



St Paul's Church



Candlemass – The Presentation of Christ in the Temple

Jack Reynolds, like most of us had goals for his life. He spent most of his life not achieving his goals. Eventually he broke four world records in his lifetime and he started this at the age of 104, when he became the oldest person to get a tattoo! I will leave you to find out what other records he broke.

Luke 2.22 – 40, tells the story of Jesus being presented in the temple by his parents Mary and Joseph at 40 days old. Greeted by Simeon who exclaimed he had been waiting to see that day with his own eyes - to catch a glimpse of the promised work of God in the world. From there we get the Nunc Dimittis ~ the song of Simeon, used during the Church of England's night prayers.

We know that Anna was 84 years old, having been widowed 7 years into her marriage, now spent her widowed life fasting and praying in the temple.

Simeon and Anna lived a life similar to most of us or at least people known to us. To spend one's life waiting, in anticipation, aspiring to achieve a goal. May be to go back-packing around Asia, paragliding, a pilgrimage to the Holy Land or solve a Rubick's cube in less than a whole day!

Or maybe you are waiting, anticipating that something profound God has spoken to you will come to pass. As the days turn into weeks, weeks to months, months to year and years to decades, wondering if you had ever heard from God. May be you made a mistake or believe somehow you messed it up and missed that promise.

Likewise, many of us have had Anna moments in our lives. Hopes and dreams, everything going on swimmingly, only to see it all come crashing down by one event that changes your life completely.

Are Simeon and Anna different from us? Indeed what can we learn for our lives? We can have goals, expectations and indeed dreams, there's nothing wrong with that.

I pray that one thing on our list of goals as Christians, is to meet the Lord Jesus face to face. Whilst we are waiting, let us catch glimpses of him, whether through the pauses and silences, lyrics in songs, the arrangement of hymns, prayers said, in the breaking of bread and sharing of wine, the smiles on faces or in the beauty of nature.

Of course, if breaking records at 105 is your style, you go for it! But whether your life is remarkable or very ordinary, only one goal really matters: to see Jesus. To know him, to love him, to share him with others. Make that your goal, however young you are, and you can be sure of a life well lived, now and into eternity.

Rev Claude

SERVICES

SUNDAY 1 FEBRUARY – Epiphany 4/Presentation of Christ in the Temple

10.30 am - Café Service – Café Church Team

SUNDAY 8 FEBRUARY – 2nd Sunday before Lent

10.30 am – All-Age Worship – Rev Claude

SUNDAY 15 FEBRUARY – Sunday next before Lent

9.15 am for 9.30 am - Bubble Church

10.30 am – Morning Worship – Gwyn

SUNDAY 22 FEBRUARY – Lent 1

10.30 am – Holy Communion – Rev Claude

EVENTS

FRIDAY 30 JANUARY @ 7 pm

Church Crafts

FRIDAY 6 FEBRUARY @ 9.30 am

Baby & Toddler Group

THURSDAY 12 FEBRUARY @ 2.30 pm

Mothers' Union: 103rd Anniversary Tea

THURSDAY 19 FEBRUARY @ 2.30 pm

Fellowship: Life on an African Mission

FRIDAY 27 FEBRUARY @ 7 pm

Church Crafts

FRIDAY 6 MARCH @ 9.30 am

Baby & Toddler Group

THURSDAY 12 MARCH @ 2.30 pm

Mothers' Union: Bible Market – A.F.I.A

THURSDAY 19 MARCH @ 2.30 pm

Fellowship: Games Afternoon

SATURDAY 21 MARCH - tbc

Quiz & Ploughman's

SUNDAY 22 MARCH

Lunch after the service

FRIDAY 27 MARCH @ 7 pm

Church Crafts

FOOD BANK

The next delivery will be on Friday 27 February.

VACANCY @ ST LUKE'S

Please see link below:

[Operations Manager \(Part-Time\) - St. Luke's Maidstone](#)

PRAYER RESOURCE

week beginning Sunday, 1st February 2026

'Prayer transforms our vision of the world, and makes us see it... in the light of God.' (Thomas Merton)

This week we give thanks for:

- The wonder of prayer; and when darkness dulls our wonder, may the light of Jesus lead us on.
- The exuberant diversity of God's creation and pray for all who work to care for our world, monitoring our planet and its resources, and whose decisions have a direct effect on people's lives.

Please pray for:

- All people to know that the love of God reaches out to every part of our world.
- Our nation, knowing that hope lies in our capacity to look to the future in a spirit of openness towards each other, even amid great challenges and changes.
- All around the UK seriously affected by the stormy winter weather – heavy rain, flooding, strong winds, and, in some places, blizzard-like conditions.
- Those working in education; gift them with the art of teaching complex subjects in accessible ways.
- A deepening of our prayer life as a church and to be obedient to God's call, and grow in us wondering souls, alive to the joy of discovery.
- Our Church family: all who are struggling; and for Edith, Alice, Jill, Sandra, Brenda, Elizabeth, Carol, Di, Ray, Percy and Paul; and for Meaghan, Alison and Frances.
- God's love to fill the hearts of all who cry out to Him.

You may like to use this hymn chorus as you pray this week:

Lord, the light of your love is shining. In the midst of the darkness, shining. Jesus, Light of the World, shine upon us. Set us free by the truth you now bring us. Shine on me, shine on me. Amen.