

Dear friends,

Annual General meeting season is now safely in the rear-view mirror so now we are free to concentrate on both the Jubilee weekend celebrations followed by the East Budleigh scarecrow festival the weekend after that.

But of course spiritually, the celebration that far outstrips both is the celebration of the feast of Pentecost in the universal church which is also on the 5th June. The feast that encapsulates the truth that followers of “the way of Jesus” are to literally live their lives in the same Spirit that motivated Jesus – and those people are to form a community we call the church.

The original meaning of the word “Church” as we are mostly all dimly aware means a gathering of people – not the building that houses our worship, though that is the common understanding nowadays.

Sunday 5th June – Pentecost

The Venerable Trevor Jones will preside at both services at St. Peter’s. I will preside at the 9.30 service at All Saints and John Archibald will preside at the 11am service at St. Michael’s. Pentecost marks the end of the liturgical season of Easter and the last Sunday service that requires the Paschal candle to be lit. Red is the usual liturgical colour nowadays but traditionally in England White was the more usual colour and is just one interpretation of why it became known as Whit Sunday.

Acts 2: 1-21. The thing that stands out beyond the “sound and light” show is the inclusivity of what was happening. The disciples were together in one place, all who heard them heard in their own language, so no barriers based on nationality. In Peter’s address he emphasised (quoting the prophet Joel) that there were also no barriers of age, sex, or class. This inclusivity was one of the most defining and attractive traits of the new Christian community that propelled its rapid growth.

Romans 8: 14-17. This poignant extract from St. Paul emphasises that underpinning the new Christian movement was a change in relationship to God as a Father/Son/Daughter relationship. To see God as “Abba” which means “Daddy” in Aramaic (The language of Jesus) is a profound spiritual step away from picturing God as a distant, wrathful, judgemental and partial tyrant. Subconsciously, I think many Christians still see (prefer to see?) God

like that, maybe because it keeps God at a safe distance from their lives. The theology of “presence” looms large again.

John 14: 8-17 (25-27). Speaking of the theology of “presence”, here we are back with John’s gospel speaking of the mutual indwelling of God the Father and Jesus and that they are essentially one thing in terms of word and action. Then Jesus promises that we will be drawn into that close relationship when the Spirit of truth, sent by the Father, will abide in all of us, drawing us all together into that same unity.

Q: What’s going on across the RMC?

A: Quite a lot....

Saturday 4th June 10am-4pm. All Saints churchyard Jubilee treasure hunt. Guided walks at 11am and 2pm. Devon cheese and wine tasting in the church hall. Light music in the church 3pm-4pm played by Mike Scrivener.

Sunday 5th June 6.30pm – The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee concert with St. Peter’s choir which also includes a contribution from the Benefice Choir from All Saints and St. Michael’s.

Friday 10th June at 1.30pm. Organ2 – duets for organ and other instruments featuring Stephen Tanner and Andrew Downton.

The Famous East Budleigh Scarecrow Festival is taking place on **Saturday 11th - Sunday 12th** June ending with a scarecrow songs of praise service in **All Saints church at 6pm. on Sunday 12th.** It is organised as ever by the “Friends of All Saints church” and it will be great I’m sure!

And in Otterton. The resumption of the much anticipated **Open gardens** day on Sunday 26th June from 11am – 5pm. 9 gardens to enjoy for £5 (under 16s go free). Refreshments in the village hall. Proceeds are split between St. Michael's church and a local charity

Sunday 3rd July at 6pm. An organ recital in St. Peter's by David Davies, the organist at Buckfast Abbey and great friend of St. Peter's.

Friday 22nd July at 1.30pm. A lunchtime concert in St. Peter's by our Director of Music Stephen Tanner.

Friday 29th July at 1.30pm. A lunchtime concert by Jean-Rene Andre the organist from Rennes cathedral in France.

And a date for your Diary!

23rd July at 3pm. After the success of last year's get together, Louise and I are inviting you all to a joint RMC Garden party in the vicarage garden here in beautiful East Budleigh. Be there or be square!

Thought for the day

Let's leave aside any arguments about whether the monarchy is a good thing or not. If we just accept the fact that there is a monarchy – no amount of wishing it was otherwise is of any use – there is no doubt in my mind that Queen Elizabeth has been an exemplary example of poise, service and devotion to duty these past 70 years. This was a role she did not seek and inherited it on the death of her Father. As a symbol of national unity and longevity she is pretty much unsurpassed in the world today. Presidents come and go, but the notion that a hereditary unelected monarch still survives is one thing that marks Britain out as being different from most other countries. I don't suppose it is coincidental that we almost alone amongst all the major European powers have never had to endure socialist or fascist dictatorships. We have a stability that owes much to parliamentary democracy overseen by a unifying, steadying, constitutional monarch. Her role as the supreme Governor of the church of England is also a role that

history may have forced upon her, but here too, her devout Christian faith and devotion to duty to fulfil whatever role her position demands of her, is an example to us all. There is so much to commend in the life and reign of Queen Elizabeth that transcends constitutional arguments and there is much to be thankful for in her tireless service to our country. Whatever our politics, we can applaud and celebrate a person who has devoted herself to the role that history has thrust upon her, to the enormous benefit of our country.

The Prayer for Today is an official C of E collect composed for the Jubilee.

*Gracious God, we give you thanks
for the reign of your servant Elizabeth our Queen,
and for the example of loving and faithful service
which she has shown among us.
Help us to follow her example of dedication
and to commit our lives to you and to one another,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Amen.

Love and peace,
Martin