

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

9th Sunday after Trinity 17th August

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

The prophet Isaiah sings a song of God's vineyard. God gives his beloved a fertile hillside, He prepares the ground and equips in every possible way. He expects it to yield sweet, juicy and tasty grapes to make fine wine. But it did not, it yielded wild grapes. So, says the prophet Isaiah, God will allow the Vineyard to be overcome and no longer be fruitful. The land will no longer be cared for, planted, tilled, and harvested; rather it will be neglected, go wild and to seed. And the walls, watchtowers and wine presses will fall into ruin. For, says the prophet Isaiah, His is judgement on the peoples of Israel and Judah; God expected good government, but look it was blood government; he expected law making, but look it was law breaking!

And when disaster, hard and harsh times, fell upon Jerusalem, the people remembered and recorded what the prophet had said, and how this disaster was not God abandoning them, but rather them receiving the consequences of their neglect of the values of God and their ungratefulness of what wonders God has provided for them.

And Jesus knew this song, and knew that those around him sang this song, so Jesus said to them; *"A man once planted a vineyard. He set a hedge around it, and dug a pit for the winepress, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went abroad. When the time came, he sent a servant to the tenants, to get from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. But they took him, and beat him, and sent him away empty handed. Again, he sent another servant, and they struck him on the head, and treated him shamefully. And he sent another, and him they killed. So it went on: some they beat and some they killed. Finally, the owner had only his beloved son."*

His beloved son? Those are the words which resounded from on high when Jesus was baptised by John. It was a voice from heaven, not a human voice: "You are my beloved son."

"Finally, the owner sent his beloved son to them. 'They will respect my son' he thought. But those tenants said to one another, 'He is the heir, come,

let us kill him, then the inheritance will be ours.' And they took him and murdered him, and cast him out of the vineyard."

Jesus reworks Isaiah's song to focus not on land and desolation, but on people, servants, and betrayal and destruction. Jesus knows that death awaits him and that he won't even be granted a hearing or a resting place. *"What will the owner of the vineyard do now? He will come in person and destroy the tenants, and give the vineyard to others."*

Who are these others? As long as the answer you give isn't that these others are the church, all is safe. As if this attractive vineyard in this parable only stands for Israel and not for the whole world! As if only Israel has failed and killed God's prophets! As if, for example, good government in Christian hands doesn't degenerate just as much into blood government and law making into law breaking.

Be this as it may, if we may believe the story, that's what happens to the vineyard and that's the point of telling this parable: not as a prediction of how things will turn out but as a warning, so that things don't turn out like this. *"Do you not know the word of scripture: The stone which the builders rejected, has become the cornerstone?"* The rejected stone has been chosen by God to be the cornerstone of a new building. The gospel writers are alluding to the resurrection of the dead of the beloved son who was murdered by the tenants. They dream of a new temple, now that the old one has been destroyed.

By now the chief priests and the scribes have got a good grasp of the parable. However, good isn't the word, since they were all too eager to do what the tenants did in the story: *"they wanted to arrest Jesus, but were afraid to because of the crowds. They had understood that he had told the parable against them. They left Jesus and went away."*

Now the ways part irrevocably. It isn't that the leaders of the people don't understand Jesus: they understand him very well. But they're afraid, and hatred fills their heart. ***They left Jesus and went away.*** So, this is precisely the opposite of what the disciples did and disciples still need to do. The disciples left their own life behind them and followed Jesus. The chief priests left Jesus behind them and returned to their old life.

It happened and it happens. For time and again Jesus is crucified. He will be in agony to the end of the world.

Isaiah's song spoke to those who first heard it, but needed to be sung again and seen in fresh light when disaster for Israel occurred. It needs to be sung and seen in today's light by those people of Israel and elsewhere who regard Isaiah as part of their tradition, not as a prediction of how things will turn out but as a warning, so that things don't turn out like this, and there is a chance to change. Jesus's building on Isaiah's song needs too to be seen in today's light, not to blame people in a past time and place for crucifying our Lord, but to see where Christ is still crucified, to recognise him in the victims of powerplays, dominance, revenge and possessiveness. And not just to point away to others, but to see in ourselves what the light of Christ reveals. And to know, yes, he is in agony for the world, but that too, paradoxically, amazingly, wonderfully and almost unbelievably; He is risen, He is risen indeed. Alleluya.

Prayers

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ, let us pray to the Father. Lord of glory, it is good to know you are with us. In peace we make our prayer to you. In trust we confirm our faith in you. Help us to set our faces steadfastly to where you would have us go.

Lord of glory, look with favour on your Church, proclaiming your beloved Son to the world and listening to the promptings of his Spirit. May she be renewed in holiness that she may reflect your glory.

Lord of glory, look with favour on the nations of the world, scarred by hatred, strife, war, plague, and injustice. May they be healed by the touch of your hand.

Lord of glory, look with favour on those in need or distress, suffering as your Son suffered and waiting for the salvation you promise. May the daybreak and Christ the Morning Star bring them the light of his presence.

Lord of glory, it is good if we suffer with you so that we shall be glorified with you. According to your promise bring all Christ's brothers and sisters to see him with their own eyes in majesty and to be changed into his likeness from glory to glory.

To him be praise, dominion and worship now and for all eternity. Amen.

Christ Jesus, the splendour of the Father and the image of his being, draw us to himself that we may share in his light and share his glory; and may the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among us and remain with us always. Amen.

MODEL RAILWAY SHOW

Saturday 30th August

in St Mary's Church & Hall 10am-4pm

Many layouts, Trade & Club Stands

Entry £5, under 16 free

Refreshments, Bacon butties etc available

Saturday 6th Sept – Quiet day at St Mary's

Led by Mother Jane

10am - 4pm Shared lunch.

The modern mystics

Future Events for your Diaries

AUGUST

Sat 30th Model Railway Exhibition St Mary

Sun 31st Armed Services events in Park, Service at 5pm

SEPTEMBER

Sat 13th CMS Concert at St Peter's

Sat 13th "Ride and Stride" Walk, Cycle etc

Sat 13th Working Party in St Mary's Churchyard

**Sun 14th Sept Musical afternoon St John's Choir
at 129 West End – Refreshments and Raffle**

Sat 20th St John's Autumn Fair

Sun 21st Harvest Festival at St John's

Sat 27th Lions Event at St Peters

OCTOBER

Sun 5th Harvest Festivals at St Peter & St Mary

Sun 5th 2.30pm 3 Counties Masonic Service St Peter

Sun 12th 1 for 1.30 Harvest Lunch at Maureen's

Sun 12th 4pm Choral Evensong St John's

Sat 18th Bondi Concert 7pm St John's

Sun 26th Mourners Service at St John's 4pm

Tues 28th Mourners Service at St John's 10am

Wed 29th Mourners Service at St Peter's 10am

NOVEMBER

Sat 1st Requiem at St Peter's 10am

Sun 2nd Mourners Service 9.15am St Mary's

Sun 2nd Mourners Service at St Peter's 4pm

Sat 8th St Mary Coffee Morning at Sue's

Sat 8th CMS Concert St Peter's 2pm

Sat 22nd St Peter's Christmas Fair

DECEMBER

Sat 6th St John's Christmas Fair/ Choir Singing

NEW ADDITION Sat 6th FMC concert in St Peters

Sun 7th Dec 1pm Christmas Lunch at St Mary's

Fri 12th – Sun 14th Christmas Tree Festival

at St Peter's, with Christingle Sunday 3pm

Wed 17th-Fri 19th Winterwonderland at St John's

Sat 20th Dec St Mary's Coffee Morning at Roger's

Sunday 21st Carol Services 3pm St Mary, 4.30pm

St John, 6.30pm St Peter

Wednesday 27th August

Christian Aid Garden Party

2-4pm at the Rectory

All Welcome

9th Sunday after Trinity 17th Aug

**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**

MESSY CHURCH 1-3pm

3rd Sunday of the month, not in August

St Mary 9.15am Traditional Sung Communion

St Peter 8am Holy Communion

11am Sung Communion

***Last Sunday of each month, Sunday Club 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, Aug 24th, 10th Sunday after Trinity

Jeremiah 1 v4-10, Luke 13 v10-17

12.30pm Baptism at St Peter's

2pm & 3pm Baptism at St John's

BAPTISM

2pm St John's; Delilah Joan Chapman

FUNERAL

Wed 27th 11am St Peter's; Memorial; Martin Smith

YEARS Mind – a reminder

**The names we read out in the prayers in church are
to be found in the 2024 diaries in each church.**

**Please feel free to add any more names for the rest
of this year. Diaries for 2026 entries will be
available in the autumn**

**Names should be read on the Sunday the week
before the anniversary, this week will be 10-16 Aug**

***The names for the sick are also usually by this
book, and you can add names, and for other names
see the information on this notice sheet.***

Prayers, Collect, for this week

Compassionate God, you gather your people in prayer and lavish gifts upon us anew. Sinners that we are, you have forgiven us much. Grant that our experience of your pardon may increase our love until it reflects your own immeasurable forgiveness. We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Old Testament Isaiah 5 v1-7

Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watch-tower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes.

And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes?

And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his pleasant planting; he expected justice, but saw bloodshed; righteousness, but heard a cry!

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 Sept 3rd*
2nd Wed Christian Aid Lunch Hall 12-1pm

First Thursday No August meeting.

Next is 4th Sept at Rachel's

June Jackson on work in Prison Service.

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 Sept 9th
Study Group 7pm-8.30pm; Film The Chosen
resuming 2nd Sept.

Wednesdays

Thursday 1st Thursday Social Group (see above)

Friday Choir Practice in Church 7pm

Gospel of Luke 7 v36 - 8 v3

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, 'If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him—that she is a sinner.' Jesus spoke up and said to him, 'Simon, I have something to say to you.' 'Teacher,' he replied, 'speak.' 'A certain creditor had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he cancelled the debts for both of them. Now which of them will love him more?' Simon answered, 'I suppose the one for whom he cancelled the greater debt.' And Jesus said to him, 'You have judged rightly.' Then turning towards the woman, he said to Simon, 'Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little.' Then he said to her, 'Your sins are forgiven.' But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, 'Who is this who even forgives sins?' And he said to the woman, 'Your faith has saved you; go in peace.'

Soon afterwards he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him, as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their resources.

Prayer after Communion

Lord, you invite our touch, beyond decency, beyond order, beyond possession: may the anointing woman teach us to break the seal of our heart and pour it at your feet; and may the fragrance of love weave through our rising prayers; through Jesus Christ, the Anointed one. **Amen.**