

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

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Trinity 29<sup>th</sup> June

#### 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

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> June 4pm Choral Evensong at St John's

#### Meditation

*Last week we had a narrative centring on the prophet Elijah, and he will remain centre stage through June and July. So back to Elijah's beginning.*

The kingdom which had been a unity under his father David split into two under Solomon's sons. Slumbering opposition between North and South flared up leaving the line of David ruling over the southern kingdom, Judah, with its capital and Temple in Jerusalem, and a northern Kingdom, Israel, with its capital at Samaria with places of sacrifice at both Bethel and Dan, each, would you believe it with a golden calf. It's as if we were back in the wilderness and not entered the land that the Eternal One gave for living with the Torah and to make a kingdom of God.

Kings come and kings go. Omri became a mighty king of Israel, but who walked in the wave of the calves, personified in the God Baal. As part of a trading deal with the Phoenician coastal cities, he married his son Ahab to their princess Jezebel. Ahab, a chip off the old block, walked in the way of the Golden calves, he served and bowed down before Baal. Now Israel reached a nadir, even sacrificing his own child. Are these cruel child sacrifices only belonging to the distant past? In our day, children are driven out over mine fields to spare soldiers, and are targets of drones and missiles. And how many parents are prepared to sacrifice their children on the altars of happiness and prestige? The golden calves, the Baals are still served and bowed down to.

It is in our narrative now high time for the prophetic word of God to be heard again in Israel, and look, suddenly Elijah is there, quite out of the blue. Elijah the Tishbite – his name means "The Lord is God". That means Baal is not God, a land that makes Baal god is subject to barrenness, *'As the Lord loves, the God of Israel, in whose service I stand, there shall be no dew or rain in these years except through my word,'*

If things go well between heaven and earth, between God and humanity, then the good earth brings forth good fruit, and people do good works. The earth that wants to be the earth under heaven is fruitful, just like those who want to live under the kingly rule of God. Not just fruitful in any way, but at the word of the Lord. If the word of the Lord is no longer heard, then Baal rules, the god of avarice and possessions, the god who makes people walk over dead bodies. Then nothing good will grow any more. After Elijah has spoken his prophecy of doom, the ground is taken from him under his feet. Ahab and Jezebel seek to kill him. A voice tells him he must flee and hide.

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"Baal, Baal, send rain." But Baal is deaf to the cry of his people. No rain falls, no dew falls, the land of milk and honey withers, the brook of Cherith has dried up.

The word of the Eternal One came to Elijah: "Go to Zarephath in Sidon and settle there. There I shall command a widow woman from a pagan background to give you food." ***In Sidon.*** Will a widow woman from the pagan land of queen Jezebel have pity on a prophet of Israel's God? Elijah went. When he arrived at the city gate he saw a woman in black gathering wood. *"Bring me a little water in a vessel, so that I may drink."* As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, *"Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand."*

She turned round, *"As the Lord your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die."*

Elijah replied: *"Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son. For thus says the Lord the God of Israel: The jar of meal will not be emptied and the jug of oil will not fail until the day that the Lord sends rain on the earth."*

The woman went home and did as Elijah had told her. That is the second miracle in the story: that this widow woman from the pagans did what the prophet told her. Unlike queen Jezebel, that rich powerful woman who seeks to kill Elijah, the poor widow of Zarephath, trusting in the Lord of Israel has pity on the man of God. She opens her house to him in hospitality. The flour pot did not run out, nor the oil in the jar.

The widow of Zarephath has only one child, a precious possession for a mother all on her own in those as in all days: the boy is the provision for her old age. Then, having barely escaped death by famine, the boy falls ill,

seriously ill. Life flowed out of him until *‘there was no breath left in him.’* The boy lay motionless in her lap. The mother was inconsolable. “How are things with you, Man of God? Did you come here to my house to remember my unrighteousness and to make my son die?” No, the Man of God has come to show up the unrighteousness of Jezebel. We are soon told that her sons die. Jezebel is granted no future. But it’s different with the life to which the widow of Zarephath gave birth.

Elijah lifted the little corpse from her lap, and carried it carefully upstairs, to the room where he lodged, put it down on his bed. “O God, Lord of all life, Lord over death, give us a sign of your loving-kindness and make the breath of life return to this small boy. Cause no evil for the widow who gives hospitality to me as a guest by making her son die.”

In prayer Elijah stretched himself full length over the child, three times. He embraced the dead child with all his life. “Lord God, let the soul of the boy return within him.” The Eternal one heard Elijah’s prayer; he made the soul of the boy return within him. And Elijah took the child, brought him down from then upper room, and gave him to his mother. “Look, your son lives.” The woman said to Elijah “You are truly a man of God. The word of the Lord is trustworthy in your mouth.”

Centuries later the evangelist Luke will make a story about Jesus fit this story about Elijah. Jesus too meets a widow woman, also at the city gate, and she too has a son, her only one, whom she has lost. It is also written of Jesus who restored him to his mother, and the story ends too with a joyful recognition that a great prophet has arisen. Again a glimpse of heaven has been caught on earth.

### **Prayers**

Blessed are those whose spirit has been shaped by poverty;  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who are sick at heart to see power abused;  
for they shall be invited to the feast.

Blessed are those who are not arrogant;  
for they shall inherit the earth,

Blessed are those who are desperate for justice;  
for they shall eat and drink their fill.

Blessed are the compassionate;  
for they shall have compassion shown to them when they need it.

Blessed are those who refuse to be corrupted;  
for they shall not be afraid to come face to face with God.

Blessed are those who bring about peace;  
for they shall truly be called God’s own.

Blessed are those who carry wounds suffered in the struggle for justice;  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

O God you have made us creatures of this earth, hungry and thirsty and needy, that you might satisfy our longings with your abundant love. Satisfy the hunger of our bodies for food and shelter, health and human touch.

Satisfy the needs of our spirits for dignity and freedom in giving and receiving. Satisfy the hunger of our minds to understand our world, the reasons for its pain, the ways we are connected to each other. Satisfy the hunger of our hearts that all who share this loving earth with us shall share our satisfaction. And satisfy the hunger of our hands to help us make it so,  
through Jesus Christ. Amen

***Next Big St Social at St Peter's is  
Bacon Butties 12<sup>th</sup> July 9.30-11.30***

*Raffle prizes, volunteers help etc needed*

**Regular Church Activities at St Peter's**

**Tuesday**

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

**Wednesday**

***10am Midweek Communion Service***

1<sup>st</sup> Study Group 7.30-9pm ***THIS WEEK July 2<sup>nd</sup>***  
2<sup>nd</sup> Christian Aid Lunch in Hall 12-1pm

THIS WEEK **First Thursday** 3<sup>rd</sup> July 3pm  
Wimbledon **GARDEN PARTY** at the Rectory,  
54 High St behind St Peter's church. ***All Welcome***

**St John's Church Activities**

**Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday**

9.15-11.15 St John's Tots;

**Tuesday**

***10am Midweek Communion Service***

2<sup>nd</sup> Study Group 11-12 ***Next July 8<sup>th</sup>***  
Study Group 7pm-8.30pm; Film The Chosen

**Wednesdays**

**Thursday** 1st Thursday Social Group (see above)

**Friday** Choir Practice in Church 7pm

Thanks for the re-decoration of St Peter's Hall  
and to those who washed curtains

**Fenland Churches Celebration**

Tues 22<sup>nd</sup> 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 6<sup>th</sup> Sept – Quiet day at St Mary's**  
**Led by Mother Jane**

**First Aid course**, open to members of all March  
Churches, ***THIS*** Wed 2<sup>nd</sup> July 7:15 in St John's  
Church. Places limited to 15. Cost £32 each. For  
further details and to book contact Rachel.

**PLACES STILL AVAILABLE**

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> August

**Christian Aid Garden Party**

2-4pm at the Rectory  
**All Welcome**

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.

**THANKS for the lovely lunch for St Mary's**  
**at Liz & Joel's yesterday.**

**THANKS for the Christian Aid Garden Party**  
**yesterday at Jackie's**

**THANKS for the support of the HOT! Summer**  
**fair at St John's last week – over £700 raised**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Trinity 29<sup>th</sup> June**

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

**THIS SUNDAY 29<sup>th</sup> June**

**4pm Choral Evensong at St John's**

**Regular Sunday Services**

**St John 9.30am Sung Communion**

*First Sunday of each Month 9.30am*

Wholeness Service with Laying on of Hands

**Monthly MESSY CHURCH 1-3pm**

**Next July 20<sup>th</sup>, none in August**

**St Mary 9.15am Traditional Sung Communion**

**St Peter 8am Holy Communion**

**11am Sung Communion**

**THIS WEEK Sunday Club**

*The next sessions will be on 29<sup>th</sup> June and then  
27<sup>th</sup> July. Both will be at the later time of 11am  
and we plan to come into church for communion time.*

*There will be no session in August (31<sup>st</sup>)*

**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 6<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Trinity***  
***1 Kings 21 v1b-21a, Luke 10 v1-11 & 16-30***

**BAPTISMS**

12.30pm St Peter's; Laura Frances Garner  
& Archie James George Grinling  
2pm St Mary's; Pippa-Mae Louise Mason

**WEDDINGS**

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July**

25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 2pm St Mary's  
Mark & Caroline Walton  
3.30pm St John's  
Vernon Clinch & Odette Lesk

**Latest WINDOWS Magazine now available**

Thanks to Editor Alan and the contributors.

### **Prayer, Collect, for this week**

Sovereign God, ruler of our hearts, you call us to obedience and sustain us in freedom. Keep us true to the way of your Son, that we may leave behind all that hinders us and, with eyes fixed on him, may surely walk the path of the Kingdom. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

### **Old Testament 1 Kings 17 v8-24**

The word of the Lord came to Elijah, saying, 'Go now to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there; for I have commanded a widow there to feed you.' So he set out and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the town, a widow was there gathering sticks; he called to her and said, 'Bring me a little water in a vessel, so that I may drink.' As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, 'Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.' But she said, 'As the Lord your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.' Elijah said to her, 'Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son. For thus says the Lord the God of Israel: The jar of meal will not be emptied and the jug of oil will not fail until the day that the Lord sends rain on the earth.' She went and did as Elijah said, so that she as well as he and her household ate for many days. The jar of meal was not emptied, neither did the jug of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord that he spoke by Elijah. After this the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became ill; his illness was so severe that there was no breath left in him. She then said to Elijah, 'What have you against me, O man of God? You have come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to cause the death of my son!' But he said to her, 'Give me your son.' He took him from her bosom, carried him up into the upper chamber where he was lodging, and laid him on his own bed. He cried out to the Lord, 'O Lord my God, have you brought calamity even upon the widow with whom I am staying, by killing her son?' Then he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried out to the Lord, 'O Lord my God, let this child's life come into him again.' The Lord listened to the voice of Elijah; the life of the child came into him again, and he revived. Elijah took the child, brought him down from the upper chamber into the house, and gave him to his mother; then Elijah said, 'See, your son

is alive.' So the woman said to Elijah, 'Now I know that you are a man of God, an that the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth.'

### **Gospel of Luke 9 v51-62**

When the days drew near for him to be taken up, Jesus set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him; but they did not receive him, because his face was set towards Jerusalem. When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, 'Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?' But he turned and rebuked them. Then they went on to another village. As they were going along the road, someone said to him, 'I will follow you wherever you go.' And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.' To another he said, 'Follow me.' But he said, 'Lord, first let me go and bury my father.' But Jesus said to him, 'Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.' Another said, 'I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home.' Jesus said to him, 'No one who puts a hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.'

### **Prayer after Communion**

Crossbound God, nothing protects you from open sky and beckoning grave: teach us to leave behind the fear that kills what is different, our love for what is dead and safe; may we set our face like you to find our true home, our unexpected city of peace, your fearless life; through Jesus Christ, who will not turn back. Amen.

### **Summer & Autumn Events**

5<sup>th</sup> July St Wendreda's Summer Fair 10-2  
5<sup>th</sup> July FMC Summer Concert 7pm St Peter's  
Sat 26<sup>th</sup> July 1pm Bar-B-Q at Ruth & James  
Thu 14<sup>th</sup> Aug St John Toddlers Beach Party.  
Sat 30<sup>th</sup> August Model Railway Exhibition  
Sat 13<sup>th</sup> Sept CMS Concert at St Peter's  
Sat 13<sup>th</sup> Sept "Ride and Stride" Walk.Cycle etc  
**Sun 14<sup>th</sup> Sept Musical afternoon St John's Choir  
at 129 West End – Refreshments and Raffle**  
Sat 20<sup>th</sup> Sept St John's Autumn Fair  
Sat 27<sup>th</sup> Sept Lions at St Peters  
Sun 12<sup>th</sup> Oct 1 for 1.30 Harvest Lunch at Maureen's  
Sat 18<sup>th</sup> Oct Bondi Concert 7pm St John's

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](mailto:andrew.marchurch@gmail.com) or 01354 572117