

ST PAUL'S CHURCH

This is the message we
have heard from him and
proclaim to you, that God
is light, and in him is no
darkness at all.

John 1:5

27 December 2020

Sunday After Christmas Day

Almighty God, who wonderfully created us in your own image and yet more wonderfully restored us through your Son Jesus Christ: grant that, as he came to share in our humanity, so we may share the life of his divinity; who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God, now and forever. Amen.

Scripture Readings

First Reading: 1 John 1

Gospel Reading: John 21:19b-25

Today's Sermon

“Do I Compromise my Convictions?”

by Rev Ezra Sivakumar

A hand is shown at the bottom left, holding a long, thin stick of a lit sparkler. The sparkler is in the center, emitting a bright, golden-yellow light and a shower of sparks that radiate outwards. The background is solid black, which makes the light from the sparkler stand out. There are a few other smaller, distant sparklers visible in the upper left and right areas of the frame. The overall mood is celebratory and hopeful.

The New Beginning

by Shi Pau Soon,
saltandlight.sg

In the background is the beautiful planet “Blue Marble” otherwise known commonly as Earth.

On December 24, 1968, mankind was mesmerised with the images of our planet suspended in the absolute black, infinite void of space – fragile but beautiful.

The pictures were captured by the crew of Apollo 8 as their spacecraft became the first to orbit the moon. It was an amazing feat of engineering with amazing images.

More amazingly, earthlings heard the Word of God when the astronauts spontaneously read from Genesis 1:1-10 in affirming God as the Creator.

“In the beginning, God created the Heaven and the Earth. And the Earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep.

“And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and God said, ‘Let there be light’.

“And there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good, and God divided the light from the darkness...”

An estimated one billion people in 64 countries heard the live reading, and delayed broadcasts reached another 30 countries.

Television screens around the world blacked out when the camera on-board the spacecraft was switched off at 11.46 am (Singapore time), ending a 26-minute 55-second broadcast.

The creation account brought forth the New Beginning – Order out of chaos; Light out of darkness; Life out of inanimate matter; Colour and beauty out of blackness.

And supposedly a beautiful relationship between God and man.

But the relationship was marred by sin and the folly of man which became our constant unwanted companions ever since.

Because of these, many tragedies, misfortunes, heartbreaks, wrongdoings, calamities and dysfunctionalities were wrought – resulting in pain, regrets, anger, disappointment and shame.

Beauty out of blackness

Many wish to have a second chance; to start over again; to have a New Beginning. But society is less accommodating and forgiving. And thus the burden of

the past is hard to lift.

God, however, is gracious.

He is the God of New Beginnings. Though the relationship with us is painful and disappointing because of our sin and folly, thankfully, God has not and will not abandon us.

Like the longing father looking out for the return of his prodigal son; God will receive home with gladness all who repent. He will give returnees second chances to start over again with a new beginning.

As the year is drawing to a close, will you take stock of your relationship with God?

Has it regressed, stagnated or progressed?

Remember, it was supposed to be a beautiful relationship.

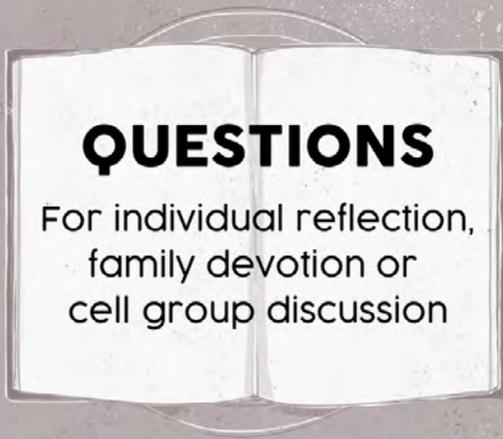
And for it to happen, the Holy must be met with holiness. Therefore "You must be holy because I, the LORD, am holy. I have set you apart from all other people to be my very own." (Leviticus 20:26, 1 Peter 1:16).

"Dogs will return to its vomit and pigs return to its filth" (2 Peter 2:22), But man is a higher form of creation and different.

Let the past be past. Do not revisit it again.

A new year is dawning. May it be a new beginning for you.

May the God of new beginnings bless you and grant you renewed strength to have a better relationship with Him.



“The convictions we are considering are those that arise from our beliefs as Christians. They should have a limiting effect on our behaviour and may cause us discomfort when we have to take a stand in the midst of a crowd that doesn’t share our beliefs.”

-In Touch Ministries

- a. How would you describe your Christian convictions?
- b. How did the apostle John testify about his convictions? How did he stand his ground to overcome the teachings of Docetism, a heretical teaching which was motivated by a strong belief that Jesus was in fact God, but also that material things are inherently evil (Jesus Christ was not truly man)?
- c. Discuss about your fears and causes of Compromise. How could you overcome your struggles?

1

Our Vision

To be Ambassadors for Christ in the Community

2 Corinthians 5:20

Therefore, we are Ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

2

First Pillar

Being Spirit-Filled

Galatians 5:16

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

3

Second Pillar

Imitating Christ

Luke 9:23

And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

4

Third Pillar

Persevering Prayer

Colossians 4:2

Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.

5

Fourth Pillar

Serving All

Mark 10:45

For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

6

Fifth Pillar

Living Witness

Matthew 5:16

let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.



The Future of SPCK Virtual Consultation Session

Date: Wednesday, 30 December

Time: 7.00pm

Venue: ZOOM Platform

Zoom Link: <https://bit.ly/2Jdooii>

Meeting ID: 874 8008 8758

Passcode: 974686

If you have any queries, kindly email
your questions to
spck_transition@stpaulschurch.org.sg.

NEW YEAR SERVICE



1 JANUARY, FRIDAY, 9AM
GUEST SPEAKER: REV TIMOTHY CHOW

TESTIMONY TIME!

We would like to open up a time of testimony sharing at our New Year's Day Service. If you have a testimony that you would like to share with the church, either in person or by video, kindly contact Pastor Leon Stewart at 9199 3815 or email him at leon@stpaulschurch.org.sg



Update on Registration for In-Person Services

Dear Members of St Paul's Church, please note that as of 1 January 2021, registration for in-person services will not be needed.

A gentle reminder to download the TraceTogether app. If you do not have a smartphone, bring along the token that was distributed by the government or your NRIC.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Benjamin William or Pastor Leon Stewart.

A hand is shown reaching upwards from the bottom center of the frame. The background is a gradient of blue and purple, with a subtle, grainy texture. The hand is rendered in a dark, almost black silhouette, with fingers spread. The overall mood is one of aspiration or reaching for something higher.

CONTEMPORARY SERVICE

**SATURDAYS, 6 FEB ONWARDS,
5PM, SECOND SANCTUARY**

A monochromatic, teal-toned photograph of a person with long, wavy hair seen from behind. Two hands are placed on their shoulders, one from the left and one from the right, suggesting a comforting or supportive gesture. The background is softly blurred, showing other people in a group setting.

Pastoral Care

For those who require prayer or pastoral care, do drop us an email at contact@stpaulschurch.org.sg or contact the respective pastoral staff directly.

Rev Jeremy: 9477 5476

Pastor Leon: 9199 3815

Pastor Leroy: 9710 2900

ST PAUL'S CHURCH

ONLINE GIVING



INTERNET BANKING

St Paul's Church

DBS Current Account No. : 023-000684-7



PAYNOW

USING BANK APP

Scan the QR Code or enter
UEN: T08CC4082E

Please indicate "S2" under Reference No. The code "S2" refers to the English Congregation. Other information like specific giving (e.g. mission, building, etc.) as needed. Names are optional.



GIVE BY CHEQUE

Made payable to "St Paul's Church" and mailed to our Church address - 843 Upper Serangoon Road Singapore 534683. Kindly indicate English Congregation at the back of the cheque.