

CUTTING EDGE CAMELOT, No 173

Sunday 18th September 2022

‘Virtually Church but with some way to go...’

Welcome

Welcome to this Sunday’s Cutting Edge Camelot. Our readings, reflection, prayers and suggested hymns are all drawn from some of our local Services of Commemoration for our late Queen today.

Some readings from our Services of Commemoration

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; *
therefore can I lack nothing.

He makes me lie down in green pastures *
and leads me beside still waters.

He shall refresh my soul *
and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil; *
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You spread a table before me
in the presence of those who trouble me; *
you have anointed my head with oil
and my cup shall be full.

Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life, *
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Revelation 21: 1-7

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

‘See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them;

they will be his peoples,

and God himself will be with them;

he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away.’

And the one who was seated on the throne said, ‘See, I am making all things new.’ Also he said, ‘Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.’

Then he said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children.

Reflection drawn from Services of Commemoration

Those of you who are familiar with funerals will notice that this service has somewhat of the same form.

It is not of course the actual funeral which will take place in Westminster Abbey tomorrow. But it does give us an opportunity along with many other local churches to anticipate and feel part of this occasion in our own way.

And as with a number of funerals I have to preface what I have to say with the words 'I did not meet the Queen personally.' Some of you here today may have done so and in this case you will have your own first hand memories to draw upon. In fact in the course of her long life the Queen must have met more people than almost anyone else in history. Certainly, when I asked the question at North Cadbury school as to who had met the Queen I was struck by the number of children who either said that a member of their family had met her or received some form of correspondence from her.

I, however, like many of us need to rely on the public impressions that we had of the Queen, the public life that she led with such great faithfulness and to such great effect.

But whether or not we met the Queen many of us have found that the Queen's passing is indeed like the loss of someone close to us. Even if we never met the Queen we are nevertheless likely to have felt a very strong sense of personal connection. Countless tributes from across this country and beyond bear witness to this. The words of my newspaper delivery person last Sunday, 'Apart from my mother she was the person I looked up to most', will I guess have been echoed by many others.

And another question that we often ask at a funeral is 'How did this person's life reflect the life of Christ?'

In answering this question, the words 'service' and 'humility' were the ones which most immediately sprung to mind after the Queen's death. And these are clearly and obviously Christian values. We think of Jesus' words that whoever would be great in the Kingdom of God must be the servant of all and that whoever enters into Kingdom of God must become humble like a little child.

And then we might think of the many tributes that have come in from international leaders. Some of these have been from surprising quarters and have cut across the usual and expected political barriers.

This, I believe, bears witness to the personal impact of our Queen acting in her public role. More than we doubtless will ever know was achieved through the way she undertook her endless official state visits and state banquets.

If we are extending an invitation to dinner most of us like to choose who we will eat with. And if someone else offers us an invitation and we do not want to go we are usually quite good at finding convenient excuses not to do so.

But in her role, the Queen did not have this kind of freedom. In our service and on the promptings of her government she entertained and ate with many people. She never made known her feelings about any of them but our guess might be that not all of them would be among her choice of guests if she had had the freedom to choose.

And yet whether she wanted to do so or not she carried out this role with grace, charm and effectiveness. It was part of her service to us which she had promised to carry out. And its harvest has been seen in the outpouring of international goodwill which has been evident since her death.

So in one way the Queen was simply fulfilling the duties of her role. But in the light of her deep Christian faith I would guess there was more to it than that. She evidently read her Bible deeply and was able to make connections between this and the way she lived her life. After all, Jesus Himself ate with all kinds of people including those such as tax collectors and sinners whom many thought He should have steered clear of.

In one of her Christmas broadcasts, she drew out the practical implications of the parable of the Good Samaritan in this way,

'The man who is robbed and left at the roadside is saved by someone who did not share his religion or culture. This wonderful story of kindness is still as relevant today. Good Samaritans have emerged across society showing care and respect for all, regardless of gender, race or background, reminding us that each one of us is special and equal in the eyes of God.'

And in another she spoke of the power of forgiveness,

'God sent into the world a unique person - neither a philosopher nor a general, important though they are, but a Saviour, with the power to forgive.'

Forgiveness lies at the heart of the Christian faith. It can heal broken families, it can restore friendships and it can reconcile divided communities. It is in forgiveness that we feel the power of God's love.'

Perhaps in her own life she exemplified the power of forgiveness most strongly in her visit to Ireland. In the light of a long history of conflict and hurt between these two nations her visit to Ireland late in her reign was not simply an occasion of national healing. More than that the Queen had lost close relatives in these struggles so this visit involved forgiveness at a costly, personal level.

We do indeed mourn the loss of a very remarkable person, our late Queen. And we feel this loss at a personal level. But it is also a public loss and in the light of this it is fitting that our New Testament reading should come from the book of Revelation.

This inspires us with the future hope of a heavenly city, the New Jerusalem. We are reminded of not just of the significance of our relationship with God as individuals but also of the hope of a renewed life of a community, that of God's people. It is a life lived in community in which death will be no more and where mourning, crying and pain will also be no more.

Surely it is fitting in the light of the way that the Queen's life reached out in so many ways to so many different people that in this time of grief we are sustained by this hope. This is that one day God's purposes will reach across the whole of human relationships and even the whole of creation.

Tristram

Some prayers from our Services of Commemoration

Merciful Father and Lord of all life, we praise you that we are made in your image and reflect your truth and light. We thank you for the life of our late Sovereign Lady QUEEN ELIZABETH, for the love she received from you and showed among us. Above all, we rejoice at your gracious promise to all your servants, living and departed, that we shall rise again at the coming of Christ. And we ask that in due time we may share with your servant Elizabeth that clearer vision promised to us in the same Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Eternal God, our maker and redeemer, grant us, with your servant QUEEN ELIZABETH and all the faithful departed, the sure benefits of your Son's saving passion and glorious resurrection: that, in the last day, when you gather up all things in Christ, we may with them enjoy the fullness of your promises; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Almighty God, Father of all mercies and giver of all comfort: deal graciously, we pray, with all who mourn, the members of the Royal Family, this Nation and all the Nations of the Commonwealth, that casting all our care on you, we may know the consolation of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Some Hymns from our services of Commemoration

Some hymns from our services of commemoration include two of the Queen's favourite hymns 'Praise my soul the king of heaven' and 'The Lord's my shepherd' together with two others sung on national occasions 'O God our help in ages past' and the National Anthem.

Services for this week and next

Sunday 18 th September	9.30 am Communion, Compton Pauncefoot
Sunday 18 th September	11.00 am Commemoration Service, North Cadbury
Sunday 18 th September	11.00 am Commemoration Service, Maperton
Sunday 18 th September	6.30 pm Commemoration Service, Yarlington
Sunday 25 th September	8.00 am Communion, Blackford
Sunday 25 th September	9.30 am Communion, South Cadbury
Sunday 25 th September	9.30 am Harvest Matins, Compton Pauncefoot
Sunday 25 th September	9.30 am Morning Worship, North Cheriton
Sunday 25 th September	11.00 am Communion, North Cadbury
Sunday 25 th September	11.00 am Communion, Holton
Sunday 25 th September	11.00 am Sunday Worship, Yarlington
Sunday 25 th September	6.30 pm Evening Service, Galhampton

Camelot Benefice Quiet Day

The Camelot Benefice Quiet Day has been rescheduled for Saturday 24th September, 10.00 am to 4.00 pm at Woolston Manor Farmhouse Barn, Woolston, North Cadbury, BA22 7BL. Please bring a Bible, notebook and pen, a picnic lunch (tea and coffee will be provided).

Excalibur

Excalibur is back in paper form. It contains details of Camelot people, a record of baptisms, weddings and funerals undertaken through the church in the Camelot Parishes. The September edition of Excalibur has now been published online at camelotparishes.co.uk.

The Parish Office

If Rob is not in the Office during normal office hours please contact him via email (office@camelotparishes.org.uk) or on 01749 850934.

Growing as a worshipper, a servant and a family

*We pray that 'we might live in love,
as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us'*

(Ephesians 5: 2)