

COLLECTORS CORNER

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Mouse Makes

The date is fast approaching when we, as a country, will be celebrating the Platinum anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's ascension to the throne. Seventy years of serving our country in many ways, far too numerous to list here today... the list would be endless. **One of the promises she made was to be Defender of the faith.**

How many of our readers still have memorabilia of that first special Coronation or the subsequent anniversaries?

I still have the mug that was given to my parents to keep safe for me, in pride of place in the china cabinet that their generation held dear, until I was old enough to appreciate its value. Similarly, my husband received a crown money box which had pride of place on a shelf in his parents' house for many years. We, in turn collected coins for our children which they will receive... in time.

Much of this memorabilia has been

wrapped, boxed and tucked away into cupboards, very rarely seeing the light of day.

On the head of our coins we can read a Latin inscription saying: ELIZABETH II DEI GRATIA REGINA FIDEI DEFENSATRIX, meaning "**Elizabeth II, by the grace of God, Queen and Defender of the Faith**".



Each time we handle coins we can be reminded of the promise given by Her Majesty. **She has continued throughout her reign to defend our faith, our Christianity, but for many people, sadly their Christianity like**

the memorabilia, has been safely abandoned, packed away, rarely seeing the light of day. Let's pray that in this Jubilee Year people will not only remember the memorabilia, but also the Christian faith that Our Queen defends.

*Marie Nichols
(Staincross WR Church)*

WHERE ARE THEY NOW



DOROTHY WILLIAMS

Where do you live now?

Bicester, Oxfordshire since 2010

Are you still involved in the Union?

It's lovely to be invited to preach at Syresham, Fritwell and, until it closed, Souldern.

If not, for how many years were you involved in the Union?

Many, many years – 60+

Where do you currently worship?

Emmanuel Church, Bicester (ECB) – an Anglican church planted 18 years ago.

Describe your current church.

ECB is very outward looking. Many have found the church welcoming and have decided to follow Jesus.

All of us are encouraged to get involved. God's word, worship and small groups are very important. There are many challenges, including welcoming without compromising the truth and the discipling of young Christians.

Which of the following do you prefer and why?

Organ, piano or music group?

I love to hear an organ – especially as ECB does not have one. However, I value our worship group greatly.

Pews or chairs

Chairs – more versatile.

Lectern or pulpit?

Lectern – usually closer to the congregation.

Refreshments before, during or after the service?

After – young families are not usually early for a service.

Other than the Bible, which book has influenced you the most?

I read a biography of Hudson Taylor a few years ago and was greatly challenged about resting in Jesus.

Who would you most like to have supper with (dead or alive, actual or fictional)?

Smith Wigglesworth – though I would be in awe of him! What might he say to me? He heard from God and his response was sometimes unconventional.

What is your favourite Bible verse?

Psalm 90:14 "Satisfy me in the morning with your unfailing love that we might sing for joy and be glad all our days". A good prayer for lockdown days – in fact, a good prayer for any time.

What is your favourite hymn or song?

"I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene... How wonderful, how marvellous is my Saviours love for me".

What is your favourite memory of your time in the Union?

The trip to Israel in 1995. The devotions led by Geoffrey Lee and the wonderful sound of our voices singing "Father, we love you" in the Church of the Beatitudes (I think) was so special.

My Lord, What A Morning!

That was certainly our experience on March 19th when the Women of Action were able once again to meet in person for a morning of teaching, reflection, discussion, worship and prayer focusing on

Psalm 23 v.3 He restores my soul

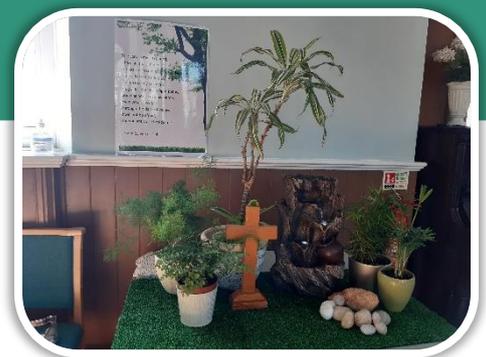
We met at Rose Hill W.R Church at Dodworth and our opening devotions were led by Sue Hartshorn.

A delightful visual display, complete with running water, set the scene for our morning's focus. Sandra Fall led us in our thoughts for the day which included lots of challenges, lots of encouragement, lots of opportunities

to share with others and much time given to prayer for ourselves and others. As God spoke to us through what we heard and experienced, we were invited to make our own response as He continues to restore our souls.

Whether we are young Christians or more mature in faith it was good to recognize once again, the significance of the words of this familiar psalm which we sang as we concluded our morning of teaching.

Thank you to Sandra for her thorough preparation and teaching and to Sue and the ladies at Dodworth for providing our refreshments and lunch.



There will be another opportunity to share in this teaching at Hall End, Attleborough on September 24th.

Ladies book the date now and come and share in a morning of blessing.

Muriel Stonehewer

EPHESIANS 4:3

‘EAGER TO MAINTAIN THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE.’

Recommended Reading: Romans 15:1-13

Unity of the Spirit doesn't come naturally for any of us. We are all so different—in personality, in temperament, in our likes and dislikes. We all have our preferences and tend to think that our ways and ideas are the best. In fact we can feel hurt if someone disagrees with us. **That is human nature, and Christians are not exempt from it.**

That is why we are to work hard at maintaining unity whatever the cost may be. We must never take it for granted, but be eager to maintain that which is so precious and vital for the witness of the church of Christ. We must cultivate everything that would encourage unity and destroy those things that would lead to friction and disunity.

Throughout the New Testament Paul and the other apostles were insistent in emphasising the importance of being one in Christ Jesus. They knew only too well the dangers when that unity was broken.

So how do we maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?

If any are sick, let us care for them; if

any are discouraged, build them up; if any are troubled, sympathise with them; if we are aware of faults in another believer, admonish them with love and affection.

Be patient with others, as we wish them to be patient with us. Treat one another as you would like to be treated. Above all we must, if at all possible, be peacemakers and not troublemakers.

We need to remember to walk in our brothers' or sisters' shoes before we knock them over.

We cannot keep the unity of the Spirit unless we all believe the Bibles teaching. We want unity in the truth of God. Let us live near to Christ, for that is the best way in promoting Christian unity.

One final, but important thought is that **we all have an adversary who will do anything to undermine our unity in the gospel.** Therefore, let us resist him at all times and strive with all our energy to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

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100TH BIRTHDAY



Dorothy attended our church since she was about four years old. On the 3rd of February this year, she celebrated her 100th birthday. She had sixty to seventy birthday cards, and also one from the Queen.

As a young girl she was a member of the Girls Brigade and later became a Sunday School teacher. She married another faithful member of the church, Dick Bailey (who for many years was Sunday School superintendent).

They were married for 39 years and had two children, Ann and Simon who have been very good in caring for her. She is a woman with a strong Christian faith, and despite what life has thrown at her, she always bounces back. She is good at crochet and is even now still busy making blankets for premature babies, for the hospitals. She is loved and respected by us all. It was a privilege to join with her and the family to celebrate this special occasion.

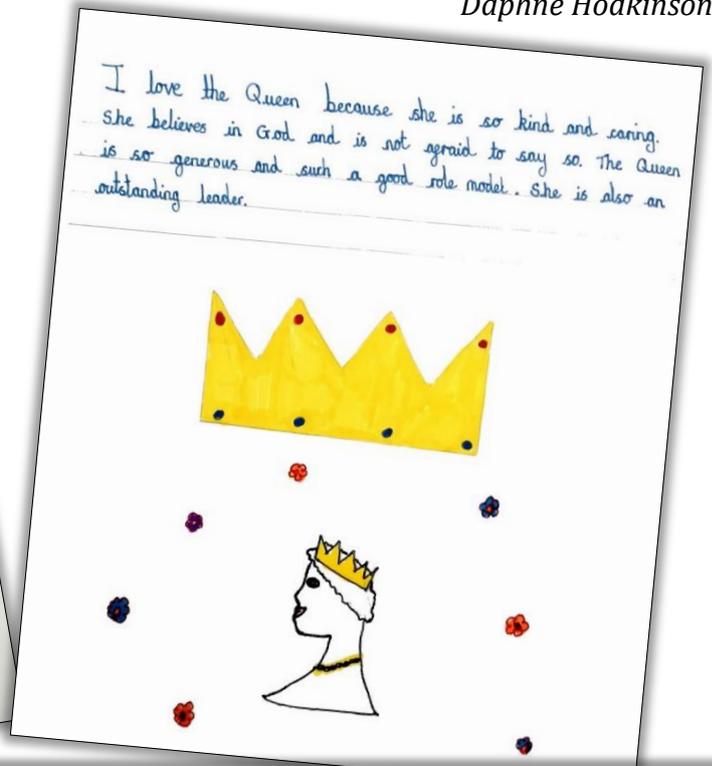
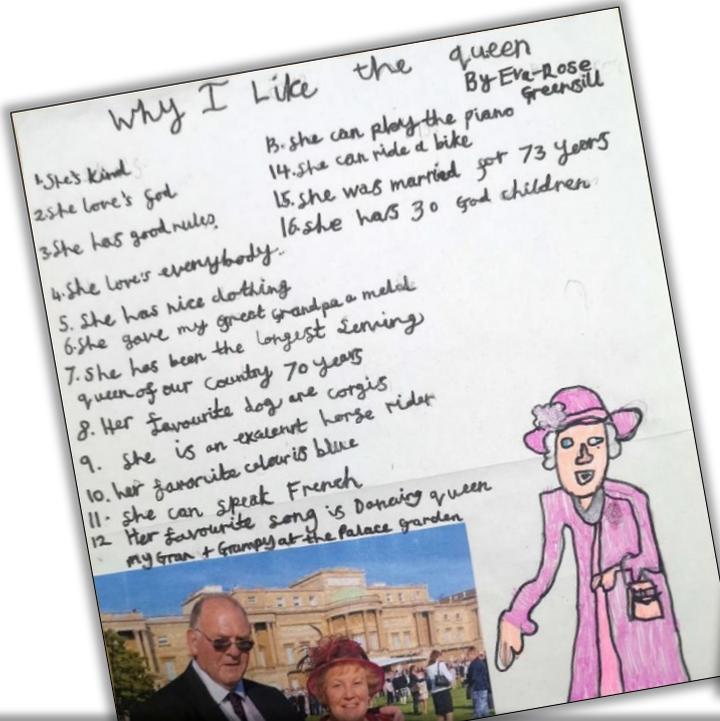
Pauline Downing

WHY WE LOVE OUR QUEEN

In February, Her Majesty the Queen marked 70 years as monarch. Her life has consistently reflected her steadfast faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. She is not ashamed of the Gospel and in 2014, the Queen said, "For me, the life of Jesus Christ is an inspiration and an anchor in my life."

In a recent Sunday School session, the children were asked the reasons as to why she is so popular and well respected. Here are two of the responses.

Daphne Hodkinson



THE QUEENS PLATINUM JUBILEE

Is anything special happening in your Church or community to celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee? On 6th February this year Her Majesty the Queen became the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee, marking 70 years of service to the people of the United Kingdom, the Realms and the Commonwealth.

There will be year-long of Platinum Jubilee celebrations throughout the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth and around the world as communities come together to celebrate the Queen's historic reign.

One of the activities we at Staincross will undertake, is a coffee morning, similar to one we celebrated five years ago, to celebrate sixty five years of the Queen's reign. We decorated the hall and displayed a time line of photographs of the Queens life. It certainly made a talking point within our community and stirred lots of memories.

In The Queen's Christmas broadcast to the Commonwealth, she said: 'I hope [it] will be an



opportunity for people everywhere to enjoy a sense of togetherness.'

HOPE Together has compiled a list of 70 acts of service to honour the Queen's seven decades on the throne. If you check out the website, it gives lots of ideas of practical suggestions that you may enjoy trying.

The Platinum Jubilee invitation is to choose a handful of acts, or complete one a day for 70 days. Gather your friends, family, and community together and share together.

<https://www.stewardship.org.uk/stories/70-acts-service-platinum-jubilee-hope-together>



TLC Bitesize @10

Our first monthly "Bitesize" opened in September 2021 after much prayer & discussion by the fellowship at Bozeat. It's a relaxed time of conversation, with bacon rolls, hot drinks & juice, & background Christian music playing. We have a few minutes' towards the end where Rev. Peter Norton gives us

a "Thought for the Day", which always leads to discussion. Topics covered so far include "Have I told you lately that I love you?", "Do you ever feel useless/disappointed?", "Seeing in colour with Jesus in our lives", "How are you feeling-at the moment/about God?" "Commitment-to spouses, teams, God", "Memories, how good & bad memories shape the person we are now". We usually end with singing one or two worship songs or hymns, & prayer.

Looking back over the time we've been meeting for "Bitesize", there's been a gentle growth in numbers attending, & we're praying that we will encourage others to come to taste God's love for themselves.

"For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plans to prosper you & not to harm you, plans to give you hope & a future" Jeremiah 29 v 11

Love & blessings,
Ellie Minney

HOME MISSIONS Outreach Bulletin

STARTING UP AGAIN...

A number of our Churches have not started midweek meetings yet, coffee mornings, youth work etc. Could we help you? What are the challenges you face?

At Hampden View, we've closed our Girls Brigade, so we could concentrate on doing other things better. What we've found is that people are desperate to get out and start going to groups / events again - our Toddler group bounced back after Covid. We've also started a "Knit and Natter group", this is well attended and really valued by those who attend.

What about something new? Here's a few ideas, please email me if you'd like advice on getting one of these started... andymarkw@gmail.com or 07792944217

Fellowship Group
Day Time Bible Study
Walking Group
Knit and Natter
Toddler Group
Kids Club
Craft Group
Prayer Meeting
Board Games Group
Book Club
Breakfast meeting
Brain and Soul Boosting

BRAIN AND SOUL BOOSTING

What is it?

It's a lovely resource to help groups explore a subject in a light hearted way that also involves prayer, Bible reading and a short thought. You choose a theme, say Bread, Transport, Holidays or Weddings and create a program around it.

Our group ranges from people in their 50's to 80's men and women on a Wednesday afternoon.

The last theme we did was bread.

- Reminiscing Question: What is your earliest memory of bread? Did someone in your house make it? How much did it cost to buy when you were a child?
- When did Sliced Bread come in?
- We had a Quiz on world breads, and had to try and recognise breads from Israel, France and Germany etc.
- We had some Hot Cross Bun Tasting (It was just before Easter), but you could get different types of bread.
- A Bible reading - John 6:1-15 feeding of the 5,000 or John 6:25-40 "I am the Bread of Life".
- Someone could give a short thought on one of these passages

or read out a Daily Reading that relates to bread.

- You could also sing a hymn or listen to a piece of music.

Where could you use this?

An Established Ladies Meeting or Fellowship group - maybe once every two months as something different. Also, a good opportunity to invite new people along.

Introduction to Bible Study -

Maybe there are people in your church who feel intimidated by the idea of a Bible Study. They feel they are not clever enough or wouldn't enjoy it. This could be a great way of introducing the Bible to Them and also getting others to speak and contribute, who usually don't say anything.

Care Home activity - Maybe you have the opportunity to go into a Care Home and this could be a great Group Activity to do with them. The material was originally designed for people with Early Dementia, and using taste, touch, music and storytelling. It can be a really good time.

Andy Wilcock
(Development and Outreach Consultant)

UKRAINE



So, for the first time in my lifetime, Europe finds itself at war. This is not the place for a full analysis of what is happening, but can I simply suggest four duties for those of us who are Christians.

First, we need to be *aware*. In many ways this is a wake-up call for the church. We have followed too closely the naive philosophy of the world that there is nothing so seriously wrong with human beings that science and prosperity will not cure. This appalling invasion of Ukraine demonstrates the sad Biblical truth that human beings are inclined to evil and that only the grace of God in Christ can truly bring peace. We have been inclined to consider evil to belong to fantasy realms such as Narnia and Middle-Earth. The sad reality is that evil, whether subtle or blatant, is present in our world.

Second, we have the duty of *prayer*. We are those who believe in a God who answers prayer and who reigns over all the world. Let us bring the situation to him. Let us pray for those who are at this moment frightened and fearful. Let us pray against those powers who wish for evil to be done. Pray for wisdom and unity among those leaders who must oppose the Russian invasion. Let us remember in prayer that one of the sad predictabilities of warfare is that the unpredictable is inevitable. These are very dangerous times.

Third, we have the duty of *care*. We must never forget that the prime Christian virtue is that of love. We need to lift up to our heavenly Father all those, whether in Ukraine or in Russia, who are caught up in this conflict. But we must be prepared to do more than just simply pray.

Although much of the suffering will be beyond our immediate aid, there will in the days ahead be opportunities for practical giving and caring. There must be a temptation for people to try to ignore the news and try to forget what is happening. We who are Christians do not have this option. We need to be involved.

Finally, we have a duty to *share*. One of the very few positive things about this conflict is that it is a reminder that this world is not a playground but a battleground. We will be talking with those who are scared and troubled about the state of the world. In this darkness comes an opportunity to share the light of Christ and the only lasting hope of peace in this world.

J. John - Reverend Canon (www.canonjjohn.com)
Philo Trust, Witton House, Lower Road,
Chorleywood, WD3 5LB, UK



THE NEW NORMAL (Part 2)

Over the last few days, I've had conversations and thoughts about getting back into church.

I suppose many of us still have mixed feelings about when will be the right time, but my own feelings have centred more and more on why we should go back, and what will we do when, eventually, we get there.

Could it be that for many people, even regular church attendees, the 'new normal' will be to stay in their homes on Sunday, perhaps because of age and/or infirmity they have become increasingly less mobile, or because they have become generally less willing to stir from their homes, or perhaps because actually watching or participating in a service online or on TV is far more interesting and exciting than travelling out to a service in their own church through duty.

Of course, there are countless reasons why, as believers we need to attend church, not the least because we are adjured to (another one to look up) in scripture. The biblical writer to the Hebrews (Hebrews 10:25) - "And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near".

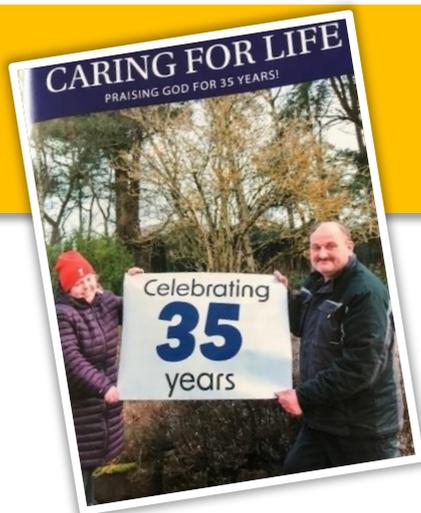
But perhaps that still doesn't completely answer the question, and especially in the context of whether what we have done before - including our traditions - is the reason why we return to the same again.

I suspect that, for many churches, especially ones who were already struggling before the pandemic, this might be the last straw, so perhaps it behoves (there's another one) us all,



to think and pray and talk seriously about what God might want us at Griffydam to do and be when we can at last return. And maybe we, seeking the Holy Spirit's guidance, do that with open minds and open ears and open hearts in the days to come.

Cliff Darby



CESA Safe and Secure

As I write this article, war rages in Ukraine and we see daily desperation etched on the faces of those so troubled people. **Old and young, families and individuals all longing to feel safe and secure.** We pray that prayer and giving and a great awareness of God's presence will greatly help. To feel safe and secure is a state of mind we all long for and we feel, is our right. In our country and throughout the world, sadly, so many do not know the love and feel the security they deserve. For many years the Wesleyan Reform Union as a denomination and CESA has recognised the need to support

Christian organisations and charities who show great love and concern for the individual, be it in a physical, mental or spiritual need. For example, spiritual - the Bible Society. Physical, mental and spiritual - Caring for Life, Leeds.

Caring for Life was established in 1987 as a Christian charity after seeing the needs of so many vulnerable young people. It happened, because of a heavenly vision given by God to individuals he knew could and would fulfil the vision, and kept going by earthly individuals and organisations who believed in the vision and knew the importance of prayer and monetary giving. **The stand out words are "caring for life" and this statement and the fulfilled promises over the years have given a great deal of hope and a sense of safety and security to so many.**

"Caring for life" words fit the whole promise of God from the beginning

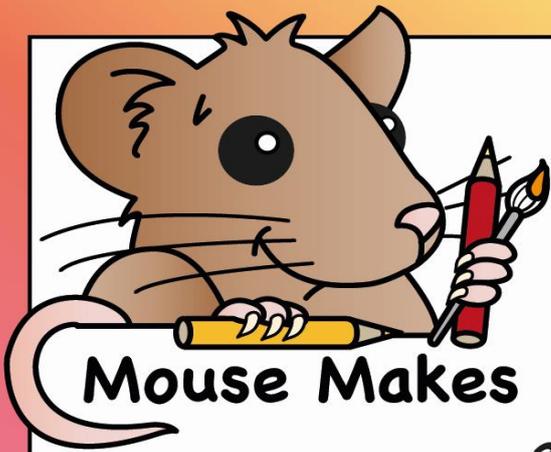
of time to this present day, giving us all a sense of eternal hope and security, eternally safe from the evils of this world. Let us remind ourselves of [John 10:27-30](#).

Jesus said. "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from me, for my Father has given them to me, and He is more powerful than anyone else. No one can snatch them from my Father's hand".

Believing that is really being safe and secure.

Stuart Allen
(Curbar WR Church)

We praise God that in February of this year Caring for Life celebrated thirty five years of sharing the love of Jesus.



Mouse Makes

"Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, His love endures forever"
Psalm 136:1



"Never stop praying."
1 Thessalonians 5:17



"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."
Philippians 4:6

Jesus said,
"This, then, is how you should pray:
Our _____
in _____
hallowed be your _____
your _____
come,
your _____ be done, on _____ as it is in _____.
Give us this day our daily _____.
And _____ us our _____, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And _____ us not into temptation, but _____ us from the _____ one."

Read Matthew 6:9-13 to fill in the words.