



St. Paul's Boundary Road

Your church in the community

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Thirty for £30 – *enabling the future* **of Children's, Youth and Families Ministry at St Paul's** *"... you do not have, because you do not ask." James 4:vs2.*

Dear friends,

For a long time we at St Paul's have enjoyed great stability in our children, youth and families ministry. For eight whole years we have had the privilege of having a paid role to lead and develop this area of our shared life. As you may remember it was Suzanne who got things started for us, eight years ago, and then for the last five years Penny has expanded and widened this ministry.

A paid Children and Youth role is a big blessing and a hugely important factor in enabling a church to grow and thrive – that is why it is such a big priority for many well-resourced parishes, who spend tens of thousands of pounds, year on year, on supporting this sort of ministry.

So how have been able to enjoy such a long period of paid ministry? Well, back in 2013 when we started all of this, we had £30k of our own funds available from legacies, to which we added £10k of savings. Initially, we hoped that this might be the basis (alongside some grant monies) to fund a role for three years.

But then a total of £80k was provided by six grant making Trusts, **which has enabled the role to be funded for eight years**, *without the need* to approach our congregation for separate support at any point. This has been a massive blessing, that has born great fruit for the church – but perhaps a blessing that it has been easy to take for granted.

Sadly, we now have to face the fact that this funding is soon to run out. **In September of this year we will no longer have the money to continue our children, youth and families ministry.** This brings the *very real* possibility of having to make Penny redundant.

But – you might ask, why can't we simply re-apply to the same grant-making trusts to finance the role? Well, the answer is that the funding environment is completely different now, and there are very few trusts or charities who will support a church to minister to its own children and youth. Unfortunately, we simply cannot expect 'someone else' to pay for our own young-people's work anymore.

You might also ask 'But hasn't the church recently been awarded grant money for other projects, like the Café? Why can't we use some of that? The reason is simple, the funds received for specific projects (such as the Café and Social Eating) have to be spent on those things, and those things only; they are restricted funds. These grants are linked to community benefit, and it is a fact that **work that brings wider community benefit has a much greater chance of securing grant funding** than church-focused work.

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This is why, over the last year or so, Penny has been actively shaping her role to mix resourcing our internal provision with 'outreach' and community work focused on local schools. However, one month ago, we learned that an important grant application that would have continued the role (and placed far greater focus on such outreach work) had been declined. This was by far the 'best bet' we had identified for finding significant external funding, and sadly it was not successful.

What are we going to do?

We believe that supporting our children, young people and families with a dedicated, paid role is a huge priority for St Paul's. If we want to thrive and grow, and bring new families into this church community, we simply need to make this ministry a priority. We are not going to give up trying to find the money to continue this work! And we need your help!

We want to raise an **annual commitment** to *meet half the cost of the role ourselves*.

That's £10,000.

That may seem like a huge amount of money, but if just 30 people commit to giving £30 per month, on an ongoing basis, then we will raise that amount every year.

Of course we will also apply for whatever small grants we can – including from our own diocese (we have started that process). However, on their own, small grants are not sufficient to support a role. That is why we now need to ask our church community to financially support this ministry.

As it happens, it was our original plan (when we submitted our first grant application all those years ago) to be in the position where we could eventually fund the CYFM role ourselves. In practice we never got to a position where our regular congregational giving was sufficient to do this. We now need to take a big step towards that original plan, and start to take responsibility for our own children, youth and families ministry at St Paul's.

What currently happens at St Paul's that *will stop* if we can't fund the role?

- Our Sunday provision for young people of all ages, (*... and six of our youngsters are being confirmed at Easter.*)
- Some preparation, content, and input to All-age services.
- Fortnightly Saturday night 'Infinity' sessions for teenagers.
- Football church each month and the seasonal "camps."
- Penny's contribution to Messy Church and our Wednesday Toddlers.
- Regular "in-school assemblies" at two of our primary schools.
- There would not have been a time capsule project, or labyrinth stones, or bottle poppies ...
- The building of ongoing relationships that lead to
 - all of Jesse Gray visiting St Paul's to learn about Easter;
 - (that's over 400 children, two classes at a time).
- The fledgling *Milk Shake club* for teens on the way home from school will fail.

Every one of these is a way of sharing our faith and building relationships, and they are all in danger of stopping. If we cannot raise significant funds, **they will stop**. And yet, we are aware that many members of the congregation may not be aware that this is a risk, and that their help is needed to continue this work. But that's not all - we are also aware of the words in the bible that say...

"... you do not have, because you do not ask."

(James 4 verse 2).

So we feel the need to be bold, and ask you to help!

Can you be one of thirty cheerful givers who can commit to £30 a month?

30 givers giving £30 per month will enable us to reach our £10k annual target. If you would love to help, but know that £30 is not practical for you, a lower amount will also be valuable, as will a lump sum if that is an easier way to help for you. Of course if you want to give more, that would be wonderful, and would greatly help us to reach our goal.

We continue to look for smaller grant support that will lift the annual amount available closer to the £20k (with NI, Pension contribution and operating costs) the role currently absorbs. Those “irons in the fire” may come to fruition and will be built on a **continuing commitment from our congregation** at £10k per annum.

This giving will be ring-fenced, it will be “restricted income” (in accounting terms) that can *only be used for the CYFM role*.

If you can help, there are two steps.

- (1.) Let us know you are willing to support. <mailto:st.paulschurch@outlook.com>
- (2.) If you currently give by standing order (almost all of us) you can use the bank details to set up a new standing order for £30 p.m. – note *CYFM in the reference*.

If you prefer to make a lump sum, either use a cheque or a direct credit to St Paul’s, again noting CYFM.

If you have a question, please speak with Andrew (07557 648871) or Tim (07881 380745).
Thank you reading this far! **It’s a big ask, for a big task.**

Please pray to discern how God is asking you to respond.

Thank you.

Rev. Tim Fox. Camilla Gilmore PCC. Andrew Little. Lay Chair, St Paul’s PCC.