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Please visit our website  
<https://holytrinitychurchmadeira.org/>



## Holy Trinity Church Funchal



*Jasmine in Full Bloom – A Heady Scent*

*May 2026*



## CHAPLAIN'S NOTES — "LIFE WITH BRIAN..."

May 2026

"Where did I come from, Daddy?" – the question every father dreads, especially from a daughter, and never at a conveniently quiet moment!



"Ask your mother, dear" is the easy answer, but it is just possible that the questioner only wants to know something as simple as the place where s/he was born. How lucky is that?

At a somewhat deeper level, is a debate about our far distant origins, spurred on by the sort of discoveries that the Artemis 2 project is adding to currently. Somewhere in the background lie the facts which have produced the world/universe/us and here we are in the present with all its joys and woes, wonders and horrors. Some of these are natural, some man-made, and if the insurance companies are to be believed, some "acts" can still be attributed to God (in the hope of avoiding a pay-out!).

One thing is sure; we will always be possessed of the same curiosity which prompted the original question and spurs the sort of research that leads us onwards in our development beyond the known. It was the unknown that led Thomas to doubt the events that he was witness to after the Resurrection.

I was ordained on St Thomas' Day which used to be observed in December, but which to my annoyance was transferred to 3 July in the current lectionary! However, I retain a great empathy with the enquirers of this world, and once the questions are genuine and open and we are prepared to accept the answers even if they don't support the position we have held up to now, then we can stand alongside Thomas when Jesus said "reach out your finger/hand and *explore* my hands/side and be not faithless, but believe".

Jesus wants us to research and explore and ask and reason. Our curiosity is as much God-given as any other of our faculties, and to ask "why?" is critical to developing and growing as any child will tell you if given the opportunity.

To be "seen and not heard" doesn't help in this regard! "The Kingdom of God is (just) like a child" gives us a clue how to act on the new and exciting information we gain from sharing Thomas' newly reinforced faith. The world wasn't so different in his day, and the challenge the followers of the Way of Jesus presented to it was just as sharp then as it should be now.

Ask the questions and enjoy the consequences!

May your God go with you.

Brian McAvoy

## CONCERT PROGRAMME AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

**CONCERTS** English Church & Garden  
Rua do Quebra Costas, 18  
Inf.: +351969581525

<b>VIOLIN CLASSICS</b> Olga Samara (Violin) A. Ladetschikov (Piano)	<b>Monday</b> 18:00 Classical Violin Concertos and Romantic Pieces from the 19th Century
<b>The Swinging 60s</b> Orchestra Quartet	<b>Tuesday</b> 18:00 Simon & Garfunkel Rolling Stones The Monkees The Temptations
<b>IRISH MUSIC</b> Viols Guitar Cello Flute	<b>Tuesday</b> 20:30 Music from Riverdance-Show Firedance, Danny Boy Amazing Grace The Reel from "Secret Garden"
<b>Broadway MUSICALS</b> Gal Nussen (Soprano) Violin Piano	<b>Wednesday</b> 18:00 Les Misérables, Cats, West Side Story, My Fair Lady, Wicked The Phantom of the Opera
<b>BEATLES</b> Orchestra Trio In A Classical Way	<b>Thursday</b> 18:00 A Day in the Life When I'm 64 Eleanor Rigby Hey Jude, Imagine Here Comes the Sun
<b>Open Air CLASSICAL</b> Orchestra Trio	<b>Friday</b> 11:00 Waltz of the Flowers Pachelbel - Canon Vivaldi - Storm "Figaro Overture" Bach - Double Concerto
<b>Legendary ROCK</b> Orchestra Quartet Rock violin solo	<b>Friday</b> 18:00 Led Zeppelin, AC/DC U2, Pink Floyd, Queen, Guns N' Roses,
<b>RAGTIME</b> 1900-1920 Old Jazz Trumpet Violin Piano	<b>Saturday</b> 14:00 Scott Joplin, G. Gershwin Georgia On My Mind Checko Check All of Me When the Sun Goes Down Tiger Rag - Aunt Mitchell
<b>PIANO Miniatures</b> Andrei Ladetschikov	<b>Sunday</b> 16:00 Beethoven - Für Elise Grieg - Sørøysen's Song Waltzes, Nocturne by Chopin Brahms - Intermezzo, F Liszt
<b>SPECIAL PROGRAMS</b> Check by QR Code:	<b>Saturdays &amp; Sundays</b> 18:00 Tickets 20€

**CONCERT OF IRISH MUSIC**  
BY "WOOD-TRIO"

**Tuesdays At 8:30 At the ENGLISH CHURCH**

- Music from Riverdance-Show
- Firedance
- Danny Boy
- The Reel from "Secret Garden"
- Amazing Grace
- Tubular Bells

TICKETS 20€  
RUA DO QUEBRA COSTAS, 18  
PAY AT ARRIVAL OR BOOK BY +351969581525

Please note that The Church does not accept any responsibility for changes that the musicians may make to their weekly concerts.

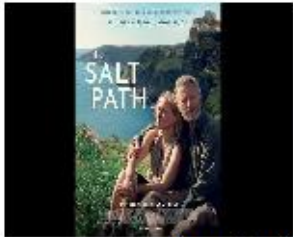
# HOLY TRINITY CHURCH FUNCHAL

Rua da Carreira 20

Themed meals and film reviews

\*\*\*NONE IN JUNE 2026\*\*\*

Sat. July 4<sup>th</sup> 6.30p.m.



*The Salt Path* follows a married couple who, after losing their home and facing a terminal illness diagnosis, set out on a 630-mile trek along England's South West Coast Path. Their journey becomes both a physical challenge and an exploration of resilience, nature, and companionship. Praised for Gillian Anderson and Jason Isaacs' performances and striking cinematography, it offers a heartfelt if sometimes unevenly paced adaptation of Raynor Winn's memoir.

Menu. Cornish Pasties, Salad/ Strawberries and cream

Sat July 25<sup>th</sup> 6.30p.m.

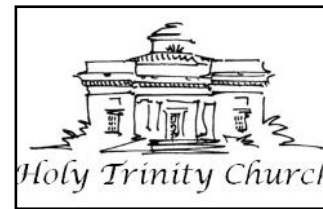
*Cinema Paradiso* is a nostalgic coming-of-age drama set in a Sicilian village, where young Toto forms a deep bond with Alfredo, the local cinema's projectionist, sparking a lifelong love of movies. Decades later, now a successful filmmaker, Toto reflects on their friendship's impact. Praised for its emotional depth, evocative cinematography, and Ennio Morricone's score, it's a heartfelt ode to cinema that is widely regarded as timeless classic worth watching

Menu Scicilian Pasta/Tiramasu



20 euros on the night

Please book through Friends Secretary Jean Faulkner at least three days before event ([friendssecretaryhtc2026@gmail.com](mailto:friendssecretaryhtc2026@gmail.com)) **NEW E MAIL**



## Things Conspire Against Us

The World Day of Prayer has become a permanent fixture in our Church Calendar for the month of March. We sit in the sun using the stage in the garden to listen and learn about Christians from around the world. This year it was the turn of the women of Nigeria to provide the order of service. We looked forward to once again sitting in the sun to join in prayer with others around the world.

The day arrived, grey, cloudy/overcast with the threat of rain. It was cold, damp, more Northern European than Madeiran. Our musician forgot to turn up, so things weren't going well. Fortunately Andrew Twiddy stepped up to the mark or should say the piano and after a few minutes of practise, we began our service in the Lady Chapel with a smaller number than usual but we enjoyed a special time learning about being a Christian in Nigeria.

We thank everyone who attended and contributed. Hopefully normal service will resume next year when we can once again sit in the sun.





# Wedding Bell(e)s!



One of the loveliest things we do at Holy Trinity is to bless/confirm/renew marriage vows for couples who have special links with Madeira. It's something beautiful on every occasion. The couples come from all backgrounds and ages, the one thing in common is the relationship they have with the island.

The event can take place in the church, quietly or with a large gathering of friends and family. There's often a reception in our beautiful gardens (thank you, Tuesday gardening team!) and some memorable photographs are taken and prized memories created.



Often, there's music provided by some of the musicians who are known for the weekly concerts in the church and the gardens. Altogether, wonderful strengthening of love and the bonds that hold us together. We're very privileged to be part of such intimate moments in people's lives. Long may it continue, here is a sample of some of the photos:

**Brian**



concrete pillars over the ocean. For one magnificent, bowel-loosening moment, you are convinced you are landing in the sea. And then — THUMP. Rubber meets concrete. The reverse thrusters roar. The plane decelerates with the urgency of someone who's just remembered the runway has an end. Applause erupts throughout the cabin. This is not an exaggeration. People genuinely clap when you land in Funchal. Not polite golf claps, either. Full, enthusiastic, we-just-survived-something applause. The kind of applause usually reserved for encores and rescue helicopters.

The British woman is crying. Derek is staring straight ahead with the expression of a man who has seen God and God was a Portuguese pilot. I applaud too. Every single time. Because no matter how many times you do it, landing in Funchal never becomes routine.

The Airport Formerly Known As Santa Catarina. Once your legs remember how to function, you step off the plane and into Cristiano Ronaldo International Airport — renamed in 2017 after Madeira's most famous son. There's a bust of him inside that's become almost as famous as the airport itself, though for entirely different reasons. The original bronze bust made him look like he'd been stung by a swarm of bees whilst having an allergic reaction. They've since replaced it with a more flattering version, which is either an improvement or a loss for comedy, depending on your perspective.

The airport itself is actually quite modern and efficient, which feels wrong after what you've just experienced. You want drama. You want a medal. You want someone to hand you a brandy and say "well done." Instead, you get a luggage carousel and a Europcar desk. A Brief History of Near-Misses. The original runway, built in 1964, was only 1,600 metres long. Let me put that in perspective: a modern commercial aircraft ideally wants about 2,500 metres. So they were landing jets on a runway roughly the length of a vigorous jog. In 2000, they extended it — over the ocean, on those now-iconic concrete pillars — to its current 2,781 metres.

This was considered a vast improvement, which tells you everything about how terrifying the original was. Before the extension, only specially trained pilots could attempt the landing, and flights were frequently diverted to Porto Santo (Madeira's smaller, flatter, significantly less dramatic sister island) when conditions were deemed too challenging. "Too challenging for Funchal" is a bar so high that most airports couldn't see it with binoculars. Even now, with the extended runway and modern aircraft, go-arounds are not uncommon. A go-around is aviation terminology for "we tried to land, the wind said no, and we're going to fly around and try again."

I've personally experienced three go-arounds in Funchal. Each one added a new grey hair. I'm running out of space for grey hairs. Why We Keep Coming Back. Here's the thing, though. As the adrenaline fades and you collect your rental car and drive along the VR1 towards Funchal (or west, towards Calheta, if you're heading to family like I do), Madeira begins to work its magic.

The air hits you first. Warm, humid, tinged with eucalyptus and ocean salt. Then the views — those impossible, vertiginous views of terraced hillsides tumbling into the sea. The banana plantations. The bougainvillea cascading over stone walls. The old men sitting outside cafés drinking poncha and discussing football with the intensity of UN diplomats. And you think: yes. That landing was worth it. That landing is ALWAYS worth it, because Madeira isn't just an island. It's a place that demands a dramatic entrance. And Cristiano Ronaldo International Airport — with its crosswinds, its ocean-spanning runway, and its ability to turn atheists into believers in approximately 90 seconds — delivers exactly that.

Practical Tips for the White Knuckle Experience- Sit on the left side of the aircraft for the best views of the coastline approach. Sit on the right if you prefer not to see what's happening.- Window seat vs aisle: Window if you want the full experience. Aisle if you value plausible deniability about what's happening outside.- Don't fly on an empty stomach, but also don't eat anything you'd rather not see again.- The applause is mandatory. Even if you're too shaken to move your hands, at least nod appreciatively at the pilot.- If the flight gets diverted to Porto Santo, consider it a bonus. Porto Santo has a beautiful 9km beach and significantly fewer near-death experiences.

## A light-hearted well written post doing the rounds on social media. Passed on by Tobi Hughes

There are airports, and then there is Cristiano Ronaldo International Airport. Yes, they named it after a footballer. No, that is not the most terrifying thing about it.

The most terrifying thing about it is that the runway was built on the side of a volcanic island in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, extended over the sea on 180 concrete pillars, and regularly visited by crosswinds that would make a seagull reconsider its life choices. They call it the "white knuckle airport." They are not being dramatic.

Lisbon: The Calm Before the Storm. It starts innocently enough. Humberto Delgado Airport in Lisbon. Gate 47. A TAP Air Portugal Airbus doing its best impression of a trustworthy aircraft. The flight time reads 1 hour 35 minutes, which seems perfectly civilised. You board. You sit down.

The couple next to you are British tourists wearing matching sun hats and radiating the sort of holiday optimism that only people who've never landed in Funchal can possess. "Madeira!" she says to him, clutching a guidebook. "The flower island! So romantic!"

I smile. I say nothing. I've done this flight more times than I can count. I know what's coming. The First Hour: A Masterclass in False Security. For roughly 80 minutes, everything is delightful. The Airbus purrs along at 37,000 feet. The cabin crew distribute tiny sandwiches and those miniature bottles of wine that make you feel like a giant. The sky is blue. The Atlantic glitters below like someone spilled a continent's worth of sequins. You could be forgiven for thinking this is just a pleasant little hop from the mainland to a subtropical paradise. The in-flight magazine shows photos of levada walks, botanical gardens, and poncha cocktails. Everything is serene. Everything is fine.

And then the captain makes an announcement. "Ladies and gentlemen, we are beginning our descent into Funchal. Please return to your seats and ensure your seatbelts are fastened." "A pause." "Conditions at the airport are... within normal parameters." "That pause told you everything you needed to know.

"Within normal parameters" at Funchal means winds that would constitute a weather warning anywhere else. It means the runway is 2,781 metres of concrete perched between mountains and ocean, with a lovely sheer drop at the end should anything go slightly wrong. The British couple are still smiling. Bless them. The Descent: Where Religion Gets Popular Very Quickly.

The plane banks left and suddenly Madeira appears through the window — a great volcanic fortress rising from the ocean, its peaks shrouded in cloud, its cliffs dropping vertically into frothing Atlantic surf. It looks like something from a fantasy film. It also looks like absolutely nowhere sensible to land an aircraft. The approach into Funchal is not like other approaches. In most airports, you descend gradually, the runway appearing in the distance, growing larger and more reassuring with each passing second. In Funchal, the runway doesn't appear until you're essentially already on it. First, you fly along the coastline, admiring the terraced hillsides and red-roofed villages from a height that feels increasingly inappropriate. Then the plane turns sharply — and I mean SHARPLY — towards the runway, which materialises between a mountain on one side and the Atlantic Ocean on the other.

The wind hits. I don't mean a gentle breeze. I mean the kind of sideways gust that makes the aircraft do things aircraft should not do. The wings dip. The fuselage shudders. The overhead bins rattle with the enthusiasm of a percussion section. The British woman grabs her husband's arm. "Derek," she says, her voice two octaves higher than before. "Derek, the wing is wobbling." "Derek says nothing. Derek is gripping the armrest with a force that could crush coal into diamonds. The Final Approach: A Religious Experience.

Here's what nobody tells you about Funchal airport: the pilots who fly this route are absolute legends. They have to undergo special training just to be certified for this approach. They're essentially the Formula 1 drivers of commercial aviation, threading a 70-tonne aircraft through crosswinds and mountain turbulence with the casual precision of someone parallel parking. The plane drops. Your stomach stays at the altitude you just left. The runway rushes up — that famous extended platform on its forest of



## *Get Me to the Church On Time!*





*April Showers — Easter Flowers*  
*Courtesy of the Flower Team*



**Funchal to Monte — The Old Way**

My son told me, “you can’t just sit around doing nothing, now that you’re retired, you need to find yourself a hobby rather than just listening to Korean Pop Music all the time!” So in the last six years, I have made 5 model railways, for myself and for others. The latest is nearing completion, a Japanese Bullet Train or Shinkansen if you prefer. (I am on first name terms with the local DHL personnel and can get stuff from Japan quicker than anywhere in Europe).

So, I thought I might share my research on the next project.

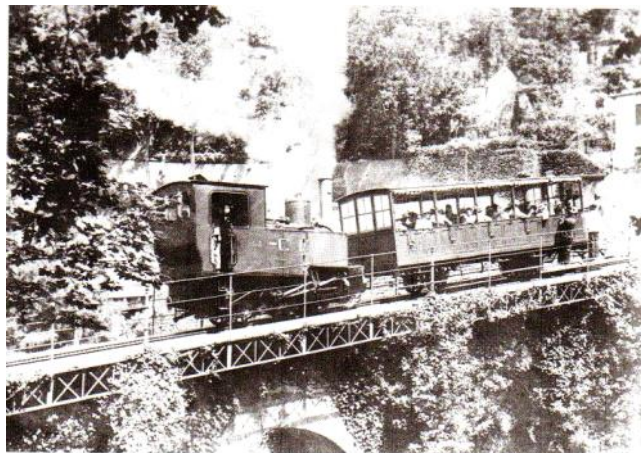


*I found out recently that there is an Austrian model railway manufacturer that makes a model of the train that went from Funchal to Monte, so guess where this is heading!*

The Monte Railway or Caminho de Ferro do Monte was designed in the 1880’s and the railway was built in stages between 1893 and 1912. The line initially was between the terminus at Pombal and Levada de Santa Luzia, only a 5 minute journey by train. A

year later it was extended, after extensive earth works, to Atalhinho in Monte. By July 1912 the line had reached Terreiro da Luta, 850m above sea level and 3.9km from Funchal. The railway company built a 400 seater restaurant at the summit for the visitors.

Unfortunately the railway company found it difficult to find financing as early as 1910 and



rolling stock wasn’t replaced. With ageing trains, the woes of the company worsened when a locomotive boiler exploded causing 4 deaths and many injuries amongst the 56 passengers in September of 1919. A derailment in January 1932 added to the woes and tourists and locals began to shun the railway. The final train ran in April of 1943.

Graham Faulkner

*The old track bed can be walked from Monte Station to Terreiro da Luta.*

# Friends of Holy Trinity

This couple are Friends of HTC. When we first were introduced they were Susan Dilkes and Paul Knight and they planned to get married at HTC. Sadly they were unable to come when they heard that Paul had a serious illness. They were immediately placed on our prayer list at HTC .



They were pleased to tell us that they were able to be married just before Paul started treatment. Surprisingly they turned up at HTC for the service a few weeks ago. Paul was responding well to the treatment and they were able to introduce themselves as Mr and Mrs Knight and thanked us for the prayers. We were delighted to see them. Any of our Friends needing prayer can send me an e mail

friendssecretaryhtc2026@gmail.com  
( Please note this new e mail address)  
Jean Faulkner

*The Garden Reception is the perfect place to catch up with friends now that the sun has decided to shine*



We are very proud of our Eco Church Silver Award. If the Selection Committee found out that we are growing our own Coffee Table, we might well get the Gold Award. If not, then surely we are in line to get at least a Silver-Gilt from RHS Chelsea. On second thoughts, let's scrub that, the transportation costs for that tree are going to be prohibitive.



## EASTER AT HOLY TRINITY 2026

Easter Sunday and Holy Week events were well attended this year. The Revd. Annie Church was our Locum during this time.

We started on Palm Sunday with the usual Blessing of the Palms except that this year we went back to the way we did in years past. That was that everyone came together outside the church and the blessing was done from there. Then we processed in to the first Hymn.

We held the usual Wednesday 10.30 said Holy Eucharist.

On Maunday Thursday we celebrated The last Supper. This again was done as we did many years ago with a very informal Family Eucharist around the long table in the Trinity Room which had no table cloth just the plain wood. First we had a lentil soup (Jacob's Soup) made only with ingredients which would have been found at the time of Christ and of course a glass of wine as well !!! The Chalice and the Patten were of pottery and we used home made unleavened bread which we passed from one to another after The Revd. Annie had consecrated it. We then went to the church to strip the Altars etc, while Psalm 22 was read out and we stayed on for a quiet time.

Good Friday was celebrated with the Stations of the Cross around the garden. It was well attended as you can see from the photo and we had a wonderful surprise because at the end Meryll presented us with some of her home made Hot Cross Buns, so thank you Meryll for that.

**Saturday was quiet !!!**

Easter Sunday we processed in as usual with no lights on, along with the Pascal Candle which was then placed in its holder, blessed and lit from the Easter Fire which had already been blessed at the 09.00 said Eucharist. Then the rest of the candles were lit in the church, the lights switched on and the service carried on in the usual way. As well as our Garden Reception afterwards there were baskets of small Easter Eggs for the congregation to help themselves to. I would like to thank our two Ukranian Soldiers who come to us from time to time and for the two typical Easter Cakes that they gave us from their country.

Jonathan Pestana – Calvert

Worship Leader

