

## Mission & Outreach

A huge thank you to all those who left water, food donations and baby provisions during last year for John's Storehouse. They have made an urgent request for their supplies to be replenished after Christmas. Your continued support for homeless, families living with poverty and unemployment and those in need is much appreciated.

**Please leave your donations at the Rectory front door on WEDNESDAYS only.**

Or donations can now be left in church

Once again a massive thank you. *Revd Lisa*



Revd Lisa - 01509890972



Revd Lisa - [revdlisatemperley@gmail.com](mailto:revdlisatemperley@gmail.com)

Michèle - [michdenn2@aol.com](mailto:michdenn2@aol.com)

**FYI** : Revd Lisa & Michèle will be having their day off on Tuesdays

## A Church Near You

St Paul's - [www.achurchnearyou.com/church/5286](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/5286)

St Mary's - [www.achurchnearyou.com/church/5285](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/5285)

Follow us on Facebook to keep up to date with the church family & the wider church.

Like & Comment to be part of the conversation!

<https://www.facebook.com/stpaulschurchwoodhouseeaves>

Some material in this service is copyright:

Common Worship © 2000 The Archbishops' Council and Common Worship:

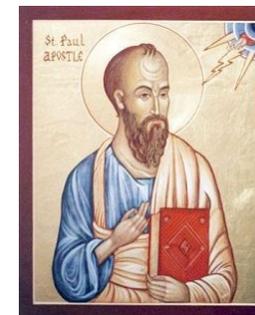
Festivals © 2008 The Archbishops' Council

Song lyrics: CCli 1238447



The Weekly Service

Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2022



## The Feast of St Paul

*A very warm welcome to you all as we worship  
the Lord together*

✠ In the name of the Father, and of the Son  
and of the Holy Spirit **Amen**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The grace of God has dawned upon the world through our Saviour Jesus Christ, who sacrificed himself for us to purify a people as his own.

**Let us confess our sins.**

We were once dead through the trespasses and sins in which we lived, but now we are alive together with Christ.

Through him we have access in one Spirit to the Father, to whom we humbly confess our sins.

### *Kyrie Confession*

Open our eyes to your presence in our midst.

Lord, have mercy.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Turn our hearts from selfish ends.

Christ, have mercy.

**Christ, have mercy.**

Draw us into your company on the way.

Lord, have mercy.

**Lord, have mercy.**

### **Absolution.**

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who in his great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with heartfelt repentance and true faith turn to him: have mercy on you;

Have mercy upon you, ✠ pardon and deliver you from all your sins;

confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



## **COMPLINE AT ST PAUL'S Wednesday 2nd February at 7.00pm**



### **St Paul's Christmas Hamper Raffle**

Thank you so much to everyone who contributed to the Christmas Hamper Raffle.

The basket was brimming with goodies and loads of tickets were sold thanks to the many people who helped.

The winner was Rita Hornbuckle - a very worthy winner given how many hours she has contributed to raffles for the Christmas Bazaars in previous years.

To cap it all we made a grand total of **£171.20!**

A wonderful result.

### **The Collect for Feast of St Paul**

Almighty God, who caused the light of the gospel to shine throughout the world through the preaching of your servant Saint Paul: grant that we who celebrate his wonderful conversion may follow him in bearing witness to your truth; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**



### **The Peace:**

Christ is our peace.

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation.

The old has passed away: behold, everything has become new.

The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**and also with you.**

### **The Blessing**

May Christ who called Paul to his service,  
and to preach the good news to the world,  
strengthen you to witness to his grace and love.

And the blessing of God Almighty ✠ the Father, the Son, and  
the Holy Spirit, come down upon you and all those you love  
now and forever.

**Amen**

### **The Dismissal**

We have seen his glory, the glory revealed to all the nations.  
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**In the name of Christ. Amen.**

### **Bible Reading**

**9** Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest <sup>2</sup> and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. <sup>4</sup> He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' <sup>5</sup> 'Who are you, Lord?' Saul asked.

'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' he replied. <sup>6</sup> 'Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.'

<sup>7</sup> The men travelling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. <sup>8</sup> Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. <sup>9</sup> For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

<sup>10</sup> In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, 'Ananias!' 'Yes, Lord,' he answered.

<sup>11</sup> The Lord told him, 'Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. <sup>12</sup> In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight.' <sup>13</sup> 'Lord,' Ananias answered, 'I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name.'

<sup>15</sup> But the Lord said to Ananias, 'Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. <sup>16</sup> I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.' <sup>17</sup> Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord – Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here – has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.'

<sup>18</sup> Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptised, <sup>19</sup> and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. <sup>20</sup> At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. <sup>21</sup> All those who heard him were astonished and asked, 'Isn't he the man who caused havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn't he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?' <sup>22</sup> Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Messiah.

*Acts 9:1-22*

This is the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

### **Gospel Acclamation**

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

Many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.

**Alleluia.**

Hear the ✠ Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to  
St Matthew

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>27</sup> Peter answered him, 'We have left everything to follow you! What then will there be for us?' <sup>28</sup> Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>29</sup> And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. <sup>30</sup> But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.

*Matthew 19:27-30*

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Jesus, the resurrection and the life, we give you thanks for all who have lived and believed in you. Raise us with them to eternal life.

We remember before God those who have died and we pray that God's love will surround all who mourn them, now and always.

We give you thanks for all those whom we have loved but who have gone ahead of us.

We pray for the repose of the soul of Michael Gray, Judith Sykes,

### **From St Mary's Book of Remembrance**

Marjorie Jean Taylor, Margaret Lesley Brookman



### **From St Paul's Book of Remembrance**

Eric Daniel Alsop, Mary Elizabeth Bott, Frank Harris

Rest eternal grant to them and let light perpetual shine upon them.  
May the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God  
rest in peace **and rise in glory.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;

Thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation;

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,

for ever and ever. Amen.

### Let us pray

Jesus calls us out of darkness into his marvellous light. Washed clean by the waters of baptism, let us pray that we may live the life to which he has called us. Lord Jesus, eternal Word, proclaimed as the Christ by John the forerunner, hear us as we pray for all who proclaim your word Lord of truth,

### Hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, baptizing with the Spirit and with fire, strengthen us to withstand all the trials of our faith

Lord of truth,

### Hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, bringing forgiveness to all who repent, teach your Church dependence on your grace

Lord of truth,

### Hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, fulfilment of the promises of old, give hope to all who suffer or are ignored. We pray for Joan Fletcher, Pat & Keith Randon, Marlene Jenkins, Karen Lee, Jean Sury, Jean Bowley, Vincent Nash, June Shilton, Sue & John Thorne

Lord of truth,

### Hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, beloved Son of the Father, anoint us with the gifts of your Holy Spirit

Lord of truth,

### Hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus, bringer of hope, share with all the faithful the riches of eternal life

Lord of truth,

### Hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus Christ, in you the Father makes us and all things new. Transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your heavenly glory.

**Amen.**

### Saul: A Change of Plans (And a change of name)



This story of Saul's encounter with the risen Jesus on the way to Damascus was clearly a favourite of Luke, since he tells it three times in Acts (see Acts 22:6-16; 26:12-18).

Luke is a master of narrative and of little words. As the story begins, an important word is “still” The resurrection has come, but Saul and the powers of evil are “still” at work and effective. Saul has “official” “letters” authorizing wholesale arrests of those who belong to “the Way” (9:2). Ironically, Saul is also “on the way” to Damascus and all signs point to his success. And then “it happens!” This favourite word of Luke signals the surprising entry of God into ordinary events. A light flashes “around” Saul and he wisely capitulates to the voice, that in the quick exchange twice identifies the object of Saul's persecution as not Christians, but “me,” “Jesus”.

The command quickly cuts to the chase. “Get up and go into the city.” There is no argument or explanation, and one gets the sense objectives in Damascus will be changed. “And you will be told what it is necessary for you to do”. The “it is necessary” links this story to Luke's common emphasis on the sure and certain destiny of God's promise.

Now the story shifts to Damascus to a disciple named Ananias, and thus to one of Saul's former targets. To his obedient “Here I am, Lord,” Ananias receives the same cryptic “Get up and go,” but with explicit instructions regarding the object of his mission: Saul. Ananias responds, “I have heard from many ...how many evil things he has done.”

Ananias knows too much about the ways of the world and about persons like Saul. But in the promise of God's word, then, as now, the ways of the world are being rearranged.

So, the command needs repetition along with supporting rationale. "Go, because..." Because Saul is God's chosen vessel who will carry God's name. Surprise, surprise! Saul's name will be added to the list of those who "call upon the name" and now will bear this name to strange places and to strange peoples like Gentiles and kings, and yes even to the children of Israel.

So now Ananias obeys. He goes, enters, and lays hands on Saul. His address, "Brother Saul" is a telling sign of the new relationship underway in fulfillment of the promise. It is sealed in baptism as the sign of the Spirit's presence and outpouring.

"For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus". This concluding remark leaves much unspoken about the changes implied in the Damascus community of believers. One would like to know some of the dynamics that those "some days" with Saul entailed. Instead, what we hear is that Saul "immediately" began to proclaim Jesus as the Son of God in the synagogues.

In this story a profound transformation takes place between Saul's opening threats and his concluding preaching in the synagogues that Jesus is God's Son. The two conversions are a sign of how the name of the risen Lord takes shape and unfolds in the lives of believers, then and now.

In this story disciples and non-disciples alike are swept up in the necessary plan of God's design.

The story of Saul and Ananias invite us to ponder how we will look at our own world. God rearranges our ways of seeing, being, and acting. God changes our world.

It is not far from the Damascus Road to Paul's later word to the Romans about a "God who gives life to the dead and brings into existence the things that do not exist" (Romans 4:17).

Where is God leading us?

What will be our response when God says to us, "Get up and go, because I have chosen you and am commissioning you for the life of a new community?"

Commentary on Acts 9:1-6 [7-20] - Working Preacher from Luther Seminary

### Let us declare our faith together.

We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family  
in heaven and on earth is named.

We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith,  
and fills us with his love.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us  
with power from on high.

We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen**

