

Pauline Newsletter

May 2020



St Paul's
United
Reformed
Church

5 Finger Prayer

How To Pray:

Thumb: The finger closest to you - Pray for those closest to you

Index Finger: The finger that points the way- Pray for those who teach, instruct and heal you

Middle Finger: The tallest finger - Pray for leaders and all who have authority

Ring Finger: The weakest finger - Pray for the weak, sick, and those with problems

Pinkie: The smallest finger - Pray for yourself

From Martin's Study

My dear friends

I am writing this little piece on the Saturday before the Prime Minister is due to make a statement. Speculation is rife about possible relaxation of some restrictions, with only further questions about what it might mean for churches. No singing? Keeping 2m apart? Cleaning every surface after every service? Who knows?

At our elders' meeting last week, we agreed not to speculate, but to respond to the government and denominational advice as and when it arrives. Be assured that we will make any decisions based on this advice and in the best interests of all our buildings' users.

In the meantime, we continue to be church in some wonderful ways!
At the study group we discovered that church, in Greek, translates as "Ekklesia" - a 'calling out'. Have we thought of church in these terms before, as a 'calling out'?

Are we calling out to the world?

Are we 'called out', as separate but part of the world - perhaps with a distinct task?

Thoughts to mull over.



At present we may be feeling very separate from each other and from the world, but we are also making huge efforts to

*A welcoming place for all
through our buildings and as people*

contact each other, comfort each other, to say something important to the world about God's love in Jesus, through how we react to the pandemic. So therefore we are still church!

Since our Vision Day back in July, huge strides have been taken in putting that vision into action, not least with the church meeting vote to support the package of work to enable it.

Over the coming weeks and months, we will be exploring God's Vision for us in a more focussed way - so that we can all feel a part of it and take ownership of it.

This will be enabled even further by the URC's 'The New Normal' series, helping us to see how we are church as we return to our buildings.

Back in August last year I wrote from my study

"The elders and I are completely committed to enacting the vision that the Spirit is bringing to life among us. The vision Day was the first step in this process, and it has already created an atmosphere of hope and potential."

Through my conversations with many of you, I know this to be true today. I also know that God is guiding us to a new place because of this pandemic. We have hard questions to ask, discussions to be had and changes to make - as local churches, as synods, as the URC and as churches in the UK. The pandemic has shown some major challenges and has enabled us to be creative and fleet of foot.

For St Paul's, we will be exploring our New Normal, through the lens of our Vision. We will make any changes to us as people, to our buildings, our mission, our worship, our commitment to our young people - through this lens: what does it mean to be a welcoming place for all?
A place where God's love is seen at work?

Despite the grief and trauma around us at present, we can hope in God's love and we can look to the future with positivity. God has shown us that we can change, even very quickly, when we accept the need to adapt.

The pandemic has forced us to work in different ways.

Our Christian faith should do the same.

The threat of climate-change should force us to act for the good of all creation.

The injustices in our society can be resolved if we have the will.

I pray that God will continue to interrupt our lives with love and grace.

I pray that you will know God's presence with you through these challenging times - perhaps through the people of St Paul's URC.

I pray that the Spirit will revive us as a people and as a place of welcome.

Every blessing to you all!

Church meeting - 16 May

No URC church meetings till we are in church again – so they are accessible for all members. We can still discuss and share ideas through the Pauline, WhatsApp and Facebook. Look forward to hearing from you!



Thoughts...



I believe that we have all had more time for reading lately and there is even talk of forming a book group. Last year I treated myself to a special offer of the books in the Booker prize short list. Even in lockdown I haven't finished them all yet as I have paused in between to read some of my birthday and Christmas presents. Even so, in the strangely named *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in this Strange World* by Elif Shafak I encountered a passage which I would love to share with you. Zaynab122 has been talking to a friend, who confided that when her mother, who was from a Christian family, died, there was a row between her Christian aunt and her Muslim father about the style of her burial. Here are Zaynab122's reflections on this:

Zaynab122 nodded as a cloak of sadness engulfed her. Religion for her had always been a source of hope, resilience and love - a lift that carried her up from the basement of darkness into a spiritual light. It pained her that the same lift could carry others all the way down. The teachings that warmed her heart and brought her close to all humanity, regardless of creed, colour or nationality, could be interpreted in such a way that they divided, confused and separated human beings, sowing seeds of enmity and bloodshed. If she were summoned by God one day, and had a chance to sit in His presence, she would love to ask Him just one simple question: "Why did you allow Yourself to be so widely misunderstood, my beautiful and merciful God?"

Bea

VE Day 75th Commemoration



Hi Big Chris,

Here is a picture of the spitfire I made. We also made VE Day cakes but have eaten most of them or given away to friends!

Little Chris

A message and photograph from one of 7th/12th Scouts

Well done Little Chris.

+++++

Lovely to see so many people enjoy Martin's guided tour of his garden on Wednesday 13th and all the wonderful plants, flowers, trees, shrubs, lights, pond life and cats tucked away behind the Manse. Felt like a bit of a garden club in the making..... thanks all!





St Paul's
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St Paul's Virtual Afternoon Tea



Desert Island Discs

Presenter: Dennis Simmonds

Guest: Rev Martin Knight

**Tune in with a cup of tea or coffee on
Saturday 23rd May at 3pm**

Zoom ID: 895 1764 1003 Password: 435654

Contact helendean@connecthealth.co.uk for more information

www.stpaulsurc.org.uk



Don't forget to save up your freewill offering envelopes and church collection money for when we are back together again – or you can do a bank transfer or drop it off with Robert, Caroline or Sue on your daily exercise!

The elders discussed a revised budget this month and whilst we will save on utilities and some expenses, our deficit will be sizeable, with investments also hit, depending upon when we are back in the buildings. For more detail please get in touch.

Hello from South Croydon United Church!

We're all invited to SCUC's Zoom coffee mornings, usually at 11am on Wednesdays.

ID: 772 9860 4258 Password: 6CQ9R9

GDPR and confidentiality

With the buildings closed for a while we're all in touch by phone, email, post and video. At present all the 'group' emails come 'blind copied' from me to protect people's data; whilst elders have details of those in their pastoral groups, and there are 31 in the WhatsApp group, our 2018 directory doesn't have email addresses and mobile numbers.

Over the next month I'll be contacting individuals to check if it is OK to include your address phone and email details in our updated church directory. We need formal consent to produce this and it will be a confidential document just for the use of St Paul's people. If you would rather not - that is absolutely fine and you'll still receive the current mailings from me (unless you don't want those either!). Many thanks for your help. - Sue

Christian Aid week started on 10th May in a whole new way given the lockdown



The house to house collection, shaking tins and events are not happening this year, but your donations and prayers are even more important than ever to bring relief, courage and hope to those facing the most difficult of circumstance. We have a St Paul's Christian Aid fundraising page which accepts credit card or PayPal - please use it so we know how much we have raised as a church community. If you prefer to give cash, let us know and one of us can collect on 'daily exercise' and pay it in.

Details about Christian Aid's work are on their website including the Coronavirus appeal and prayer.....Daily live-streamed worship at 11am this week including Rowan Williams and a Daily fun quiz at 7.30 each evening

Our very own St Paul's 'Big Brekkie' is on Zoom from 9-10am on Sunday 17th May, allowing plenty of time to move to shared reflections and worship from 10.30. Link is the same as our coffee mornings,

Fran & Helen



Sunday 17th May
9am - 10am



Includes an
update on the
work of
Christian Aid
and a Quiz!

Big Brekkie



*Join us for St Paul's first ever
Virtual Breakfast!*

Zoom meeting ID: 895 1764 1003
Password: 435654



To donate to Christian Aid please visit:
<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/stpaulsurc>
or use the QR code





St Paul's Events May 2020

Wednesday 13th: 3pm

Afternoon Tea & Manse Garden Tour

Sunday 17th: 9am - 10am

Virtual Big Brekkie Fundraiser for Christian Aid
Includes Quiz & update on the great work of
Christian Aid

Saturday 23rd: 2.30pm

Afternoon Tea & Desert Island Discs
Dennis Simmonds will be interviewing the
Rev Martin Knight - not to be missed!

Saturday 30th: 10.30am

Coffee Morning and Talk (Topic TBC)

Zoom Details for all events:

Meeting ID: 895 1764 1003

Password: 435654

All Welcome!



NHS Volunteer service



From 24 March $\frac{3}{4}$ million people nationally volunteered to help the NHS locally with essential support for neighbours. The Royal Voluntary Service, running the scheme on an existing medical alert application was overwhelmed, checking and verifying everyone but it's now up and running with self-referral possible as well as from health professionals. As a volunteer you put your phone 'on duty' when convenient and get perhaps 1-2 calls a day (with a rather alarming siren noise!) to either accept or pass to the next person.

Although lots of people are registered in South Croydon, in one hour I had seven alerts during the setup period, but almost all were in Thornton Heath. Mostly it has been older people needing shopping or prescriptions (and a chat), plus a few false alarms, and it seems that in the six weeks of setup most people arranged help from local authorities and churches. Some people were a little confused when I called as they had no idea their GP or carer had flagged them with a need! It will be interesting to see how the scheme is taken forward in future, but it has been a great opportunity for outreach as most people know St Paul's and it's always lovely to chat with neighbours.



Do you need some help while self-isolating?

If you, or someone you know, needs a hand with collecting shopping or prescriptions, or just wants someone to talk to, our **NHS Volunteer Responders** are here to help.

Join the thousands of others throughout England who are already receiving support – even if it's just for a friendly chat.

Call 0808 196 3646 or visit
nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk

Help is available if you have a medical condition which makes you vulnerable to COVID-19, especially if you are over 70. You also qualify if you are pregnant or have a disability.

Royal Voluntary Service is a registered charity 1015908 (England and Wales) & SC038924 (Scotland).

What have we all been up to?

On Saturday 2nd May we were invited to attend a virtual Afternoon Tea with



a guest appearance from baby Laurie with a guess the St Paul's baby with a prize for the winner! Oh my it was difficult all those cute little faces; at the end I had so many crossings out I had to rewrite my sheet before sending it to Helen for marking. Fran was the lucky winner and I believe

Jelly babies will be with her very soon! Now I think I'm right in saying that Fran was also on the winning team for our VE Day Quiz! I thoroughly enjoyed both events. The VE Day quiz was very well planned with anagrams, picture and written clues. Thank you to the IN & OUT team and helpers for all their hard work - brilliant and the graphics on the posters are amazing well done Helen. I do have a paper/email copy if you were unable to attend but would like to test your WW2 knowledge. Please just let me know it's well worth a



try. As you will have read we have enjoyed several events with others in the pipeline. Before 'Lockdown' I had not heard of Zoom and I suspect I'm not the only one - it's an app that you can have on your phone, laptop, PC or iPad its enables us to come together on screen (so long and you have the technology and the inclination)! Junior Church are meeting on Zoom too. On the next

few pages are the baby photo's if you would like to have a go - no cheating - the answers are at the bottom.

We are trying to keep in touch with everyone, as ever it would be wonderful to hear what you have all been up to, your views and thoughts please don't hesitate to contact me if you have anything to contribute to our newsletter: patgo123@aol.com. I hope you enjoy this



edition of the Pauline. I hope we can all meet together again soon - in the meantime if I can do anything to help please let me know.

Pat Granville-Overton

Groans....

Been reading a very interesting book.
It's called Over the Cliff by Hugo First.

Bought a great book on Addiction - I can't put it down

I am writing a book about plagiarism. Would anyone like a copy?

What do we want? "Anagrams"
What-ho! Wet, new mend? "Own"

Woke up this morning to a tap on the door
Weird sense of humour some plumbers have.

What rhymes with orange? No it doesn't

Some people keep calling me a hypochondriac. That really hurts...

Murphy's Law – if something can go wrong it will.
Cole's Law – thinly sliced cabbage

Life in Lockdown - new things I've found out...

- there is a back to the garage
- who lent us that wallpaper stripper?
- being 95 doesn't stop you dyeing your hair pink
- the introverts do best in lockdown
- some amazing new places to buy flour
- how many wonderful people hook into Zoom
- the amazing efficiency of Purley Food Hub's team
- how well the 'kids' get along together on skype
- in Slovak, correct intonation is vital to avoid offence
- what lovely things people post on WhatsApp
- that people's front gardens have very many uses
- facemasks frustrate those who lipread, even a bit
- the ViewPoint view is so much clearer these days
- modern flats are mostly sympathetically designed
- the best time to avoid queues in Sainsbury's
- that it's great to have the Minister back
- the huge choice of online shows, tours and galleries
- what great films 'The Vanishing' and 'Local Hero' are
- I really should get rid of the spacehopper
- Those out of date seeds were dated for a reason
- God is with us everywhere
- no rush for the lockdown to end.....



Sue

Guess the Baby competition

Here are the bonnie babies of St Paul's - I hope you are better at this than me! I found some are very confusing, I thought I had got it right, then looking at another, indecision set in. Good luck - there is a hint at least with the colour & age of the photos.



1.Dennis 2.Bea 3.Sue 4.Pat 5.Joshua 6.Liam 7.Fran 8.John 9.Cathy H 10.Helen 11.Julie 12.Linda 13.Stuart D 14.Caroline 15.Janet (with brother) 16.Laurie. 17.Jenson 18.Ellis 19.Rowena 20.Charlotte Longman (60) 21.Victoria Lang (60)

Purley Food HUB

Each Wednesday for the duration of the coronavirus emergency, we are covering the postcode areas of CR2 (South Croydon), CR5 (Coulsdon), CR8 (Purley) and CR0 4 (Waddon) and delivering packages of food, toiletries, etc, to clients referred by our Ticket Partners and local churches, schools and GP surgeries. Other food banks are serving other parts of the Borough of Croydon, mostly through home delivery services like ours.

We continue to thank God for:

- The **volunteers** sorting food donations and shopping for extra supplies, refilling the shelves, packing the food bags, making the deliveries to clients' homes, carrying out the important logistics work and other practical tasks.
- The **friends and supporters** from the churches, local community, WI and Rotary, businesses and many others kindly donating food and money.
- The **Trustees and Management Committee** involved in planning and running the new service and the day-to-day decision-making.
- And **EVERYONE** keeping the Food Hub and our clients' difficult circumstances in their collective thoughts and prayers.

May Food List with the food and other items we most need in May, including: **tinned ready meals, tinned/packet potatoes, jars of coffee, tinned/packet custard, tins of rice pudding, jars of honey and savoury spread, shower gel and washing tablets/capsules.**

Please consider sending the food list on to others you know who might be able, safely, to **drop off donations** on Wednesday and Saturday mornings (10.00am-12.00noon) at Purley United Reformed Church, 906 Brighton Road, Purley CR8 2LN (next to Purley Hospital). These should be brought to the door at the end of the roadway running along the left side of the church building.