

**March Team St John, St Mary, St Peter, St Wendreda**  
**Mothering Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> in Lent, March 15<sup>th</sup> 2026**

**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**

**Fridays in Lent Stations of the Cross 12noon St Peter's**

**Meditation**

After the betrayal, Judas became a man wild with conflicting emotions – despair, horror, regret, shame. All of it because of what he had done and could not undo. Standing there, haggard and desperate in front of the chief priests, trying to take the selfishness out his act by returning the thirty pieces of silver, he was a man almost insane with guilt. To the priests he was an intrusion, a reminder of their own guilt. They treated him with scorn, the contempt of a user for the used, and sent him away. Thirty pieces of silver fell on the marble floor, and with a deep groan Judas rushed away, fleeing from himself.

Lungs wheezing to the point of exhaustion, thigh muscles burning with fatigue, he ran...stumbled.... fell and ran on beyond the city walls to the darkness of the valley outsider Jerusalem. When he could run no longer, his aching legs drove him to keep climbing jagged rocks. Finally high in the hill where the Kidron and Hinnom valleys merge, he understood....- there was no place to go. No matter how dark the night, no matter how far from Jerusalem and Jesus he ran, there was no place on earth where he could forget who he was and what he had done.

Then he spied a tree outlined against the cold moonlight, old and gnarled, rooted in the windswept soil of a rock at the edge of a chasm. With a solution in sight, he calmed himself and removed the girdle of his tunic – the girdle that had carried thirty pieces of silver. Once the girdle was fastened to a branch, he hung it around his neck and threw himself into the night.

There was no one to mourn his dark, lonely death.

Gone was the intoxication of temptation, the delightful tremble of false expectation. Gone was the glamour of sin.

On a horrible night both Peter and Judas betrayed their Lord and Master. One returned to Jesus. One felt he could not. One repented, did the other? One found peace, the other a field of blood?

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In Jesus' day, three years of travelling together on foot meant endless hours of conversation to fill the unhurried time - shared laughter, astonishment, sorrow, disappointment, and anger during events so incredible that they have been told and retold for over twenty centuries. In today's society, where the hectic pace of work and play and the distractions of technology tend to cocoon each of us, it is hard to comprehend how closely all of this would knit friendship. Yet close as the friendship was between Peter and Jesus, one denied the other, even when forewarned that it would happen.

It took place in the Palace of Annas the High Priest, a luxurious building located on the hillside of upper Jerusalem. An outer court, and inner court, and dozens of rooms were connected by mazes of corridors. On that cold spring night a coal fire burned in the centre of the inner courtyard, throwing a small glow of light on the bearded men who talked in excited tones about the capture of the rebel messiah. Jesus, in an audience chamber somewhere in the depths of the palace, faced his accusers alone.

The Synoptic Gospels tell us that Peter sat down among the servants at the fire; John's Gospel tells us he stood up. In short, Peter was restless and uninvolved in the stories around the fire. This attracted the attention of the maid who had first admitted him to the circle. The firelight was uncertain; so was she. "Weren't you with the Nazarene. Jesus?" What went through Peter's mind as he readied his answer? Did he tell himself that by incriminating himself he would not help Jesus? Did he reason that, worse, he might be brought forward to testify against Jesus and thus actually harm his master's cause? Did he tell himself that the woman - after all she was only a woman, in a time when women were regarded as second class citizens – has no moral or legal right to his confession?

Peter justified; then denied.

There is something peculiar about human nature. In almost reverse proportion, the more off-kilter our stance, the more strenuously we defend it – justification requires further justification for the self-deception to survive.

We can understand why Peter, with every additional denial, added more bricks to build a higher wall of defence- a wall, the cock crow should have reminded him, that was being built not between him and his accusers, but between him and Christ. At that point, however, Peter's attention was not focussed on Jesus, but on himself and his scramble to keep safe. Pacing back and forth in the night, worrying about his deception, the first cries of the rooster did not even brush his conscious thoughts.

In Peter we see ourselves. Anything we truly want we justify. Pride pushes us to cling to the justification. And selfishness – choosing our will against the will of God – deafens us to his warning calls.

For Peter, it took a second crowing of a rooster to penetrate his self-absorption. (God will not stop trying to reach us!) Once Peter's heart was pierced – to his credit – he allowed the bricks to crumble and the wall to fall. remorse took him away from self-justification back to his friendship with a man about to die for his sins.

Peter's story raises a simple question. Are there walls in our lives that need to crash with the sound of a new day – a day of God's reconciliation?

## **Prayers - Station of the Cross**

### **IX. Jesus falls the third time**

**Beaten, but now within sight of the Hill,  
face down in the dust.**

**Unrecognisable. Voiceless.**

**'Get up, we've a job to do.'**

*Lord of all change and growth, change our hearts before we let our world be poisoned and die. Transform our hearts of stone into warm hearts of flesh. Give us courage to co-operate more responsibly and trust each other more generously. Help us to build together a new society, so that we may experience the blessing of the peacemakers.*

**Lord, time and again we almost make it,  
and turning, dejected and disheartened, we realise our failure.**

**Even then, Lord, you are with us.**

**It's time we were moving; It's time to start again.**

### **X. Jesus is stripped**

**Stripped, he is prepared for public shame.**

**Bruised, he is silent.**

**With shoulders bared he accepts the inevitable.  
Besides the crowd are waiting.**

*Lord Christ, on Calvary, you made yourself naked so that we might be enfolded in love. Give us your wedding garment, Risen Lord, make us ready to sit at table with you in your eternal kingdom.*

**Lord, strip me of all I carry:**

**strip me of everything that prevents me from carrying my cross.**

**And when I am stripped be there to sustain me.**

### **XI. Jesus is nailed to the cross**

**Nailed to the wooden frame**

**that stretched wide his arms and secured his feet,  
there on the Hill, he is raised above the people.**

*Risen Lord, you are the sun that never sets. When we enter the darkness, shine on the pain of our loneliness and bring us onwards to a new dawn.*

**Lord, the hammering of the nails has echoed across this earth  
as we repeatedly crucify you.**

**Man against man, nation against nation.**

**Yet, from that cross of suffering with failing voice you called,  
'Father, forgive them for they do not know what they do.'**

**Father, forgive us.**

## **LENT ACTIVITIES – CONTINUING**

**Fridays 12noon St Peter's Stations of the Cross  
followed by simple lunch in the Rectory**

### **Lent Courses**

**Tuesdays 11-12 St John's "Psalms"**

**Wednesdays 7.30-9 St Peter's "Psalms"**

**Tuesdays 7pm St John's Chosen Video continues**

**On-line Fridays 3pm** contact Jenny "Difference"

*This year's Lent Charity is **Water Aid***

**NEXT SATURDAY 21<sup>st</sup> March**

**Water Aid Lent Appeal Coffee Morning**

**10-11.30am at Rev Jenny's 3 Wherry Close**

**Raffle prizes, bring&buy and donations welcome!**

*"Art Cafe returns this Lent starting Thursdays 11am  
looking at the Via Dolorosa.*

*Contact Rev Jane Rees. Everyone welcome*

### **Future Dates**

**Sun 29<sup>th</sup> Mar 2.30pm Civic Service St Peter's**

**Thu 2<sup>nd</sup> Apr Craft Fair at St John's**

**Sun 12<sup>th</sup> April Choral Evensong St John's 4pm**

**Sun 19<sup>th</sup> Apr Confirmation at St Peter's 4pm**

**Sat 18<sup>th</sup> Apr St Mary's Coffee Morning at Sue's**

**Sat 18<sup>th</sup> Apr Brass Concert at St Peter's 7.30pm**

**Sun 26<sup>th</sup> Apr Lions at St Peter's for St G fair**

**Sat 28<sup>th</sup> Mar St Peter's Easter Fair 9.30-11.30am**

Posters to distribute. Help needed, see list

Easter chocolates/sweets needed for Raffle Prizes

## **HOLY WEEK SERVICES**

**Palm Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March – Services at usual times**

*Remember to alter your clocks.*

**Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March 10am Communion at St Mary's**

**Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 10am Communion at St John's**

**Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April 10am Communion at St Peter's**

**7pm Taize Service at St Peter's**

**MAUNDY THURSDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> April**

**7pm at St Peter's;**

**Communion of Last Supper with Footwashing and Vigil**

**GOOD FRIDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> April**

**10am St Peter's**

**12 Noon Churches Together in Broad St**

**1-3pm Messy Church at St John's**

**1pm zoom service – contact Rev Jenny**

**2pm St Mary's                      7pm St John's**

**HOLY SATURDAY 4<sup>th</sup> April**

**7pm St John's Ceremonies and First Communion**

**Easter Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April – Services at usual times**

**CONFIRMATION;** if interested see Andrew now

### **Church Annual Meetings**

**St John's Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April 7pm in Church**

**St Peter's Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April after 11am service**

**St Mary's 7.30pm Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April in Church**

**NOMINATION FORMS for Churchwardens, PCC at**

*back Nominations for other church officers also needed*

**ANNUAL REPORTS just waiting for the last**

*contributions, hopefully available next week.*

**If you worship regularly and are not yet on the**

**ELECTORAL ROLL, please fill in form.**

## **Welcome to St John the Evangelist,**

## **St Peter & St Mary Churches**

## **in the March Team**

## **Mothering Sunday**

**4<sup>th</sup> in Lent, March 15<sup>th</sup>**

## **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** Next Good Friday

**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 07957919510 Mother Jane Dicker 661099**

**Readers; Hannah Taylor 661712, Stewart Piper**

**Next Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, Lent 5 Passion Sunday,**

**Isaiah 65 v8-17, Matthew 27 v11-13**

**6pm Choral Service at St Peter's**

## **FUNERALS**

**Fri 20<sup>th</sup> 1.30pm Fenland; Selma Ridley**

**Thu 26<sup>th</sup> 12noon St Peter's; Maureen Hull**

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March Choral Service 6pm St Peter's**

**'Come and Sing' Stainer's Crucifixion**

**See james.trundle@hey.com for more information**

**Rehearsals, THIS WEEK**

**1.30pm or 7pm Thu 19<sup>th</sup>, & 3.30pm Sun 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**Please sign lists to read the parts in the**

**Passion Gospel on Palm Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> March**

## **St Mary's Church Lunch**

**12.30pm NEXT Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March**

**Middle Fen Farm, 257 Whittlesey Rd, PE15 0AL.**

**Any puddings or raffle prizes welcomed.**

**£15 each. Please book 07971 153 164 (Liz).**

**Articles for next WINDOWS magazine  
to Alan <allan.whyte@yahoo.com> by 27<sup>th</sup> March please**

***Thanks for the Musical events yesterday.***

## Prayers, Collects, for this week

Gracious Father, who out of love for the world and by the passion and resurrection of your Son delivered and saved the world: lead us to ponder the mysteries of his passion, and grant through our Saviour's blood, we may know eternal peace; for Jesus Christ our Lord is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

### Old Testament; Isaiah 52 v13 -53 v12

See, my servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high. Just as there were many who were astonished at him —so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of mortals— so he shall startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate. Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account. Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people. They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him with pain. When you make his life an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days; through him the will of the Lord shall prosper. Out of his anguish he shall see light; he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

### 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 see Lent Groups  
2<sup>nd</sup> Wed Christian Aid Lunch Hall 12-1pm

## Gospel of St Matthew 26 v69 -27 v10

Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant-girl came to him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." But he denied it before all of them, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about." When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." Again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you." Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know the man!" At that moment the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor. When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. He said, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself. But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money." After conferring together, they used them to buy the potter's field as a place to bury foreigners. For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set, on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price, and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

### Prayer after Communion

Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you that in your passion you offer forgiveness and invite us to be with you where death has no more dominion: may the broken bread of life fracture stony hearts for the sake of a better world. You have taught us that what we do for the least and lost, we do also for you: give us the will to be the servant of others as you are the servant of all, and gave up your life for us, yet are alive, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### St John's Church Activities

#### Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

9.15-11.15 St John's Tots;

#### Tuesday

#### 10am Midweek Communion Service

2<sup>nd</sup> Study Group 11-12 see Lent Groups

Study Group 7pm-8.30pm; Film The Chosen

Wednesdays Community Hub in Hall 12-2

Thursday 1st Thursday Social Group (see below)

Friday Choir Practice in Church

First Thursday Theatre Trip on 9<sup>th</sup> April - tickets now booked. Following meeting - visit to the deer farm on 7<sup>th</sup> May at 7pm. Details to follow.