

St. Paul's Church, Bushey



Introduction

St. Paul's is one of the three Church of England churches in the Parish of Bushey, the others being St. James's (in the High Street, behind the pond) and Holy Trinity in North Bushey. The Parish comes under the Diocese of St. Albans.

History of the Building

In 1877 and 1878 part of the Bushey Hall estate was sold for housing, which became the district now known as Bushey Grove. In December 1903, the then Rector, Revd. Montague Hall, announced in the parish magazine that there was to be a new church in this area. In September of the previous year a well-to-do parishioner, Mr. Burchell-Herne, had offered £500 for a site for a church to be built and it was decided to build a permanent building in Bushey Hall Road, to serve for a time as a church and permanently as a parish hall and Sunday School and at the same time endeavour to procure a site quite in the centre of Bushey Grove for the future building of a permanent church. The architect, Mr. Austin Durst M.A., produced a design in the Arts and Crafts style. An appeal for £2,500 was floated. Throughout the summer of 1904 the work



of building proceeded, the builders being Messrs. Waterman and the church was completed and furnished in time for its dedication by the Bishop of St. Albans on October 6th 1904. The cost of the building, including £300 for furnishing, was £1,494. At the time of the dedication the appeal was about £300 short of this, but by 1906 the debt was completely paid off.



Furnishings

The picture between the windows at the east end represents our Saviour giving utterance to the universal invitation “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest (Matthew 11:28).” The picture was removed in 1910 because it had been spoilt by damp. The artist, Mr. A.U. Soord, replaced it by the present one, copied from the first. Further damage by damp was prevented because a hot water heating system had just been installed in the church. Mr. Soord, who lived locally and was a member of the congregation, belonged to the Herkomer School of painting, which, of course, was flourishing at the beginning of the 20th Century. The hymn board was made by William Grant, a woodcarver who worked on Lululaund’s woodcarvings.

Multipurpose Building

As the Bishop explained on the opening day, although he had licenced the new building for worship, he knew it was contemplated one day

thereafter to worship in a larger and more permanent edifice, with the new building then used for other purposes. Therefore this building was not consecrated as a Church, either 1904 or ever since, because the plan for a much larger church (on the Aldenham Road) never came to fruition. For one thing, it never proved possible to raise a sufficiently large sum to enable building to be started and, for another, the congregation at St. Paul's never grew to the extent of over-filling the present church. Visitors to our wonderful Christmas Fair each year can experience the Church in use as a hall.



Music

Originally there was a much smaller organ in the alcove on the North side of the chancel (the left hand side of the choir stalls). The present organ (believed to have come from a London church) was installed in 1930, where it is now on the other side, it being intended to be the first part of the new, larger, St. Paul's. Its keys are narrow!

The St Paul's Proms - informal concerts - are held on Sunday afternoons during the year, and are very successful and well-attended, raising money for a number of charities, both near and far. We are delighted to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Proms in 2015.

Bell

Until 2010, our bell hung in a little "cloche" above the roof, but this let the rain in, so the bell was moved to an outside end wall. It is tolled electorally, by a hammer mechanism.

Worship

The Eucharist is celebrated at 11.15 am each Sunday, lasting about an hour, with freshly brewed coffee and biscuits afterwards. There is a said celebration of the Eucharist at 12.30pm on Wednesdays.

Social life

People find us friendly and, even, fun! In addition to regular social events, St. Paul's is now open every Wednesday from 10 am – 12 noon for Coffee, Cake and Chat. A recent 'visitor' from the Church Tourism Study team (<http://churchtourismstudy.com/>) described us thus:

St. Paul's is a lovely little church and dates from 1904. Again, it was open on a Wednesday morning for tea, coffee and cake. They were a friendly crowd of people and the cake was good! It is a simple church and very well cared for. There is a dish of sand to leave tea lights in for prayer – this was used. Very much a community church and I am glad I was able to call in.

