

**Saturday 15th September**



## **Count your blessings**

I have been celebrating with a lot of baptism families recently as the church welcomes their children into the life of faith. Many in churches have mixed feelings about baptisms at the moment: “It’s nice to see families in church, but they never come back”, is the most common phrase that I hear. Perhaps that is how you feel about baptisms too?

For me, baptism is a chance to share God’s grace, freely given to you and me, freely to others. It is true that many may not come again, but we don’t know what God will do with that tiny seed many months, years or even decades down the line. In the act of baptism, whether the family realises the implication or not, we say that the child is now God’s, that God’s name is now written on their hearts. It’s a mark that never fades, even if they don’t come to church or only hear about God in snippets. It’s a mark that they have started their journey with God, whether or not they realise it at the time.

Of course, if they never come to church, they don’t come to know God as easily, but if Jesus believed there was hope for the prodigal son who knew his father and turned away, I’m sure there is hope for those whose families have their children baptised yet don’t attend church. As the words of the baptism service state: “All this for you, before you could know anything of it”. Many of those baptism families come for baptism and are again blessed by God, even if they don’t know anything about it.

How do we count our blessings from God? Are we always aware of all that God does for us? Hymns that help me to consider the many blessings I have include: *Blessed be your Name* (by Matt and Beth Redman) which speaks of praising God for my blessings even in the dark days, and *Ten Thousand Reasons* (by Matt Redman and Jonas Myrin) which praises God for all blessings whatever has happened and whatever will happen.

*Loving and Gracious God,  
How can I ever thank you for all the blessings  
that you have bestowed upon me?  
You give me so much, much more than I could ever thank you for  
and much more than I ever know.  
I thank you for all that you have done for me,  
all that you are still doing for me,  
and all that you will do for me in the future  
Help me to count my blessings and be grateful for them,  
even when the days seem dark.  
Thank you, God, for you do more for me than I could ever know.  
Amen*