

St Paul's Methodist Church, Crawley

Extraordinary Times

a magazine to help us through COVID-19

Issue 42

January 17th 2021

What's On

Sunday 17th 10:45am worship with Ms Jill Brooks

Sunday 24th 10:45am worship with Ms Jill Brooks

Every Wednesday 2pm Rev Ralph's Bible study on Mark's gospel

Find these live on [Trinity's Facebook page](#) and [St Paul's Facebook page](#)

with videos available afterwards

Ralph on leave

No message from Ralph this week as he is taking annual leave, and so is not available, until Monday Jan 25th. Sunday streamed services will be led by local preacher Jill Brooks. If you need to urgently contact a minister, please email ask.stpauls@gmail.com or phone Rev Melvyn Cooke on 01293 973847.

There was some confusion last Wednesday when Ralph's promised 2pm bible study on Mark chapter 2, which he pre-recorded, failed to appear on Facebook. Ralph finally presented it live on Thursday at 1:30! Some of us caught it live but for those who didn't [click here for the video](#). The next one should happen at 2pm on Wednesday 21st – technology permitting 😊

In your prayers

The whole subject of mental health is high profile at present, whether in the young, the elderly, people falling sick or frightened of becoming sick, those struggling financially and people feeling increasingly isolated and lonely. We don't have the benefits of long daylight hours and warm weather as we did in the first lockdown – it is hard for many of us.

It may help to join in this Prayer for Mental Health in January, written by Carolyn Lawrence - Vice President of the Methodist Conference:

Lord Jesus,

January can be such a difficult month for so many.

The days are short and cold, the skies are grey.

We may have overspent or eaten too much over Christmas.

Light Spring days seem a way off yet, and sometimes we feel a bit low.

We may say with the Psalmist:

Why are you downcast, O my soul?

Why so disturbed within me?

*Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him,
my Saviour and my God.*

*Lord help us to lift our eyes towards your light, to rest in your presence
and to experience afresh the joy and hope of your salvation*

In Jesus' name. Amen

Pray for all working to get people vaccinated as quickly as possible. Continue praying for the NHS, hospitals and all medical workers as pressure increases and they struggle to keep on top of everything.

Pray for the USA, and for a peaceful inauguration for President-elect Biden.

Give thanks to God that Lyn Gorrings's sister Wendy and niece Leah have recovered from the Covid virus. Continue in prayer for members of our church community and others you know who need our prayers at this time.

Send your prayer requests to ask.stpauls@gmail.com

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

At a time of political transition for the US the Methodist Presidency writes to the United Methodist Church

The President and the Vice-President of the Methodist Conference have written a letter of support to the Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church assuring them of the prayers of the Methodist people of Great Britain:

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Methodist Church in Britain values its concordat relationship with the United Methodist Church and has benefitted greatly and in many ways from our sharing with Methodists in the United States of America. Like many around the world, therefore, we rejoice when you rejoice and weep when you weep.

At this time of political transition in the USA, we wanted to assure you of the prayers of the Methodist people here. We understand (and indeed to some degree experience ourselves) the way in which deeply held convictions can divide people in communities, in families, and in churches, and we understand the frustration that those who would be peacemakers feel when faced by groups with contradictory and apparently irreconcilable narratives. We pray with you that the call to civility might be heeded; may the Methodist people be emboldened to offer pardon where there is injury, hope where there is despair, and love where there is division.

Yours in Christ,

The Revd Richard Teal President of the Methodist Conference 2020/21

Mrs Carolyn Lawrence Vice-President of the Methodist Conference 2020/21

Stamps for the Hospice

Bobbie Gillett is still collecting used stamps for St Catherine's Hospice. We can't take them into St Paul's at present, so please collect them up at home until church is open again, when Bobbie will be able to pick them up. St Catherine's makes a significant amount of money by selling them on, so it's well worth doing.

Supporting parents through lockdown



The demand for parenting support during lockdown has grown as families have struggled to balance home schooling, childcare and work. Ruth Stokes from *Action for Children* reports on how the charity has responded.

"She offered more help to me in our short conversation than I've had in years of trying to get help for my son" - a parent's review after using the *Parent Talk* service from *Action for Children*.

In the middle of the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic, children's charity *Action for Children* launched a new service for parents. The advice website and one-to-one chat - *Parent Talk* - was a response to a growing number of parents needing help and guidance.

In June the charity and YouGov asked more than 2,000 parents how the coronavirus pandemic was impacting them and their families. More than one in three parents said they felt out of their depth. Over a third said they were struggling due a lack of usual support. This reflected what the charity was seeing in its own services: in the first three months of lockdown, there was a surge of 417% to its existing digital parenting advice

Down-to-earth advice, when it's needed

Parent Talk offers down-to-earth parenting advice, when it's needed. Parents can browse articles on the most common parenting questions or talk one-to-one with a qualified parenting coach about anything that's worrying them.

The charity sees parents come to the service with a range of needs: from emotional wellbeing and mental health to behaviour, development and co-parenting.

The *Parent Talk* website builds on the charity's successful one-to-one chat service, which has supported more than 450,000 parents since its pilot in 2018. This includes more than 11,500 one-to-one chats.

Developing essential, continued support

Recent data shows that 90% of parents rate the support from one-to-one conversations at 4 or 5 out of 5, while 79% of parents say they feel supported after accessing the information, advice and guidance content on the website.

The site is reaching a large number of parents around the UK - between July and December 2020, it helped 233,647 families but need for support remains high. That means that a priority for the team is now working to ensure the service is sustainable for the long-term, to allow them to reach more parents when they need support.

Alongside this, they're using parental feedback and data to develop the service and help people find what they need as quickly and easily as possible. This feedback also helps the team see the difference they're making.

Find out more or get support by visiting [Parent Talk](#).

And finally – a few thoughts about January

New Year's resolutions have always been something to beat myself up with by the second week of January. It seems perverse to set yourself up for failure right at the start of the year.

(Romesh Ranganathan)

If I had my way, I would remove January from the calendar altogether and have an extra July instead.

(Roald Dahl)

*Let January open with joy in the Lord,
and December close with gladness in Jesus.*

(Charles H. Spurgeon)

The shortest day has passed, and whatever nastiness of weather we may look forward to in January and February, at least we notice that the days are getting longer. Minute by minute they lengthen out. It takes some weeks before we become aware of the change, until the moment comes when with a start of delighted surprise we realize that we can stay out of doors in a twilight lasting for another quarter of a precious hour.

(Vita Sackville-West)

*The Snow-drop, Winter's timid child,
Awakes to life, bedew'd with tears.*

(Mary Robinson)



Rev Ralph is on leave until Monday 25th January. Please email urgent requests to ask.stpauls@gmail.com or phone Rev Melvyn Cooke on 01293 973847

Prayer requests & newsletter items ask.stpauls@gmail.com

St Paul's website www.crawleymethodistchurch.org.uk

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