

From the Vicarage....

Dear Friends,

Once again this year has flown past and by the time you read this, we will be into the season of Advent and the preparations for Christmas will well and truly have begun. I am conscious that for many people Christmas will be difficult again this year, as the economic crisis continues. The food banks report that more people than ever are having to use them and that includes families where both parents are working but are unable to make ends meet, a situation that I'm sure many of us never expected to experience. As I have been reflecting on that, it seems to me that perhaps this year it is more important than ever for us to think about the true meaning of Christmas. Yes, I do mean the coming of the Christ child, but I also mean really thinking about the gifts that we are giving to people, perhaps gifts that give something of ourselves as well. I know that personally the gifts that have meant the most to me, and that I have treasured for many years, have been those that people have made for me. Not only has the time and effort gone into that gift, but it is also the fact that someone knows me well enough to know how much I would appreciate the gift. Two gifts stand out in my memory, one is a crocheted snowflake decoration that hangs on my tree from a friend who I studied with and the other is a knitted prayer shawl that

keeps me warm at this time of year. I have over the years enjoyed baking sweet treats and the teachers of my children's schools have found themselves recipients of home-made fudge - which never quite makes it back to their homes. Having a damson tree in a former vicarage also led to the production of damson gin which was in much demand by friends. (If anyone does have a damson tree in their garden please let me know!)

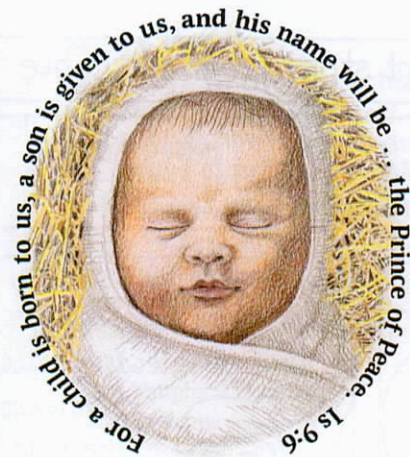
At our Christmas Tree Festival this year as well as live-music, we are also having some crafting activities on-site. You might find yourself learning to knit a small stocking, making friendship bracelets or making a home-made Christmas card. If you're a crafty person perhaps you can bring along your craft and show us how to do it! We hope that everyone goes away from the festival with at least one home-made gift.

Giving the gift of memories, giving the gift of a small part of ourselves is something that we can all do and it is what God has done for us in the giving of His son, a gift that is freely given to each of us and that God longs for us to receive.

With my love and prayers for a truly blessed Christmas and New Year.

Becky





Tuesday Group

A big thank you to Jean for helping us to make our Christmas table arrangements. She even provided prizes for the best three!

On 5th December Jayne Gigner-Hollis is kindly going to cook us what looks like a delicious Christmas lunch. Please remember we are again at Paula's and to bring the correct money.

I wish you all a very happy and healthy Christmas.

Diana



IMPORTANT NOTICE:-

The parish office email is now

officestpaulsale@gmail.com

Please use this email as the aol email has become a little flaky and unreliable of late and may stop altogether but I will continue to monitor both emails.

Thanks

Karen

Christmas Singalong

The Autumn term finishes this year with our Christmas Singalong on Friday 8 December at 1:15 to sing at 1:30pm with festive refreshments at the end of our session.

A huge thank you to everyone who has supported our singing throughout 2023.

Spring Term 2024: Dates for the "Spring" term are as follows:

January: Fridays - 12, 19 & 26

February: Fridays - 2, 9 & 23

March: Fridays - 1, 8, 15 & 22

Please note there will be no choir on Friday 16 February as we break for half-term.

Please add singing to your must do list for 2024 and come along in 24.



Santa's Grotto

Santa will be visiting St Pauls Church Hall on Saturday 9th December 10-12noon and 12.45-1500 and again on Saturday 16th December 10-12 noon and 1300-1500

Your visit includes an hour of craft activities and a gift.

Tickets are to be pre-booked only: £5 per child and £15 for 3 or more children from one family.

Please ring 07989 138644 for tickets.

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

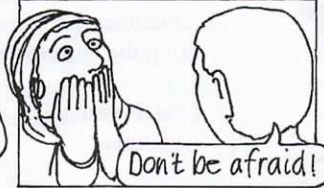
It can be read in the Bible in
Luke 1:26-56 & Matthew 1:18-25

In Israel, about 2000 years ago, a young woman, Mary, was going to marry Joseph. The weddings were in two stages.

In one year we will complete our wedding



Then God's messenger angel came to see Mary.



Don't be afraid!

You will have God's baby, and call him Jesus, 'God saves', because he will save people



from what they do wrong.

How can this happen?



With God, nothing is impossible.

Your cousin Elizabeth, who couldn't have children, is now 6 months pregnant.



Mary visited Elizabeth.



When Joseph heard that Mary was pregnant, he was very upset



This will bring shame on me and my family.



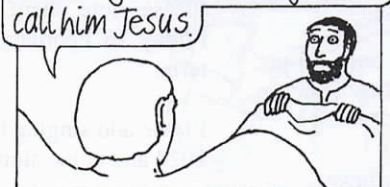
He always did what was right so he decided to end their marriage, but quietly.



But the angel came to him in a dream.

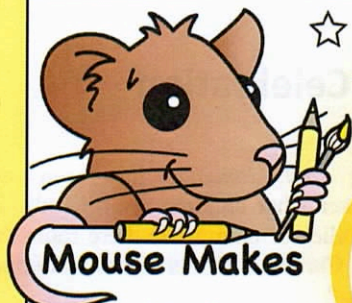


Don't be afraid to marry Mary. The baby is God's, and you will call him Jesus.



So Joseph and Mary completed their marriage.





Mouse Makes



GOD'S PROMISE

Isaiah 9:6-7

CHILD • BORN • SON
GIVEN • WONDERFUL
COUNCELLOR
MIGHTY • GOD
EVERLASTING
FATHER • PRINCE
PEACE • LORD



AN ANGEL MESSENGER

Luke 1:26-38

ANGEL • GABRIEL
JOSEPH • MARY
FAVOUR • SON
JESUS • GREAT
THRONE • REIGN
FOREVER • HOLY
SERVANT • WORD

ADVENT
comes from
the Latin
'AD VENTO'
which means
ARRIVAL

In Advent we
celebrate Jesus' birth
and look forward to
the time when Jesus
will come again.



A LONG JOURNEY

Luke 2:1-20

BETHLEHEM
REGISTER • BIRTH
MANGER • INN
SHEPHERDS • FLOCK
ANGELS • JOY
GOOD NEWS • PRAISE
SAVIOUR • CHRIST



THE BEST GIFT OF ALL

John 3:16

GOD • SO • LOVED
WORLD • HE • GAVE
ONLY • SON
WHOEVER • BELIEVES
ETERNAL • LIFE

V	R	P	R	I	N	C	E	L	R	O	D
W	O	R	D	C	F	A	T	H	E	R	E
J	A	G	M	A	N	G	E	R	G	E	B
O	W	H	O	E	V	E	R	W	I	I	J
S	J	O	Y	B	O	R	N	O	S	G	E
E	S	L	S	E	R	V	A	N	T	N	S
P	P	Y	J	C	H	I	L	D	E	P	U
H	R	O	S	H	E	P	H	E	R	D	S
F	A	V	O	U	R	E	F	R	W	S	O
B	I	R	T	H	S	W	O	F	O	D	L
I	S	A	V	I	O	U	R	U	R	L	O
F	E	C	O	U	N	C	E	L	L	O	R
A	N	G	E	L	B	J	V	K	D	V	D
B	E	T	H	L	E	H	E	M	G	E	S
L	A	N	G	E	L	S	R	G	O	D	V
I	G	A	B	R	I	E	L	T	D	S	M
F	P	G	I	V	E	N	A	H	U	O	A
E	E	H	G	A	V	E	S	R	W	N	R
S	A	E	G	R	E	A	T	O	N	L	Y
O	C	H	R	I	S	T	I	N	N	J	O
N	E	O	G	O	O	D	N	E	W	S	N
F	L	O	C	K	M	I	G	H	T	Y	B

Canon Paul Hardingham continues his series on the spiritual disciplines that help us to grow and deepen our faith.

Spiritual Disciplines — Celebration

'But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.' (Luke 2:10).

As we conclude our series on the spiritual disciplines, this month we look at *Celebration*, which is very appropriate for this Christmas season. We are called to rejoice in God's good gifts and celebrate His faithfulness.

Jesus modelled celebration in his first miracle at Cana, when He turned water into wine, enabling the party to continue (John 2:1-12). Celebration helps us with the other disciplines, as it enables us to keep going through times of joy and struggle: *'Without a joyful spirit of festivity the Disciplines become dull, death-breathing tools in the hands of modern Pharisees.'* (Richard Foster). We celebrate crucial moments in our lives with unreserved joy and thanksgiving and this shape our lives to be more like Jesus.

Richard Foster offers a few helpful pointers to celebration in his book *Celebration of Discipline*. They may come in handy as you celebrate Christmas this year!

Singing and dancing: how can we rediscover what children do brilliantly, in our families or church? Is there room for singing Christmas carols together at home this year?

Laughter: just as Jesus brought humour into His teaching, how can we laugh more? What does it mean to take ourselves less seriously and encourage more fun with our friends?

Imagination and creativity: how can we invest in our own creativity, as well as other people's? - e.g. in painting, poetry, reading and other leisure activities? God gave us these things to enjoy! As we celebrate our own creativity, we are sharing in God's goodness and joy.

Family events: we can use family celebrations and with Christmas approaching, there is the opportunity of putting God at the centre of our celebration.

'So, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God' (1 Cor 10:31).



2023 Advent Study Book

We will be using *Stick with Love* by Revd Arun Arora which is the Archbishop of York's recommended Advent book.

Tuesday evenings:

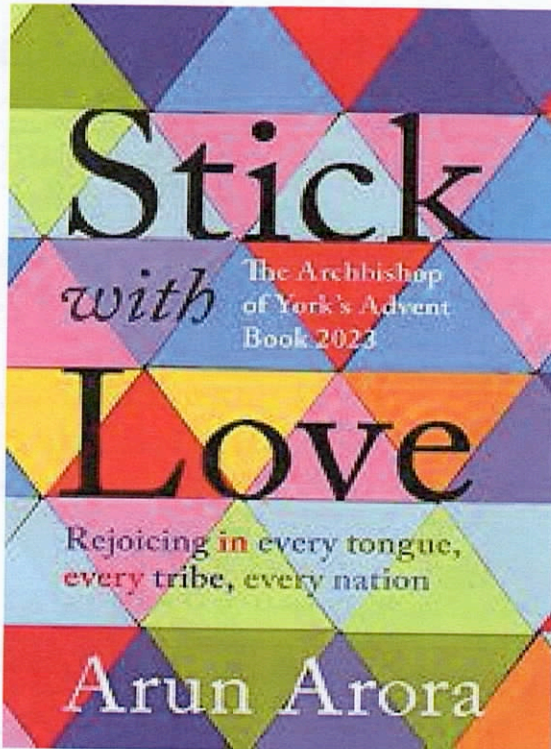
5th, 12th & 19th December 7.30pm-8.30pm in the Church Hall music/choir room with Revd Lisa.

Wednesday mornings:

6th, 13th & 20th December 11am-12noon in the Church Hall music/choir room with Revd Becky.

(Entry via the green external corridor doors- between Church and Hall)

Limited copies available from Becky are £10.50





St Paul's Parish Church
Sale, M33 7YA
Tel: 0161 9620082



Christmas TREE FESTIVAL

Free Admission

Friday 8th December
2-5pm 6-8pm

Saturday 9th Dec 10-4pm

Sunday 10th Dec 12-5pm

For more information see
www.stpaulsale.co.uk
or St Paul's facebook page.

SEASONAL
REFRESHMENTS





**ST PAUL'S PARISH CHURCH,
SPRINGFIELD RD, SALE**

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Sunday 10th December:

**10am All-Age Service in the Christmas Trees -
please wear your Christmas jumpers and
bring a unwrapped toy donation.**

Sunday 17th December: 6pm Carol Service

24th Dec Christmas Eve:

10am Holy Communion



**5pm Christingle: Come dressed up as a
nativity character- Angel, Mary, Joseph,
Shepherd, King. (No booking required).**

11.30pm Midnight Communion

Christmas Day: 10am Holy Communion



**For more information please take a look at
our webpage: www.stpaulsale.co.uk or call
Becky on 0161 2178795**

Ven John Barton considers the Christmas story ...

No Room? On the Contrary

This year one carol will be sung with particular poignancy. It retells the message of angels, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favour rests” and continues:

*Yet with the woes of sin and strife,
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel strain have rolled,
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love song which they bring:
O hush the noise, you men of strife,
And hear the angels sing.*

The angels’ goodwill message will persist despite our clamour, for it proclaims God’s all-embracing and eternal welcome. Heaven’s doors are ever open: it is home for everyone. The final biblical vision is of an all-encompassing city: “On no day will its gates ever be shut... the glory and honour of the nations will be brought into it.”

Jesus, for whom there had been no room at the inn, taught that God’s kingdom is home for every race: “I say to you that

many will come from the East and the West, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.” He reassured those anxious about the future: “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms...”

*Lord Jesus Christ,
may we never cease
to wonder at your birth,
when heaven touched the earth
and you came
to be among us;
our Saviour and our God.*



No room? Don’t you believe it!

The Light of the World?

During the month of December, people are 'counting down' to Christmas Day in an ever-increasing variety of ways.

In my childhood we had a simple card with a traditional picture of a manger scene with doors marked with the countdown numbers and a picture of the different characters behind each. If my parents had extra money to spend, they would buy one with shiny snow made of sparkles!

These days you can pay hundreds to have a gift for each day from toys to jewellery. And don't fret, your pets can have their own also!

Churches don't normally count the days, but they do note the four Sundays before Christmas Day. They give each of those four 'advent' Sundays a theme and light a candle each time. One for the first week, two for the second and so on.

Unlike the secular world, the church counts up, and not down. It increases the light as we get nearer to Christmas Day and then adds an extra light on that day. So, a total of five candles.

Churches vary in their use of colour in the candles. Some will use all white, whilst many only use white for the Christ-light on Christmas Day and 'colours' on the four Sundays.

There again they vary; some use all purple – originally the most expensive colour – as we prepare for The King. In a more modern style, some use blue – perhaps recalling the most associated colour for Jesus' mother Mary. But perhaps reminding us of creation and that we are surrounded by God's love as the earth is surrounded by the blue sky.

And again, others will change the colours for each Sunday, often giving the third Sunday to be pink as we are over half-way through Advent and it is known as *Gaudete* – Joyful – Sunday. Or there are those who make the fourth Sunday pink, as that one is often dedicated to Mary and it's a 'girly' colour.

This month

Have a look at the advent candles in your church, or perhaps in your own home, and think about what the colours mean to you. How do they reflect your faith?

Whatever the colour –
Have a Good Christmas!



Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Exodus chapter 2 verses 1 to 12

In Egypt the Hebrew people flourished so well that the new Pharaoh grew scared and ordered all their new-born boys to be killed.

Moses' mother hid him when he was born, but he grew too big.



She made a basket from reeds for him and put it in the grass by the river Nile.



She told Moses' sister Miriam to keep watch.



Pharaoh's daughter found Moses



Shall I get someone to look after the baby?



So Miriam got her mother.



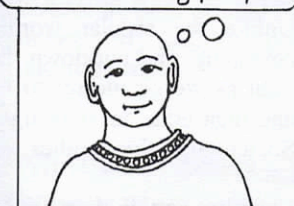
The princess adopted Moses as her son.



When Moses was grown up he went to see where his people worked as slaves.



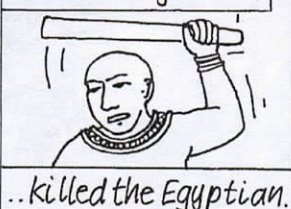
Perhaps I will be the one to save my people.



Moses saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew slave.

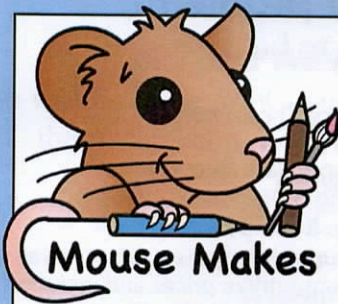


Moses checked no-one was looking and...



He hid the body in the sand.





Mouse Makes

EPIPHANY is the time in the Church year that we remember when the 'wise men' or 'Magi' followed a star that led them to the Christ child Jesus. They bowed down, worshipped him and left *three* special gifts.



Where was Jesus born?

 Luke 2:1



What three gifts did the wise men give Jesus?



 and -----
 Luke 2:11



Who was the king?

 Luke 2:1

Where did the wise men come from?
 the -----
 Luke 2:1

How were the wise men warned not to return to Herod?
 In a -----
 Luke 2:12

What had the wise men seen?

a -----
 Luke 2:2

 Luke 2:12



Look up the Bible verses, fill in the blanks, find them in the word search then look for the words opposite.

C H I L D S T A R J D K
 J E S U S W A E B O B I
 E S R E J O I C E Y O N
 W H A C H R I S T H R G
 S E E E O S J C H U N O
 Y P L A U H R U L E R L
 G H I S S I T H E R O D
 I E M T E P I P H A N Y
 F R A N K I N C E N S E
 T D R S W I S E M E N E
 S M Y R R H D R E A M I

JESUS
 WISEMEN
 WORSHIP
 SHEPHERD
 KING • JEWS
 CHRIST • CHILD
 BORN • RULER
 ISRAEL • REJOICE
 JOY • HOUSE • MARY
 GIFTS • EPIPHANY

How many other words can you make from the letters in EPIPHANY?

"Have you a computer problem? If so, I am local and here to help..."

Here are just a few of the services I can offer

- Virus removal and health checks
- Internet & Email set up
- New computer installations
- Upgrades & repairs
- Help and advice on how to get the best out of your computer
- Back up & data recovery
- Training & support
- Laptop & computer repairs
- I can supply computers & laptops at very competitive prices and include data transfer, full set up & full guidance

Quite simply my aim is to provide an effective, quick, reliable and friendly service without unnecessary charges.

I CAN SUPPLY COMPUTERS & LAPTOPS AT VERY COMPETITIVE PRICES & INCLUDE SET UP, DATA TRANSFER & GUIDANCE

DO GIVE ME A CALL NOW OR AT ANY TIME IN THE FUTURE. I AM HERE TO HELP YOU WITH ANY TECHNOLOGY PROBLEM, HOWEVER BIG OR SMALL.

STOP PRESS!!! Microsoft have now removed support for all Windows XP systems, which could affect the security of your software. If you are using XP, do give me a call for FREE & independent advice.

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Lester Amann considers the three songs of the nativity story.

A Season for joyful song

Some of us like to sing, no matter what we may sound like to others! And sometimes, something happens that is so special that we can't help but burst into song.

In the Christmas story, singing is featured on *three* occasions.

When Mary visited her elderly relative, Elizabeth, she was so overwhelmed with happiness at the forthcoming miraculous birth of her Son, that she burst into a flow of praise. Her words are known as *The Magnificat*, and they have been set to music by numerous composers down the years. Mary recalled God's promise that He would rescue His people and, through the Messiah, save the world.

The next 'song' came from the angels, on the night of Jesus' birth. They appeared to the shepherds in the fields of Bethlehem and were full of the glory of God. 'Peace on earth', 'goodwill toward man'.

The final 'song' in the Nativity story came from the shepherds, who hurried to see the new-born baby. They were so overwhelmed by the implications for Israel, that they sang praises to God as they returned to their sheep.

Mary, the angels and the shepherds could not help but sing for joy at the coming of the Messiah. They were the first, but not the last! Since the day of Pentecost, hundreds of millions of people have raised their voices in gratitude, thanks and wonder at God's love and mercy in sending Jesus.

Down the centuries, countless poets and musicians have composed music to describe a wondrous moment in history. At Christmas, around the world, people come together to sing carols and other songs that express the wonder of God's Gift to us.

Jesus has given *us* hope; forgiven *our* sin; and continues to impart faith and heal *our* spiritual wounds. **Now isn't that something to sing about?**



New Year Prayer 2024

Everyday Christmas

(Mal 4:2, Mt 1:23)

Light a candle,
Look into the light,
Pray.

*Light and life to all he brings,
Risen with healing in his wings*

As the flame rises,
Smooth, bright,
Know the comfort of Christ
In the carol speaking
Afresh.
Bringing Jesus
Into heart and prayer.

Emmanuel, God with us.
Light of the world,
Out of the stable
Into our situations.

Because of Jesus
Christmas is everyday.

The Lord is here.
Hallelujah.

By Daphne Kitching



Lord,
We stand on the threshold of a new year.
Some of us are excited, some of us are
fearful. We don't know what 2024 will
bring, but we know that there will be ups
and downs, joy and sadness mixed in with
the months.

As we step into this new year, help us to
keep our eyes fixed on you; to know for
certain that, whatever happens, you will be
in it with us, not watching from the side-
lines, but right in the middle of it with us.
Help us to put our trust in what Jesus did
on the cross, maybe for the first time,
maybe as a New Year re-commitment, so
that we will *know* that nothing can sepa-
rate us from you.

Let the storm rage, let the sun shine – we
are safe!

In the name of the risen, living Lord Jesus.
Amen.

Daphne Kitching



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**Who's Who?
Members of the Parochial Church
Council (not mentioned on the
back page)**

Diana Kelly 973-4578
 Carole Shakeshaft 969-6319
 Paula Hughes 973-5121
 Joyce Green 973-0396
 Eileen Craven 283-7668
 Jean Law 962-6761
 Fiona Vaughan-Thomas
 Amanda Pearson

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December 2023

1 st	Friday	1.30pm	Community Choir
3 rd	Sunday	10.00am	Parish Eucharist
		6.00pm	Taize Style Evening Prayer
5 th	Tuesday	9.30am	Babes & Tots
			Tuesday Group Christmas Lunch
6 th	Wednesday	10.00am	Communion Service (CW)
8 th to 10 th	Friday to Sunday		Christmas Tree Festival—see page 8
9 th	Saturday	10-12noon	Santa's Grotto
		1-3pm	Santa's Grotto
10 th	Sunday	10.00am	Toy Service in the Trees
		6.00pm	Evening Prayer
12 th	Tuesday	9.30am	Babes & Tots
13 th	Wednesday	10.00am	Communion Service
15 th	Friday	1.30pm	Community Choir—Christmas Singalong
16 th	Saturday	10-12noon	Santa's Grotto
		1-3pm	Santa's Grotto
17 th	Sunday	10.00am	Parish Eucharist
		6.00pm	Carol Service
19 th	Tuesday	9.30am	Babes & Tots
20 th	Wednesday	10.00am	Communion Service
24 th	Sunday	10.00am	Parish Eucharist
Christmas Eve		5.00pm	Christingle Service
		11.30pm	Midnight Eucharist
25 th	Monday	10.00am	Communion Service
Christmas Day			
27 th	Wednesday	10.00am	NO Communion Service
31 st	Sunday	10.00am	Parish Eucharist
New Year's Eve		6.00pm	No Evening Prayer





January 2024

3 rd	Wednesday	10.00am	Communion Service
7 th	Sunday	10.00am	Parish Eucharist
		6.00pm	Taize Style Evening Prayer
9 th	Tuesday	9.30am	Babes & Tots
10 th	Wednesday	10.00am	Communion Service
		7.45pm	PCC Meeting
12 th	Friday	1.30pm	Community Choir
13 th	Saturday		PCC Away Day
14 th	Sunday	10.00am	Parish Eucharist
		6.00pm	Evening Prayer
Deadline for the February Parish News			
16 th	Tuesday	9.30am	Babes & Tots
17 th	Wednesday	10.00am	Communion Service
19 th	Friday	1.30pm	Community Choir
21 st	Sunday	10.00am	Parish Eucharist
		6.00pm	Evening Prayer
23 rd	Tuesday	9.30am	Babes & Tots
24 th	Wednesday	10.00am	Communion Service
26 th	Friday	1.30pm	Community Choir
28 th	Sunday	10.00am	Parish Eucharist
		6.00pm	Evening Prayer
30 th	Tuesday	9.30am	Babes & Tots
31 st	Wednesday	10.00am	Communion Service



February —

2 nd	Friday	1.30pm	Community Choir
4 th	Sunday	10.00am	Parish Eucharist
		6.00pm	Taize Style Evening Prayer
6 th	Tuesday	9.30am	Babes & Tots
7 th	Wednesday	10.00am	Communion Service (CW)

*Please check the weekly pew sheets for any service changes that may occur.
Don't forget—email any articles for the Parish News to the Parish Office email address—*

officestpaulsale@gmail.com

salestpaul@aol.com (note this email may end shortly)

St. Paul's Parish Directory

Churchwardens:	Yvonne Stevenson	*	07946 644214
	Vacant		
Pastoral Workers:	Yvonne Kerridge	*	962-4066
	Karen Salisbury	*	283-8309
Treasurer to the PCC:	Vacant (Contact the Parish Office)		
Secretary to the PCC:	Karen Salisbury	*	283-8309
Director of Music:	Anne Allen	*	01925-763103
Assistant Organists:	John Clisset		962-2096
	Kevin Drury		962-7963
	Donald Brooks		
Safeguarding Officer	Carole Shakeshaft	*	969-6319
Parish Giving Officer	Brian Kerridge	*	962-4066
Electoral Roll Officer:	Yvonne Stevenson	*	283-1065
Parish News Editor:	Karen Salisbury	*	283-8309
Bible Reading Fellowship:	Rachel Lee	*	973-1282
Men's Society:	Rodney Hadwen		
Women's Tuesday Group:	Hilary Moore	*	969-1831
St. Paul's Babes & Tots	Rachel Lee	*	973-1282
Tower Warden:	Ian Moore		0787-670-6834
Christian Aid:	Anita Evans		973-4679
Children's Society Rep:	Sheila Clarke		962-4678
Church Hall Bookings:	Contact via the Parish Office		
4 th Sale Central (St. Paul's) Rainbows, Brownies & Guides	Vicky Williams		07986 525898
Vicar:	Revd. Becky Mathew	217-8795 / 07584 604627	
Email:		revbmathewstpaulsale@gmail.com	
Associate Ministers:	Revd. Dr Lisa Redfern (Forest Church)		
	Revd. Dr Margaret Jones	973-7790	
	Revd. Shemil Mathew	217-8795	

Parish Office

962-0082

Parish Office e-mail

officestpaulsale@gmail.com

*Names above marked with * are members of the Parochial Church Council. Please note that **Vicar Becky** is part-time and her working hours are flexible so she might not be able to reply or respond immediately to your calls and emails.*

Parish Organisations affiliated to St Paul's

The following groups meet in St Paul's Church Hall unless otherwise stated.

Tuesday	9.30am-11am	St. Paul's Babes & Tots (school term time)
	1.15pm	Women's Tuesday Group (2 nd of every month)
	6.15pm	4 th Sale Central (St. Paul's) Brownies
	7.30pm	4 th Sale Central (St. Paul's) Guides
Thursday	7.30pm	Chorister Training and Choir Practice
	8.00pm	Men's Society (last of every month Sept to May but not Dec)
Friday	1.30pm-2.30pm	Community Choir (school term time)
	5.30pm	2 nd Sale Central Rainbows