



The Benefice of St Mary's Bocking & Panfield Church



Sunday 7th May 2023
The Fifth Sunday of Easter
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 7th May	8am	Said Mass
Sunday 7th May	10am	Sung Mass
Wednesday 10th May	9.30am	Said Mass
Sunday 14th May	8am	Said Mass
Sunday 14th May	10am	Sung Mass

See
Special
Booklet

Panfield Church

Sunday 7th May	11am	Morning Worship
Tuesday 9th May	5pm	Evening Prayer/Office Hour
Sunday 14th May	11am	Holy Communion

Gospel Acclamation

*I am the way, the truth
and the life says the Lord.
No one can come to the Father
except through me.*

NOTICES

Coronation Weekend – Tomorrow we are hosting a picnic in the Church Grounds with a Cream Tea. All welcome, bring your own food and drinks for plenty of good fun and maybe some singing. Please arrive from 1.30pm onwards. If you would like a Cream Tea, cost £5, these need to be ordered in advance and can be collected on the day from 2pm. Sign up sheet at the back!

Stepping Stones - This is a new 5 week course beginning on Tuesday May 23rd at 7pm. Across the sessions we will be looking at 'God and the Trinity', 'The Church', 'The Creed', 'The Bible' and 'The Sacraments'. Each session will be accessible with some initial input and then a chance for questions and further discussion. The course is open to everyone whether you are taking some initial steps in your journey of faith, maybe heading towards Confirmation, or those who have already walked quite some way, but would value the opportunity to learn more. See Fr Rod for more details.

Light a Candle - We are pleased to be hosting this special service once again. Janet C. Davies', 'Light a Candle' memorial service will be on Sunday May 14th at 3pm. All very welcome.

Hymns - We would love you to choose your favourite hymns for us all to enjoy over the Summer months. The slips are at the back of the church and need to be back by Sunday June 4th.

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

Save the Date - On **Sunday June 11th at 4pm**, we are thrilled to be welcoming back 'Rock Choir' who will be performing another fabulous concert. We are hoping, weather permitting, to hold this outside, but we shall see! More details and tickets will follow after May Day.

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.

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 Gordon Strong, Thomas Fenner, Maurice Johnson, David Austin (Priest), Gertrude Ward, Marjorie Fuller, Betty Grice, Edith Gostling, Ivy Elliott, Arthur Tyler, Christine Clayden, Gladys Annetts and Jean Stiff.

The Collect for the Coronation of King Charles III

Almighty God,
the fountain of all goodness,
bless our Sovereign Lord, King Charles,
and all who are in authority under him;
that they may order all things
in wisdom and equity, righteousness and peace,
to the honour of your name,
and the good of your Church and people;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Epistle Reading - Acts 7:55-60

But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 'Look,' he said, 'I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!' But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' When he had said this, he died.

Gospel Reading - John 14:1-14

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.' Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.'

Address

God save the King!

If you hadn't yet got used to hearing it, then by this point in the Coronation weekend, you will be by now, I am sure.

However, if we go back to last September following the death of HM Queen Elizabeth, as announced by the then Prime Minister, Liz Truss, she closed her short statement with the words God save the King. Then, those words jarred and caught us all off guard. It was the first time for many of us that such words have been said in our hearing.

Since then, we have slowly continued to adapt to the change, to adapt to a new Monarch. A process of grieving for what was, and looking forward by affirming that which is and will be.

As millions watched on television yesterday. King Charles is our King, newly crowned before our eyes. It was a special moment, a moment of coronation that many have never seen other than through recordings. The words rang out repeatedly, God save the King.

A King who bears much responsibility. Upon whom there is immense pressure, expectations and more, but behind all the pomp and ceremony, it was a different phrase than I think many were thinking yesterday. He is just an ordinary man.

Seeing the robes come off, as he disappeared behind the screen with a simple shirt, it seemed so much had been stripped away both physically and metaphorically. I was certainly struck, movingly, to see him dressed so. The moment of anointing on his hands, head and breast hidden from public view. A moment between King and Charles, between God and man. For in God's eyes, he is just an ordinary man, loved by God, called by God. A man seeking to live his faith out day by day.

We might find it understandably hard to relate to a life of palaces, public engagements and the like, a life he has grown up through, but it doesn't mean that's the only way to live as God's servant. The pomp and ceremony that came with the service yesterday added so much history, and pageantry. The inclusion of so many in the day, from faith leaders to representatives from across the world was also important. Then another moving moment thanking the military services in the gardens at Buckingham Palace, and the terrific noise of their three cheers for the King. Incredible moments, that speak of the monarchy, this nation and who we are as the people of these Isles. I hope through each that King Charles was aware of just how much support and affection there is for him.

Our lives though are very different, we don't live in palaces, we don't attend huge services in Westminster Abbey.

However, I did once myself have the privilege of leading worship in Westminster Abbey. I led compline to a group of 50 parishioners. We were on a tour of the Abbey and the Verger asked if one of the visiting clergy would lead, if we wanted to of course. My colleague the Team Rector backed away, and I was slightly relieved as clearly the Curate wasn't going to get asked either! The Team Rector then said, Rod might like to! Well I am glad I said yes, even if I can still feel something of the anxiety of that moment all these years later. A brief, but wonderful opportunity, that I know few can claim.

While our day to day lives are indeed very different to that of the King, don't be under any illusion, behind all that we are also men and women loved by God, called by God, and seeking to live our lives and follow God in faith. A faith like our King's which is tested and tried, a faith nourished and affirmed. Our paths may be different but there is unity in knowing that all our paths will lead us home to God, and as we journey through, so he journeys with us.

That is captured so beautifully in the passage from John we heard today. A passage often shared at funerals because of the image of heaven as a mansion with many rooms, a place we can be reunited with loved ones. I can completely see the comfort that brings, but there is so much more to it. For a place in his kingdom, a place in heaven will not be like finding our wing at the far end of an ever-growing Premier Inn, but knowing we are home, in a place where we are loved. A place where we can truly be ourselves and reunited with those gone before. A place for Kings, a place for you and me.

How appropriate then that the reading set for today, and it says to us all, if we dwell in God, he will dwell in us, no matter who we are, no matter how or where we live, and that each of us will have a home in Him.

Between now and then, we are called to serve, we are called as were reminded last week to live abundantly. We called to love, to share, to seek peace, to fulfil our calling. That will be different for us all, but we do it in the knowledge that our companion is God.

For King Charles III, the same is true, he said himself he wishes to serve and not be served. Alongside living his faith, for him will come the weight of office, even once the crown finally comes off. As we seek to encourage one another in our faith, and all God calls us to, then this Coronation weekend, we can continue to encourage him and proudly declare the words.

God save the King! Amen.

Post Communion Prayer

Grant, O Lord,
we beseech you,
that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered
by your governance,
that your Church may joyfully serve you in all godly quietness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.