

11 October 2016

Dear St Paul's Member,

It is with great sadness that I am writing to inform you that our Church Warden, Michael Stocking, died at about midnight on Saturday 8 October.

Those of you able to join us for worship this past Sunday will already be aware of the tragic news which is now filtering out.

Michael was out walking in Kent and was taken ill with what turned out to be a torn aorta. Surgeons at St Thomas's Hospital fought a lengthy battle but were unable to save him.

We gathered on Sunday in shock and tried to find a way to respond. We were supported by Graham Tomlin, the Bishop of Kensington, who spoke at our 10:30am service. Many were unable to be with us and we will let everyone know when funeral and other such arrangements are finalised. In the meantime we are keeping the Prayer Room in the St Paul's Centre open for people to come to pray.

We have postponed Gift Day until the beginning of November, and we will postpone the launch of our new sermon series until a later date.

Please pray for Michael's wife Lisa and the children, Sid, Elsa and Hannah. Close family are with them and also a food rota is being organised by friends.

Michael was an outstanding man and a great leader in our church. He will be missed by all of us. As Bishop Graham said on Sunday morning, in the midst of the lament and the questions, God's arms are reaching out, drawing us near and holding us close. We are held by the reality and truth that our God reigns. Jesus Christ has won the victory. God is making all things new and one day there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain.

In sorrow and with love,

Simon

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