



February 2022

# Together in Wotton

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Christians worshipping and working together in Wotton under Edge

## Front Page News for the Christians of Wotton

The tinsel has been put away and Easter eggs are in the shops but as we look forward we can look back at Christmas knowing that, on our journey from the manger to the cross, God is with us.



### Christingle at St Mary's

Thanks to the fantastic work of Sharon Dove and her Christingle Team, more than £775 was raised for the Children's Society on Christmas Eve.

Many people took up the offer of coffee and mince pies and 'make your own' Christingle, and even joined outside later to sing carols in the rain.

## Christmas at Dryleaze House

Christmas seems a long time ago now but the Residents at Dryleaze House and Court would like to say "thank you" to both St. Mary's and the United Church for Christmas services that they arranged for them.

In the week before Christmas St. Mary's Parish members brought Holy Communion up to Dryleaze, and at the weekend United Church members, led by the Rev. Phil Summers kindly hosted a Carol Service here. Both services were much appreciated. They were reminders of the real meaning of Christmas. Thank you to everyone involved.

*Mary George*



This morning, I welcomed the children as they walked up the frost covered path on their way up to Blue Coat Primary School. We are now in the depths of winter, with the memories of Christmas having been left behind. However, the joy and enthusiasm that children bring with them every day warms our hearts and souls. Where we see the inconvenience of scraping cars, they show us the wonder and excitement that God's creation brings. We all feel very privileged to see the world through children's eyes when we are with them.

There has been plenty of learning taking place in the first few days and weeks of school. Each class is engrossed in the topics and areas on which they are currently focusing. In Milepost 1 (Years 1 and 2), they have recently taken a flight to Kenya! This was all done from the comfort of their own classroom. The children had their own boarding passes in order to board their (virtual) flight to the East African country. A thrilling video clip was used to bring this experience to life for them. This was the "hook" to draw children in to their Geography topic where the children learn about a contrasting environment.

The curriculum at Blue Coat is designed to prepare the children to be "future ready". We use a problem based learning curriculum, which involves a problem (or a hook) which is used to give the children a real life context for their learning that inspires them to learn (like the "flight" to Kenya). The children then tell us what they know about the topic already and what they would like to find out. Then, the teachers model with the children what they are going to learn in the coming weeks. The problem is revisited at the end of the topic. We believe that this means that our children see a purpose in learning, are excited by the topics and are also taught how to plan themselves when they want to find out about a specific area. In future, our children should be experts in planning how to find out more about something that they are interested in, as well as having all the skills needed to revise in readiness for exams and beyond.

We love it when our children contribute to our curriculum. In Milepost 3 (Years 5 and 6) Jenson used his expertise to teach the others. Jenson is one of the best racers in the country – currently he races in the IAME Cadet category, nationally. When his class were learning about friction, Jenson brought in the brake pads from his kart and explained how they use friction to slow down. This really brought the learning to life for the others and is something that we love to see here at Blue Coat Primary School.

In Milepost 2 (Years 3 and 4), the children have been learning about Black History in their History topic. We think that this is really important for us,

especially because of the make-up of our school. To be “future ready” we want our children to know about the achievements of people like Mary Seacole and Walter Tull. It was great to see the children celebrating diversity and recognizing the contribution of Black History to our country and our world.

In the coming days, some children will be going to the Christingle Service. These are children selected from our inspirational Ignite Club, which we have spoken about previously. This is going to take place with Bishop Rachel at Gloucester Cathedral on January the 22nd. We enjoy supporting The Children’s Society in this annual event.

We have plenty more in the pipeline at Blue Coat Primary School. Next week Class Discovery will be going to The Egg Theatre in Bath to watch Snow Mouse, among many other great experiences. This keeps every day an adventure for us all. As ever, Blue Coat is an exciting place for children and adults alike.

*Glyn Jones*  
*Headteacher*


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## **Holiday at Home 2022**

Holiday at Home is an event run by all the churches in Wotton, and is aimed at those who live alone in the town and who might not go away on holiday.

In 2020 and 2021 this obviously didn’t happen, but in 2022 Churches Together is asking whether we should do it again. Once we have decided on a date in either July or August we can decide on a venue (it will be either the United Church or the Baptist Church whose kitchens can cater for a number of folk), and then start to plan the food, entertainment and transport , and also decide who we should invite. It may still be that we decide that now is not the right time, and we would welcome input from other people.

We will need volunteers - quite a lot of them. If you have any comments or are willing to help, please do contact Judy Mills ([judy.mills@live.co.uk](mailto:judy.mills@live.co.uk) 0781 795 8199) or Alison Jackson ([alison.jackson24@btinternet.com](mailto:alison.jackson24@btinternet.com) 01453 843072)

	<p><b>Tea and Chat</b></p> <p>United Church Hall, Bradley Street</p> <p>Every Wednesday 2.30 - 4.00pm</p> <p>An informal get-together for anyone who would like a cuppa, cake and company</p>
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## The IMB at HMP Leyhill

The Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) at HMP Leyhill is looking for new members.

HMP Leyhill is situated at Tortworth, close to Junction 14 of the M5 and caters for adult male prisoners mainly being prepared for release and resettlement. It's an Open prison, on an attractive rural site.

The IMB monitoring team are members of the general public who are totally independent of the Prison and Probation Service. The purpose of their monitoring is to check that proper standards of care and decency are maintained and that prisoners are being prepared for release by an effective programme of rehabilitation and resettlement. Their role is very different from that of Prison Visitors.

The Board has access to HMP Leyhill at any time of day or night. Members observe all parts of the prison, talking to prisoners and staff and monitoring all aspects of prison life. Individual members monitor remotely or by visiting 1 or 2 times a month. The Board meets monthly and discusses current issues with the Prison Governor.

The Board is required to submit an Annual Report to the Secretary of State for Justice. The report focuses on Safety, Humane Treatment, Health & Wellbeing, Progression and Release. The report receives a detailed response and is subsequently published.

For someone wanting to get involved in their local community, this is an ideal opportunity to do something a little bit different, potentially challenging and undoubtedly vitally important. The IMB acts as an independent voice in a closed community.

This is a voluntary role for which all necessary training is provided, travel expenses and in some cases loss of earnings and childcare/carer costs are paid. Applicants need to be over 18 and should live within 45 minutes travel time of the prison. Members come from all walks of life and formal qualifications are not required. Useful Information about the IMB Person Specification and Application Guidance can be found at <https://www.imb.org.uk/about-us>. Alternatively, email [imb@justice.gov.uk](mailto:imb@justice.gov.uk) or call the national office on 0203 334 3265 with any questions.

Once an Application form has been completed and submitted, all candidates will be invited to make a preliminary visit to the prison prior to interview. The recruitment campaign starts on Monday 14th February 2022 and completed applications must be submitted by Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2022. Please quote Recruitment Campaign Reference 1198/Leyhill/2022 on all correspondence and forms.

Applications can only be submitted through the Online Applications Form at [imb.org.uk/current-vacancies](https://www.imb.org.uk/current-vacancies)



**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2022**



# **FRIDAY 4 MARCH**

A SERVICE FOR EVERYONE

At

United Church,  
Bradley Street,  
Wotton u Edge.

10:00am

Please join this Wave of Prayer spreading  
through the world.

**I know the plans I have for you**

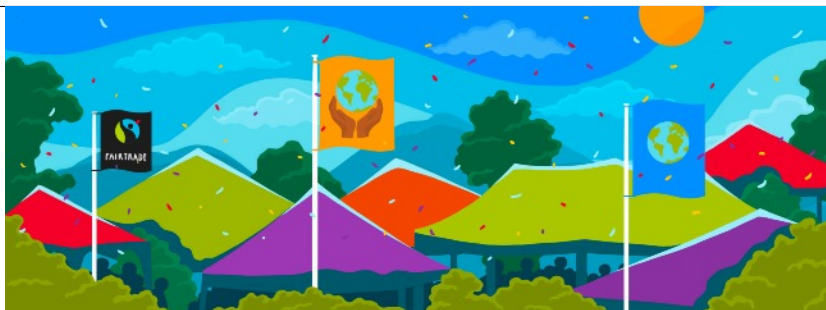
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ation · Registered Charity Number 23224

There is planning meeting for World Day of Prayer on Thursday, 3rd February, 2:30pm at the United Church. We would welcome help. We also need a large globe if anyone can lend us one.  
Tel Kate Barlow on 01453844013 or 07980 635566

## **Lent Lectures 2022 - save the dates!**

In line with previous years, a series of lectures has been organised by the clergy, to be held on Wednesday evenings throughout Lent (9 March - 6 April), in the Baptist Church (precise details next month).

The subject for the series is “Christians and the Climate Crisis” and the speakers are all Christians with special interest in and/or responsibility for sustainability and environment. That said, these talks may be of interest to friends and family who do not attend church. So bring a friend!



### **Fairtrade Fortnight 21 February to 6 March**

For two weeks each year at the end of February and start 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.

For more information see: <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get-involved/current-campaigns/fairtrade-fortnight/>

## **Thank you, Farewell and God Bless**

It seems - in fact it was - only a short time ago that we were welcoming Rev Rachel Cook (Cookie) and her family as she was appointed Vicar at the Tyndale Benefice.

For all of us, it is sad that circumstances have meant she has to leave us, but we trust that God has plans for her and for the Anglican churches of Wotton, North Nibley, Alderley and Tresham.<sup>7</sup>

Cookie, we wish you and yours all the best for the future.

(Cookie's last service here is/was on 30 January.)

You are warmly invited to Charfield Chapel  
for an Alpha Supper on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022  
7:30-9pm



## IS THERE MORE TO LIFE THAN THIS?

This one-off evening is an opportunity to meet others from a range of backgrounds who are asking questions about life and meaning, to enjoy some delicious home-cooked food and try out the Alpha course.

Alpha is an 11-week course that creates a space for a conversation about faith, life and God. We'll be running the course on Monday evenings following the Alpha Supper.

The course is being run by Charfield Chapel along with friends from Kingswood Chapel, Cromhall Chapel and Wotton Baptist Church.

To join us for the Alpha Supper, RSVP to [charfieldchapel@gmail.com](mailto:charfieldchapel@gmail.com)

[alpha.org](http://alpha.org)

### United Ramblers



United Ramblers walk on Monday 7th February meet at the church 10am. Graham Jackson will lead a 4 mile walk starting at the Amberley Inn at Amberley. We will walk towards Rodborough Fort and return across the common towards Minchinhampton. It is a relatively flat walk. Lunch will be available at the Amberley Inn.

The walk on 7th March will be led by Rob Carruthers. Meet at the church 10am or in the National Trust car park at Woodchester Mansion from where we will walk around the lakes. There is a steady walk down hill from the car park and of course a steady walk up hill to return! Lunch will be available in Wotton.

*Rob Carruthers*

# Little Fishes

Play, craft, songs, story and snack for  
babies and pre-schoolers  
Real coffee and space to chill  
for mums, dads and carers

Term-time Thursdays 10am-12 noon

Wotton Baptist Church, Rope Walk, GL12 7AA

Entrance fee £1 under 12 months; £1.50 for toddlers; £2 per family/childminders

For more information about Little Fishes see website [www.wottonbaptist.org.uk](http://www.wottonbaptist.org.uk)

Fish Photo: copyright rmainuk (flickr)

## Give thanks and Celebrate



Can you imagine working in the same job for 70 years? And a job with, I imagine, slightly more pressure than working in the Co-op!\*

On 7 February 1952 a 25-year-old Princess Elizabeth was on holiday in Kenya when she learned of the death of her Father, instantly elevating her to Queen, although the Coronation didn't take place until 2 June 1953.

Wotton is making plans to celebrate her long and faithful reign, and the churches are not going to be left out! At the very least there will be a Service, probably along the lines of Songs of Praise, and a chance to give thanks to God.

The whole Platinum Jubilee weekend will, we hope, be a celebration, but it is on **Sunday 5 June** that the Service will take place. And there will be room for all! More details in due course.

\* Co-op staff: we do appreciate you: thanks for being there.



## Archbishop Desmond Tutu

### 7 October 1931 - 26 December 2021



In conversation with Nelson Mandela, 2008

Desmond Mpilo Tutu was born in a small gold-mining town in what was then the Transvaal. He first followed in his father's footsteps as a teacher, but left after the passage of the Bantu Education Act in 1953 which introduced racial segregation in schools.

He joined the church and was strongly influenced by many white clergymen in the country, especially another strong opponent of apartheid, Bishop Trevor Huddleston.

Never afraid to speak out against injustice, he was also prepared to take direct action, showing no fear of arrest or imprisonment: he stressed however that his motives were religious, not political.

The BBC obituary says: 'He was witty, and his conversation was frequently punctuated by high-pitched chuckles. But beyond this, he was a man of impeccably strong moral convictions who strove to bring about a peaceful South Africa.'

Since his death many of his quotes have been circulating on social media and elsewhere. Below are a few.

- We may be surprised at the people we find in heaven. God has a soft spot for sinners. His standards are quite low.
- Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put

together that overwhelm the world.

- Differences are not intended to separate, to alienate. We are different precisely in order to realise our need of one another.
- When the missionaries came to Africa they had the Bible and we had the land. They said "Let us pray." We closed our eyes. When we opened them we had the Bible and they had the land.
- If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse, and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.
- My father always used to say, "Don't raise your voice. Improve your argument." Good sense does not always lie with the loudest shouters, nor can we say that a large, unruly crowd is always the best arbiter of what is right.
- We learn from history that we don't learn from history.
- Forgiving is not forgetting; its actually remembering--remembering and not using your right to hit back. Its a second chance for a new beginning. And the remembering part is particularly important. Especially if you don't want to repeat what happened.
- Language is very powerful. Language does not just describe reality. Language creates the reality it describes.
- A person is a person through other persons; you can't be human in isolation; you are human only in relationships.
- There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they're falling in.

We give thanks to God for the life, work and witness of Desmond Tutu.

### **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - 18 - 25 January**

Half hour meetings in each of Wotton's churches, followed a programme prepared by churches in the Middle East on the theme 'we have seen his star in the East'.

As well as prayer, there were questions for discussion each day and encouragement to go and do something, following the link <https://ctbi.org.uk/go-and-do-week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2022/>

Whether you were at the meetings or not, do 'Go and Do'.

## Praying for the Churches

In February we are asked to remember especially in our prayers, the Oliver Memorial Chapel in Synwell.

Their Pastor Lois Etherington writes: Thank you for the offer of prayers. May we please ask for prayers for the chapel to be able to have more services if possible. Since the Covid restrictions we have only had 2 a month due to a number of our local preachers not being available for various reasons. So if any preachers would like to lead a service for us they will be made very welcome and we will be very grateful.

We haven't much news except to say that we were able to have a lovely Christmas Carol service with some of our members taking part and we ended with carols outside followed by tea and mince pies. Its hard to believe that already our thoughts are looking forwards to Easter and then on to the Queen's Jubilee.

Just a reminder to people, that there is a defibrillator on the chapel wall. It has already been used a couple of times, so help is available in emergencies.

May God's peace and blessings be with us all.

*Lois*

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## Say 'No' to Floral Foam

Floral foam, or Oasis has been around for 60 years and is wonderful for holding flower stalks firm to get your flowers arranged just where you want them.

It's clever stuff; lightweight when dry but will hold up to 50 times its weight of water, easy to cut and shape to fit those awkward vases.

However it's made from synthetic, non-recyclable plastic and is created using a combination of carbon black, formaldehyde and phenolic foam, which are all toxic. It's non-recyclable and will not decompose, merely breaking down into smaller and smaller micro-plastic particles

As with all micro-plastics, these filter into the oceans where they are ingested by marine life and so enter the food chain.

The RHS has banned the use of foam at their shows so I am sure we in Wotton's churches can do so. The alternatives? Balled chicken wire; glass beads; use a kenzan (one of those spiky things), bendy twigs ...

We are told to never tip water down the drain that has had oasis in it - strain it then put the water in a hole in the garden and send all the Oasis to landfill.

As Churches we need to take a lead in looking after God's creation and as Desmond Tutu said (page ix): 'Do your little bit of good where you are ...'

# WOTTON BAPTIST CHURCH

## ART GROUP

WE'RE A FRIENDLY GROUP WITH A VARIETY OF SKILLS, EXPERIENCE AND AGES, SO ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US!

**WHEN:** EVERY TUESDAY MORNING FROM 9.30 TO 12

**WHERE:** BAPTIST CHURCH HALL, ROPE WALK

**WHO:** ANYONE WHO WANTS TO PAINT OR DRAW, OR TRY NEW SKILLS; NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY

**WHAT:** COME WITH YOUR OWN MATERIALS, OR TRY SOMETHING NEW USING OUR SUPPLIES.

COFFEE/TEA AND BISCUITS PROVIDED. ALL THIS FOR A SMALL ANNUAL FEE AND A WEEKLY CHARGE OF £1



**POP IN ONE TUESDAY  
AND SEE WHAT WE DO  
- THERE'S NO OBLIGATION  
TO JOIN!**

'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](mailto:judy.mills@live.co.uk)  
All items and articles for the March edition should be submitted by 5pm on Monday 23 February