



# St Paul's Church



Photo by Mae Mu on Unsplash

Dear all

As I write, it's that last of the three Rogation days this year (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday) following Rogation Sunday last week (5<sup>th</sup> May). Given the fact that we at St. Paul's are in what counts as an urban parish, you could be forgiven for not knowing much about this ancient church festival.

The word rogation comes from the Latin verb rogare, meaning 'to ask', and in a church context, what people would traditionally be asking for is a blessing for their agricultural community and protection from extremes of weather. It doesn't happen in Penenden Heath (as far as I know!) but there are certainly some rural parishes not far from here who observe the traditional procession of 'beating the bounds', praying for God's blessing upon the crops and thus the people. These days, even though the practice is almost always confined to rural areas, the prayers tend to have a wider reach, asking for God's blessing to nourish every endeavour which enables the people of the parish to flourish. Rogation is totally inclusive; it addresses all the inhabitants of a place and seeks to join everyone together in praying for their sustenance whilst committing them all to play their part in its provision.

So far, so good. I'm sure we all have images by now of village squares filled with Morris dancers, Maypoles and more cream teas than we can shake a stick at...BUT...Rogation also provides an opportunity for us to recognise that for some, our villages (and indeed towns) can be a place of *slavery* rather than *safety* where people are exploited in ever more cruel and creative ways...a far cry from God's vision (as expressed in the Bible) of healthy communities where the vulnerable are seen and provided for. For more detailed information about modern slavery, please see [www.theclewerinitiative.org](http://www.theclewerinitiative.org)

As we make our individual and collective petitions to God this week, let's take some time to pray for those denied a proper place in our community. May they be properly seen, set free, and enabled to make their desires known so that they may take their precious place in the fuller unfolding of God's goodness.

Rev Anthea

## **FORTHCOMING SERVICES**

### **SUNDAY 12<sup>th</sup> MAY – Easter 7**

10.30 am All-Age Holy Communion – Rev Anthea

### **SUNDAY 19<sup>th</sup> MAY – Pentecost**

9.15 am for 9.30 am - Bubble Church

10.30 am Experimental Worship – Gwyn

### **SUNDAY 26<sup>th</sup> MAY – Trinity Sunday**

10.30 am - Holy Communion – Rev Anthea

### **SUNDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> JUNE – Trinity 1**

10.30 am Café Worship – Gwyn

## **EVENTS**

### **THURSDAY 16<sup>th</sup> MAY**

2.30 pm – Fellowship: Outing to Great Comp Garden

### **FRIDAY 24<sup>th</sup> MAY**

7 pm – Church Crafts

### **FRIDAY 7<sup>th</sup> JUNE**

9.30 am - Baby & Toddler Group

### **THURSDAY 11<sup>th</sup> MAY**

3.00 pm – A Wing and a Prayer Talk by Dr Lee Collier @ St Mary All Saints Church, Boxley contact 07734 409140  
*Lee is a neonatal intensive care doctor that provides air ambulance flights for premature and sick babies.*

## **NOTICES**

### **Annual Parish and Annual Parochial Church Meetings** **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> 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 28<sup>th</sup> April 2024. The revised roll will be on display from Monday 29<sup>th</sup> 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 5<sup>th</sup> 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 24 May.

## **PRAYER RESOURCE**

**week beginning Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

*'Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.'* (1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18)

This week we give thanks for:

- The knowledge that God is here among us, ready to listen to our prayers and eager to respond, ever faithful and always true.

Please pray for:

- Peace in the Middle East: for the acceptance of the proposal for a new Gaza ceasefire and hostage release deal with Israel.
- Leaders of nations that they may work for the good of all and strive for peace, justice and the flourishing of all humanity.
- All in need: for willingness to share our plenty and be generous in our support, compassion and understanding.
- The Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with the fruits of the Spirit and renew in us our faith, hope and love, so that we can go out into the world to be God's presence and to do His will.
- Our Royal Family: for courage, strength and integrity, as they face the day-to-day challenges both in their official roles, and in their personal lives.
- The needs of our town and of Kent as the newly-elected Council Members assume their responsibilities.
- Our Church family: all who are struggling; and for Edith, Pat, Alice, Jill, Trevor, Maureen, Sandra, Brenda and Elizabeth; and for Ruth, Meaghan, Linda, Stephanie and Alan.

**You may like to use this prayer during the week:**

***God of wisdom, fill me with your Spirit making me joyful in you. Fill my heart with your praises, that I may give thanks to you at all times for everything. Amen.***