

Today

Welcome to St. Paul's Worship and Communion Service this Sunday. We are pleased to welcome Rev. Dennis Lloyd.

If you are new or visiting do make yourself known and feel very welcome to stay for tea and coffee after the service. Please take this newsletter home with you and use it as a prayer reminder during the week▲

For young people:

Crèche - facilities in the back room.
9:00am - Fusion - Christian Centre▲

A bit of 'Housekeeping' for the New

Year... It has been really good to welcome new people and visitors to the fellowship at St. Paul's in recent months.

 If you are 'newer' to the church do remember to sign up for our weekly E-newsletter on the church website www.stpaulsbarton.co.uk via the News & Events > E-Newsletter page. If you would like a Church Directory you can also add your entry on the website as well by using the Church Directory page. For a 'low tech' alternative simply have a word with Kevin at the sound desk at the back!▲

Collect for this Sunday

O God,
who by the leading of a star manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth:
mercifully grant that we, who know you now by faith, may at last behold your glory face to face;
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.

A Thought for the new Year

We often mention the possibilities of opening St. Paul's during the daytime to allow people to just come in and sit or pray or contemplate. So far due to 'lack of resource' shall we say this hasn't happened. The article below by Dr. Giles Fraser who is priest-in-charge at St Mary's Newington in south London and the former canon chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral was interesting. He writes the 'Loose canon' column for the Guardian.

The church door had been forced open during the night. The church warden arrived early on Tuesday morning to unlock the place, only to discover the side door already swinging open. Her heart sank. We do have occasional robberies, although since the candle-

sticks were taken we have little of value left to pinch. And besides the thieving, there is always the threat of vandalism. Windows are often being smashed, and our church hall was deliberately burned down a few years ago – by bored kids, I suspect, although the police have never arrested anyone. So the warden was right to be cautious as she stepped inside.

The first thing she noticed was that all the candles had been lit. And by all, I mean all. The main altar candles, the side altar candles, about 20 or so on the votive candle stand, the one in front of Our Lady, and so on. For a high church establishment such as ours, lighting all the candles is quite an undertaking. The place looked like a John Woo film set. And there, sitting a few pews up from the front, a solitary man sat still. He hadn't broken in to rob or damage, he had broken in to pray. And judging by the amount of candle wax he burned, he had been there half the night.

They chatted. He apologised for the door. And then left. Later that evening, as the weekly congregation gathered at our properly designated evening prayer time – what some call "organised religion" – we agreed that there was much to admire in a man who had gone to such remarkable lengths simply to get into a church to pray. Call the police? Certainly not – would that more people were so keen to come to church.

"Was he, erm, OK... if you follow?" asked a friend on Twitter. That could have meant anything, of course. But I took her to be asking if he was a bit unstable, unhinged maybe. "Are any of us OK, if you follow?" I replied, deflecting the question. I'm certainly not "OK, if you follow", and never have been. And maybe that's why I also need to sit alone in church and pray.



Years ago, when I had the keys to St Paul's Cathedral, I would frequently sit in there on my own at night. And I do the same now in my bombed-out 1960s community church. Of course you can do it elsewhere, but these are places set aside for it. Here the silence creeps into me, a bit like the cold. Not the silence of empty nothingness but the silence of sitting comfortably with a friend. And into that silence I bring all that is not OK with me.

The chemistry of prayer is the meeting of these two elements: that little surd of hidden desperation that some (most, all?) of us carry around with us, often without owning up to it, and that vast expanse of purposeful silence, the shorthand for which is God. In my experience, these two elements are drawn to each other. And the slow reaction between them is worth breaking into any church to find. *Continued overleaf >*

A man recently broke into my church. Good on him, I say

This week

Date	Time	Event
Mon 9th	10:30am Lunch	St. Paul's leading worship at Polars Residential Home. Ladies Fellowship - Lunch at 'Table Table', Medina Quay - See Margaret for details.
Tue 10th	9:45am	Little Rascals Parent & Toddler Group (9:45am - 11:30am) - Christian Centre.
Wed 11th	10:15am 7:30pm 8:00pm	Morning Prayer. Evening Prayer with Intercessions. PCC Meeting.
Thu 12th	7:00pm	Worship Team Practice.

Looking ahead: Dates for your diary...

Date	Time	Event
Sun 15th	9:00am 10:00am	Fusion - Christian Centre. Worship & Communion Service - Rev. Carol Smart. Speaker Jane Shyvers.
Fri 20th	7:30pm	Wight Church Network: All Island Worship Event (7:30pm-9:30pm) - Cowes Enterprise College, Crossfield Avenue, Cowes PO31 8HB with Guest Speaker Andy Frost.

Continued... There are various accelerants to this chemical reaction – the repetition of liturgical formulas, even lighting candles. Like all organised religion, this is easy enough to sneer at. But key to the reaction is silence and time. For both of these eat away at our excuses, our false hopes, our lack of reality. Self-serving bull doesn't easily survive the rigours of time and silence. And in this fantasy-busting environment I am lent the courage to open the most defended bits of me to the infinite love of God.

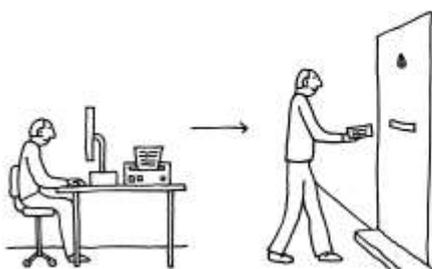
Sorry, this is probably far too religious a thing to say in a secular newspaper. And in a wider culture that has got so used to defending itself with irony and sarcasm. To say what one believes straight up is to break the omertà of collective insincerity – the punishment for which is a rather predictable ridicule.

But for those of us who are "not OK", we have little choice but to accept this as a consequence. The need for God can be just too strong, overwhelming. And I totally get why someone might break into a church to find it. So, good on him. I hope he found what he was looking for. *Dr. Giles Fraser The Guardian Newspaper 05.01.2017*

CartoonChurch.com Dave Walker

CYBER ATTACKS

HOW THE MODERN-DAY CHURCH IS RESISTING THEM



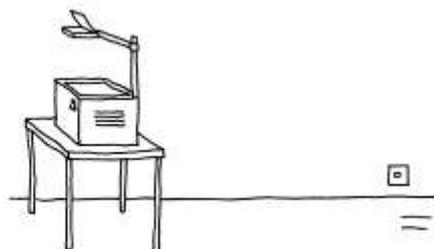
PRINTING EMAILS AND DELIVERING THEM BY HAND



MAINTAINING ANTIVIRUS PROTECTION



KEEPING UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION OFF THE WEBSITE



NOT PLUGGING THE OHP INTO THE INTERNET

Celebration Food
Fun Messy Craft
at St. Paul's
Staplers Road, Newport

2017 dates for your diary:
Saturdays from 3.30pm -
February 4th
March 18th
Sunday April 9th at 10am
May 20th
July 1st

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