



# St Paul's Church



Photo by Assy on pixabay

Dear all

Last Thursday evening, I welcomed the St. Paul's cubs to church. They are working towards their 'My Faith Activity' badge, and their ages ranged from 8 to 10. I must admit to being a little nervous as to how I would fill the designated 90 minutes and keep them entertained but I needn't have worried. They seemed to have a great time and were fully engaged for the duration. It was me that had to go and lie down in a dark room once it was over!

We kicked off with a quiz which had them running round the church trying to find various things and work out what different objects are used for and why. Having worked off some of their energy, we moved into the baptistry where I filled the font with water and baptised a Pokémon that I had hastily grabbed from my son's bedroom. The children seemed to find this sacrament very absorbing until one little boy pointed out that this particular Pokémon is an 'electric type' and by getting him wet, I had compromised his power for the next 25 years! I think he was exaggerating but that didn't stop me feeling awfully guilty.

Next, I asked the pack leader to choose a boy and a girl who he thought would be good sports and allow me to 'marry' them. We had a mock up wedding ceremony, including exchanging rings (which I had brought from home) and making vows. They chose their own bridesmaids and best men who performed brilliantly. Needless to say there was much hilarity and tittering amongst the 'wedding guests'.

Finally, I took them into the sanctuary, and they crowded round the altar while I showed them the Communion elements and pretended to consecrate the bread and wine (which was water in this case for obvious reasons). I offered to 'give Communion' to anyone who wanted it so that they could see for themselves what it felt like and tasted like. All but two of them were willing to try. I was amazed at the prayerful hush that descended on them all as they were watching and listening. It was as if they could all sense that this was a solemn moment, and they were very respectful, even prayerful when receiving.

And all of this made me wonder about children's spirituality. It strikes me that children have an innate capacity for the awareness of God's presence, something which is often sucked out of them as they reach adolescence and adulthood. It's this spirituality that we aim to nurture and develop with initiatives like Bubble Church which launches this weekend. Please pray for the Bubble Church team as they prepare in hope and faith to welcome new people to St. Paul's this Sunday, and touch the lives of children and families who are willing to explore new possibilities.

Rev Anthea

## **FORTHCOMING SERVICES**

### **SUNDAY 17<sup>th</sup> MARCH – Lent 5**

9.15 am for 9.30 am - Bubble Church

10.30 am - LOVE NATURE - Rev Anthea, Jenny Clifton, talk by John Buckingham

(very well respected ornithologist and ecologist)

### **SUNDAY 24<sup>th</sup> MARCH – Palm Sunday**

10.30 am Holy Communion

### **THURSDAY 28<sup>th</sup> MARCH – Maundy Thursday**

6 pm Maundy Thursday – Foot-washing, Community Meal

Service to conclude with Stripping of the Altar – Rev Anthea

### **FRIDAY 29<sup>th</sup> MARCH – Good Friday**

2 pm Meditation - Gwyn

### **SUNDAY 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH – Easter Day**

10.30 am All-Age Worship – Rev Anthea

### **SUNDAY 7<sup>th</sup> APRIL – Easter 2**

10.30 am Café Worship – Gwyn

## **EVENTS**

**SATURDAY 16<sup>th</sup> MARCH from 5.30 pm**

Quiz with Bangers & Mash Evening – Donations £5+ (bring your own drinks)

**THURSDAY 21<sup>st</sup> MARCH @ 2.30 pm**

Fellowship: Jacquie Grace Dandelion Time

**FRIDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> MARCH @ 7 pm**

Church Crafts

## **EASTER FLOWERS**

Easter is an appropriate time to remember a loved one, relative or friend who has died. One way of doing this is to donate towards the annual cost of church flowers in their memory. During the Easter season a list will be on display in church giving the names of those in whose memory flowers have been donated.

If you would like to contribute in this way, please complete one of the forms at the back of church and hand to Charys by Palm Sunday 24th March. If anyone wishes to donate online or using the card machine, please record the donation as 'Flowers' on the 'Payments Form' next to the machine. *Thank you.*

## **FOOD BANK**

The next food bank delivery is Thursday 28th March.

## **PRAYER RESOURCE**

**week beginning Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

*'Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances: for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.'* (1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18)

This week we give thanks for:

- Kind and tender-hearted people; as God forgave us, let us forgive those who have done us wrong.
- Spring flowers: their bright colours, varying shapes and sizes and for the hope and joy they bring into our lives.

Please pray for:

- The safe and regular passage of much needed aid to northern Gaza via the new land route and by boat through a new maritime corridor from Cyprus into the Palestinian territory.
- Leaders of all nations that they may be guided into the ways of peace and justice.
- God's comfort as we journey through our own wildernesses of doubt and uncertainty.
- The wise and just counsel of Government Ministers and MPs as they continue to make decisions on the future of this country.
- Faith, vision, love and hope as we work together to set out the future needs of our Church and community.
- Our Church family, especially Edith, Pat, Alice, Jill, Trevor, Maureen, Sandra, Brenda and Elizabeth; for Ruth, Meaghan, Linda.
- Humility as we each face challenging situations this week at home, work, church or as we socialise.

**You may like to use this prayer during the week:**

***Sending God, you show me how to listen and empower me to love. May I take risks, finding your grace in unexpected places, as I follow in the way of your Son. Amen.***