

All Saints' Church

Cottenham with Rampton



Pastoral Letter #50

3rd March 2021

Dear Church Family,

This week's thought for the day comes from Cheryl Lowe:

“One of the things that I have been thinking about lately is where and how I meet God. We've heard in recent sermons about Peter, James and John meeting Jesus in glory along with Elijah and Moses at the transfiguration, and Daniel's friends meeting God in the fiery furnace. But those encounters started with deliberate actions: Jesus asked his friends to accompany him to the top of the mountain; Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego consciously refused to worship a statue in Babylon.

As we look forward to meeting friends and family, even in small numbers and outdoors, I'm sure it is something that we will do deliberately and will plan and prepare for. We'll arrange dates and times that are convenient and ensure that we keep within the rules, especially whilst we have to meet outside and keep our distance.

Putting these two together, I have been asking myself how often I plan to meet God, and how often I hope he will turn up when I am doing something else. Many of us talk about meeting God in nature when we are out taking exercise and wonder at his creation, but do we go out hoping to meet him or is it just 'chance'? Sometimes we meet him through what we read or when we pray, but I wonder how much more we could get out of our encounters with God if we prepared for those meetings, if we thought about where and how we could meet God, and what we could talk to him about?

Through Lent we can prepare for a close encounter with the risen Jesus at Easter. I will be putting more thought into my meetings with God – maybe not using my diary and worrying about whether its indoors or out, and certainly not keeping 2 metres away from him. But in planning what I want to say to him, listening for his voice and making an effort to be more attentive in those times when I can meet together with God and other believers and we can share in enjoying his company. ”

This week we continue through the book of Daniel for our Lent sermon series. On Sunday, we'll be looking at chapters 5 and 6 as we think about how to live *consistently* as Christians. Why not have a read of both chapters before the online service (or reading the sermon).

We've been overwhelmed by the response from the local community to the activities in the churchyard. There are lots of ribbons tied to the church gate to represent someone they are missing or have lost over this last year. The stock has been replenished several times so there are still plenty of ribbons in the porch or you can bring your own. Do also have a read of the sign on the horse chestnut tree as you enter the churchyard and reflect on an aspect of Lent. During Holy Week we are planning to construct a large Easter Garden just inside the

churchyard on the right. If you'd like to help with this, please contact Ken Hewitt or Anna Marsh (details in church directory).

Thank you to all those who have responded to the plea for financial giving over the last few weeks. If you still plan to give, a reminder that you can use the QR Code or give through the church website. Every contribution is gratefully received.



Over the next few months we will be preparing for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting which has to be held by 31 May. This year we **must** appoint a new Churchwarden to replace Graham Appleby who has served magnificently for the last 6 years. If you are interested, please give Graham a ring to find out more about the role.

Please can you continue to pray for:

- Those who are unwell, including Peter Tilbury, Rona Gardner, Bob Ward, Janet Johnston, Pam Lumsden and Pat Labistour
- The families of Mary and Cyril Waldock, John Easterling, and Michael Saxby who have recently died
- Those struggling with mental health as the lockdown continues
- All those working for the NHS and in our care homes at this difficult time
- Those in severe economic need and those relying on Foodbanks
- For our local schools as they prepare for the return of *all* children on Mon 8th March. We pray especially for those who may be feeling anxious
- The government and scientific advisors as we follow the roadmap out of lockdown
- The PCC as it meets on Tues 9th March to discuss a return to onsite worship (amongst other things).

A reminder that **Evening Prayer** continues at 6pm on Sundays through Zoom (contact Cheryl Lowe for the link). Do also prioritise **Coffee and Chat** on Sunday at 11am, again through Zoom. It's a great way to reconnect with the church family so come if you can. There's always a warm welcome. There will be a service of **Compline** today (3rd March) at 7.30pm – contact Cheryl Lowe if you'd like to join in.

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,

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