

# St Paul's Methodist Church, Crawley

## *Extraordinary Times*

*a magazine to help us through COVID-19*

**Issue 33**

**November 8th 2020**

*From your minister...*

Here's a quiz question for you. What's the connection between Bryan Adams (Canadian rock star) and your minister?

Well, yes, we both play the guitar and sing. But I'm not thinking of that. The link is that we were both born on the same day in history – November 5th 1959.

Yes I know I don't look old enough. And I've aged better than him (maybe). But he's a lot richer than me.

Having a birthday on Bonfire night has always been fun. All through my childhood, not only did I get presents and cards on my birthday, but we always got to go out and celebrate at a fireworks display!

But of course, Bonfire night has been a bit lame this year, what with the recently enforced second lockdown. It's just one more thing that has had to be cancelled.

And sadly, as you know, our church services have had to be cancelled as well. Which is a shame, because we were just starting to get back into the swing of things. Let's all pray that this current lockdown serves its purpose in putting Covid 19 on the run, and that we are allowed to open safely in time for Christmas.

So just in case you're not sure what's happening with church, here's how things are looking:

- All churches are closed until further notice. That includes services and all lettings and events, except for a very few essential activities for the more vulnerable members of our community, such as foodbanks and victim support
- All ministers and local preachers are stood down from preaching appointments unless these services are online. In our case I would like to encourage you to join me on the Trinity East Grinstead Facebook page, where I will be leading a live streamed service every Sunday in November beginning at 10.45am. Even though it's coming from Trinity it is the official joint service for both Trinity and St Pauls, and whilst I will be back to leading the service alone in an empty church like I did earlier in the first lockdown, we will be joined by online readers from both churches on alternate weeks.

This Sunday is of course Remembrance Sunday, and as such there will be the usual Act of Remembrance at 11am as part of the online service.

A number of people have enquired whether the "Love in a Box" shoebox appeal will still be taking place this year – the answer is yes, please see the article included in this newsletter telling you how to get your shoeboxes to us.

We have just finished putting together the circuit preaching plan for the period December 2020 – February 2021. We are working on the premise that lockdown will be lifted as the Government has suggested, at the beginning of December. So hopefully our first service back in church will be open to the public on Sunday December 6th, and from that point on our local preachers will be back in circulation.

Please keep in touch with one another as you have been doing. Keep praying and stand firm. I look forward to seeing you again in person as soon as we are able.

God bless, *Ralph*

## In your prayers

**Continue praying** for Barbara Fleming, Geoff Ridgway, Jean and Geoff Rose, Faye Butcher and for others you know who need prayers at this time.

**Send** your prayer requests to [ask.stpauls@gmail.com](mailto:ask.stpauls@gmail.com)

*Permission must be received from a person before their name is put on the Church prayer list*

## What's On

**St Paul's is closed** for the duration of this second lockdown. Hopefully, services in church will resume in December. In the meantime join us online.

### Sundays throughout November 10:45

Live streamed worship with Rev Ralph Ward from our [Facebook page](#)

**Every Wed 7:30pm** Online Alpha course with Rev Ralph

## Love in a Box

As you are aware, this year we are combining with Trinity for our Love in a Box. We will be taking any boxes to Trinity on 15th November.

If you have boxes you would like included, we will be at the church to collect them at the following times:

Monday 9th November – 2-2.30pm

Wednesday 11th November – 11.30-12.00am

Thursday 12th November – 8.30-9.00pm

Please leave them at these times, in the porch and we will put them into our car. Please wear a face covering, maintain social distancing and don't touch any of the other boxes.

A collection box will be provided for the fee of £4 per box, which must be presented separately this year. Cash is acceptable, either loose or in an envelope (or use the envelope supplied as part of the Love in a Box leaflet). Cheques should be made out to "Mustard seed relief missions", and of course if you are donating multiple boxes then one cheque for the appropriate amount is sufficient.

Please note, we will not be able to take any boxes that are left after the Thursday collection slot and we cannot take any responsibility for any boxes left in the porch at times other than the three collection slots above.

*Martyn and Carol Ofield*



## A bit of Wesley wisdom

“And as peace, hope, joy, and love are the fruits of patience, both springing from, and confirmed by it, so is also rational, genuine courage, which indeed cannot subsist without patience.”



At the beginning of another lockdown in England and continued restrictions in Scotland and Wales, here are some wise words from John Wesley on the importance of patience.

[The Methodist Church on Facebook](#)

## The significance of remembrance

My first thoughts surrounding Remembrance date back to my school days and trying to mind what had occurred during the two World Wars. Many years later and as a Local Preacher, I remember leading worship on VE Day 1995 and basing the act of worship around the closing days of War in Europe. So for many years, Remembrance to me involved considering the events of conflict, for which I had no direct knowledge or engagement.

On joining the Royal Navy in September 2005, I became aware of the significance of Remembrance across the Naval Service and the Royal Marines in particular, many of whom had served in recent conflicts, suffering the loss of colleagues or dealing with traumatic injuries. It was evident that Remembrance had a real connection, and was a moment for service people to do just that – remember.

The following year I was in Afghanistan, and by the time it came around to November, 3 Commando Brigade and in particular the Unit that I was serving with, had already suffered several fatalities and seriously wounded personnel. Remembrance was poignant as memories were very fresh and raw. Gathering together at 0700 (deliberately early) in our camp in the middle of Sangin, it was cold and bright. We had to keep the Service short, in order to reduce the opportunity of attack, and so we sang the Corps hymn, said a few prayers and many of us shed a tear as the bugler sounded out. In the middle of a busy, dangerous operational tour – Remembrance was a moment when folk felt they could stop, think of their friends and their loved ones, and for a brief moment, allow their emotions some space.

A few years later, I was celebrating Remembrance at sea, in sunny climes with the waves lapping against the side of the ship. Whilst the location was different, it was once again an opportunity to pause and be aware of the organisation in which we serve and make sacrifice. So often the military culture is one where the phrase 'non-emotional' is bandied about. Whether that means not smiling and looking 'non-emotional' in a photograph, or jumping into the cold water in Norway 'non-emotionally' and thereby remaining silent.

However, Remembrance is an opportunity to pause, reflect and give one's emotions a little space. My mind goes back to my tours of Afghanistan, and I think of the men that we lost and those whose lives were traumatically changed. For a brief moment, I can almost sense the smells and sounds of life out there, but then I quickly switch back to the present, and mentally wish the bugler well as they prepare to sound Reveille!

*Rev B Gates (Methodist Chaplain in the Royal Navy)*

## Prayers for the nation



The Archbishops of Canterbury and York and other senior church leaders invite Christians across the nation to join in a month of prayer during this second lockdown in England. Throughout the month, Christians will be asked to pray daily for a specific area of national concern, culminating into a collective moment of prayer at 6pm each evening. Details on the [Thy Kingdom Come](#) website.

## They just beat the lockdown!



Robin Webb (Sandra & Terry's son) and Leila Marshall, who were to be married on Saturday 7th November, managed to re-arrange the church service and the reception at Gravetye Manor for Wednesday the 4<sup>th</sup>, so got in ahead of the lockdown by one day.

Sandra says everything went perfectly. Congratulations all round!



to Gill Penny, Heather Njinyam and Rev Ralph  
all celebrating birthdays this week

## Fond Farewell from the Fernando Family

Dear Friends at St. Paul's,

This year has brought changes for many. For Shehan and I it has meant the start of a new adventure and new jobs in Scotland. We made the move to the village of Kilmacolm (10 miles south west of Glasgow Airport) at the end of October. St. Paul's Church has been a big part of our 22 years of family life in Crawley and is a big part of the happy memories we take with us. I wish to thank you all for the Christian love and fellowship that you have shown us over the years. I'm very thankful that I will still be able to join you for services online, particularly as we head back into a further lockdown. I hope that it will not be too long before we're able to come back to visit. In the meantime, keep staying safe.

God Bless, *Karen*



## And lastly

*"Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow;  
it empties today of its strength." Corrie Ten Boom*

## Contacts

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**Prayer requests** & newsletter items [ask.stpauls@gmail.com](mailto:ask.stpauls@gmail.com)

**St Paul's website** [www.crawleymethodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.crawleymethodistchurch.org.uk)

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