



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I do not think we could ever imagine how much change we have had in our lives since I wrote the first weekly bulletin of the school year. In the space of only one week, we witnessed our beloved Queen Elizabeth II appoint her 15th Prime Minister and then two days later we heard the heart-breaking news that Her Majesty the Queen had sadly died.

When the news came through, I was at Launde Abbey in Leicestershire attending a residential meeting with other Diocesan Directors of Education. Like everyone, I will always remember where I was when I heard this very sad news. In some ways, I found it comforting to be at Launde Abbey as I could attend the chapel there. I was able to light a candle, reflect on the Queen's wonderful service to our country and Commonwealth and pray for the Royal Family and the new King Charles III. There was a part of me though where I just wanted to go home and be with my family at this sad time.

In this national period of mourning, I expect we will all feel a range of deep emotions. Of course, we feel great sadness and loss. Her Majesty the Queen has been the nation's constant for 70 years and has provided great comfort and reassurance to us in very turbulent times. We will also feel immense gratitude for the Queen's loyal service and duty to our country and the Commonwealth. We will also feel a sense of hope for the future as her eldest son, His Majesty the King Charles III promised to build upon the legacy of our late Queen Elizabeth. In His Majesty's first address to the nation, he said,

Queen Elizabeth's was a life well lived; a promise with destiny kept, and she is mourned most deeply in her passing. That promise of lifelong service I renew to you all today.



We of course need time and space to pray, reflect and pay our respects to the Royal Family. The Cathedral is open from 8a.m. to 8p.m. during this period. The Diocesan Education Team will be visiting the Cathedral today (Monday) to lay flowers, sign the book of condolences and to pray.

Churches across the diocese will be open for local communities to pay their respects. I imagine school and church leaders will wish to consider how they may work together to engage the school community in prayer and remembrance activities in school or in church.

Last week, Lynsey Norris, (Assistant Diocesan Director of Education) shared with you a range of resources that you could use at this time. These be found on our website at <https://www.lincolndiocesaneducation.com/news/?pid=3&nid=1&storyid=13> with further ideas and information at the end of this bulletin.

I can also confirm that during the national period of mourning, **all SIAMS inspection activity is suspended until further notice.**

During the course of this year, different members of the education team will be sharing thoughts and reflections about different themes each week. Thank you to Lynsey for sharing her thoughts and reflections this week about the passing of Her Majesty the Queen Elizabeth.

If you need any further support or guidance from the diocesan education team, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

With love at this difficult time,

Paul Thompson
Diocesan Director of Education



A prayerful reflection from the Assistant Diocesan Director of Education, Lynsey Norris

There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens:
a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,
a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build,
a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,
a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing,
a time to search and a time to give up,
a time to keep and a time to throw away,
a time to tear and a time to mend,
a time to be silent and a time to speak,
a time to love and a time to hate,
a time for war and a time for peace.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

As I sit down to write this I wonder how I am going to do justice to the enormity of the last few days. In less than 48 hours we heard of the declining health of Queen Elizabeth, to the announcement of her death and the accession of King Charles III. The announcement of the monarch's death is one of those moments in time we will all remember where we were when we heard. Not personally knowing our Queen, nor having never met her, I was surprised at the strength of the emotion I felt. Just before the announcement there was a beautiful moment where rainbows simultaneously shone over Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle.





Every time a rainbow shines in the world it is a witness of God's promises to us, promises we can be assured that will never be broken. This is something Queen Elizabeth was also sure about. In her Christmas speeches she often spoke about her faith; she spoke about Jesus being 'an anchor in my life', how she relied on her faith 'to guide me through the good times and the bad'. She also spoke of Jesus not as a philosopher nor a general, 'but a saviour with the power to forgive'. In August this year she sent a message to the Lambeth Conference which said

'Throughout my life, the message and teachings of Christ have been my guide and in them I find hope. It is my heartfelt prayer that you will continue to be sustained by your faith in times of trial and encouraged by hope at times of despair.'

Much will be spoken about her in the coming weeks, many people sharing stories of when they met her or why they admired her. Many will speak of the promise that she gave and lived by until her last moments. However, my overriding thoughts are about her unswerving faith in Jesus, her life of prayer and the hope she found within that, which I believe helped her fulfil her duty as our Queen. May we all learn from her faith and the hope she found in it.

Gracious God,
We give thanks for the life of your servant Queen Elizabeth,
for her faith and her dedication to duty.
Bless our nation as we mourn her death
and may her example continue to inspire us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Please find a message from the Bishops on the Diocesan website <https://www.lincoln.anglican.org/News/the-death-of-her-majesty-the-queen-elizabeth>

Please find details from Lincoln Cathedral here <https://lincolncathedral.com/latest-news/the-death-of-her-majesty-queen-elizabeth-ii/>

Nigel Genders Chief Education Officer of Church of England Education has also informed us of a suite of resources available for schools on The Church of England website:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/remembering-her-majesty-queen>

Scroll down beyond the invitation to send a message of condolence and the resources for churches. The resources for schools are underneath.

You can find more resources on our dedicated page [here](#).