

### New beginnings

Happy New year to one and all!!

The Christian faith always offers new beginnings. Every time we fall short we come to God in confession and we trust in his grace and mercy, that we have been forgiven and we start again. A bit like when Peter takes his eyes off Jesus when walking on water, he cries out to be saved. Jesus immediately takes his hand and returns him to the boat. I sometimes wonder if Peter fancied trying it again at that point but perhaps not. After all, It was Jesus who called him to walk on water, Peter to where Jesus already was. I guess new beginnings don't always mean trying the same thing again.

This year holds a new beginning for me and my family as we move across town to the North Downs benefice (Otham, Langley, Leeds, Broomfield and Kingswood). If I'm honest, it's a daunting prospect due to the amount of churches but Tansye and I both strongly felt two truths came to light in the exploration process. Firstly, when we visited... we felt that Jesus is there, we felt encouraged by signs of the life of the Spirit in the buildings and more importantly the people we met. Secondly, through prayer, we believe that this is something that we are being called to. At the moment I'm not entirely sure what the future will look like, but as I said to Andrew as we discussed the role, I never want to limit in my mind what God can do. I am fairly confident that I will feel like I'm sinking at various points, but I know if we as a benefice of churches keep our eyes on the one who called us, call on His name and not do things in our own strength, we will be ok. As a friend encouraged me from 1 Thessalonians 5: 24 'He who has called you is faithful and He will do'.

Perhaps the hardest part will be to leave St Paul's and all the good people we have met and come to love. From day one we were welcomed, valued and

encouraged and we genuinely couldn't be more thankful. But in truth we leave full of optimism for ourselves and St Paul's. In Andrew, who has been exceptional to me and the family, this church has a leader who is conscientious, caring and humble and I am hugely confident that with you all supporting and encouraging him, and your continued willingness to serve the church and the community... there are even brighter days ahead, yet, just as I said in my interview, God calls the church to grow the church. If the church is the body made up of many parts it is absolutely impossible for myself, and in the case of St Paul's... Andrew... to be all those parts. The future of all the churches depends on the people's willingness to step out of the boat at times, to show faith, to be brave. Our willingness to do this so often depends on our continued falling in love with Jesus. We do this through prayer and exploring scripture, keeping our eyes set firmly on him and growing in the knowledge of His love for you!

The beauty of Luke's account of Peter walking on water is that he wasn't rebuked for messing it up... Jesus said 'you of little faith, why did you doubt?' in other words why did you stop looking to me? The disciples' response was to worship... redirecting their gaze to Jesus!

For all of us there are question marks over our futures, but please know this...

We will miss St Paul's greatly because we love St Paul's ... but not as much as God does!!! So keep your eyes fixed on him and trust him with your new beginnings.

*Mark*

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## Items of Interest

### St Paul's Fellowship

On Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> December twenty two of us enjoyed a Christmas Lunch at the Bull, Penenden Heath. A great opportunity to celebrate the festive season in the company of others. Our thanks to all those who made this possible.

We return in 2019 on January 17<sup>th</sup> with our usual Bring and Buy Auction fundraiser. Please bring along any unwanted goodies to auction and a small amount of cash for those irresistible bargains!

St Paul's Fellowship Group always welcomes new members, so why not invite friends or neighbours along? Guests can attend for just £1 per session. Our annual membership fee remains at £10 and will be collected at our February meeting.

For more information please contact Ann Lewis on 07713192369 or Katy Carter on 07837413472.



Deanery  
Prayer for  
January

A copy of the Prayer Focus can be found at the back of the church.

## OUTLOOK

Celebrating faith and life in East Kent

Copies of the WINTER 2019 Outlook Magazine can be found at the back of the church.



A copy of the MSP News can be found at the back of the church.

## St Paul's

### A Sight Loss Friendly Church

St Paul's has joined a NATIONAL Initiative to ensure appropriate support to people with sight loss, so they can attend safely, and participate fully, in Church activities. We need to be aware of each individual's needs, have good physical access and offer service sheets and notices in alternative formats. If you are sight impaired yourself, or know of any sight impaired members of our congregation, please refer any current difficulties to Ann Lewis, who is acting as our Sight Loss Champion, and will take issues forward.

**Look out for your invitation to a sight loss friendly Church Workshop in 2019.**

### The Maidstone Churches Winter Shelter Volunteers Needed

21st December - 23rd March 2019

<http://www.maidstoneshelter.org.uk>

or contact the shelter office on: 296450



Christmas  
Quiz 2018



Full details and entry forms are available from **Di Austin**

Donation of £1 to enter  
Closing date 4th January 2019

Please place your entries in the green box at the back of the Church or send to:

Di & Ray Austin  
107 Hillary Road  
Maidstone  
ME14 2JX

Results to be announced on  
Sunday 6th January



### Christmas Fayre

Well done everybody for supporting this year's Christmas Fayre!

We raised **£1,172** for church funds.

*Jenny*

## Services at St Paul's for January

Date & Day	Time	Service
 <i>Epiphany</i>	8.45 am 10.30 am 6.30 pm	Holy Communion (sung) Café Worship Sung Evensong
 <i>Baptism of Christ</i>	8.45 am 10.30 am	Holy Communion (said) All-Age Worship (with Communion)
 	9.30 am	Mid-Week Holy Communion
 <i>The Second Sunday of Epiphany</i>	8.45 am 10.30 am 6.30 pm	Holy Communion (sung) All-Age Worship Taize Worship
 <i>The Third Sunday of Epiphany</i>	8.45 am 10.30 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion (said) All-Age Worship (with Communion) Breathe

## What's on

Thursday 3 January	12 for 12.30	Lunch at The Bull, Penenden Heath
Monday 14 January	7.30 pm	Ministry Leadership Team Meeting
Tuesday 22 January	7.30 for 7.45 pm	PCC Meeting
Thursday 31 January	12 noon	Cathedral Prayer time
Thursday 14 March	7.00 pm	Mark Pavey - Licensing Service - St Nicholas, Leeds
Thursday 21 March	7.30 for 7.45 pm	PCC Meeting

Happy New Year

# Bits and Pieces

## St Paul's Church - Coffee, Cake & Chat 1st Saturday of the month

9.45 am - 11.30 am at the back of church. All Welcome.



## Bishop of Dover Announces Retirement

The Rt Revd Trevor Willmott, Bishop of Dover and Bishop in Canterbury, has announced his intention to retire in May 2019. He has served in this role since February 2010, taking on additional responsibilities for the Channel Islands in 2014.

Trevor Willmott was ordained deacon at St Mary's Church in Luton in 1974. Having served his curacy in the Diocese of St Albans, he became assistant chaplain of Oslo with Trondheim before moving to become the chaplain of Naples with Capri, Bari and Sorrento from 1979 to 1983. He served as Officiating Chaplain to the British and American forces in Southern Europe from 1979 to 1983.

In 1983, he returned to the UK as Rector of Ecton in Northamptonshire, and warden of Ecton House retreat centre. He became Diocesan Director of Ordinands and of Post-Ordination Training in 1986. Alongside that role, in 1989 he moved to become a Residentiary Canon of Peterborough Cathedral, a position he held until he became the Archdeacon of Durham in 1997.

He was consecrated Bishop of Basingstoke in 2002, and became Bishop of Dover and Bishop in Canterbury in 2010.

There will be an opportunity for the Diocese to say farewell at Evensong in Canterbury Cathedral and a reception afterwards on 11 May. Bishop Trevor will then conclude his public ministry by celebrating Holy Communion and preaching in the Cathedral on Sunday 12 May.

## A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL REGULAR GIVERS

As the year draws to its end, it will soon be time for me to distribute next year's boxes to all regular givers who use envelopes. Next year's envelopes are pink and as usual there is a different coloured envelope- a yellow one- marked 'My Christmas gift to St Paul's'. You should have a similar Christmas envelope in this year's box. Please try to set aside a little money for this and give this in at some time over the Christmas 2018 period. This extra envelope leads to an extra collection which helps to boost our funds. The new boxes should be available from early December. Please take boxes for neighbours or friends who are not at church. Thank you so much for all you have contributed. Thank you also to all of you who give by standing order, and those who use both systems. If you find it difficult to have the correct change for your envelope, consider changing to giving by standing order.

Many people have increased their giving this year; if at all possible please try to increase your regular giving and also **please** do try to make up for weeks you have not been at Church.

If you regularly attend St Paul's and would like to show your commitment to the church and start planned giving, please take a form from the table at the back of church, fill it in and post it into the red box. If you are a tax payer please fill in a declaration form to ensure that we can claim gift aid on all your giving. This is 25p for every pound given. All the details are on the form to enable you to set up a regular standing order or, if you would prefer, you may have a box of envelopes. Please mark your preference clearly on the form.

You can reach me on 01622 758995 or at [jan.hudson1@googlemail.com](mailto:jan.hudson1@googlemail.com)

Best wishes to you all.

*Jan*

## Who's Who at St Paul's

### Priest-in-Charge

Revd Canon Andrew Sewell

01622 691926

### Curate

Revd Mark Pavey

01622 431 538

### Churchwardens

Mr Mark Turner

01622 206529

Mr Brian Beswick

01622 678315

### Readers

Mrs Katy Carter

01622 735828

### Authorised Lay Ministers

Mrs Jenny Clifton

01622 761533

Mrs Gwynn McPherson

01622 674683

### Parish Administrator

Mrs Tracey Pavan

01622 762370

**Mon/Tues (9 am - 10.30 am)**

**Thurs (9 am - 11 am)**

**Fri (11 am - 1 pm)**

[admin@stpaulsmaidstone.org](mailto:admin@stpaulsmaidstone.org)

## LOST PROPERTY

**There is a basket at the back  
of the Church, please check  
when you leave.**

