

# GRAPEVINE

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## Go and bear fruit

*“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.” John 15:16*

Friends at St John’s Welling and Erith, Years ago my Dad bought a fig tree for me and one for himself – they are now both in the vicarage garden and weighed down with fruit. They do it every year quite naturally and without seeming to try! My only task is to see

that they get enough water and that the wind doesn’t blow them over. Although Jesus often talked about real fruit, the fruit he was talking about was the fruit of His Kingdom growing in our lives – and the fruit of bringing others into His Kingdom.

One of the best opportunities to grow fruit in both our lives and the lives of our community is SPARK in the Park – 25<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> July. We need you to volunteer to help if you can – during the afternoons, or evenings, or beforehand getting craft things



ready. 500+ Children + their adults will be there every day – and we can share God’s love in word and action. Sign up is via the web <http://www.sparkinthepark.org.uk/> - or on the St John’s Welling website. If you find that impossible ask someone for help – Cathy in the office at St John’s Welling should be able to help.

f SPARKBEXLEY  
@SPARKBEXLEY

**SPARK**

#SPARK2022

**JULY 25TH TO JULY 29TH**  
1-4:30PM & 7-9PM

**DANSON PARK**  
NEAR THE PLAYGROUND

**IN THE PARK**

**FREE**

This is the first opportunity for many of us to bless the community after 2 horrid years. Many people take their holidays as a family to come to SPARK as it is the only holiday they can afford. Our task is to plant seeds, and to water them. God’s task is to grow fruit in their lives and as he does fruit grows in ours too!

Many Blessings  
Adam

**Rev Adam Foot, Vicar St. John’s Welling and Priest in Charge St. John’s Erith**

## St John’s News

The very beautiful view of a harbour, the sea, and many small boats that I can see from the window as I write, confirms this is not Welling, that:

- the holiday season is underway,
- Spring 2022 is at an end.
- BUT sadly not the wars in Ukraine, Afghanistan, Syria or Yemen so a relevant moment to note that Daily Zoom prayers and Sunday evening prayer have provided the opportunity to pray daily to the only One who knows the end from the beginning.

**Reflecting on the last few weeks** brings so many good memories:

- a lovely lunch with **Kathy Walker** in honour of her 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday.
- The three day **Holiday Club** just

before Easter, for which Linzi had planned such a great programme, jam packed with activities enabling fun, friendship and thinking about some big life questions. We all, leaders and children, thoroughly enjoyed nearly every minute (although those exercise sessions...)

**Holy Week services from Palm Sunday to Good Friday** encouraged us to reflect on just what Jesus went through for us to be Easter people.

• **An excellent Alpha group Sermons and House Groups** are challenging and helpful as we consider the implications of **Christian Hope**.

The **Growing Leaders** course is underway with 10 people journeying and learning where and how God is equipping and leading them.

If you have noticed how attractive the

church grounds are looking, the **Church work morning** was key in achieving this...and by the time you read this, there will have been a 2<sup>nd</sup> such morning in preparation for our June Jubilee celebrations. Talking of which, our **Jubilee Celebration\*** weekend is very close! Our Prayer is that this will be a wonderful time of celebration, fun, Fellowship and appropriate focus on our Queen and the God whom she has served so faithfully.

We welcomed **Gracie Mae** and **Stirling** into our Church family and look forward to encouraging them to know and love Jesus.

We continue to remember **Les Dunworth** in hospital together with others undergoing treatment.

So on into Summer, SPARK and much else...

**Estelle Woodcock**

\*Jubilee celebration was 12th June 2022



## St John's Church The Queen's Platinum Jubilee 'Working Group'

In June 2022, there will be many celebrations happening all over the country to celebrate the wonderful achievement of Her Majesty The Queen, Elizabeth II on becoming the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee, after 70 years of service to our country and the Commonwealth.

At St Johns Church, we have formed a working group to focus on this very special occasion and have decided to mark this event with a 7 decades exhibition of the Queen's reign. This is to promote a series of milestones for celebration and reflection throughout her remarkable reign and Accession to the throne.

Queen Elizabeth II is known for her sense of duty. On becoming Queen, Her Majesty became 'Defender of the Faith and The Supreme Governor of the Church of England'.

The Queen has a strong Christian faith which has been evident throughout her life in her words and actions, her personal faith was evident even before she was crowned.

***'Pray for me ... that God may give me wisdom and strength to carry out the solemn promises I shall be making, and that I may faithfully serve Him and you, all the days of my life.'***

This was the first prayer request made by Queen Elizabeth II in her first Christmas broadcast in 1952. She was crowned Queen six months later on 2 June 1953 at Westminster Abbey in London.

***The Jubilee Working Group have lots of fun things planned for you to enjoy\*. We look forward to celebrating with you and the local community, especially on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2022.***

Our St John's Church celebration of 70 Glorious years will be one to remember. We hope everyone can come together in praise, prayer, music, food, social activities, plus a live exhibition of memorabilia throughout each decade of the Queens reign and to share our memories and stories.

It has been an honour to be part of the Platinum Jubilee Working Group. We all hope that such an event will reinforce unity as people come together to mark and important occasion for our Sovereign.

**\*Jubilee celebration was 12th June 2022**

## Jobs Column: Kathy Walker

I couldn't really not interview the lovely Kathy about her life, after we celebrated our first ever centenarian at St John's, and I must say, it was an absolute delight. Of course if you were born in 1922, patterns of work were rather different for women and girls in 1936 when she left school, as was normal, at 14, so much of this is also about her life other than in work.

Kathy lost her dad at age 12. He was a Master Builder, and the men who worked for him made a mistake on site which caused his early death. Not a day goes by that she doesn't remember him, he was such a lovely man. Sadly she found out not from her mum, but from the local news shop, so it was hugely traumatic. Kathy didn't know any of her grandparents, so it was a hard challenge for her mum to bring up 12 children (yes 12, plus one who died in infancy) with no husband, no parents or in-laws and no welfare state. Kathy was 8<sup>th</sup> with 6 sisters and 5 brothers. All her family lived around Plumstead Common, and though all the boys



were called up, thankfully they all returned safe.

The first two years after school ended, Kathy spent helping her mum who was then unwell, and looking after the home including housework, until the next sister down left school two years later. Kathy

was grateful for this training for life. Her mum had inherited Kathy's dad's business, including all the contracts, which were sold to support the family. If he had lived, they would have been well endowed, but it kept them going. Mum knitted everything for the family, and the older siblings contributed to the family income as they became able.

In 1938 at 16, after a few months helping out with some office filing for her brother, she started an actual office job, but it was only a short while before war broke out and she went to work in a munitions factory. It was here that she met her husband Leonard, and they were married 3 years later in 1942. Two pictures survive from her home at that time as it was bombed by a doodlebug, and one is her wedding photograph, the other her husband as a young child with his grandmother.

Leonard was 7 years older, and his mum ran a provisions shop all through the war negotiating the coupon system. His parents lived above the shop in the East End, and Kathy moved in to make their married life with his parents. Leonard was

*(Continued on page 3)*



Hello everyone, Firstly I want to thank you all for your generosity in October 2021 with purchasing the fingerless gloves and other donations given at the Freedom Sunday service in October 2021. We raised £205.51 which was paid into IJM's Christmas Appeal and was therefore doubled to £411.02. Alianore, from IJM, thoroughly enjoyed meeting and chatting with everyone that day.

IJM is one of St John's mission partners and as such you have generously given other donations to their Christmas Appeal and UK's Ukraine Crisis Appeal for which they are massively grateful.

I'm writing this about IJM to give you a little insight into what International Justice Mission is all about. It is a global organisation working in over 100 different countries with the aim of stopping modern day slavery. They have a website, ([www.ijmuk.org](http://www.ijmuk.org)), that you can freely sign up to and in turn you will receive regular updates.

The IJM teams have huge uphill struggles to rescue victims of slavery and bring perpetrators to justice. It is dangerous work and they are often up against corrupted systems and officials. IJM has aftercare staff to support victims and families while cases are being brought to court, helping them to heal from their trauma. They work hard to bring systemic changes that will see people protected long term.

Please keep praying to support the teams and victims because your kindness is powerful in making hope and freedom possible. I have placed information on the church notice board about success stories that IJM has experienced, letters of thanks and different suggestions of ways that you may personally want to get involved in supporting IJM.

Does anyone want to do a sponsored challenge or any other ideas to raise funds?

If so please speak to me. or Adam. Thank you very much for being part of the movement, until all are free,

**Terry Golding**

# Climbing the mountain: The Testers, CMS Peru

We have just returned from a week away in the Peruvian Andes. There is something about being in God's creation amongst the snow-capped mountains and the fresh air that is so restorative for the soul. We spend most of our lives in the noise and dust of the massive bustling coastal city that is Lima. Lima is Peru's capital and the central place to be in order to be able to travel for Paul's regional role, visiting CMS's people in mission and the partners that we work with across Latin America. Lima is also the place that Peruvians from across the country tend to come to for the opportunities there are for work and for education.

But the hustle and bustle, the noise and constant activity, the dust and the winter grey clouds from May to November can make the day to day seem like a constant set of challenges, making life almost like a mountain to be climbed. But we know that life isn't meant to be that way. Jesus himself said that our burdens with him would be light and that he would give us rest if we come to him (Matthew 11:28-30)

So, if any of us are feeling like life is becoming a mountain that needs climbing, perhaps what we need to do is follow Jesus' example and climb an actual mountain (or if no mountains nearby and available at least take some serious time out of the busy-ness of life and get away for time with God in prayer). After one of Jesus' most famous miracles, the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus could have headed straight into the next "big thing". But instead *"with the crowd dispersed, he climbed the mountain so he could be by himself and pray. He stayed there alone, late into the night"*. Matthew 14:23 (The Message).

Let's make sure we take time to climb the mountain and spend time in prayer with God.

**Paul Tester**



*(Continued from page 2)*

the only child, and they shared the flat for the next 25 years, bringing up their 2 children Derek and Pat there. Kathy helped in the shop when required. Leonard was called up 6 weeks before they were married, and 2 months afterwards he was posted abroad as a tank driver. He returned permanently 2 years later in 1944 in time for Derek to be born. During air raids, they used a nearby shelter every night (identifying with current Ukrainian experience of basements and bunkers), and when the whole street was bombed, they were given a prefabricated home nearby and ran a temporary shop in other premises. Kathy commented on how good the neighbours were, everywhere, and how close knit the community was.



Kathy and all her siblings had been sent to Sunday School as children, and it was a pattern she continued with their own children. Unlike her parents, who relished the break, she went with her children unless she had to open the shop. It wasn't until her children had left home that she and Leonard moved to their own home in Bexleyheath, and in later years Bexley. This left Kathy free to begin work in new areas, and after a short term

office job in the Brook Hospital, Shooters Hill, she passed the entrance exam in Croydon and joined the Civil Service, working for the DHSS in Bexleyheath for 8½ years until retirement at 61. Kathy loved the work, visiting families at home to help them complete application forms for benefits.

Leonard died in 2002 aged 86 from a massive stroke. Kathy said he'd been a marvellous dad. They had also travelled quite

extensively, going to all the places where their son Derek had been posted with the foreign office – Tripoli, Canada, Brussels, Tunisia – saving up leave from work and visiting a month at a time. In more recent years, Kathy has been several times to the south-west of France where Derek and his wife retired to, Pat and her husband living more locally in Surrey. On her own, Kathy

moved to her lovely little home in Welling where she has enjoyed the last 19 years, except the Covid years when she was isolated a great deal by necessity. Kathy may have only two children, unlike her birth family, but she has 4 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren, and also 6 great-great-grandchildren, as well as one remaining sister aged 94.

**Kate Foot**





after all, at the heart of the Easter story is the killing (murder even) of an innocent man. So, how do you tell children about such a story? One way we attempt this weighty task is to use puppets and this year's Easter

# Family Photos:

St John's 2022 Holiday Club

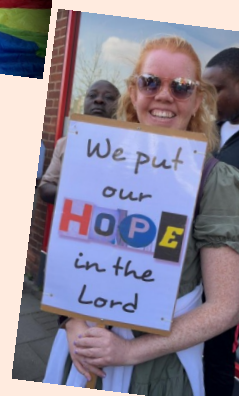
## A Hand In It...

Recently I saw a dead puppet in a classroom. It was a boy, with his head flopped lifelessly over the back of a chair, face up, eyes staring and mouth gaping. My first impulse was to call for a first aider, but I managed to stifle this and instead walk nonchalantly past the stricken, inanimate form to be greeted by the teacher. A puppet without a hand in it can look so alarming!

Thinking back on this event reminded



Good Friday Walk of Witness (wonderful Churches being back together walking)



drama had lots of them: Mrs Rabbit, Mr Mouse, Mr Bird, Mr Fish, Mr Camel and a monkey named 'Wotsit'. (I have no idea why they were mostly all 'Mr'; I confess the imbalance). These characters helped 'Shirley Holmes' investigate 'The Extraordinary Case of the Empty Tomb'.

I'm sure we don't always pitch it right, but we were thrilled to have visited so many schools with the account of Jesus' death and resurrection this Easter and thrilled too with the response. We can only trust that God will cover our mistakes and even use mixed lumps of material and stuffing for his glory, after all, if the hand of a teacher is all it would take to raise a boy puppet to life, what kind of life would be given if God's hand was in or on something? The Bible has a word: eternal.

**Jason Vaughan, CRiBS**



Easter Sunday - Adam arrived at the end of the morning service, which was packed, after leading Easter worship in

Erith. Communion back with wine at the rail was such a joy and so emotional for so many. What a celebration for Easter.



Baptism of Gracie Mae

me of a comment a CRiBS colleague once made, that telling the Christmas story to children is far easier than telling the Easter one. She had a point;



Repurposing the St John's Easter Card Invitations from 2020