



St Paul's Church



Photo by Nicholas Githiri: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/brown-beans-on-palm-3401479/>

Dear all

If you were in church last weekend, you'll have heard Gwyn talking about mustard seeds, echoing Jesus' parable in Mark's Gospel. Faith as small as a mustard seed, Gwyn reminded us, has the potential to grow and flourish, changing the community in which it is rooted and transforming people's lives. I've been reflecting on that since then, prompted particularly by the people we have been commemorating in the Daily Prayer cycle this week.

- On Monday, we remembered Samuel and Henrietta Barnett, born around the middle of the 19th century. They were devout Christians who both became social reformers working tirelessly for the welfare and education of the poor, especially in London.
- On Tuesday, we commemorated the death of Bernard Mizeki (1896), born in Mozambique, who ended up living in the slums of Cape Town. He became a Christian and travelled as a missionary to Mashonaland (Zimbabwe). He converted great numbers of people to Christianity and educated many children by operating a school, but his work was resented by some of the locals who arrived at his house one day and drove a spear into his side.
- On Wednesday, the liturgy called to mind Sundar Singh, an Indian missionary (born 1889). He had a vision of Jesus one night when seeking to discover 'the one true God' and he became a Christian, although again, this did not go down well with his community. People threw snakes in to his house and his brother even tried to poison him! Undeterred, he travelled all through the Punjab, into Kashmir and back through Afghanistan as well as to Tibet, as an ardent devotee of Christ; it became his life's work to spread the gospel message in a way appropriate for each culture he found himself in.

By the grace of God, all of these people developed a faith which may have started as a seed but grew and grew, sometimes in the most inauspicious of circumstances, and changed the lives of so many. These heroes of the faith all became Christians because *someone* had first shared the gospel with them, *someone* had planted the tiny seed which God watered. I wonder how we might seek to do just that in our communities and amongst the people that we know? In many ways, it's the hardest question the church faces in our secular society, and I'd be really interested to hear your thoughts and opinions on this.

Rev Anthea

FORTHCOMING SERVICES

SUNDAY 23rd JUNE – Trinity 4

10.30 am - Holy Communion – Rev Anthea

SUNDAY 30th JUNE – Trinity 5

10.30am - Music and Memories – Gwyn

SUNDAY 7th JULY – Trinity 6

10.30 am - Café Church – Gwyn

SUNDAY 14th JULY – Trinity 7

10.30 am - All-Age Holy Communion – Rev Anthea

SUNDAY 21st JULY – Trinity 8

9.15 am for 9.30 am - Bubble Church

10.30 am Morning Worship – Anthea

EVENTS

FRIDAY 28th JUNE

7 pm – Church Crafts

FRIDAY 5th JULY

9.30 am - Baby & Toddler Group

SUNDAY 7th JULY

Bring and share lunch 12 noon onwards

THURSDAY 11th JULY

Mothers' Union: Cream tea

THURSDAY 18th JULY

Fellowship: Teapot island, Teapot Museum, lunch or afternoon tea

FRIDAY 26th JULY

7 pm – Church Crafts

NOTICES

SATURDAY 21st SEPTEMBER @ 3.30 PM

Friends of Kent Churches (Ride & Stride organisers)

75th anniversary evensong service - All Saints Church, Mill Street – All Welcome

FOOD BANK

The next delivery will be on Friday 5 July.

PRAYER RESOURCE

week beginning Sunday, 23rd June 2024

'Father God, thank you for the examples you have given in your word to help us pray.'

This week we give thanks for:

- The life of St Paul's and pray for the right person to come forward to lead the church into the future.
- The Summer as we reach the longest day; pray that families will be able to spend some time together during the holiday period.
- The life of Stephanie, and, at this sad time, pray for her husband Alan, their family, friends, and for Judy a special friend.

Please pray for:

- The millions of people around the world who are unable to return to their homes and ask God to show us how we can be a blessing to refugees in our own neighbourhood.
- Syria as the country enters into its 12th year of conflict; pray for the work of aid organisations supporting Syrians to meet their basic needs.
- Our communities and neighbourhoods that they may be places of connections and acceptance, where stigma is erased and people can live together safely and peacefully.
- The future of our young people, especially those who are awaiting exam results.
- All the young families who attend Bubble Church and the Toddler Group and for the teams of helpers.
- Our Church family and all who are struggling; and for Edith, Pat, Alice, Jill, Trevor, Maureen, Sandra, Brenda, Elizabeth and Georgia; and for Ruth, Meaghan, Linda, Alan, Laura and Dean.

You may like to use this prayer during the week:

Lord, teach me to pray more deeply, and in praying to find strength, courage, hope and peace, and your saving and renewing love. Amen.