



# St Paul's Church



Photo by fauxels: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/group-of-people-standing-indoors-3184396/>

Dear all

Today at work, I found myself with some unexpected free time because a client was forced to cancel her appointment at the last minute. Once I'd completed a few chores on my to-do list, I decided to have a wander about in town as it's been a long while since I ventured in to the town centre.

It wasn't the picture of doom and gloom that I had feared. Yes, it's sad that some household names are no longer trading in town but there were lots of new shops and cafés, and there were quite a few people about too. I did notice that there were many more independent traders or small businesses (particularly in the food and service industries), and I could see that a large proportion (though not all) of these looked to be owned and run by people of Global Majority Heritage (in other words, all ethnic groups except white British and other white groups).

My default position (as the daughter of immigrants to this country AND as a Christian) is to rejoice at this fascinating mix of culture and diversity but I know that not everyone will feel the same way. I'm sure we've all seen Nigel Farage whipping the people of Clacton up into a frenzy about this very issue (despite the fact that there are actually very few immigrants living in that town). Maybe you agree with Mr Farage, maybe you don't, and I don't for a moment want to suggest that the issue of immigration is without its complexities, but as Christians, I believe that it is incumbent upon us to spend some time reflecting on our posture towards people of other cultures and heritages. As Martin Snow points out in his new book, *An Intercultural Church for a Multicultural World*, 'The Bible is unambiguous in offering a vision of heaven with people from the East and West, North and South.' So I suppose, I am left asking this question: As Christians, does our behaviour reflect a Christlike intention to ensure that all people are equally valued, able to contribute their unique gifts, and receive the gifts of others?

Our own church community has become noticeably less diverse post-Covid, and in fact it is often said of the wider Church that the worship service on a Sunday morning is the most segregated hour of the week. If that's true, and I suspect that it probably is in our case, what could or should we be doing to change that? I don't think there are any easy or obvious answers to these questions by the way, but I pose them here as they may trigger some reflection and prayer moving forward, and encourage us to be a church with hearts and minds fully open to the joy that the 'other' in our midst may bring.

Rev Anthea

## **FORTHCOMING SERVICES**

### **SUNDAY 9<sup>th</sup> JUNE – Trinity 2**

10.30 am All-Age Holy Communion – Rev Anthea

### **SUNDAY 16<sup>th</sup> JUNE – Trinity 3**

9.15 am for 9.30 am - Bubble Church

10.30 am Experimental Worship – Gwyn

### **SUNDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> JUNE – Trinity 4**

10.30 am - Holy Communion – Rev Anthea

### **SUNDAY 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE – Trinity 5**

10.30am - Music and Memories - Gwyn

## **EVENTS**

### **THURSDAY 13<sup>th</sup> JUNE**

2.30 pm – Mothers' Union: Bingo

### **THURSDAY 20<sup>th</sup> JUNE**

2.30 pm – Fellowship: Talk - Olive Lindsay and Gwen Walker

### **FRIDAY 28<sup>th</sup> JUNE**

7 pm – Church Crafts

### **FRIDAY 5<sup>th</sup> JULY**

9.30 am - Baby & Toddler Group

## **NOTICES**

### **SATURDAY 15<sup>th</sup> JUNE AT 2.30 PM**

The Friends of St Peter's Church in Boughton Monchelsea will be hosting a concert by Sonare, the superb London vocal quartet, who will be singing "The Best of British" in St Peter's Church. Come and join us for this excellent musical event. Cream teas and cakes will be available. Tickets cost £10 and are available from Margaret Greig on 01622 476705, or online from [www.sonarechoir.com/concerts](http://www.sonarechoir.com/concerts)

### **SATURDAY 21<sup>st</sup> SEPTEMBER @ 3.30 PM**

Friends of Kent Churches (Ride & Stride organisers)

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

## **FOOD BANK**

Thank you all for your contributions to this week's planned delivery. I am rearranging the delivery till next week Friday 14 June to allow some more contributions from those who have been unable so far. Thank you so much for your ongoing support. It is very much valued as you will see in the attached thank you letter from the food bank people. *Allert*

## **PRAYER RESOURCE**

**week beginning Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> June 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 people in our lives who keep us cheerful and positive, who care when we are down, listen when we need to talk and pray for us.

Please pray for:

- An end to the conflict in Gaza, the release of the hostages and the reconstruction of the Palestinian territory.
- Urgent environmental and ecological assessments to be carried out in areas where sewage spills into rivers and seas have been highlighted, and for the fixing of damaged infrastructure.
- Claudia Sheinbaum newly elected as Mexico's first woman president, and for the many challenges facing her when she takes up office.
- Our nation and the world as the General Election campaign gathers pace: this is a critical moment in the life of our nation as those elected will make decisions that shape our future and affect generations to come.
- 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.
- As we go through this week, let us remember that God loves us and journeys with us in everything we do.

**You may like to close your prayer-time each day with these words:**

***Lord, bless me and watch over me; Lord, make your face to shine upon me and be gracious to me: Lord, look kindly upon me and give me your peace. Amen.***