

*From the Revd Peter Hills*

And the risen Jesus said to his disciples:

Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you. (John 20.21)

I did enjoy Adam's reflection last week: an American's view of the British Monarchy; and it was good to be reminded that we are subjects, not just of a king, but of the King of Kings. The apostle Paul wrote this to the Christians in Rome (Romans 12.1-2):

I appeal to you brothers and sisters, by the mercy of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect.

It was during the reign of George III that the tiny part of America under British (as opposed to French or Spanish) rule gained its independence and gave birth to the United States. George did not ask to be king. He was a second son, but had outlived his elder brother and became king the moment his father died. He had no choice. He wasn't the last in that situation: William IV was his third son, and the 18-year-old Victoria the daughter of his fourth. Her grandson George V was also a second son; and then came George VI, the former Prince Albert. We know the story: how his brother gave up the crown for the love of an American divorcee, forcing Albert to become the most reluctant of kings. The late queen was 10 years old when she learnt of her future role (as was Victoria). It was George's sense of having been called into a life, not of privilege but of duty and service that he passed on to his daughter Elizabeth, and she has passed on in turn to Charles, and he to William.

I mention these things because last Sunday was named Vocations Sunday by the Methodist Church. And the coronation of our King and his Queen the previous day was all about the vocations of a king, his queen and his heir. It was a lovely service: merging tradition with innovation, familiar music with the newly composed, a Christian – indeed Anglican – service at which people of all faiths and non were equally welcome. With music familiar and new, high ceremony and a dancing choir, it reflected a society which has become much more diverse since Elizabeth's coronation in 1953. The rain was just as wet, though.

The Coronation did not make Charles a king. Neither did the Proclamation which followed the death of the Queen. He became king at the moment that the woman he called mummy died. His accession was a day not to celebrate, but on which to

weep. But Charles was ready: he had learnt from his mother that to be a monarch is to be a servant of the people.

Each of us has a God-given vocation. I was called to be a Local Preacher as a teenager – in fact, I preached my first sermon as a Preacher on Note 60 years ago, and came onto full plan three years later. I became a teacher and joined the army, but always with the nagging feeling that God was calling me to ordained ministry. I finally gave way, and am now in the 35th year of my ministry. Is there a nagging voice in your life? Don't leave it too late!

Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I: send me!' (Isaiah 6.8)

Blessings!

Peter

## **Resources**

### **Chaplaincy Event – 15 May**

Please find attached a flyer about a Chaplaincy & Discipleship evening which is taking place online on Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 from 7pm – 8.30pm.

To book your place please go to : <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/577322837147>

### **Growing Cross-Cultural Community in the Church – Training Day, 10 June**

Please find attached a flyer about a cross church cross-cultural training day, exploring how churches in Guildford can grow communities that both welcome and represent a diversity of cultures in all areas of church life.

Further information can be found at:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/603695889657>

## **Good News**

Observed annually on 11<sup>th</sup> May, National Eat What You Want Day sets diets aside for a day of indulgence. It's about having one day a year of eating with no regrets. Whether you love donuts or fast food, today is your day to gratify without feeling guilty!