

# All Saints' Church

Cottenham with Rampton



## Pastoral Letter #14

17<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Dear Church Family,

Last Friday was the Saint Day of St Barnabas, known as the son of encouragement. His name is repeated no fewer than twenty-five times in the book of Acts and five times in the epistles. He played an absolutely vital role in the beginnings of the Early Church but you won't find a plethora of books written about him. One scholar says of Barnabas:

*Barnabas unfortunately now resides in 'undeserved obscurity', despite the fact that he played a substantial role in every stage of early Christianity and had a decisive influence on the fate of the church in the first century.*

And why don't we hear about him? Because he falls under the substantial shadow of his altogether more celebrated and famous apprentice, Paul. But without Barnabas, it's unlikely that there ever would have been a Paul, as it was Barnabas who convinced the disciples to give Saul (as he was then) a chance, when they were afraid of him, not believing that he was really a disciple. You can read the story in Acts 9.

Barnabas believed the best about people, sometimes to a fault, and he defended the underdog even when it was unpopular and sometimes dangerous to do so. He stood up for those whom others wrote off as failures. When on his travels with Paul, he was faced with Paul's frustration at Mark's flimsiness, Barnabas stuck with Mark. In later years Paul writes to Timothy about Mark as one who is helpful, so Barnabas' encouragement appears to have paid off.

Christians are as much in need of encouragement today as they were in Barnabas' day. Over this last week I have been much encouraged by news of the church family – you – as you navigate your way through what it means to be a disciple during lockdown. I've heard stories of people of all ages picking up their Bibles for the first time in many years and starting to read through the gospels, and enjoying what they find there. I've heard stories of conversations with friends and colleagues in response to the ACORN acronym shared last week, and the joy that that has brought. I've heard stories of cakes made and delivered to those who are unwell, of prescriptions collected and shopping done. And I've seen the effect of those who gave of their time to get both churches ready for opening for individual prayer on Monday. All of this is of huge encouragement to me, so thank you! And thank you too for those of you who send emails, and messages of support following the service – they're the equivalent of a hug at the door and I'm truly grateful for them. So, do please remember to bless one another with encouragement. Most of us are painfully aware of our fragilities and flaws, and encouragement strengthens our hearts rather than inflates our egos.

Whilst the churches are now open for individual prayer, it's still likely to be some time before we can gather together to worship.

Services and events happening online this week are:

**Fri 19<sup>th</sup> June at 2pm** – Weekly Bible Study on 1 Corinthians led by Frances Horgan using Zoom. If you want to join, please let me know and I'll send you the link.

**Sun 21<sup>st</sup> June** – Online service available on Facebook and YouTube from early on Sunday morning. Watch at whatever time is convenient to you.

**Sun 21<sup>st</sup> June at 11am** – coffee and chat after the service using Zoom. Do join us and catch up with one another.

**Sun 21<sup>st</sup> June at 6pm** – Evening Prayer using Zoom led this week by Alison Wedgbury. If you want to join, please let Cheryl Lowe ([cheryl@cynewulf.co.uk](mailto:cheryl@cynewulf.co.uk)) know, and she'll send you a link to the service. This week, we are looking at 'For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours' from The Lord's Prayer.

For your prayers, please could you remember the following:

- The families of Rosalie Dunnico, Betty Stubbings and Ethel Kester who have recently died
- Those with long-term ill-health and their families caring for them, particularly Pauline Eke (Franklin Gardens) currently in hospital
- Those who are lonely, and those who remain unable to see close family members
- All those working in the NHS and care homes
- Those who remain on furlough, and those whose jobs remain uncertain
- For world leaders responding to the 'Black Lives Matter' protests; that racism would be abolished in all its ugly forms.

If you are using the 'Prayer and Worship from Home' resource and saying Morning or Evening Prayer, these are the Lectionary (set) readings for the week ahead:

Sat 20 <sup>th</sup> June	Joshua 24: 29 to end; Luke 12: 49 to end
Sun 21 <sup>st</sup> June	Romans 6: 1b-11; Matthew 10: 24-39
Mon 22 <sup>nd</sup> June	Judges 2; Luke 13: 1-9
Tues 23 <sup>rd</sup> June	Judges 4: 1-23; Luke 13: 10-21
Wed 24 <sup>th</sup> June	Judges 5; Luke 13: 22 to end
Thurs 25 <sup>th</sup> June	Judges 6: 1-24; Luke 14: 1-11
Fri 26 <sup>th</sup> June	Judges 6: 25 to end; Luke 14: 12-24

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and evermore. Amen.

Best wishes, Lynda.

Rector of All Saints Cottenham with Rampton

01954 583651 [rector@allsaintscottenham.org.uk](mailto:rector@allsaintscottenham.org.uk)