

The Parish Church of St Paul, Beckenham, BR3 1RB

FORWARD

Parish Newsletter



Sharing God's love revealed in Jesus Christ

Vicar: Vacancy

Children and Family Worker: Kim Curle (cfw@stpaulbeckenham.org.uk)

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Hall bookings: Juliet – 020 8658 6710

Families Together at St Paul's

The next sessions of our monthly Bible-based after-school event for children and families, under the new leadership (see inside) are on Thursday 9th February and Thursday 9th March.

Children with their parents or carers are warmly invited to join us for an action-packed programme of creative activity including crafts, singing, games, prayers, colourful animation of our featured Bible story on the big screen – and loads of fun!

PLUS the highlight of a sit-down tea for all!

There's no need to pre-register, simply turn up on the day! Sessions run from 4-6pm, with the Welcome café open from 3.45pm, so come early and join the fun! It's only £2.50 per child per session.

More information from St Paul's Church Office
on 020 8650 0501

Dear Friends

Did you, I wonder, make any new year's resolutions? If so, how are you doing? I hope you have been more successful than me. A few years ago I signed up for the gym. A very cool and well-toned fitness instructor demonstrated how to use the various bits of kit. ('This is going to be all right', I thought!) The gym was crowded but, seeing my dismay at the number of people there, my instructor said: 'Don't worry about that; everyone's really keen now because they've made new year's resolutions; there won't be nearly so many people here come February.' And he was right. There were fewer people in February – and fewer again in April. And fewer in June? I never found out because I'm ashamed to say that I'd given up by then!

A common story. But new year's resolutions say something interesting about us. First, that hardwired into our system is this desire to improve ourselves, whether it is to become better athletes, cooks, gardeners, or simply, but more profoundly, better human beings. Secondly, that we fail, time and time again to achieve the ambitious goals we set ourselves.

It's ever thus! Writing 2000 years ago the apostle Paul was surely echoing the experience of us all when he said that some power within him kept sabotaging his best intentions. 'I obviously need help', he goes on 'I realise that I don't have what it takes. I can *will* it but I can't *do* it... I've tried everything and nothing helps. Is there no-one who can do anything for me?'

He went on to answer his own question: 'The answer is that Jesus Christ can and does help. In Jesus, God personally took on the human condition and entered the disordered mess of struggling humanity in order to set it right for once and for all.'

What Paul was basically saying is that change is possible, even to those of us who are struggling, if we look to the source of change, Jesus.

Some people think that church is only for respectable people. But if you look at the life of Jesus you'll see that it was the unrespectable people that he was particularly drawn to: the law-breakers, prostitutes, those who were on the margins of society. The truth is that church is for those of us who know we've got it wrong; because in Jesus we can be given a fresh start – we can be changed, not just for the new year, but for life! If you are not already at a church, do come and visit us – we would love to meet you. (Even if you are 'respectable'!)

In the meantime, keep up the good work at the gym – and Happy New Year!

Sue Algeo
Reader at St Paul's

Would you like someone to pray with or for you? Are you housebound, and unable to get to church? Would you like a home visit or to receive Holy Communion? Please contact Juliet on 020 8658 6710 or Anne on 020 8658 0808.

St Paul's Community Choir will perform Gabriel Faure's Requiem at St Paul's Church at 4pm on Sunday 5th March. Free entry with a retiring collection. Everybody very welcome. Further details from David Storey (020 8663 9441)

Quiz Night - on Saturday 11th February, 6.30 for 7pm. Proceeds to Christian Aid. Tickets £10; under-18s £5. Includes ploughman's supper but BYO drink. Please contact the Church Office if you would like a ticket.

Save the date – 13th May, return of Cameo, an evening of music from popular opera and musicals.

St Paul's Pre-school is looking for a **part-time Finance Officer**. For more information please contact Maria Crowe 07720 631982.

Farewell and Thank You - Kim Curle, our Children and Family Worker at St Paul's, sadly comes to the end of her contract on 31st January. We are very grateful to her and her husband John for all their work over the past three years, especially through establishing the Families Together after-school activity, which has proved very popular with children and families. Kim says, *"It has been a special privilege to work with the children and families and to get to know them, as well as valuing the link with the community through leading assemblies in the local schools. John and I move on with thankful hearts, conscious of God's many blessings. We will miss everyone at St Paul's but leave the work in good hands for the future"*. Kim is pleased to announce that she has been appointed Families Missioner at St George's Bickley in partnership with The Church of the Annunciation, Chislehurst and will commence her work there on 1st March.

What's on in the hall at St Paul's (please check dates/times)

Monday 7pm	Bridge Club
Tuesday 2pm (2 nd & 4 th week)	Townswomen's Guild
Tuesday 6pm and 7pm	Pilates
Wednesday 2.45 pm (term-time)	Wednesday Fellowship
Thursday 10 – 11.30am (term-time)	Babies and Toddlers Group
Tues & Wed am/Mon & Fri all day (term-time)	St Paul's Pre-School
Saturday 10am (1 st Saturday)	Gardening Team
Saturday 10am (1 st Saturday)	Bereavement Group (please check office for venue)

Services at St Paul's

Details of the weekly services and what's on can also be found on the three noticeboards outside the church and on our website: www.stpaulbeckenham.org.uk

Every Sunday 8.00am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) in the Chapel **

Sunday 29th January

10.30am All Age Service
4.00pm Evening Worship (in the Chapel **)

Sunday 5th February

10.30am Holy Communion *
4.00pm Evening Worship (in the Chapel **)

Sunday 12th February

10.30am Morning Worship *
4.00pm Evening Praise (in the Chapel **)

Sunday 19th February

10.30am Holy Communion *
4.00pm The 4 O'Clock. An informal service with contemporary worship

Sunday 26th February

10.30am All Age Service
4.00pm Holy Communion (in the Chapel **)

Wednesday 1st March – Ash Wednesday

8.00pm Holy Communion

Sunday 5th March

10.30am Holy Communion *
4.00pm Evening Worship (in the Chapel **)

Sunday 12th March

10.30am Morning Worship *
4 or 6.30pm Evening Worship (in the Chapel **)

* During the 10.30am service there is a crèche for babies and toddlers. There is also "Sunday Squad" for primary school age children, with crafts and activities (except at All Age Services). SPY (St Paul's Youth) meets on 1st and 3rd Sundays (in term-time).

** The Chapel is accessed through the main Church entrance.

Bible Reading and Prayer – St Paul's Church is open every Monday –Thursday, 9.30 - 10.00am. There is a time of prayer, Bible reading and reflection in the Chapel. All are very welcome.