

**All Saints' Church**  
**Cottenham with Rampton**



**Pastoral Letter #77**

**December 2022**

Dear Church Family,

It's that time of the year when we start to hear the familiar Christmas readings, as we enjoy Carol Services and the readings for Advent.

We remember Mary, the mother of Jesus, on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Her song, as recorded in Luke 1: 46-49, is particularly beautiful:

And Mary said:

*'My soul glorifies the Lord  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,  
for he has been mindful  
of the humble state of his servant.  
From now on all generations will call me blessed,  
for the Mighty One has done great things for me –  
holy is his name.'*

Perhaps the most astonishing thing about the Nativity, aside from the fact that the Maker squeezed himself into the frame of those he'd made, is that he did it in such an ordinary way. There's a real friction to the way it all played out; the mundane got involved with the miraculous; the earthly partnered with the eternal.

Jesus could have drifted down from heaven fully formed and ready to rock the world. He could have ridden here on chariots of fire with thunder and lightning proclaiming his arrival. But he didn't.

He was carried for nine months, delivered in a small and overcrowded town, and raised by Mary, his remarkably unremarkable mum (at least, as far as the world was concerned).

There's a line of her song that hits me hard every time I read it. After staying with her cousin for three months, Mary was going to have to head back to her village, back to her family, back to her fiancé. And she would have to face them all cradling a growing baby bump and offering a pretty far-fetched explanation. I'm sure she braced herself to be called many things – but *blessed*? That's her main assumption? Seriously!

She's human. You can't tell me that she wasn't totally terrified, confused and overwhelmed at what may come her way because of this mysterious pregnancy. And yet, she understands her reality through the lens of a far bigger one. She is able to view her growing stomach as a blessing which has been generations in the making, her morning sickness as evidence of

God's faithfulness, the kicks she feels within as interactions with her awaited Saviour, the scorns from others as the judgements of those who just don't get it yet.

I know. Her faith blows me away too.

Here's the thing. We, just like Mary, are wrapped up in something so much bigger than ourselves. We are tasked with making Jesus known here and now, in a hundred different ways, living as evidence of his existence.

I wonder if you would call yourself *blessed*? After all, you get a front row seat at what God is doing in your piece of the world in your time. Do you see your day-to-day life that way? Your Monday-to-Saturday as filled with gritty wonder? If not, maybe this Christmas is a good time to start.

Do think about who you can bring along to a Christmas Service this year. We have services on:

Sat 17<sup>th</sup> Dec from 2.30 – Messy Christmas followed by the Live Nativity (for young families)

Sun 18<sup>th</sup> Dec at 7pm – Carol Service at Rampton

Christmas Eve at 4pm – outdoor Carol Service in the Churchyard with Cottenham Brass

Christmas Eve at 7pm – indoor Carol Service with All Saints' Choir and Junior Prime Brass

Christmas Eve at 11.30pm – Midnight Communion at All Saints, Rampton (joint service)

Christmas Day at 8.30am – BCP Holy Communion

Christmas Day at 10.30am – All-Age Holy Communion.

On New Year's Day, there will be one service of Holy Communion at 10.30am.

It will be lovely to see you.

If you're unable to come to Church and would like to receive Home Communion, do please let me know and one of the team will visit.

Blessings to you this Christmas.

Revd Lynda Davies

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