



St Paul's Church



Dear all

Whilst this isn't strictly confined to Easter, I am very glad to be bringing you joyful news this Holy week. You may remember some while ago while Chris Lavender was still with us, I persuaded him to let us have a good old clear out and tidy up at St. Paul's. We all did very well and managed to get rid of a whole load of accumulated clutter, and this helped us to appreciate anew the sacred nature of our worship space, especially the baptistry. Special thanks go to John and Judy who discovered that we had a huge surplus of hymn books and other literature lurking in deep cupboards. They set about trying to offload these on various auction sites and I'm delighted to report that they are heading towards making a profit of close to £2,000 for these sales...absolutely remarkable!

Some of the hymn books that weren't sold were given away to churches who could make use of them, and last week we heard that some of the donations we had made had arrived safely in Sri Lanka, coincidentally enough, to a church called St. Paul's in the Kandy district, famous for being the last capital of the ancient kings of Sri Lanka. Construction of this church began in 1843 and it was formally consecrated ten years later. The pictures above were taken at the dedication service for the new books which took place in February.

Kandy is home to the Temple of Tooth relic, one of the most sacred places of worship of the Buddhist world. Next to this are the four divales of the Hindu devotees, Natha, Paththini, Vishnu and Kataragama. St. Paul's church is also located right here amongst these sacred sites, and this combination of worship spaces serves as a mark of the religious harmony of Christians, Buddhists and Hindus worshipping in one small locality, which is so unique to Kandy and Sri Lanka. This city and all her ancient buildings were declared a World Heritage Treasure by UNESCO in 1988.

In this week especially, when we commemorate the last few days of Jesus' life on earth and celebrate his glorious resurrection, it's so good to know that we have been able to bless a Christian community practically on the other side of the world by giving away items that we no longer need. May our gifts to these people help them to worship the Christ who willingly emptied himself for the benefit of others, and join me as we say together, 'Christ is risen, he is risen indeed!'.
Rev Anthea

FORTHCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY 31st MARCH – Easter Day

10.30 am All-Age Worship – Rev Anthea

SUNDAY 7th APRIL – Easter 2

10.30 am Café Worship – Gwyn

SUNDAY 14th APRIL – Easter 3

10.30 am All-Age Holy Communion – Rev Anthea

SUNDAY 21st APRIL – Easter 4

9.15 am for 9.30 am - Bubble Church

10.30 am Experimental Worship – Gwyn

SUNDAY 28th April – Easter 5

10.30 am - Holy Communion – Rev Anthea

EVENTS

FRIDAY 5th APRIL

9.30 am - Baby & Toddler Group

THURSDAY 11th APRIL

2.30 am – Mothers' Union: Music & Poetry

THURSDAY 18th APRIL

2.30 am – Fellowship: Life as a PC – PC Julie

FRIDAY 26th APRIL

7 pm – Church Crafts

NOTICES

Thank you to everyone who contributed towards the church flowers. All the names of the dear departed will be on display on Easter Sunday.

FOOD BANK

Thank you all for your wonderful support to the foodbank over the years and again this was shown by very generous donations for this week's delivery. Thank you so much on behalf of our neighbours in Maidstone who are struggling to feed themselves for one reason or another.

I will be doing more deliveries after Easter with the normal pattern of every 2 to 3 weeks, I hope to provide a next delivery date shortly after Easter.

Those on the St Paul's WhatsApp Group have had a number of pictures from me taken from Coventry Cathedral, mainly the new Cathedral. My work takes me there most weeks and I am very blessed to be able to attend some of the early morning services there. The aim of this special place so scarred by the ravages of WW2 through the Community of the Cross of Nails is to encourage reconciliation between peoples and nations with particular links with countries such as Germany and Israel & Palestine. They pray regularly for these places and this includes churches in my home country too who are part of the Community of the Cross of Nails.

Below are a couple of pictures taken one early morning and one late evening. The first is of the morning light streaming through the ruins of the old Cathedral showing the outline of the open windows of the old ruined building on the grass of the Cathedral Close looking at a further church adjacent to the close. The other picture was taken earlier this week when I attended a very quiet and moving evening service, called Compline, when even in the dark new Cathedral the glass windows at the entrance etched with angels with the outside street lights make it a very magical and mysterious scene. For me a sign of hope and peace.

Allert

PRAYER RESOURCE

week beginning Easter Day, Sunday, 31st March 2024

'I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die.' (John 11: 25)

This week we give thanks for:

- New life that we enjoy because of the sacrifice of Christ. Forgive us when we are tempted to slip back to old ways; to live independently of the guiding of the Spirit.

Please pray for:

- All around the world who have been left traumatised and deeply wounded by war and unrest and pray that political and faith leaders will make the right decisions to bring about peace, comfort and hope.
- All caught up in tragedies this Easter-tide, remembering those affected by the collapsed bridge disaster in Baltimore.
- All who attend church services this Easter, that they may be touched in some way by the love of God.
- Commitment by each one of us to care for creation, living sustainably and valuing the rich diversity of life.
- Our Church family: all who are struggling; and for Edith, Pat, Alice, Jill, Trevor, Maureen (who is in hospital), Sandra, Brenda and Elizabeth; and for Ruth, Meaghan and Linda.
- The joy, wonder and power of the resurrection to transform our lives, as we realise that the same power has raised us from the dead and is at work within us by the Holy Spirit.

You may like to use this prayer during the week:

Lord Jesus Christ, may the message of your glorious resurrection continue to stir my heart and change my life today, just as it has spoken to so many across the years. Amen.

