



## The Anglican Church of St Thomas, Kefalas

### *Reaching our Community through the Gospel message*

Welcome today and throughout **March 2020**

Thank you for sharing in worship with us.

### Getting Beyond “We Don’t Do God”

Back around 2003 Tony Blair, then the Prime Minister, was being interviewed by a magazine writer when the discussion turned to how Blair’s faith influenced his politics. Alastair Campbell, his Director of Communications, shut down that part of the interview by quietly saying to the PM, “We don’t do God.”



Remember these two?

This now infamous intervention has been interpreted in many ways. Campbell says that he was just cautioning the PM. He believed that a discussion about religion and politics was fraught, not least because he thought that the average person in Britain did not like to mix politics and religion. In saying this Campbell was not articulating anything particularly new. Since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century religion had gradually receded from being a driving force in UK politics, despite the Church of England being established by Parliament and the presence of 26 bishops in the House of Lords. Whereas 200 years ago the Conservatives were invariably supporters of the Church of England and the Liberals came from non-conforming denominations, such correspondence is long gone. There is no expectation today that the PM should be a member of the established church or even an active believer, despite the power 10 Downing has in appointing bishops and other senior church officials.

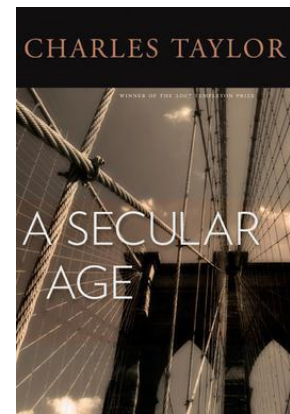
This is called secularization - the long movement of religion in western society from being a central fact in politics to where it is now, basically a private matter. Whereas the English Civil War was fought over the nature of the structure of the Church of England and the Divine Right of Kings, nowadays such

propositions just sound silly. We have diversity in faith matters, including agnosticism and atheism, and it doesn't actually affect policy.

The Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor, in his massive "A Secular Age" (2007), defines secularism in two ways. The first is the one above, the gradual move of religion from being central to politics. The second type of secularism is about the population in general becoming less religious. At best maybe 5% of the population in the UK (and in Canada) attends a church on any given Sunday. The numbers are higher in Ireland, Poland, and the United States, but the trend lines are all similarly downwards. People in the UK, Europe, and North America, generally just aren't as religious as their forebears.

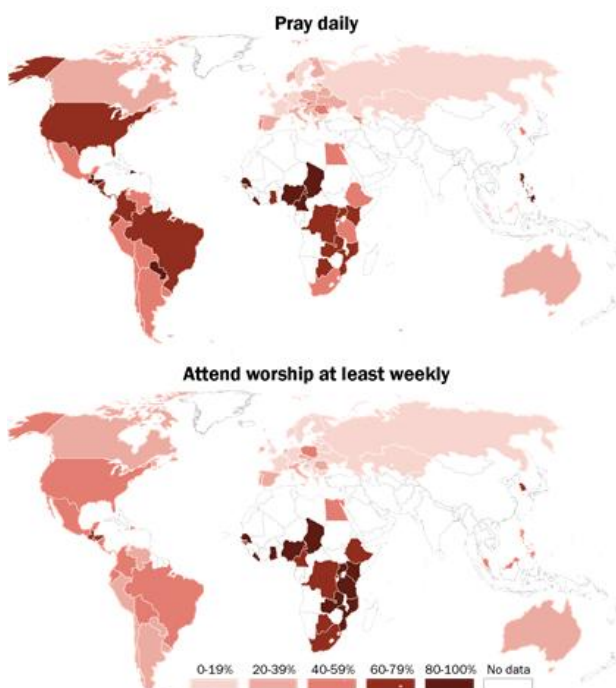
An example of this reality is the precipitous decline in the number of infants being baptised. In 2007 in the UK fewer than one in six of all infants was baptised, and in major cities the number had fallen to one in ten. I suspect that these statistics have only gotten worse in the thirteen years since those numbers were published. While part of the decline can be attributed to an influx of non-Christian immigrants, the reality is that what has really driven the decline is the fact that the infants' parents – who themselves probably were baptised – do not see the point of it. We've gone beyond even nominal Christianity. We are, as some have suggested, in a post-Christian secular society. Religion is seen more as a hobby, like bird watching or train-spotting – exciting for those who are enthusiasts, but otherwise not very important.

Charles Taylor spends 776 pages of his highly regarded book examining why this is, and his analysis of the past five hundred years of history and political philosophy is illuminating. He finds that this is a massive shift in the way Europeans and North Americans think. He describes it as a "dis-enchantment" of the world, in which there is no transcendence. While many people think it is just the natural progression arising from the development of science and education (the so called "secularization thesis") he argues that there was nothing inevitable about it. However, even as he describes the genealogy of secularism, and the apparent decline and transformation of the role of faith, he does not really suggest how the Church might respond. As a faithful Roman Catholic, Taylor believes that Christian faith is a good thing – but he has no prescription for how the Church might carry out its mission. He refers us to the wonder of existence and creation, the sense of the Holy Spirit moving through society and history, but he does not have a practical plan.



**Among Christians, worship attendance and prayer frequency highest in sub-Saharan Africa, lowest in Western Europe**

*% of Christians in each country who ...*



Source: Pew Research Centersurveys, 2008-2017

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

This has not stopped others from trying to say how to "fix" things. Some suggest that it is the Church that has lost its way. "If we only we had the right doctrine we would have the churches overflowing" some seem to suggest, wanting to turn back the clocks on the development of doctrine. Some advocate becoming like Holy Trinity Brompton in London (very evangelical and charismatic), and others like All Saints, Margaret Street (very Anglo-Catholic), also in London. Others suggest that we need up-beat music, or a return to the classic Anglican choral tradition. Some have had great success with hand-bell choirs. In some Anglican circles people advocate for the inclusion of LGBTQ+ persons, while others see such inclusion as the reason for decline. Some have started alternative "missional" gatherings, such as "Messy Church", or "Rave Church", or focus on "emergent churches."

In my humble opinion I suspect that all of these are answers, and perhaps very successful ones in particular local circumstances, but that none of them are THE answer. The fact is that the secularization of western society and the decline of religious adherence has been a trend of at least two centuries,

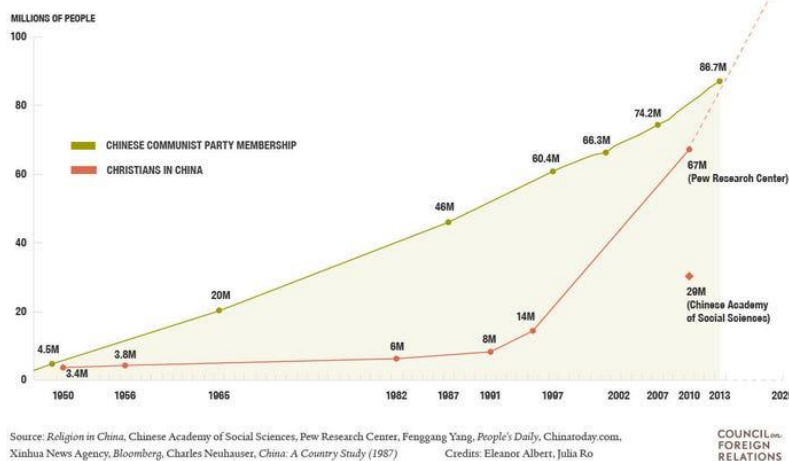
and the causes have less to do with any deficiencies in the churches than the attractiveness of secular alternatives: materialism, individualism, a distrust of institutions, the subversion of external authority in favour of personal autonomy, a love of the new over the traditional, and the denial of death.

And all too often the solution for many Christians is to play along with secularism. The “Prosperity Gospel” – which promises that if one is faithful to God then God will reward you with material wealth – is one such heresy. For others Christianity has become an institution to achieve personal fulfillment, but does not have any other significant social role. Some find the Christian faith a suitable way to import Marxian socio-economic critique and use it against governments. Others somehow meld Libertarianism with Christian faith, thereby removing themselves from any kind of meaningful community except those that they choose.

So is there a way forward?

A few things seem obvious to me. First, the historic faith, as expressed in the scriptures, the creeds, our liturgies, and as safeguarded by bishops, priests, and deacons – is still the faith we should proclaim. This historic faith is not something abstract, but like Jesus himself, is incarnate in the particularities of material existence. And Christianity in general is actually in good shape. There is a resilience to this 2000 year-old faith, which this past century has grown by leaps and bounds in Africa and Asia. The rise of secularism and the decline of the role of faith in western society has been more than countered by what is happening elsewhere in the world.

CHRISTIANITY GROWING IN CHINA?



Second, should it come, the revival of faith in Europe and North America will emerge unexpectedly. One hundred years ago Pentecostalism was a marginal movement in parts of the United States, led primarily by poor African-American congregations, and condemned by all the mainline churches; today it is an engine of growth in Africa and Asia, and it has jumped denominational boundaries into Catholicism, Anglicanism, and Lutheranism. Now, I do not believe the Charismatic movement will do this in western society, but if

anything brings back Christianity in our lands, it will be just as unexpected.

Third, the faith will grow not because of political establishments or popular leaders, but because of small groups of Christians gathering to pray, sharing their faith, and studying the scriptures. The growth of the church in China, often under great oppression, is largely due to the anonymous work of small groups in house churches.

I suspect that the truth is that Christians will in Europe and North America be spending much of the next century as a marginal force. We will need to learn to be Church with fewer resources, much more humble, and much more dependent on laity than the professional clergy. As God was poured out in Jesus, a seemingly insignificant peasant in an apparently marginal ethnic group, so the western Church will be poured out into the nooks and crannies of Britain, Ireland, the United States, and Canada. Whereas early Christianity faced much opposition, we face indifference. What will come of the Church will not be another version of Christendom, which dominated our culture from Constantine the Great to Victoria, Queen and Empress, but something different, unimaginable to us.

The call to us here, in Crete in the year of our Lord 2020, is to remain faithful, to radiate God's love in Christ here and beyond. The challenge of doing this is knowing that we have a destination but we do not exactly have a map, just as was the case when Moses led the people of Israel into Sinai. Moses and the

Israelites followed God, and trusted in the divine, and not without conflict and dissension. But eventually they got where they were going. May it be so for us.

The Rev'd Canon Bruce Bryant-Scott.  
Assistant Chaplain.

## **NEWS, REPORTS, FORTHCOMING EVENTS & INFORMATION**

### **PANCAKE PARTY REPORT**

On a beautiful Shrove Tuesday morning over 30 people arrived at the Tabernacle to enjoy 'PANCAKES GALORE'.  
Diana proved she has a strong right arm after tossing approx.80 pancakes. Our thanks go to Diana, and to Jo who did the Tea-bashing.

€170 was raised for Church funds. We look forward to next year's pancakes!

Val Holmes.

### **FORTHCOMING EVENTS:**



Doctors Ioannis and Manos from the Kalyves Medical Centre will carry out FREE testing again for Type 2 Diabetes. There is a big increase in the incidence of this serious disease, especially in older people, but if detected early (at the “pre-diabetic” stage) it can be prevented. Therefore this is a wonderful opportunity, not to be missed. Come along even if you took advantage of this testing when the doctors came to Kefalas over 2½ years ago. It is recommended that you have regular checks because things may have changed, and the doctors stress that if you have already been diagnosed with Diabetes Types 1 or 2, you should still come along as your medication may need adjustment, also there are new treatments available. Action *now* may mean that if you are found to be “pre-diabetic”, you will not go on to become diabetic.

**This will take place on Wednesday, March 4th at the Church from 2.30pm.**

Tea/Coffee with sandwiches and delicious homemade cakes will be served all the afternoon. €5 per head.

**TYPE 2 DIABETES IS A VERY SERIOUS CONDITION WHICH CAN LEAD TO:**  
HEART DISEASE & STROKE.  
LOSS OF FEELING & PAIN CAUSED BY NERVE DAMAGE.  
FOOT PROBLEMS – SORES & INFECTION.  
LOSS OF VISION & BLINDNESS.  
KIDNEY PROBLEMS.

The next Church Council Meeting will take place in early March, the exact date will be posted in the Tabernacle. If you have any issues which you would like to have discussed, please email me. See last page of this Newsletter for details.

The Annual General Meeting will be on Sunday, March 29th after the service.

### **EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 12TH.**

A 3 course Easter 'lamb' meal will be held in the Tabernacle at 1.00pm for 1.30pm.  
Cost per person is €12 and drinks will be available to purchase. All are welcome, and please bring your friends.

Please book your places at [dh0131@otenet.gr](mailto:dh0131@otenet.gr)  
Val Holmes.

## BELATED "THANK YOU'S"

We wish to thank Jan, Gill, Julia, Pat and Peter for their help in November with picking the olives in the Churchyard.

An extra thanks to Peter and Pat for all their help in giving the trees within the Church premises a light pruning, and for burning all the rubbish.

The total raised from the sale of olive oil and logs for Church funds is approx. €340.

Val and Dennis Holmes.

## **CHURCH CHARITIES:**

Many thanks to those of you who sent me their preferences for the 3 Charities which they would like to support in 2020. The result is as follows:

1. Touching the Tonga. 2. Anámnisi. 3. ELEPAP. 46 people are on the Congregational list – only 18 voted!

*Diana Silk.*

**VINTAGE ROSE Second Hand Shop,  
79 Sifaka Street. Chania. A/C 395  
(A map with the location of the shop is on the Church notice board).**

Please continue to take unwanted clean, *seasonal* clothing in good condition, shoes, accessories especially jewellery, books, DVDs, CDs, furniture and household items, tools, flower pots, pet accessories etc to the shop to raise funds for the Church. €70.50 was collected last month.

*Gill.*

**Reminder: Please collect all your plastic bottle tops and bring them to the Tabernacle for recycling to fund wheelchairs for the disabled.**  
**Also please remember the Social Supermarket: There is a large red plastic bowl in the Tabernacle for your donations of non-perishable goods.**

### CHURCH SERVICES INFORMATION FOR FEBRUARY 2020

Jan 28	MORNING PRAYER	2	-
Feb 02	HOLY COMMUNION	17	€ 95.00
Feb 04	MORNING PRAYER	2	-
Feb 09	HOLY COMMUNION	20	€ 115.00
Feb 11	MORNING PRAYER	3	-
Feb 16	HOLY COMMUNION	17	€ 100.10
Feb 23	HOLY COMMUNION	17	€ 100.00
<b>TOTAL FOR FEBRUARY</b>			<b>€ 410.10</b>

### CHURCH FINANCE INFORMATION FOR FEBRUARY 2020

EURO INCOME € 615.60  
TRANSFER FROM STERLING ACCOUNT € 1934.01

#### FIGURES AS AT 24/02/2020 (30 JANUARY – 24 FEBRUARY)

STERLING INCOME	BANKERS ORDERS	£ 425.00
	GIFT AID	£ 228.00
		£ 653.00
STERLING EXPENSES:		£ 0.00

#### FIGURES AS AT 27/01/2020 (01 JANUARY - 27 JANUARY)

The Diocese Office in London are currently inputting the Banking Figures for February so I will include these figures in the next Newsletter.

Thank you to everyone for your financial support. Mary Hurley.

## **CHURCH SERVICES IN MARCH 2020**

Sunday March 1st	Holy Communion	11am	Purple
Sunday March 8th	Holy Communion	11am	Purple
Sunday March 15th	Holy Communion	11am	Purple
Sunday March 22nd	Holy Communion	11am	Purple
Sunday March 29th	Holy Communion	11am	Purple

## **BIBLE READINGS FOR MARCH 2020**

<b>March 1, 2020</b>	<b>First Sunday of Lent</b>	(Purple)
Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7		
Psalm 32		
Romans 5:12-19		
Matthew 4:1-11		

<b>March 8, 2020</b>	<b>Second Sunday of Lent</b>	(Purple)
Genesis 12:1-4a		
Psalm 121		
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17		
John 3:1-17		

<b>March 15, 2020</b>	<b>Third Sunday of Lent</b>	(Purple)
Exodus 17:1-7		
Psalm 95		
Romans 5:1-11		
John 4:5-42		

<b>March 22, 2020</b>	<b>Fourth Sunday of Lent: Mothering Sunday</b>	(Purple)
Exodus 2:1-10		
Psalm 34:11-20		
Colossians 3:12-17		
John 19:25b-27		

<b>March 29, 2020</b>	<b>Fifth Sunday of Lent</b>	(Purple)
Ezekiel 37:1-14		
Psalm 130		
Romans 8:6-11		
John 11:1-45		

## **PRAYERNET**

Are you experiencing a rough patch in your life? We all have times when we are having problems, either healthwise, mentally or emotionally. Or do you know of someone who is in a difficult place at present? The Prayernet consists of people who pray for others in need, either for a week or two, or sometimes longer. If you would like the support of extra prayers, or would like to join the Prayernet to pray for others in need, please contact me. All this work is done by email and is confidential to the members of the Prayernet. The Prayernet is a vibrant, worldwide community of people who enjoy being able to support people through prayer. Do contact me for help or further information: [suewhitehouse1808@gmail.com](mailto:suewhitehouse1808@gmail.com) or on +3028253 00657

Sue.

**MARCH NEWSLETTER**

Please would you send any notices or articles for the **APRIL 2020** Newsletter to:  
Diana Silk at [tonydi@otenet.gr](mailto:tonydi@otenet.gr) by **MARCH 24th**

The Newsletter may be downloaded from the  
**Church website:** [theanglicanchurchincrete.co.uk](http://theanglicanchurchincrete.co.uk)  
**Church email:** [creteanglicans@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:creteanglicans@yahoo.co.uk)

**THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS, KEFALAS  
LEADERSHIP TEAM**

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Email: [bbryantscott@gmail.com](mailto:bbryantscott@gmail.com)

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**Deputy Church Warden: David Hurley 6946 691818**

**Church Council Members:**  
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Diana Silk, Pat Worsley,

**Secretary: Diana Silk 28250 23374 / 6949 102426** Email: [tonydi@otenet.gr](mailto:tonydi@otenet.gr)

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**Standing Committee: Rev. Canon Bruce Bryant-Scott, Val Holmes, Jan Lovell,**

**Fundraising Coordinator: Val Holmes**

**Publicity: David & Mary Hurley**

**Safeguarding Officer: Jo Cheslyn-Hall**