



June 2021

Together in Wotton

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



Christian Aid Week

Due to the ongoing effects of the pandemic, we were not able to hold our usual Christian Aid pop-up shop during Christian Aid Week.

We did, however, hold a sale of cakes, plants and books/puzzles outside the Baptist Church on the Monday and Tuesday.

The total monies raised from this was £1183.06. We subsequently received donations of £210. At the present time, the Justgiving page total is £2319.57, making an overall total for the week of **£3712.63** (excluding gift aid of £395.75). A brilliant effort!

The Christian Aid Committee would like to thank all those who helped in any way, with a special thank you to Tom Wharin, who saw the predicament we were in on the Monday, with the inclement weather, and offered us the use of the Baptist Church marquee! This was greatly appreciated!

The JustGiving page is still open if you would like to make a donation:
www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Wotton-under-EdgeCAGroupOR342902

Alison Sutton

'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



In the times before *COVID*, on most Wednesday afternoons, the whole school would venture into the hall and be transported back into biblical times by way of *Open the Book*.

For those of you who maybe don't know, *Open the Book* offers primary school children an opportunity to hear & some to act out key Bible stories with a team of Christians from local churches.

The children loved to be involved and speaking to ex-pupils of the school who are now in their twenties, it was one of the highlights of their week. My kids certainly enjoyed it!

Then *COVID* struck and the team obviously were unable to go into the school, all assemblies cancelled as all classes had to be bubbled. Let's think out of the box. Why don't the Year 6s (who let's face it have been unable to do what Year 6s should be doing in their last year of primary school) dress up, act out the whole of the story, record it (by one of the students) and stream it into each classroom? And that's what has happened. They have a backstory, one rehearsal and then



they record it. Fantastic! They have covered the life of Paul the Apostle and the Easter story so far. The next series we will continue with some New Testament stories starting with Mary & Martha.



Open the Book happens at both primary schools in Wotton and if you would like to get involved then please contact Karen Dover for The British School on karend@wottonbaptist.org.uk or for Blue Coat School Val Smith on valsmith17@talktalk.net

Karen Dover

St Mary's Prayer Trail

In conjunction with St Mary's opening for private prayer on Wednesdays, from 10am until 4pm, there is a prayer trail round the churchyard for adults based on Psalm 23. There is also a trail which is suitable for children. You can pick up trail leaflets from the holder on the main notice board which is opposite the Parish Room. The trail directs you to five areas of the churchyard, where you can sit and reflect, and ends by a tree to which prayer cards may be tied (strung cards provided).





"But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint." – Isaiah 40:31

A happy hello from Class Freedom, Blue Coat's Year 5 class. Can you believe we are halfway through the Summer Term already? Since settling back into class after the Easter Holidays, time has flown by and new adventures are now close on the horizon!

Hope has been a common theme during many of our 'Zoom' whole school and class worship services this term and Class Freedom have reflected on this in the best way we know how – talking! With the hope of school life, the local community and (fingers crossed) wider world returning to normal, Class Freedom have had lots of discussions about what we hope for in both the near and distant future.

- *"I hope to have a buddy and to be a helpful and good friend to them. I hope to be in the same class as my friends and I hope we get to go to Morfa Bay."* James
- *"I hope to have a good year with everything being back to normal. I hope I don't have to worry about another lockdown so I will be able to do things with my friends which I can't do now."* Jemima
- *"I hope we get to go to Morfa Bay and to be with my friends. I hope I can have a buddy and I hope to be a good role model for the rest of the school."* Daisy
- *"I hope that I do well next year with my learning. I hope to have a buddy because I cannot wait to have the responsibility of helping and supporting a younger child. Also, I hope I will be able to set good standards for all younger children because I will be at the top of the school."* Sam

It's not surprising that many of the responses were about hoping for a Reception buddy next year!

With hope comes new beginnings. Class Freedom, along with the Year 5 children from the other Mile Post 3 classes, have lots of new



Staff and children are thankful to our amazing PTA who have funded 9 Surface Go tablets for the school. These will be used by the children in their learning and as a way of sharing with parents what we are doing in class over Seesaw.

beginnings to look forward to as we transition into Year 6: new class, new teacher, new friends, new classroom, new learning, new play opportunities, the list goes on. We will finally be 'top of the school' and with that comes greater responsibilities. Not only will we have to be exceptional Reception buddies, but also fantastic role models to our peers across the school by living our lives through our core Christian values: Happiness, Respect, Responsibility and Creativity.

Hope enables us to look towards to the future but also it empowers us to reflect on things we are thankful for. Since the last edition of 'Together in Wotton', the Blue Coat community has lots to be thankful for.



Blue Coat students are thankful for the new saplings they were able to plant onto our beautiful school field. We cannot wait to watch them grow!



The staff at Blue Coat were proud to support Clap for Children to let them know how great they have been and to thank them for all their perseverance!

Most importantly, Class Freedom are especially thankful for continuing to be

back at school, learning and playing together and we hope this carries on when we embark on our new adventures as we transition into Year 6!

Jane Blaken

Update from Wotton Baptist Church

At WBC we're now experimenting with Hybrid services. We were keen to take advantage of the possibility of outdoor meetings as attendees can safely unmask and sing as long as households remain >2m away from one another. However, we can only accommodate 18 pre-booked households appropriately spaced in our main graveyard and we know that some folks in the church family are anxious about returning, so we have continued to broadcast eservices into zoom meetings for those who can't be here.



There are some fun things about this half-way house solution. Prayers led from home over the PA system have a wonderful out-of-nowhere feeling & it's great for those who can attend to finally be able to sing together. I was a little worried about the noise we'd make at 10am on a Sunday, but comments from neighbours have been generally positive & I'm glad passers-by can see into our services. We've been using Virtual Sunday School's material for online kids groups - this is freely available on you-tube and is absolutely brilliant. Youth groups continue to meet in the midweek, but our forthcoming renovation works in the hall will make it tricky for us to run Sunday mornings anything like normal at least until September.

Various groups are beginning to meet outside the church during the week and one or two support groups have been able to meet inside. We were glad to be able to host the Christian aid week sale outside. I suppose we're all keeping an eye on unfolding regulations and trusting that Jesus is still building his church. We're really looking forward to a Baptism service later in the summer and are hoping we'll be able to do this inside. If not, maybe we'll have to go back to doing it in the stream at Coombe!

Praying for the Churches

In June we are asked to pray for Holy Cross. Kate Barlow writes: “We at Holy Cross are continuing with two Masses a week with only 10 (pre-booked) people at each. We are hoping we will be able to have more people after 21 June. It will be wonderful to see more of us if it is safe to do so.

Kate also shares with us the below letter from the Bishops’ Conference which was sent to all parishioners throughout England, Wales and Scotland



CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF ENGLAND AND WALES

Pastoral Letter for Pentecost 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Solemnity of Pentecost reminds us that everything which exists, every person and the whole of creation, is a gift of “God the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.” God our loving Father creates and continues to give life to the world through His Word, Jesus Christ, in the power of His Holy Spirit. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Church, which we celebrate at Pentecost, is not something separate from Creation. God’s revelation of himself in Creation is inseparable from the revelation of his love for us in Christ and in his desire to live in us through his Holy Spirit.

‘God’s Spirit is always and everywhere “the Lord, the Giver of Life”, and the voice of Pentecost is echoed in the voice of creation being transformed into the glorious liberty of God’s children.’ In this liberty, as God’s children, we call on the Spirit to ‘renew the face of the Earth’, and as his children, we are called, in turn, to use this liberty for the good of creation and for the good of all that brings life. Our world, God’s creation, is a precious gift to us. It is our common home entrusted to each generation. But how have we used that glorious liberty? How do we honour this precious gift? Are we really demonstrating love, care and respect for our common home?

As we celebrate Pentecost this year, we are acutely aware of the damage that continues to be inflicted on the Earth, and the repercussions for the well-being of our brothers and sisters, both here in our own countries and, more especially, in the poorest countries of our world. Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis have both taught us that everything is interconnected and interdependent. The way we live our everyday lives has an impact on everyone and on the earth. The urgency of the situation, and the enormity of

the challenges we face, have spurred us to speak out together this Pentecost Sunday, as bishops of England, Wales and Scotland, about the role that the Catholic Church and our faith must play in our shared care for God's gift to us.

For all too long we have either been ignorant of, or ignored, the systematic exploitation of our planet and the unsustainable consumption of its resources. While accepting the crucial need and demand for energy for the benefit of the poorest of our brothers and sisters, the provision of our energy must, nonetheless, be by means which radically reduce the use of carbon-based fuels.

In our political thinking, there must be a new global understanding of our world, where nations recognise our common responsibility for the dignity of all people and their rights to sustainable livelihoods, in authentic freedom. Pope Francis speaks of a global politics that looks beyond our own needs to the needs of all, most especially the poor and the marginalised.

But we cannot leave the healing of our common home and the wellbeing and care of our brothers and sisters merely to a response from industry and governments. Our own local concern and action is necessary and has far-reaching consequences. We all have a part to play, each and every one of us, in the routines, choices and decisions of our everyday lives and our aspirations for the future. The actions of parishes, families, schools, and individuals will have a significant impact on our efforts to restore our common home. There are now many resources, freely available, to advise us on our choice of food, saving of water and electricity, suggestions about travel, waste, and re-use. These are measures that everyone can employ, in some degree, with minimal inconvenience and change. They are effective ways in which we can each reaffirm our personal vocation to be stewards of creation.

This Pentecost comes at a time of remarkable challenge and opportunity. We are gradually emerging from the tragedies and restrictions of the pandemic. We have the ability to make changes. Our countries are also hosting two most important meetings this year, the G7 in June and COP26 in November. These meetings will gather together men and women who have the power to make defining choices and policies which will help us build back better, provide for our brothers and sisters, and take care of our common home.

In all our human endeavours, we need the presence of the Holy Spirit, "the Lord, the Giver of Life", whose gift to the Church and the world we celebrate again at Pentecost. Let us keep this Feast with that enduring hope that we can begin to repair the damage we have done and provide a healthy home for future generations. Our hope will be strengthened by our prayer. May our constant request be that the Holy Spirit guide us, strengthen our resolve and 'renew the face of the earth'.

Please note change of email address for St Mary's Office.
It is now office@tyndalebenefice.co.uk



Help us shape our future.... join our Board of Trustees

Passionate about making a difference in your
local community?
Got a few hours a month to spare?

The Keepers Community Hub is looking for experienced people to join our Board of Trustees. We are looking for a Treasurer and 2 further Trustees to join our committed and enthusiastic team. We are particularly keen to recruit members of our community who have expertise in and experience of community development, finance or business management.

The role is voluntary and involves regular meetings and input into the Community Hub's strategy and governance.

For more information or to request an application pack, contact

thekeepersrecruitment@gmail.com

Closing Date: 25th June 2021



www.thekeepers.org.uk

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