

Church of St John the Evangelist, Elora  
Platinum Jubilee  
June 5, 2022  
Canon Paul Walker

It's not in the program or in the Order of Service, but while I don't have anything original to say, it still warrants that something needs to be said on this historic occasion, even if it's the obvious.

This historic milestone is a unique event: a Platinum Jubilee of a Monarch and, if you have followed any of it in the news coverage, it is a spectacular celebration across the Commonwealth and beyond. In the Christian calendar it happens to coincide with the Feast of Pentecost when we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit that is invoked at our baptism and our confirmation; the Spirit that is invoked at the blessing of two people who are committing themselves to each other in marriage; the Spirit that is invoked at an ordination to make a new deacon, priest or bishop; is also the same Spirit that was invoked at Her Majesty's coronation 70 years ago. When that happened she was set apart. She was anointed with holy oil and crowned as the Sovereign, the Queen, the head of the state

and all her realms, beyond political lines, and the defender and keeper of the faith. And as the young Princess Elizabeth took on that role she asked us to pray that she would remain faithful to those promises that she took.

The invocation of the Holy Spirit on *anyone* or *anything* is to set *them* apart for a particular role, and to ask God to empower them to fulfill that role in our midst. In setting them apart, we say that the person is consecrated.

It is abundantly clear that in all of the challenges and vicissitudes of the world over that past 70 years, Her Majesty has been set apart and consecrated as a model of service, a unifier of peoples, an icon of stability in a way that is really unparalleled in the modern world for that length of time. It has been a remarkable and exceptional achievement to accomplish this. Clearly Her Majesty has been faithful in her role and from the bottom of our hearts we thank her and we rededicate ourselves to continue to pray for her.

In a moment we will hear the same anthem that was sung 70 years ago at the Coronation. Handel's "Zadok the Priest" was written for the

Coronation of King George II in 1727, but the text comes from the biblical account of Zadok and Nathan anointing Solomon as King. The words for “God save the Queen” are based on the same Biblical story. These words were first used in the year 973 for the coronation of King Edgar at Bath Abbey. It is sung prior to the anointing of the sovereign at the coronation of every British monarch since its composition. Don’t be alarmed when you hear the words “God save the King!” The lyrics of the anthem do not change based on the gender of the Sovereign, because the king in question is Solomon, so it remains “King” even if the sovereign is female.

When we say or sing “God save the Queen!” we are not only saying it for her sake, but we are saying it for all of our sakes, because the Queen, in her office embodies all of us collectively. So while it is a prayer to save the Queen personally, it is also a prayer to save us as a society, a culture, and a world, because the office and role of the Sovereign, in a unique way, embodies all of us collectively. One of her roles, which she continues to fulfill, is to inspire us towards service and point us to things higher than anything that

ever threatens to divide us. To that end, we extend our sincere gratitude and good wishes to Her Majesty on her Platinum Jubilee.

God save the Queen!

Church of St. John the Evangelist  
36 Henderson Street, Elora, ON, N0B 1S0  
519-846-591

