

No. 35: 'Holy Trinity – 10,000 Reasons....'

"His Grace proceeded to Greenhead, the seat of B. H. Allen, Esq., where he slept, and the following morning consecrated the beautiful Gothic Church just built there at the sole expense of Mr Allen. His Grace was highly gratified with the elegance and spaciousness of this truly important accession to the Established religion in that vicinity and we understand expressed himself in strong terms of approbation."



**Rt Rev Edward Venables
Vernon Archbishop of York
1807-1847**

The quote above is how the Leeds Intelligencer newspaper reported the start of the life of Holy Trinity Church which opened on Sunday October 10th 1819. The church was consecrated by Rt. Rev. Edward Venables Vernon, Archbishop of York, in whose diocese Huddersfield was at the time. This month we celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the consecration with a visit by our current diocesan Bishop, Rt. Rev Nick Baines, Bishop of Leeds.

In the 10,000 (approximately) Sundays in-between, the church has maintained the cycle of worship and witness. Holy Trinity has not got everything right but has sought to proclaim God's faithfulness over the past two centuries. There have been countless people who can bear witness to experiencing the presence of his loving kindness here.

The number 10,000 appears 45 times in the bible and is used symbolically to represent abundance, plenty and fertility. It speaks of the eternity of God's creation.

It is a pure coincidence that there are approximately 10,000 Sundays in 200 years and yet it is a reminder to us of how our history is just a small part of God's creation story where the church is called to a life of worship and witness.

At the service on October 13th when we shall celebrate 200 years of the life of Holy Trinity, we shall sing the song "Bless the Lord oh my soul", written by Matt Redmond in 2010. This song, based on Psalm 103:1-5 explores how we can never run out of reasons to worship and praise God. The song has become a firm favourite at Holy Trinity and was sung at Mike's licensing service in 2013.

***Bless the Lord, O my soul,
Worship His holy name
Sing like never before, O my soul
I'll worship Your holy name***

***The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning
It's time to sing Your song again
Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me
Let me be singing when the evening comes***

***You're rich in love and You're slow to anger
Your name is great and Your heart is kind
For all Your goodness, I will keep on singing
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find***

**And on that day when my strength is failing
The end draws near and my time has come
Still, my soul will sing Your praise unending
Ten thousand years and then forevermore**

The theme of the never-ending round of worship was taken up in the service of Evensong held last month to celebrate 200 years of worship at Holy Trinity. The 'offices' of Matins and Evensong formed the mainstay of the worship services at Holy Trinity for most of the life of the church and it was good to be able to recognise our musical heritage and welcome members from other churches to join with us to worship together.



In the service of Evensong we were reminded of another reference to the number 10,000 in the reading taken from Revelation 5:11-14, which talks about the eternal worship of heaven. The reading presents an extraordinary image of dazzling technicolour, light and sound, of the angelic host numbering in their thousands singing to the Lamb that was slain, joined by every living creature adding their voice and amen to the cacophony of praise.

It has been said many times, but remains true, that the church is not the building but the people. Our church building is 200 years old this month, but the people of the church are part of an eternal community called to worship and witness. The past 200 years have been the story of the people of this place called to add their voice and amen to the worship in their day. Our worship patterns have changed, we now may sing 'as never before' but worship of the true and living God is not about whether it is Evensong or Hillsong, worship isn't purely for us, rather it is the only appropriate response to declare again and again, the majesty of God.

The building of Holy Trinity Church was built to glorify God, at great expense and at the vision of its founder. In the words of the Intelligencier two hundred years ago it is, to my mind, still beautiful, elegant and spacious. It has been the base for our worship for 200

years through many changing periods of history. My prayer is that it continues to point to the creator God and draw people into the worship of his holy name.

Andy Barber
October '19

With thanks to Rev. Mike Wilkins for the use of material used in his sermon preached 22.9.19 at the Evensong service

This is the last of the monthly churchwarden's blogs, written to mark the 35 months of construction of the building of Holy Trinity between the laying of its foundation stone in December 1816 to the consecration of the church in October 1819. I hope you have enjoyed reading about the history, development and times of the church in these monthly snippets.