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WINCHMORE HILL

**CAROLS ON
THE GREEN**

5:30-6:45pm
Wednesday 17 December

Come and join us to sing carols and enjoy a glass of
mulled wine, mince pie and other refreshments

Donate by cash or card on the night

The money raised will go to

crisis

a national charity that supports homeless
people at Christmas and throughout the
year and to our local Day Shelter

Carols on the Green are led by
St Paul's Church Winchmore Hill
Charity Number 1133942

**Details of Advent and Christmas events
at St Paul's Church can be found on pages 6 and 7**

Parish Magazine

Price 50p

December 2025

St Paul's Church, Church Hill, London N21 1JA

Website: www.spwh.org

Charity number 1133942

VICAR

The Revd Daniel Sandham
St Paul's Vicarage, Church Hill
N21 1JA
020 8886 3545
07865 774028
vicar@spwh.org

Assistant Curate

The Revd Dr Lyanne Beckerson
lyanne.beckerson@spwh.org
07904 197502

Children and Families Worker

Mrs Elouise Nell
children@spwh.org
07511 938 289

LICENSED LAY MINISTERS

Mr Mark Ashworth Tel: 020 8360 1854
Mrs Sarah Elkins Tel: 020 3231 0050
Mrs Alison Perera alijperera@icloud.com
Kirsten Lazarus Tel: 07725 909392

CHURCHWARDENS

Mr Phil Morehen
phil.morehen@spwh.org
Mr Paul Prigmore
paul.prigmore@spwh.org

SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Mrs Claire Knight 07736 934989
safeguarding@spwh.org

DEPUTY SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Jessica Kafizas
07859 825342

DBS CHIEF RECRUITER

Mrs Hilary Crocker
dbcs@spwh.org

PASTORAL CO-ORDINATOR

Jane Reed pastoral@spwh.org

FACILITIES MANAGER

Ayse Eris
facilities@spwh.org 07946 852 110

ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER

Mr Christopher Foreman: 020 8803 0309

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

Mrs Elouise Nell
children@spwh.org
07511 938 289

SACRISTAN

Mr Andrew Corden jacorden@gmail.com

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL HON. SEC.

Mrs Rebecca Clarke pcc@spwh.org

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL HON. TREASURER

Mrs Alison Atkins
treasurer@spwh.org

PLANNED GIVING OFFICER

Mr John Hey plannedgiving@spwh.org

ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER

Maggie Lindsay office@spwh.org

ST. PAUL'S WINCHMORE HILL TRUST

Mr Andy Dodd andy1.dodd@outlook.com

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH SCHOOL

Executive Headteacher: Miss Cathryn Mann
Head of School: Mrs Clare Cresswell
Ringwood Way, N21 2RA
020 8360 3137
www.st-pauls.enfield.sch.uk
Email: office@st-pauls.enfield.sch.uk

PARISH OFFICE

Office Manager and Vicar's PA
Mrs Emily Jarosch
Monday, Tuesday & Thursday mornings
Tel: 020 8886 4290
office@spwh.org
Letter box by main hall entrance

PARISH MAGAZINE EDITOR

Mrs Susan Chambers
magazine@spwh.org
020 8360 6437

Dear Friends

I am privileged to have been invited back to my old theological college this December to conduct the Advent Retreat. I can well remember my first Advent Retreat at St Stephen's House, Oxford, 19 years ago. The conductor began his first address by telling us that he understood it had been a long term, and that we should feel at liberty to fall asleep during his addresses. 'If that's how God wants you to use this time, then let it be God's will.' It was a kind and generous offer, but it didn't really feel in the spirit of Advent: 'Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.' (Matthew 25.13)

I realise in hindsight what a precious gift the Advent Retreat was. As I have written in December letters in past years, the celebration of Christmas – which should properly begin on Christmas Eve and last until Candlemas (2 February) – now largely eclipses Advent. That's why the practice at St Stephen's House of committing a whole 48 hours to reflecting on and praying through the themes of Advent is a such a good and edifying thing to do.

I realise few of you will be able to carve out this amount of time in your diaries. But I encourage you at least to carve out *some* time to keep Advent well. Its themes of hope, expectation and freedom are subjects which pertain powerfully to the challenges of society and individual lives. At St Stephen's House I will be reflecting on the (nowadays much maligned) Four Last Things: death, judgement, heaven and hell. They may not sound like cheery subjects, but, when considered through the lens of the coming of Christ, they become celebrations of the hope which can only be found in Jesus.

This Advent at St Paul's we will be running Lectio Divina each Wednesday before the lunchtime Eucharist. This was very popular in Lent, and I invite you to use this as one way of keeping a good Advent. And please pray for me and the ordinands of St Stephen's House, Oxford – not least that they won't fall asleep!

With my love and prayers

Fr Daniel

Services in December 2025



Morning Prayer is said publically at **9.10am** and Evening Prayer at **5pm** Monday-Thursday. **ST PAUL'S CHURCH**

WINCHMORE HILL

The church is open for visitors and private prayer every day from 9am to 5pm

Day	Date	Observance	Time	Services	Prayer Intention
M	1	St Andrew the Apostle	12.30pm	Eucharist	The people of Scotland
T	2				Our keeping of Advent
W	3		12pm 12.30pm	Lectio Divina Eucharist	Victims of modern day slavery
T	4				Racial justice
F	5				HM government
S	6	St Nicholas of Myra	1pm	Quiet Afternoon	Children in poverty
S	7	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	8am 9.15am 10.30am	Said Eucharist Joyful Noise Eucharist Sung Eucharist	Our parish and its people
M	8	The Conception of the BVM			Devotion to Our Lady
T	9				Carers
W	10		12pm 12.30pm 7pm	Lectio Divina Eucharist Keble Carol Service	Vocations to the sacred ministry
T	11				The Mothers' Union
F	12				Climate justice
S	13	St Lucy, martyr			Prisoners
S	14	THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (Gaudete)	8am 9.15am 10.30am	Said Eucharist Joyful Noise Sung Eucharist	Our parish and its people
M	15		2.30pm 6pm	St Paul's School Christingle Services	Local schools
T	16				The judiciary
W	17		12pm 12.30pm 5.30pm	Lectio Divina Eucharist Carols on the Green	The homeless
T	18				Local shops and businesses
F	19				Safeguarding
S	20				Church hall refurb project
S	21	FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT	8am 9.15am 10.30am 6pm	Said Eucharist Joyful Noise Sung Eucharist Nine Lessons & Carols	Our parish and its people
M	22				The bereaved
T	23				The unemployed
W	24	CHRISTMAS EVE	12.30pm 4pm 5.30pm 11pm	Eucharist Crib Service Crib Eucharist Midnight Mass	Our celebration of the Lord's nativity
T	25	CHRISTMAS DAY	8am 10am	Said Eucharist Sung Eucharist	The joy of the Christ-child
F	26	St Stephen, martyr	10am	Eucharist	The persecuted church
S	27	St John, apostle & evangelist	10am	Eucharist	The spread of the gospel
S	28	FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS	8am 9.15am 10.30am	Said Eucharist Joyful Noise Sung Eucharist	Our parish and its people
M	29	St Thomas Becket			Sarah, our bishop
T	30				Parish clergy
W	31		12.30pm	Eucharist	Thanksgiving for the year past

Services times are subject to change. Please contact the Parish Office for details. Contact the clergy if you would like to speak to someone regarding your spiritual life, or to make use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (confession)



A PRAYER FOR ADVENT



O Lord of light and hope,
 help us to remember
 that this time of waiting and excitement
 is in expectation of your coming into the world;
 that this time of Advent is a time for preparation.
 not for the commercial greed that Christmas has become,
 but a time of listening for your voice
 inviting us to the celebration
 of the Christ Child's birth at Christmas.

FROM THE REGISTERS OCTOBER 2025



BAPTISMS

12th October Joshua Day

Remy Stanton

19th October Millie and Lucas Arbuckle

DECEMBER 2025 FLOWER ROTA

There are no flowers in church during Advent.

21st December The Flower Group will meet after the services that Sunday to decorate the Church for Christmas.

Adele would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to join the flower arranging team. Both those who are experienced flower arrangers and those who would like to develop their skills would be most welcome. To contact Adele ring 020 8360 3676.

Celebrate Christmas at St Paul's



www.spwh.org/christmas

Christmas 2025

Celebrating the birth of Jesus



Sunday 14 December

8am, 9.15am & 10.30am as usual

Children's nativity at 10.30am Eucharist

Wednesday 17 December

5.30pm Carols on the Green

Sunday 21 December

6pm Nine Lessons and Carols

CHRISTMAS DAY

8am Said Eucharist

10am Sung Eucharist

Sunday 28 December and Sunday 4 January

8am, 9.15am & 10.30am as usual

Tuesday 6 January

6pm Epiphany Eucharist for All Ages

CHRISTMAS EVE

4pm Crib Service aimed at pre-school children

5.30pm Crib Eucharist aimed at school-age children

11pm Midnight Mass

For more details visit
www.spwh.org/christmas



Advent LECTIO DIVINA



ST PAUL'S CHURCH
WINCHMORE HILL

"A voice crying in the wilderness"

Lectio Divina – literally *divine reading* – is a way of reading the Bible reflectively and contemplatively, allowing the reader to be immersed in the Word of God.

Members of our Ministry Team will help us reflect on passages from the prophecy of Isaiah this Advent. This takes place each Wednesday before the lunchtime Eucharist; come to either or both.



Wednesday 3, 10, 17 December 2026

12pm **Lectio Divina**

12.30pm **Eucharist**

PAUL – A BIOGRAPHY BY TOM WRIGHT**CHAPTER 8**

It is late AD 50 or early 51 and in Chapter 8 we find Paul in Athens. We also find that he is in danger; Paul has been put on trial and taken to the Areopagus, the highest court in the land; from which he risks being either banished or killed.

This chapter recounts the message that Paul gives to the Athenians. It also charts the unlikely event that he will be released, as it turns out, to continue his travels, without punishment. Religious diversity was usually tolerated in the ancient world, so why did Paul turn out to be such a threat? How did he use the opportunity he was given to speak to the Athenians?

Paul's Areopagus address is found in Acts 17:22-31, and it is this that Wright gives further background and detail to in this chapter.

Paul found many idols during his time in Athens and he decides to take issue with them, they made him uncomfortable and this was his threat. He challenges his audience to understand that their idolatry is a perversion and 'a shabby and misleading representation of the true God' (i).

At the centre of his message to them was that the one God had revealed his purpose through Jesus his son, crucified and resurrected, and this act would fulfil God's ancient promises and bring the world to wholeness, no idols needed.

It emerges that those listening to and questioning Paul have got hold of some fake news. They become wary because they greatly misunderstand him, never mind agree. They imagine that he is referring to a pair of Divinities, as they hear him speaking of the relationship between Jesus and Anastasis. But as Wright is careful to explain, Anastasis is not the name of a female consort, but in fact the Greek word for Resurrection.

Paul uses the opportunity he has while on trial in the Areopagus to communicate his core Jewish and biblical worldview, as it has developed in the extraordinary events of the life of Jesus, his death and resurrection.

It is mainly the Epicureans and the Stoics that Paul was in conflict with; the disagreement focused on their differing views of how their Gods related to the world. The Epicureans held a view that echoes the dominant view in western culture now, that the human world ran under its own steam and that their Gods lived in a separate dimension, unaffected by the human world. For the Stoics, God and the world are much the same thing and the divine presence is in everything. Wisdom for them emanates from the word in the world, not from the divinity of a transcendent God.

Paul's Jewish roots gave him strength and agency, he felt empowered to speak of the total transcendence of the one God and at the same time God's personal presence in the world. Despite their antagonisms, he found a way to debate with his captors and attempt to persuade them that they should discern within their traditions signposts that had for a long time pointed to his message.

In the end the Athenians at the Areopagus must have found Paul sufficiently engaging and respectful towards them, that whilst they didn't agree with him and no one seemingly was converted, the heat was taken out of their opposition and then his trial. Paul, right at the height of his game, was sufficiently alert to his situation in Athens and left alone for Corinth whilst the going was good.

Jane Reed

(i) Page 203

CHRISTMAS POST BOX

Our usual Christmas Post Box will be in Church from 30th November to 14th December. Some church members share the same surname, so please write the recipient's full name on each envelope. Sorted cards can be collected from the cross aisle. This is a free service but, in lieu of postage, you are invited to leave a small donation in the top of the post box for our annual charity, One-to-One.

NB The post box is for the congregation to exchange cards. No delivery service is offered so please only



14 December 2025

10.30am

All Ages Welcome

For unto us
a child is born!



Rehearsal Dates: Sat 22 Nov 4-5pm in Church
7th & 14th of Dec at 10.30 in Church Hall



Join the
**St. Paul's
Community
Choir**

Sign up here





Members of our MU and their friends were busily getting ready for Christmas during late November. At their afternoon meeting on Thursday 13th, our MU Leader Theresa Davis led a Christmas card-making workshop that was greatly enjoyed by all who came.



The following week, on the evening of Friday 21st November, there was a good turnout for our Christmas Pudding Party during which the guests made puddings ready to take home and cook, and the seasonal refreshments were thoroughly appreciated. For those not able to get to the evening, kits were available to make a pudding at home.

MOTHERS' UNION DIARY DECEMBER 2025

THURSDAY 18TH DECEMBER AT 2 PM IN THE CHURCH CHRISTMAS READINGS AND MUSIC

MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO BRING ALONG READINGS THEY WOULD LIKE TO SHARE. AFTERWARDS, CHRISTMAS REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED IN THE HALL

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO ALL OUR MOTHERS' UNION MEETINGS AND EVENTS

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Christmas

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Facilities Manager, Ayse Eris, at facilities@spwh.org or 07946 852 110



Many of our readers will remember Mark Amey, his wife Kathy and children Ruth, James and Peter. Mark served in St Paul's as Assistant Curate from 2000 to 2004 at the time when John Paul was our Vicar and he and his family lived in 'the little house in the car park' - Mark's description.

Recently, Mark has been in touch to share the news that, after 15 years as the vicar of St Ives in Cambridgeshire, in the New Year he will be moving to become the part-time Priest-in-Charge of three parishes, Prees, Edstaston & Whixall, in the Diocese of

Lichfield. Mark is looking forward to his new post for two reasons. Firstly, he and Kathy will be living much nearer to family and they will be able to see more of their grandchild, Rey. Secondly, this is Mark's first step towards retirement, it being a part-time position as priest-in-charge of the three parishes, which he has been assured work together as one church with only one Sunday service.

While in Cambridgeshire, and in addition to his parish duties, Mark has served as an Army Chaplain with the rank of Major and he has been Senior Padre for Cambridgeshire. When he moves to Shropshire, Mark will maintain his rank and work alongside another Chaplain who is already in the area.

It is no coincidence that Mark has chosen his last Sunday in St Ives to be 25th January 2026, The Feast of St Paul. He chose this date to mark the fact that his sending parish when he began training for the ministry was St Peter and St Paul, he served his curacy in our parish of St Paul's and at that time John Paul was our vicar.



Let us pray for Mark and Kathy as they prepare for this new stage in their lives.

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