



The Benefice of St Mary's Bocking & Panfield Church

Sunday 11th June 2023

Corpus Christi

Staying in Contact



The Very Revd Rod Reid - Incumbent (*usual rest day Monday*)

Email: bockingchurch@gmail.com Call: (01376) 324887 www.stmarys-bocking.com

or on Facebook, search for 'St Mary's Church, Bocking', or 'Panfield Church'

Forthcoming Services

Hymns

St Mary's, Bocking

Sunday 11th June	8am/10am	Said Mass/Sung Mass
Wednesday 14th June	9.30am	Said Mass
Sunday 18th June	8am/10am	Said Mass/Sung Mass

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Panfield Church

Sunday 11th June	11am	Morning Worship
Tuesday 13th June	5pm	Evening Prayer/Office Hour
Sunday 18th June	6pm	Evensong

Gospel Acclamation

*I am the living bread which has
come down from heaven,
says the Lord. Whoever eats this
bread will live for ever.*

NOTICES

Stepping Stones - The next session is on Tuesday June 13th at 7pm, meeting in church. This week we will be looking at 'The Creed'. The sessions will then run until June 27th. You are welcome to come to any sessions that you can make, and importantly the course is open to everyone.

Concert - Rock Choir are back at St Mary's TODAY at 4pm. The weather is looking perfect for us to be outside, so bring a blanket, chair and picnic if you want. Tickets are still on sale now. Adults £10, concessions £8, and children attend free. At the concert, we will also be offering a glass of Pimms, and we will have a traditional ice cream cart too!

Fellowship Outing - On Thursday 28th September there is a trip to Cromer Pier arranged. There are a few places lefts. Cost is £45 which covers the coach trip and The End of the Pier Show. The coach will leave church at 9.30am. Please speak to Ann Lanham or Ann Harrington to book your place.

Friendly Friday Cafe - Following the success of Warm Space, our new regular community lunch space has re-launched in the Church Hall on Fridays from 12-3pm and will run until July 21st.

Friends of St Mary's - The Friends have arranged a Barn Dance at Bocking Village Hall for **Friday July 14th at 7pm**. More information will follow in due course, but for the moment we wanted you to have the date, so that you can get it in your diaries now.

Benefice BBQ - You are invited to a BBQ on Sat July 29th from 3pm in the gardens at The Deanery, cost £5 for adults, children go free. More details nearer the time, but for now, please save the date.

Fellowship - The next meeting is THIS THURSDAY June 15th in the Church Hall. The speaker is Ed Fairey and his talk is on the 'History of the National Garden Scheme'. We start at 12.30pm with a light lunch followed by our speaker, the cost only £5, don't miss it.

Prayers - We keep in our prayers Peter Hopkins, Jean Goodwin, Sue, Roger, Frances, Peter, Jo, June Blackwood, Tony & Ann, and Margaret Everitt. We remember our care homes Millard House, Fern Lodge, Aspen Grange, Larchwood, The New Deanery & St Mary's Court. In our Years Mind, we pray for the families of Kit Staines, Leslie Yeldham, Violet Dance, Lilian Warren, Elsie Grieve, Mary Knupple, and Wendy Cross.

The Collect for Corpus Christi

Lord Jesus Christ,
we thank you that in this wonderful sacrament
you have given us the memorial of your passion:
grant us so to reverence the sacred mysteries
of your body and blood
that we may know within ourselves
and show forth in our lives
the fruits of your redemption;
for you are alive and reign with the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Epistle Reading - I Corinthians 11:23-26

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Gospel Reading - John 6:51-58

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.' The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' So Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live for ever.

Address

What are the building blocks of music? Well, a clue! Back in this week, 55 years ago a certain film soundtrack had just spent 70 weeks at number one. Released in 1965, *The Sound of Music* left a huge mark on many people's lives. Many of the songs instantly recognisable, and one gave us the very building blocks to music. Do-re-mi

Those building blocks become the basis, foundation for all music, at which point you add some colour and form, to create an unending catalogue of music genres. We see and hear it happen in the film too. Do-re-mi, becomes Doe a deer a female deer, ray a drop of golden sun, me a name I call myself, far a long, long way to run!

Singing, and indeed music, bring people together, we see that in church as we join in with the hymns. Are all hymns as good as each other? No, but we all have our favourites and I am looking forward to hearing them through July and August. For a rousing hymn in worship connects us with something beyond, we see it in other places too, with nights like the Last Night of the Proms, massed crowds in Hyde Park, the Hall itself and in living rooms up and down the country singing, humming along to Rule Britannia, it brings people together.

A favourite of hymn mine, albeit I admit to have many favourites, is Abide with me. Not everyone's I know but that sense of time moving, evening rolling into night and on into the next day, and then you get change and decay in all around I see. For me it captures that sense of change which we seem to be in the grip of. I was talking to someone the other day about the shops we used to have in the village, but now don't. Each week the *Brainless and Witless* tells us about more housing, I have to say most of it, it seems in this parish. The church itself is changing and we can't pretend that won't affect us. Change is unsettling, it leaves us unsteady, and not sure of the future, what can we hold on to? What will still be here in 10, 20, 30 yrs, and will we still recognise it?

And so we find things to hang on to, relying on building blocks, constants, and we preserve everything as it should be, and try to shield ourselves from change. Change for many of us is something negative, not good for us, or those around us but can that always be true? I am sure your faith has deepened, changed and that is a good thing, so maybe change isn't always bad.

Back to the hymn though, in one line we had change and decay in all around I see, then the next line? 'O thou who changest not, abide with me'. Or from Great is thy faithfulness, 'thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not, as thou hast been thou forever will be'. Amongst all that we see changing, God remains the same, a Triune God as we celebrated last Sunday, and one who gave us the constant that is Communion, Mass, the Eucharist, one we celebrate today on a feast day entitled Corpus Christi and rooted in the Last Supper. For me, communion is a building block, the firm foundation that we each need, and without it we cannot manage it all.

If I take us back to John's gospel, his account of the Last Supper doesn't give us a version of what we call the 'institution narrative' for Holy Communion. Where the other gospels give us Jesus breaking bread with his friends and saying 'this is my body' and pouring wine and sharing it with them saying 'This is my blood – do this in remembrance of me', John instead tells us the story of how Jesus washed his friends' feet, followed by the new commandment. So why this reading from John 6 today then?

I think because John picks up the theme of the manna in the wilderness and contrasts that bread with the new bread of life given by Jesus.

In the desert the people learned that they could not continue their journey towards the Promised Land without being sustained by God. If you remember the people collected the manna every morning, as much as they needed for the day. The next day the arrival again of new manna, new bread was seen as a sign of God's continuing favour.

The writer of John's gospel is anxious that we understand the link, that in the person of Jesus there is a new word of God and a new bread from heaven, just as there is a new commandment.

Now the Word of God has become flesh asserts John, and the new bread of heaven is the very life of Jesus himself. God is both a constant and an instigator of change but throughout sustains with bread. To eat this bread is to have a share in the life of God himself. During the last meal of his earthly life Jesus charges his disciples to keep his memory alive by gathering together to break bread. Whatever else they do, he tells them, his followers must remember to eat and drink in his name.

Ahead of us will be change, there is little we can do about it. New housing, new people, changes in the community and the church. It is daunting but if we believe that God is in everything, then maybe what we are seeing is God transforming our world, transforming his church. In amongst the changes are the constants, building blocks that we can't take for granted and so we should hold them close, they are our manna, our food for the journey, and communion is one such constant. Much needed opportunities to draw from the well, ready to face whatever is ahead.

I mentioned earlier that the film soundtrack for The Sound of Music was at number one for 70 cumulative weeks. That is not the longest running album at number one, that accolade goes to another film, another musical that was at number one for 115 weeks, South Pacific. Songs like 'Some enchanted evening', and 'I'm gonna wash that man right outta my hair', and lastly 'Happy Talk'.

Happy Talk or as I like to call it good news, is what we are called to share with others. As we see change around us and within the church, we should remember that as God is changing them, so he is changing us, transforming us to be what he needs us to be. A transformation into something even better, in the knowledge that he loves us, protects and care for us, and has given these constants, building blocks to support and feed us. That is true food for others, happy talk indeed, and for us to share, and if you must sing about too! Amen.

Post Communion Prayer

All praise to you, our God and Father,
for you have fed us with the bread of heaven
and quenched our thirst from the true vine:
hear our prayer that, being grafted into Christ,
we may grow together in unity
and feast with him in his kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.