stories where lives have been changed as people have become part of the Trinity community.

A lady walked through Trinity's doors a few weeks ago and explained to me that due to personal circumstances she was hungry and needed food. She was obviously embarrassed to broach the subject. I sought to allay her fears and offer the welcome that was needed. Her plight is an unfortunate regular occurrence at Trinity. I was able to offer her bread which is collected daily by Port Grocery, along with an explanation and referral to join the Port Grocery food club. This "wrap around" approach has become a major strength at Trinity where working in partnership with The Debt Advice Network and Port Grocery provides practical support on many levels.

"Who we are and how we live maybe more significant than what we believe or how we say it, and what a Christian community gets up to is more significant than what it says it believes." Martin Wroe



So what are the encouraging signs?

PRESENCE

- It would be fair to say that Trinity now has a clear presence in the Ellesmere Port community and is known as a place where help can be sought and found. With around a thousand people entering the building each week Trinity's presence is becoming established.

PROFILE

- The profile of Trinity has increased amongst the wider community. Numerous agencies including ForHousing, CWAC, Health & Wellbeing Co-ordinators, Macmillan Cancer Support and too many to list, work from Trinity to engage people in the local community.

PARTNERSHIP

- The willingness to work with various agencies has enabled Trinity to develop and grow. For example, the ongoing partnership with The Debt Advice Network has created opportunities that have enabled us to engage the community in new and innovative ways.

PROVISION

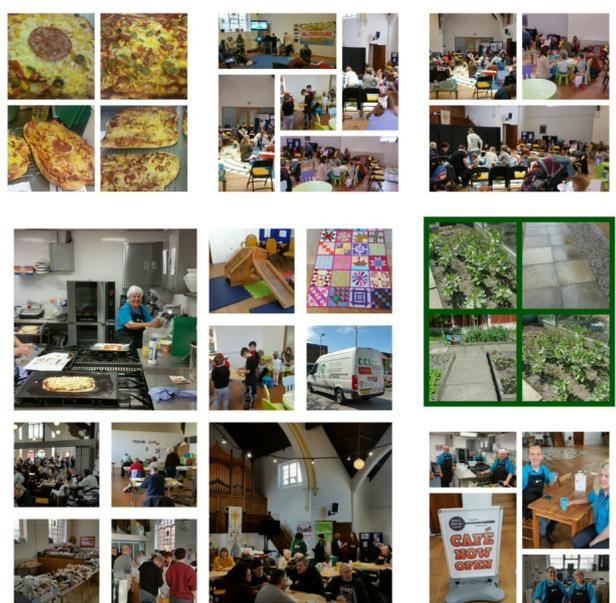
- Trinity can now offer a provision that is holistic in its nature seeking to meet the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of people.

PROCLAMATION

- We are followers of Christ and sharing God's love of affirmation, generosity and healing is integral to the mission of Trinity. The increase in presence and profile create more opportunities to witness to the local community.

POTENTIAL

- The potential for growth is evident and we pray God may continue to bless the work at Trinity.





TRINITY: THE FACTS

- * Trinity is a Methodist Church seeking to share the love of God in Ellesmere Port.
- * Trinity has a regular Sunday morning worship service.
- * On average Trinity serves around 350+ every week in the Daily Bread cafe.
- * A team of volunteers help to make home made soup, cakes and bread each day.
- * Breadmaking is attended by around 15 individuals each week.
- * Pop-Up cooking offers healthy food options for people with limited budgets each week at a Foodbank session.
- * Trinity's art groups have over 40 people attending each week.
- * Wednesday Welcome serves over 200 meals a week, over 10,000 every year.
- * Port Grocery has over 300 members making around 1,300 shop visits a month, providing two days meals for each visit.
- * The food waste initiative supports 12 charities in the locality with the distribution of waste food.
- * Church Mice & Tots time has around 45 attending each week including baby / toddler with parents / carers.
- * Trinity holds a ladies fellowship meeting each monday afternoon with around 20 ladies attending.
- * Trinity each week now works with over 40 different individuals and organisations in Ellesmere Port offering a diverse range of activities.
- * Trinity and Port Grocery collectively work with over 80+ volunteers from the local community.
- * Techy Coffee runs each Thursday morning and helps around 6 people each week with various questions about computers and mobile devices.
- * Trinity offers a diverse range of activities to the community including; two choirs, dance groups, art classes, craft groups, a mental health support group and much more.
- * "Glorious" - a family worship session runs each month on the third sunday.
- * Over 70 people attend Pilates / Zumba classes at Trinity improving their fitness and personal health.
- * Trinity hosts two foodbank sessions a week which provide emergency food supplies to those in need.
- * Trinity now offers a number of groups working around the area of health and wellbeing including; a relaxation group and a session seeking to raise individual's self esteem.
- * Trinity each week hosts counselling sessions around gambling addiction.
- * Trinity hosts support groups for Narcotics and alcohol Anonymous groups.
- * "Stillness" is held once a month and provides a quiet space with Bible readings and reflection.
- * Various agencies, including ForHousing and Macmillan Cancer Support use Trinity as a natural connection to the wider community and so will meet in the cafe area and meet the public.
- * Holy Port runs once a month seeking to focus on how our Christian faith meets contemporary issues.
- * Trinity's buildings are open early in the morning until late at night during the week and at various points during the weekend.

Nigel Mountford - Mission Development Officer March 2018