

Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry

VIRAL BULLETIN

31 August 2025

11th Sunday after Trinity

Please forward this to anyone you know who might not be in our Google group.

For information about us please visit: www.northburychurches.org.uk



Pilgrims gather at Walsingham for the healing pilgrimage on 25 August.

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11th Sunday after Trinity

Ecclesiasticus 10:12-18 Psalm 112 Hebrews 13:1-8,15,16 Luke 14:1,7-14

Jesus is going to the house of a Pharisee on the sabbath for a meal. We know, if we have a passing acquaintance with the New Testament, that this might be the signal of some sort of trouble ahead. They were *watching him closely*, we are told.

But just *who* were these Pharisees? We are used to dismissing them as self-righteous hypocrites, but they weren't seen that way at the time. They were the religious purists, committed to the Jewish law, promoting observance of the law and developing that tradition of individual piety, strict ethical standards and ritual observance.

They were model Jews, and widely respected. St Paul was one. He tells us that himself. They had also come to hold a belief in immortality and resurrection, so, you might think they'd have a lot in common with Jesus.

But this very respect was a temptation. It could lead to the development of a sense of superiority. It could lead to the letter of the law being used to trump faith, love and mercy. This is where Jesus, and later Paul, would part company from them.

So they don't get a very good press in the Christian Gospels. Today we hear of Jesus putting the demands of love and mercy before them in very sharp terms. For Jesus was coming, we might say, from a very different place. His trajectory is quite other.

Jesus's trajectory is one of humility, as we read in Philippians Chapter 2:

he 'emptied himself, taking the form of a slave,

being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form, he humbled himself

and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross.'

In his very being Jesus shows us that humility as at the heart of God, and he tells us that this is the way he is calling us to follow.

As we read the Gospels, we find that he tells us this time and time again. In parables. By ticking off the disciples when they get above themselves. In all sorts of ways. It is just the way he is and the way he calls us to be. 'The first shall be last and the last shall be first.'

Jesus has a way of shaking us up and turning our values and expectations upside down. He's taking up a well-established Hebrew idea about God. So, for example, our reading from Ecclesiasticus challenges all our pride and tells us: 'The Lord overthrows the thrones of rulers, and enthrones the lowly in their place.'

Words much like that turn up again in the Magnificat, Mary's song of praise in the first chapter of Luke's gospel: 'He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly.'

Today we hear two parables used by Jesus in the Pharisee's house. The first he addresses to the guests. It has a worldly-wise feel about it and a place for mixed, partly self-interested, motivation. You don't want to be made to look a fool do you? With everyone watching you it's much better to be asked to 'move up higher' than to be turfed out of your place and told to move down.

If we're honest, we all care about what other people think rather more than we care to admit. So this parable touches us in a place we all know and understand. Ironically, humility is not just godly, it is also good for the reputation.

The second parable, addressed to the host, is sharper and slices across our self-interestedness with a serrated blade. Don't ask someone to a meal if all they'll do is ask you back. Don't provide hospitality for the comfortable insiders in your life. Instead (*not even as well as*) ask the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind. Provide for those who have nothing, for those who can never repay, so that there is *no benefit to you at all* until the last day.

We've been hearing extracts from the letter to the Hebrews over recent weeks. Today, as the letter nears the end, complex theological argument gives way to a sequence of exhortations and encouragements. And these harmonise with Jesus' message: Care for the persecuted and those in

prison. Beware the love of money and the constant desire for more. Be content with what you have and trust in God. Share.

Make 'a sacrifice of praise' - live generously and sacrificially. 'Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.'

The Greek word behind 'mutual love' is *philadelphia*, brotherly love. Family love, we might say. But, as if that was too cosy and self-satisfied, it's followed straight away with the reference to 'hospitality to strangers'. The Greek word behind that is *philoxenia*. Love of strangers.

Jesus's love cannot be possessed or tamed. It cannot be contained, even by the church. It *should not* be contained, *especially* by the church. Jesus's love is there to be given away.

So Jesus tells the Pharisee and his guests some home truths. Fair enough. We're used to that. Maybe just a little bit *too* used.

We need to remember that when Jesus was engaging with the Pharisees, he was engaging with the conventionally religious, with the respectably pious, with the seekers after the moral high ground, with ... er ... could it be? ... people like us.

Try a little experiment when you read a passage in the Bible which mentions the Pharisees. Try substituting the word 'Christian' instead. Then read it again - and see how it fits. As Jesus said: 'For *all* who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.' That sentence occurs here in Luke 14 and is repeated word for word in Luke 18 at the end of the Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector, which is not a bad place to give the experiment a trial run.

Adrian Mann

News from West Stow

SEPTEMBER IS CANCELLED! Janet and Ann are having September off. So there will be no coffee morning on 3rd September at West Stow. Normal service will resume on Wednesday 1st October.

Lark Valley and North Bury Churches

SERVICES WEEK BEGINNING 31 AUGUST

SUNDAY 31 August 11th Sunday after Trinity

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Holy Communion (CW)	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Holy Communion (CW)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	Culford
11.00am	Sung Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds

Monday 1 September *Giles, hermit, c710*
Season of Creation begins

Tuesday 2 September *Martyrs of Papua New Guinea, 1901, 1942*

6.00pm	A Quiet Space (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
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Wednesday 3 September *Gregory the Great, bishop, teacher of the faith, 604*

8.30am	Morning Prayer (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
5.00pm	Evening Prayer (CW)	St George's, Bury St Edmunds

Thursday 4 September *Birinus, bishop, 650*

9.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
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Friday 5 September

5.15pm	Evening Prayer (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
6.00pm	Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds

Saturday 6 September *Allen Gardiner, missionary, founder
of the South American Missionary Society*

SUNDAY 7 September 12th Sunday after Trinity

~ Season of Creation

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Holy Communion (CW)	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Holy Communion (CW)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Timworth
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	West Stow
10.00am	All Age Worship	Fornham All Saints
11.00am	Sung Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
3.00pm	Wonder Club	Lackford

Open Garden

Sunday 31st August

Peter and Claire welcome you
to their garden at 7 Meadow Close
Bury St Edmunds IP33 3LE

2 to 4.30 pm

All welcome

Cake, Cuppas and Chat

Donations towards
a new boiler for
All Saints Church
Bury St Edmunds



**Next Tuesday, 2nd September
will be our monthly Coffee Morning
at All Saints' Bury, 10 to 11.15am.**

This month our donations are going to the

Bury St Edmunds Child Contact Centre

who use our hall on Saturdays. They 'provide safe spaces where children can meet the parents they don't live with'. Do come along if you can for coffee / tea, cake and chat. All welcome so why not bring a friend.

Fornham St Martin Church

*Book Sale,
Coffee & Cakes*

Saturday 6th September

10:00am - 3:00pm

Over 2000 books and lots of
cakes, scones and pastries.

All Welcome



Quiet Skies

Throughout the summer, the skies above Bury St Edmunds have been filled with the screams of swifts.

They commute 14,000 miles to and from Southern Africa, passing through the airspace of around 25 different countries en route. Travelling at speeds of about 70 mph they reach their destination in around four weeks' time. The swifts arrive in our area to find nest sites and breed.



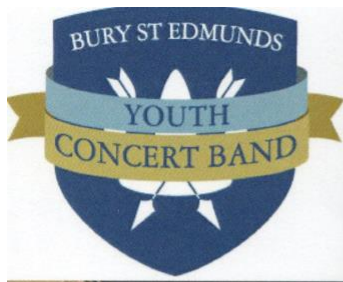
Behind the red grids in the tower of St John's church are 60 swift nest boxes. The swifts are counted and ringed each year by Simon Evans who takes on subcontracted work for Action for Swifts. This year Simon found that 59 of the boxes showed signs of occupancy. He ringed 112 chicks this summer which came from 53 of the boxes. He also put rings on 9 non-breeding adults and 2 birds from a previous season.

After the majority of the birds have flown, Simon mainly leaves the boxes alone but does check them for 'flat flies' so that next year's young don't get troubled by them too much.

Simon is planning to install a further 40 boxes in the tower, taking the total to 100. Funding for the materials has been offered by Save Our Suffolk Swifts.

Although we no longer have the joy of seeing the swifts soaring around, it is comforting to know that, with a fair wind, they and their young will return next year.

Valerie Wilde



**The Bury St Edmunds Youth
Concert Band Presents**

PROMS IN THE PARISH

**Saturday 6th September 2025 at 2:30pm
St Mary's Church West Stow, IP28 6ET**

**Tickets priced at £10 for Adults U18's £5
and U10's go Free.**

Light refreshments included in ticket price

**Available from 01284 728714 or
teamrectorlvnb@btinternet.com**

Caring for God's Creation ~ Genesis 1 1-31

Many thanks to the Ven David Jenkins for permission to use his address to our churchwardens in June this year, thanking them for their important work and introducing this year's theme as the Season of Creation begins.

I want to begin as I always do by saying thank you to a range of folk including all of you for taking time out of very busy lives and schedules to be here. If I have any specific aspirations for this evening they would be that you as church wardens and their supporters might leave here after this service feeling affirmed in what you do in the name of the church; that you fully understand and appreciate just how valuable you are to the life of the church and the wider mission of the kingdom of God; and that that you would leave feeling renewed for the tasks that lie ahead. Thank you all most sincerely for all that you do.

I also want to record here publicly my gratitude for the love and support of my rural deans and lay chairs many of whom I consider after all these years to be personal friends although they may feel rather differently about me. Without wishing to bring tears to your eyes the lot of an archdeacon can be at times a rather lonely and isolated one and I rejoice in, and give thanks for, the collegiality I enjoy with the clergy of this archdeaconry and for the pastoral care they show me.

Another joyful feature of life in this diocese over the last few years has been our corporate commitment to *Growing in God* and its four strands of growing younger, growing deeper, growing in influence and growing in number. *Growing in God* has brought real fruit to our diocese. For me one of the great strengths of *Growing in God* is the way in which it helps us to focus in on the God of small things, that personal encounter, that personal deepening which is at the heart of the Christian experience.

Many of you will know that I am not an enthusiastic advocate for more recent developments in how the national church seeks to resource mission and ministry or indeed for macro plans in general. Scripture shows us time and again that Jesus recruited and converted by personal encounter and

invitation and not by mail shot or slick campaign video. The English parish church, based in the locality, has proved itself a highly resilient vehicle for outreach and engagement and a place where the God of small things reaches out into the lives of ordinary folk. Despite the many ups and downs of church and civic life the parish church and its clergy and people remain for me at the very heart of what it means to be the Church of England. To that end I am delighted to report we continue to attract and recruit high-quality candidates to posts in this archdeaconry and there are several fine examples sitting in this building this evening.

So, to this year. The theme set for this year's series of Archdeaconry Visitations right across the diocese is **Caring for God's Creation** and we have chosen as the reading the dramatic account of the creation as found in the first chapter of Genesis. This will hopefully provide a theological and spiritual context to reflect upon how we might as Christians engage in caring for the world in which we live and how we might help all our churches here in glorious Suffolk aspire to being places of respect and concern for God's creation. One of the great privileges of being an archdeacon is the opportunity to get out into the parishes and meet those who are working very hard to maintain and nurture their beautiful and much-loved church and of course the omnipresent churchyard. The preservation and care of the fabric of our buildings and their surroundings is a weighty responsibility and I am immensely grateful to all of you.

May I also therefore take this opportunity to thank publicly Edmund Harris, Julie Alcock, Alison Barker, Dawn Gillett, Julie Bilham, and all the staff at the Diocesan Offices who work so hard to keep our churches and our parsonages in the best condition possible.

Today, of course, environmental or green concerns are just one aspect of modern life that our forebears would not have had to address with quite such rapt attention. At the very top of that list needs to be our active engagement with, and promotion of, good Safeguarding practice and policies as we seek to protect all those in our care and ensure that the most vulnerable amongst us are never put at risk. In addition, responding to the growing body of building and church legislation and all that comes with it

inevitably fills much of our thinking and planning. What remains constant over the decades, however, is that without your commitment and hard work, the church could not properly function or fulfil its potential as God intends. We are the Body of Christ. Look at your neighbour and you see Christ looking back (that may be slightly challenging for some). We are the church. As Paul reminds us, we each play an indispensable part in making up the whole.

Those who encounter us in our roles as priests and churchwardens and members of the church will judge the integrity of the church by our integrity. They will judge the integrity of the gospel by our integrity. If they are warmly welcomed and made to feel valued by you they will feel welcomed and valued by the church and by God. You and I; all of us, do indeed have a Gospel to proclaim and as that great hymn reminds us it is a message for all God's children and not just those who come to church.

In a moment you are going to stand together as a body and make your declaration. As you do so, please be assured of the prayers and gratitude of us all as you commit or perhaps re-commit yourselves afresh to the task that lies before all of us; the growing and nurturing of God's kingdom here on earth. As churchwardens you are called not just to care for the bricks and mortar; not simply to ensure that 'order and decency' are maintained; not just to provide adequate seating for all who wish to attend divine worship; not just to deal with 'riotous, violent or indecent behaviour in church'; not just to do those jobs that no one else will do. Canon E1 charges you 'by example and precept to encourage the parishioners in the practice of true religion and to promote unity and peace among them'.

You are to be an example to your peers and to be peacemakers when unity is threatened. You are to be an encouragement to your fellow-Christians even, or perhaps especially, when the going gets tough. If you are always seeing the glass half-empty who is left to proclaim the good news that the glass is still half-full. If your litany is one of despondency and cynicism who is left to pray with joy and thanksgiving?

If I may add to this worthy if rather intimidating list, please also be joyful! There is only one thing worse than a miserable churchwarden and that is a miserable archdeacon! We are all called to proclaim the joy of the Gospel

through our lifestyle; through our words and our actions; to be like a mustard seed that blossoms and encourages so that growth happens in those around us. Like the mustard seed we are called to flourish in the service of the Lord so that others might have their faith renewed and fed by the example and faith of one. What we sow as church wardens and as ministers of the gospel may indeed be like the fig tree; slow to bear fruit but we need to take the long view. We need to stick with it; to persevere so that we can leave our children and our grandchildren that wonderful legacy which is the Christian presence here in Suffolk.

This brings me back rather neatly to our theme this year, **Caring for God's Creation**. As I mentioned earlier, as I travel around the deaneries, I meet so many church wardens and their colleagues who are trying very hard to make their church a place where God can be encountered in a safe and welcoming environment. We are now of course painfully conscious that part of that engagement must be about reducing our individual and corporate footprint as we pass along on our journey. I know for some this is not entirely convincing stuff but however we feel about the modern debate around ecology and environment we do need to be clear that care for the world in which we live is a Christian duty.

Ruth Newton, the new Archdeacon of Carlisle, who I remember well as a curate in Carlisle, has written these helpful words: *"Responding to the climate crisis is also an act of mission. It demonstrates the relevance of Christianity when the church's actions so far have fallen short. It models responsible discipleship. It responds to human need. Quite simply, addressing climate change is something the Good Samaritan would do in our day, and other "Good Samaritans" around the world are already showing us how to do likewise. It is a response to injustice: it is our economy, and our churches, that have benefited most from fossil fuel use, but it is the poorest societies who face the most tragic costs: drought, famine, fires, extreme weather events, resource insecurity and mass migration. Because of all this, and simply because the earth is the Lord's, achieving net zero is an act of mission."*

The wonderful first chapter of Genesis is both poetic in its language and sweeping in its narrative and it reminds us that the world in which we live is pure gift. The gift of a loving creator to his created. It is the very embodiment

of the meta narrative, no God of small things here. This is divine encounter on a truly epic scale. And yet at its very heart are two human beings, created by God, and it is here, is it not, that we once again encounter the God of small things. It is too easy when faced with huge global issues such as planet warming or the food resource crisis to simply put the issue into the too difficult box. To throw up our hands and say what can I do, I am only one person or what can I do in the face of such a huge challenge. In truth of course there is much we can do, and we can begin by starting small and local.

Our diocese boasts a huge number of initiatives of all sorts designed to make our churches ecologically more efficient and our churchyards more sustainable environments. These are often small-scale local actions whether it be the installation of swift boxes, the re-wilding of parts of our churchyards, or perhaps engaging with the A Rocha scheme which offers an environmental award scheme for churches in England and Wales. At the heart of Eco Church is an [online survey](#) about how you are caring for God's earth in different areas of your life and work. The answers a church provides earn points towards an Eco Church Award – the more your church does, the more points you get! The survey covers all areas of church life including:

- Worship and Teaching
- Management of Church Buildings
- Management of Church Land
- Community and Global Engagement
- Lifestyle

and is an easy step by step way of getting involved.

Whatever you decide to do or however you decide to get involved may God continue to bless you in your roles as church wardens in all that you say and do on behalf of the church in this wonderful county. If the last few years have taught us anything then surely it is that we are amazingly resilient both as individuals and as a church and that ordinary people, ordinary Christians, can do and achieve extraordinary things in the name of the Living God. I finish with these words of hope and joy from Genesis:

God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

David Jenkins

St George's

BINGO

at **The Anselm Centre, Anselm Avenue,
Bury St Edmunds, IP32 6JZ**

**Saturday
6th September
6.30pm for 7.00pm start**

**£8.00 per person which includes
entry fee and bingo cards,
(extra cards can be purchased on the night)**

**Hot drinks and snacks will be on sale
in the interval**

although you may bring your own

Everybody welcome

**Please book in advance by ringing
Wendy on 07707 497461**

or

Maz on 07746 058179

Charity Number: XN42173

St George's Cream Tea update

Thank you to all who attended our Cream Tea on 9th August and those who didn't missed a treat. We were blessed with a beautiful sunny afternoon where everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves and we are pleased to say that we raised £125.00 for Bury Drop-In Centre.

Maz Callaby

Wonder Club

Story
Wondering
Craft
Prayer
Cake



St Lawrence
Lackford

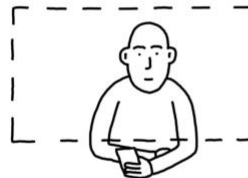
7th September
3pm

THE ONLINE MEETING

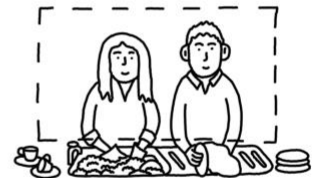
APPEARANCE



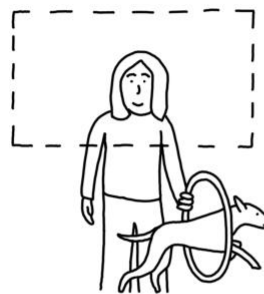
REALITY



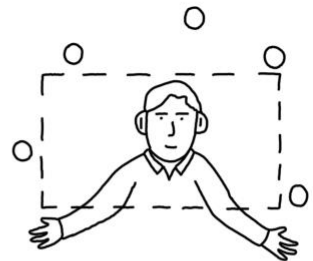
FOLLOWING
TWITTER AND/OR
THE FOOTBALL



HOUSEHOLD
CHORES



TRAINING
ANIMALS



CIRCUS SKILLS
(BASIC)

CartoonChurch.com

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*We also have assistance from priests within
the benefice who have permission to officiate.*

Please don't forget ...

to let Julie Hooton NBTLVB@outlook.com

and the 'Viral Bulletin' adrian.mann@btinternet.com

have news and details of events which have happened
as well as events which are coming up at your church.

And your photographs are always welcome.