

On Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> September Her Majesty the Queen, Elizabeth II, died at Balmoral Castle in Scotland. On the afternoon of Friday 10<sup>th</sup> September we stopped our school day for a brief moment to remember with thanksgiving her life and service to us as her people.

These were the words we used at each of 6 short assemblies, one with each year group:

*For 70 years she has represented us as our monarch. She has guided us as our Sovereign. She has embodied what this country stands for as our Queen.*

*When she was born in 1926 she had no idea that this was to be her calling. When at the age of 10 her father suddenly became King George VI, her life took a new and unexpected course. At the age of 21 in a speech in South Africa she committed herself to lifelong service as our future monarch. Little did she know then how long that life and service would last. She became Queen in 1952 and died as Queen in 2022: for 70 years we have known no other.*

*Today we are bereft as a nation. The scriptures help us to understand that we should grieve her loss, but also how we should do so as Christians, for, in Paul's words to the Thessalonians: we do not grieve like the rest of men who have no hope. Our late Queen lived and died as a person of strong Christian faith, a great example to us also of love and hope.*

*The same scriptures have good words in the book about Joshua, who followed the great leader Moses, for our new King, Charles III: Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. And: Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified. Do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.*

Mike Rutt, our Lay Chaplain led us in three short prayers. Then we said together the Lord's Prayer.

Subsequently we also wrote these words for our school website:

*At Archbishop Tenison's we mourn the loss of Queen Elizabeth II after our 70 years as our monarch. Our current school building was opened by her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1959, which gives us a personal link with her daughter, too.*

*As a Church of England school, too, we have benefited richly from the late Queen's example of living and practical Christian faith. This was well expressed in her Christmas broadcast of 2014, in which she said: "For me the life of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace ... is an inspiration and anchor in my life. A role model of reconciliation and forgiveness, he stretched out his hands in love, acceptance and healing. Christ's example has taught me to seek to respect and value all people of whatever faith or none".*

*From the New Testament we learn both to grieve, but not to do so without hope. On Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September we held a brief assembly with each year group to do just that. No doubt there will be many other opportunities over the coming days to remember with thankfulness the life and service of Queen Elizabeth II and also to pray together for King Charles III. In the meantime our normal activities will continue, but in a spirit of reflection and thanksgiving.*