



March 2021

Together in Wotton

Christians worshipping, working and social distancing together in Wotton under Edge



World Day of Prayer – Friday 5 March

The World Day of Prayer will take place in Wotton on Friday 5 January at 10 am on Zoom hosted by Alison Jackson.

We are delighted that Morag Langley will be sharing a reflection on the theme “Build on a Strong Foundation” as part of a service which has been prepared by the women of Vanuatu for women and men across the world. Members of

the churches in Wotton will lead the different parts of the service.

We also have a CD with pictures and film about Vanuatu. If you are interested, stay on after the service and Alison will show it; it only lasts 10-15 minutes, but is still rather long to be part of the main service

Normally we would take a collection for the various charities supported by the World Day of Prayer. Instead, please consider making a donation on their website Homepage | World Day Of Prayer (wwdp.org.uk) using the “Donate” button which will also give a link to the list of charities supported. Alternatively they will accept cheques sent to World Day of Prayer, Commercial Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2RR.

The Zoom link is below. It will also be on the United Church website and Facebook page. Please do put it in your own church publications and social media.

World Day of Prayer Mar 5, 2021 10:00 AM London

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85798722417?pwd=czQwVWY1NTA5UUhCaHRjRTBreVp6dz09>

Meeting ID: 857 9872 2417

Passcode: 611036

To everything there is a season
and a time to every purpose
under Heaven

Ecclesiastes 3

We're
getting
there!

Mothering Sunday 14 March
Palm Sunday 28 March

Good Friday 2 April
Easter Day 4 April



The Singles Space, hosted by Wotton Baptist Church

A new social group for single people. During lockdown, this will be via Zoom.

The purpose is to provide a forum for us to gather and to have a bit of fun.

Post lockdown, the world's our oyster. Zoom coffee chats could expand into walks, coffee shop meetings, Saturday brunches, cinema trips - ideas will be led by the group.

It's an inclusive group which means ALL single people are welcome - church-goers or not, tall or short, contacts or glasses, widowed and divorced, single by choice or by chance - we'd love to welcome you all.

Come and test us out, and then maybe invite a friend too.

Contacts: Judy Breavington and Louisa Lockwood via
admin@wottonbaptist.org.uk

First Saturday of each month:

Saturday 6 March, Saturday 3 April



Fairtrade Fortnight

For two weeks at the end of February/beginning of March, thousands of individuals, companies and groups across the UK come together to share the stories of the people who grow our food and drinks, mine our gold and who grow the cotton in our clothes, people who are often exploited and underpaid.

In 2021, Fairtrade Fortnight will feel very different. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us more than ever how interconnected we are globally. This interconnection is at the very heart of the Fairtrade message and is where your role begins. You are part of the Fairtrade movement and you have the power to drive long-term change, not only with your shopping choices but with your support in spreading the message.

This year Fairtrade will highlight the growing challenges that climate change brings to farmers and workers in the communities they work with. The facts are straightforward. Farmers and workers in countries such as Kenya, Ethiopia and Honduras, who have done the least to contribute to climate change, are disproportionately affected by it. They have told us that:

- Climate change is one of their biggest challenges right now.
- Low prices for their crops mean that they are struggling to fight back.
- Only with more money will they feel equipped to meet their everyday needs and deal with the challenges they face from climate change.

The climate crisis is an immediate and ever-increasing threat and those in climate vulnerable countries are already seeing its impacts from droughts and crop disease to floods, heatwaves and shrinking harvests.

With the global COVID pandemic, the challenges that farmers face now are bigger than ever before with falling commodity prices and widespread shocks reverberating along our global supply chains.

Read more at <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get-involved/current-campaigns/fairtrade-fortnight/>

Soup!

WAMA are still providing free soup. If anyone needs it to be delivered they can call the WAMA number and order some to be delivered on Monday mornings.

It's still made by local chefs in the Baptist church kitchen but now available through the community freezer.



Wotton Area Mutual Aid

COMMUNITY FREEZER

OPENING TIMES

Mondays
8.30-11.00a.m

Thursdays
3.00-6.00p.m

FREEZER OF LOVE

with

THE LONG TABLE

At The Keepers,
Wotton Area Community Hub,
Symn Lane

Freshly cooked,
frozen ready
meals using
donated, surplus,
local ingredients
wherever
possible and
cooked with love

Select your meal,
pay as you feel

Payments for meals will be processed and administered by the National Funding Scheme (Charity No: 1149800), operating as DONATE. Texts will be charged at your standard network rate. For Terms & Conditions, see www.easydonate.org

Coronavirus Restrictions

What am I allowed to do and when am I allowed to do it?

You would think, after almost a year, we would all know the answers, but the 'rules' and 'restrictions' are interpreted and misinterpreted time and time again. The most useful source of up-to-date information is the gov.uk website, and always worth a look if you are unsure.

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Keep safe - keep caring - keep praying

Cookie's Ramblings

I'm sure we all know that coming into a new job can be challenging, exciting, draining and exhilarating in equal fashion. Arriving, with my family as the new Vicar of the Tyndale Benefice has not been any different. **Challenging**, as I get to grips with life as a 'civvy' following my time in the RAF whilst navigating new places, customs, and the Hilly, Cotswolds context. **Exciting** as I get to meet and greet (albeit mostly online) new people, listen to your stories and plan for the future, with you. **Draining**, because it's a constant, steep learning curve particularly when using 'new-fangled' technologies such as zoom, teams or skype (pick your poison) yet **exhilarating** because this 'job' gives me a glimpse into the amazing things God has been doing in this place through you, the people.

Matt and I have been blown away by the warmth, fellowship and offers of help we have had already and we have only just arrived. Community is so important, more so now than ever before of course. It seems to me that this benefice has got it just right and this will continue to be important coming out of the COVID crisis as we move forward into 2021.

So for now, a short 'ramblings' from the Vicar. If you would like to have a 'walk and talk' with me or a zoom chat (I can do it...just!!) then please do drop me a line. But for now, I would just like to say 'thank you' for making us feel so welcomed. I look forward to seeing you all 'around the bazaars' (as we say in the military) and getting to know you all properly, very soon.

Blessings,

Cookie (aka Revd Rachel Cook).
Vicar of Tyndale Benefice.

* **New mum? Tired?** *

* **Lonely? Got questions?** *

* **Join our mums support group** *

* **Thursdays 9:30-11am (term-time)** *

* **Wotton Baptist Church** *

* **For new mums and under 2s to meet and support one another.** *

* Unfortunately due to Covid-19 restrictions and limits on numbers, we can only
* accept babies and toddlers who are not already in a ChildCare bubble such as a nursery. *

* **Pre-booking is required via <http://bit.ly/NewMumsSupport>** *

* **Email admin@wottonbaptist.org.uk or leave a message on 01453 844726 for more info.** *





We aspire to live life in all its fullness (John 10:10) and to enable others to do the same. (Matthew 22: 37-39)

Blue Coat has much to celebrate and be thankful for this month

We have launched a brand-new website which emphasises children learning and having fun together.

There are five key headings to help navigate your way around the site, one being the Christian Distinctiveness of the school. Headteacher, Glyn Jones, writes in his opening statement how our school Christian Vision is rooted in the foundation of God's love. Recent editions of 'Together in Wotton' can be located here; another way in which we strive to strengthen and connect our school and church communities together.

The website provides information for new parents, as well as existing parents to keep them informed of dates, events and curriculum news. We also wanted to reach out to our wider community as we know how much you all care about our children's futures and this is an opportunity for you to keep in touch and stay connected with the lives of our young people. Please do take a look at our new website we warmly welcome feedback.



The organisation that seeks to bring churches, schools and communities together through music.

Many of you are familiar with iSingPop and can recall the happy times we have worked together to produce concerts in St. Mary's Church. Collective worships at Blue Coat are integral part of our day and we were so thankful when during this period of lockdown iSingPop produced a series of 'watch at home' worships. They follow the themes of love, respect, forgiveness and Easter and can be shared with all of our families. Each worship is packed with energy, laughter and dancing! Those of you who fancy dipping your toe into an iSingPop online worship, can follow the link to Episode One:

Episode 1 Love : <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8125517>



National Young Leadership Programme

We have been invited along with two other Church of England primary schools in the Diocese to take part in the National Young Leadership Programme. In October, one of our Year 5 pupils was nominated to represent our school and has already completed one of three online sessions which aims to seek out the views of young people. In the words of The Most Revd and Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York:

“We long to see our church grow younger, growing in faith of children and young people through schools, churches and families. As we shape the vision of the Church of England for the next decade together, we want our children and young people to be central to this.”

Topics under discussion include diversity, social justice, environment, and Growing Faith. As a school we are very excited to be taking part in this initiative and feel encouraged that the voices of our children are shaping the church’s thinking and direction.

Wotton Winter Wanderland

We were delighted to contribute to this event and pupils in class and those learning at home produced some fantastic art pieces that we believe represents hope amidst challenging times. The front of the school was lit up with colourful images and messages. We feel blessed and privileged to be part of this amazing community – all pulling together to support and care for each other.



Jane Blaken

Praying for the Churches

In March we remember in our prayers the Wotton Society of Friends. They have asked for prayers for Rosie Bailey, who is currently in hospital and for Wotton Quakers as they try to support each other remotely during this difficult time

Powered by WAMA Volunteers



Following on from the amazing community support we've seen over the past 12 months...

We're setting up a new permanent Community Hub. We need your help to shape it.



Tell us what you think, please complete our survey here:

<http://bit.ly/WAMAsurvey>

Any questions? Email us: wamasurvey2021@gmail.com
or call 07585 466418

Let's shape the future of our support, together. **#loveyourcommunity**



Churches Together in Wotton

Did you receive communication about the Lent House Groups? These started on 22 February, but there will be no problem joining with one if you still wish to do so. See details below

Our Ministers have been making plans for Easter. There will still be a perambulation of the town -but you will have to do it in your own family/bubble as part of your daily exercise. It will take the form of a Stations of the Cross, as you walk the scenes from the Crucifixion and Resurrection from one site to another, and will be displayed between Good Friday and Easter Monday.

There will be a Zoom service on Easter Sunday, brought to you by Cookie, Tom and Phil together. Hopefully it can also be recorded so that you can celebrate Easter with others even if you're not available at the Zoom time.

Zoom Lent Groups

These small group meetings will be looking at the prayers of Jesus, using a Cover to Cover course. Anyone from any of the churches is welcome to join any of the groups. To sign up, choose a time which will work for you from the list below and email the leaders to ask if there is space.

Monday 10am

Contact Kate Tutty katetutty@hotmail.com 01453 844371

Tuesday 7:30pm

Contact Roger and Shirley Wyse shirleywyse@yahoo.co.uk 01453 844222

Thursday 11am

Contact Louisa Lockwood: louisa.lockwood@mac.com 01453 845710

Thursday 7.30pm

Contact Sharon & Martin Dove shazzodove@hotmail.com 01453 521459

Friday Morning 10am

Contact Roger and Shirley Wyse shirleywyse@yahoo.co.uk 01453 844222

There is also the possibility of a **Wednesday** group at 7.30pm but as of the start date there was only one taker, so it will not run unless a few more are interested. Contact alison.jackson24@btinternet.com 01453 843072

A Palm Sunday reflection by Archbishop Justin Welby

This was written for 2020 - did we ever think it would apply to 2021?

For Christians this will be a Palm Sunday unique in almost the last 800 years. Normally, we would be in our churches singing praises to Jesus the King, perhaps waving palm crosses or taking part in processions to remember Jesus' entry into the city of Jerusalem. Some adventurous and optimistic vicars who have managed to arrange a donkey and have lots of children in church would be worrying about children sticking palms in each other's' eyes, or the donkey misbehaving. (Donkeys always misbehave.)

This year, we are all celebrating separately in our homes. The celebration is tinged with real sadness for the loss of contact with our physical communities and the constraints of this present time. For some, particularly in large urban areas, it will be a day of emotional clouds loaded with worry over someone who is ill, or even with grief over the death of a loved one.

Palm Sunday is a strange anyway. It's a celebration of Jesus as King, but even as we celebrate, we are conscious that the next part of the story gives us some extra perspective. The crowds cheered and lauded Jesus as he entered Jerusalem; the same crowds seemed to turn on him when he was not the military conqueror they expected.

There is a bigger story going on at Palm Sunday than most people at the time could see. We have the benefit of the bible telling us the rest - we can see the journey of Jesus to the cross. But the clues were all there at the time: the King arriving into Jerusalem was on a donkey, not a war horse. As the crowd waved their palm branches and shouted "Hosanna", many were expecting a leader who would fight their battles and liberate them from the Roman Empire. What they got was a different kind of king - infinitely more powerful, yet vastly more humble. The week took a very different turn: in just a matter of days, Jesus would be executed as a criminal, silent before his abusers, humiliated and tortured.

Lent is a good time to be asking, what is our mental or emotional picture of God? It is a time to think about what we are expecting from Him. And crises are an especially good time to be asking that question.

We might not be anticipating a warrior king, but right now we may want God to make the coronavirus disappear, to make everything go back to normal again. If we are honest with ourselves, we can want God to be like a fairy-godmother, to wave a magic wand and take away all the pain and suffering.

These are very human responses. We find them in the Psalms. They are not sinful, even if they are the wrong picture. The Psalmist in Psalm 44 gets quite personal with God. He tells God that God is a rubbish businessman – he has sold his people, and not even done a good deal. He suggests God is asleep, and tells him to wake up.

Prayer should always be honest – but it also goes far beyond just honesty. It's a meeting with God himself, whom Jesus says we can address as father, as Lord, as healer and redeemer, life and truth, creator, and many more ways.

Palm Sunday confronts us with God being disruptively different. God the revolutionary. We see God who takes on the pain, who walks the journey of Holy Week, deeper and deeper into a darkness we cannot enter. God in Jesus lets his friends deny and betray him. God, in Jesus, suffers rejection and abuse, and the ultimate desolation of a lonely yet innocent death. All the worst of human experience is heaped on Jesus.

So, this Palm Sunday let us ask ourselves: what are we praying for? What are we expecting of God? The thing is, God is so infinitely loving and generous that he comes to meet us wherever we are at, because he knows and understands our sufferings. On that first Palm Sunday, Jesus criticised those who would seek to silence the cries of the crowd. Bring all you are – your hopes, fears, sadness, uncertainty – to Jesus. He never turns anyone away.

And because of the life and death of Jesus, we can trust in the forgiveness of God and his victory over death. But here is the challenge of Palm Sunday: in trusting in Jesus, the Servant King, we are set on a path of following his life and pattern, right to the cross, so we too might experience the glorious resurrection.

Resurrection requires that we carry a cross. And that means turning away from what is wrong and putting our selves, our self-obsession and our selfishness on the cross. Putting self on the cross leads straight to resurrection.

1,000 mile Walking Challenge

Hoorah! By the time you read this Rob & I will have completed our 1,000 mile walking challenging to support the charity Hope For Tomorrow. It has been a great experience and we are so grateful to the folk who have both supported us with a donation and encouraged us on our way. So far we have raised £3892. Our sincere thanks to you all. *Margaret Carruthers*

(£3952 as at 23 Feb. Come on - make it £4k!
<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/margaret-rob>)



Mothering Sunday - 14 March 2021

It is traditional now to celebrate Mothering Sunday in many of our churches. Even though most of our churches are closed, the flower, perfume and card industries are going to make sure we know it's 'Mothers' Day'. We won't be able to visit each other this year, but let us make time to remember and give thanks for Mothers, especially, but not only, on this day.

During the Middle Ages, the custom developed of allowing people who had moved away from home to come back to visit their 'mother' churches, and their mothers, on the fourth Sunday of the Christian festival of Lent.

At the time, it wasn't uncommon for children to leave home to work when they were just ten years old, so this was an opportunity for families to meet up again. This became Mothering Sunday in Britain. As the dates of Lent vary each year, so does the date of Mothering Sunday.

Although it's often called Mother's Day (or should it be Mothers' Day'?) in the UK, it has no connection with the American Mother's Day.

In the US, Mother's Day is celebrated on the second Sunday of May each year.

The idea started in America when a woman called Anna Jarvis held a small memorial service for her own mother on 12 May 1907. Soon after, most places in America were observing the day and in 1914, the US president made it a national holiday, celebrated on the second Sunday of May.

Lots of other countries celebrate Mother's Day at different times of the year as well.

From the BBC Newsround website

'together in Wotton' is produced on behalf of all the Wotton under Edge Churches. Items and comments are welcome and should be sent to the Editor, Judy Mills judy.mills@live.co.uk