



May 2022

Together in Wotton

Christians worshipping and working together in Wotton under Edge



Christian Aid Week 15 - 21 May 2022

LAUNCH! This week of fundraising for Christian Aid will start with our Christian Aid Service at The

United Church, Bradley Street, at 6 pm on Sunday, 15 May and will be led by Rev Phil Summers.

POP-UP SHOP! The usual pop-up shop will operate at The Baptist Church from Monday 16 May to Wednesday 18 May. We will have the marquee in place as last year and we will be selling books, jigsaws and plants. Inside the hall we will be offering tea/coffee, cakes and soup lunches.

We will also have a stall selling cakes.

UKRAINE! Please support if you can – this year, with the refugee situation in Ukraine, the need is greater than ever and there are many other areas of the world where our help is desperately needed.

ONLINE GIVING: As it worked well last year, there will be an online donation page (details below) and there will be the usual street collection on Friday.

<https://giving.give-star.com/online/christian-aid/wotton-under-edge-ca-group-or342902>

Bottle Top Recycling



Firstly, thank you to the mystery donor who periodically leaves bags of lovely clean milk bottle tops at the United Church.

You gave us a bit of a challenge, but we have risen to it!

Bottle Tops can be recycled to raise money for Charity: however it takes thousands and thousands* (500kg in fact) to raise £30. Also, there are few places that will accept them for recycling, and many have had to be transported to Portsmouth for this purpose. When you start to consider fuel costs this seems pointless.

One local charity that has been able to take them is Linc** in Cheltenham, but their capacity for storage and transport meant they were disinclined to continue to accept them.

Not to be deterred, a man called Tim who lives in Hucclecote has taken up the challenge of keeping the lids out of landfill and making sure a worthwhile charity benefits. And with a link to Hucclecote we are able to get your bottle tops to him without destroying the planet in the process..

So - keep collecting, and thank you.

* 294000 based on 1.7g per lid

**Leukaemia and Intensive Therapy Fund

Tea and Chat

While you keep coming, we'll keep cooking!



An informal get-together with cake

2.30 - 4pm, every Wednesday afternoon

United Church, Bradley Street

All Welcome.

Praying for the Churches

In March we are asked to remember especially in our prayers, Wotton Baptist Church.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Weekend Thursday 2 - Sunday 5 June

So much is being planned for Wotton Jubilee 2022, and exact times and details will be publicised nearer the date.

Amongst this, there is to be a Churches Together Queen and Commonwealth event with flowers and displays in St Mary's Church. Plans are still being made and anyone interested is invited to a meeting at St Mary's at 2pm on Monday 25 April.

At 3pm on Sunday 5 June there will be a Churches Together Songs of Praise on the Blue Coat field and we hope as many as possible will attend and sing so that the whole town can hear.

Holy Histories Holiday Club

When – Sunday 24 July – Thursday 28 July 2022

Set up – Saturday 23 July

Clear up – Thursday 28 July (after HC and BBQ ends)

Where – Wotton Baptist Church

Time – Children 10-12.30pm each day but helpers need to be there a bit before and after (set up for the day & clean up)

Who – All primary school children

Now the fun stuff:

Each day we will learn about different characters from the Bible. We are still working on this but could be Moses, Daniel, Esther, Mary & Jesus

- Songs, Drama and Games
- Prayer space
- Art & Crafts
- Jokes and Dressing-up
- Not forgetting the gunge machine, who will get gunged this year?? (Tom Wharin needs to be!)
- And lots more and loads of fun!

Would be absolutely fantastic if other people from other churches would come and join us. We are looking for ;

Helpers in the groups - Red Group- Reception/ Year 1, Yellow Group - Year 1 (older) Year 2, Green Group - Year 3/Year 4, Blue Group - Year 5/Year6.

Help with registration (first thing)

Gunge maker – coloured custard basically

BBQ helpers (on the Thursday at the end of HC)

If you are interested or indeed just need to know more info, please contact me on karend@wottonbaptist.org.uk or 07770892323



The Keepers

Wotton Area Community Hub

Come as you are,
bring what you can and
take what you need.



What's on at The Keepers?

MAY

Helping communities in Wotton and surrounding areas
to be more resilient, connected and supported.

Monday

- Age UK Gloucestershire - 11am - 1pm

Tuesday

- Online Skills course - 10.30am - 12.30pm (booking required). The next 5 week course starts on Tuesday 14th June. Call us if you would like to be added to the waiting list.
- NEW Chair Yoga - to be confirmed. Please call The Keepers for more information.

Wednesday

- Drop in Café - Pay As You Feel - 10am - 12pm
- Craft and Chat with tea & cake - Held fortnightly - 10am - 12pm
- Job Club/GEM - help with CVs and employment support - 10 - 11.30am
- P3 drop in - help with a range of issues - 10am - 12pm
- Health Visitor drop in - 4th May - available to weigh babies and answer any questions you have - 11am - 12pm

Thursday

- Independence Trust and NHS social prescribers - 11am - 1pm
- Qigong - meditation, breathing and gentle movement - 12 - 1pm
- Welcome Space - space to talk, be listened to and make new friends - 1.30 - 3.30pm (call 01453 767999)

Friday

- Rhyme with Me - a free session of songs, rhythm, rhymes and fun for 0 - 5 year olds - 10 - 10.40am



Monday, Tuesday
and Thursday:
9.00am - 4.00pm

Wednesday and
Friday: 9.00am -
1.00pm

Call us or pop in:
07585 466418

For more information, see our website <https://www.thekeepers.org.uk/>
Please get in touch if you have any ideas for
new activities at the Hub



Easter is a time of year that we always welcome at Blue Coat. Spring brings a plethora of reasons to celebrate: the resurrection of Jesus Christ, warmer weather, longer daylight hours and the joys of new life. Within our school corridors, the echoes of children singing 'Spring Chicken' can be heard and one will find themselves smiling and humming along instinctively to the familiar tune.

This term, the Blue Coat community has been lucky enough to have even more reasons to celebrate. We had the pleasure of inviting iSingPOP into our school. iSingPOP is a singing, performing, and resourcing project that helps children and families engage in Collective Worship in school, church, and at home. This is the third time in six years that we have worked with iSingPOP and it never fails to inspire and enthuse the children. Many of our Upper Key Stage Two children expressed their excitement about the return of iSingPOP with many of the younger children bursting with anticipation about being involved with the legendary iSingPOP project.

The children (and adults) were counting down the days until the return of iSingPOP. Eventually, the day had arrived and on Monday 14 March, the project began. We spent the first 3 days of the project learning a set of catchy, fun-filled pop songs with our iSingPOP project leader, Robin. Each song was based on an important and inclusive Christian value, which was shared and explored with the children. My personal favourite was 'Viva Forever'. For the following two weeks, we lived and breathed all things iSingPOP.

After a few Covid hurdles, the eagerly awaited live concert was upon us and it was finally show time! On Friday 1 April, the whole school danced through Wotton to welcome the wider Blue Coat, Church and Wotton community into St Mary's Church. The children performed not once but twice that day and on both occasions St Mary's was filled with an explosion of colours, smiles and voices - even Reverend Morag sported a fabulous pink iSingPOP hoodie. For the duration of the concerts, the children sang and danced their hearts out and were thanked with an eruption of well-deserved applause from the audience. It's fair to say that iSingPOP has become a valued and unforgettable milestone at Blue Coat for the children and we feel exceptionally lucky that we can share this magical experience with the wider community. Watch this space for the 2025 iSingPOP concert!

Kiri Cole – Acting Deputy Headteacher



An update from the Oliver Memorial Chapel.

Pastor, Lois Etherington writes: 'It was so good for all of us to be back together again for Mothering Sunday this year. We were able to hand out silk flowers and little red heart cases filled with love heart sweets.

At Easter we re-instated the evening service on Good Friday.'

In addition, people from all the churches were able to meet at the Chapel on Good Friday morning, where Lois led the first part of the Walk of Witness worship prior to setting out with the cross. Around 60 people took part, at least some of whom had never previously been inside the little Synwell Chapel which is dear to so many.

Lois signs-off her update with : 'With God's blessings from Lois and all at the Oliver Memorial Chapel.'

And ... an update from Dryleaze

Easter Monday was marked with a celebratory Easter tea party in the Lounge. In keeping with thoughts of Spring and new life the room was decorated with flowers, dozens of little bunny rabbits and fluffy yellow chicks and, of course, eggs - all colours and sizes and made of many different materials. Residents enjoyed puzzling over quizzes, chatting and being regaled with well buttered hot cross buns and other refreshments.

On the Wednesday following Easter a group of residents was very pleased to have Holy Communion brought to them from St. Mary's Parish Church. While prayers and quiet reflections for our troubled world were offered, thoughts also focused on the Easter message of the blessings of new beginnings and hopes for the future.

Mary George

Lent Lunches 2022

Thank you to all those who supported the Lent Lunches in any way. After two years without, there were fresh challenges for 2022 with non-availability of the Parish Room and Coronavirus still doing its best to prevent smooth running.

We do know that a very successful Lent Lunch was held at the Baptist Church on Friday, 8 April to raise funds for Christian Aid. It was well supported with four types of soup, a variety of delicious cakes and beautiful flowers on every table!

Overall, including a donation of £40 from the Lent lectures, an amazing £445.75 was collected! Thanks to all those who attended and donated.



A Necessary Evil?

The recently announced £120m scheme to give migrants a one-way ticket to Rwanda is, PM Boris Johnson says, designed to

"save countless lives" from human trafficking



Archbishop Justin Welby's Easter message made his thoughts clear: "...sub-contracting-out our responsibilities, even to a country that seeks to do well like Rwanda, is the opposite of the nature of God who Himself took responsibility for our failings."

Steve Valdez-Symonds, Amnesty International UK's Refugee and Migrant Rights Director, said:

"Today's announcement could not be clearer – the UK government is flaunting a fundamental absence of humanity with no regard for people fleeing danger, violence or war.

"Banishing people to Rwanda, which has an appalling human rights record, is the same as the UK tearing up its commitment to give people who need asylum sanctuary. It does not matter where they come from or what their sex is or whether they are single.

"Not only is this a fundamental repudiation of obligations the UK shares with other countries to provide asylum, but this so-called partnership is a dismal repeat of an abandoned deal struck by Israel when it 'persuaded' people seeking asylum to relocate to Rwanda. Instead of safety, they faced abuse, trafficking, starvation and threats of being returned to countries they were fleeing from torture.

"The Government is rapidly destroying the UK asylum system at great cost to the taxpayer. If it is serious about tackling smugglers and traffickers it needs to target them, not their victims, and provide real alternatives for people to seek and receive asylum in the UK - none of which it currently does."

While we continue to pray for all those caught-up in the war between Russia and Ukraine, we need to add prayers that our government will make the right decisions in dealing with refugees, wherever they have come from.



Choose Love - Choose Life - Choose Christ



The railings outside the Baptist Church and the United Church are adorned with fluttering blue and yellow ribbons; a sign of our prayers for all those affected by the conflict in Ukraine.

United Ramblers

Monday 2 May



We are planning a walk in Westridge woods. Meet at the church at 10 as usual, drive up the Old London Road and park by the Scout hut.

Alternatively those with the energy could walk up the hill and meet us at the end of the track close to the top of Adey's Lane (but please let me know if you intend doing this so we don't set off without you).

We will then take a roundabout route out to the monument where we will have our coffee break and take another roundabout route back to make 4 to 4.5 miles. We hope that the bluebells and wild garlic should still be good.

Lunch at the Swan – yet to be arranged.

Alison J

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'together in Wotton' is produced on behalf of all the Wotton under Edge Churches. Items and comments are welcome and should be sent to the Editor, Judy Mills judy.mills@live.co.uk

All items and articles for the June edition should be submitted by 5pm on Monday 16 May

This is a week earlier than usual