



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

What are you doing for Advent?

The weeks leading up to Christmas can be very full, busy and noisy, which is why I find that deliberately entering into the spirit of the season of Advent can be a real sanity saver. I know that if I don't make space, it's all too easy to become caught up with the long lists of jobs to be done, and find that time for God has been squeezed out, and there is 'No room at this inn'.

Little things can help: for many years we have had an Advent candle, marked with the days of December, to burn a little each day, and have a few moments of quiet to watch the flames. I've often used a book of daily readings or reflections, and in recent years, that has often taken the form of an online resource, such as the ones produced by the Church of England. My photo-a-day challenge helps me to have some time each day to pause, look around and listen, and pray, and open myself up once again to the presence of God.

Advent can also prompt us to pray for our world. With so much that seems to be broken and in darkness, we can pray for the Light of Christ to come and for God to bring the healing and transforming power of his love and grace

For all of us, the journey of Advent ends, as it has always done, at the manger, where we face again the question, 'Is there any room?' May we be able to respond, 'O come to my heart, Lord Jesus, there is room in my heart for Thee', as we open our hearts to Jesus, and welcome him into our lives and into our world. Come, Lord Jesus, God with us, our Emmanuel.

Almighty God, as we prepare with joy to celebrate the gift of the Christ-child, embrace the earth with your glory and be for us a living hope in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

OUR SPECIAL SERVICES FOR ADVENT, CHRISTMAS & EPIPHANY

Sunday 7th December

4.30pm Christingle Service at St Mary's

Sunday 14th December

**4.00pm Churches Together Carols
at Ness Court**

Sunday 21st December

**6.30pm St Mary's Carols by Candlelight
followed by mulled wine & mince pies**

Monday 22nd December

5.00pm Christingle Service at Reach

Christmas Eve 24th December

3pm Crib Service at St Mary's

11.30pm St Mary's Midnight Communion

Christmas Day 25th December

8.30am Christmas Communion at Reach

10.00am Christmas Day Communion

at St Mary's

Sunday 28th December

10.00am Holy Communion at St Mary's

Sunday 5th January

10.00am St Mary's Epiphany Café Church

**From the
Parish Registers**
Funerals
Rest in peace
Brian Wallace



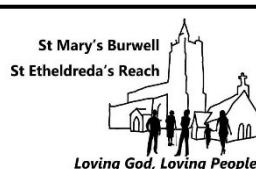
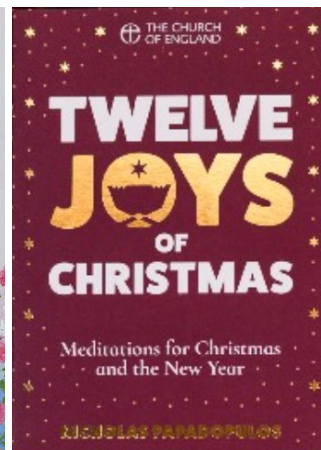
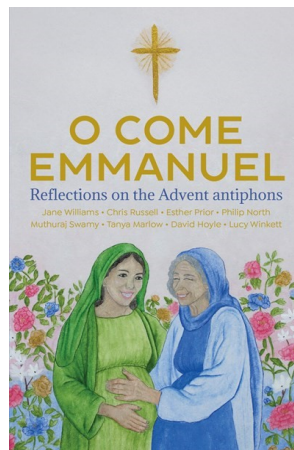
HOPE MAGAZINES

HOPE Christmas Magazine is back for 2025! Packed with real-life stories and topical features that gently point to the hope that can be found in Jesus. We have 100 copies of this magazine to give away. Why not take one for a friend, and invite them to one of our Christmas services! We'll have some cards available with all the details.



ADVENT & CHRISTMAS REFLECTIONS

Once again, the Church of England has produced audio reflections for Advent and for the Twelve Days of Christmas. Both are available on the Everyday Faith app. If you have a smartphone, and would like help downloading the app, please just ask!



COMMUNITY ANGEL AWARDS 2025

To celebrate our amazing community St Mary's is partnering again with Burwell Co-op to launch this year's Community Angel Awards

We are looking for nominations from the community for those who have made a difference to individuals, groups or the community as a whole. You can nominate anyone who has made a difference to you, anyone you know, or in the community. All nominations by **9th December** please to Eleanor Williams. Award Ceremony will be at **St Mary's at 12pm on Saturday 13th December**, hosted by St Mary's and the Co-op.

We would like to decorate St Mary's Churchyard and Church for the Award ceremony with **ANGELS** designed and made by the people of Burwell. These can be made by individuals or by groups and can be of any media or size, although we do encourage you to think recycled or recyclable materials. Hence this message to ask you to take part and make angels for the displays. It's a fantastic opportunity to get creative! Feel free to pass this onto anyone who might like to add to the decorations, all are welcome.

We would like all the angels in place by **12th December** to decorate the Churchyard and Church before the **Awards Ceremony on 13th December**. Please contact us on 07768 763145 with any questions, to drop your angels off if you can't get them to the church on the 12th or to discuss how to display them.

More about what's coming up in December for all ages

**Refresh Café
@St Mary's Burwell
Fridays
10.00 - 11.30am
Simple lunch
from 11.30am**

***No Café on December 26th ***

A café & play space
for pre-school children
& their parents & carers
Older siblings welcome
in school holidays
Refreshments
No charge
Donations welcome



St Mary's Burwell
St Etheldreda's Reach
Loving God, Loving People

**Christingle
Services**

Sunday 7th December
4.30pm
St Mary's Burwell

Monday 22nd December
5.00pm
St Etheldreda's Reach

Donations may be given for
The Children's Society



Connect Café
A connecting space for families

Wednesday 10th December
3.30 - 5.00pm
St Mary's, Burwell



Refreshments
Board Games Table Football
Activities Crafts
Connect with each other
and with God

**Light in the
Darkness**

A quiet space
to remember
loved ones
who have died
and add
their name
to the Remembering Tree
which will be in St Mary's
during December



**Youth
Café
@St Mary's**

Friday 12th December
4.00 - 5.30pm
For Year 7+
Contact Eleanor
for info



**St Mary's Burwell
3.00pm
Christmas Eve
24th December
Nativity Carol Service
For the young + young at heart**



Celebrate Jesus' Birthday
Carols, Readings, Prayers
Dress up for the Nativity Story



**Advent
Songs of Praise**



Sunday 14th December
4.00pm Ness Court
Followed by tea

**St Mary's Burwell
Carols by Candlelight
Christmas Service
Sunday December 21st 6.30 pm**



Traditional Readings and Carols
followed by mulled wine & mince pies
All welcome!

NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL CHURCH OF ENGLAND

UPDATE ON LIVING IN LOVE & FAITH

The House of Bishops has recently made a series of key decisions on the future direction of the Church of England's Living in Love and Faith process, which explores questions of relationships, sexuality and marriage. Final decisions will be taken in December. At its residential meeting, the House reviewed detailed theological and legal advice on outstanding questions following the landmark 2023 Synod vote which led to the introduction of the Prayers of Love and Faith (or PLF). The PLF are a set of prayers, readings and liturgical material which, for the first time, enable same-sex couples to come to church for public prayers of dedication, thanksgiving and asking for God's blessing as part of a regular church service. Since then, the Church has been exploring whether special 'bespoke' services using the PLF could be introduced and whether clergy could legally enter into same-sex marriages.

There has also been much consideration of possible new arrangements for how the Church is organised including so-called 'Delegated Episcopal Ministry'. The bishops reviewed advice both from the Church of England's Legal Office and the Faith and Order Commission (all of which will be published in due course). While final decisions will be made by the House in December, the bishops agreed in principle that both bespoke services and clergy same-sex marriage would need formal synodical and legislative processes to be completed before they could be permitted. As a result, they also concluded there is currently no need for a new code of practice setting out special arrangements such as Delegated Episcopal Ministry.

Although there remains a wide range of views within the House on questions of sexuality and relationships, there was strong consensus on the need for unity, transparency and proper process alongside pastoral care. Despite personal convictions across traditions, the House of Bishops recognised these were the procedural realities to effect any future change.

The Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, chair of the LLF Programme Board, commented: "As we continue prayerfully to navigate this important work on behalf of the Church, we believe these are the right decisions following further legal and theological advice. However, we recognise that for some, they will be difficult and disappointing. I continue to pray for God's grace and gentleness for all as we continue to discern a way through these questions."

Please pray for the House of Bishops meeting again on December 16th.

ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY DESIGNATE, SARAH MULLALLY, SETS OUT HER HOPES FOR THE CHURCH

Shortly after the announcement of her nomination as the next Archbishop of Canterbury, Bishop Sarah Mullally delivered an address at Canterbury Cathedral, reflecting on her calling, the challenges facing the Church, and her hopes for its future.

Rooted in her early vocation as a nurse and shaped by her ministry in London, she spoke of "washing feet" as a guiding image of Christian service, and of finding hope in the quiet faithfulness of churches, chaplaincies, and communities across the Anglican Communion.

She addressed the Church's responsibility in safeguarding, the need to confront power dynamics, and the importance of standing against hatred and antisemitism. She said she would seek to be "a shepherd who enables everyone's ministry and vocation to flourish," and expressed her desire to nurture confidence in the Gospel. "Held fast by the Lord's hand," she concluded, "please pray for me as I will pray for you."

What's involved in... PCC membership?

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the governing body of our parish and is responsible for supporting the vicar with the church's mission and wellbeing. Its key roles include: financial management; building and property maintenance including contents and churchyards; forms of worship and the appointment of a new incumbent; safeguarding compliance and adhering to our Policies and Procedures

Every member of the PCC is a charity trustee, and the PCC is the legal body responsible for complying with the Charity Commission regulations. PCC members are required to be on the Electoral Roll and once elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in April, serve a three year term. During the course of the year members attend 9 or 10 PCC meetings and the APCM. There is also the occasional Standing Committee during the year at which representatives of PCC address any urgent issues that cannot be left until the next scheduled PCC meeting. PCC members are required to carry out modules of safeguarding training.

I am serving my third term on PCC and from my own experience, recognise the importance and relevance of being able to serve in this way. I have gained a huge amount of knowledge over the years of the processes involved which has helped me to have a much broader understanding of how things develop and progress. It is a privilege to work alongside my fellow PCC members and build-up a relationship and understanding of each other.

Being a member of PCC is rewarding and it is an opportunity to contribute ideas and influence the mission and wellbeing of our parish as well as contributing own knowledge and expertise.

We are a friendly and welcoming group and meet together in the Guildhall, prayerfully and thoughtfully encouraging each other in our decision-making. We want to encourage new people to join PCC

bringing fresh ideas as well as their individual gifts and experience.

Please do consider if PCC is something you might think about joining in the future? If you would like to discuss further please speak to Eleanor. Sarah Wingate

CentrePeace



CentrePeace is a good place to do your Christmas shopping, without breaking the bank! We have a wide range of books of all types for adults (£2 each) and children (£1 each), as well as jigsaws (£3 each), all of which are in good condition. We also have greetings cards for all occasions, including Christmas cards, and Advent Calendars so why not drop in to see us?



Opening Times

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

Christmas Holiday

CentrePeace will be closed from 26th December till 1st January inclusive.



Environment Matters

This month, we are re-cycling the Eco-Living ideas published by Kathy in December 2023, as they are entirely appropriate advice for the festive season!

(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!

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families
Diocese of Ely

Burwell Branch News

Our meeting in October included a fascinating talk by Ian Richards on TWAM (Tools With A Mission), at charity that collects unwanted tools (anything from spades and hammers to sewing machines) and refurbishes them for distribution to people in third world countries who can use them to earn a living and support their families. We were surprised at the similarities between the aims of our organisations (albeit the focus is somewhat different). We also had the pleasure of a visit from representatives of the Diocesan Mothers' Union, good friends of ours

By the time you read this we will have enjoyed our November meeting on 26th November, during which we will consider progress on the 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence campaign, start planning our 2026 diary of events and look at our Christmas arrangements, including our Party – a busy meeting! Before that we will also have enjoyed an Advent service with the MU Anglesey Branch in Lode on 20th November and another Advent service with the MU Branch in Newmarket on 4th December – we are getting around this Christmas!

Our next fellowship lunch after Holy Communion in St Mary's will be on Wednesday 10th December and, as usual, it is open to all our friends in St Mary's. Please let me know if you would like to join us. If any of our friends in St Mary's would like to join us in a protest, we will be taking part in the 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence gathering in (and outside – banners supplied) Ely Cathedral on 29th November.

If you are not a member but interested in the work of the Mothers' Union here in the UK and around the world and would like to know more (or join one of our events to see us at work and play), please contact me (or Hazel). We welcome women and men who support our aims, which relate to the Christian support of families and family life.

Philip Baker

What's on this month

10.00 16.00	Sunday 30th Advent Sunday Holy Communion at Burwell Messy Advent at St Mary's	Wed 3 Fri 5 Sat 6	10.30 10.00 9.00	Holy Communion at St Mary's Refresh Café at St Mary's Village Green Prayers
8.30 10.00 16.30	Sunday 7th December Advent 1 Holy Communion at Reach Café Church at St Mary's Christingle Service at St Mary's	Wed 10 Fri 12 Sat 13	10.30 10.00 9.00 12.00	Holy Communion at St Mary's Refresh Café at St Mary's Village Green Prayers Community Angel Awards
10.00 16.00	Sunday 14th December Advent 2 Holy Communion at Burwell Churches Together service at Ness Court	Wed 17 Fri 19 Sat 20	10.30 10.00 9.00	Holy Communion at Reach (also at Ness Court) Refresh Café at St Mary's Village Green Prayers
8.30 10.00 6.30	Sunday 21st December 2nd before Advent Holy Communion at Burwell Holy Communion at Burwell Carols by Candlelight at St Mary's	Mon 22 Wed 24 Thurs 25	17.00 10.30 3.00 11.30 8.30 10.00	Christingle Service at Reach Christmas Eve Holy Communion Crib service at St Mary's Midnight service at St Mary's Christmas Day Holy Communion at Reach Holy Communion at Burwell
10.00	Sunday 28th December Christmas 1 Holy Communion at Burwell	Wed 31 Fri 2 Jan Sat 3	10.30 10.00 9.00	Holy Communion at St Mary's Refresh Café at St Mary's Village Green Prayers
8.30 10.00	Sunday 4th January 2026 Epiphany Holy Communion at Reach Café Church at St Mary's	Wed 7 Fri 9 Sat 10	10.30 10.00 9.00	Holy Communion at St Mary's Refresh Café at St Mary's Village Green Prayers
	Please check the weekly news sheet for updates or our website. Refreshments are served after the 10.00am Sunday service and our Wednesday midweek service. Café Church is usually on first Sunday of month, beginning with refreshments, activities for all ages, then a short service. Most weeks, we aim to live stream the Sunday 10.00am service on Facebook, apart from Café Church or when there is a baptism. You don't need to have a Facebook account, and to make it easier to find, there is a direct link from our website to the Facebook page.			

WEEKLY GATHERINGS: We have a number of small groups meeting during the week, including:

Monday 7.30pm St Mary's Bellringers meet to practice most weeks (check pew sheet)

Friday 10.00am Refresh Café and lunch for babies, pre-school children and their grown-ups

Saturday 9.00am A Prayer Group meets at Village Green Coffee Shop

Please speak to Eleanor if you would be interested in joining a bible study group, or are wondering whether baptism and/or confirmation might be the next step for you on your faith journey.

**Pop-Up Pantry
at Burwell Day Centre
First Friday of month**

**December 5th
and January 2nd
2.00 - 3.00pm**

***Check Facebook page
for updates***

**If you're struggling
to make ends meet,
you can pick up
a bag of groceries**

**No voucher needed.
Voluntary £2 contribution.**

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

Part of Burwell Food Support Group

**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 speak to our Gift Aid Officer, Ian
Richards 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)

Priests in retirement

Rev'd David King

Rev'd Dr Roger Williams

Licensed Lay Ministers

Jo Proctor

Kevin Powell

Churchwardens

Wendy Smith

01638 741888

Sue Reynolds

Churchwardens' Assistants

Stephen Martin

01638 742667

Caroline Smith

Administrator

Kathy Ogilvie

administrator@stmarysburwell.org.uk

We're also on Facebook

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

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

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

Keeping in Touch

We send the weekly pew sheet and monthly
Contact magazine by email. There are usually
a few spare paper copies in church.

Both the pew sheet and Contact are also
available to download from our website:

www.stmarysburwell.org.uk/about-us/newsletters/

**QR code for
church website
home page**



We welcome your contributions to Contact. Please do keep sending them!

Send to Pat Chalmers, Contact Editor at pat@patchtcs.co.uk

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