

**All Saints' Church  
Cottenham with Rampton**



**Pastoral Letter #76  
October 2022**

Dear Church Family,

A few weeks ago, Martyn and I enjoyed a lovely holiday in Paphos, Cyprus. It was quite remarkable that the day we arrived, the reading for Morning Prayer came from Acts 13, where Paul and Barnabas sailed from Seleucia to Cyprus, arriving at the other end of the island to us, in Salamis. Acts tells us that *'When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues... They travelled through the whole island until they came to Paphos.'*

During our time in Cyprus, we spent a day in the Troodos Mountains, and I wondered how Paul had travelled from Salamis to Paphos because, if you walk, these impressive mountains are in the way! The words *'travelled through the whole island'* implies that they walked from town to town, proclaiming the word of God to anyone who would listen. But it may be that they used a boat and worked their way to Paphos along the coast. Even so, it's a 170 miles journey, so quite a trek.

Paul is still remembered in Cyprus today. On our last day, we visited Kykkos monastery in the Troodos Mountains which has a wonderful set of murals depicting his life, from Paul's role in the stoning of Stephen where he's in the background minding the coats, his conversion on the road to Damascus, to his escape from Jews conspiring to kill him via a basket lowered through an opening in the wall. And in Paphos, there's an old pillar, called Paul's pillar, where local legend has it that, before Paul met the proconsul (Acts 11:7), he was captured by the people of Paphos, tied to the pillar, and flogged thirty-nine



times. There is no historical evidence to support the legend, though Paul mentions in a letter that he was flogged like this on five occasions in his lifetime so who knows!

Over the last few weeks, the readings for Morning Prayer have continued to detail Paul's journeys to Pamphylia, Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe and Antioch as he makes his way towards Jerusalem. In each place, Paul preaches the good news of Jesus, often when he's in captivity, and many people become disciples. In the later chapters of Acts he also spends much time with new Christians in fledgling churches, preaching and encouraging them in the faith. There's clearly much benefit to having Paul

among them and he is anxious that they form strong communities. We see this also in his letters to the churches in Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus and Philippi, urging these early churches to carry on the good work that he started when he was with them.

As the church leadership at All Saints' works its way through the questionnaire responses – thank you to all those who completed one – it's obvious that a sense of community is important to you all too. The most common answer to the question 'What do you most appreciate about being part of All Saints?' was '*the church community*'. Responses include:

*'The certainty that I am part of a loving, trusting, supportive group of people all trying to follow Jesus together.'*

*'The warmth and friendship of members.'*

*'I have somewhere to go on a Sunday morning where I feel welcomed.'*

*'The Church family and fellowship, sharing the Christian faith.'*

*'Being part of a church family.'*

*'I feel so at home at church.'*

*'A tremendous community and fellowship.'*

It is lovely to read these comments and reassuring to know that we're not that different from the churches that Paul formed two thousand years ago.

As we approach the winter months with the temptation to hide indoors, let's celebrate the benefit that being part of a loving community brings, and also remember Paul's words in his letter to the Hebrews:

*'And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another.'*

Thank you for your words of encouragement through the questionnaire - we plan to feed back the results after the next PCC meeting - but let's build on the positives, especially being part of a warm and friendly church family. Everyone has a part to play in this, so thank you!

A few events coming up to mark in your diaries:

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

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

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

Revd Lynda Davies

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