

March Team St John, St Mary, St Peter, St Wendreda
3rd Sunday of the Kingdom Season, 16th November 2025

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

Jesus warns of wars and persecution, betrayal and division, being just round the corner. Perhaps we feel like this, or perhaps we feel Jesus is talking to different people at different times or different places to us. Jesus also said, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." So, when we gather, at Christ's invitation, at his table, we gather to commit ourselves to tearing down barriers between people that make enemies. We are to practice peace-making, to un-learn our abilities to make war, to shape communities and individuals to seek peace and harmony rather than division. We gather to affirm the peace that is ours in Christ. We are here to re-member, re-call, re-collect the pieces of broken humanity, that they may be fully restored in Christ. The members of this body are one, even though we too easily forget and work against that reality. When you and I gather round this holy table of word and meal, when we gather for conversation and friendship, we begin to re-member the reality in which we already exist.

There is a great image of nations streaming to Zion to worship one God in peace, but it should challenge us. We cannot look around and find a full and perfect example anywhere in this world – there is too much corruption, too much selfishness, too much strife in cities and nations around us. Yet there is also hope, and glimpses of human community restored, if we are willing to look, however tentative and imperfect. Wherever people begin to look for the image of God in people they would rather see as enemy, Zion emerges in their midst, and nations begin to stream towards that metaphorical holy mountain. Wherever people gather in councils of peace rather than war, God's instructions bear fruit. Whenever people ask how a nuclear reactor can be an instrument of peace, how it can produce energy and treat cancer, rather than fashion weapons of war, there the Spirit of God is at work. When food and medical care and education are shared with those who have none, instruction is going out from this holy mountain.

Yet this is never a passive process. We don't just sit and wait for the Spirit to work alone. You and I, and everyone we meet in our daily rounds, can

share in that work of the Spirit. Each one of us can engender change, can forge weapons into instruments of peace. And, when we move in the power of the Spirit the earth begins to move as well. That work of shifting ground begins with our own attitudes, responses and actions. How do we perceive the stranger – as threat or as image of God? There is a part of each one of us that awakens to full alert at the presence of a stranger, an unknown, one who is "other". That reaction is an instinctual survival skill, and in itself is neither good nor evil. But what we do with that heightened awareness is a moral decision. When we become profoundly aware of the presence of "the other" we are confronted by a series of choices. Is this "other" a threat or a potential blessing – or do we need to gather more information before we decide? We would do well to remember that the unknown stranger just might be a divine messenger – an angel. I am convinced that every stranger may bear a divine message if we can discover and receive it. Certainly, every encounter brings an image of God, and image we don't yet know, and that meeting must thereafter be rich with creative possibility.

The choice between vulnerability and fear underlies the human ability to make both peace and war. That choice is what most profoundly underlies Jesus' witness, and his life, death and resurrection. Living is radical openness to the image of God in the other may lead to death, but it is also the only route to full and abundant life.

The human ability to make war has mostly to do with fear: people and their leaders live in fear of their neighbours or what they may do. Some use fear to control others and fill their own desires. Some live in fear of territorial expansion, or lack of access to resources and the basic stuff of life – like water, fuels, cropland or fisheries. Neighbours may live in fear of reprisals for old injustices – like Jacob and Esau, like Israel and Palestine, like Ukraine and Russia. If we do not settle or forgive those old disputes, we will continue to live with fear.

Living with fear only degrades life, for it leads inexorably to violence. Living in fear denies the fundamental hope we share, for it condemns us to remain in the grave of the past. Christians are not meant to live in fear. We are born anew in hope for a dream that we expect to become a reality. That great dream of God is for a restored and reconciled creation. We make peace now so that God's cosmic dream can be made real. Jesus says, love your enemy now, in the present, so that we might "be perfect as God is perfect." That perfection is becoming, undergirded by reconciling work in this age, luring us towards the vision of creation existing in the full presence and perfection of God. Peace-making requires confronting fear, both our own fear

and the fear that keeps others in that grave. Loving our enemies means letting go of our fear of their perceived difference; letting go of our fear that they will take something precious from us; letting go of our fear that they intend only evil towards us. Loving our enemies means insisting that each is made in the image of God, that each of us can only live in peace only when all live under their own fig trees, with vines bent low and heavy with fruit. Loving our enemies means insisting that there is an abundance for all in God's dream of a restored creation.

To make peace, we must feed our neighbours, both stranger and friend, with the same gusto with which we feed our own children. We must seek the welfare of all with the same energy we spend to provide education and health care for our own families. Loving our enemies is only another version of loving our neighbours, for in truth all God's creatures are our neighbours. We do not have the luxury of distinguishing stranger from neighbour or friend. Setting down our swords and spears and re-making them into tools for farming or learning or healing means we must meet those neighbours in all their diversity and see only the beloved image of God.

May we go forth and transform the world. may God's peace be made real. May God's peace spread over this earth like the blessing of a rain cloud in the desert.

Prayers

Eternal God, fount and source of all authority and wisdom,
hear our prayer for those who govern.
Give Charles our King grace as the symbol of loyalty and unity
for all our different peoples;
give the parliaments in these islands, and especially our own Government,
wisdom and skill, imagination and energy;
give to those who have influence, power and hold sway
vision, understanding and integrity,
that all may live in peace and happiness, truth and prosperity
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God and Father,
you have so ordered our life that we are dependent on one another:
prosper those engaged in commerce and industry,
and direct their minds and hands
that they may use your gifts in the service of others;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Eternal God, in whose perfect realm
no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness,
and no strength known but the strength of love:
so guide and and inspire the work of those who seek your kingdom
that all may find their security in that love which casts out fear
and in the fellowship revealed to us in Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

God, who from of old taught the hearts of your faithful people
by the sending of the light of your Holy Spirit:
grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgement in all things
and evermore to rejoice in his Holy comfort;
through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour. Amen

St Peter's Christmas Fair
NEXT Saturday 22nd November
9.30-12.30

Cakes, Raffle prizes, Bottles and HELP wanted

12th-14th Dec St Peter's Christmas Tree Festival
Entry forms for Christmas Trees now available.
*Individuals or Organisation invited to enter a tree
and sign up to help please in the many ways needed*
Donations for Contents of Hampers welcomed
See Christmas Events newsletter for more info

QUIZ NIGHT for St Wendreda 27th Nov 7.30 for 8
March Cricket Club, Burrowmoor Rd PE15 9RS
Teams of 4; £3 per person on night

CHURCH MEETINGS

Tues 18th Nov St Mary's PCC at Vera's 7.30pm
Wed 26th Deanery Synod at Coates 7.30pm

St John's Church Activities

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

9.15-11.15 St John's Tots;

Tuesday

10am Midweek Communion Service

Study Group 11-12 **Next THIS WEEK Nov 18th**

Study Group 7pm-8.30pm; Film The Chosen

Wednesdays Community Hub in Hall 12-2

Thursday 1st Thursday Social Group (see above)

Friday Choir Practice in Church

First Thursday Christmas meal on Thursday 4th
December at the conservative club 7pm for 7:30pm.
All welcome - partners, friends

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 Dec 3rd***

2nd Wed Christian Aid Lunch Hall 12-1pm

Saturday 29th 11.30am St Peter's

FREE Coffee Concert

The Snowman

Complete Live performance with narration & song

St Mary's 2 Course Christmas Lunch
Sunday 7th December 1pm in the Parish Room

*Tickets £15 from Ruth 01354 650858 or
fundraising@stmaryschurchmarch.co.uk*

Draw prizes please!

3rd Kingdom Sunday 16th Nov

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

THIS SUNDAY 3rd Sunday

MESSY CHURCH 1-3pm

St Mary 9.15am Traditional Sung Communion

St Peter 8am Holy Communion

11am Sung Communion

*Last Sunday **Sunday Club 11am***

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, Stewart Piper

BAPTISM

12.30pm St Peter's Esme Pammy Hinson

FUNERALS

Wed 19th 10.30am Fenland; Brenda Sired

Wed 26th 12.30pm Fenland; Joseph Stacey

Next Week, November 23rd, 4th Kingdom, Sunday

Colossians 1 v1-11, Luke 23 v33-43

12.30pm Baptism at St Peter's

*Thanks to those who supported the
Can't Sing Choir Charity Concert*

ADVENT CHORAL SERVICE

Sunday 30th November

4pm St John's

All Welcome

Prayer, Collect, for this week

Lord God of all the ages, the One who is, who was, and who is to come, stir up within us a longing for your kingdom, steady our hearts in time of trial, and grant us patient endurance until the song of justice dawns. We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, for the gifts of the Holy Spirit, who is one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Epistle 2 Thessalonians 3 v6-13

We command you, beloved, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from believers who are living in idleness and not according to the tradition that they received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us; we were not idle when we were with you, and we did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it; but with toil and labour we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you. This was not because we do not have that right, but in order to give you an example to imitate. For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: Anyone unwilling to work should not eat. For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busybodies, not doing any work. Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right.

DECEMBER

Sat 6th St John's Christmas Fair/ Choir 10-1.30

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

Sun 14th 4.30 G&S concert in St John's

Wed 17th-Fri 19th Winterwonderland St John's 5-8

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

Sunday 21st Carol Services 3pm St Mary,

4.30pm St John, 6.30pm St Peter

CHRISTMAS EVE Wednesday 24th December

10am St Peter's Holy Communion

1-3pm St John's Messy Church Nativity

4pm St Peter's Crib and Carol Service

9pm St John's Midnight in Bethlehem! Communion

11.30pm St Peter's Midnight Communion

CHRISTMAS DAY Thursday 25th December

Communion Services at usual Sunday times

8am and 11am St Peter's

9.15am St Mary's

9.30am St John's

March Foodbank needs volunteers

to help at the food collection at Tesco 27th to 29th Nov (one hour slots).

Please contact Rev Jenny for more info

Gospel of Luke 21 v5-19

When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, Jesus said, 'As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down.' They asked him, 'Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?' And he said, 'Beware that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name and say, "I am he!" and, "The time is near!" Do not go after them.

'When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately.' Then he said to them, 'Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and plagues; and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven.

'But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. This will give you an opportunity to testify. So make up your minds not to prepare your defence in advance; for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. You will be hated by all because of my name. But not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance you will gain your souls.

Prayer after Communion

God who is faithful when all foundations crumble: in the time of crisis, as holy places fall and nations stumble, give us the conviction to bear witness to love, whatever the cost; through Jesus Christ, the Word and Wisdom of God. **Amen.**

NEW Years Mind Books

Please include names of those they would like remembered in prayers in 2026.

Leading Intercessions:

we are planning to run a workshop in early 2026 for those who already lead intercessions and those who might wish to consider leading them in the future.

Please contact Revd Jenny if you are interested.

THIS WEDNESDAY 19th Nov

12.30-2.30pm St John's Hall

Vaccinations available – see poster for details