

ST PAUL'S NEWS

April 2026



ONE POUND

SERVICES

Wednesday 1st April

9.00 am Morning Prayer at the Church Centre
Minister: The Vicar

8.00 pm Compline
Minister & Preacher: Tim Harrold

Thursday 2nd April

Maundy Thursday

11.30 am Said Holy Communion at the Church Centre
President: The Vicar

8.00 pm Eucharist with washing of feet and stripping
of altars followed by Vigil
President & Preacher: The Vicar
Minster: Tim Harrold

Friday 3rd April

Good Friday

9.45 am Procession of Witness in the Village

12 Noon Three Hour Devotion with final Liturgical Hour
Ministers: The Vicar, Daphne Pilcher,
Tim Harrold

Sunday 5th April

EASTER DAY

8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
President & Preacher: The Vicar

10.00 am Parish Eucharist (CW)
President & Preacher: The Vicar
Minister: Daphne Pilcher

10.00 am Family Service with Holy Communion
at the Church Centre + Zoom
President & Preacher: Rev Nicholas Burton
Link: Graeme & Wendy Anderson

No Evening Service

Monday 6th April

9.00 am Morning Prayer at the Parish Church
Minister: The Vicar

Wednesday 8th April

9.00 am Morning Prayer at the Church Centre
Minister: The Vicar

Thursday 9th April

11.30 am Said Holy Communion at the Church Centre
President: The Vicar

Sunday 12th April

Second Sunday of Easter

8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
President & Preacher: The Vicar

10.00 am Parish Eucharist (CW)
President: The Vicar
Minister & Preacher: Tim Harrold

10.00 am Family Service at the Church Centre + Zoom
Lead: Susan Powley
Link: Jean Kerr

6.30 pm Choral Evensong (BCP)
Minister: The Vicar

Monday 13th April

9.00 am Morning Prayer at the Parish Church
Minister: The Vicar

Wednesday 15th April

9.00 am Morning Prayer at the Church Centre
Minister: The Vicar

Thursday 16th April

11.30 am Said Holy Communion at the Church Centre
President: The Vicar

Sunday 19th April

Third Sunday of Easter

8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
President & Preacher: The Vicar

10.00 am Parish Eucharist (CW)
President & Preacher: The Vicar
Minister: Daphne Pilcher

10.00 am Family Service at the Church Centre + Zoom
Lead: Daphne Pollard
Link: Chris Bassett

6.30 pm Evensong (BCP)
Minister & Preacher: Tim Harrold

Monday 20th April

9.00 am Morning Prayer at the Parish Church
Minister: The Vicar

Wednesday 22nd April

9.00 am Morning Prayer at the Church Centre
Minister: The Vicar

Thursday 23rd April

11.30 am Said Holy Communion at the Church Centre
President: The Vicar

Sunday 26th April

Fourth Sunday of Easter

10.00 am Matins
Minister: Tim Harrold
Preacher: Daphne Pilcher

10.00 am Family Service with Holy Communion
at the Church Centre + Zoom
President & Preacher: Rev Nicholas Burton
Link: Rosemary Romano

4.00 pm Taize Service at the Church Centre
Minister: Tim Harrold

6.30 pm Parish Eucharist (CW)
President: Rev Nicholas Burton
Preacher: Tim Harrold

Wednesday 29th April

9.00 am Morning Prayer at the Church Centre
Minister: Tim Harrold

Sunday 3rd May

Fifth Sunday of Easter

10.00 am Parish Eucharist (CW)
President & Preacher: Rev Nicholas Burton
Minister: Tim Harrold

10.00 am Family Service at the Church Centre + Zoom
Lead: Daphne Pilcher
Link: Karen Miller

6.30 pm Evensong (BCP)
Minister & Preacher: Tim Harrold

DIARY

Saturday 4th April

6.30 pm Handel's Messiah sung by the Church choir
Parish Church

Tuesday 7th April

7.30 pm Organ Renovation Committee meeting
in the Lodge

Wednesday 8th April

3.00 pm Communion to Chamberlain Court
Ginette di Palma

Monday 13th April

8.00 pm PCC Meeting in the Lodge

Thursday 16th April

11.00 am Communion to Mt Ephraim House
Ginette di Palma

Wednesdays throughout the month

9.00 – 11.00 am Playtime at St Paul's at the Church Centre

Thursdays throughout the month

12 for 12.30 pm Rusthall Lunch Club
at the Church Centre



Fridays throughout the month

12.30 – 2.00 pm Community Larder
at the Church Centre

Saturdays & Sundays throughout the month

10 am – 4 pm Choristers Café in the Lodge

From the Registers



**Baptism - we welcome as newly baptised members
of the Church**

Darla Harrison

Dates for Your Diary

All events taking place at St Paul's Church

Wednesday 20th May

Saturday 30th May

Sunday 5th

Saturday 11th July

Saturday 18th July

Saturday 8th August

Saturday 12th September

Saturday 7th November

Sunday 29th November

Saturday 5th December

Sunday 20th December

Bacchus Wind Orchestra

Choir Summer Concert

July Hymns and Pimms

Grenadillas Clarinet Concert

"I am Mark" play

End of Camp concert

An Evening at the Musicals

Concert for Remembrance

Readings and Music for Advent

Sponsored Sing-a-thon

Nine Lessons and Carols

Magazine Deadlines

Please submit articles for the 2026 magazines in
accordance with the following deadlines.

May 2026 by 12th April

June 2026 by 17th May

July/Aug 2026 by 14th June

Sept 2026 by 16th August

October 2026 by 13th September

November 2026 by 11th October

December 2026/January 2027 by 15 November

The time between the deadline and magazine issue is
to allow for typing, formatting, proofreading, and
compiling the magazine. These all take time and have
to be fitted around the volunteer editorial team's other
commitments. We would therefore be very grateful if
you would keep to the deadlines set. Please send items
for publication to magazine@stpaulsrusthall.org.uk.

Magazines are posted on the Parish website by the
1st of the month. Photocopies of the magazine can be
made available to those who cannot access the
magazine online. Please contact Helen Reynolds at
the Church Office (TW 521447) to arrange production
and collection/delivery.

St. Paul's Parish, Rusthall



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GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL Esq^r
born February XXIII. MDCLXXXIV.
died April XIV. MDCCLIX. *L.F.Roubiliac inv^t et*

St. Paul's
Church
Rusthall

All services take place at the Parish Church unless stated otherwise.

St Paul's Parish Church: Langton Road, Rusthall, Tunbridge Wells TN4 8XD.
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to book your
tickets



From the Vicarage

April 2026

Dear Friends

Thank you very much for your continued support and hard work.

Thank you to those of you who have been attending the Lent course and to Tim Harrold for leading them. Special thanks to the Flower Team for decorating the parish church for our joint Parade service on Mothering Sunday and to the leaders and members of Girlguiding for helping with the organisation and delivery of the service and for providing the speakers.

Some of you will be receiving this magazine on Palm Sunday, when the Church 'celebrates' Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. We know that this was short-lived, as he was shortly after that arrested with help from Judas Iscariot, one of his own disciples. Of course, we know that Judas wasn't the only disciple to be disloyal to Jesus. Theologians have tried to explain Judas' reasoning for betraying Jesus. Some say he was trying to force Jesus' hand into 'restoring the kingdom of Israel'. When this failed/backfired, he was full of remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver that he was given to him for pointing out Jesus. He did this 'pointing out' by kissing Jesus, for he had told them: 'the one I kiss is the man (Jesus); arrest him' (Matt 26:48). I often wonder what it was that made Judas end his life in such a tragic way, especially since he wasn't the only disciple to betray Jesus. Maybe he wasn't aware of that, or perhaps he felt that his method of betrayal (with a kiss) was the lowest form of betrayal one could use to/for someone as special to him as Jesus was. Consequently, he couldn't bring himself to face Jesus at the cross, or live with the sense of guilt for the rest of his life. I think it is both, but heavily the latter. Although Jesus had told the disciples (Judas included) that he would be crucified and then be raised, they really didn't believe him. I think Judas not believing what Jesus had told them about his manner of death and resurrection played a big part in how he dealt with his enormous sense of guilt.

Jesus has promised to never leave or forsake us and we are encouraged to 'cast all' our anxiety on Jesus because he cares for us (1Peter 5:7). I pray that we will be disciples who truly take Jesus at his word. Doing so should save us from many a sleepless night. But if taking Jesus at his word still gives us sleepless nights, then, I hope it would be because he is, through the Holy Spirit nudging us to do and/ or be different, and truly rely on him, instead depending on our own strength. So, as we journey through Holy Week and celebrate Jesus' resurrection from the dead, I pray that we may do so in the strength of the Lord.

Ronnie

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Editorial for April 2026

At long last there is a feeling that spring is in the air! Langton Road looks wonderful with its display of daffodils. My garden is still waterlogged but even there I have spring bulbs and primroses everywhere and my neighbour's weeping willows are looking decidedly green. Attending Evensong it is particularly noticeable that the evenings are staying light much later, especially now we are in British Summer Time. Now we just have to hope that the sun plays no April Fool's joke on us!

A lot seems to have happened in the last month, sadly not yet for the good. While deploring the Iranian regime, I am still working through my thoughts on whether the current attacks are warranted, legal or likely to improve the situation. Like many things, the issue is complex and will require a good deal of consideration. It makes me relieved that I live in a country that abides by democracy, civil rights, law and order – all those 'British Values' we hold to, even if some of those in power and authority need to revise their understanding of the Seven Principles of Public Life. An excellent TV drama showing the shortcomings of the privatised water companies has been aired and is provoking debate. I remember some of the first TV dramas, like 'Cathy come home' which had a real impact on public opinion, but in February Sir Ian McKellen appeared on The Late Show with Stephen Colbert in America and gave an impromptu performance of a speech from the play 'Sir Thomas More', written during the reign of Henry VIII by Anthony Munday, Henry Chettle, and with revisions by Thomas Heywood, Thomas Dekker and William Shakespeare. Analysis of the speech suggests that it was written by Shakespeare. It talks about protests against the 'strangers' invading the land, threatening them with violence and forced repatriation, and urging people to put themselves in the refugees' position and ask themselves how they would wish to be treated. As with all things relating to human emotions, nothing ever really changes. It is a timeless message related to the parable of the Good Samaritan, which Tim Cripps writes about later in this magazine. April 23rd is, of course, the anniversary of Shakespeare's birth in 1564 and death in 1616, England's pre-eminent writer, which somehow makes it appropriate that his anniversaries fall on St George's Day. A film of part of his life, 'Hamnet', has been steadily collecting awards at this year's film festivals.

At church the month takes us from the reflection of Lent, into Holy Week, following Christ's journey to the cross and then the joy of Easter resurrection and that amazing period when the disciples had that precious extra time with Jesus after they thought he was lost to them. As usual there are additional services during this time, detailed in the Services section at the front of this magazine. You can also follow Jesus' life as told through Handel's setting of the scriptures in 'The Messiah', being sung by the Church Choir in the parish church at 6.30pm on Saturday 4th April – Easter Eve. We have been practicing hard for some time as, although it is very familiar for some members of the choir, for others it will be the first time they have performed it and finding your way around the tricky corners of long runs takes some hard work! I hope that whether you have heard the Messiah performed many times or never before, you will come along. Tickets are only £10. I have lost track of how many times I have sung it myself, but I am definitely into double figures, yet at every performance there is something that suddenly makes you think about something in a new way.

For those of you that like their music more contemporary, the concert date marks the anniversary of The Beatles holding the first 5 positions in the American Billboard Hot 100 singles chart with 'Please please me', 'I want to hold your hand', 'She loves you', 'Twist and shout' and 'Can't buy me love', a record which still stands.

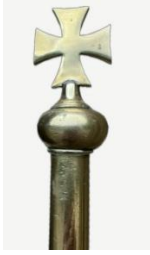
On 17th April 1969 the age at which you can vote was reduced from 21 to 18. However, in order to vote in the elections next month, you must be on the electoral register and the last date that changes can be made is 20th April, so if you have recently moved or have gained the age required, you need to check the accuracy of your entry in the register quickly.

The spring weather makes sporting events much more fun. The Oxford v Cambridge Boat Race is on 4th April (but in the afternoon, well before The Messiah concert!). Cambridge took the honours in Men's and Women's races last year, helping them maintain their slim lead in the series, which started in 1829 (men) and 1927 (women). The Grand National Meeting is 9-11th April, with the Grand National itself on the 11th. That weekend is also the Brighton Marathon Weekend, with a number of running events in Brighton and Hove, and on 12th April there is the London Landmarks Half Marathon, a run through central London with plenty of sight-seeing opportunities on the way, and then on Sunday 26th April the full London Marathon takes place, a wonderful mix of serious athletes competing with amateur runners and those running for charity.

Please get your articles for the May magazine in by Saturday 12th April.

Deborah Bruce and Sue Hare

Churchwardens' Notes



Another month has passed and I have just actioned my first fire drill at the Parish Church. Despite this only being a drill, it is vitally important that everyone knows what to do in the event of a real fire. I feel that more practice is required and must also admit to not being as clear in instruction as I should have been! To this end I am producing a poster detailing the procedure for safe evacuation of the church and directions to the proper assembly point. Watch this space.

The PCC unanimously commenced our push towards raising the funds for the refurbishment of the organ. This is a major job and will be needing a concerted fundraising effort. Work is progressing on the roof repairs and it is important that this work is completed before any work is started on the organ.

We are quickly approaching our APCM with still no sign of a churchwarden volunteer to take over from May. If you would like to help us in the continuing drive to move our church ever forward, please contact either Ronnie or me about the position. We will also seek to be appointing new members of the PCC and we are looking for someone to take on the vital role of PCC Secretary. Again, if you think you could help the Parish in this way, please speak to Ronnie or a churchwarden.

We also have plans to install CCTV which will help protect the church and its surroundings, including the bees, and may enable us to open the church more frequently to visitors and share what a fabulous church we have at St Paul's. Our thanks must go to the flower team and the Martha's for all their efforts in making it such a wonderful and welcoming space.

Chris and May



St Paul's Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM)

**Tuesday 12th May 2026
7.45 pm at the Church Centre**

A Lament for the Preamble (and the importance of having a Will)

Consider these two statements:

"I die, as I have lived, a Christian. I commit my body to be buried in the earth, in hope of the Resurrection. My soul I commend to Almighty God, asking him to receive it in mercy, on account of the Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection of my Lord, Jesus Christ. Of those I have wronged, I ask forgiveness; those who have wronged me, I forgive and ask God to forgive them also."

And sadly, now for how most wills begin. It is about as flat and prosaic as it is possible to imagine:

"I, [Name], of [Address], revoke all former wills and testamentary dispositions and declare this to be my last will and testament."

We can blame solicitors for the demise of the humble Preamble. But does it still have its place in this 21st Century world? There are good theological arguments to be made in favour of resurrecting the tradition.

We are God's stewards, entrusted to use His gifts for the good of our loved ones. In thanksgiving, we should take will writing seriously, setting our affairs in order, and stewarding them wisely to the end of our time on earth and beyond. Our generosity is a response to God's abundant grace and is demonstrated through our lives and the lives we share with others.

It is easy to forget that a will is a public document. It allows us to lodge something in the public record which attests to the goodness of God and which bears witness to his grace. As William Assheton put it, in his *Theological Discourse of Last Wills and Testaments* (1696), it is good to "declare your Christianity" and show the world the "reason of the hope that is in you". Consider this preamble from the 17th Century and popular in the Manchester

area – presumably the work of a legal man of the time:

First and principally I render and bequeath my soul unto my lord God and creator, firmly trusting that by the death and passion of his dearly beloved son Christ Jesus my saviour and redeemer and by his only mercy and mediation for me, I shall live and partake with his blessed saints in his heavenly kingdom of those celestial joys which of his eternal goodness he hath prepared for his Elect, of which number, through his infinite grace and mercy, I do confidently hope and believe that I am one.”

Responsibility for ruling on wills remained the business of ecclesiastical courts until the Court of Probate Act 1857, after which the more prosaic form began to take over such that by the end of the 19th century the preamble had all but disappeared.

Sadly, it is not just the preamble that has gone. A staggering 66% of the UK population die intestate, leaving no will. The Book of Common Prayer makes comment on this in its service for the Visitation of the Sick.

There, the parson is charged with the following responsibilities:

“If [the sick person] have not before disposed of his goods, let him then be admonished to make his Will, and to declare his debts, what he oweth, and what is owing unto him; for the better discharging of his conscience, and the quietness of his Executors.”

We are also told that parishioners

“...should often be put in remembrance to take order for the settling of their temporal estates whilst they are in health”,

and that the minister

“...should not omit earnestly to move such sick persons as are of ability to be liberal to the poor”.

The Prayer Book’s rubrics also offer further advice concerning moral and spiritual debts:

“...exhorting him [the sick person] to forgive, from the bottom of his heart, all persons that have offended him; and if he have offended any other, to ask them forgiveness; and where he hath done injury or wrong to any man, that he make amends to the uttermost of his power”.

All excellent advice.

But beyond the purely theological, there are particularly good practical reasons for ensuring your will is up to date. One will, after the preamble, contained the following:

“I wish my funeral Requiem to be conducted according to the rite and ceremonies of the Church of England, in traditional language, and in the spirit of the Oxford Movement. . . I wish to be buried in the churchyard of St

Peter’s Church, Rowley, East Yorkshire — since that is where I was baptised — according to the Book of Common Prayer of 1662, with such additions in the spirit of the Oxford Movement as the Rector or priest taking the service sees fit to add.”

Beyond the disposal of your assets, leaving clear instructions to those who survive you will ease their strains and worries immensely in what can often be a stressful time. Knowing that they are meeting your wishes provides a huge comfort. Along with your loved ones, your executors will be thankful for every bit of detail you leave for them.

And there are financial reasons for using your will in an efficient way. Once you have made provision for your loved ones, you may wish to include a gift in your will to your local church to help meet the needs of future generations. All gifts to charities, including your church, in wills are tax-free. Your solicitor can advise you on how with proper planning you can make tax savings.

At St. Paul’s we welcome all gifts in wills, however large or small, and we promise to use your gift to make a difference in our parish. Since needs change over the years, we encourage you to leave a gift in your will for the general purposes of the parish rather than for a restricted purpose. We will discuss possible uses of your gift with your executors when the time comes, bearing in mind your known areas of interest in the church (e.g. music, buildings, children and youth, overseas mission or aid, or another suitable area) and the church’s priorities at the time. You can be confident that your gift will be used to make a real difference.

If you would like to make a gift to our church in memory of a loved one, or if you are thinking about leaving a legacy to St. Paul’s, and would like to talk to someone in confidence about the sorts of purposes your gift might fund, and how/if you would like your gift to be acknowledged, please contact the Parish Administrator via email office@stpaulsrusthall.org.uk.

A range of practical material is also available to help you in drawing up a will including a guide to writing your will along with a checklist of information your solicitor will require. And if you are changing your will or arranging a will for the first time, think about if there is space for the humble preamble to make a long-awaited return.

Tim Harrold

(Nothing in this article should be construed as providing tax advice)



The Chronicles Of Hope CIC presents

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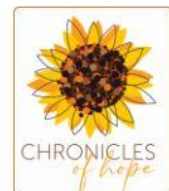
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Location, location, location

The story of Easter is known to believers and unbelievers. I have many friends who do not believe but are respectful of my faith. Even so I am not beyond some gentle joshing at Christmas and Easter when the phrase ‘suppose you will be on your knees again’ often crops up. This despite the fact that since having had my right knee replaced I cannot kneel. No matter. The story of Easter is one of resurrection but the stand out part of the story, in my opinion, comes through Mary Magdalene, who I would count as the greatest disciple even if not recognised as such. Her loyalty, devotion and belief are shown to the disciples who, perhaps fearing Roman reprisal, are in hiding.

Imagine going to the grave of a loved one, whose funeral you had attended just two days before, and finding the grave open! Mary is appalled and runs away in horror to fetch reinforcements. Simon and Peter race back to the grave ahead of her. There’s a touching realism in the detail someone has gone to, to record the details of who won that race. It’s an insight into how competition can creep into our interactions as disciples, even at the holiest of moments. I once heard someone say that this passage shows what people do when Jesus is absent: they run around a lot! Frenzied activity in response to Jesus’ absence contrasts with Mary’s later stillness in Jesus’ presence. The two disciples see Jesus’ absence, and they note for us the signs that this does not have an easy explanation – it’s unlikely to be a simple grave-robbing when the valuable linen is still in place. We remember how the soldiers diced for Jesus’ tunic on Friday. Simon and Peter note all this, but they are bemused, grieving and confused, as we would be, and they retreat to the familiarity of home.

But Mary can’t bring herself to leave. All she can think about is Jesus’ absence. Notice her refrain in this passage: three times she says that Jesus has been taken away and questions where his body is now. She wants to keep a vigil over him – in Mark and Luke’s versions, her desire to be in physical contact with his body is emphasised by her carrying spices to anoint him. The absence even of Jesus’ body is like a second bereavement, a second atrocity.

Even when she sees the angels, Mary’s preoccupation with where Jesus’ body is means that she doesn’t react at all to being angels being present – she just repeats her sad refrain of loss which is of course the most human of reactions. She is determined to be as present as she can be, even in the face of Jesus’ seeming absence. It’s ironic, then, that when she is actually face to face with Jesus, she doesn’t at first recognise him.

Preachers and theologians have long speculated why Mary might not have recognised Jesus. Was

she simply blinded by her tears? Is there a point about our tendency to see what we expect to see, rather than recognising the surprising presence of God? Or perhaps Jesus’ resurrected body was very different in appearance – emphasising, perhaps, the theological point that the resurrection is a transfiguration rather than a simple resuscitation. Others have seen more symbolic meaning in this mistaken identity. The image of the risen Christ having earth under his fingernails is an arresting image of a God who literally and metaphorically gets his hands dirty for us.

And then, after Mary has spent all morning searching for Jesus, when she goes to hug him, he sends her away. It’s a startling moment. It goes against all our human instincts to hold on to our loved ones, to hug tight what is precious to us. Leaving him there must have been one of the hardest things she’d ever done. But she does it. She retraces her steps for the third time that morning, back to the others, to announce the good news. She becomes, as the early church came to call her, apostle to the apostles.

There is a temptation for us when we have spent a Holy week preparing for his death upon the cross and the glorious resurrection, hearing on Easter Eve a marvellous performance of the Messiah from the choir, when the Marthas have been busy polishing and preparing the church for the great celebration, when Jill and her flower team have been arranging beautiful flowers, to focus on the fact that we on Easter Day, symbolically gather at the empty tomb, to celebrate Jesus’ death and resurrection. But Jesus’ message to Mary is spoken to each one of us, too. He calls us by name not to focus our attentions on gathering here to commemorate that amazing moment 2000 years ago, but to be sent out. It’s not necessarily what we want to do, or what we feel comfortable doing. Gathering with our church family and friends, holding onto the familiarity of this Easter celebration, is our natural instinct of course but we would do well to remember that this is a commissioning of us all not a commemoration.

The jolt of those words spoken to Mary ‘ – don’t hold on to me; go, tell – ’ is God’s calling to each one of us. It’s great to hear it but the purpose of our great celebration isn’t just to hear it, it’s to go out and announce the great news and goodness only knows this world needs us to do just that. Then we really have celebrated Easter.

May you all be truly blessed this Easter.

Recommended Reading:-

Acts 10:34–43, Colossians 3:1–4, John 20:1–18

Tim Cripps



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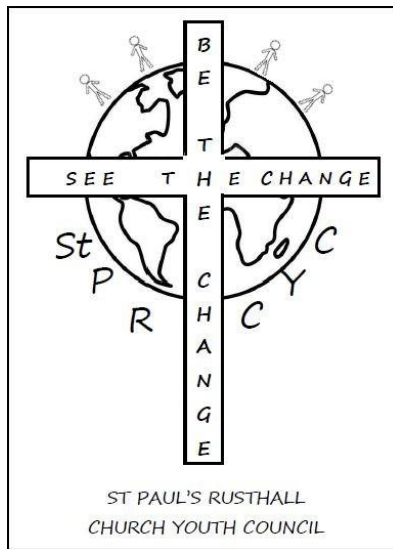
Magazine Easy Payment Methods

Income from magazine sales is important to us at St Paul's. If everyone paid the £1 cover charge we would raise over £900 a year, which would not only cover the cost of producing the magazine but also contribute to other costs such as leasing the photocopier.

If you often find yourself fumbling for the right change, perhaps you might like to pay in advance for a year's "subscription", 10 issues for the sum of £10, (you might even feel tempted to be more generous!) Please make cheques payable to St Paul's Church, Rusthall and send them to the Parish Office.

Alternatively you can use the card payment machines – just choose the £1 donation option.

Your contributions are much appreciated.



What a month!

Our Hot News is that KCC have approved and secured funding for a road island seemingly at the end of the avenue and surveyors have been seen measuring up. Whilst it is not a full crossing, and the speed reduction request has again been rejected, this road island should be cause for a huge celebration and would certainly help make crossing the A264 so much safer for everybody. We don't know when yet but hopefully during the 2026/2027 financial year. We cannot wait and feel very proud to have been part of this longstanding campaign.

We talked about the upcoming sale of the commons and the campaign to buy them through The Friends of the Commons, thereby safeguarding them for the future. The CYC have pledged some of their 'Honey Money' to the cause. We are all keeping our fingers crossed that the offer will be accepted.

This month's meeting saw us being introduced to the fun of a 'Beetle Drive'!



A big thank you to Lisa Coughlin and Mary Nolze from The Bonfire Society



for leading us. It was great fun and quite competitive!! Super was KFC so we were all very happy!



We were delighted to welcome the Commons Volunteers to the cafe when we were on duty. Twenty four people arrived at the same time so we



were manically busy: sausage rolls, cheese scones, toasted tea bread with butter and all sorts of delicious cakes were sold and we were exhausted!

The Youth Council have unanimously voted to go to PaintnGo during the school Easter break. Old clothes essential as we anticipate a mess 🤩😄🤩 This will be fully funded by their work in the cafe and the book share initiative. A terrific achievement.

The CYC have also voted a trip to Bewl Water Aquapark as their summer trip. Again this will be fully funded by their own efforts including honey sales.

Next meeting:

Thursday 7th May 6pm in The Lodge.

Our speaker will be Anne Krisman Goldstein who will be telling the story of The Beacon and the hope and care it gave to both the Basque children fleeing from the Spanish Civil War and the Kindertransport children rescued from Nazi Germany. This promises to be a fascinating, interesting and moving evening.

Finally, current Year 6 pupils can join CYC upon returning to school in April. Please encourage younger siblings to join us if appropriate and also spread the word among friends and local schools. You do not need to be a resident of Rusthall or necessarily worship at St. Paul's. Please contact Angela (07779098026) or Jean (stpauls.cyc@gmail.com) for further information.

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Home Life in the New Testament

Part 3



Lighting indoors and out would, on the whole, have been rather restricted. Basically any form of artificial light, either indoor or out, would to our eyes seem somewhat feeble. Should people have ventured out at night they would probably have carried a lantern lit by oil but this would probably only have been affordable by the more wealthy and those living in Roman populated towns. Candles were known and were either made from beeswax or tallow (purified beef fat). We do know that they were carried in funeral processions.

Indoor lamps were sometimes hung from chains in the ceiling, but more generally they stood on a lamp stand and that stand would have been placed in such a position to provide light for everyone in the house. In the majority of Jewish houses this stand would have just been a plain pedestal with a flat top.

We do know that Antioch had some form of organised lighting in some of the main streets and this probably applied to other main cities such as Rome and Ephesus. These lamps were oil ones enclosed in lanterns to provide some protection from the wind.

The problem for any form of fire, lamp and stove was to get it lit. Matches, needless to say, did not exist. Once a fire had been lit in a very primitive way (by striking flint or rotating sticks) it was a disaster to let it go out. All fires had to be continually stoked and watched and it was from them that torches were used to light lamps, stoves and lanterns. People would borrow fire from one another, and from the central and sacred hearth of the house.

Earthenware pottery was in general use in all houses in some shape or form. It was still very much a domestic industry but groups of potters were beginning to work together under one 'employer'. Glass making goes back to at least 1500BC. At first all the glass was opaque, but as time went on it was found out how to make transparent glass and how to 'blow' glass. The majority of poor people would have been content with what was available locally, but the richer people began to benefit from imported pottery and glass.

Hot water for people in the first century was an important issue and apart from the system of supplying it to baths there was also the need for making and keeping it hot for table purposes. One of these was called a Authepssa which was really rather like a type of urn, an earthenware or metal



vessel with two compartments, one for water and the other for hot charcoal. Hot and cold water at dinner tables had to be available for both mixing with wine and for washing hands. So far as we know the Authepssa was not used for actual cooking.

For cooking people had either the aenum or bronze cauldron suspended from a chain or the caccabus or ordinary saucepan. There was also a charcoal brazier rather like a spirit lamp. Vessels containing food which people wished to keep hot were stood on top. For the Jews – who of course were not allowed to do any work on the Sabbath Day (included cooking) - this was very useful. We also understand that a haybox was also sometimes used for this purpose.

Incidentally shower baths were invented by the Greeks and it is almost certain that these would have been fitted into wealthy households in Roman times.

We know that a number of carpenters' tools existed at this time and some were not so different to those used today. Door keys and nails appear to have been much the same as ours today. Doors were swung open and shut with hinges of metal, but they were sometimes worked by a dowel fitting into a socket. However, this was no so good as it was more likely to creak.



Kitchen utensils were numerous, including strainers, spoons, forks, knives of all sorts, ladles, sieves, grills for standing over an open fire and bellows. Wicker baskets were commonly used for gathering fruit and their exact counterparts can still be seen in Jerusalem today. Wooden casks, again very similar to those in use today, were used for the storage and conveyance of fruit, grain or wine. The staves of these casks were usually of pitch-pine, but the stronger casks were bound with iron hoops, and others with rushes or osiers (flexible willow rods).

Daphne Pilcher



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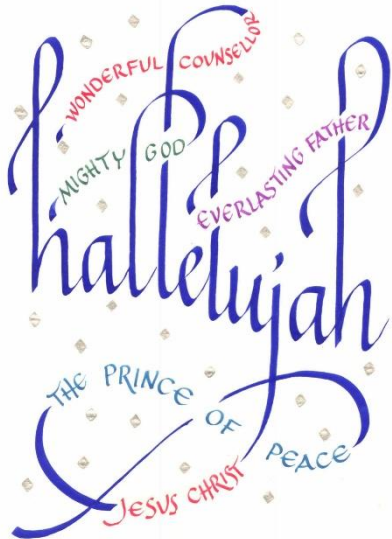


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A Musical Note



The choir has been hard at work over the past few weeks for our upcoming performance of “Messiah” by Handel on Saturday, 4th April at 6.30pm. It is a remarkable work full of drama, slower moments of great beauty, and quite a lot of notes! Rehearsals have been exciting. There have been brilliant moments where everything works perfectly, and others where we resemble several choirs singing entirely different works at once. Fortunately, those moments are becoming fewer, so we remain optimistic!

The concert itself will be in three sections, with short(ish) intervals and refreshments will be available. Tickets are £10, with free entry for under-16s, and can be booked via the Parish Office or Eventbrite. You can of course just pay at the door on the day; you don't have to buy your ticket in advance. We would absolutely love to see a full church, so please do bring friends, family, neighbours, and anyone else who can be persuaded.

This concert is the first event in our Organ Renovation Fund project. With our organ being in desperate need of repair we are likely to need in the region of £350,000 to save it. Sadly many church organs are falling into disrepair and we need to ensure that ours is not one of them. Each of our events will hopefully raise a small amount of money to help towards the total. In 2026 the events are:

Saturday 4th April: 6.30pm - Handel's Messiah

Wednesday 20th May: 8pm - Bacchus Wind Orchestra Concert

Saturday 30th May: 6.30pm - Choir Summer Concert

Saturday 11th July: 7.30pm - Grenadillas Clarinet Concert

Saturday 18th July: 6.30pm - “I am Mark” Play

Saturday 8th August: 6.30pm - Junior Choir Concert at the end of Choir Camp

Saturday 12th September: 6.30pm - “An Evening at the Musicals”

Saturday 7th November: 6.30pm - Concert for Remembrance

Saturday 5th December: 10.30am - 9pm - Sponsored Sing-a-thon of 100 Carols for Choirs

If you are not able to join us for any of the events in 2026, don't worry as this is definitely a long-term project and we will be continuing with the fundraising over the next few years. A committee has been formed to oversee the Organ Renovation Fund and we will be meeting regularly over the next few months to get the project underway.

As I am writing, we are about to board the coach to take us to Southwell Minster to sing Evensong. Their Cathedral Choir is taking a well-earned break ahead of the rigours of Holy Week and so there is a rare opportunity for us to go and sing a one-off Evensong there today. The occasion is made all the more festive as it doubles as a birthday outing for May, our indefatigable churchwarden and splendid alto. And really, what could be more enjoyable on one's birthday than a coach trip and the chance to sing Evensong somewhere new! Hopefully she will have a thoroughly lovely day, Suzie has baked her a birthday cake and there might be wine later!

Fiona Johnson



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What is it?

A community larder receives surplus short date food from supermarkets to offer to people in our community.

When and where is it?

Our community larder will be in the St Paul's Church Centre every Friday between 12:30pm and 2:15pm.

Who can use it?

Anyone can come and visit the community larder. There are no restrictions, no booking necessary, just turn up with a carrier bag to fill.

How much does it cost?

We suggest a small cash donation of £2, or as much as you can afford. For this, you can take away a bag full of quality food.

Please help us all stay safe by wearing a face mask, respecting social distancing and using the hand sanitiser provided.



WE'D LOVE TO SEE YOU!

For more information, please email contact@rusthallvillage.org
or telephone 07805 475397

Poems for April

The Easter story shows us how devastating loss, fear and uncertainty are transformed by the mysterious events of the Resurrection. Through the darkness, comes light. These poems reflect the universal journey of grief toward hope and a new way of being with what we have lost.

Susan Barber

Lost and Found

I missed him when the sun began to bend;
I found him not when I had lost his rim;
With many tears I went in search of him,
Climbing high mountains which did still ascend,
And gave me echoes when I called my friend;
Through cities vast and charnel-houses grim,
And high cathedrals where the light was dim,
Through books and arts and works without an end,
But found him not – the friend whom I had lost.
And yet I found him – as I found the lark,
A sound in fields I heard but could not mark:
I found him nearest when I missed him most;
I found him in my heart, a life in frost,
A light I knew not till my soul was dark.

George MacDonald

Farewell

Farewell to Thee! But not farewell

To all my fondest thoughts of Thee;
Within my heart they still shall dwell
And they shall cheer and comfort me.

Life seems more sweet that Thou didst live
And men more true that Thou wert one;
Nothing is lost that Thou didst give,
Nothing destroyed that Thou hast done.

Anne Brontë

The Gift is Balanced

(Extract from "A Costly Year")

Nothing
Is given that is not
Taken, and nothing taken
That was not first gift.
The gift is balanced by
Its total loss, and yet,
And yet the light breaks in,
Heaven seizing its moments
That are at once its own
And yours.

Wendell Berry



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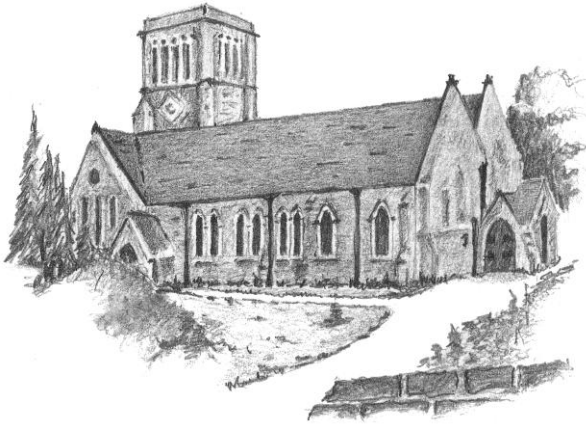
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24 (£100), 87 (£60) AND 3 (£40)

There is not much to laugh about with the world as it is but this story perhaps supports that most of us would try to help and make someone feel comfortable when things go astray.

There are two football clubs in England playing at grounds called St James' Park. One is the Premier League team Newcastle United and the other is Exeter City, playing in the first tier of the football league. As it happened both teams were playing at home on the night of 10th March. Newcastle were at home to Barcelona in the UEFA Champions league, whilst Exeter were playing Lincoln.

A young Barcelona supporter had flown from Spain to Heathrow and had taken the Heathrow Express to Paddington where he approached the information desk asking for onward directions to St James' Park. Being Paddington, he was advised to take the Exeter train and arriving at the football ground realised that a terrible mistake had been made. I will let the Chairman of Exeter City take up the story.

“When we realised what had happened, we felt so sorry for the young man that we tried to look after him. We gave him a seat in the Directors Box, refreshments were provided and we found a radio so that he could listen to commentary of the match he should have been at in Newcastle. After the match we discovered that he had booked a night in the Newcastle Premier Inn so we got on to them and without charge they offered to switch the booking to Exeter. However, the young man said he would, perhaps out of embarrassment, prefer to return to London so I personally drove him to the station and put him on the London train. He was very grateful and I hope our hospitality went some way to assuage his disappointment.”

We know the story of the good Samaritan but this 21st century story captures the essence of helping others in need. For the record the young man might have been cheered up by Barcelona equalising in the 96th minute with the match finishing 2-2. Sadly, Exeter lost to Lincoln 0-1.

Tim Cripps

Activity Pages

A Wordsearch based on the Stars and Planets. The words are written forwards, backwards, diagonally and vertically. At the end you should be left with 14 unused letters. These will make up two words which are sometimes used to describe something seen in the sky in certain parts of Britain.

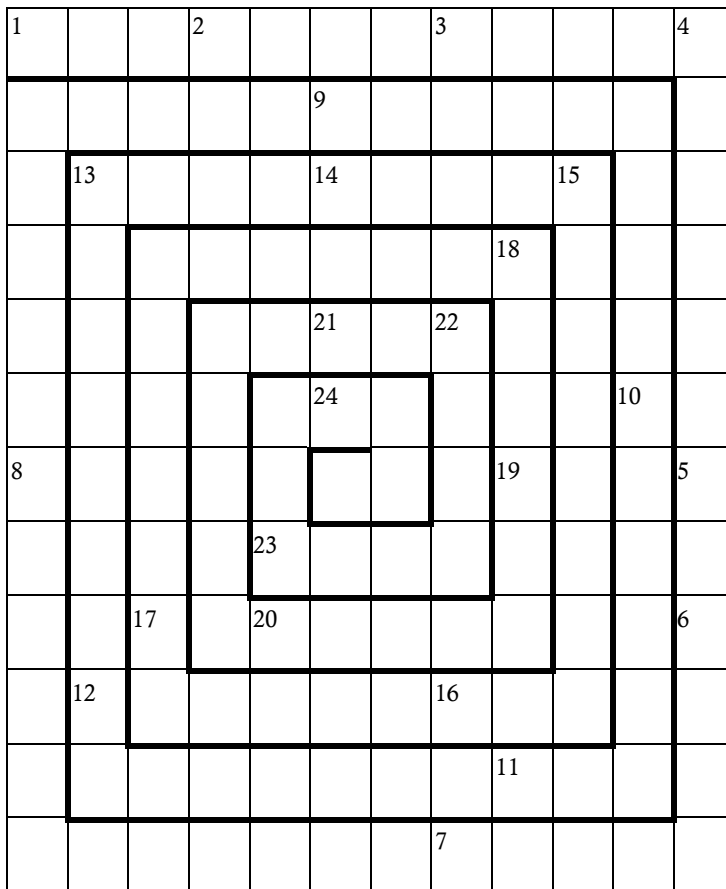
V	N	R	O	J	A	M	S	I	N	A	C		
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U	E	N	P	O	L	E	S	T	A	R	L	EARTH	GALAXY
S	G	P	N	U	A	H	S	E	M	Y	Y	JUPITER	LEO
E	A	U	T	R	Y	T	U	M	L	X	A	LYRA	MARS
D	S	O	I	U	H	R	R	O	Y	A	W	MERCURY	MILKYWAY
A	U	E	I	G	N	A	U	C	R	L	Y	MOON	NEPTUNE
I	S	G	U	H	O	E	A	C	A	A	K	ORION	PEGASUS
E	N	O	O	M	I	T	T	S	R	G	L	PLEIADES	PLOUGH
L	L	E	O	N	R	U	T	A	S	E	I	PLUTO	POLESTAR
P	A	I	E	P	O	I	S	S	A	C	M	SATURN	SUN
												TAURUS	URANUS
												VENUS	

Twenty Questions to Test You

1. What is the National animal of Scotland?
2. What is the more usual name for an American Pit Viper?
3. A feather scarf
4. What is the name of Cadbury's chocolate frog?
5. The name given to the Thames at Oxford
6. The Norse god of Thunder
7. Which sweets' advert encourages you to 'Taste the Rainbow'?
8. Which Dutch painter painted 'Girl with a Pearl Earring'?
9. Complete the title of Dahl's book – James and the Giant _ _ _ _ _
10. What is the capital of Tennessee?
11. Sport connected with Flushing Meadows
12. Which country in Africa has a flag of three vertical stripes – green, white, green?
13. Madeira is part of which European country?
14. What is the hottest planet in our solar system?
15. What is the profession of Gordon Ramsay?
16. Which sport do you associate with Ellen MacArthur?
17. Name the Atlantic to Pacific canal
18. Who wrote Lord of the Flies?
19. In which Dickens book do you meet Abel Magwitch?
20. What name is given to the followers of Guru Nanak?

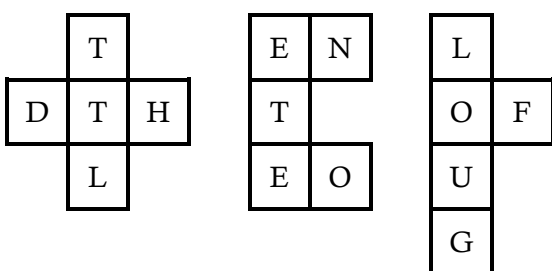
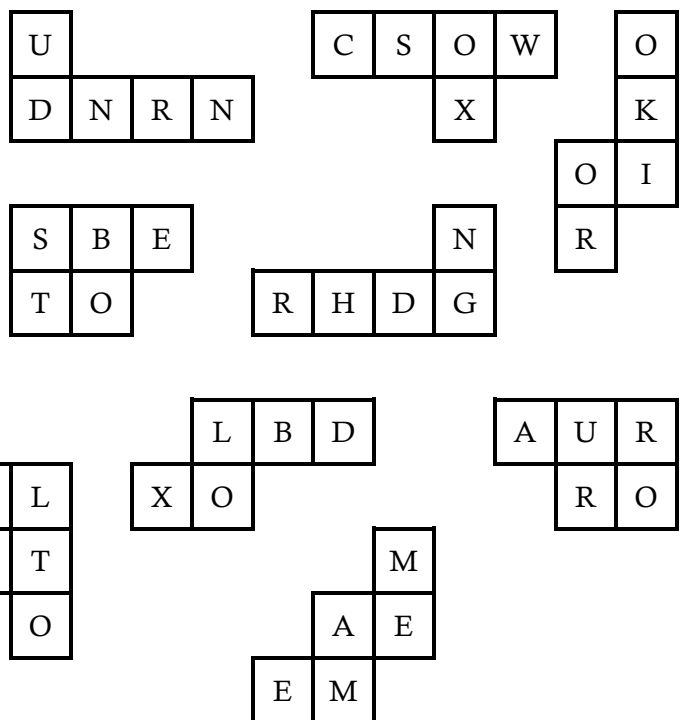
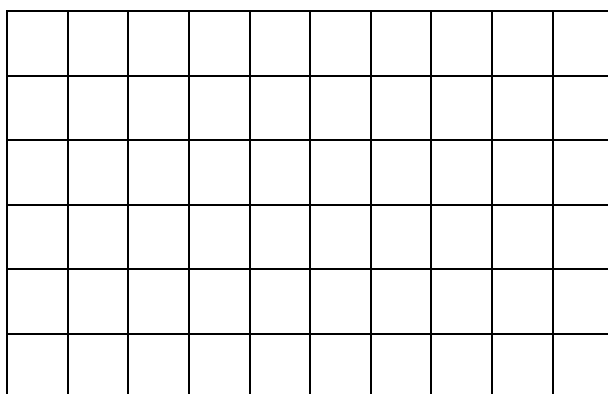
Crossword with a Difference

The last letter of one answer is the first of the next. All of the answers are loosely connected with buildings.

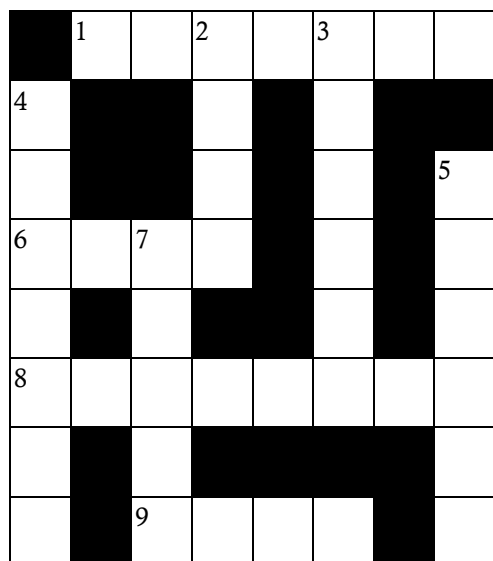


1. Building which houses a particular interest or activity
2. Temporary structure at a market or fair
3. Housing a rabbit perhaps
4. Housing chickens
5. Place where beer can be consumed
6. One storey house
7. Home of royalty in Berkshire
8. Landmark in central Paris
9. Where meals can be consumed
10. Indian building near Agra
11. The Old Bailey is one of these
12. Eatery by the roadside
13. Large farm in North America or Australia
14. Where you might stay on holiday
15. Building used to guide shipping
16. Official residence of an ambassador
17. Budget friendly accommodation for young travellers
18. Place to buy goods
19. Structure found in Egypt
20. Formal term for a house
21. Place to go for exercise
22. Large impressive house
23. Bird's home
24. Famous London gallery

Try your hand at this Cross-jig. Fit the five letter shapes into the grin to find the name of ten English towns or cities.



A Crossword based on 'places' mentioned in the Bible. All the references are taken from the Good News version of the Bible.



Across

1. A village connected with Mary, Martha and Lazarus (John 11 v 1)
6. Where Paul met his death (Acts 28 v 16)
8. Town connected with 12th book of the New Testament
9. Roman province where Paul taught (Acts 19 v 10)

Down

2. Ancient seaport (Mark 7 v 24)
3. Where was Paul waiting for Silas and Timothy (Acts 17 v 16)
4. Where Jesus met blind Bartimaeus (Mark 10 v 46)
5. Home of Simon (Mark 15 v 21)
7. Where Paul was shipwrecked (Acts 28 v 1)

ANSWERS

Wordsearch – Stars and Planets. The unused letters make up the words Northern Lights

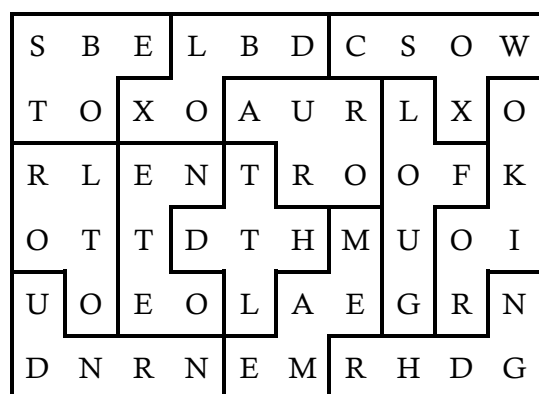
Twenty Questions to Test You

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|----------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| 1 Unicorn | 2 Rattle Snake | 3 Boa | 4 Freddo | 5 Isis | 6 Thor |
| 7 Skittles | 8 Vermeer | 9 Peach | 10 Nashville | 11 Tennis | 12 Nigeria |
| 13 Portugal | 14 Venus | 15 Chef | 16 Yachting | 17 Panama | |
| 18 William Golding | 19 Great Expectations | 20 Sikhs | | | |

Crossword with a Difference

- | | | | | | |
|------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|
| 1 Club | 2 Booth | 3 Hutch | 4 Hencoop | 5 Pub | 6 Bungalow |
| 7 Windsor Castle | 8 Eiffel Tower | 9 Restaurant | 10 Taj Mahal | 11 Law Courts | 12 Snack Bar |
| 13 Ranch | 14 Hotel | 15 Lighthouse | 16 Embassy | 17 Youth Hostels | 18 Shop |
| 9 Pyramid | 20 Dwelling | 21 Gym | 22 Mansion | 23 Nest | 24 Tate |

Cross-Jig



From left to right:

Stroud Bolton Exeter London Battle Durham
Cromer Slough Oxford Woking

Crossword based on 'places' mentioned in the Bible

Across

- 1 Bethany 4 Rome 6 Colossae 8 Asia

Down

- 2 Tyre 3 Athens 4 Jericho 5 Cyrene 7 Malta

Daphne Pilcher



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Rusthall Community Cinema



The Last Showgirl (2024) Cert 15

Doors open: 6.30pm Saturday 11th April
 Directed by: Gia Coppola
 Genre: Drama
 Runtime: 1hr 29 mins
 Starring: Pamela Anderson, Jamie Lee Curtis, Brenda Song



All the President's Men (1976) Cert 15

Doors open: 6:30pm Saturday 25th April
 Director: Alan J Pakula
 Genre: Drama, History, Thriller
 Runtime: 2h13m plus interval
 Starring: Dustin Hoffman, Robert Redford, Jack Warden



NT Live: All My Sons (Cert 15)

Doors open: 2pm Sunday 26th April
 Written by: Arthur Miller
 Director: Ivo Van Hove
 Genre: Recorded Live Theatre
 Runtime: 2h with interval
 Starring: Bryan Cranston, Marianne Jean-Baptiste, Hayley Squires

General Information

Vicar Rev. Ronnie Williams, The Vicarage, Bretland Road, Rusthall	521357
Associate Priest Rev. Nicholas Burton (c/o Parish Office)	521447
Reader Daphne Pilcher	521691
Licensed Lay Minister Tim Harrold	07413805814
Churchwardens May Graves Chris Dobson	gravesmay7@gmail.com 539539
Deputy Churchwarden Graeme Anderson	532922
Parochial Church Council Secretary Mione Palmer	667951
Youth Council Angela Culley	07779 098026
Treasury and Planned Giving PCC Finance subcommittee c/o the Parish Office	521447
Safeguarding Officers Daphne Pilcher	521691
DBS Officer Clive Brown c/o the Parish Office	521447
Bible Reading Fellowship Secretary Vivienne Sharp	543263
Choir Leader Fiona Johnson	07540 273303
Magazine Editors Deborah Bruce and Sue Hare c/o the Parish Office email – magazine@stpaulsrusthall.org.uk	
Flower Team Jill McAllister	532817
Parish Hall Bookings Churchyards Enquiries to Parish Office	521447
Rusthall St Paul's Primary School Executive Headteacher – Mrs Liz Mitchell Head of School – Mrs Lyndsay Smurthwaite	520582 520582

CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL

All worshippers who are baptised members of the Church of England, and aged over 16, should have their names entered on the Electoral Roll. This entitles them to attend and vote at the Annual Parochial Meeting. Forms for enrolment will be found in the Parish Church or the Parish Office and should be sent to the Vicar.

Organisations

Julian Group Pat Stevens	529187
Group Scout Leader Gavin Cons Email – rusthallscoutgroup@gmail.com	
Scout Membership Secretary Juliet Waller Email – rusthallscoutgroupwaitinglist@yahoo.co.uk	
Squirrels: rusthallsquirrels@gmail.com Beavers: beaversrusthall@gmail.com Cubs: rusthallcubs@hotmail.co.uk Scouts: rusthallscouts@gmail.com	
Ranger Guides Gemma Bradley	07377 061398
Guides Gemma Bradley	07377 061398
Brownie Guides Karen Miller (Thurs) rusthallbrownies@btinternet.com Tina Francis (Mon)	545877
Rainbows Liz Mankelow	07840 837968
Playtime at St Paul's Liz Mankelow	07840 837968
Rusthall Lunch Club Helen Foster Richard Brook	01892 535159 01892 862677
Rusthall Community Larder Bjorn Simpole	07900 906294
Rusthall Community & Youth Project Barry Edwards	680296
Rusthall Village Association Alex Britcher	07967 011467
Rusthall Parish Council Council Clerk: Alison Stevens	520161
Rusthall Bonfire and Fete Committee Annie Softley	548366
Friends of TW and Rusthall Common Roger Barton rogerbarton@gmail.com	524795



The Parish Office

Parish Administrator - **Mrs Helen Reynolds**

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The Office is open on weekday mornings (except Tuesdays) between 10 am and 1 pm.