



St Paul's



The Big Question

February 2008



## SUNDAY SERVICES – FEBRUARY

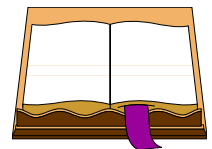
<b>Sunday 3rd</b> (Sunday before Lent)	8.30am 10am	Holy Communion Youth Communion- ‘Singleness’ Revd Sue Hartley
<b>Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup></b>	7.30pm	Ash Wednesday Holy Communion and Ashing
<b>Sunday 10<sup>th</sup></b> (1 <sup>st</sup> of Lent)	8.30am 10am	Holy Communion Morning Praise ‘Sex - a gift from God’ The Vicar
<b>Sunday 17<sup>th</sup></b> (2 <sup>nd</sup> of Lent)	8.30am 10am	Holy Communion Family Service – ‘Jesus our teacher & Example’
<b>Sunday 24th</b> (3 <sup>rd</sup> of Lent)	10am	Holy Communion ‘Marriage – for life?’ The vicar

## SUNDAY SERVICES – MARCH

<b>Sunday 2nd</b> (Mothering Sunday)	8.30am 10am	Holy Communion Contemporary Communion
<b>Sunday 9th</b> (5 <sup>th</sup> of Lent)	8.30am 10am	Holy Communion Morning Praise – ‘Living beyond our means’ The Vicar
<b>Sunday 16th</b> (Palm Sunday)	8.30am 10am	Holy Communion Family Service – Followed by Spring Harvest Meeting
<b>Sunday 23rd</b> (Easter Day)	10am	Holy Communion
<b>Sunday 30th</b>	8.30am 10am	Holy Communion Annual Church Parochial Meeting



There is also a service of Holy Communion or Morning Prayer each WEDNESDAY at 9.30am followed by coffee shop until 11am



There is a prayer meeting at 9.30am until 9.40am each Sunday  
Everyone is welcome to join us as we pray for the main service

## THE WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S CHURCH

<b>Sunday</b>	8.30 am 10.00am	Holy Communion (not 4th Sunday) Morning Service (every week) including: Players for Jesus (0-6's) – formerly Climbers Rock Solid (7-10's) in term time Highlanders (11-18's) in term time
<b>Monday</b>	1.30pm 8.00pm	Homegroup – 7 Stoke Avenue (alternate weeks) Joan Lingwood ☎8500 5178 Homegroup – (alternate weeks) – phone for details Jill James ☎8501 1162
<b>Tuesday</b>	9.15am	Prayers for the Church in the Side Chapel
<b>Wednesday</b>	9.30am 10.15am 12.30pm 7.30pm	Holy Communion Coffee Shop in the Hall Wheels and Squeals (Carer and Toddler Group) Highlanders Group meet in the Church Hall (alternate weeks) Drama Group – on the in-between weeks
<b>Thursday</b>	8.00pm	Homegroup – (alternate weeks) – phone for details Jill James ☎ 8501 1162 & Helen Duke ☎ 8500 6678
<b>Saturday</b>	7.30pm	SatNav – Alternate weeks – see the website for dates:



### PRAYER CHAIN

The Prayer Chain is organised so that prayer can be offered quickly for an individual or a particular situation. Ring the first person on either or both the lists. If they are not in, then ring the second and so on. Make your request clear and straightforward. The members of the chain will then pass on your request to the others and commit themselves to pray.

#### Chain 1

1. Maggie Sansom 8500 2341
2. Charmaine Andrews 8500 0164
3. Joan Lingwood 8500 5178
4. Joanna Cant 8500 3366
5. Sue Hartley 8500 4592

#### Chain 2

1. Beryl Gough 8550 0957
2. Sandra Lee-Down 8262 4494
3. Kathy Habberley 8501 1386
4. Will Davies 8551 3620
5. Sue Hartley 8500 4592

# *The Vicar's Letter*

## Back from My Sabbatical!

It is really good to be back after my three months away – especially to be able to thank Sue Hartley and all of you who have done so much to keep everything going while I was away. I come back to find a new pattern of service in place and a new group 'Inspire'! This a wonderful way of inviting children from the community to an activity morning on the first Sunday of the month and then encouraging their parents to bring them back for the Family Service on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday.

While I was away I was able to visit several churches which have installed solar PV and wind turbine systems to generate electricity. I have written up all the findings and am happy to send it to anyone who would like a copy – preferably by email. The main conclusion is that it is very hard work but well worth doing, both as a long term financial



Solar Panels on St Aldhelms Church Hall, Edmonton

investment and as a way of raising the profile of living a sustainable lifestyle and appreciating the value of energy. For so long we have to lived in a world where energy is cheap and waste is normal. This will change in the next few years whether we like it or not.

As well as the practical issues I tried to read and think about the future of the planet. Are the present inequalities going to get worse as fossil fuels run out or is God going to show us a way of restructuring the world economy so that life on this planet is fair and sustainable? Many people, both Christians and non-Christians, are struggling to find a solution. Some advocate the introduction of a world government to force us to change. I would hate to see that happen – it is only by willing cooperation that God's purposes will come about.

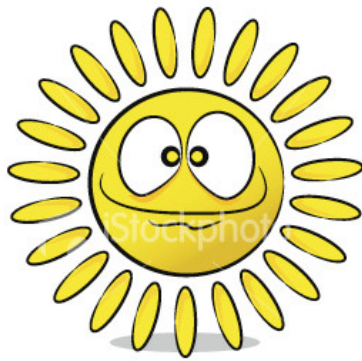
Let us all continue to pray for world leaders as they have to make very hard decisions. We can work together as a church to do more here in St Paul's to reduce our energy wastage and generate power for the national grid. Even more important we can make changes to our lifestyles because we believe in a future for our children.

During Lent we will be handing out a Tear Fund booklet 'The Carbon Fast' which suggests something we can do each day to reduce our carbon footprint. Let us use it to make this Lent an opportunity to change old habits and to live for the future.

May the Lord Bless you all.

**Christopher**

# February 2008



Saturday	2	All Day	Healing Ministry Training Day
Sunday	3	10am	Inspire
		6.30pm	Youth Service at St Luke's Ilford
Monday	4	7.30pm	SatNav Prayer Meeting
Tuesday	5	7.30pm	PCC Shrove Tuesday Social
Wednesday	6	7.30pm	Ash Wednesday Holy Communion
Friday	8		Havering Halfterm Starts
Saturday	9	7.30pm	SatNav
Monday	11	1.30pm	Homegroup
Wednesday	13	7.30pm	Highlanders
Thursday	14	8pm	Homegroup
Friday	15	10pm	Redbridge Halfterm Starts
Monday	18	8pm	Lent Homegroup
Tuesday	19	10.30am	Singing Group Practice
		7.30pm	PCC Meeting in the Vicarage
Wednesday	20	7.30pm	Spade Drama Group in Hall
Thursday	21	8pm	Neal Morse at All Saints Woodford Wells
Sunday	24	3pm	Induction of Chris Wragg at All Saints Squirrels Heath
Monday	25	1.30pm	Home Group
Tuesday	26	10.30am	Music choosing in Vicarage
Wednesday	27	7.30pm	Highlanders
Thursday	28	10am-2pm	Response Seminar to BNP in St Margarets Barking
		8pm	Home Group

# What Happened at the PCC January 15<sup>th</sup> 2008

This was my first meeting back after my three month Sabbatical and it was good to be able to report back and hear all that had been going on in St Paul's. We read the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 21:33-39) and reflected how God has given us this world to take care of and how we are wasting its resources as if it didn't matter.

The main result of the research on renewable energy systems is that a wind turbine will not be feasible on the back of the church as originally thought. Instead solar panels will give a good return with low maintenance costs. The idea now is to redevelop the link-way with a south facing solar PV roof and a lounge area behind. The diocesan authorities will be asked to make a visit to discuss the possibilities.

We reviewed the new service plan which so far seems to be working well. The first Sunday of the month will be called a 'Contemporary Communion' instead of 'Youth Communion' although young people will still be involved as much as possible.

Finance: We were thrilled to have paid the Deanery Share (Family Purse) of £21,860 in full to the Diocese last year. This year we have a slightly higher target of £22,780 and we need to pray for the means to achieve it.

We are very grateful to the London Over the Border fund which has made us a grant to cover the replacement of the gas heater behind the altar, renew the notice board, repair the concrete pillars in the hall and change the Church door lock. Ian Thurgood has repaired the cub garage roof which has been leaking badly for months.

We are sad that Nicky Cleaver has decided to stop doing the magazine. We are hoping someone else will come forward to take it on - perhaps in a different format. We all thanked Nicky for all he has done this last year.

Lisselle Clarke-Moisley has been given her certificate by the Bishop to administer the bread and the wine at Holy Communion and we are going to ask several more if they would like to be able to serve in this way.

Lent Course: We discussed the possibility of having an evening Lent course starting with a meal together. It was too late for this year but good to plan for next year. This year we will be opening up the Monday homegroup on the three evenings during Lent, 18<sup>th</sup> Feb, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> March for anyone who would like to come.

We will be handing out Tearfund's Carbon Fast Booklets which give us something to do each day of Lent to reduce our carbon footprint. It follows on from last years 'Love Life, Live Lent' booklets.

May each of us know the Lord's special grace this Lent.

**Christopher**

# Busy Bees

## What are we doing there?

I have worked at Busy Bees for something like twelve years now and for much of that time have had the joyous task of picking our termly themes:

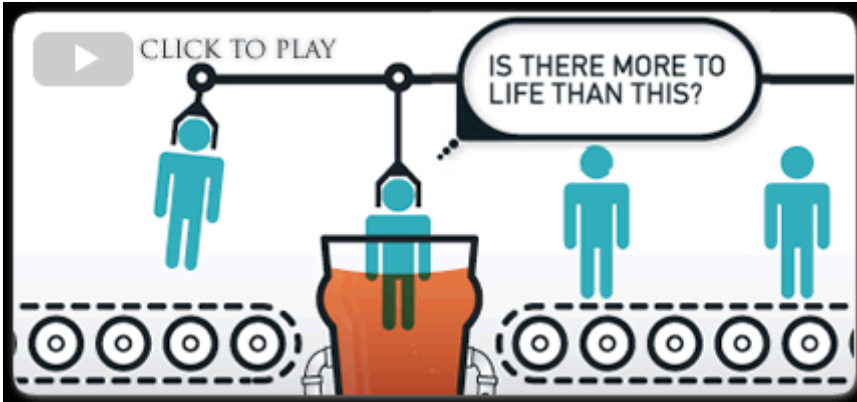
We have covered a wide range of topics, many of which have been depicted as large pictures or collages on the back wall. I now realize that this generates a good deal of interest while the pictures are in the making and many people now ask me what is going to emerge as they realise a new piece of artwork is being embarked upon.

Well, in case you are having sleepless nights trying to guess what our latest masterpiece is going to be, I will put you out of your misery:

I have thought for sometime now that whilst we do obviously promote Christian festivals and read Bible stories to the children, it would be nice to up the Bible teaching a little... especially as schools seem reluctant to get involved with much Christian teaching. So, I have decided that each half term we will have a bible story as our theme and where better to start than with Genesis and Creation? We will be looking at a day a fortnight (if that makes sense) so, so far we have looked at 'day and night' and 'land, sea and sky'. I am particularly looking forward to the animal fortnight. Look out for what I'm sure will be some new species, black and white striped giraffes, tigers with trunks etc. and hopefully by Easter there will be a wonderful creation about Creation on our back wall and you will see that it is good!



God Bless  
Wendy



# Alpha 2008

We are planning an Alpha course after the Easter Holidays. It is a 10 week course looking at different aspects of the Christian faith. The evening will start at 7pm with a meal followed by a short talk to introduce a topic and then a discussion. We plan to finish by 9.30pm. It is open to everyone whether you are a regular at St Paul's or never go to church.

The exact day of the week and starting date will depend on what is best for those taking part – probable a Tuesday or Friday evening. Do let me know if you are interested so I can keep you informed.

Christopher



# **Book Review by Rachel Thorpe**

## **Velvet Elvis by Rob Bell**

I just finished reading *Velvet Elvis*, about two seconds ago. I started reading it with a friend on holiday a few weeks ago and in his words, “There are probably two or three really great nuggets of wisdom in there, but you have to read through a whole lot of other stuff to find them. I suppose it’s probably worth it.”

I was in total agreement with him. I have to read so many books for uni, for a Christian book to get a look in it has to be amazing. And it has to prove that pretty quickly if I’m going to finish it. But I picked *Velvet Elvis* up again last night and either I wasn’t paying attention properly at first, or the book gets much better after the first few chapters! It is refreshingly honest, cram-packed with interesting stuff about rabbis and the author, Rob Bell invites you to challenge what he says.

It is a book about anything and everything; the author just tells you about things that he knows about and has opinions about as he feels that they fit together. So rather than trying to give you a plot summary, I’m going to list a few quotes and paraphrased bits. They are a mixture of my favourite bits and some of the bits that really made me think.

I’m still not sure if I agree with some of them, or quite how some of them make me feel. Maybe some of them aren’t that helpful or seem more controversial taken out of context, but I hope they can really get you thinking too.

- “The person who says that we are here by chance and there is no greater meaning has just as many beliefs as the person who says there’s a creator. Maybe even more.”
- “The moment God is figured out with nice neat lines and definitions, we are no longer dealing with God. We are dealing with someone we made up.”
- “The point of the cross isn’t forgiveness.”
- Sometimes we can meet a Muslim who speaks more truth than a Christian. And that is okay.
- “Just because it is a Christian book by a Christian author and it was purchased in a Christian bookstore doesn’t mean that it is all true or good or beautiful.”
- It is damaging to teach that “there is no truth outside the Bible”
- “I don’t follow Jesus because I think Christianity is the best religion”.
- What does Jesus do in his final moments on the cross? Questioned God. (cf. Matthew 27: 46)
- How do our churches respond to the message that “the way of Jesus is a journey, not a destination”?
- As Christians, we don’t have the answers to people’s problems and we can’t always fix things.
- Just because you have people in your congregation who are good at acting you don’t have to do plays in your services.
- One church service the pastor asked everyone to close their eyes, and for people who wanted to commit their lives to Jesus to pray a prayer after him. “Then he asked for the people who had prayer the prayer to raise their hands... He said that nobody but him would be looking... and he proceeded to acknowledge the hands that were going up all around the room. During this entire time I had my eyes open. I didn’t see any hands go up.”
- “It is possible to be saved and miserable”
- One of the biggest tragedies of the Christian faith is the mistake which taught us that if we believe in Jesus, he’ll take us somewhere else soon. “We are not going somewhere else at the end of time, because the world is our home. And our home is good”
- “Heaven is full of forgiven people. Hell is full of forgiven people.”
- “If the gospel isn’t good news for everybody, then it isn’t good news for anybody.”
- “The true greatness of the Bible isn’t that it happened, but that it happens.”
- “Because God has spoken, and everything else is commentary”
- It is nonsense to say “I’m going to withhold my opinion and just tell you what the verse means” or talk about a situation “When God showed up.”



# Have you made any resolutions?

It may be far from New Year but it is not too late for resolutions. It is always the right time to change aspects of your life you are not happy with, or that aren't glorifying Jesus. So to help you...

Here are the TOP TEN resolutions scientifically discovered to bring HAPPINESS.

- 1. Count your Blessings** – Psalm 46:1 *God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble.* Focus on the positive, take a couple of minutes a day to think about all the things we should be grateful for, starting with our health and that of our family & friends.
- 2. Simplify your Life** – Psalm 46:10 *Be still and know that I am God.* Un-clutter your life from the unnecessary chores which mean you will get time on top of your commitments. Take time out to do very little or even nothing!
- 3. Avoid Shopping** – Matthew 6:25 *Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?* Avoiding 'avarice' is a sure path to happiness. Stop fretting about what you don't have, that car, holiday or expensive gadget you can't afford. Forget that, give thanks for what you do have.



- 4. Take exercise** – 1 Timothy 4:7, 8 *Physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.* Fresh air and exercise may keep you away from temptation, but will invigorate you and make you feel happier and lift your spirits and help release all sorts of hormones and other feel good chemicals into your brain & body.
- 5. Take Pleasure in simple tasks** – 1 Corinthians 10:3 *Whatever you do, do it for the glory of God.* Psychologists point out the huge sense of satisfaction nearly everybody gets from performing what may be a simple task extremely well.
- 6. Set realistic goals** – Romans 12:3 *Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgement, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.* Setting realistic goals and achieving them is far better than having no goals or shooting for the moon. This applies to our personal lives as much as our careers. Work hard to achieve something you know you are capable of.

7. **Admit mistakes** – James 5:16 *Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. Admitting failure and error will not only make you happier but will also raise you in the esteem of others.*
8. **Avoid Commuting** – James 4:13 *Now listen you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city . . . instead you ought to say, ‘If it is the Lord’s will we will live and do this or that.’* Surveys consistently show the length of time people spend getting to work every day correlates strongly and negatively with their state of happiness. So move closer to work, get a new job or work from home if you want to be happier.

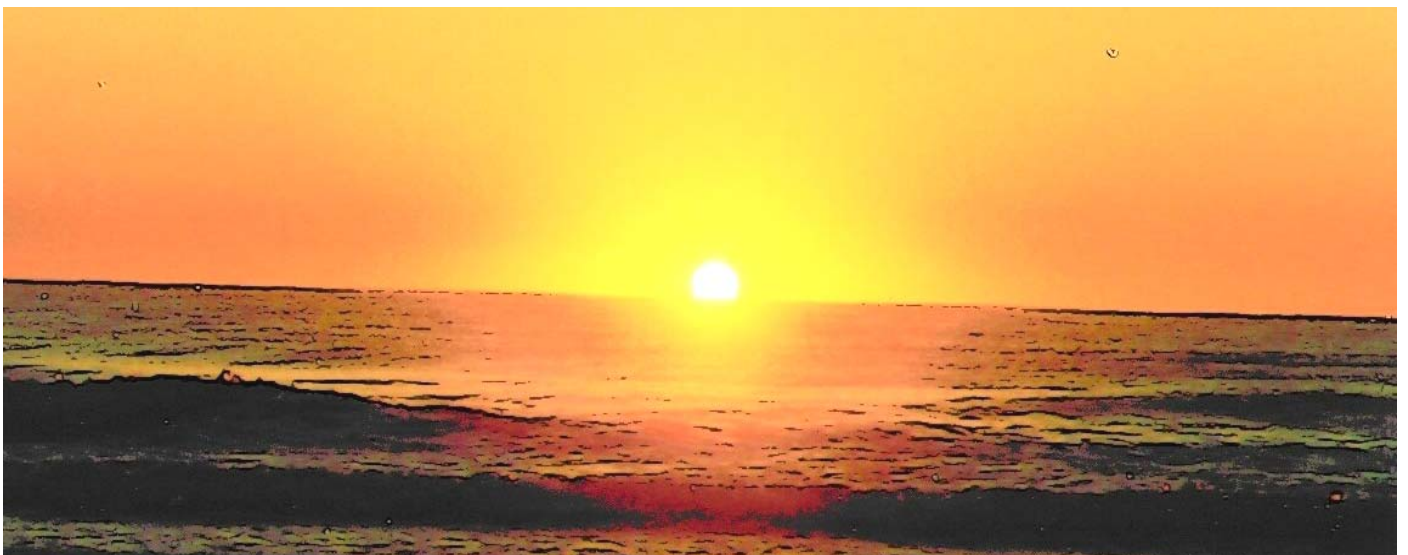
9. **Be Traditional** – 1 Corinthians 11:23 *For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: the Lord Jesus, on the night that he was betrayed, took bread . . .*

Keeping positive values of the RIGHT, hard work, family, church, religious observance, seem to make people happier than anything goes morality of the left (in my opinion!) Humans like freedom but they also need structure.



10. **Don't try too hard for Happiness** – Matthew 5:6 *Blessed (or Happy) are those that hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.* Like love, happiness will turn up when you least expect it. Search too avidly and it will be forever slipping from your grasp.

**Pauline Sheridan**



# John the Baptist



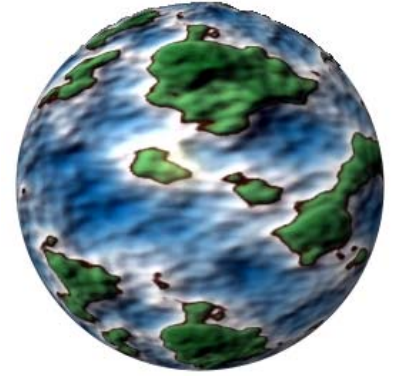
Baptist  
desert  
honey  
John  
locust  
river

Jordan  
Son of God  
angel  
gift  
camel

John was the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth. They were very old when John was born. They thought it was impossible to have a son, but he was a gift to them from God, confirmed to them by the Angel Gabriel.

If John was around today we would find him very strange. When he grew up he lived in the desert, wearing clothes made from camel's hair and he ate wild locusts and honey!

However, John was a great man of God. He told people about God and about the Son of God, who he knew was coming soon. He told people to stop doing bad things and start doing good. He baptised people in the River Jordan as a sign of turning from their old lives and beginning to follow God.



### To Do List From God

I ran my life in search of worldly things;  
My time and will were firmly in control.  
I thought I had no need for what God brings;  
I gave no heed to murmurs from my soul.



"You're planning, doing all the time," it said,  
"But something else is missing deep inside.  
Your mind is whirling, but your heart is dead,  
So turn to God and let go of your pride."



I did, and God said, "Here's My plan for you:  
Give your life to Me, and just let go.  
Have faith and pray, and read the Bible through,  
And you'll have blessings more than you can know."



So simple, yet it brings me perfect peace,  
Living life for God the way I should.  
Direction, purpose, fullness and release—  
Life with God is very, very good.

*By Joanna Fuchs*





Join me on May the 11<sup>th</sup>, Pentecost Sunday, at 3pm in Millwall Football Stadium for an afternoon of praise, prayer and encouragement. The tickets are £6 if you book before Easter and £8 after that. Let me know if you'd like to come & I will get us seats together.

The dream is that 30,000 people come this year – it was 20,000 last year - in the rain. Pray for sunshine! More information on the website:

**[www.gdoplondon.com](http://www.gdoplondon.com)**

Christopher



## Unlock London - Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> April

This year the walk is in Chelsea, East Fulham & Battersea and along the Thames Path. Each year a group from St Paul's joins hundreds of others to raise money for Unlock's work in deprived inner cities. Along the way churches of all denominations are open to welcome us in and provide refreshments.



A brilliant day out! Keep the day free and nearer the time we will let you know more details.