

March Team; St John, St Mary, St Peter, St Wendreda
6th Sunday of Easter, May 10th 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

THURSDAY, ASCENSION DAY COMMUNION SERVICE

7.30pm at St John's

Meditation

Noah and his family left the ark, along with the animals. On dry land he built an altar on which to offer a burnt offering, to thank God for their rescue, for their safe voyage and their new beginning. God smelled the savour of the burnt offering, and God smelled that it was good. And God spoke quietly to himself, but fortunately loud enough for our storyteller to hear: "Although the human heart is evil from his youth, never again will I curse the earth, adama, because of humanity, adam. From now on seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall never cease."

God blessed his sons: "Be fruitful, become numerous, fill the earth. Look, I am establishing my covenant with you and with your descendants and with the birds, the cattle, and the wild beasts. No life shall ever again be swallowed up by the waters of a flood. This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and every living creature, for always, the rainbow in the clouds. When dark clouds gather above you, lift up your eyes to heaven. When the bow which binds heaven and earth appears in the clouds, know that I am remembering my covenant. Don't be afraid."

Be fruitful, become numerous, fill the earth. As Adam once stood among the animals, so now Noah stood among them, and he heard the very words that Adam heard then. God was making a new beginning.

Noah offered a sacrifice. Devout as ever, he thanked God. The great flood hadn't changed him noticeably. Fortunately, however, God had changed in the meantime. "I shall never do it again," said God. High above Noah curved a bow of sevenfold light, as wide as the world.

'Noah, a man of the soil, was the first to plant a vineyard.'

Noah's seen and drunk enough water for the time being. After all he's been through, a glass of grape juice will do him good. He cheerfully broaches the cask. To life!

His cup runs over. But he doesn't know the grape juice can just turn into wine, and so the world's first vintner becomes the world's first drunkard. He has no idea what has come over him. Dead drunk and naked he lay in his tent, sleeping it off. Ham saw it. But instead of protecting his defenceless father and keeping it quiet, he spread the news around. Ham gleefully told everyone something he should have kept quiet about: "Just look, father's drunk!"

However, Shem and Japheth were amused. Walking backwards diffidently, so as not to see their father's nakedness, they entered Noah's tent. They covered him with the cloak of love.

Sooner or later children discover the vulnerability and limitations of their fathers. So, what do we do with a drunken sailor? Shem and Japheth continue to respect him. Ham abandons him, the father of Canaan. Pagan Canaan, where, in Israel's eyes, the religion leads to immorality and shameless acts. Israel feels no attitude towards it can be too hostile.

Ham is cursed. A tragic story.

Our Gospel also continues from last week – the break is in the middle of an explanation. Jesus has answered Philip by saying "*I am in the Father and the Father is in me. The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these.*" John goes on to say that we will have help, the Spirit will come. And that this Helper, this spirit will dwell, abide, with you forever. Jesus had said a minute ago in reply to Thomas, "*I am the Truth,*" now he says the Spirit reveals this Truth about God. "*You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.*" and to Philip who asked to see God "*you will see me; because I live, you also will live.... you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.*"

And just as Jesus had said (at end of last week's gospel in the immediately preceding verses), "*I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these*" so here has assured us of the presence of the Spirit within us that we who act in accordance with God's values "*They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.*" Believing and acting are held in perfect alliance.

We, in our readings, will end this passage here, but John has a third disciple asking a question too, Judas (not Iscariot), who asks “*Lord, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?*” *Jesus answered him, ‘Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me...the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.’* Which seems to indicate again the connection between belief and actions. Those who act in accordance with God’s values are believing in and knowing God, and he is assuring us of his dwelling and abiding with us.

Prayers

Let us join our prayers with those of our Saviour Christ, seeking the Father’s blessing and the gifts of the Spirit.

Jesus Christ, great high priest, living for ever to intercede for us, pray for the Church, your broken body in the world.

Jesus Christ, king of righteousness, enthroned at the right hand of the majesty on high, pray for the world and make it subject to your just and gentle rule.

Jesus Christ, Son of Man, drawing humanity into the life of God, pray for your sisters and brothers in need, distress or sorrow.

Jesus Christ, pioneer of salvation, bringing us glory through your death and resurrection, surround with your saints and angels those who have died trusting in your promises.

Jesus Christ, Lord over all things, ascended far above the heavens and filling the universe, pray for us who receive the gifts you give us for work in your service.

Jesus Christ, keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace, and bring the whole created order to worship at your feet: for you are alive and reign with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**NEXT Saturday 16th May St Peter's
Plant Sale 9-30-11.30
Helpers needed, please see sheet**

**St John's Church Regular Activities
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday**

9.15-11.15 St John's Tots;

Tuesday

10am Midweek Communion Service

2nd Study Group 11-12 **THIS WEEK 12th May**

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

NEXT First Thursday

Meet at March Museum 7pm 4th June

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 3rd June**

2nd Wed Christian Aid Lunch Hall 12-1pm

SPECIAL SERVICES

Thursday 14th May

ASCENSION DAY Service

7pm St John's

Sunday 24th May Choral Evensong 3.30pm St Peter

Thursday 4th June

CORPUS CHRISTI Service

7pm St Mary's

Evensongs at St John's 4pm

June 7th, July 26th, October 4th

Saturday 27th June

St Peter's 6.30pm

Carl Jenkins Mass for Peace

Future Dates

Sat 20th June St John's SUMMER FAIR 11-3

Sat 27th June St Mary Lunch at Liz & Joel's

Sat 27th Christian Aid Cream Tea at Jackie's 2-4

Sat 27th 6.30pm Choral Service at St Peter's

Sat 11th July BACON BUTTIES at St Peter's

Sat 11th July Alan Norris Band Concert St Peter's

Fri 17th July Water Aid afternoon tea, Rachel's

Sat 25th July St Mary's Lunch Bar-B-Q

Wed 19th Aug Christian Aid Tea&Cake Rectory 2-4

Sat 5th Sept Quiet Day at St Mary's

Sat 19th Sept St John's Autumn Fair

Sat 19th Sept Model Railway Exhib St Mary's

PIG RACING NIGHT

with Sausage and Mash Supper

Saturday 16th May 6pm St Mary's Parish Room

Tickets £10 from Ruth 01354 650858

fundraising@stmaryschurchmarch.co.uk

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

6th Sunday of Easter, 10th May

Alleluya Christ is Risen!

He is Risen Indeed, Alleluya

Regular Sunday Services

St John 9.30am Sung Communion

First Sunday of each Month

9.30am Wholeness Service with Laying on of Hands

Monthly 3rd Sunday MESSY CHURCH 1-3pm

St Mary 9.15am Traditional Sung Communion

St Peter 8am Holy Communion

11am Sung Communion

Monthly, 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, May 17th, Sunday in Ascensiontide

Acts of the Apostles 1 v6-14, John 17 v1-11

BAPTISM

12.30pm St Peter's

Harry Overton

WEDDING

Sat 23rd May 1pm St Peter's

Jake Stockbridge and Kelly Batchelor

FUNERALS

Thu 21st 1.30pm St Peter's; Maurice Bishop

Fri 22nd May 2.30pm St Peter's; Edna McGoff

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

begins today.

Please take envelopes

Christian Aid Lunch Wednesday, May 13th

12 o'clock noon at St Peter's Hall.

Prayers, Collects, for this week

Faithful God, who loves us in Christ Jesus, send your Spirit of truth to dwell within us, that we may always reject what is false, live by the commands of Christ and be true to the love you have shown us. Grant this through Jesus Christ the resurrection and the life, who reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Old Testament: Genesis 8 v20- 9 v12

Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar. And when the LORD smelt the pleasing odour, the LORD said in his heart, 'I will never again curse the ground because of humankind, for the inclination of the human heart is evil from youth; nor will I ever again destroy every living creature as I have done. As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.'

God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. The fear and dread of you shall rest on every animal of the earth, and on every bird of the air, on everything that creeps on the ground, and on all the fish of the sea; into your hand they are delivered. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; and just as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. Only, you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. For your own lifeblood I will surely require a reckoning: from every animal I will require it and from human beings, each one for the blood of another, I will require a reckoning for human life. Whoever sheds the blood of a human, by a human shall that person's blood be shed; for in his own image God made humankind. And you, be fruitful and multiply, abound on the earth and multiply in it.'

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, 'As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.' God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all

flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.' God said to Noah, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.'

The sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Ham was the father of Canaan. These three were the sons of Noah; and from these the whole earth was peopled. Noah, a man of the soil, was the first to plant a vineyard. He drank some of the wine and became drunk, and he lay uncovered in his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and walked backwards and covered the nakedness of their father; their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness. When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him,

Gospel of St John 14v15-21

Jesus said to his disciples: 'If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you for ever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

'I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.'

Prayer after Communion

Trinity of love, inviting us to abide in you: may we follow the Spirit of truth through desert wild and city street, rutted field and snowbound height, battleground and market square, that your demanding love might speak to the heart of the manifold world; through Jesus Christ, our Brother. **Amen.**

***THIS Thursday 14th May
ASCENSION DAY
Service 7pm St John's***

Bishop Sarah's Welcome 3pm 21st June Cathedral
Information about tickets to come.