

Justin Welby urges nation to plant a tree to mark Queen's 70-year reign

Faith leaders have spoken out in support of a project to encourage communities, schools and gardeners to plant trees to mark the Queen's platinum jubilee.



The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has been joined by senior clerics from Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and other religions urging their communities to honour the head of state's lifetime of service by planting a tree.

In a video message where the leaders each speak a line, the Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis said: "In Jewish tradition, people are similar to trees, like them we can bless and protect our environment."

While Imam Qari Muhammad Asim, chair of Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board, said: "Prophet Mohammed spent his life caring for the creatures of God and urged humanity to plant trees to protect the environment."

The Queen's Green Canopy scheme has been launched to encourage people to plant trees from the start of the tree-planting season in October 2021 through to the end of 2022, to mark the Queen's 70-year reign which will be celebrated next year.

The scheme will also highlight 70 irreplaceable ancient woodlands across the UK and identify 70 ancient trees, and create a pilot training programme for unemployed young people to plant and manage trees.

Celebrity gardeners Alan Titchmarsh and Monty Don are among the project's official ambassadors which include former children's television presenter Baroness Floella Benjamin, chair of UK Sport Dame Katherine Grainger, former international rugby union referee Nigel Owens and actress Dame Judi Dench.

Veteran broadcaster Sir David Attenborough, who featured in the ITV documentary *The Queen's Green Planet*, talking to the Queen about the trees planted in Buckingham Palace's garden, is not officially involved in the project but is a supporter.

Schools and community groups will be able to apply for three million free saplings from the Woodland Trust as part of the project.

The Prince of Wales was joined by the Queen for the first jubilee tree-planting in the grounds of Windsor earlier this year, during the tree-planting season.

In a video message to launch the initiative, Charles urged people to join him to "plant a tree for the jubilee - in other words a 'tree-bilee'."

He said: "It is absolutely vital that more of the right species of trees are planted, in the right places, and that more woodlands, avenues, hedgerows and hedgerow trees and urban

planting schemes are established, whilst ensuring that we also protect and sustain what we already have.

"Whether you are an individual hoping to plant a single sapling in your garden, a school or community group planting a tree, a council, charity or business intending to plant a whole avenue of trees or a farmer looking to create new hedgerows, everyone across the country can get involved."

The scheme is being launched as part of the Royal Horticultural Society's "virtual" Chelsea Flower Show, taking part online this week.

People are being encouraged to use the summer to plan their jubilee projects and be ready for the start of the planting season in October, when they will be able to upload details and images on an interactive Queen's Green Canopy map.

Taking part in the scheme, which is being hosted by climate charity Cool Earth, could range from individuals planting trees in their own garden to the creation of platinum jubilee copses on council land or avenues in cities or housing developments.

The pilot training programme for unemployed young people aged between 16 and 24 will be run through Capel Manor College, London's only specialist environmental college, of which the Queen Mother was patron.

Donations to the scheme will go to deprived areas and urban schools through one of the partner organisations of the Queen's Green Canopy, Trees for Cities.

Heavenly Father,

We pray that we may be good stewards of your creation.

Thank you for the collaborative effort by faith leaders to care for our environment.

We remember the Queen in our prayers as she adjusts to life without Prince Philip

Amen

Bishop of London joins celebration for 15 years of the Filipino Chaplaincy

The Bishop of London joined the Filipino Chaplaincy at St John's Notting Hill on Ascension Day, together with the Mayor of Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the Consul General of the Philippines, to celebrate 15 years of the Filipino Chaplaincy in the Diocese and 500 years of Christianity in the Philippines.

Also present were members of a new Cantonese worship group comprised of newly arrived Christians from Hong Kong and members of the Persian Chaplaincy of the Diocese, as St John's hosts three linguistic chaplaincies.

The service was characterised by exuberant Filipino music and dancing and colourful traditional Filipino costumes, combined with classical European Church music led by The Orfeas Quartet and the St John's Choral Scholars.



Ascension Day, celebrating the cosmic Lordship of Christ, was the focus of the service, expressed through the presence of worshippers from very diverse backgrounds and traditions, all present in London as a global city. It also prefigured something of a return to more joyous, in-person worship. At the end of the service, the Bishop blessed a new beehive to be placed in St John's gardens as part of the Church's work in increasing biodiversity.

Places of worship vital for pandemic recovery says university study

Churches and other places of worship are not just for the faithful but can play a vital role in our recovery from the pandemic, according to new research from the University of York.



More than 5,500 people, made up of non-church members, congregations and church leaders, took part in the survey between August 2020 and March this year. It looked at the human cost of the pandemic when places of worship were closed and unable to play their usual role as crisis centres and places of comfort.

Dr Dee Dyas who led the research team, told Premier that a striking aspect of the findings was how strongly non-church members had

been affected by the closure of church buildings and activities:

"I think many people who don't normally go to church hadn't realised what churches meant to them until it was all taken away in a moment. And that goes from young mums desperate for contact with others, right through to older people who not only want social care, but also want to be able to go on volunteering because that's a lot of who they are. And all of that is something that churches offer."

Praising churches for "stepping up amazingly" since the pandemic began, Dr Dyas, said as we look forward to recovery it is vital to reinstate those activities and also increase them because the need is now greater :

"The isolation, the unprecedented pressure on people's mental health, insecurity that people right across society have been feeling about their lives, they didn't realise things could change so quickly and there's so much grief that hasn't really been dealt with."

79 per cent of those questioned for the survey identified social isolation as a key issue in their community, while 75 per cent of non-church members wanted access to churches as quiet spaces of reflection and comfort.

While 91 per cent of churches offered online engagement, Dr Dyas said online activity shouldn't be a replacement:

"We need to find a new mix mode as we go forward. We've reached many people, but it's not the same and not everybody has been able to join in - there is digital poverty, digital deprivation, but there is a lot to look forward to."

Diana Evans, head of Places of Worship Strategy for Historic England, one of the funders of the project, said: "This report gives voice to the pain people experienced when places of worship were locked during the pandemic. It also shows the potential of local places of worship for people of all faiths and none as the country moves towards recovery; acting as symbols of their community's long-term survival while serving as local hubs for social care, practical support and companionship."

'He put his hand on my head' Liverpool goalkeeper thanks God after scoring shock goal

Liverpool footballer Alisson Becker has thanked God following the bizarre events that saw him become only the sixth goalkeeper ever to score in the Premier League.

With his club needing to win against West Bromwich Albion and seconds to go, the goalkeeper ran the length of the field to give his side an extra chance to score from a corner kick.

The win means Liverpool remain in the hunt for qualification for the Champions League.

"You can't explain a lot of things in life," Alisson, who's a committed Christian, told Sky Sports after the match. "The only answer for me is God; he put his hand on my head today and allowed this to happen."

The surprise match winner comes after a difficult start to 2021 in which the goalkeeper's father drowned in February in Brazil, his homeland.

Because of the pandemic, he's been unable to be with his family.



Dedicating his goal to his father, Jose Agostinho Becker, he said: "This last month for everything that happened with me, with my family, but football is my life, the places, everything I remember as a human being.

"With my father, I hope he was here to see it, but I'm sure he was seeing, with God at his side, celebrating."

Alisson previously has spoken openly about his Christian faith. After his club won the Champions League in 2019, he revealed a t-shirt which read 'the cross = love'.

In 2020 Alisson was involved in the baptism of his team mate Roberto Firmino. Pictures of the event were shared hundreds of thousands of times on social media.

Church of England sets out guidance for collective worship

Worship in schools should be "inclusive, invitational and inspiring" according to the Church of England's new guidance for collective worship, which has been published to support Church Schools.



The new resource describes collective worship as the "unique heartbeat of a Church school" which is offered as part of a wider opportunity for pupils and adults to encounter faith.

The guidance, which draws on the Church of England's Vision for Education, sets out how collective worship should be welcoming, inclusive and exemplify the principles of Christian hospitality, and should meet the needs of all,

wherever they may be on their journey of faith and belief.

The Church of England's Chief Education Officer, Nigel Genders, said:

"We are delighted to offer this new publication which seeks to challenge, guide and set expectations for Church school communities and diocesan authorities when considering this essential component of an education that enables all pupils to flourish and to live life in all its fullness.

"We want pupils to leave school with an understanding of Christianity having encountered Jesus Christ in a way that enhances their lives and collective worship is at the heart of this."

ME? AN ORGANIST?

Having produced a number of organ accompaniments and a smaller number of voluntaries for recent Sunday services at St Hilda's I sense the assumption on the part of some members of the congregation that I must be an organist.

No complaints there on my part. On the contrary in fact. Thank you but I can't claim that label.

True organists can play more or less anything that is required of them, without practice. (My family has always cruelly joked that I need a choir master who can give me three months advance notice of hymns to be sung so that I can practice them.) True organists can manage both hands and both feet with consummate ease, think ahead to the next change in register, watch the conductor, turn pages effortlessly and follow the words and number of verses to avoid embarking on a verse that doesn't exist. Regrettably I am not in that category.



Yes, I have played the organ occasionally in the past at St Matthew's Church and I can even claim to be the organist *meritus* at the Catholic Church of St Ignatius in Sunbury before a new incumbent arrived and brought his own organist with him! But with a paucity of opportunity as an organist I sold my double manual organ complete with full pedal board and gave in to the draw of the jazz club as a tenor sax player which has been a lifelong interest.

Now with the arrival of Covid19 and the subsequent closure of all of my jazz club venues I am very happy to do what I can to 'keep the show on the road' and support Chris Maddock and Paula Gething's sterling efforts in any way I can.

A number of kind souls have expressed appreciation of my efforts but how does this square with my claim that I am not an organist?

Well, the answer lies in technology. For the technically minded, I possess a DAW (Digital Audio Workstation) Logic Pro software which I have used for some time to produce backing tracks for aspiring vocalists. It is often used as a tool for producing and editing music for film tracks. As is the case with my computer I use only a fraction of its potential but it enables me to load, in my own time, arrangements of any sort and in any style with the choice of thousands of different 'voices'. My computer drives a piano style keyboard which enables me to play-in whatever I want to produce. It doesn't have a pedalboard, so for an organ composition that has to be played-in separately. The system allows me to fully manipulate a composition, adjust volume, pitch, tone, apply reverb, (small room acoustics, concert hall acoustics), and not least of all, it allows me to correct any mistakes I make. This last facility is one that I use QUITE often!

Anyway, I will continue to do my best - but I will not be applying for that post as organist at St Paul's Cathedral just yet!

Melvyn Rouse.

War Stories by Derek Scott

Miraculous Escapes

Over Germany a Lancaster bomber was on fire. The captain gave the order to bail out. The tail gunner could not retrieve his parachute from where it was kept inside the plane. He had two choices, a slow painful death being burned or a quick one by escaping through his badly damaged rear turret. He jumped.

When he awoke he was in a very deep snowdrift and had to wait to be rescued by German soldiers, becoming a prisoner of war, but at least he was alive.

Secret agents from England operated all over occupied Europe. Paris was a particularly dangerous place as the gestapo were everywhere. One agent was captured by the Gestapo and taken to a hotel which they used.

Day one the interrogation was more of a friendly chat over glasses of wine. Day two the questioning really began and he gave only information that the Germans already knew. That evening he was moved to a room on the top floor with only a chair, and had his shoes and socks removed.

Going into the bathroom, he found a window open over the toilet, and by putting the chair on the toilet he could reach the window. He waited until the early hours of the morning and then went through the window on to a narrow ledge. Despite being terrified of heights he edged his way to the corner of the building. Turning the corner he saw a light from an open window. The room was empty and the door was open. He reached the ground floor. There was a sentry at the main door, on hearing German voices he dived for a door on his left which opened onto the hotel side entrance.

Arriving at a metro station he saw a gendarme and said to him “if you are a true Frenchman give me the fare for the metro and ask no questions.” He got the fare and made his way to a safe house. The resistance helped him to return to England.



Israel/Palestine:
IN SEARCH OF THE
RULE OF LAW

A free online conference on the
afternoons of May 25 and 26

Balfour
Project

Exploring the distance between international law the lived reality in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

To register:

www.balfourproject.org/rule-of-law

Speakers include:

Baroness Hale of Richmond, Baroness Warsi, Philippe Sands QC, Dominic Grieve QC, Michael Sfard, Zaha Hassan, Prof. Michael Lynk and Jack Straw.

Sheep and Lambs Together

Creative and Reflective activities for All Ages

23rd May Pentecost

Read John 15: 26 – 27 John 16: 4b – 15

A Very Messy Activity: You will need: a tumbler; 100ml vinegar; a heaped teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda; a large bowl to catch the 'eruption'.

Pour the vinegar into the tumbler, then add the bicarbonate of soda and hold it over the bowl – you won't need to wait long for action!

Could we say that Pentecost was a bit like this? The mixing of a crowd of people and the Holy Spirit certainly caused a reaction. And the effects of it, seen first by those present, soon spilled out to people from far and wide.

You could put washing up liquid in a small container with a little bit of water, swish it round and watch the bubbles form and rise. Or perhaps notice the way the foam grows and grows as you have a bubble bath.

Think about/ talk about how you could be like the early disciples who, with the help of the Holy Spirit bubbled over and shared the good news of Jesus Christ with other people. Perhaps you could invite them to Junior Church or to a church service. Or get them to go online and follow the Sunday service. There are lots of other ways of sharing the Gospel with other people.



St Hilda's Parish News

If you have any Parish News you would like to share, then please send them into the Parish Office.

Jumble Trail – Sunday 30th May

St Hilda's is going to take part in next week's Jumble Trail. As it is half term and many of you will be visiting family or out and about, there aren't many of us that are able to man the stalls. With this in mind we are only going to have a few tables out, Cakes, Books and Toys.

The only donations we are asking for are cakes, please do not bring any jumble etc. as we do not have either the space or able bodies to deal with it. However, if you are able to give some time between 11am and 4pm all offers of help will be gratefully received.

Kindly bring along any cake donations on Sunday morning. Many thanks.

Rosalyn Young



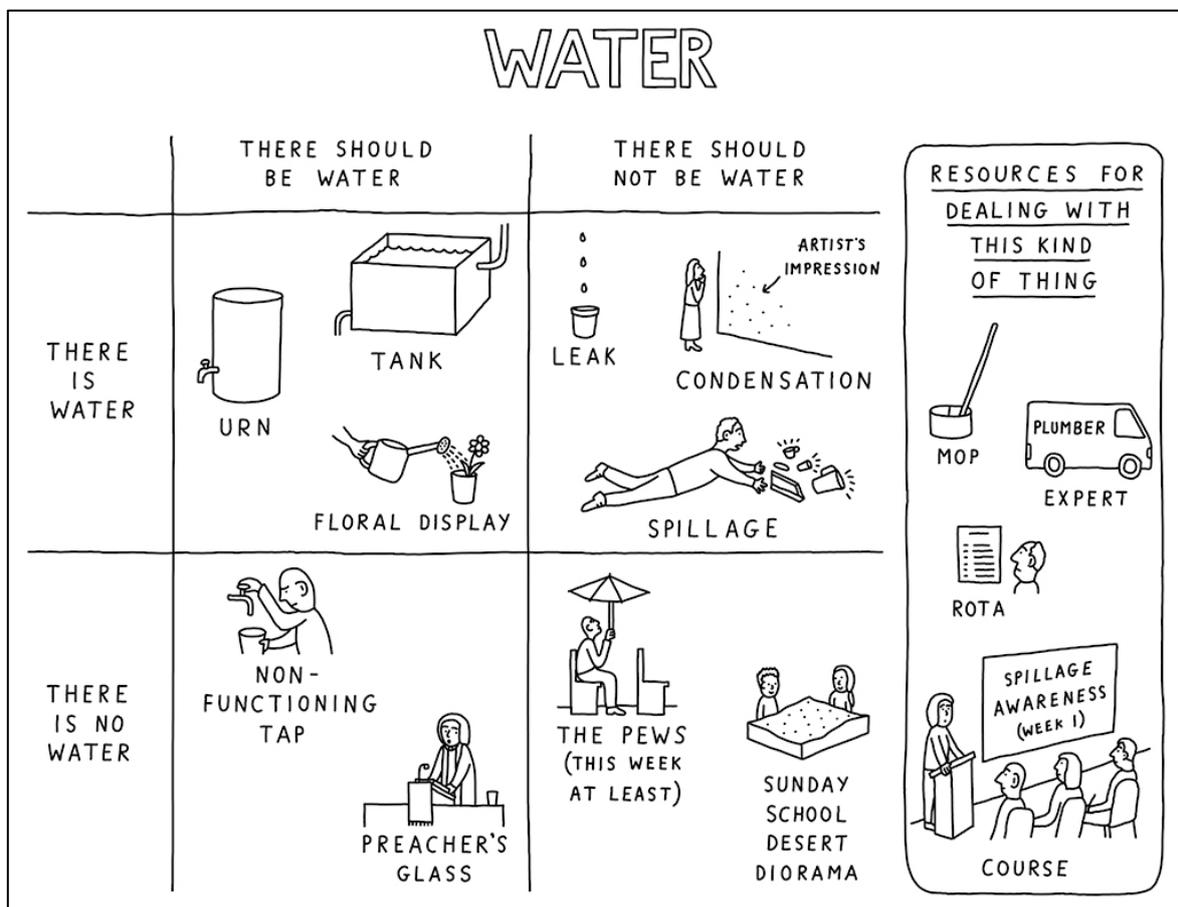
On 21st May I marked 25 years since I was admitted to the Office of Reader. I want to take this opportunity to thank all Clergy and congregations at St Hilda's, Christ Church, St Mary's and St Peter's in those 25 years for their support, encouragement and contribution to my ongoing learning and growth in Ministry. *And most of all for putting up with me!*

Rosalyn

Congratulation and a huge thank you for all you do for St Hilda's

Update on Sheila West

As some of you may know Sheila West fell and broke her hip a couple of weeks ago, I have been in touch with her son Peter and he gave me an update on her progress. Sheila has had her operation and is recuperating in Walton hospital; she can walk a few steps with the aid of a walker and is nagging the nurses to let her come home. I will keep you up to date with any further news of her. Bobbie



Canaan Ministries are open for any of your needs. Just simply phone or email them and they will look after you. They also offer a delivery service.

Any other information can be found on their website www.canaanchristianministries.co.uk/

Romans15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This weeks services

Sunday Eucharist – 23rd May @ 9.30am

This service can be viewed via our Facebook page, our new YouTube channel (St Hilda's Ashford), and Twitter.

Wednesday Eucharist – 26th May @ 9.45am

Tickets can be booked for this week's services via the links on our website and Facebook page or by contacting the Parish Office by 5pm Friday for Sunday's service and 12pm Tuesday for Wednesday's service.

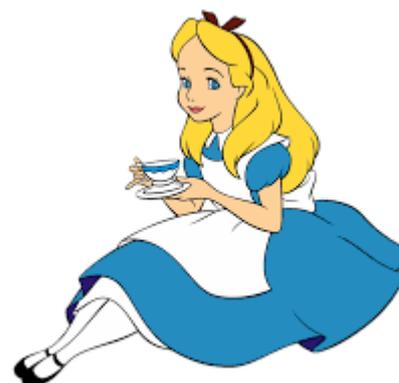
Please remember a face mask must be worn whilst in the church.

Tea and Chat after Sunday Service

We would like to invite you to join us for a virtual Tea and Chat after the service on **Sunday 23rd May 2021 at 11.15am**. See below on how to join.

The meeting is hosted by Zoom.

- Download the Zoom app – www.zoom.us
- Click – Join a Meeting
- Enter the Meeting id – **998 7943 9741**
- Enter password – **365191**



Please hold in your prayers and thoughts this week those who are affected by the Corona Virus as well as the family and friends of those below.

The Sick

James Bedford	Jackie Forsbrey	Raymond Nation	Sandra Swain
Michael Browne	Peter Garner	Pat Parish	Rev. Peter Taylor
Robb Clarke	Eileen Gilbert	June Prentice	Sheila West
Daniel Cohen	Alison Griffiths	Daphne Roberts	Philip Willerton
Rebecca Cohen	Jim Hennessey	Elizabeth Savill-Burgess	Chick Wilson
Mary Congdon	Jean Iddiols	Delphine Scrivener	Peter Wilson
Ann Considine	Jane Johnson	Riley Shaw	Jo Wood
Julia Cowley	Pat Kyle	Elsie Stone	Erin
Michael Dixon	Libby Mills	Roy Stone	George

The Recently Departed

Alec Holloway	Margaret Reid	Rev John Congdon	Gillian Shepherd
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Prayer

O God the King of glory,
 you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ
 with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven:
 we beseech you, leave us not comfortless,
 but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us
 and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ is gone
 before,
 who is alive and reigns with you,
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 one God, now and for ever.

Amen