

Rev'd Manette Writes

Dear friends,

Last month has been a month of mixed emotions. In the afternoon of Thursday, 8th September the sad news broke that the long life and reign of our monarch, Queen Elizabeth II had come to an end. We all knew that this day would come but I think that we had all been in denial and when it happened, the nation went into shock and grief. Few of us have known life with Queen Elizabeth II on the throne and she has been a symbol of stability and continuity. She touched the lives of many in different ways, not just in our country and the Commonwealth but, as tributes have shown, also in the wider world. During the official period of mourning, we have had the opportunity to reflect on Her Majesty's long life of duty and dedication to her people and to our country, and I guess that most of us will have watched the documentaries and news reports with interest. We certainly learnt a lot about history and the processes involved in the accession of a new King. As I write this, the images of the state funeral are fresh in my mind and found this deeply moving. This was a historical day for our nation, watched by billions of people across the world. The significance and solemnity of the occasion was not lost on the crowds who watched the day unfold on big outdoor screens across the Commonwealth and on the many who lines the various routes of the procession of the royal coffin. It was a moving sight to see the crowds in respectful stillness for the two minutes silence at the end of the funeral service.

At this time we hold the Royal Family in our prayers as they grieve, like any other family who have lost a much-loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, but they had to do so very publicly and in the spotlight of the press. I believe that the first few days of the reign of our new King Charles III show that he will be a worthy successor to his mother. His sense of duty and depth of faith fill me with confidence that he will dedicate himself to his new role with total commitment. So whilst we mourn the end of an era, this is also the beginning of a new one with all the challenges and opportunities this may bring. God save the King!

In our benefice, we had another wonderful service of Confirmation on the 18th when 5 candidates were confirmed by Bishop Mike. It was a joyous occasion which was very meaningful for the candidates, their families and for all of those who attended. Please continue to pray for Lottie, Caspar, Caroline, Milo and William who were confirmed as they continue their journey of faith. October brings us our Harvest celebrations and thanksgiving which are advertised elsewhere in this newsletter. Non-perishable gifts for the local foodbanks can be brought to all our churches. We look forward to seeing you!

Wishing you every blessing,

Yours in Christ,
Manette