

All Saints' Church

Cottenham with Rampton



Pastoral Letter #52

17th March 2021

Dear Church Family,

The beady-eyed among you will have noticed that this is the 52nd Pastoral Letter. It's hard to believe that almost a year has passed since the first lockdown was announced on the 23rd of March 2020. Since then, millions of people have been bereaved, both as a result of Covid-19 and due to other causes. The restrictions we've all been living under have meant that many people have had to grieve without the comfort of having friends and family around them. As a family, we know this first-hand, as Martyn's mother, Doreen, who had been living with us since early February, passed away on Friday. Thank you for your thoughts and prayers over these last few weeks.

Marie Curie, a charity which supports people around the event of a terminal diagnosis, has organised a National Day of Reflection next Tuesday (the 23rd) to acknowledge grief and loss over the last year. The Church of England is supporting the day, and there will be prayers available in both churches and on our Facebook page. You might like to use this prayer at home:

Dear God,

*be with us as we think about all that has changed this year,
and help us to trust that you are always with us.*

*Be close to us as we remember those who have died,
and help us to trust they are at peace with you.*

*Show us how to reach out to others with kindness and care,
so that hope shines out in every heart and home.*

Amen.

On the day itself, there will be a national minute's silence at 12 noon to create a moment that shows support for the millions of people who've been bereaved. It might also be a day to connect with someone who is grieving. This might be in simple ways such as having a chat with them, sending a card, a message, or giving them some spring flowers. You can also tie a ribbon to the church gate to remember someone you have lost and have a look at the reflection posted on the laurel tree this week – it's by the gate at the north end of the churchyard.

If you'd like to reflect on your own experience of the last year, I'm including with this letter a resource created by the Church Pastoral Aid Society (CPAS) to help you explore what has been going on for you, and where God has been in the midst of it. If, after completing it, you'd like to talk it through, please get in touch.

Following Doreen's death on Friday, I am taking some time out this week to be with the family as we grieve and plan her funeral. Therefore there will NOT be an online recorded

service this week. I do hope you understand. Church Coffee and Chat will continue as normal at 11am. You can join an online service at other churches in the Deanery, and/or come along to Evening Prayer on Zoom at 6pm. This will be the main service for this week and the joining instructions are included in this week's Church Email.

As we prepare to re-open both churches for onsite worship on Good Friday, we are inviting you to complete a second questionnaire at <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/JNYS1W/>

to give myself and the PCC an idea of where people are in their thinking about returning to church. It takes less than 5 minutes to complete and we'd love as many people as possible to return it. It's easy to complete online but if you'd prefer a paper copy, please let me or the office know.

As we continue through Lent, please can you pray for:

- Those who are unwell, including Peter Tilbury, Rona Gardner, Bob Ward, Janet Johnston, Pam Lumsden and Pat Labistour (back in hospital)
- The families of Mary and Cyril Waldock, John Easterling, Michael Saxby, Danny Granger, Dorothy Brannan, Joan Marsh (Mike's mum) and Doreen Davies 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 adjust to *all* children and young people being back.

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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