

Prayer for Parliament

Notes of Chapel Service Tuesday 15th March 2016

As happens two or three times a year this month's meeting of Prayer for Parliament and the Nation took the form of a Service of Thanksgiving and Praise in St Mary Undercroft, which was full almost to bursting! Certainly when the singing reached its peak it was easy to imagine that passers-by in the corridors above must have wondered where all the sound was coming from! The worship was ably led by Rollo Hope, and was very uplifting both at the start of the service and the closing hymn.

Jeffrey Donaldson welcomed us all, thanking us for our prayers and explaining the nature of the various meetings that are held. He reminded us of some recent victories in Parliament, such as in the matter of Sunday Trading Regulations; such a positive result is greatly encouraging when so often we despair at the kind of laws that are passed! But the juggernaut of secularism can be stopped! He assured us that Parliamentarians really can feel the impact of our prayers, as they are strengthened through them. He noted that the persecution of Christians in many nations is on the agenda: there is a greater awareness of this issue today. Only the Lord can deliver this nation and restore her to her former glory as a channel of the Gospel of Jesus. Facing as we do a difficult and significant time we can but pray "Thy will be done!"

Jim Shannon was with us during the service: he too greatly appreciates the intercessors' prayers.

Lady Carol Baker was the speaker; she noted that the first time she had spoken in the Chapel was in a service in which we had thanked God for the founder of Prayer for Parliament, Rev Francis Pym, who had passed away. She began by reminding us of the historic setting we were in: the chapel survived the fire of 1834 in which the chapel above, probably used by the Royal Family, was destroyed – it is now the thoroughfare into Central Lobby. St Mary Undercroft itself was used by the Royal Household. She spoke with great impact about the role of Israel as "The Wife of the Father" as opposed to the role of the Church as "The Bride of the Son". The story shows the tragic consequences of mankind's disobedience. There are 6 stages of this Covenant relationship, the last of which has yet to take place – The Marriage Contract, The Great Adultery, The Separation, The Divorce, The Punishment, and The Remarriage with Restored Blessings. In the sixth stage the Lord remembers the Marriage Covenant and will establish an everlasting covenant based on the new heart and the new spirit (see Ezekiel 16:60-63). Lady Baker showed how the Lord is doing an amazing work in His Wife, and in His Bride, refining us for the culmination of His glorious purposes, the One New Man (Ephesians 2:14-18). We have much to celebrate but must press in with prayer!

Julie Anderson led a time of powerful prayer, including for Parliamentary Wives Groups. God knows what concerns us. That God's Word will become alive in us. For increasing unity. That the 'heavy things' will be revealed. For our own MP. To release grace to move mountains ahead of us. The service closed with a further song, "I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene." Please pray for the future development of Prayer for Parliament and the Nation.

Pat Brandon is standing down as Facilitator after the July meeting: please pray for his successor. As yet nothing is confirmed about a meeting in April! There are a number of recesses before the summer break so please pray it will be possible to arrange a meeting EVERY MONTH up to and including July.

Statement of Purpose; Since all authority comes from God (Rom 13.1), Parliamentarians carry spiritual as well as temporal authority whether they are conscious of the fact or not. This authority does not necessarily mean they automatically know how to pray since no one knows how to pray as they ought (Rom 8.26). If however, with one accord in Christ, those who have this God-given authority come together in the Spirit with anointed intercessors who have networks of prayer support across the Nation, prayer for Parliament and the whole Nation would have greater spiritual and practical accomplishment (Acts 1:14).