

ST LUKE'S & CHRIST CHURCH CHELSEA

The Parish of St Luke's & Christ Church
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From pancakes to penitence

Shrove Tuesday, writes Nicholas Orme in *Going to Church in Medieval England*, was “a festival for young people, when schoolboys took cockerels to school to fight them and when football matches were held”. It was also a day when pancakes were eaten, continuing the



finishing of eggs before Lent that began on the preceding ‘Egg Saturday’. However, Orme continues, in England Shrove Tuesday “does not seem to have burgeoned into so grand a period of carnival as it did in parts of the Continent”.

A shame, we say! For there is something important about the jolt in movement from the celebrations of Shrove Tuesday to the solemnity of Ash Wednesday. That shift from joyful overindulgence – continued today in our traditions of Pancake Day – to penitence marks two extremes of our human lives. The self-sacrifice of Lent is all the more apparent to us after the enjoyment of the previous day.

Our English traditions probably still fail to match up to the continental carnival of Mardi Gras, but



here in our parish we give it a good go. Our Shrove Tuesday celebrations may not (thankfully) involve cockfighting and the violence of medieval football. But our pancake party aims to capture something of the spirit of those joyful times together before the discipline of Lent begins.

For the rhythm of the church year insists that we need both parties and penitence. It is good to give ourselves over in semi-abandonment with others. But it is also good and life-giving to remember our own humanity, to call to mind the ways in which we long to be more fully human, to turn our gaze towards the reality of suffering in the world, and to ponder Christ's own suffering and death.

So join us this February as we gaze in both directions. Our parish pancake party takes place from 4pm to 5.30pm on Tuesday 21 February in the vestry of St Luke's. And the following day we will celebrate eucharists, including ashing, at St Luke's at 7am, 12.30pm, and 8pm (the latter with choir).

SAM HOLE

Wholeness in body, mind and spirit

Since November we have been offered anointing with oil on the first Thursday of the month at our 12.30pm eucharist at St Luke's. One regular attender reflects on her impressions of the service.



'Healing Eucharist' it said in the pew sheet.

I didn't know what to expect from that. It was to be a trial, once a month as part of the midweek Eucharist. What do we mean by healing though? Do we know? I must confess, I didn't.

Therefore, with a degree of curiosity, I went to the first of the services. After taking communion, we were invited to stay at the altar if we wished to receive the anointing with holy oil. The sign of the cross was made on both palms and on our foreheads and a short prayer was said by the clergy over each individual, which include their name.

It was a short, simple service but I immediately felt calm and at peace, with my cares and worries seemingly vanished, at least for a short while. I can't begin to explain why I felt like that. I hadn't expected to. It was not something that lasted - just a fleeting moment, but the memory has stayed with me.

I look forward to these services and hope they will continue to be a very welcome part of our worship.'

JANET GOWER

Our Healing Eucharist continues the first Thursday of the month – all are very welcome.

Confirmation 2023 approaches

Have you ever thought about confirmation? On Sunday 23rd April we welcome Bishop Martin Wharton to lead our annual confirmation service. As ever, we look forward to welcoming for confirmation a range of people: children in Year 6 from Christ Church alongside children from other schools, teenagers, and adults.

Confirmation is the Church of England rite at which, traditionally, older children personally 'confirm' the vows that were said on their behalf at their baptism by their parents and godparents. But it is by no means restricted to children and teenagers. Every year we welcome adults from the parish as part of the confirmation group. What's more, often there is at least one child or adult who has not yet been baptised – and so they get to be baptised and confirmed all at once.



The clergy will be happy to hear your questions and to explain more about what confirmation means. If you would like to find out more, or to put your name down for confirmation, please speak to one of the clergy.

The Song of Simeon

As part of Jos' bedtime routine, I've always sung to him (badly) the Song of Simeon (also known as the Nunc Dimittis) to the tune and words I learned from the Melanesian Brothers' Evening Prayer:

*Lord now let your servant go in peace,
As you have promised him,
For my eyes have seen your saving power,
Which you have prepared before the face of all people,
A light to shine on the heathen,
And to be the glory of your people Israel.*

The Song of Simeon is often sung or spoken at Evening or Night Prayer (Compline) as an expression of confidence in God at the end of the day. For Simeon,



The fourth joyful presentation in the Presentation Chapel of St Peter's Basilica.

however, this song came as an expression of confidence in God at the end of his life. He had been waiting patiently and

expectantly in the Temple for the fulfilment of the promise that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah. Now, seeing Jesus and holding him in his arms, Simeon praised God for his faithfulness, even as his own time on earth was ending. Indeed, it is for this reason that the Song of Simeon is also used at funerals, conveying the confidence and joyfulness found in Christ, even in the face of death.

Yet, this encounter at the end of Simeon's life, alongside Anna the elderly prophetess, coincides with new beginnings for this young family. Mary and Joseph fulfil the Jewish obligation of presenting their child, Jesus, in the Temple, 40 days after his birth. This February, 40 days after Christmas,

we celebrate this as the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, also known as Candlemas. Here, we recount Jesus being brought to the Temple at the beginning of his life.

And in many ways, we might think this ritual seems unnecessary. Why does Jesus need to be presented in the Temple? He is God

incarnate after all. Equally, why should Mary need to be purified following Jesus' birth, if his very birth brings healing and



purification for the whole world? But part of what we see here, in the encounter between old and young, the end of life with the beginning of life, is the fruit of new life blossoming from its roots. In the presentation of Christ in the Temple, we see what it means for Jesus to be God incarnate; born into a specific people, grounded in a specific context, time, and place. Yet, though Jesus' is a life that is firmly rooted in the Jewish Law, as another translation of Simeon's Song puts it, it is a life that will "be a light to lighten the Gentiles," a light for the whole world, for all people.

So then for us, how might we see continuity and salvation being worked through the endings and new beginnings we face in our own lives? Whether we're encountering a new beginning or an ending, may we face each with confidence and joy, for in Jesus we have seen and shall continue to see God's saving power.

Welcoming Baxter

In November we announced that our new curate, from July 2023, would be Baxter McRolston. Here Baxter introduces himself to us.

Hello! My name is Baxter McRolston, I am a final year ordinand training at Westcott House in Cambridge. I live here with my partner Jimmy, who (like me) is a native of Brighton, also having lived in Aberdeen and London in our time. We're both really excited to return to London after having spent two years in Stepney where I served as a parish assistant and Jimmy worked as a store manager and in recruitment in retail.

In addition to my ongoing studies, I'm currently Westcott's senior student where I'm responsible for supporting the life of our community at a student level, to our in-house leadership, and on our Council where I serve as a trustee. Community life is a passion of mine, which has been informed significantly by my time working in parishes, both before Westcott and during. This year I'm looking forward to serving the community in a different capacity, particularly with attachments to the local primary school and the chaplaincy department at Addenbrookes Hospital.

For me, finding God within the excitement (and messiness!) of life informs the heart of my vocation; I learned this lesson especially during my time as a parish assistant where a big part of my role was rooted in our food bank, particularly during the pandemic. This experience also gave me a deeper appreciation for the sacramental life of our church which became so fragile at that time; making accessible and journeying into these gifts of grace is a real refuge and fount of my faith. In their absence, I returned to my favourite pastime: walking! Growing up at the foot of the South Downs I had plenty of opportunity to walk and it was also there that I learned to pray (think Maria from the Sound of Music, only with smoother slopes and without the singing talent, alas!)



All this walking and praying led to my baptism at 17. Still having lots of questions about God, I went on to read Divinity and Political Science at the University of Aberdeen and at the end of my course, I was fortunate enough to access a number of modules on Islamic Theology and Politics which led me to complete my first Masters in the subject.

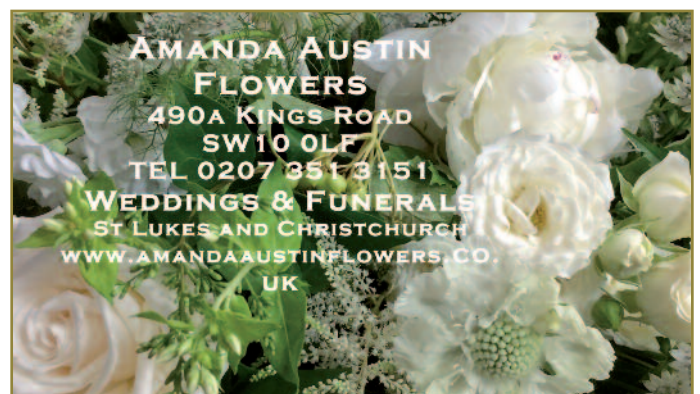
Christian-Muslim relations has become my main field of interest, and my current postgraduate studies at Westcott have focused on this area particularly.

I'm really excited and honoured to be joining you as your curate; Jimmy and I are looking forward to getting to know you all in due course. In the meantime, I'll be keeping you in my prayers; please pray for us too as our time in Cambridge draws to its end... see you at Petertide!

BAXTER MCROLSTON


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“Tell me the old, old story...”: Jael and Sisera (Judges 4)

We continue our series exploring memorable stories from the Old Testament.

The story is one of the most memorable in the Old Testament – even if it has not found its way into most Sunday School curriculums. Israel has been oppressed for 20 long years by the Canaanites. At last, however, Israel’s army has routed the Canaanites. Only the Canaanite commander, Sisera, survives. Finally Sisera reaches a tent where he finds a lone woman who invites him in. The Book of Judges proceeds to immortalise the bravery of that woman, Jael:

Jael stepped out to meet Sisera and said, “Come in, sir. Stay here with me. Don’t be afraid.” So he went with her into her tent. She covered him with a blanket. He said to her, “Please, a little water. I’m thirsty.” She opened a bottle of milk, gave him a drink, and then covered him up again. He then said, “Stand at the tent flap. If anyone comes by and asks you, ‘Is there anyone here?’ tell him, ‘No, not a soul.’” Then while he was fast asleep from exhaustion, Jael wife of Heber took a tent peg and hammer, tiptoed toward him, and drove the tent peg through his temple and all the way into the ground. He convulsed and died. (Judges 4.18-21)

Ponder Jael in Artemisia Gentileschi’s stunning depiction of the scene. She wears a simple dress – the kind the wife of a 17th century tradesman might wear.

Her hair is neatly braided and pinned back. Her sleeves are rolled up, revealing arms grown powerful through years of manual labour. Her expression is placid.

Perhaps it is no surprise that Gentileschi chose to capture this scene. The story of her rape by a seventeen-year-old student of her father’s, and the subsequent torture she underwent in order for her testimony to be deemed trustworthy, is well recorded. Gentileschi’s depiction of Sisera, it is suggested, quite possibly has the face of that man. Here, in Jael, we have the striking tale of female bravery and accomplishment. What better scene could Gentileschi choose to represent the revenge of the voiceless oppressed than the triumph of Jael?

And, regardless of whether those traumatic events were on her mind as she painted, I think that Gentileschi perfectly captures the determination of Jael. Jael’s calm approach stands in for the years of oppression suffered by the Israelites. The retribution she achieves – even if we might quake today at the brutal violence involved – brings the Israelites freedom. It doubtless speaks today to millions around the world who suffer similarly. Justice will be done.

SAM HOLE



Sisera kills Jael

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YOUTH & CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES



“You are the light of the world, said Jesus” Matthew 5:14-16

As we celebrated Christmas, we saw Christ's presence shining forth in a new way. Then, on the Epiphany, the three kings arrived to visit Jesus following the star of light. Now, as we celebrate the traditional feast of Candlemas on February 2, we see Christ coming to the Temple and bringing God's light and mission to the world.

We are all called to be reflections of Christ's light in this world today to those around us. We all have that mission through our baptism when we are given the bright burning light to keep the flame of the faith alive in our heart.

ABC Christmas party

In December our ABC toddler's group (0-3years old) celebrated Christmas with a special dressing up party and a lot of food and drinks. At the end we had a surprised visit from Father Christmas. He was very impressed with the children singing and gave each of them a lovely present.



ABC is meeting every Thursday at Christ Church 10am to 11.30am and no booking is required. A suggested donation is £3 per child. Parents/carers are welcome.

Youth Group

On December 15 our youth group celebrated the end of term Christmas party at the ice-rink at Battersea Power Station. We had a great a time skating together and managed to avoid any major injuries(!) that great fun was followed by hot chocolate and mince pies.

Our youth group dates for the remainder of term are: **9th February, 2nd March, 16th March, and 30th March (Easter Party!)**

We are also running STEP Up again this year, a tutoring and exam preparation week for teenagers aged 15+ who are taking GCSE and A-Levels or equivalent exams. This will be run in the afternoons of April 11 to 14 (Tuesday to Friday). If you're interested, please contact either Fr Samuel or Anna.

Epiphany Party

A huge thank you to all the children, families and everyone who joined us to celebrate Epiphany at St Luke's. It was lovely to have so many people joining in all the activities - thank you to the parents and members of the congregation who ran crafts and music sessions very successfully, and to everybody who joined in so enthusiastically to make the day very memorable.



Half Term activities for children, Age reception and above.

Monday 13 February 2023, 10.30am -12pm, St. Luke's Vestry

More information to follow close to the date.

Thank you and keep Jesus in your heart!
Anna

Meet the parishioner: Frances Prenn

Frances Prenn has enjoyed an extraordinary career, which spans working with US presidents and British prime ministers, medical pioneers, and culture leaders. “I’ve worked with some of the most amazing people in society,” she says. “I feel so lucky and blessed.”

As we talk over Zoom, the St Luke’s regular is warm and inquisitive – perhaps shaped by a life being around interesting people, often ones in big decision-making roles. Her engagement in the conversation is an impressive feat as she only got off a flight a few hours earlier, but she talks excitedly about a range of things from her love of the arts, especially dance, to her faith and a fascinating career.

For the past three decades, Frances ran her own consultancy enabling not-for-profit and charitable organisations to increase their income more effectively. It grew out of her work for political parties on both sides of the Atlantic, and politics is clearly a subject that fascinated her from an early age.

Born in the Mid-West to Korean immigrant parents who arrived at the end of Korean War – Frances would visit her “adopted” grandmother, who sponsored her parents to the US, regularly with her summers spent in South Dakota.

It was through her grandmother, who owned the concession to Mount Rushmore, that she caught the politics bug. “Through her, I became quite engaged with the civic responsibility and the Republican party.” That interest “snowballed” and she took an internship with Senator Jesse Helms in Washington DC.

After leaving college, Frances worked on Ronald Reagan’s second presidential campaign and subsequent inauguration followed by a job at the White House in an area that focused on the presidential appointments.

After marrying Alexis in Washington – at another Christ Church there – they moved to the UK in 1988. Frances initially wanted to do something outside of politics, but with a little black book of great political contacts, she ended up advising the Conservative Party. She began work with the then party’s treasurer Lord McAlpine, who had oversight of turning their finances into a surplus.

Her time working for the party crossed over Margaret Thatcher and John Major’s premierships. “I worked the longest with Major and have an enormous respect for him,” she says. “He has great judgement... He appears shy, but he was very clear we were going to clean up the party and leave it in a better state than when we started, and he did.”

Throughout, Frances remained close with Republican friends and politicians – she was particularly close with

Senator John McCain, and helped his presidential campaign. With over 8 million Americans living abroad, London is the gateway to an important international network.

After leaving the Treasurer’s Department, she found a niche market of private and public funding for not-for-profit organisations, setting up her consultancy in 1992. “At the time, Britain was quite far behind America. I’d learnt a lot with Conservative Party, the charitable funding landscape was changing and I was able to transfer my experience for organisations such as education and the arts.”

This included the National Theatre, the Natural History Museum, the Darwin Centre, as well as Daniel Barenboim and many others. The arts are clearly a huge passion, and a cause she and Alexis do much to support.

Then, a year ago, Frances joined Korn Ferry as Vice Chairman and recently became Chair of the UK Government and Public Services and is enjoying the new landscape and challenges.

As for her faith, Frances and her family have been attending St Luke’s for three decades – albeit they were neighbours to Christ Church. They were struck by the music and choir at St Luke’s. “We feel fortunate to worship with amazing music and liturgy, it’s an important part of our life here in Chelsea.”

“Faith,” she adds, “has always been important for me.” Frances was a church warden, and involved with the interregnum and the appointment of Father Brian, whom she describes as her “spiritual compass”.

The parish has changed enormously. “It’s younger and more diverse both ethnically and economically, yet being firmly anchored in its roots.”

I ask one last question about politics, about her views on what happened in America from 2016 and beyond. “It was hard for me. I was a Reagan Republican, very moderate, down the middle,” she says. “When we went through the period, it was such a schism.”

She adds, “Clearly there is a shift happening. The extreme elements of any party, have become efficient and well managed. Whether you like them or not, they are effective in getting their message across.”

Government has changed hugely since she was in the White House. “It is larger and a very different machine.” She wistfully thinks back to her time under Reagan. “Every Friday the President would visit our offices before leaving for the weekend and thank us for our work and ask about our families. It felt smaller and more personal.”

NICK CLARK



Hidden Histories: Charles Dickens

Charles Dickens often tops the list of famous names associated with our parish, having married in St Luke's in 1836. Yet the Chelsea connection is actually his wife Catherine's: St Luke's was her local church.

Dickens first met Catherine Hogarth at her family home by Queen Elm's Parade and after they became engaged, he took lodgings at 11 Selwood Crescent to be near her. Their wedding was remembered by attendees as a quiet, yet happy event. It had the qualities Dickens gave all the 'happy weddings' in his novels, like that of Little Dorrit and Arthur Clennam.

Acquaintances recalled Catherine's gentle nature and her sense of humour. She was adventurous and travelled with her husband in America and Europe – she even climbed Mt Vesuvius! She was an experienced hostess and published a book of menus and recipes titled *What Shall We Have For Dinner?* Sadly after 22 years of marriage and 10 children, Dickens separated from Catherine but she built a new life for herself with a close circle of friends that included the wives and editors of Punch magazine, female novelists and musicians.



LOUISA PRICE

Catherine Dickens by Daniel Maclise, 1847
Credit: Charles Dickens Museum

The Posada returns

It was wonderful, after its Covid hiatus, to revive our tradition of the Posada nativity set. The small figures of Mary, Joseph, Jesus, the shepherds and the wise men travel from house to house around the parish, recalling the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem. Thank you to all who participated so enthusiastically!



New sculpture for Dovehouse Green

Exciting plans have been drawn up to recommission Sir Eduardo Paolozzi's sculpture of Oscar Wilde. Originally commissioned by The Chelsea Society in 1999, it never came to fruition because Sir Eduardo became ill and was unable to work again. Permission for a posthumous casting has been granted by The

Paolozzi Foundation. It is hoped that, after the necessary public consultation, permission to erect the statue on Dovehouse Green will be given by St Luke's and Christ Church, who own the land. The Chelsea Society and the Oscar Wilde Society are fully supportive, as are the council, who manage the green, and have promised financial support from their relevant sources. Supporters would be able to donate via the Just Giving website. The actor Stephen Fry, who played Oscar in the film *Wilde*, has kindly endorsed the project.

The work will be cast in bronze at the Pangolin foundry, which was Sir Eduardo's original choice. They made the Bomber Command Memorial at Hyde Park Corner, and it will be overseen by one of Sir Eduardo's former assistants. It will measure 2 meters high, 2.3 metres long and 2 meters wide. It will stand on a base with a total height of approximately 3m and will be situated at the King's Road end of Dovehouse Green back from the main thoroughfare of the King's Road. It was designed to be an interactive piece of sculpture with the base of the work to be sat upon and children to climb on.



Sir Eduardo's studios were at the top end of Dovehouse Street, where he lived and worked for many years and was often seen sitting on the benches on the Green. He taught at the Royal College of Art until his ill health prevented him from doing so. When not teaching, he designed and created major public works

such as the bronze sculptures on the forecourt of the British Library and outside St Mary's Metropolitan Cathedral in Edinburgh. He served as the Queen's Sculptor in Ordinary for Scotland from 1986 until his death in 2005.



Oscar Wilde needs little introduction and is widely regarded as a literary genius and one of the wittiest men who ever lived. "No man is rich enough to buy back his past". Wilde lived and worked in Tite Street and his mother lived in Oakley Street. Needless to say,

the pairing of these two artistic greats, both of whom lived and worked in Chelsea, would be a very important monumental piece of public art. It will reflect Chelsea's history as a centre of the arts, a piece to be looked at and appreciated for generations to come.

VICKY JACOBSEN

*Sir Eduardo's Secretary from 1998
until his death in 2005*

Did you know you can download this Magazine, our weekly sermons, and the weekly newsletter from our parish website? Go to www.chelseaparish.org and search for what you want to find.'

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Christmas in Chelsea

Thank you to all who helped and participated in our Christmas celebrations – here is a selection of photos from our events!



Christmas Day at St Luke's



Snowy St Luke's



St Nicholas Fair



Christ Church Residents Association carol singing



Christmas carols at Christ Church



Nile Rodgers performs at Nordoff-Robbins carol service



Seniors group Christmas lunch



Youth group ice skating

FROM OUR REGISTERS



Arthur Borton's baptism at St Luke's



Baptism of Isabelle Giles at St Luke's - with her parents James & Signe




Clover Cole with her family - at her baptism at Christ Church



Beatrice Reeve-Tucker & Hugh Stanley's wedding at St Luke's in October




The family baptism at Christ Church of James senior, Leigh Ann, Mia, Oliver, Cassie, James, Kristen, Emily, Theo, Louis & Alexandra

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Golden Charter  

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brianleathard@chelseaparish.org

Associate Vicar: The Revd Dr Sam Hole
samhole@chelseaparish.org

Curate: The Revd Samuel Rylands
samuelrylands@chelseaparish.org

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johnmcveigh@chelseaparish.org

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Children's Administrator: Anna Stamenova
annastamenova@chelseaparish.org

For enquiries regarding baptism, confirmation (adults and children), marriages, funerals and home communion visits, please contact the clergy via the Parish Office. Also for the Planned Giving Schemes for both churches.

Follow us on   

ST LUKE'S

Sydney Street,
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Director of Music: Jeremy Summerly j.summerly@icloud.com
Organist: Rupert Jeffcoat

CHRIST CHURCH

Christchurch Street,
London SW3 4AS



Churchwardens: Jonathan and Louisa Price
Nick Smith
Director of Music: Gareth Wilson 07939 378 759
Organist: Samuel Ali

Safeguarding Officers:

(for any safeguarding issues in the Parish)

Duncan Kennedy (Mob: 07548705667)

Lizzie Watson-Steele (Mob: 07855455559)

SUNDAY SERVICES

0800 Holy Communion	St Luke's
1030 Sung Eucharist	St Luke's
1100 Sung Eucharist	Christ Church
1500 Choral Evensong	St Luke's

WEEKDAY SERVICES

0900 Monday	Morning Prayer at Christ Church
0900 Tuesday-Thursday	Morning Prayer at St Luke's
1230 Thursday	Holy Communion at St Luke's

YOUTH & CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

Children's Ministry Administrator Anna Stamenova:
Please contact Anna for any enquiries about children's groups, registrations and schools via the parish office, or annastamenova@chelseaparish.org

Children's Groups During Sunday Services

Sunday School at St Luke's (10.30am) and Christ Church (11.00am).

A crèche is available at both churches.

Youth Events for 13 + please contact Samuel Rylands for more details: 020 7351 7365, samuelrylands@chelseaparish.org

ABC Club During Term Time

Thursdays 1000-1130, at Christ Church
Parent, carer and toddler group.

Uniformed Organisations all at St Luke's Hall

The Rainbows contact is 10thchelsea.rainbows@gmail.com.
They meet at 5pm to 6 pm on Tuesdays.

Brownies contact is 10thchelsea.brownies@gmail.com.
They meet at 6pm to 7.30pm pm on Tuesdays.

Guides for girls 10 years to 14 years and
Rangers 14 years to 18 years
Their contact is 10thcheseaguides@gmail.com.
They meet at 6pm to 7.30pm on Tuesdays.

Beavers are the youngest part of the Scout movement. For 6 to 8 year olds it gives them a taste of what it means to be a scout, preparing them for the move to becoming a cub when they turn eight. They meet between 5.00pm-6.30pm on Thursdays.

Cubs are for boys and girls aged 8 to 10½. They meet between 7.00pm-8.30pm on Thursday evenings.

Scouts are for boys and girls aged 10½ to 14. They meet between 7.00pm-9.00pm on Friday.

Explorers are for boys and girls aged 14 to 18. They meet between 7.00pm-9.00pm on Monday.

Contact for Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers is wolf2872@gmail.com

PARTY VENUES FOR HIRE

The Hall of Remembrance, Flood Street, St Luke's Hall, St Luke's Street, and The Hut, Alpha Place. All are available to hire for children's parties, workshops, rehearsals and public or private meetings. All halls are light and airy, on the ground floor with high ceilings. For more information contact tel: 020 7351 6133.

OPEN FOR PRAYER

St Luke's is open for prayer from
0900-1530 Monday to Saturday

The PCC of St Luke's and Christ Church is a Registered Charity, No 1133092



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