

All Saints' Church

Cottenham with Rampton



Pastoral Letter #44

20th January 2021

Dear Church Family,

I don't know about you but I always enjoy having flowers in the house. Martyn frequently complains when I add a bunch to the weekly shop (regarding it as a bit of an extravagance) but seeing flowers, for me, is a real pick me up. As I sit with my coffee during a break in the middle of a busy morning, I notice the colours. I notice how far they have opened, how long they might have left, the intricacies of their leaves and petals. I also notice when it's the right time to say that they've come to their end, and then I take them out to the green bin to add to the compost.

Part of the loveliness of flowers, I find, is that they don't last forever, so their presence is a statement of hope and finding pleasure in the 'here and now'. Having flowers reminds me to live one day at a time, and to appreciate the beauty I can see, whatever else is going on.

Jesus told his disciples not to worry, but instead to 'consider the lilies' as the Bible translates it, or 'look at the flowers'. He said that flowers don't strive anxiously and God provides beautiful clothes for them. We all know that worrying doesn't help us. In Matthew 6: 34, Jesus says, *'Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.'* We probably would all agree with that last sentence, but it rarely stops us from worrying. But, to help pick me up when the daily news gets me down, I'll carry on looking at the flowers, with joy and gratitude, and greet each day with hope.

I'm really pleased to say that David Woodcroft is now out of hospital and recovering well at home. Dave, Brenda and Connie thank you for your prayers and support. Please continue to pray that he makes good progress. Other needs for prayer include:

- Those who are unwell, including David Woodcroft, Peter Tilbury, Rona Gardner, Bob Ward, Janet Johnston and Clare Campbell
- The families of Kay Wilson, Richard Gautrey and William Hornett who have recently died
- All those working for the NHS and in research and the pharmaceutical industry
- All those who cannot work from home and have no choice but to be at risk of becoming infected and infectious
- Those in severe economic need and those relying on Foodbanks
- Those struggling with mental health in this third lockdown
- Local teachers and teaching staff who are providing education for children of key workers/vulnerable children as well as teaching online
- Parents who are juggling work with home-schooling
- Those with little contact with family who are feeling lonely, particularly those in our

local care homes

- All those with responsibility of leadership during this pandemic, locally, nationally and across the world
- The US as they swear in a new President, for a calm and orderly transfer of power.

This week, as a thanks for their hard work during the pandemic and to let them know we are thinking and praying for them, we will be delivering a box of chocolate treats and a card to our local schools and care homes. I was in Cottenham Court last week visiting a resident receiving end-of-life care, and saw first-hand how well they are managing such difficult circumstances. I'm sure they will appreciate knowing that we value and care about them.



Thank you to those who have already let me know that they'd like a copy of Jeff Lucas' book '*Singing in Babylon: Finding Purpose in Life's Second Choices*', the theme of Lent this year. I'll be making the order in early February, so please let me know as soon as possible if you want a copy. The cost is £9.99.

A reminder that Evening Prayer continues at 6pm on Sundays through Zoom (contact Cheryl Lowe for the link). It was wonderful that 18 of us worshipped together last Sunday evening but there's always room for more. Bible Study has resumed on Tuesdays at 7.30pm alternating with Compline on a Wednesday (contact Cheryl for the link). Friday Bible Study continues each week at 3pm with Frances Horgan leading us through some books of the Old Testament (contact me for the link). New folk are always welcome.

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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