



**St Paul's
United
Reformed
Church**

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Order of Service

Sunday 23rd July 2023



Quivering with Anticipation

Please use 'T' on your hearing aid if you need the hearing loop.

Today's service is being led by: **Fiona Pollard**

The Organ is played by: **Pam Vaughn**

It is a joy to welcome you to this service!

If you do not attend a church elsewhere, we invite you to join regularly with us in our Sunday worship and other activities – see www.stpaulsurc.org.uk

Feel free to spend time before worship for quiet preparation, especially once the music begins. We light a candle at the start of the service to remind us all of Christ's message of peace.

The Reformed Church recognises God's Word as its supreme authority and **you are asked to stand as the Bible is brought in** at the start of worship, **and again as the Bible is taken out after the blessing.**

We pray that you will know God's presence as we worship – in church, at home, online, outdoors, at work, school; in all places.

Welcome & Notices

Lighting the Peace Candle

Call to Worship *Psalm 139: 7-10*

Leader: Where can I go from your spirit?
Or where can I flee from your presence?

**All: If I ascend to heaven, you are there;
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.**

Leader: If I take the wings of the morning
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,

**All: even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me fast.**

Opening Hymn 712: All people that on earth do dwell

Prayers of Approach,

We say together

**Loving God, You surround us with songs of deliverance,
until all our fears are gone.**

**You have chosen us, and your love has called us by
name.**

**You have adopted us into your family, so that your
blood flows through our veins,**

**Help each of us stand and say, "I'm no longer a slave to
fear, I am a child of God."**

First lesson: Gen 28:10-19a (Jacob's ladder)

Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the Lord stood beside him and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!" And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called that place Bethel;

All age activity – Hearing from God

Hymn 92: Amazing Grace

As the children depart, let us say the grace together:

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

Second lesson: Romans 8:12-25

So then, brothers and sisters, we are obligated, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— for if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if we in fact suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

Future Glory

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the

revealing of the children of God, for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its enslavement to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning together as it suffers together the pains of labour, and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what one already sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Third lesson: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

The Parable of Weeds among the Wheat

He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field, but while everybody was asleep an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us

to go and gather them?’ But he replied, ‘No, for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’ ”

Jesus Explains the Parable of the Weeds

Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

Sermon

Hymn 573: God is working his purpose out

Prayers of Confession

Together we say:

Almighty God, who forgives all that truly repent, have mercy upon us, pardon and deliver us from all our sins, confirm and strengthen us in all goodness, and keep us in life eternal. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayers of intercession:

In the power of the Spirit, and in union with Christ, let us pray to the Father.

Response:

Your kingdom come

Your will be done.

And we pray, as Jesus taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed by 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

Offertory hymn: 72 Now thank we all our God

Offering:

Yours, O God, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for everything in heaven and on earth is yours; yours is the Kingdom, O God, and you are exalted as Head above all. All things come from you, O God,

And of your own have we given you.

**Strengthen for service, God, these hands that have worshipped you,
may these ears that have heard your word, be deaf to clamour and dispute,
may these tongues that have sung your praise be free from deceit,
may these eyes which have seen your love continue to shine with the light of hope. Glory be to you forever.**

Recessional hymn 415 The Trees of the field.

Doxology.

You are very welcome to join us in the large hall for refreshments after the service

Training in
pastoral
 *care*

Sunday 20th August

TIME: 14.00 – 18.30

Two seminars:

Introduction to Pastoral Care

Listening Skills

VENUE: Christ Church URC,
High St, Tonbridge TN9 1SG

EVERYONE WELCOME

For more details or to book your place, contact Andy Twilley:
training@urcsouthern.org.uk



Synod Prayer Days

Deployment Missions Outreach
Concerns Future
Congregations Buildings Age profiles
Evangelism Decline

**We talk a lot together,
in Councils, Synod Area
and Synod meetings**

But do we listen?

*Do we spend time listening
to God?*

**This is an opportunity to listen to
God together as Synod (Area)!**

EKSA / WKESSA	Sat 8 July	Cade Road Ashford
S&SSA	Sat 22 July	Crawley URC
SLSA	Sat 12 Aug	Crossways URC, Elephant & Castle
CSUA	Sat 9 Sep	Emmanuel United Church, Eastbourne

All days start at 10am for 10:30 finishing at 4pm

Coming up...

United Prayer Time – Zoom - St Paul's & South Croydon United Church. Meeting ID: 845 5391 2820 **Every Friday, 6pm**

Synod Area weekly online prayer time – a chance to pause, reflect and join other from across the SWL area
'Zoom' Meeting ID: 896 3882 1888 Password: URC50

Tuesday Guild Summer Coffee Mornings – fortnightly from 11th July 10,30 -noon. This Tuesday 25th June at Fran's house

Book club – Summer read is the Grapes of Wrath

Next week – worship is led by John Ellis

For other events and activities please see our website

Croham Park Avenue, South Croydon, CR2 7HF www.stpaulsurc.org.uk
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