



**for St Mary's, Burwell with St Etheldreda
and the Holy Trinity, Reach**

ADVENT WAITING & REMEMBERING

When I was a child, December seemed such a long month, waiting for Christmas to come. Time seems to have speeded up since then, but I still don't find waiting easy. Yet waiting is so much a part of life - we wait for trains and buses, for pay day, for news, for appointments, for results, for births and for deaths. The season of Advent invites us to embrace our times of waiting, to slow down, and take the opportunity to reflect on our lives, on the broken world around us, and to enter into the remembering that allows us to become part of God's Big Story. We remember the waiting and longing of God's people for a Saviour. We remember the waiting of the prophets for their words to come to pass, speaking of a time to come.

We remember the visits of the angels – to Zechariah, to Mary, and to Joseph, and the months of waiting for fulfilment. We remember the journey to Bethlehem, and the waiting of Mary for her baby to come, until finally, we remember those precious moments when God came among us and the Light had come at last. And we pray, Come, Lord Jesus - into the darkness of our world, into the darkness of our homes, into the darkness of our hearts. We wait for hope, for peace, for joy, for love, and we wait in hope, in peace, in joy, in love. And as we wait, may we see the signs of God's coming among us, and look for his glory revealed in the baby in the manger.

Eleanor Williams



THE KNITTED BIBLE is at St Mary's
25th November to 3rd December
Over 30 knitted Bible scenes.
Free entry, donations welcome. Limited access during services.



OUR SPECIAL SERVICES

FOR ADVENT, CHRISTMAS & EPIPHANY

Sunday 3rd December
4.30pm Christingle Service
at St Mary's

Sunday 17th December
6.30pm Carols by Candlelight
at St Mary's

Saturday 23rd December
5.00pm Christingle Service
at St Etheldreda's, Reach

Christmas Eve 24th December
3pm Crib Service at St Mary's
11.30pm Midnight Communion
at St Mary's

Christmas Day 25th December
8.30am Christmas Communion
at St Etheldreda's, Reach
10.00am Christmas Morning Communion
at St Mary's

New Year's Eve 31st December
10.00am Holy Communion at St Mary's
Sunday 7th January 2024

8.30am Holy Communion at Reach
10.00am Epiphany Café Church at St Mary's

**From the
Parish Registers
Funerals**



Rest in Peace
Sam Lucas
Stephen Brooks
Margaret Andrews

Burwell Food Support Group
Pop-up Pantry & Ely Foodbank
working together
to support our local community
at Burwell Day Centre
Fridays 2.00 - 3.00pm

Pop-up Pantry is working towards reducing waste and offers short life food and more as is available.

Donations towards the Pantry are gratefully received and can be dropped off at the Day Centre. A voluntary contribution of £2 is helpful towards running costs.

Ely Foodbank provides food for 3 days and can help with issues such as benefit changes, low incomes and more.

Citizen Advice join the team on 1st Friday of month. If you require help from the Foodbank please ring 01353 468626 or email info@ely.foodbank.org.uk

Burwell Food Support Group links individuals and groups working to support those in need in our community, and includes Burwell Help Group, Open Arms, St Mary's Church, Burwell Baptist Church, Burwell & District Day Centre, Burwell Co-op



CentrePeace



38a The Causeway, Burwell

Opening Times

Tuesday 10.00am—12.30pm
Wednesday 2.00pm—4.00pm
Thursday 10.00am—12.30pm
1.00pm—3.00pm
Friday 10.00am—12.30pm
Saturday 10.00am—12.30pm

**Advent Calendars
and Christmas cards
are now in stock!**

COMMUNITY ANGEL AWARDS

There's still time to nominate someone for a Community Angel Award. Nominations to Eleanor by 9th December. Award Ceremony in St Mary's Churchyard on Saturday 16th December, hosted by North Street Co-op & St Mary's. Still time to make angels to decorate the Church and Churchyard, Contact Eleanor or Angela for information.



Create for Christmas
Wednesday 13th December
St Mary's Church, Burwell
7.00 - 9.00pm

**Enjoy seasonal refreshments
while you create your own
Christmas Crafts**
**This event is for adults
but accompanied young people
aged 11+ are welcome**
Free, but donations welcome

Thank you!

To all the musicians contributing our services over the Advent and Christmas period:

Peter Hall
Becky Wilkes
Frances O'Gorman
John Wyatt
Huw Jenkins
Josie Roberts

And of course, our own Simon Ogilvie, and the choir.

Light in Darkness

A quiet space to remember loved ones who have died Remembering Tree will be in St Mary's throughout December to write a name on a star



Charity Spotlight

As mentioned last month, the PCC supports nearly 20 charities through its Mission Giving, and a few others are supported by passing on donations collected at special services. Here are some examples. Please follow the links for more information and keep these organisations in your prayers.

Christian Aid is a well known global charity which delivers emergency aid where it is most needed and also campaigns to eradicate the root causes of poverty world wide and to tackle injustice and climate change. It is supported by the PCC and also directly through Harvest collections and Christian Aid week.
<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/>

Royal British Legion was supported recently by the collections at the Remembrance Day services. Their aim is to support serving and ex-serving members of the armed service every day of the week, all year round.
<https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/>

The Childrens Society will benefit from the collections at our Christingle services this month to help in their work to 'provide specialist support that empowers young people to make positive changes and rediscover their hope'.
www.childrenssociety.org.uk

Embrace the Middle East is supported by the PCC. It is a Christian development charity, which partners with Christians in the Middle East to transform lives and restore the dignity of the most excluded and marginalised communities. At present, this includes particularly supporting people in the terrible situation in Gaza
<https://embraceme.org/>

Ely Foodbank is supported by the PCC and also directly through donations of food and cash from the church members at harvest and other times. Part of a nationwide network supported by The Trussell Trust, it provides emergency food and support to local people in crisis.
<https://ely.foodbank.org.uk/>

Refresh Café and Messy Church

We have a really exciting ministry with children and families at Refresh Café every Friday morning, and at Messy Church, monthly Sunday afternoons. We are hoping to recruit more team members to help with activities and with preparing food, and would love you to pray with us for those that God is calling to share in this lovely and very special ministry.

If you would like to know more, please speak to Eleanor or Paula. All team members need to complete the Church of England's Safer Recruitment Process, and be prepared to have a DBS check and undertake some safeguarding awareness training.

Stepping back

I read somewhere recently that God always has a purpose for each of us, which may be a specific task to do for a period of time, but at other times may be something different. Terry and I have realised that the period of time when our purpose is the specific tasks of PCC Treasurer and Church Administrator is coming to an end. We have therefore decided to retire from these posts at the next APCM in April, or indeed earlier, if others come forward to take up the reins.

We've both been in post for a very long time, during which the affairs of St Mary's and St Etheldreda's have been at the centre of our lives and we've been privileged to use the skills gained in our working lives in the service of the church. It's probably true to say, however, that we have become set in our ways and we hope our retirement provides the PCC with a good opportunity to take a radical look at the two roles and maybe to do things in a different way in future.

We're not going anywhere and still intend to play an active part in the life of our church family, but perhaps in a different way. We will, of course, be available to assist those who take over from us in any way we can, and for the next few months at least, it will be 'business as usual'

Pat & Terry Chalmers

This month's Eco Living Ideas from Kathy



(With thanks to Sue E and Good Energy for these ideas)

Christmas trees – if you use an artificial tree, use it for many, many years so as to reduce its carbon impact. If you use a real tree, dispose of it by cutting it up and composting it, rather than burning or adding it to landfill.

Wrapping presents – use re-usable cloth or bags, or choose recycled and recyclable paper and tie with ribbon, wool or string. Avoid plasticised or glittery paper and sticky tape which cannot be recycled. Save any wrapping cloths and paper, along with the ribbons, ready for next year. Any recyclable paper that can't be saved for re-use should be recycled (remove sticky tape first).

Packaging – clean/wash glass and aluminium and put in the recycling bin rather than adding to landfill. Avoid plastic packaging where you can (buy loose veg, refill bottles).

Food – Reduce the carbon footprint of your Christmas meals by eating more plant-based food (you could eat a smaller portion of meat, with a few more vegetables). Buy and cook only what you think will get eaten, and if there is any left, freeze it for later, or use in your next meal.

Presents and clothes – look for second-hand items and try to buy what the person wants/needs rather than something they don't want. Support small and ethical businesses. Enjoy being as creative as you can be in how you choose to celebrate the birth of Christ!

Why should Christians care for God's earth?

Dr Ruth Valerio, global advocacy and influencing director at Tearfund, was quoted in the Church Times (22 Sept 2023): "As Christians, we need to think carefully about how we use our money. If I'm buying something that supports a system that does not treat people properly, or abuses the land, then before God I'm not using my money well."

Silver Eco Church Awards

We are pleased to announce that we now have Silver Eco Church awards for both St Mary's and St Etheldreda's. We've made a lot of progress, but there's lots more that we can be doing, especially with personal lifestyle changes.



Reflection by Philip Baker

It seems hardly possible that we are again approaching the time of celebrating the birth of Jesus at Christmas. Jesus, who taught of love, peace and fellowship. Yet as we look around the world, and even our own country, we see signs of hatred, violence, intolerance and vengeance. This is not the way it should be!

Many of the conflicts we see are under the guise of bringing about peace; but never has lasting peace been achieved through the use of force. We see excuses that “the other side started it”, but trying to outdo the attacker in violence is not going to bring about a peaceful conclusion. Perhaps worst of all we see intolerance, where the views of others are considered wrong if they do not coincide with ones own views; those cornerstones of human relationships – compromise and respect – seem to have been consigned to history.

All this could conspire to make one feel despair, dispirited and defeated. But we are fortunate to have the example of Jesus to inspire us and our faith in God to sustain us. The world is comprised of a vast multitude of people – suppose all those individuals followed the way of Christ – that would solve everything! The world would be at peace, everyone would respect everyone else and love would abound.

It is down to individuals collectively to make it work. Now, none of us is going to influence everyone in the world, but we can apply Christian principles to all our interactions with others; showing care and respect for them, if we disagree doing so politely without resort to hate language (or even thought). It is not easy, but, with God’s help, it is something positive we can do in what has become a negative world. Perhaps we will inspire others too. Break it down like that and it starts to look more manageable, less daunting; something we can do that actually might make a difference.

This Christmas, let us try to make our start. If it seems too unlikely to be worth attempting, remember the impact on the earth that the birth of just one baby had, about 2024 years ago. *Philip Baker*



Burwell Branch

For the Mothers’ Union, November is the month of activism against gender-based violence, this year’s focus being on domestic violence. Globally, it is believed that as many as one in three women suffer from this type of violence, which can be physical or psychological. Men can suffer from it too, but the incidence is a great deal lower and it is typically exercised against women. Our Branch meeting will hear what the Mothers’ Union worldwide is doing to counter this awful problem. At the end of November we will be gathered in Ely Cathedral to take in explanatory displays and discussion, culminating in a silent vigil outside the main doors just after mid-day to remember victims. It is always a moving experience and worth attending to publicise the issue.

In December we will be having our traditional Branch Christmas Party at Mill Bungalow. If you would like to come as a non-member let me know. Then in January we aim to start our new year with a service of Holy Communion at Mill Bungalow lead by our chaplain Paula. The address will be made by our Curate Virginia and I am looking forward to it already.

I will be enrolling new members early in 2024 (March) and I again invite anyone, male or female, who believes in the campaigning work of the Mothers’ Union, but is not already a member, to consider joining us. The subscription cost is low but the potential return worth far more. If you would like to learn more, please contact me.

Philip Baker

CHRISTMAS GIFTS TO FAMILIES

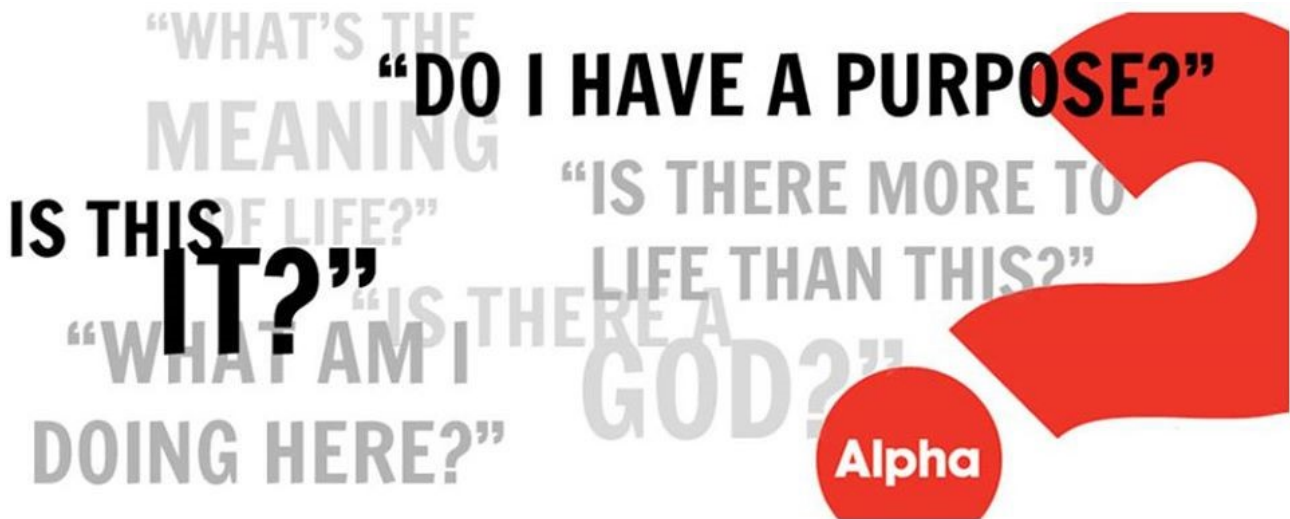
In previous years, we’ve given out the Real Advent Calendar, made by the Meaningful Chocolate Company, to children and families connected with us. This year, with rising costs and greater numbers, we’ve gone for a different gift, available to more children. If you’d like to sponsor this, please send donations to Terry Chalmers, our treasurer.

December and January Services

Please check the weekly news sheet for updates or our website. Refreshments are served after the 10am Sunday service and our Wednesday midweek service. Café Church is usually on first Sunday of month, beginning with refreshments, themed activities for all ages, then a short service.

Date	St Mary's Burwell	St Etheldreda's Reach
Sunday 3rd December Advent 1	10.00am Café Church and Baptism 4.30pm Christingle service	8.30am Holy Communion
Wednesday 6th December	10.30am Holy Communion	
Sunday 10th December Advent 2	10.00am Holy Communion	
Wednesday 13th December	<i>10.30am Holy Communion at Ness Court</i>	10.30am Holy Communion
Sunday 17th December Advent 3	8.30am Holy Communion 10.00am Holy Communion 6.30pm Carols by Candlelight followed by mince pies and mulled wine	
Wednesday 20th December	10.30am Holy Communion	
Saturday 23rd December		5.00pm Christingle service
Sunday 24th December Advent 4 Christmas Eve	10.00am Holy Communion 3.00pm Crib service 11.30pm Midnight Communion	
Monday 25th December Christmas Day	10.00am Holy Communion	8.30am Holy Communion
Wednesday 20th December	No Service	
Sunday 31st December	10.00am Holy Communion	
January 2024		
Wednesday 3rd January	10.30am Holy Communion	
Sunday 7th January	10.00am Café Church	8.30am Holy Communion
Wednesday 10th January	10.30am Holy Communion	
Sunday 14th January	Holy Communion	
Wednesday 17th January	<i>10.30am Holy Communion at Ness Court</i>	10.30am Holy Communion
Sunday 21st January	8.30am Holy Communion 10.00am Week of Prayer for Christian Unity service at Trinity Church	
Wednesday 24th January	10.30am Holy Communion	10.30am Holy Communion
Sunday 28th January	10.00am Holy Communion 4.00pm Messy Church	
Wednesday 31st January	10.30am Holy Communion	

Alpha Course starting in the New Year



Alpha is a series of group conversations, online or in person, that freely explore the basics of the Christian faith in an open, friendly environment. Everyone's welcome. No matter your background or beliefs, you're invited. Alpha is a space to explore different parts of the Christian faith in a relaxed and friendly environment, in person or online.

Each session covers a different topic, like prayer, the bible, who Jesus is and loads more. Then there's plenty of time to chat about what you think. Each group has a leader to help guide the conversation. There's never pressure to share your thoughts, but the floor is yours if you do want to say something.

To find out more, please contact Jo Proctor llm@stmarysburwell.org.uk.

OPENING OF OUR CHURCH BUILDINGS

Both of our churches are open to the public every day, except when there is another event, such as a wedding or a funeral.

WEEKLY GATHERINGS

We have a number of small groups meeting during the week. Ask Eleanor for details.

Fridays 10.00am Refresh Café in St Mary's *For pre-school children with their parents & carers*

Saturday 9.00am The Green Prayer Group (at Village Green Coffee Shop)

More information in our regular emails to families and on our Messy Church and Refresh

Facebook page: www.facebook.com/messychurchburwell. Join the mailing list via with

our Keeping in Touch online form. [St Mary's Burwell with St Etheldreda's Reach |](https://www.stmarysburwell.org.uk)

[Keeping in Touch \(stmarysburwell.org.uk\)](https://www.stmarysburwell.org.uk)

WORSHIP AT HOME ONLINE *Join us to pray, to worship, to share together*

Most weeks, we aim to live stream the 10am service on Facebook, apart from Café Church and when there is a baptism.



Churches Together in Burwell has a regular slot on Burwell Radio called 'Cross Talk' on Sundays 8.30am and repeated at 4.30pm Sunday and 7.00pm Monday. To listen you can either go to the station's website <https://burwell.radio>, or play via an Amazon Echo smart speaker.

Activities for Children and Young People and their Families

Sunday Mornings @ St Mary's

Families, children and young people are welcome at all our services. Café Church once a month.

Refresh Café

Every Friday 10.00-11.45am

For toddlers & babies & their parents and carers. Free play, crafts, refreshments, with nursery rhymes, songs and a short bible story, followed by a simple lunch.

Messy Church and Café

Events for families and children of all ages, often on Sunday afternoons, and sometimes meeting outdoors in the churchyard. Also cafés in school holidays with games and activities, drinks and snacks, for children and families..

Eleanor sends out a regular update email to families. If you'd like to join the mailing list, fill in the Keeping in Touch form on our website.

Supporting St Mary's and St Etheldreda's

Could you support the work of our church by making a donation? There are various ways to do this.

At one of our services or events, you can give cash or a cheque, made payable to 'Burwell PCC' or use the card reader.

Alternatively, go to our website

www.stmarysburwell.org.uk/donate

for information about how to make a single or regular donation by credit or debit card.

You can also download forms to set up a Standing Order or a Gift Aid declaration.

For more details, please see our website or contact the Treasurer, Terry Chalmers.

Telephone: 01638 742006

or Email:

administrator@stmarysburwell.org.uk

Vicar

Rev'd Canon Dr Eleanor Williams

22 Isaacson Road 01638 741262

vicar@stmarysburwell.org.uk

Associate Priest

Rev'd Paula Spalding 07849 936085

associatepriest@stmarysburwell.org.uk

Duty days Wednesday, Friday and Sunday

Curate

Rev'd Virginia Moggridge 07566 773020

curate@stmarysburwell.org.uk

Priests in retirement

Rev'd David King

Rev'd Dr Roger Williams

Licensed Lay Minister

Jo Proctor

Churchwardens

Stephen Martin 01638 742667

Wendy Smith 01638 741888

Churchwardens' Assistant

Caroline Smith

We're also on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/stmarysburwell>

<https://www.facebook.com/messychurchburwell>

<https://www.facebook.com/centrepeaceburwell>

Keeping in Touch

During the coronavirus outbreak we started sending the pew sheet by email and phoning and posting information to those without Internet access. Both the pew sheet and Contact are also available to download from our website: www.stmarysburwell.org.uk/contact-magazine

QR code for church website home page



We welcome your contributions to Contact. Please do keep sending them!
Send to administrator@stmarysburwell.org.uk

To join the circulation list please fill in a Keeping in Touch form available in our churches or on our website