

All Saints' Church

Cottenham with Rampton



Pastoral Letter #29

30th September 2020

Dear Church Family,

Have you noticed, but suddenly in the village there are lots of trees on fire! Not literally, but autumn seems to have brought out a huge flash of bright red and orange in some trees, leaving the rest of the leaves green. It's like some giant paint brush has splodged them or like they're on fire.

Autumn is such a beautiful season with childhood memories of finding the biggest conkers and threading them on string for conker fights in the playground, but this year the trees 'on fire' reminded me of Moses and the burning bush:



Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb (Sinai), the mountain of God. There, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire, it did not burn up.

Ok, so here's what first struck me: Moses saw the bush – he noticed it. This reminds me to keep my eyes open. Do you ever have children in the car pointing out things along the road which you hadn't even noticed? They seem to be very good at living in the present moment and noticing what's going on around them. Have you noticed any trees 'on fire' near you? This autumn I want to get better at looking, at noticing.

So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up."

Moses didn't just look. He stopped what he was doing to investigate. Again, children are good at this. When they see something interesting (a ladybird on a leaf), they stop and investigate (making our walk a slow one!). Often when I'm out with our little granddaughter, we're trying to get somewhere quickly, so I'm not as good as she is at slowing down and taking time to investigate something which we hadn't anticipated seeing. Isn't that how life is though? As much as I try to plan my week, God is often found in the things not on my 'To Do' list, such as the person in the churchyard, or the Co-op or the Post Office who simply wants to chat. This autumn I want to get better at stopping, at turning away from my own agenda, to engage with what might be God's.

When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then God said, "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." (Exodus 3: 1-5)

And then, when God saw that Moses had turned away to look, God called to him. Wow. This is what I want in my life – to hear God speak to me, to be connected with him during

my whole day. This autumn I want to let the 'fiery trees' be my reminder to look, stop and acknowledge God's presence with me, to look for his agenda and to listen for his voice.

There's lots going on in the next week or two so do please read the Weekly Sheet and sign up to our Facebook page if you haven't already. It's Alison Wedgbury's licensing as a Lay Reader on Saturday at 2.30pm and details of how to watch online will be in the body of the weekly email. The Vestry Meeting and APCM will be held in church at 11.30am this Sunday, immediately after the 10.30 service, to elect our Churchwardens, PCC members and receive the accounts. Please take time to read the reports for the APCM (published in March 2020) on the website and email any questions you have to Lesley Maile, the PCC Secretary (lesley.maile@gmail.com 252003). We will not be going through the reports at the meeting but will take questions.

We're starting to plan for Time to Remember, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas. The advice from the centre is to plan to do as much as we can online, particularly if it's a service to which we would normally attract large congregations, and consider anything we can do in-person as a bonus. If you don't have Internet access and would like a DVD of any online service, do please let me know.

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,

Revd Lynda Davies

Rector@allsaintscottenham.org.uk

01954 583651