



St Paul's Church

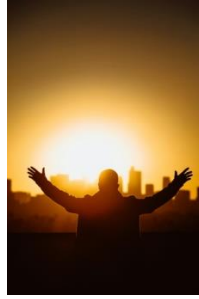


Photo by Natham Dumlao on Unsplash

Dear All

Last Sunday I spoke about the emotional turmoil the disciples must have been feeling after Jesus' crucifixion, and how this played into their inability to recognise the risen Christ, either on the road to Emmaus or in the upper room. I said that when we are in a state of great sadness, depression, disappointment or vulnerability, the human brain has a tendency to make us hear what we expect to hear and see what we expect to see. I didn't have time to make the argument from the other direction, but I think it's important that I do because our judgement can be just as impaired when it feels as though things are going really **well** too, even in church.

It seems as though this is what happened during the height of the Soul Survivor success. The movement had gained unprecedented momentum, thousands of young people were coming to faith, and the leader of Soul Survivor, Mike Pilavachi, was hailed as a hero, spiritual father and mentor to a generation. However, what we now believe is that he was abusing many young people, certainly psychologically and spiritually, and likely in other ways too. These young people felt that they could not speak out because they had a sense that the movement was being 'breathed on by God' and they could not bring themselves to be the ones to stem the tide of this divine work. Even when one or two brave souls did finally speak out, they were shut down and told that they were immature and that this was not a matter of concern. The truth was that Pilavachi was so 'successful' and held so much sway by this time, he seemed untouchable. People were hearing what they wanted to hear and seeing what they wanted to see.

If you have a spare half hour, I urge you to watch the documentary that was released last week and explains more about this very disturbing story. It's called 'Let there be Light' and can be found here:

<https://youtu.be/YVZkgt32u8?si=04mm3XIYwYDrUXuv>

If you've ever rolled your eyes at having to jump through hoops with regards to safeguarding and safer recruitment (and to be honest, who hasn't?), I do think you'll have a different mindset having watched this. It isn't a happy watch, but I do think it's really important.

Rev Anthea

FORTHCOMING SERVICES

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

SUNDAY 5th MAY – Easter 6

10.30 am Café Worship – Gwyn#

SUNDAY 12th MAY – Easter 7

10.30 am All-Age Holy Communion – Rev Anthea

EVENTS

FRIDAY 26th APRIL

7 pm – Church Crafts

FRIDAY 3rd MAY

9.30 am - Baby & Toddler Group

THURSDAY 9th MAY

2.30 pm – Mothers' Union: Grand Canyon Edna & Janette

THURSDAY 16th MAY

2.30 pm – Fellowship: Outing to Great Comp Garden

NOTICES

Revision of Church Electoral Roll

Notice is hereby given that the Church Electoral Roll of the Parish of St Paul's Maidstone will be revised by the Parochial Church Council, beginning on Sunday 14th April 2024 and ending on Sunday 28th April 2024.

Annual Parish and Annual Parochial Church Meetings

Sunday 12th May 2024 at 12 noon in church

These meetings are held to elect the Churchwardens, PCC members, Deanery synod representatives and to conduct parish business. The APCM is open to all members on the church electoral roll which is displayed at the back of church. Electoral roll application forms are available at the back of church for those of you who would like to be added to the roll this year. All application forms must be returned to the electoral roll officer by the 28th April 2024. The revised roll will be on display from Monday 29th April 2024.

This year we will be electing

- Two church wardens
- Three members to the Parochial Church Council (PCC)
- One member to the Deanery Synod

Again, nomination forms for the above are available at the back of church. All nomination forms should be handed to the PCC secretary before the APCM.

The Trustees' Annual Report and Audited Accounts will be available from 5th May 2024. If you would like to receive a copy by email please let me know your email address.

Jenny Turner

PCC Secretary and Electoral Roll Officer

FOOD BANK

The next delivery will be Friday 3 May.

PRAYER RESOURCE

week beginning Sunday, 21st April to Saturday, 4th May 2024

'There is nothing that makes us love someone so much as praying for them.' (William Law)

We give thanks for:

- The gifts that God has given each one of us, and for the various ministries within the church.
- The Bank Holiday weekend: for time to spend with friends and loved ones, for the warmer weather and for the simple delights of life that we are able to enjoy.

Please pray for:

- All who have been denied freedom or peace: places where communities have been destroyed, loved ones and homes lost and families separated.
- Our homes, schools, workplaces and shopping areas that they may be places where God's love is seen and experienced in the ordinary things and everyday routines.
- All whose lives have been marred by the past and destroyed by bad memories, hatred, guilt or resentment.
- Our Church family: all who are struggling; and for Edith, Pat, Alice, Jill, Trevor, Maureen, Sandra, Brenda and Elizabeth; and for Ruth, Meaghan and Linda.
- God's love to shine on this struggling world and all its sorrows, and pray for peace among nations, peace in our homes and peace in our hearts.

You may like to use this prayer during this period:

Loving God, you bring hope to broken dreams and show us new possibilities. Renew me with an open heart, an open mind and an open will, ready to follow wherever you lead. Amen.