



March 2023

A Pastoral Letter from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Greetings in the name of the Lord!

We are writing to you to share with you our hopes, desires and prayers for the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III on the 6th May. The Coronation will be a historic moment in the life of our nation; a time to reflect on our history, reflect and celebrate something of who we are, and look forward.

The Coronation is steeped in this country's traditions and filled with great symbolism. It is essentially a consecration to service. Happening within a Eucharist, the most basic and the central act of Christian worship, it includes oaths, regalia and crowning. Through it we receive from Jesus the one who comes to us as a servant; the one who is the king of Kings.

The Coronation weekend and bank holiday is aimed at bringing the nation together in common meals and in helping and serving our communities through the Coronation Big Lunch and the Big Help Out.

It is, of course, part of every Christian's witness to commit joyfully to a life of service to God and one another; a commitment the King has exemplified throughout his life. We pray this would be a moment for all to encounter afresh the person of Jesus Christ - the servant King - and be renewed in our calling to serve Him by serving others.

At the heart of communities across the country, particularly through your ministry, the Church of England will provide space for prayer and worship, as well as events where people of all faiths and none can gather together. This is an moment for us to witness to the love of Jesus Christ and a chance, in partnership with many others, to reach out and serve our communities.

You will know best how to do this in your own context and with the resources you have. We hope that no matter the size of your parish, cathedral or diocese, you will find an opportunity to celebrate and mark the Coronation in a way that is creative, joyful and meaningful with those in your local area.

The journey to the Coronation weekend starts after Easter, with a season of prayer. The Church of England has published a special book of prayers called 'Prayers for the Coronation

of King Charles III. Running for 28 days, from the 9th April (Easter Sunday) up to the Coronation Day, the prayer book has daily prayers, readings and reflections. It is available from Church House Publishing.

Nationally, the Church of England has produced a wide range of resources to help people pray, plan and mark this occasion - we warmly commend them to you. If you haven't had a chance to look at them yet, they are all available on the Church of England's website [cofe.io/Coronation] to download and adapt to your setting. They provide lots of simple ways for churches and congregations to get involved - from services and celebrations, to volunteering and community events. To help the public find any services and events you may be organising, please do ensure you've listed these on AChurchNearYou.com as well as, edenprojectcommunities.com and thebighelpout.org.uk.

The Church of England has the great privilege of a role at the heart of our national, local and community events. That also means we get to work in partnership with those around us - so do consider reaching out to other communities, traditions and groups and doing something together. Or perhaps endorsing and supporting a community-led event or initiative, if that works best for you in your context.

However you choose to mark the Coronation weekend, we hope this will be a time celebrating God's love and generosity, and making that love known in our communities and national life.

Finally, our prayer is for the fruitful ministry of Jesus Christ through each of us in these next weeks. As we come together to celebrate this historic occasion in our national life, we pray that we would all know the empowering of the Holy Spirit in each of us, personally and in those with whom we minister. May this be a wonderful time of serving others, reaching out to our neighbours, and celebrating our unity in diversity.

Yours in the service of Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read '+ Justin Welby:'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**The Most Reverend and Right Honourable
Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read '+ Stephen Cottrell:'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**The Most Reverend and Right Honourable
Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York**