

## All Saints' Church

Cottenham with Rampton



### Pastoral Letter #46

3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 composed by Alison Wedgbury

Dear Church Family

I found a bit of personal treasure the other day. It has survived many house moves since I was born in the summer of 1951. It's a 'Five Shilling' piece bearing the images of King George 6<sup>th</sup> and St George and the Dragon. My mother bought it to commemorate the 1951 Festival of Britain which aimed to be 'a beacon of change' for British people recovering from war, austerity and loss. I was 0 years old at the time and cannot claim to remember a thing about 1951!

That coin started me thinking about other 'beacons of change'.



On Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021, in the Anglican set prayers and readings, we commemorate Anskar, a 9<sup>th</sup> century bishop in Northern Europe. Many rejected the Christian message but he persisted in Germany and Denmark. He also worked hard to reduce the European slave trade of that time.

Today we see the damaging consequences of the Transatlantic slave trade which lasted for many centuries. Prejudice persists. Azariah France-Williams, a black British vicar in Manchester, has recently written on institutional racism and the Church of England in his book 'Ghost Ship'. He's a great speaker, poetic and down to earth. In an online talk last week, he reminded us of something important as followers of Christ. He proposed that Jesus was **not** actually at his most prophetic when he was angry, overturning tables in the Temple. Jesus **was** at his most prophetic when washing feet, healing and listening to people. Jesus, a 'beacon of change', started locally.

We cannot all become famous and dramatically change society. Change is much more likely to start in small ways, locally, quietly, by ordinary people. Some of us in Cottenham and Rampton and some of our neighbours are truly 'beacons of change' every day. Whether we are housebound ourselves or more mobile in 'essential' jobs or community action, we can effect change. What we say, what we do and how we listen to others are all part of Christian living. We can change our world, whatever age we are.

Finally, here are a couple of prayers by young people. For Wednesday 3 February, Rebecca Kemal urges the Anglican Communion to encourage, support and train youth leaders across the world, 'perhaps even to the same level as vicars' because young people and children are 'the Church of today and not the Church of tomorrow'.

Young people can be 'beacons of change' locally too. For All Saints' Junior Church on Sunday 31 January, Hannah Ward (aged 13) wrote this prayer, full of insight:

Dear God, Give the leaders in the world authority. Let them make good decisions and help our countries. Authority in Heaven and on Earth belongs to you, God, and guide those people in the world this week. **Amen.**

Please continue to pray for all those with responsibility of leadership during this pandemic, locally, nationally and across the world.

Other needs for prayer include:

- Those who are unwell, including David Woodcroft, Peter Tilbury, Rona Gardner, Bob Ward, Janet Johnston, Pam Lumsden and Barbara Groom
- The families of Richard Gautrey, William Hornett Mary Waldock and Captain Sir Tom Moore who have recently died
- All those working for the NHS; and those rolling out the vaccine
- Those in severe economic need and those relying on Foodbanks
- Those struggling with mental health in this third lockdown
- Local teachers and teaching staff who are providing education for children of key workers/vulnerable children as well as teaching online
- Parents who continue to juggle work with home-schooling, not knowing how long for
- Those with little contact with family who are feeling lonely, particularly those in our local care homes, and those eagerly awaiting their vaccines

A reminder that **Evening Prayer** continues at 6pm on Sundays through Zoom (contact Cheryl Lowe for the link). We rejoice that it's a service that continues to grow – 20 last week - but there's always room for more. It was also lovely to see many of you at **Coffee and Chat** on Sunday at 11am, again through Zoom. It's a great way to reconnect with the church family so do try to come along if you can. There's always a warm welcome.

If you need any help with anything or just fancy a chat, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

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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