



# St Paul's Church



Hopelessness often comes at the point in your life when you feel you have hit rock bottom. But I've heard it said, God will often let us hit rock bottom so that we will discover that He is the Rock at the bottom. Hopelessness is often born out of difficulties, defeats and discouragements. And while these things are painful, there are seasons when the Lord uses our suffering to grow and strengthen us. These are the times when He sees fit to strip us of our self-sufficiency.

We shouldn't run from difficulties or try to cope our way out of the lessons to be learned. Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:3). Those who are spiritually broken will be blessed because they will see God in a way unlike most others. They will experience His reality and presence flowing through their lives in a uniquely personal manner.

Scripture promises that God remains close to those who are broken and He makes them stronger than before. Psalm 34:18 says, "The LORD is near to the broken hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." Isaiah 61:3 teaches that God would give those who mourn and are broken "a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."

I'm sure we've all seen restored furniture. Restoring furniture involves stripping away old varnish or paint with strong chemicals. This reveals all the nooks, cracks and original spots on the piece of furniture. The sanding takes place next where the wood is rubbed with coarse sandpaper in order to level out its imperfections. Then the furniture is ready to receive a new stain or paint colour – it's ready for a new look.

New glory can be given to old furniture. And God can do the same thing with us. He can put new glory inside our old life, but He must first strip away the blemishes while also sanding away the strongholds in order to bring us to a place of purity and dependence on Him. The Lord longs to bless and restore us, but He also wants to transform us in the process. Sometimes the greatest path to healing involves embracing the hurt while understanding God is after our greater good. Just like an athlete experiencing pain in taking him or her to the next level of strength, God often uses the painful times in our lives to make us stronger. So today thank Him for what He is doing and can do through the trials you face.

*Inspired by a Bible plan in You version.*

Rev Claude

## **SERVICES**

### **SUNDAY 15 FEBRUARY – Sunday next before Lent**

9.15 am for 9.30 am - Bubble Church

10.30 am – Morning Worship – Gwyn

### **WEDNESDAY 18 FEBRUARY**

11.30 am – Ash Wednesday Service

### **SUNDAY 22 FEBRUARY – Lent 1**

10.30 am – Holy Communion – Rev Claude

### **SUNDAY 1 MARCH – Lent 2**

10.30 am - Café Service – Café Church Team

### **SUNDAY 8 March – Lent 3**

10.30 am – All-Age Worship – Rev Claude

## **EVENTS**

### **FRIDAY 6 FEBRUARY @ 9.30 am**

Baby & Toddler Group

### **THURSDAY 12 FEBRUARY @ 2.30 pm**

Mothers' Union: 103<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Tea

### **THURSDAY 19 FEBRUARY @ 2.30 pm**

Fellowship: Life on an African Mission

### **FRIDAY 27 FEBRUARY @ 7 pm**

Church Crafts

### **FRIDAY 6 MARCH @ 9.30 am**

Baby & Toddler Group

### **THURSDAY 12 MARCH @ 2.30 pm**

Mothers' Union: Bible Market – A.F.I.A

### **THURSDAY 19 MARCH @ 2.30 pm**

Fellowship: Games Afternoon

### **SUNDAY 22 MARCH**

Lunch after the service

### **FRIDAY 27 MARCH @ 7 pm**

Church Crafts

### **THURSDAY 9 APRIL @ 2.30 pm**

Mothers' Union: Bingo

### **FRIDAY 10 APRIL @ 9.30 am**

Baby & Toddler Group

### **THURSDAY 16 APRIL @ 2.30 pm**

Fellowship TBA

### **SATURDAY 25 APRIL @ 5.30 pm**

Quiz & Ploughman's

## **FOOD BANK**

The next delivery will be on Friday 27 February.

## **LENT COURSE**

Rev Claude will be leading a Lent course on the theme of Difference, on Tuesday mornings during March (3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup>) commencing at 10 am, refreshments will be available from 9.45 am.

# **PRAYER RESOURCE**

**week beginning Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

*'Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.' (Romans 12: 12)*

We give thanks for:

- The opportunity during the next few weeks to work through a Lent course, either together at Church, in a Home Group or on our own.
- The loving relationship we can have with God, and mighty though He is, He cares about our welfare and values us as His friends.

Please pray for:

- People around the world who are in great need: in Gaza, Ukraine, South Sudan, Iran, Afghanistan, and many others, unknown to us but known and loved by God.
- Ongoing momentum to care for God's creation and communities badly affected by climate change.
- All to join together to call for a fairer, more stable and resilient future.
- People who feel isolated or are living alone, and for the residents of Care Homes – may they be sustained by God's peace and loving presence.
- Our Church family, especially all who are struggling; and for Edith, Alice, Jill, Sandra, Brenda, Elizabeth, Carol, Di, Ray, Percy and Paul; and for Meaghan, Alison and Frances.

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

***Lord, as we begin Lent, prepare our hearts and minds to reflect upon the temptation of Jesus for 40 days and nights and what that means for us. Help me to enjoy and give thanks for the bounty you provide for me, and remind me to share your gifts with others. Amen.***