



Newsletter

(17) Sunday 20 Nov to Saturday 3 Dec 2016

Our aim is to *KNOW* God through Jesus,
GROW in faith, and *SHOW* God's love in our community



Rick and Lisa write:

One might be surprised to hear that one of the things that we were recently talking about after morning prayers was the *weakness* of God.

There are many things which seem insignificant but have huge impact. It seems that some things which on the face of it seem so small or invisible as to be almost 'nothing' are also capable of making the biggest changes in our world you could imagine. For example, the *phenomenal* amounts of energy released in the atomic bomb were released from a *tiny* amount of matter; gravity which keeps everything in place is really difficult to locate – it is merely the fundamental *shape* of space which produces it; the birth of the Universe may have been when space started expanding... so galaxies which seem to be moving away from our galaxy actually aren't doing so... it is the space which is expanding. Gravity even causes galaxies to clump together!

And then there are living things that 'blow the mind' with the power that they have even while they appear to be exceedingly weak; for example, bacteria and viruses that are so small that we can't see them with our eyes and yet they have brought plagues and death to millions. Our ecosystem is utterly amazing, and the fact is that life is pure miracle. So many factors of existence have to be 'just so' for any life to happen and continue.

The weakness of God is shown in the way God creates everything to 'run' itself, even while staying fully in touch and in ultimate, *but not controlling*, control.

We see the power of God in nature with some stars ending their life in massive explosions called supernovas, and the weakness of God in bringing mere dust together under gravity and different forces, to give birth to a star.

And all this becomes even more glorious as we approach the time of year in which we will celebrate God's Incarnation on earth. It is at Christmas time that we see the weakness of God in human terms – in the birth of a little baby, the most vulnerable type of human we can think of. It is frightening to think how barren the world would now be if Herod had managed to kill Jesus, or Joseph had refused to support Mary, or Mary had said 'No' to God!

Surely what this signifies to us is that we can trust God even though we are weak, and even when we feel *really* weak, because God has 'been there'. Ironically, it is when we are most weak that we are most strong, because it is only then that we most obviously have to put our trust in God and not in our own strength.

We feel that these things are worth reflecting on over this Christmas period – and invite you to use the Advent time of preparation well by looking up and contemplating the meaning of **1 Corinthians 1 verse 25**... that in due time we come to *really celebrate* Christ's coming into our world, in a great consciousness of our Weakness and God's most wonderful Strength... *all over again!*

REGULAR SERVICES

<u>Sundays:</u>	St Paul's	10am
	St Andrew's	11am
27 Nov & 4 Dec:	St Paul's	7.30-8.30pm
	NEW! Christian Meditation (see below)	
<u>Wednesdays:</u>	St Paul's	10am
	St Andrew's	2pm
<u>Mon. & Wed:</u>	Prayers, St Paul's, 9.05am	

Bible Readings

20 Nov. Jere. 23: 1-6 & Luke 23: 33-43.

23 Nov. Rev. 15: 1-4 & Luke 21: 12-19.

27 Nov. **ADVENT SUNDAY!**
Isaiah 2: 1-5 & Matt. 24: 36-44.

DIARY DATES

Sat. 26 Nov. St. Paul's Christmas Fair. 11am to 1pm. If you have any items for raffle prizes, tombola, £1 bags, cakes etc. or can help please see Marion as she would be extremely grateful.

Sun. 27 Nov. Advent Sunday! Be sure to take a copy of your Daily Advent readings and to USE THEM during Advent.

Sun. 27 Nov. St Paul's 7.30pm-8.30pm: CHRISTIAN MEDITATION – entrance via the back door into the Youth Room.

Mon. 28 Nov. Mary Duffy's funeral St Paul's, 1.15pm followed by cremation at 2.30pm at Blackley Crematorium then refreshments (in a near-by venue) to which everyone is invited.

Wed. 30 Nov. St. Andrew's Day

Sat. 3 Dec. 2.30pm Messy Church at St. Andrew's. The theme is "Meet the Cast" a Celebration of the Nativity. Decide who you would like to be in the Christmas story and if possible bring your own costume.

FUTURE DATES AND NOTICES

Fri. 9 Dec. 7pm Advent Praise at Our Lady of Grace, Fairfax Road, Prestwich. Followed by refreshments. This is a lovely service every year – do go, it really contributes to our Advent experience.

Sun. 11 Dec. 10am St Paul's. We welcome SHOLEH and SANAZ to the sacrament of BAPTISM. Praise God!

Many thanks to Val for organising it and to all who helped raise £600 at St. Andrew's Autumn Fair! A great success.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Curate: Revd Mike Dyson, 15 Moorside Road Kersal, Salford M7 3PJ (0161 792 1098)
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Sun. 11 Dec. Parish Christmas Lunch - arrive 1pm to be seated for 1.30pm.

It will be a three course meal: Vegetable soup, Turkey lunch with all the trimmings, Christmas pudding or fruit salad and mince pies. Please tell us if you are on a special diet. Ticket only: Adults £10, children (under 11) £5. The tickets *must* be paid for in advance. Beverages and juice will be provided but please bring your own wine or beer.

Tickets from Kathryn Disley (St. Andrew's) or Maureen Roberts (St. Paul's). Please try to buy your tickets by **Mon. 5 Dec.** to give us numbers for catering and seating.

Fri.20 to Sat. 22 Jan. 2017 'First Friday' Men's Weekend away at Abbott Hall. For information contact Len Mills on 792-3877 or lenmills1@hotmail.co.uk.

Fri. 15 to Sun. 17 Sept. 2017. Parish Weekend Away. Book the dates, and speak to Maureen on 0161 792-4873 or via robert382@sky.com

SHOE-BOXES: Many thanks to all who contributed to make this year's appeal such a success. Special thanks to the Brownies and Guides. 122 boxes are going with Alan Thompson to Moldova. He would welcome prayers for his safety on the roads. *Eileen Booth*

Night Shelter: Thank-you for the donations, much appreciated. More warm clothes and food would be welcome – please pass to Jean Dyson (up to April).

Register your interest to receive details of Gary Bridson's book with stories from people who served in WWII on the list outside the Parish Office (or let Lisa know).

Hall Bookings: St Paul's and St. Andrew's 792 3877;

Emergency prayer chain: ring Maureen 792 4873 or email rober382@sky.com

All notices to sub-editor Norma MacKinnon at mackinnon860@hotmail.co.uk

For more information and past newsletters visit our website: www.stpaulsparish.org.uk