

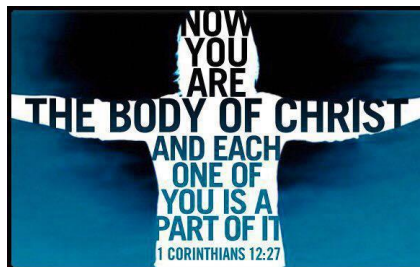
ST PAUL'S CHURCH



REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2021

THE VICAR'S REPORT

One of the things that always amazes me as I look at the notice-sheet each week, is just how much goes on here, in a relatively small Church. We do a lot! You do a lot, and I am truly grateful to all of you who contribute to the life of this Church.



And it reminded me of that famous passage in 1 Corinthians 12 (and the similar passage in Romans 12) that describes the Church by using the image of the body. The Church, like a human body, has many parts, each different, each with a different function, and with different gift appropriate to that function. And each one is needed; each one of us has a part to play, and each one of us can, and should, serve God and the Church in some way or other.

And reading through this Annual Report is a reminder of the same thing. So many things going on; so many people helping in so many ways. Thank you to each one of you that serves. I am truly grateful to you.

And to those of you who are not serving, or not doing so much, may I take this opportunity to encourage you to get involved and to do your part.

The reality is that when we all serve, the load on each of us is actually lessened. So please read this report and, as you do so, ask God and ask yourself, 'How can I get more involved in serving God and His Church?'

A lot of 'Thank-Yous'

Reading through this report is an inspiration to me, and I see how many of you serve in so many ways.



The catering team, for example, do a fantastic job and are a key part of the welcome that we offer to Church members and visitors alike. Thank you.

I would like to say a massive thankyou to our two Church Wardens, Graham and Laurel. Their support and work for the Church are invaluable. They are a wonderful support to me and such a blessing to the Church.

I'm sorry to say that we have not been able to find anyone to stand as warden next year, now that it is time for Graham to step down. The PCC have discussed this and agreed that we need to set up a group, of ex-wardens and PCC members (and others) who will plug the gap. Please be willing to step forward and to help out more. We will need to pull together and to work together at this time.

I am also immensely grateful to our wonderful Parish Administrator, Joanne Griffiths. She has served the church as administrator for over 20 years and is such a blessing and a help to me and to us all. I am so thankful for her. As most of you know, she is giving up this role in the coming months, and I am delighted to say that her successor, Kate Shrimpton, will start work in May, initially working alongside Joanne and then, in due course, taking over completely. Joanne's will be hard shoes to fill, she is an excellent, efficient and knowledgeable administrator, and I am just so thankful to her for everything.

I am also grateful to so many others of you: to Diane our wonderful Verger; to our servers Susan and Jane; to Ian our reader; John our organist; Jane our treasurer; to our PCC. Indeed, to any and all of you who serve God as part of the body of Christ, thank you. We really would be lost without you.

I am also immensely grateful to David who does so much to keep our churchyard bright, colourful, and welcoming. He is such a blessing to us all.

The Parish Hall Committee have done an amazing work maintaining and letting the hall and, as you will read, refurbishing the annex. I am so grateful to them all for what they do to serve God, the Church and the community.

And then there are the many small groups that meet and that provide valuable fellowship, company, support and spiritual nourishment: The home Bible-study groups; Mothers' Union; Women's Fellowship; Knit and Natter; the flower-arrangers. They each help to make our community into a loving and caring, nurturing and supportive fellowship. Thank you all.

Giving and the AV System

One particular thing that I must give thanks for is the new Audio-Visual (AV) system. Many of you gave generously to make this possible - thank you. It really will help us in so many ways to enhance our worship and it already makes it possible to live-stream our services at the push of a button. I am truly grateful to you Church members for your generosity.



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Special thanks must also go to Graham who has been so key in getting the faculty and in putting the system in place; to Brian Dale whose knowledge and helpfulness are so vital, and to our wonderful AV operating team. I am so grateful to you all.

Which all brings me back to 1 Corinthians 12, where Paul reminds us that, "*to each one a manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good*" (v7); and that, "*just as the body ..has many parts ..so it is with Christ*" (that is, with the Church; v12). We all have a part to play in the body of Christ, and we all have gifts to bring. Thank you to all those of you who use your gifts for the common good, and may we all do so all the more. Because when we all serve, the load on each of us is correspondingly less.

Thank you all for your fellowship, your worship, your service and your love, now and for the years to come.

Luke



FROM THE TEAM RECTOR:

THiS Team Matters

*Trusting in the Father, Honouring the Son,
Serving in the Spirit*

Are we in recovery or still riding (or submerged under) another wave? Are we, indeed, waving or drowning?! Many of us will have gone through such a range of emotions during 2021 that it is complex to look back on such a momentous year. It is already hard to remember quite what it was like in the worst of COVID. Perhaps we look back with some nostalgia to the time when, however bad things were, we all understood where we were, what was allowed and at least things were clear. But as we emerge into a post-Covid world we have much to celebrate and for which to be thankful.

Each church had its own particular challenges and opportunities which were met in different ways but the sense (especially at Clergy level) of support and combining for the good of all was a real encouragement. Operating online gave THiS Team a new impetus as clergy provided much appreciated daily acts of worship and other services all available from our very own YouTube Channel. We took advantage of Zoom too in our 'Thy Kingdom Come' nightly calls reflecting on the persecuted church. In person we said farewell to Rev David Nyirongo and to Safiya, Kamran, Judah and Seraphine as David's three-year contract at St George's came to an end. David's infectious smile and energy was greatly appreciated both at St George's but also across the Team. His commitment and love for people and the Lord and his enthusiasm prepared the ground wonderfully as St George's then welcomed Rev Nicholas Lebey along with Evelyn, Joshua, Gabriel and Elizabeth to the Team. As a training curate Nicholas' time is partly taken up with varied training requirements and his studies but we are all benefitting from his godliness, warmth and depth of Christian experience.

As Christians we believe our hope is assured but none of us know quite how that will pan out in the here and now. There are some dire predictions about the sustainability of churches in today's world which we can't afford to be deaf to, but which we have to hold in tension with the promises of Scripture. So let us hold onto the truth that *'Jesus doesn't change—yesterday, today, tomorrow, he's always totally himself. Don't be lured away from him by the latest speculations about him. The grace of Christ is the only good ground for life.'* (Hebrews 13.8-9, The Message).

I would like to end this short piece by thanking you for reading to the end (!) but mostly for your contribution to the life and ministry of St Paul's, St George's and St Matthew's and together THiS Team. Many people have given sacrificially of their time, their talents and financially to support our churches and to further the work of God's Kingdom in Tolworth, Hook and Surbiton. This is often done quietly and generously and I thank you.

Rev Helen Hancock

BAPTISMS 2021



We were unable to hold baptism services at the beginning of the year but from June onwards were able to catch up by holding two baptisms per month. Majority of our postponed baptism have now taken place or are scheduled to take place in 2022.

The baptism families come to be introduced to the congregation on the first Sunday of the month and then again on the third Sunday of the following month to be formally welcomed into the family of the Church and presented with 'My First Bible' and certificates for their baptism and for each of their Godparents.

During 2021 we welcomed the following children to baptism: *Reggie, Harry, Freddie, Aaron, Jessica, Aurelia, Sophia, Chloe and Oliver.*

CATERING TEAM

We have had a very quiet year due to Covid restrictions. We were able to hold our Harvest Festival Lunch in the church and we were able to be very sociable.

At the All-Soul's Service in November, we had very light refreshments, people were pleased to be made so welcome.

Throughout the year, we were able to hold Thursday morning refreshments when we had services. Thank you to everyone who helps on the rota, and those who donate to our raffle each week.

Last year we raised just over £300 on refreshments and raffle.

Diane Tink, Verger

THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

The
Children's
Society

No child
should feel
alone

It was lovely to once again be able to hold our main event to support 'The Children's Society' charity. This year's Box Opening Day was held on Saturday 9th October 2021 at St Paul's Centre. The large amount of small change from the boxes was counted and totalled £1959-67, an increase of £137.83 on last year's total! Christmas cards were on sale and there was also a raffle, lunch and refreshments to enjoy. A further £266-27 was sent to The Children's Society from this.

A speaker, from The Children's Society, explained the work of the society to the congregation at Sunday service in October and as a result some new box holders were recruited, however if anyone else would like to help us raise funds for The Children's Society, please speak to Graham or Jill Cocks and they will let you have a box to start collecting in.

Our support will help change the lives of extremely vulnerable children across the country and shows our love and care for all.

Sarah (Earl), Vanessa (Kearns) & Nigel Ling

CHURCHWARDENS

At the APCM in April 2021 we welcomed Laurel Devadasan as my fellow Churchwarden, having been without a second Warden for the previous two years.



Last year was again dominated by Covid and the accompanying restrictions. However, we did not have the lengthy lockdown that we had in 2020 and managed a much more normal service pattern.

In July we commemorated the 100th anniversary of the death of Harry Hawker, the aviation pioneer, whose grave is by the lychgate. We erected a plaque to his memory, which was unveiled by two of his granddaughters at a special service.

The most important event of the year was the installation of the new audio-visual system in November. Once again, our congregation stepped up with generous donations to allow this important improvement to our church. Supply chain delays mean that at the time of writing we are still awaiting a couple of pieces of equipment, but by the time of the APCM they should be installed. The new equipment allows much greater flexibility in how we use a computer-based system for our services, but also, importantly in today's world, allows the live streaming of services for those unable to attend church in person, as well as having past services available to watch on YouTube. Particular thanks are due to Brian Dale for his expert input and the serious amount of time that he has devoted to this project.

In 2021 we also had our Quinquennial (every five years) inspection of the building and churchyard. There are a few repairs that need to be done over the next year or two, but nothing of crucial importance. However, since then Storm Eunice this past February deposited a large cherry tree against the porch at the main entrance, causing damage which will require significant repairs. We are in discussion with our insurers.

Finally, as always, Laurel and I would like to thank all those who help and support us in maintaining the church and churchyard and in our other duties.

This year I am standing down as Churchwarden, having completed my five-year term. A lot has happened over that period and it has been a joy to have served God and our church in this role. I wish Laurel and my successor every success in the coming year. I know they will be fully supported by the congregation, especially past Churchwardens.

Graham Cocks, Church Warden

CHURCHYARD & GARDENS

Due to the weather conditions last year, keeping the churchyard looking good, especially the area at the front of church was not easy. The rate of growth was enormous!



Thank you to all who turned up for the workday, the grass cutters, and the donation of plants.

We do not bury people in the churchyard now, but we do inter ashes into the new Jubilee memorial garden at the far end of the churchyard. We had four interments during the year.

2021 was the hundredth anniversary of the death of Harry Hawker. We commemorated this by placing a plaque in front of his grave. The plaque was unveiled by one of the three of his granddaughters who came. The whole event was attended by many people, both from our congregation, local Councillors and visitors, including members of Kingston Aviation Project, The Hawker Association and RBK Hook & North Chessington Ward, who jointly funded the plaque. The event, on an exceptionally hot sunny day, concluded with refreshments.

David Freeman

ELECTORAL ROLL

"The Church Electoral Roll is the official membership list of the Church of England. Being on the Electoral Roll is a statement of intent, to be a fully participating member of St Paul's through regular worship and through your support across the range of Church and Parish life."

Anyone baptised and over the age of sixteen is entitled to be included if they live in the Parish and/or attend the church regularly.

The roll is revised annually and each name represents a valued, special member of the church family here at St Paul's, Hook.

This year there are 8 additions and we are delighted to welcome:

Mr David Denny

Mrs Kathleen Pellatt

Mrs Nelly Uzoeto

Mr Peter Franklin

Mr Nigel Llewelyn-Price

Mrs Linda Weston

Mrs Joan Nash

Mrs Mary Robini

There are 14 deletions from the Roll this year for various reasons and they are:

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Mrs Julia Bradley | Mrs Susan Craig | Mrs Denise Dale |
| Mr David Disspain | Mr Christopher Fernihough | Ms Judit Horvath |
| Miss Clare Paske | Mr Gareth Paske | Mrs Lynne Paske |
| Mr Garry Simmons | Mrs Margaret Thompson | Prof Richard Thompson |
| Mr Darryl Van Eeden | Mrs Megan Van Eeden | |

Sadly, Christopher passed away. He was a much-loved member of our church family often leading our intercessions at Sunday services and we are thankful for all he gave to enrich our lives at St Paul's. We remember him with love.

Margaret & Richard have moved to be nearer to their family and grandchildren and we wish them much happiness in their new home.

Julia and Judit have also moved from the area and we hope they too will be happy in their new homes.

We shall miss them all.

The Roll revised this year contains 117 names and produced 14 deletions and 8 additions.

My special thanks to Joanne Griffiths, the Parish Administrator, for her work and help in the preparation of this Electoral Roll.

I present the Church Electoral Roll of St Paul's at Hook with Southborough for 2022 to this annual meeting.

Marlene Whitlock, Church Electoral Roll Officer

HOOK & SOUTHBOROUGH PARISH HALL



The Parish Hall is located 300 metres up the road from St Paul's Church. It is a large hall that is widely used during the week by many different groups within our community – Hook Pre-School, Pilates, Rainbows, Guides, Kumon, Line Dancing, Women's Institute, Tai Chi, Games Club and St Paul's

Players. At the weekends it is used mainly by families for children's parties and also for fundraising events by both St Paul's Church and other charities. We allow these charities to use the hall for free in our attempt to 'give something back' to the community.

This year has continued to be difficult with the continued impact of COVID19 but with careful management we have managed to get all our regular users back into the hall. We must thank our users for their support and implementing the measures the committee has requested.

We have additionally taken the decision to protect our regular users by not hiring the hall out for parties at this time.

With regards to the upkeep of the hall, we re-invest the funds from the hire of the hall back into maintaining and improving the facilities. Works have obviously been quiet this year as we consolidate the accounts and reduce expenditure.

Works had commenced in 2020 during lockdown to update the annexe and these stalled slightly in 2021, as furlough came to an end, but the building is coming together. We plan to be able to hire this out from the Summer 2022.



We have a programme of improvements lined up for future years which include:

- Kitchen cooker and dishwasher to allow for larger hall functions
- new front doors
- replacing windows not already replaced
- Toilet remodels
- new flooring (long term goal)

the list goes on..... If you have any ideas, you would like us to consider, please let the Parish Hall Committee know.

The committee gives its time for free and we still urgently require help to spread the workload, so if you would like to come and join the Parish Hall Committee please contact: Ian Reid, Izzy Burton, Sue Russell or Steve Griffiths.

We plan to have a workday this year – date to be confirmed. We have not done this for the last couple of years and it has been missed!! Please attend if you are able - for the day or just an hour or two. It all helps no matter how small – it is a good day

If you would like to book the hall, please contact the Parish Office on 020 8391 2362 or email: premises@stpaulschurchhook.org.uk
Steve Griffiths, Parish Hall Committee

LINK PARISH – ST MARY’S CHIDDINGFOLD

We have had a long held and precious link with St Mary’s Chiddingfold for a number of years.

Sadly, the COVID pandemic has stopped us from visiting each other over the last two years. However, as soon as the pandemic lifts, we will renew our friendship.

In the meantime, we continue to uphold our brothers and sister in Chiddingfold in prayer.

Luke



St. Mary’s Church

Chiddingfold

ST PAUL’S HOOK, MOTHERS’ UNION



St Paul’s Hook Mothers’ Union usually meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 10.30am to 12 noon in

the Mary Wise Room at the Church with coffee served from 10am: Our meetings open and close with prayers.



Unfortunately, 2021 did not start well as we had no meetings from January to April due to the coronavirus lockdown. In May, we had a service in Church led by our Vicar Luke. Again, in June and July there were no meetings due to another lockdown. In August, however, we were able to have our usual Garden Tea at the Church with a bring and buy sale, and a raffle, which raised money for the Mothers' Union Summer of Hope appeal. September, we returned to our usual meetings with some interesting speakers and we finished the year with a social meeting in December, followed by an enjoyable Christmas lunch.

The knit & natter group has started meeting again on Monday afternoons in the Mary Wise Room from 2pm-4pm making items for Kingston Hospital's 'Born-to-Soon' unit and an orphanage in Malawi.

Mothers' Union is open to anyone who is a baptised member of the Church. It has a worldwide membership of four million working to strengthen family life. All are welcome to our meetings.

For further information, please contact Branch Leader Carole Noakes.
Carole Noakes (Tel No: 020 8397 1558)

PARISH OFFICE

The St Paul's Parish Office is open Monday through to Thursday from 9am to 12.30pm, term time only.

The office deals with all enquiries, weddings, baptisms, funerals; etc., keeps the congregation informed via the notices and email of what is happening within the Church and provides the necessary service sheets for all the different types of services we have within church.

The Administrator is sometimes the first point of contact for anyone coming to or making enquiries about the church. The office also deals with and looks after all the Parish Hall and Mary Wise Room lettings.

Joanne Griffiths, Parish Administrator

PRAYER CHAIN

The Prayer Chain is a group of members who undertake to pray for anyone who requests it. Please contact Mary Reid (mary@maryreid.org.uk, 07855 042 638) if you have a prayer request or would like to join the group.

Mary Reid

SAFEGUARDING

The Parochial Church Council of St Paul's along with the Vicar carries a duty of care for the safety of those who attend or use our church premises. There is a statutory legal duty to pay "due regard to the guidance issued by the House of Bishops on matters relating to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults."

A hard copy of 'A Safe Church' can be found at the back of the church and via the Southwark Diocesan website:

<https://southwark.anglican.org/safeguarding/diocesan-policies-and-procedures> A link to this guidance can be found via the Parish website.

Any queries or concerns you may have should be addressed in confidence to Luke Wickings, Vicar or Sue Russell, Parish Safeguarding Officer. Email and telephone numbers can be found on the Safeguarding posters around church, which also carry details of key helplines.

All PCC members, Creche Helpers and Home Visitors are required to have DBS clearance and also to undertake online Safeguarding training, appropriate to their role.

Sue Russell, Safeguarding Officer

SERVERS / SACRISTAN

We have just been through another year of adjustments due to Covid and I'm glad to say things are starting to get back to normal.

There are still just the two of us servers and I would like to say a big thank you to Jane for covering a lot of the Sunday services and all of the Thursday

services, I am very grateful. Thank you to Diane for her support and help as well.

If anyone feels they would like to find out more about becoming a server please talk to Jane or myself.

Susan Hodgson & Jane Greenfield-Sacristan & Servers

ST PAUL'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Our mission at St Paul's School is to 'enable all to flourish', and I love that, because it defines our commitment to all. We want ALL to flourish, all students, irrespective of educational ability, race or social standing, and all staff, and indeed all of our families. We are a school that is committed to enabling all to flourish.



Our three key values are Commitment, Courage, and Love. We seek to instil these within our pupils; and all staff, governors and other professionals seek to live these values out ourselves.

I am proud to say that the school is largely achieving these aims, an assessment affirmed by our very positive recent OFSTED report.

Ofsted Outcome and Report – January 2022.

I am absolutely delighted to be able to tell you that OFSTED's assessment is that St Paul's continues to be a 'Good' school!

Some key phrases that really stand out in the OFSTED report are:

"The school's values are an important part of daily life."

"Pupils behave well both in and outside of lessons. They are courteous and respectful to each other."

"There is a sharp focus on early reading. Pupils read widely and often."

"Pupils achieve well across a range of subjects."

"Leaders make careful observations so that any pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified as early as possible."

"Pupils with SEND access the same broad curriculum as their peers."

"Leaders create an open environment where pupils can talk to adults if they are worried."

"Leaders prioritise emotional support for pupils who need it."

"Senior leaders are reflective and continually look for improvements."

"Parents and carers said the school feels like a community."

As Chair of Governors, I can only commend the school leadership and staff for such excellent work. St Paul's continues to provide good education for families in our community and the school remains a real community school.

As you know I continue to take Collective Worship in school every Wednesday morning and currently we are working our way through the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, to try to improve the basic Bible knowledge of the pupils. So far this year we have got as far as the life of Solomon!

Please continue to pray for our school. It is a challenging time to be a teacher and a school leader, and the pressure that our wonderful staff work under is very significant. As Governor I try to support the school and the leadership, and I remain committed to maintaining the close links between the Church and the school.

Rev Luke Wickings – Chair of Governors

SATURDAY STALL

There are currently no plans to resume the external stall manned by volunteers. However, the produce we have is displayed on a table in the Mary Wise Room. There is an honesty pot for donations.

If you could help to make marmalade, jams, chutneys for the stall it would be most welcome. I am also happy to receive 'spare produce' as the summer and autumn crops arrive.

Thank you to the 'pickled onion' team and others who made produce for the stall at the Winter Fair.

Sue Russell

STUDY GROUPS

Reading the Bible Together: Monday mornings 10.30am to 12 noon

These sessions have usually been at Ann's house, 36a Hunter's Road, Hook (020 8397 5954) but with the pandemic still with us we decided to continue to meet on zoom, thanks to Sue Fry hosting the sessions. We started each meeting as usual, having time to chat from 10.30am, then starting with prayer at 11am. During 2021 we have studied the Gospel of St. Luke then the Acts of the apostles, followed by the Epistles to Timothy, Titus and Philemon.

During the Autumn worked our way through the book of Jonah and then we tried to study Isaiah.

The group decided that we needed to revise our knowledge of the main stories of the Old Testament, so in November we started at the beginning of the book of Genesis. By the end of the year, we had covered the stories of the Creation, Noah and the flood, Abraham, Jacob and Joseph.

If you would like to join this Bible study group, please contact Ann.

Ann Fernihough (E-mail fernihough443@btinternet.com)

Wednesday evenings Bible Study at 8.00pm on Zoom!

Our Wednesday Bible Study Group continues to meet, albeit over Zoom, each Wednesday at 8pm.

We are a friendly and welcoming group and our focus is on studying the Bible, growing in faith, and supporting each other in prayer.

Our current series of studies is on Knowing God better. We tend to use the Life-builder notes and find these helpful, but we always feel free to move away from the notes if that seems right.

If you would like to join our group speak to me (Luke) and we would be delighted to welcome you.

Luke - Group Leader.



SUNDAY MORNING REFRESHMENTS

It is so good to be back in the kitchen serving the Sunday morning refreshments after Covid brought so many changes to church life, forcing us, initially, to close our church and zoom our services online.

When we were eventually allowed to reopen, precautions had to be taken. Services were streamlined down from two to one on a Sunday morning, face masks were obligatory, as was sanitising and, from 23rd May last year, refreshments could only be held outside, for the purpose of social distancing, under a gazebo next to the vicarage. None of it was ideal but it was far, far better than nothing and we all made the best of it, happy to be back amongst our friends, some of whom we'd not seen for rather a long time. Sharing refreshments gave everyone the opportunity to relax and swap stories of life during lockdown. I seemed to remember that, for some of the Sunday mornings under the gazebo, the weather was not particularly kind to us!

Since 27th June last year we have been lucky enough to be back and serving our delicious 'proper' coffee and teas in the kitchen again, along with the delicious home-made and shop-bought cakes. It is so good to be able to offer our hospitality to visitors and regulars alike, to relax for a little while and share our week's news. We still have to be careful, Covid is still very much with us and everyone is asked to spread out into the Church, just to be on the safe side.

Thank you so much to all our wonderful team of regular helpers and to those who step in at short notice to help when we are short of someone in the kitchen or at the cakes table. We would love a few more to join us on the team. If you think you could help in any way do, please, come and have a chat with any of us in the kitchen.

Jane & Ian Jarman, Pam Ingram and Maggie Dowd

TECHNOLOGY

Due to of the generosity of the congregation, we have now been able to replace the audio and video equipment. The company installing the equipment did it to a very high standard and have been a pleasure to work with throughout. However, the set-up is not yet complete. At the time of writing (February) we are waiting for the ear-worn microphones, the sound desk which has been delayed by the "chip" shortage and we're arranging for an extra screen in the chancel area.

We've spent a bit of time working through the logistics of streaming services. We don't anticipate streaming every Sunday but we can now do so when necessary. We're needing to be intensely aware of the extra copyright issues when a service is streamed.

I'm very grateful to the people who prepare the PowerPoint slides and operate the equipment for us each week. They have done a sterling job getting across it. Ideally, we would like two more people to join us. If this is something you are interested in or would like to know more about, please do come and have a chat with me or perhaps speak with one of the people at the desk on a Sunday morning to find out what it's really like!

Brian Dale

TREASURER'S REPORT

Once again 2021 has been a year of social distancing, small congregations, masks and hand sanitiser. We had no cash collections in church for the first three months of the year due to the enforced closure but thank you to all of those who kept their bank payments going. Most of those who give by weekly envelopes did their best to bring them when we were allowed to open.

Thanks to many of you, we had a very successful gift day in July which enabled us to have our audio-visual system installed. This is now in use at most of our services. We still have some more equipment to come but hopefully this will be delivered and installed this year.

Our bank balance has not improved very much since last year. We have had problems with claiming the gift aid we are entitled to. This is mainly because our Gift Aid Officer moved and left the parish. Hopefully this will be sorted out during the coming weeks.

We are also very pleased with the success of our new card machine which is very easy to use and gives us extra income from those of you who no longer carry cash around. It is at the back of the church. Do have a look.

I know that with the cost of living rising; food prices, energy bills and council tax increasing, we all have to think about how much we pay out but if you pay Income Tax and are able to sign a Gift Aid Form, available at the back of the church, this will increase your contribution by 25% at no extra cost to you. All your contributions are completely confidential.

Please help us to keep St. Paul's open and running in these difficult times and those of you who, for whatever reason, have not visited our church recently, please come back. We miss you!

Jane Greenfield, PCC Treasurer

UMOJA BOYS

As you will be aware one of the charities that we support as a Church is Umoja Boys. The Church gives them £1,000 a year and many of you support them personally. I am so grateful to you all for your support.

The annual cost of running Umoja Boys is £65,000 per year and all of that comes from voluntary donations. This pays for rent, staff costs, utilities, school fees, food, clothing travel and other miscellaneous costs.

As you will know I spent a week out in Mombasa with Umoja Boys in March. I ran a one-week Holiday Club for the boys, some of whom you see in the photo here.



It was a tiring undertaking but very worthwhile.

Umoja continues to transform the lives of the boys and is making a real difference. Your support makes all this possible.

Indeed, your support is especially vital because, due to the pandemic we have been unable to run any of our normal fundraising events and this has really hit our finances.

So, thank you to each one of you that supports Umoja. You really are making a difference, and please continue your support and add to it if you possibly can.
Luke, Chair of Trustees: Umoja Boys

WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Our website (www.stpaulschurchhook.co.uk) and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/stpaulschurchhook) continued to be very useful during 2021 as we gradually returned to normal, in-person services and events. Towards the end of the year, we experimented with livestreaming services on our YouTube channel, where previously they had been prepared and uploaded to Facebook. Although we are no longer broadcasting online, we could easily do so again in the future if needed.

If you are looking for this weeks' notice sheet or the current service rota you can find them on the website – click on "For members". You can also make a donation online to the church.

Luke Wickings (Luke.wickings@stpaulschurchhook.org.uk) – Facebook
Mary Reid (mary@maryreid.org.uk) – Website

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Due to the Coronavirus and lockdowns, we were only able to meet once during 2021 which was for our pre-Christmas get-together in December and only a small number of our members were able to attend.

Sadly, following our AGM in February 2022, after 50 years of meeting on the second Monday of each month, Women's Fellowship has had to cease due to the lack of sufficient support.

Thank you to all of you who have been part of the group over the years.
Susanne Puckle & Diane Tink

WORSHIP AT ST PAULS



I love the quote from Psalm 122 in our porch as you enter the Church, "I was glad when they said to me, let us go into the house of the LORD." Because, of course, worshipping God is one of the most important things that we do as Christians.

Worship – a new priority.

Indeed, Jesus himself said that the first and greatest commandment is to 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.', a quote from Deuteronomy 6v5.

So, according to Jesus, the most important thing that we can do is to love God; and worship is the verbal outward expression of that love. In worship we acknowledge him as God; we honour him, submit to him and glorify him.

So can I please encourage you to make the worship of God a priority in your life. Come to Church regularly, weekly if you can, it is the least that God deserves. And, if you haven't yet returned to Church post-COVID, may I suggest that now is the time to do so. God deserves our love and our worship.

Worship -A new pattern.

Secondly, you will be aware by now that we have adapted our pattern of Sunday services. Our main services are at 10am each Sunday. The first Sunday of each month is a 10am All-Age Worship service (preceded by a said eucharist at 8.45am). The All-Age service is child and family friendly and ideal for you if you have children. Every other Sunday we share a Eucharist at 10am. We also continue to offer a weekly Communion Service every Thursday at 10am.

We look forward to worshipping with you.

Worship – and COVID

COVID initially closed the Church and so we provided online worship. Then we returned to physical worship in the building with masks and social distancing. Now, almost all restrictions are legally removed. However, we do ask people to be cautious, wise and loving of others. Some are still shielding; some are still afraid; so, can I ask you to be considerate of others when you come to worship and to do all that you can to minimise the risk of any cross-infection? Let love, as always, be our guide.

Worship and Families.

One of the sadness's of our post-COVID worship is that we miss those of you who, for whatever reason, have stopped worshipping with us. Sadly, and perhaps strangely, this has included a number of our families and our children. Let me just say with love that we miss you and we long for you to return. We really hope to see you all soon.

Worship -moving onwards.

With God's help we will continue to offer God the worship that He deserves. Thank you to all of you who help us to do so, wardens, welcome team, servers, reader, lay preachers, Bible readers, intercessors, creche-helpers, verger and catering team. I am so grateful to you all.

Luke