

**All Saints' Church  
Cottenham with Rampton**

**Pastoral Letter #75  
September 2022**



Dear Church Family,

## **The End of One Chapter. The Start of Another.**

There is a time for everything,  
and a season for every activity under the heavens:  
a time to be born and a time to die,  
a time to plant and a time to uproot  
a time to kill and a time to heal,  
a time to tear down and a time to build,  
a time to weep and a time to laugh,  
a time to mourn and a time to dance.

### **ECCLESIASTES 3:1—4**

We knew the day would come. We'd been preparing for it. But there's still a palpable sense of shock and disbelief that the woman who has been on the throne for most of our lives has now died. As Princess Anne said following the death of her father, The Duke of Edinburgh, *'You know it's going to happen, but you are never really ready.'*

Until her death, Queen Elizabeth II was the longest-reigning incumbent monarch and the longest-reigning female monarch in history. On 6 February 1952, at the age of just 25, she became Queen of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth realms. During her reign, she saw 15 Prime Ministers, starting with Sir Winston Churchill, and 13 US Presidents, beginning with Harry Truman.

But it was the quality, not the length, of the Queen's reign that was truly exceptional. Elizabeth II was the servant queen, and the course of her life was guided by the servant King: *'For me, the life of Jesus Christ... is an inspiration and an anchor in my life'*, she noted. *'A role-model of reconciliation and forgiveness, he stretched out his hands in love, acceptance and healing.'*

The death of the Queen not only marks the end of her life; it closes an extraordinary and tumultuous chapter in our history. Elizabeth was one of the last of the World War II generation. During her more than seven decades on the throne, she became a symbol of continuity even as the world changed around her.

In all of this, we are of course reminded of our own mortality. It is an inescapable reality. We can try to hide from it, but it will find us. As the writer of Ecclesiastes puts it: *'There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot.'*

It is right then that we grieve. But we do not grieve as those without hope. Isaiah found

reassurance in the vision of the Lord on his throne; we find it in the resurrection of Jesus. Because in his resurrection, sin and death are defeated, and a new creation is begun. We look forward to a day when God puts all things to rights; a new heaven and a new earth, a new order, where there is no more death or mourning or crying or pain.

But until then, inspired by the Queen's example, we work and pray to bring the life of heaven to earth. And we would do well at this time to listen to the advice contained in the poem the young Princess Elizabeth, aged just 13, gave her father, George VI, shortly after Britain had entered the war:

*'And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: "Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown." And he replied: "Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.'"*

May it be so. And may God save the King.

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I trust that you've all had a good summer. A few events coming up to mark in your diaries:

**Sun 9<sup>th</sup> Oct** Harvest Festival (Cottenham at 10.30; Rampton at 4.30pm)

**Sat 5<sup>th</sup> Nov at 3pm** Annual 'Time to Remember' Service for those who have died

**Sun 6<sup>th</sup> Nov** Back to Church Service at 10.30am

If you're not able to come to church, do remember that there's Evening Prayer on Zoom on Sundays at 6pm. Contact Cheryl Lowe for the link. If you'd like to receive Communion at home, do contact myself or Revd Marie, or one of the ALMs (Maggie or Sue).

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

Revd Lynda Davies

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