

Celebrating our links

Churches across Bath and Wells and in Zambia are invited to celebrate the links between the dioceses on Sunday, 2 July on the renamed 'Zambia - Bath and Wells Sunday'. Launched in 2021 as Zambia Sunday, the day has been renamed to reflect the desire for the link not just to be celebrated in churches in Bath and Wells, but also in churches in Zambia.

Martin Canning Chair of the diocesan World Mission Group, explains, "Zambia - Bath Wells Sunday is an opportunity for every parish across our six partner dioceses to pray and learn more about each other, and to consider our place as part of the worldwide



Members of St Paul's, Chipata South laying new school foundations.

Anglican Communion.

"It is also an opportunity to give thanks for the nearly 45 years we have celebrated life and faith together through our companionship link. Even if a parish doesn't currently actively have a link, we hope they will join with us in prayer on the day."

As well as celebrating the link, with all the joys that it brings, people are also asked to reflect on

the challenges we are all facing, including climate change which affects some areas of the world more than others. Sara Emmett, diocesan Climate Justice and Environment Adviser says, "Growing our relationship with our brothers and sisters in Zambia offers many benefits, but certainly gives us a greater insight into not only the impact of climate change, but also the inequity of climate change."

Prayers and other liturgical resources for 'Zambia – Bath and Wells Sunday' can be found on the diocesan website, along with lots of stories of how the link works in different parishes across Bath and Wells at bathandwells.org.uk/zambia ■

News in brief

Coronation celebrations

Services and celebrations took place right across Bath and Wells to mark the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III.

St Paul's Church in Weston, St Andrew's Church in Minehead, and Bath Abbey were among the many churches which livestreamed the event and invited their local community to join together in celebration. St Paul's even had their very own giant crown. At St John's Church in Keynsham the tower was lit up in red, white and blue and an image of the Union Flag was projected on to the west front of the church, while inside a mini-Flower Festival was just one of the celebrations they held ■

Church compost loo a hit

After receiving a quote of £120,000 to install a toilet in their church, the community of St Peter's Church, Staple Fitzpaine, changed their plans and are now enjoying having a new environmentally friendly compost toilet.

Rebecca George, Churchwarden at St Peter's says, "I have an elderly mother and I wanted her to be able to come to my church, but she didn't feel confident without a handy loo. So, with permission, I ordered a port-a-loo which was installed about 100 yards from the church. Suddenly the Pop Up Cafe got more popular, more people like my mum came to services, and it became possible to put on more events for a wider range of people." ■

Pupils enact first Coronation

At St John's church in Glastonbury on Sunday 7 May, following the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III, there was a Civic Service and town procession with a twist. Pupils from Wells Cathedral School re-enacted the first Coronation, that of King Edgar at Bath Abbey. King Edgar was crowned by St Dunstan, who was born in Baltonsburgh and the first Archbishop to crown a King." ■



Visit bathandwells.org.uk/news to find more on these stories & others.

A commitment to serve

By Michael Beasley, Bishop of Bath and Wells

Your Majesty, as children of the kingdom of God we welcome you in the name of the King of kings'. In reply to these opening words at his Coronation, King Charles III responded 'In his name and after his example I come not to be served but to serve.' This short exchange summed up what the service was about and what it intended to convey.

The King's commitment to service is not in any doubt. To give just a few examples, he has engaged with our most challenged communities far more than any politician, he called on us to care for the environment years before it became popular to do so and, of course, founded The Prince's

Trust, which supports our most challenged younger people in so many ways.

He becomes king of a new era, the Carolean era. Our times see us face some big challenges. Our question is how to address them. I was immensely struck by all the agencies and charities present in the Abbey for the King's Coronation. Their participation spoke of the ways in which we're going to need to act differently in the years ahead to address the issues that confront us.

Because it's all too evident that the power of government, be that local or national, to respond to the problems we see is less now than it was when the late Queen began her reign. Our challenge in this era is of how we're going to come

together, in service, to address the different challenges that lie before us, be that the climate, how we tackle poverty, how we respond to a troubled international situation. All of us will have a part to play.

Where to find the resource to act in the way that's going to be needed? As I stood beside the King at the Coronation what inspired me was to see the way he drew so much strength, purpose and resolve and assurance from his Christian faith for the service he's called to give. And in that we can follow him too ■

Bishop Michael



Growing in faith together

Rachel Shaw is Zambia Link Coordinator in Keynsham Parish, which has a link with Chipata South in Eastern Zambia.

What prompted you to have a link?

We restarted our link to Zambia when Bath and Wells celebrated 40 years of the link in 2022 and I was fortunate enough to go on the diocesan anniversary trip and spent some time getting to know the people there. There are a lot of parallels between our parish and Chipata South, both have a mix of town and rural churches and are busy and thriving communities.

How did you get started?

We have a link group in both places. Together we worked out what we wanted to support and how we wanted to do things. Since we began, we have been clear that the link is about getting to know the people and growing in faith



Keynsham link members, with a Zambian flag presented by Fr Bernard together.

How did you manage that?

Our main challenge is to share with our congregation what life is like in Zambia. We share stories on our Facebook page, hold Zambia evenings and have a WhatsApp Friendship Group of about 40 people, half from Keynsham and half from Zambia.

Have you learnt anything from

your link relationship?

It has helped us stop being so focused on money and what we can't do. We can see what they do with so little - and with such faith, joy and hopefulness. We can learn so much from that.

Are you planning anything else for the Coronation weekend?

We're organising a teacher exchange with two schools in Keynsham, who are forming their own links with Chipata South School. We hope to fly two teachers from Zambia over here to spend a couple of weeks in school - which will be both beneficial for the teachers and children.

Read more about Keynsham's link with Chipata South at bathandwells.org.uk/keynsham-chipata-south ■

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