

Hello Everyone

What an enormously strange week this week has been. Who could have anticipated the last seven days.

Last Sunday, Nigel retired from Westoning Benefice after a very special and moving service. On Monday his retirement began unexpectedly with a period of enforced rest after a positive Covid test. On Tuesday, Prime Minister Boris, stepped down and Liz Truss was appointed as the new Prime Minister by the Queen at Balmoral and asked to form a new Government. The Queen looked frail but smiling and determined to fulfil her duties as Sovereign and reportedly held a good level of interested conversation with both Prime Ministers. On Wednesday, I also tested positive for Covid - it was inevitable really.. but the timing is awful.

On Thursday, we heard the sudden news of the Royal Family being summoned to be alongside the Queen whose health was of concern... and then came the very sad, shocking news, that the Queen died later that day and the new King was announced. How our world has turned upside down this week. Most of us have previously known no other sovereign that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, and what an amazing Queen she has been. She has been a figure of inspirational leadership, a dedicated servant to her people, a caring, intelligent, inquisitive, knowledgeable role model and a beacon of the Christian Faith. To each one of us, she will be remembered in our own special way.

HM King Charles III has already shown that he intends to be a King of the people and despite his deep grief, has extended hands of friendship on two walkabouts already and has offered such profound words of tribute to his mother, his guiding example, and at his Proclamation as King today, offered lifelong commitment to serve the people and the nations, with the help of God.

As we all try to come to terms with the rapidly moving times in which we live, our churches offer to be places of solace and peace.

The churches of Chalgrave and Toddington will be open over the coming week for people to come and pay their respects to the Queen, to write special tributes in a book of condolence, and to spend some quiet time in church with opportunity to also light a candle. Special prayers will be said at the morning services tomorrow and next Sunday.

Sunday 11th September 9.30 am Chalgrave Church, and 11.00 am Toddington church- Morning Service led by Malcolm Curtis, with representation by the British Legion. Prayers will be said for HM Queen Elizabeth II and HM King Charles III, with opportunity to sign the book of condolence. The services will conclude with the National Anthem.

Sunday 18th September a special service of Holy Communion at Chalgrave 9.30 am and Toddington 11.00 am with prayers for the HM Queen Elizabeth and HM King Charles led by Rev Linda.

Sunday 18th September 6.00 pm a joint benefice service of Commemoration to HM Queen Elizabeth (on the eve of her funeral), at **Toddington Church** (and the licensing of Rev Linda as Rector by the Archdeacon).

Chalgrave Church will be open Wednesday 14th September 10.00 am to 12.00 noon.

If you would like access to Chalgrave Church another time please phone Sandy on 07989 645040 or Rev Linda 07715 603557.

Toddington church is usually open during daylight hours but times may change this week in the lead up to the Petal and Purl festival. Please phone Dee on 872649 or Rev Linda to check access times.

Other services and events this week:

Monday 12th September 10.30 am. The funeral of John Bryant at Toddington Church.

John was such a well-known, much respected member of this village and of many community groups and the church is expected to be busy. The service will be live-streamed so if you would like to view the service from home, or with other people at another location please use this link:

<https://vimeo.com/event/2407858>

Please read the READ ME text after John's photo.

Monday 12th September No Morning Prayer service at 9.30 am at Toddington Church

Tuesday 13th September Knitting group 10.30 am Wilkinson Hall

Wednesday 14th September Funeral of Ivor Bain 1.00 pm Toddington Church
Preparation for Petal and Purl Festival - church

Thursday 15th September

Preparation for Petal and Purl - church

Friday 16th September

10.30 am Painting for Pleasure group Wilkinson Hall

Preparation for Petal and Purl - church

Preview evening of Petal and Purl (with wine and canapes) from 7.00pm - tickets £10 from Dee Curtis - see attached poster.

Saturday 17th September

Petal and Purl Festival 10.00 am – 5.00 pm Tickets £5, children free

Sunday 18th September

9.30 am and 11.00 am Service of Holy Communion at Chalgrave and Toddington churches respectively (see above)

Petal and Purl Festival until 1.00 – 5.00 pm Tickets £5, children free

6.00 pm Special service of Commemoration to the Queen (and licensing service),
Toddington Church (see above)

As we enter into a period of national mourning for Queen Elizabeth, I have sought advice from Bishop Richard and Bishop Alan about whether it is appropriate to continue to host the Petal and Purl festival over next weekend, which has become such a wonderful community event. It has been decided that the festival will offer time of reflection for our Queen and opportunity also to sign the book of condolence. We hope that you will enjoy time in church enjoying the beauty of the flowers, and the knitted displays which example scenes of church

life, and community working together, in an atmosphere of prayer and thankfulness to God, for our Queen and for all she held dear as Head of the Church of England.

Sending you love, peace and prayers

Linda

PS: If you would like a link to the recording of Nigel's leaving service please send me an email or give me a call.