

March Team St John, St Mary, St Peter, St Wendreda

3rd Sunday after Trinity 13th July

Regular Church Services

St Peter's Sundays 8am & 11am; Wednesdays 10am

St Mary's Sundays 9.15am; St Wendreda's Sundays 11am

St John's Sundays 9.30am; Tuesdays 10am

Meditation

Eli-jah, his name on the programme: 'There is only one God (El) and that is the God of Israel (Jah) Any other god who offers himself shall not be your God.'

Someone who – faithful to the Torah – wants to allow only the God of Israel to be God will inevitably be brought into conflict with those who do not want that, the Ahabs and the Jezebels. Elijah has fought this fight. And with God on his side has won a glorious victory. Why is he now so empty and so downcast? After all, Ahab came off worst; Baal has failed him at the crucial moment and the king has returned to his palace in humiliation. Yes, but Jezebel is adamant and will not give an inch. In a fury she exclaims that she will not rest until the death of the prophets of Baal has been avenged and Elijah killed. And the people again finds itself in the grip of fear and forgets the marvellous sign on Carmel.

Elijah is overcome with weariness. What is he to do now? Why keep on dreaming of a tomorrow that never dawns? The powers of darkness are always stronger. How did Moses cope with that in his day? How did he manage, clinging to his vision of peace and righteousness? Elijah is at the end of his tether. There is little left of God's indefatigable champion who swore to convert king and people from their errors. "Back," he cried then, "back to Moses, back to the beginning and to why God began it all. Let's not fall into slavery again. The Eternal One saved us from that. Why do you constantly lose sight of that? Why do you forget how the storm wind arose and parted the sea and brought us liberty? Why do you forget that God made a covenant with us, high on his holy mountain? The earth quaked, fire descended from heaven, awe seized us, for we knew that God was there. Don't you remember that any more?

But now Elijah doesn't remember that any more. He no longer wants to fight or resist; he wants to disappear into nothingness. In deep dejection he goes down to Beersheba. After a day's journey into the wilderness, he sits

down under a broom tree. Let God now serve him, and rescue his servant from the intolerable burden of this life. "It is enough," he says, "It is enough, let me die." Israel has again forsaken the God of the fathers; the people are again bowing to the gods of the queen. What shall the prophet – who must be the voice of God – still proclaim in a world that seeks his life? Elijah lay down to sleep under the broom tree in the hope of never waking up again.

But look, an angel touched him, "Arise, eat." Elijah opened his eyes, looked around and lo and behold, at his head was a loaf of bread, baked on glowing stones. There was also a jar of water. He ate and drank and lay down again. The angel of the Lord came a second time, touched him and said, "Arise, eat, the way is enough for you." The angel had clearly heard Elijah sigh that he had had enough. "Enough, Elijah? The way is enough for you! As long as the Eternal One doesn't call you, there is still a way to go. Take food, drink the drink, eat for the journey, for the way is long." Elijah arose, ate and drank and, having regained his strength, journeyed forty days and forty nights until he came to the holy mountain of God.

A remarkable journey. Elijah went back in his memory to Moses, his great model. He didn't make the journey because he was so pious, but because the angel had aroused in him the longing to be pious again. He travelled back in time, back to Moses, back to the beginning and why God began it all. A pilgrim, on a way to the mountain where the eternal One had revealed himself. A journey of forty days and forty nights. Elijah lay down to rest in the cave where God had passed by Moses. "Lord let me see your glory," Moses had asked then. Moses had to go and stand in the cleft of the rock. 'When my glory passes by, I shall cover that cleft in the rock with my hand until I have passed by. Then I shall take away my hand. You shall be able to see me from behind.'

"What brings you here, Elijah?" said a voice in the night. "O Lord, I have been so zealous for you. The children of Israel have forsaken your covenant, torn down your altars and killed your faithful with the sword. I alone am left and now they seek my life." "Come outside, Elijah. Go and stand on the hill before the face of the Lord." The prophet may not hide himself from God in the cave. "Outside! Go and stand on the mountain, the mountain of the Torah. Go and stand before the face of the Eternal One." Israel lives with the Eternal One face to face, or it doesn't live at all. God doesn't want to give up on the experiment of Israel. "Come outside Elijah."

Will the Eternal One now pass by Elijah, as he once passed by Moses? '*And behold, the Lord passed by.*' First a powerful storm wind arose, which rent mountains and shattered rocks. But the Eternal One was not in the wind.

Hardly had the storm subsided, when the earth shook to its foundations, but the Eternal One was not in the earthquake either. Then fire flashed from heaven, but the Eternal One was not in the fire. One by one the prophet sees his images of God shattered, the former signs of God's liberating presence no longer work. Then, Elijah heard the voice of pulverizing silence, the voice of an overwhelming, ominous silence. How can a person stand it? Elijah wrapped his face in his prophet's mantle, went outside, and continued to stand in the entrance to the cave. Again the voice rang out. "What brings you here, Elijah? Return upon your way."

The Lord wants Elijah to return to the land that lies behind him, the land where the voice of prophecy is no longer heard. "Retrace your steps, Elijah. I want you to anoint new kings who will overthrow with the sword and stage coups." God has changed. He is no longer in the signs of his liberation, not in the storm, not in the earthquake, not in the fire. Now the children of Israel have forsaken the covenant and seek to kill the man of God, God can only be there in the silence. "Retrace your steps, Elijah." Back to the bloody battlefield, where on earth the battle against Baal must be fought, and also against the children of Israel who bow their knees to Baal and whose mouths kiss him. A people that opts for Baal will perish by Baal. Elijah still has a way to go. Then his work will be taken over by Elisha. His name sounds almost like that of Elisha. They are brothers in prophecy: with his name Elijah proclaims that *Eli* is *Jah*, God is Lord and no one else, Elisha with his name that he a *God who liberates*. With his name, Elijah's successor bears the promise of liberation into the future. Elijah retraces his steps.

Prayers

O Lord, open our lips: **and our mouths shall show forth your praise.**

O God, make speed to save us: **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.

Praise to the Lord; **the Lord's name be praised.**

Christ has come to turn the world upside down:

to humble the powerful and lift up the lowly.

Christ has come to turn the tables:

to topple vain idols and to stand with the poor.

Christ has come to turn the world upside down:

to feed the hungry, to give sight to the blind, to strengthen the weary, to set the prisoners free.

Christ has come to turn the tables:

to overthrow the present order with a revolution of love.

O Lord show your mercy upon us; **and grant us your salvation.**

O Lord save the King; **and mercifully hear us when we call upon you.**

Endue your ministers with righteousness; **and make your chosen people joyful.**

O Lord, save your people. **and bless your inheritance.**

Give peace in our time, O Lord.

because there is none other that fights for us, but only you, O God.

O God, make clean our hearts within us;

and take not your Holy Spirit from us.

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified: hear our prayer which we offer for all faithful people, that in their vocation and ministry they may serve you in holiness and truth to the glory of your name, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

*Next Choral Evensong
Sunday 10th August
4pm at St John's All Welcome*

Regular Church Activities at St Peter's

Tuesday

10am-12noon Knit and Natter;
1st St Peter's MU 2.30-4pm 3rd Deanery MU

Wednesday

10am Midweek Communion Service

1st Study Group 7.30-9pm *Next Aug 6th*
2nd Wed Christian Aid Lunch Hall 12-1pm

Next **First Thursday** 4th September,
June Jackson on her work in the Prison Service.
No August meeting.

St John's Church Activities

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

9.15-11.15 St John's Tots;

Tuesday

10am Midweek Communion Service

2nd Study Group 11-12 *Next Aug 12th*
Study Group 7pm-8.30pm; Film The Chosen

Wednesdays

Thursday 1st Thursday Social Group (see above)

Friday Choir Practice in Church 7pm

Fenland Churches Celebration

Tues 22nd July 6.15-8.15 at Centenary Baptist
Hear from civic and health leaders, see the faith-
based social action mapping, explore working
together to support people across Fenland

**Saturday 6th Sept – Quiet day at St Mary's
Led by Mother Jane**

Volunteers are urgently needed for the
Community Hub run by Anna Godfrey through
Cambridgeshire Acre. Wednesdays 12:30 to 2:30 in
St John's Hall. Please see Anna for details.

Wednesday 27th August
Christian Aid Garden Party
2-4pm at the Rectory
All Welcome

Summer & Autumn Events

Sat 26th July 1pm Bar-B-Q at Ruth & James
Thu 14th Aug St John Toddlers Beach Party.
Sat 30th August Model Railway Exhibition St Mary
Sat 13th Sept CMS Concert at St Peter's
New date; CMS Concert Nov 8th 2pm
Sat 13th Sept "Ride and Stride" Walk, Cycle etc
Sun 14th Sept Musical afternoon St John's Choir
at 129 West End – Refreshments and Raffle
Sat 20th Sept St John's Autumn Fair
Sat 27th Sept Lions at St Peters
Sun 12th Oct 1 for 1.30 Harvest Lunch at Maureen's
Sat 18th Oct Bondi Concert 7pm St John's

4th Sunday after Trinity 13th July

**Welcome to St John the Evangelist,
St Peter & St Mary Churches in the
March Team**

Regular Sunday Services

St John 9.30am Sung Communion

First Sunday of each Month 9.30am Wholeness
Service with Laying on of Hands

NEXT WEEK MESSY CHURCH 1-3pm

3rd Sunday of Month, July 20th, none in August

St Mary 9.15am Traditional Sung Communion

St Peter 8am Holy Communion

11am Sung Communion

*Last Sunday of each month, **Sunday Club**
The next sessions will be on 27th July at the later time of
11am and we plan to come into church for communion.*

There will be no session in August (31st).

TUESDAY St John's; 10am Holy Communion
WEDNESDAY St Peter's; 10am Holy Communion
Zoom services Sunday 5.15pm Team Service

Thursday 8.30am Morning Prayer

Team Rector: Rev Andrew Smith 01354 572117

andrew.marchurch@gmail.com

*All enquiries about Weddings Baptisms etc to Andrew
Baptisms; 12.30 St Peter; 2pm or later St John St Mary*

Team Leader in Mission Ruth Clay 07905950849

RevRuth.marchchurches@outlook.com

Clergy; Jane Rees 463284, Anthony Chandler 652894,
Jenny Webb 650855, Mother Jane Dicker 661099
Readers; Hannah Taylor 661712, Diane Wise 651512.
Karen Pritchard karen.marchchurches@outlook.com

Next Sunday, July 20th, 5th Sunday after Trinity

2 Kings 2 v1-2 & 6-14, Luke 10 v38-42

Baptisms at St John's 3.30pm

BAPTISMS

2pm St John's Ayla Carol Imogen Godwin
3pm St John's Bronte Lee Munden

WEDDINGS

Yesterday Sat 12th July

25th Anniversary 2pm St Mary's
Mark & Caroline Walton
3.30pm St John's

Vernon Clinch & Odette Lesk

FUNERALS

Fri 18th 12.30pm St Mary's; Susan Watson
Thu 24th 11.30am St Wendreda's; Pauline Banks

Prayer, Collect, for this week

In Christ you draw near to us, God of mercy and compassion, lifting us out of death, binding up our wounds, and nursing our spirits back to health. Let such a tenderness as yours compel us to go and do likewise. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

Old Testament 1 Kings 19 v1-15a

Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life like the life of one of them by this time tomorrow." Then he was afraid, he got up and fled for his life and came to Beer-sheba, which belongs to Judah; he left his servant there.

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors." Then he lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, "Get up and eat." He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. He ate and drank and lay down again. The angel of the Lord came a second time, touched him, and said, "Get up and eat, or the journey will be too much for you." He got up and ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God. At that place he came to a cave and spent the night there. Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He answered, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts, for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away." He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by." Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind, and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake, and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire, and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He answered, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts, for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars,

and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away." Then the Lord said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael as king over Aram.

Gospel of Luke 10 v25-37

A lawyer stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.' And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.'

But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend." Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'

Prayer after Communion

God of bandit places, love that demands our all: reveal to us our wounds and give us grace to know our neighbour, tending us with foreign hands; through Jesus Christ, who crossed over for us. Amen.

Latest WINDOWS Magazine now available

Thanks to Editor Alan and the contributors.

*Andrew circulates a **Weekly Meditation** via email (homedeliveries are available for those without email)*

If you would like to receive this, please contact andrew.marchurch@gmail.com or 01354 572117

***Thanks to all who helped at & enjoyed the
Bacon Butty Festival***