

All Saints' Church

Cottenham with Rampton



Pastoral Letter #36

18th November 2020

Dear Church Family,

It's hard to believe that the season of Advent will be soon upon us. Advent Sunday is on 29th November and heralds the start of a sermon series called 'Worship in the Waiting'. Advent is a unique invitation to anticipate; to live with holy, awe-filled expectancy as we approach the celebration of Christmas, whatever it might look like this year. Advent offers us a period of preparation, both physically and spiritually, for the gift that is about to be born.

As most of you will know, Advent means 'coming', and there are three 'comings' of Jesus that we can focus on during this season: Christ *has* come in the incarnation; Christ *is* come in that his presence lives in and among us even now; and Christ *will* come at the end of the age. Over the weeks of Advent, we will explore what it was like for Mary, John the Baptist and all of Israel to wait for the coming of the Messiah. But also, what does it mean for us to anticipate the coming of Jesus by his Spirit into our lives today? How should we live in the light of Jesus' final return? Online, and hopefully in person from 6 December, each service will include videos, prayers, hymns, readings and a talk to help us to '*Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him*' (Ps 37:7). If you don't have access to the Internet and cannot get to church, please let us know if you'd like a DVD of the service.

To help you journey through Advent, I've produced an Advent resource which includes some meditations by Nick Fawcett ('*No Ordinary Man*'), a prayer and some questions to ponder each week. This is available electronically from this week, and will be printed and delivered next week to those of you who receive a paper version of this letter. In addition to this resource (or instead of), can I encourage you to use an Advent book (or app) during this season of waiting. There are many available from online bookshops covering a wide taste. This year I'm going to be using '*The Meaning is in the Waiting: The Spirit of Advent*' by Paula Gooder, one of my favourite authors (£8.99 from Amazon). Maybe we can share over 'Coffee and Chat' on a Sunday morning what we are reading and learning during this season.

A huge thank you to those who helped to tidy the Churchyard over the last couple of weeks. It looks amazing! We are already starting to see the tips of spring bulbs appearing and buds on the Magnolia tree. Do remember that the Church is open during daylight hours for individual prayer. In line with our Covid Risk Assessment, the church is cleaned daily – just let us know where you've sat by leaving one of the little cards (from the table in the porch) on your seat.

Do keep in contact with each other during this second period of lockdown, particularly remembering those on their own. I'm very grateful to Lesley Maile, Frances Horgan, Alison

Wedgbury, Maggie Appleby, Cheryl Lowe, Sue Hooks, Jennie Steer and Ian Winterbottom for maintaining regular contact with you all and alerting me to specific need.

Please can you remember in your prayers those who are unwell: Peter Wilbourn, Peter Tilbury, John Easterling, Janet Johnston, Phyll Greed and Bob Ward; and for the families of Patrick Barnes and Joyce Piper who have recently died.

Do join us for the online service this Sunday; our ordinand (vicar in training) from Ridley Hall, Hazel Davis, will be speaking. If you've not joined 'Coffee and Chat' over Zoom yet, do please come along. It's a great way to catch up with folk. Whilst 'in-church services' are suspended, it's reverted back to its original time of **11am**.

As part of our preparation for Christmas, we're hoping to give every child in the Reception year at Cottenham Primary School a stone baby Jesus, inviting them to create their very own manger/stable and send us a picture of the result. If you'd like to help with painting the stones, please let me know. As you can see, you don't need to be skilled artistically! If the Live Nativity is able to go ahead, each baby Jesus will come with an invitation to the Nativity.



A very happy birthday to Pauline Wayman – turning 90 this Sunday. We hope she has a lovely day.

Do please get in touch if you need anything, or would just like to chat.

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

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