

GRAPEVINE

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Easter and the Coronation of King Charles III

Alleluia, Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed. This glorious proclamation by which we begin our Easter season services and indeed the same proclamation by which the Coronation of Charles III was begun. The service pointed at Jesus Christ. His Majesty was greeted in the name of the Lord, he was welcomed into the King's house and accepted that welcome with humility and an attitude of service. I have not come to be served, but to serve. Our Lord Jesus gave his life as a ransom for many, and in that act of service, set us all free to be fully alive in God's presence. (Mark 10:45)

Our Coronation Day Parade Service and the Coronation Barbeque happened because many people pulled together in an act of service, to make the event a success. So much happened in the background with Scout leaders Jason and Sam cooking up a fabulous barbeque, Adam in the kitchen doing onions and the veggie food, Eileen and her cohorts doing the cupcakes and cakes, Rosie's fabulous chocolate birthday cakes and all the games organised and setup by Alex and company (Charlie counts as company),

and tables and chairs setup by Keith and Viv and others before the service. I am sure I've missed out people (and our thanks to them as well), because so



much was happening, yet it shows how the community can be engaged with love, joy, and wonderful fellowship by setting up an event that is done out of a desire to reach people with Jesus' love.

And that is the difference in all we as Christians seek to do. To show His love in a way that others may see and know that we are His disciples. It is that unique love

that nourishes, upholds, enlightens, comforts, feeds, corrects, encourages, sustains, rejoices and above all, points to the source of love Divine, Christ the Lord. (1 Cor 13:1-13) Being a disciple is being Easter people, we live for the Lord as he is alive, both in us by his Holy Spirit, but also interceding for us before the throne of the Almighty. (Romans 8:34)

Thrones are places of authority and King Charles started his reign kneeling before the throne of God, to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion from His table, to be anointed and inspired by the Holy Spirit, to declare his confidence in the salvation that is found in Christ as declared in the Holy Scriptures. (John 6:53-58)

God save the King, may King Charles III know in his life that affirming, upholding and thrilling love of God as found in Christ Jesus our Lord. May his reign be established in the true authority of being a disciple of the Risen Lord Jesus Christ. Alleluia, Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed.

Revd Gordon MacBean
Curate, St John's Welling

St John's News

We have witnessed two memorable services since the April News, one impacting the whole country, **The Coronation** which we celebrated with a wonderful Parade Service followed by a BBQ and fun afternoon which many people thoroughly enjoyed, as they also did the **Lamplighter Coronation Tea Party** six days later.

And then locally we hosted the **Installation/Licensing service of the new Archdeacon of Bromley and Bexley, Allie Kerr**, a Service that was both reverent and Jesus centred. The many visiting clergy and friends commented on the beautiful music and the warm welcome they received. What a privilege to be able to give of our best!

Holy week and Easter services a few weeks earlier enabled us to reflect on and rejoice over the most significant events in

the world's history and, with other Christians, to walk through Welling on Good Friday, witnessing to our own town.

The Life Service's Easter Celebration included an Easter egg hunt as well as joyful worship and a challenging talk.

Many of us are greatly enjoying **Linzi Golding's** weekly blogs from Uganda. The last month has not been without incident!

Let's be honest, The St John's family has been doing a lot of **food sharing** recently! As well as the **BBQ and Afternoon Tea**

the ladies have had another Breakfast and a **Curry**. The men have had a **Breakfast** too! Each occasion has enabled such a great opportunity to enjoy time together, grow friendship and get to know people coming into our church family.

The current **Alpha Group** has just ended...as an Alpha group, but are transitioning into a House group! Another new House group is about to begin. If joining a House Group is on your agenda please talk to me!

Our **Annual Church Meeting** was such a good occasion as we reflected on God's goodness to us in so many ways. During the meeting, Danny Branch, Micah Gompers and Dorin Mkala were welcomed unopposed onto the PCC, and Beverley Beaumont will also join as the Reader rep. The Church is people and, it was lovely to welcome **Jackson and Sophia Ellender** at their recent Baptism. We have been praying and, where appropriate, visiting **Lionel King and Andy Inglis**, both of whom have spent time in hospital.

We were all saddened when lovely **Yvonne Lynch** died so suddenly but know, sight restored, she is now with the Lord Jesus whom she loved and served.

The next two months will be good. We know there will be Confirmations and Spark in the Park, but many as yet unknowns...but, **not unknown to God**. Let's continue to journey with Him.

So, till August.

Estelle Woodcock

International Justice Mission

They have helped free tens of thousands and convict thousands of perpetrators. There are lots of happy success stories on the IJM.UK website.

IJM (International Justice Mission), is a global organisation that protects people in poverty from human trafficking, modern-day slavery, violence and police abuse of power. I must stress that this is not the same as people smuggling which is helping people into other countries for a fee. IJM helps people who have been tricked, forced or taken into a life of modern day slavery in its truest and cruellest meaning. They are usually not paid, not given a place to sleep, fed scraps, work very long hours in very dangerous work and suffer mental and physical abuse daily at the hands of their captors. They are prisoners with no escape, property to be sold and bought.

IJM's mission is to protect people in poverty from violence by rescuing victims, bringing criminals to justice, restoring survivors to safety and strength, and helping local law

enforcement build a safe future that lasts.

There are over 50 million men, women and children affected by modern day slavery.

IJM staff are dedicated to saving enslaved people around the world, despite rescue missions requiring lots of meticulous planning and the high risks involved. Bringing criminals to justice often takes years and some staff and defendants have been murdered.



BUT IJM NEEDS OUR HELP – it requires lots and lots of prayer for God's help with all they do. We have an important part to play with our earnest prayers.

They would also appreciate any monetary gifts to help fund their work. There are various suggestions on the website of how we can help no matter how small. Maybe you could take part in their organised fundraising like the bike rides or talk to me if you want to fund raise in our church.

If you click onto 'download resources' there are fun things to do with your children etc.

PLEASE CHECK IT OUT – <http://www.ijmuk.org>

Terry Golding

Ring for the King

A few months ago, I saw details in the media of [Ring for the King](#), a quest to find enough bell-ringers to ring every set of church bells in the UK for the King's Coronation. New young bellringers were particularly sought, to increase the number and lower the average age of campanologists (bell ringers).



I thought through the young people we have in Dubsters and 3dub, and whether any of them might be interested. It's a group activity in a safe environment and something completely different to belong to, and I thought of James Wood, who is part of Dubsters and came from Bishop Ridley Church. As you probably know, we do joint youth work with both Bishop Ridley and St Peter's, with members from at least one other church in our groups at present.

My first enquiry was to St John's Church, Erith where we already know the team, and although they didn't have the resources to train anyone, they pointed me to the other Churches in Bexley who might. On contacting St John's Church, Sidcup, I found that they weren't only recruiting but were clued up to train people and had a trial morning coming

up, so I asked James if he might be interested and talked to his parents. He was interested, and Kirstie (mum) took him to the try-out morning and he started training. He has loved it! And what's more, there was just enough time for him to get trained up to Ring for the King on the morning of the Coronation (3 hours), which he really enjoyed.

There are 38,000 bells across the UK, but when the recruitment drive began last October, there were only 30,000 ringers. By 18th May, 1500 potential recruits had come forward to fill the 8,000 vacancies. It takes 15-20 hours to learn how to handle a bell properly before joining the group ringing. 9 years old is not too young to start, and like some other areas of Church life, it's an all-age activity where children, young



people and adults can join in together. If you know someone who might be interested, I can now point them in the right direction as there are at 8 Churches with sets of bells in Bexley or immediately around Bexley, or visit <https://kcacr.org.uk/lewisham-district/towers/>.

Kate Foot

Making a Difference



I have written articles in the Grapevine before about how the Bible is clear that we (humans) and all living things are God's creation and about how we as Christians have to care if we believe the Bible, even if it is not naturally a particular interest of yours.

There are so many things we can do about it and many are obvious to

us all already. One surprisingly simple thing is to talk about it. To talk about the problems, about solutions and even about the new problems that come with some of the solutions.

Talking about it makes it a more natural topic of conversation, not just for people who are into the environment. Look at how King Charles used to be seen as quirky because he was concerned and now it is seen as a good point about him. And when it becomes more talked about, politicians and businesses pick up on that and then they start thinking about more meaningful change. Businesses then make things so that environmentally better choices are easier and cheaper and the momentum builds from there.

St John's has been, and is, making changes and I will pick on just one recent thing where two people in particular have been intentional. I would like to recognise Val Gompers and Viv McGill who were proactive about seeing that the Coronation Fun Day involved less waste, minimal single use (no disposable plates or cutlery) and packaging going where it should for recycling. No rocket science, just being intentional about the basics and making it happen.

Bob Morris

Ladies Curry Night



Men's Breakfast



My Faith Journey: Cathy Claridge

Shortly after moving to Thamesmead in 1983, a London City Mission outreach worker called Geoff knocked on her door, and at the time, before she and he talked, she thought she was already a Christian because she thought she was a good person. After that encounter, Geoff knocked on her door every couple of days, but Cathy didn't answer the door and avoided Geoff. Eventually she did respond, and she and Geoff began a regular Bible study at her house. Cathy soon realized that was not a Christian and needed to invite Jesus into her life (be born again), and Cathy later heard that the whole of Geoff's Church, Emmanuel Church in Thamesmead, had been praying for her to respond and thereby begin to find Christ. Geoff even knew Cathy's old Sunday school teacher from Hackney who had taught Cathy twenty years earlier and they met up for



tea at Geoff's house. In June 1983 Cathy started to attend Emmanuel Church regularly.

In 1984 on her daughter's first birthday, Cathy was baptised, and shortly afterwards she was filled with the Holy Spirit. Cathy would invite young mums to her home on a Thursday afternoon for coffee and for the children to play. This soon grew, the group of mums approached the Church to see if they could meet there, and Lighthouse Parent and Toddler group was formed which ran for 25 years.

In 1987, Cathy's husband left her, and she was left on her own with two daughters. Cathy continued to study the Bible with Geoff until 1989 but needed to take up full time employment to make ends meet. Cathy gave up going to church and at the end of 1991 found out she was pregnant with no partner, and nowhere to go, but back to Emmanuel Church, where she was welcomed with open arms. After Sophie her baby was born in April 1992 Cathy volunteered her time at the Church, and then that became her paid role as Church administrator and an active member of the church.

Through the Holy Spirit's prompting in 2012, Cathy became a Street Pastor, and trained as a bereavement counsellor and looked for ways to serve God in her community.

In 2020 Cathy was experiencing a difficult time at Emmanuel Church, and a change of Minister there made her begin to look for a new Church. In 2021, when she felt called by God through the Holy Spirit, to apply for her present role, she subsequently began to worship at St John's, Welling.

Cathy feels her faith journey has not been dramatic, just a natural process helped by listening to the Holy Spirit's intimations, those urges one cannot ignore.

Mike Cosser

The Churches Together in Welling Walk of Witness

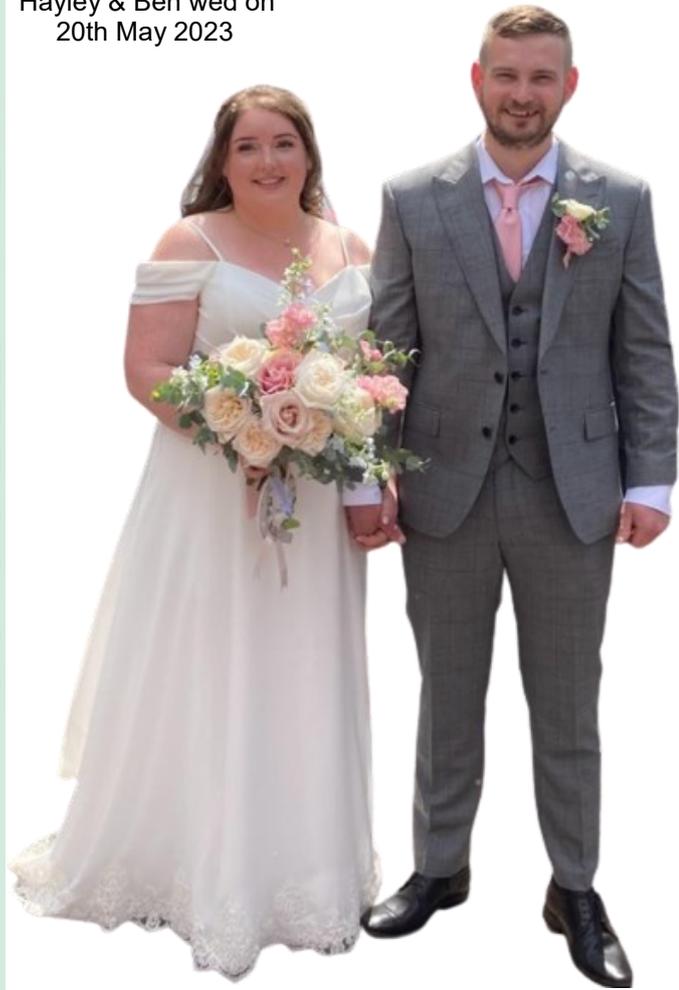
Mr & Mrs Goldsmith

Hayley & Ben wed on
20th May 2023

Good Friday 2023: The Churches Together in Welling Walk of



Witness returned last year, and this year the full lunch returned as well. It's a great way of meeting members of other Churches and something we do together where it is not just representatives or just leaders of Churches, but all of us. Approximately half the walkers/worshippers stay for lunch, and there have been many years when the youth and young adults have also socialised together over pizza and sport. With our differences in style of Church, being able to unite to thank God for Jesus' sacrifice for us on Good Friday is very special. **Kate Foot**



Community Coronation Fun Day

"Building Community- Becoming family" 7th May 2023



Lamplighters Coronation Tea Party

We had such a fantastic time at our Coronation Tea Party Fair! A very, very big thank you to everyone who helped set up, ran stalls, made cakes, donated items and helped out in so many other ways. You helped raise an amazing £2075! Proceeds will be shared between the Bangladesh tea gardens and Purulia Leprosy Home & Hospital.

