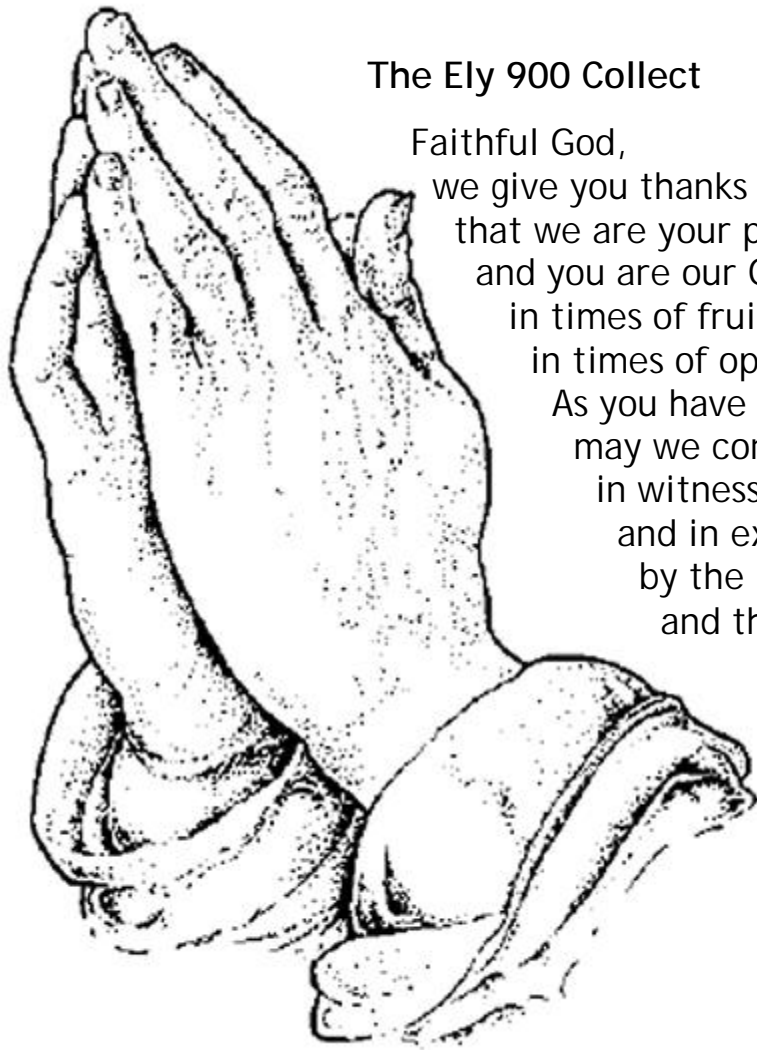




Prayer Leaflet

March 2009



The Ely 900 Collect

Faithful God,
we give you thanks
that we are your people
and you are our God,
in times of fruitfulness and times of need;
in times of opportunity and times of challenge.
As you have been faithful to us,
may we continue in faithfulness to you,
in witness to your love
and in expectation of your promises,
by the power of your Spirit
and through Jesus Christ our Lord.



The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin
Godmanchester

Astonished Joy!

Philippians 3:20 - 4:1

But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will transform the body of our humiliation so that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.



Do you sometimes wonder what heaven will be like? All of us do at some point, I imagine. I must admit, though, I've thought of it more in recent years than I would have before. I guess that the nearer I come to the end of my earthly journey the more often I indulge in "sanctified curiosity" about the home Jesus has promised to believers. What will be my reaction when I cross the river and enter into glory?

Theologian Stephen Neill asked himself the same question. At first he was inclined to think his emotion would be astonishment. But then he decided that his emotion, "to put it a little more precisely," would be "astonished joy".

Yes, astonished joy indeed! The apostle Paul called believers in Christ citizens of heaven, and wrote, "it is from [heaven] that we are expecting a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, he will transform the body of our humiliation so that it may be conformed to the body of his glory" (Phil. 3:20-21). Paul looked forward to a day when sin and pain and grief would be gone forever.

What a soul-thrilling vision that will be when we see our Lord! What indescribable ecstasy we will experience! Fully aware at last of the sheer marvel of redemptive grace that has brought us into the presence of unparalleled beauty, we will be filled with astonished joy!

Our Prayers in March are especially requested for:

In the Church

Events – CT Lunch (2nd); Women's World Day of Prayer (6th); Mayor's Charity Concert (14th); Frugal Lunch (15th); Lent Concert (21st) – please pray for these events, and for those who will attend them.

Lent Groups – for those attending the two weekly groups on Wednesdays.

Mothers' Union – that the work they do across the world may grow and flourish so more people will experience an improvement in their lives. Especially we pray for the 2009 Global walk for water.

Choir – for all people from the various choirs who will be singing in the Lent concert (21st), praying also that many will come to hear us sing.

Stepping Stones – for guidance that we may soon be able to start up again, finding the best way forward in which to best suit the little ones.

Flower Guild – for those less fortunate than ourselves.

In the Community

Community School – for the many new children and families joining our community: May they find that language, culture and unfamiliarity do not prevent them enjoying our friendship and community support.

Women's World Day of Prayer (6th) – for better understanding, and support, of this global and ecumenical movement of prayer.

Pray for young people that they may be encouraged to develop spiritually through everyday experiences, being given time to think, space to enjoy, security to be able to question and affirmation from us about their perceptions of God and the universe.

The charity the Church supports through the collection plate in February:

Diverse is one of the longest-established HIV and sexual health charities and is involved in sexual health promotion, support and advocacy work in Cambridgeshire, and in campaigning on HIV and AIDS issues across the county and nationally.

This month, in our Street Prayer Mission, we'll be praying for:

Week commencing Sunday, 1 March

Riverside Mill Flats; Bridge Place.

Week commencing Sunday, 8 March

London Road; Martin Close; Roman Gate.

Week commencing Sunday, 15 March

Cambridge Road; Cambridge Villas; Meadow Way; Harcourt; Almond Close.

Week commencing Sunday, 22 March

Carnaby Close; Rushes Walk; Field Walk; Merton Walk.

Week commencing Sunday, 29 March

The Chestnuts; Oak Tree Court; Berry Lane; Offord Hill & Road.

Please remember the residents of these streets, those known to us, and especially those, as yet, unknown to us.

Some Prayers for March:

Heavenly Father,
your Son battled with the powers of darkness,
and grew closer to you in the desert:
help us to use these days to grow in wisdom and prayer
that we may witness to your saving love
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty God,
by the prayer and discipline of Lent
may we enter into the mystery of Christ's suffering,
and by following in his Way
come to share in his glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Eternal God,
give us insight
to discern your will for us,
to give up what harms us,
and to seek the perfection we are promised
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Merciful Lord,
you know our struggle to serve you:
when sin spoils our lives
and overshadows our hearts,
come to our aid
and turn us back to you again;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

God of love,
passionate and strong,
tender and careful:
watch over us and hold us
all the days of our life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Gracious God,
you gave up your Son
out of love for the world:
lead us to ponder the mysteries of his passion,
that we may know eternal peace
through the shedding of our Saviour's blood,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

