

October 2022

T

ogether in Wotton

**Christians worshipping and working together in
Wotton under Edge**

The Ark Coffee Shop continues to be enjoyed by many people including families now that we have the play area up and running. We have over 40 volunteers who we are indebted to for their carina commitment.

However, owing to the smaller number of volunteers we have post Covid, it has not been possible to open on three afternoons each week and often find ourselves short of volunteers to cover the current morning opening hours.

For insurance purposes we are unable to open with only one volunteer present. In order to meet the needs of our regular customers and our ongoing financial commitments we do need to be open every day.



Please, if you feel you could join us for a regular shift or if you are a regular volunteer and feel you could do an extra shift please contact Babs Pearn - pearnbabs@hotmail.com

Training will be provided if necessary.

Thank you from the Ark Management Committee.

Praying for the Churches

During September we are asked to pray especially for St Mary's

Rev Lesley Hewish writes: St Mary's is working hard to find ways of growing our community so it can be inclusive for families and children. We are trying out new patterns of worship which include Cafe Church, healing and wholeness and our Celebrate 4pm service will be re introduced on the 3rd Sunday of each month in 2023 with a taster of what's to come through Advent. Please pray for us to be open to new ways of worshipping and engaging with our community.

“If you have decades to plan your funeral, and you know it will be watched by the world, and yet the content you choose mentions very little about the amazing life you’ve lived and focuses instead on Jesus and His saving grace, then I think it’s fair to say you truly loved and served Jesus with a deeply humble heart.”

How fortunate we have been to have lived under a Queen whose dedication to duty in the service of her country was only surpassed by her dedication to God!

Wotton gave thanks for her life

At Dryleaze House, so Mary George reports, "The television broadcast of the Queen's State funeral was screened in the Lounge. A group of residents came together to watch this great event in company remembering also that basically a family had experienced a personal loss."

Wotton Baptist Church invited those who wished to view the funeral on their big screen. A wonderful opportunity for some people who would otherwise have been alone on this historic day.

On the day before her funeral a **Community Service was held at St Mary's** giving people a chance to give their testimony of love for our long serving Queen, for us to hear some of her words of wisdom spoken through her reign and to give thanks for her life and dedication to our countries and commonwealth.

There was the opportunity to light candles and sign a book of condolence. All were welcome, young and old, visitor or resident, with faith or none.

As we thank God for HM Queen Elizabeth II's life and reign, we pray for her son King Charles III, that he too puts God at the forefront of all he does

We pray also for the family and friends of this remarkable yet humble woman who will be missed by so many.

Reflecting on The Queen's Life



Hope in Life and Death

Death is part of life. It seems strange to state this so starkly but it is true. From the moment we are born, we are on a journey through life that is redolent with our mortality. We are taught what to avoid (fire, venomous creatures, etc.); to be careful with that which can do us harm (including tobacco, drugs and alcohol) and to consider the risks when driving or hill walking (for instance). The NHS and the Health & Safety Executive do all they can to keep us alive but, one day, we will experience death just as Queen Elizabeth II experienced it on 8th September. And so, 2022 will be remembered as the year when Queen Elizabeth died.

In the Old Testament there is a reference to the death of a king. Uzziah was a king of Judah who, like our queen, ascended the throne at a young age and reigned successfully and well for over fifty years. His death was a significant moment because so many only knew one king. When Isaiah had a vision of God in the Temple, he anchored it 'in the year that King Uzziah died' (Isaiah 6:1). And our lives are earthed in time from the day we are born until the day we die.

For Christians, death is not the end but the beginning of a life when time is no more. We declare a 'sure and certain hope' of being raised to eternal life (1 Corinthians 15:51f). Our hope rests in Jesus who died that we might live. The Queen's faith in God, through Jesus her Saviour, gave her - and gives us - great assurance. Jesus invites us to die with Him that we might also rise with Him (Romans 6:5-8) and, when we make a Christian commitment, we die to self and seek to live the life of Jesus, eternally.

Our nations are mourning because our Sovereign, whom we honour and have come to admire and to love as a child of God, has died. We grieve with tears and smiles. Our tears are for our loss whilst our smiles are for happy memories and the joy of eternal hope. Our Queen believed in eternal life and we also believe and trust in Jesus who said, 'I am the resurrection and the life, those who believe in me, even though they die, will live' (John 11:25).

President of the Methodist Conference, The Revd Graham Thompson

There was once a time that the start of a new academic year was much like the last at Blue Coat Primary School. This has certainly not been the case recently. After the extraordinary events of the last two years, we have witnessed another historic event. The usual excitement and enthusiasm of September has been tempered with quietness and reflection as we mourned the passing of Queen Elizabeth II.

As the news of her passing was announced, we spent time with the children talking about her achievements and celebrating her life. The children felt that they had really got to know the Queen after her Platinum Jubilee. As a school we were inspired by her dedication to service, which was an exemplary lesson to us all that we should serve those around us, even when the individual is as important as our monarch. As Rupert, one of our members of Key Stage 1 told me “Even though she died, we will remember what she taught us – even when we are old.”

We have had the great pleasure of welcoming some new children to Blue Coat, both in our Early Years class and elsewhere around the school. I am always taken aback by how quickly our newest members feel a part of our community. Seemingly, within moments they have broad smiles on their faces as they are playing and learning with their new friends. This is testimony to the warmth and kindness of the children and adults who are here already. Blue Coat is a place where everyone is welcome.

Usually, the start of Year 6 is a time for concentration and hard work as the children are preparing for SATs and life beyond Blue Coat. This year is slightly different. As I write this, I can see them whizzing past my windows as they take part in “Bikeability” (what was Cycling Proficiency). Knowing this year group, they will be as sensible and determined out on the road as they are in class. We are already very proud of them.

The Year 6 children also enjoyed visiting St Mary’s for our Welcome Service. They played a key role in welcoming our newest Early Years children to the Blue Coat community. We count ourselves incredibly fortunate that Reverend Lesley Hewish and the rest of St Mary’s help us in making this event special for everybody involved.

*Glyn Jones
Headteacher*



Neuro-Divergent Peer Support Group

Last Wednesday of every month
Drop in 7pm to 9pm

A group run by and for ND adults and parents / carers of ND children, including Autism, ADHD, PDA, Dyslexia, etc. All adults welcome, whether you are ND, live with a ND family member, or are just interested in learning more about ND life.

For more information contact wottonnd@gmail.com, or come along to the group at The Keepers, Symn Lane, Wotton, GL12 7BD

News from Wotton Baptist Church

During Tom’s sabbatical we’re having different speakers on Sunday mornings. We are welcoming drama group “The Covenant Players” on Sunday 2 October. All welcome, this will be suitable for all ages. 10:30am at WBC.

We have also just started holding monthly evening services at 7.30 on the second Sunday of the month, alternating between worship and prayer. The first of these was a worship evening on Sunday 11 September and the next will be a prayer evening on Sunday 9 October. All welcome.

Looking ahead, the Tearfund Big Quiz will be on Saturday 19 November so Save the Date!

Please note: the closing date for the below is
4 October



We're Hiring!

Are you passionate about making a
difference in your local community?

Due to a donation from a local supporter, we are delighted to
be looking for a:

Kitchen Coordinator

With support from the Trustees and the Hub Manager, we are looking for
someone with:

- Experience of working and cooking in a commercial kitchen
- Knowledge of Food Safety Management procedures and Food Hygiene regulations
- Ideally holding level 3 food hygiene. If not, you must hold level 2 and be willing to undertake level 3.
- Knowledge of nutrition, healthy eating and cooking on a budget.

To coordinate the food provision of The Keepers' Kitchen - to include
meals for the freezer, social meals and cookery lessons. To work 6 hours a
week over 1 or 2 days on a fixed-term contract until September 2023.

Closing date 4th October 2022.

For more information, please email
thekeepersrecruitment@gmail.com

www.thekeepers.org.uk
The Keepers, Symn Lane, Wotton-Under-Edge, Glos, GL12 7BD

(Biblical) Storytelling Course at the United Church

29 & 30 October - led by Revd Phil Summers

Cost £35 to include lunch on
both days and tea, coffee and
homemade cake

Wotton United Church has
enjoyed Phil's gift for story-
telling over the past few years. It
is a wonderful way to
communicate the Gospel, both
within the Church Service and
online (see Phil's You Tube
Channel, Perfect Little

Gentleman [www.youtube.com/
channel/UCR3MK4vyIarT6LLqbcIFNvQ](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCR3MK4vyIarT6LLqbcIFNvQ))

We have arranged two days of workshops dedicated to the craft of Storytelling.
Suitable for beginners and all those who wish develop their natural storytelling
gifts. We will learn stories, share stories and develop our ability to tell them.
Sunday morning will be an opportunity to tell a story to a live congregation.

Story telling is a joyous, community activity. We shall have fun and grow together.

If you are needed elsewhere on Sunday morning, don't let that stop you from
coming just join us for lunch and the afternoon session on Sunday. Please email
me to book your place janegraywallis@hotmail.com



United Ramblers

October's United Ramblers walk will be on Monday 3rd
October and be led by Alan Jackson. Meet outside the
United Church at 10am.

We will start in Hillesley then join the Cotswold Way back to
Wortley and return across the fields to Hillesley. We hope to
arrange lunch in the Fleece at Hillesley and start from their
park.

It's 4.25 miles, according to my watch, with three stiles and a fourth where the
gate was unlocked when we walked it a few days ago. It's not flat - Hillesley is
the highest point - but stays in the valley and the only seriously steep bit is
very short and has steps.

Please let Alan know if you intend coming: alan.jackson1946@btinternet.com



With a page to fill to make this a tidy 8-page publication, I hope I am forgiven for the below.

Listed in Britain's Pilgrim's Places by Nick Mayhew-Smith and Guy Hayward, it is relatively close to home, and most of us will have passed it at some time.

As far as I can understand, the derrick is for navigation lights.



Drive across the old Severn Bridge at low tide and you will be aware of the military establishment at Beachley, between the Severn and the Wye. But looking to your left, amongst the rock and mud you might be able to see the remains of the 13C chapel on Chapel Rock although only a fragment of wall and an arched window remain.

This island – more of a rock really – was the home of St Tecla: the chapel was built to commemorate her hermitage.

A chapel on the rock is first recorded in 1290 when a Benedictine Monk visited. Though founded by St Tecla in the fifth century, a later chapel was dedicated to St Twrog. Records show that it earned an income in the middle ages, perhaps from pilgrims, but was in ruins by the 18th century.

This was not just an inhospitable place, but with the huge tidal range in the Severn estuary, a very dangerous one. There is nothing on the island to sustain life so even a hermit would have to cross to the mainland for food.

Although mudflats at low tide suggest it is possible to explore the island, it is not deemed safe to do so – a boy of eight was drowned here in 2005; the tragedy recorded on a memorial plaque above the shore.

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

All material for the September edition please by 5pm on Monday 24 October