

WEEKLY MESSAGE FROM OUR VICAR, ALEX – 5th December 2022

Dear Church Family and Parish Friends,

Hoping this finds you all well. I missed seeing you yesterday, as I was at a very dear friend's licensing service for the morning, but I am looking forward to seeing you lots this month as we have plenty going on in the parish!

On Saturday we had another wonderful craft morning at St. Paul's, which was so much fun - and there are LOTS of Christmas and other dates coming up.

For those of you who have Facebook, some of these can be found on this video:
<https://www.facebook.com/search/posts/?q=nork%20with%20burgh%20heath>

This email contains information on:

1. St. Paul's opening as a WARM SPACE on Tuesday (6th December) afternoon
2. Our food bank and parcels of love collections at St Mary's on Wednesday (7th December) afternoon from 2-4 pm
3. Refresh@10, this Saturday (10th December) from 10 am - 12 pm at St. Mary's
4. Christingle at St. Paul's, this Sunday (11th December), at 9 am
5. Soaking Prayer, at St. Mary's, this Sunday (11th December), at 4pm
6. Other key dates through to the 1st January 2023
7. Christmas Services in our Nursing homes - Tuesday 13th December 2022 in the afternoon
8. Alastair Watson's Thanksgiving Service (Friday 16th December, 1.30 pm, St. Paul's Howell Hill)
9. Finances in our parish - a letter you will be receiving in the next few days
10. Your views - 2 whole parish services a month for the winter months - an opportunity to have your say
11. Bible Studies on Revelation by Jo Hawkins

Love and prayers,
Alex

1. St. Paul's opening as a WARM SPACE on Tuesday (6th December) afternoon

We are delighted to be opening St. Paul's as a WARM SPACE on Tuesday afternoons, from 2-4 pm on the following dates:

6th, 13th, 20th December

10th, 17th, 24th January

Tea, coffee and biscuits will be served. There will be the opportunity to sit quietly, or to enjoy conversing with others - and most importantly, the church will be warm for these times.

Please see the flyer attached for further information.

Please also share with others who may appreciate this opportunity.

2. Our food bank and parcels of love collections at St Mary's on Wednesday (7th December) afternoon from 2-4 pm

Thank you very much to those who have already donated items for the foodbank collection this week, which will be on Wednesday, from 2-4 pm, outside St. Mary's.

Thank you also to those who have already contributed items for this year's parcels of love (which will go to local people in the community who will be alone at Christmas, or who are struggling). If you'd still like to contribute either a full bag or some items, these can also be brought along to the foodbank collection.

For the foodbank, the items most needed currently are as follows: Christmas items (no alcohol), long-life sponge puddings, coffee (100g jars), male deodorant, sanitary towels and tampons, custard, tinned soup, gravy granules, chocolate spread, dog food, strong bags for life, Christmas bags for life

For the parcels of love, the types of items we are collecting are as follows: gift bags, chocolate or other sweet treats, bath stuff, soaps, toothbrushes and paste, little packs of tissues, any other small gifts (no alcohol) which can be enjoyed by someone who may otherwise have no gifts to open at Christmas

3. Refresh@10, this Saturday (10th December) from 10 am - 12 pm at St. Mary's

It is our Refresh@10 Christmas Coffee Morning this Saturday, from 10 am - 12 pm, at St. Mary's. Please do come along - and please do invite others to join in too.

There will be Christmas activities, music to listen to, and delicious refreshments to enjoy.

A flyer is attached.

4. Christingle at St. Paul's, this Sunday (11th December), at 9 am

On Sunday, at 9 am, at St. Paul's it is the Community Alive Christingle Service.

Do come along and join us, for this special annual event & do please invite others to come also.

A flyer is attached.

5. Soaking Prayer, at St. Mary's, this Sunday (11th December), at 4pm

On Sunday, at 4pm, at St. Mary's we will be having our monthly 'Soaking Prayer' hour. This is a time to enjoy some peace and quiet with God (especially important during Advent Season, where everywhere is so busy!).

Do come and join us.

6. Other key dates through to the 1st January 2023

Other dates which are coming up are as follows (please note the whole parish service at 10 am at St. Paul's on Christmas Day and the whole parish service at 10 am at St. Mary's on New Year's Day):

Sunday 18th December, 11 am: Messy Nativity, at St. Mary's

Sunday 18th December, 6pm: Parish Carol Service, at St. Mary's

Saturday 24th December, 3pm: St. Mary's Christingle

Saturday 24th December, 5.30 pm: Parish Crib Service at St. Paul's

Sunday 25th December, 10 am, whole parish Communion service at St. Paul's (as it is St. Paul's turn this month, next year this will swap over)

Sunday 1st December, 10 am, whole parish Communion service at St. Mary's

7. Christmas Services in our Nursing homes - Tuesday 13th December 2022 in the afternoon

David Wright and I will be delivering Carol Services at two of our Nursing Homes on Tuesday 13th December in the afternoon (Montclair and Banstead Manor). If you would like to come and sing for these occasions and help us to wish the residents a happy Christmas from us, please can you let me know. (This is all dependent on no covid outbreaks in the homes, where they are still having to operate mini-lockdowns if this arises).

8. Alastair Watson's Thanksgiving Service (Friday 16th December, 1.30 pm, St. Paul's Howell Hill)

On Friday 16th December there will be a thanksgiving service for the life of Alastair Watson, which will be at 1.30 pm at St. Paul's Howell Hill, due to the large numbers expected. If you would like to attend, please let Bruce (his older son) know by emailing: bruised@btinternet.com

Many of us have very precious memories of Alastair, which I'm sure some of you will have sent to the family already, but I'd like to put together a parish collection of memories (as we did for the family of Beryl Davis) as a gift for Jean and her sons, Bruce and Phil.

If you have some memories you'd be happy to share, please can you email these back to me.

If you could do this by Monday 12th December, I'd be very grateful.

9. Finances in our parish - a letter you will be receiving in the next few days

Times are tricky for everyone - and all of us, personally and in organisations, are being stretched financially.

As a PCC we have recognised that we need to generate some more funds for our parish - for some special projects that we are working on currently and that are coming up, as well as for our staff salaries.

The Wardens have written a letter explaining this, which will be sent out / delivered in the next week.

Please don't worry if you are finding things difficult and are unable to help donate any extra funds for the parish at the current time. We do not want anyone to feel uncomfortable or under pressure.

However, if you are in a position where you may be able to help us out, please do prayerfully consider the letter you receive.

If you have any questions about this, please do be in touch.

10. Your views - 2 whole parish services a month for the winter months - an opportunity to have your say

Quite a few people have mentioned recently that they would like us to go over to having two whole parish services (at 10 am) each month, one at each church. The other services in the month would remain separate.

This could be an experiment (for January through to April) to see how it feels to everyone, also at the same time saving on the heating bills at the most expensive time of year.

I would like to know your thoughts on this - and so am opening it out for all the church family to comment. (Those who are not on email will receive a telephone call so they can have a say also).

Please can you let me know, by email - whether you are in favour of this idea (as a trial until April) or whether you are not - with an explanation as to why.

I will email this separately as well, as it could get missed in a long email!

Please can you send me a response by Monday 12th December 2022.

For those who are working on rotas - I know the outcome will potentially have an impact on the rota dates (I will let you know asap what is decided on this). Thank you so much for being patient on this.

Thank you all of you, in advance, for your thoughts.

11. Bible Studies on Revelation by Jo Hawkins

Many of you will know that Jo Hawkins has very faithfully, for many years, run bible studies on all sorts of subjects.

A favourite topic of hers is the Book of Revelation.

Piers Clark and a team of others have worked with Jo to help make a website where we can watch and listen to her online.

The link for this is here: <https://joseebiblestudy.com/revelation-1/>

Please do take a look and encourage Jo in this enterprise.

Love and prayers,
Alex

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