

Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry

# VIRAL BULLETIN

3<sup>rd</sup> March 2024

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent

*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](http://www.northburychurches.org.uk)



*River Lark in the Abbey Gardens*

*20<sup>th</sup> February*

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# 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent

Exodus 20.1-17   Psalm 19   I Corinthians 1.18-25   John 2.13-22

## Murder on the Dance Floor

The murder of Thomas Becket, that 'turbulent priest', saw Canterbury Cathedral become a place of pilgrimage, especially for those seeking healing miracles. The original shrine was destroyed during the Reformation; now a candle marks the spot. When I lived in Kent, I would go to the cathedral quite regularly and often prayed near that space with the solitary burning candle. Plenty of visitors still make their own pilgrimages of sorts, however recently the Anglican Mother Ship made news headlines for pulling in the punters in quite a different way: through a silent disco (as have other cathedrals too). And while no blood has been spilled, there has certainly been plenty of vitriol about such use of sacred space, with some going so far as to call it profane.

But look, it is nothing new under the sun. Rave in the Nave was prior to this in various places and contexts, and more recently helter-skelters, golf courses, and of course Dippy – the *Diplodocus* skeleton – have been placed in cathedrals (I saw Dippy at Norwich Cathedral and was quite charmed, but then I love dinosaurs...no, this is not a gag at the Rector's expense). Churches both grand and small host music concerts, plays, art exhibitions, quizzes, talks, films, wine tasting, beer festivals, ballet, and so on.

Personally, I don't agree with admission charges to enter a house of worship, but our precious buildings are costly to maintain, so if now and again, some creative bod dreams up an inventive use to raise a little cash then so be it. (And yes I know some cathedrals are charging for entrance as well as holding events - well, they receive a Paddington hard stare).

Some 'extra-curriculars' in churches/cathedrals are not to my taste, some are. I think this is at the heart of the complaints. We all have differing sensibilities and *whisper it*: under the ecclesiological veneer of the holy spaces discussion there is more than a whiff of distaste and snobbery. We don't complain about Mozart, but we do about Kylie? Hmmm...as the wristbands from a 90s church youth group might state: WWJD or What Would Jesus Do? Well, we can have a go at pondering it.

In today's Gospel, Jesus - just like many other Passover pilgrims - has journeyed to Jerusalem. This is the time for commemorating the Exodus: the liberation and escape of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. This is something to give thanks for and to celebrate and be blessed.

Now given the destination is Jerusalem, then the focal point for the feast is the temple, the sacred space where God dwells. The inner sanctum, the holy of holies, is the most sacred part of it and only the chief priest can enter inside there once a year. The pilgrims can move about the outer parts of the temple; this is where Jesus enters and is met by a sight that is not wholly unusual and is useful for enabling the worship: people selling cattle and sheep for the sacrificial offerings, doves for the same purpose albeit this is the poor option, and of course the money changers are sitting at their tables too swapping coins so that temple taxes can be paid. It is a noisy hubbub.

Is there corruption at work here? The account of this story in the other Gospels suggests such, for Jesus alludes to 'a den of robbers'. Here, in John's Gospel, it is not clear. Jesus reacts in a strong active manner both in words and deed. His actions are radical: imagine seeing him stringing together a cord and wielding it to drive out the animals. Witness the chaos of excited frightened sheep and cattle leaping here and there, people shouting and jumping out of the way, birds flapping out of cages, and the sound of coins tinkling and the thud of tables as they are flipped over. His emotions are real: 'Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!' No wonder it makes the disciples recall the words of Psalm 69, 'Zeal for your house will consume me.'

As Jesus's public ministry comes into being, the feathers of *some* of the religious authorities are being well and truly ruffled at the outset and it will continue in similar vein throughout this Gospel. Zeal is a passionate word and perhaps this points us right to Christ's Passion. In fact, this is where Jesus takes us next. In the temple the authorities ask Jesus for a sign. Of course, this is akin to putting God to the test – and remember Jesus has just revealed his status as the Son of God by talking about his 'Father's house'.

But signs and miracles are not produced on demand, they're a divine gift. Instead of a sign, Jesus gives them a confusing answer about the destruction of the temple and it being raised in three days. The leaders present take it literally - and comment on the temple being under construction for 46 years - rather than grasping this is about the person of Jesus. Now this is where we see the passage is straddling two time zones: Jesus currently cleanses the temple but also the passage refers to a time after Jesus's resurrection. You see - the last few verses explain to us, the readers - what Jesus meant by his words and how the disciples recalled this after Jesus was raised from the dead. Jesus spoke about 'the temple of his body'.

Back in the previous chapter in John's Gospel we heard that God pitched his tent among us, to dwell with us, to take on flesh. And here Christ references this: his body is where God is, where the divine dwells, the Incarnate Word. Wherever Jesus is is sacred space.

As an aside, I want to tread carefully here because it is too easy to fall into the replacement theology tropes, ie Jesus replaces the temple; over the years such tropes have played into anti-semitic thinking. It is more helpful to remember that Jesus is concerned about the happenings in the temple. For Jesus, the synagogue is still precious, it is still special – it is his Father's house, God's house. This is worth holding on to as we engage with our Jewish siblings and transformative readings of difficult texts.

Back to sacred spaces. These are places where you sense God's presence, the divine whispers, and holiness permeates the air. Places where the veil betwixt heaven and earth is gossamer thin. You may be drawn there for an obvious reason or just curiosity. These are important places. In the early centuries Christians gathered to worship in houses, in caves, underground, and then later - when persecutions stopped - in specific buildings for this purpose. Churches are sacred spaces, set apart for this purpose, a chance to 'kneel where prayer has been valid' (thank you, T. S. Eliot), to be in God's presence, to be restored.

I believe in a sacramentality of place; remember, sacraments are outward visible signs of inward invisible grace. Churches have a sacramental status in our communities, and they reveal something more: God is in this place, this village, this town. The buildings are holy, the body of Christ meets there, we find Christ in each other, in words of scripture, and in the bread and wine, his body and blood.

These buildings are there for everybody; they are for worship, yes – and due reverence is necessary. But within this, is being in the presence of the One who came to give us abundant life. The One who meets us in the everyday stuff and everyday places and encounters. Jesus works across the borders of holy and profane, sacred and secular. For this, Jesus took on flesh – to be with us wherever we are, however we are. As Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote,

‘...Christ plays in ten thousand places  
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his  
To the Father through the features of men's faces.’

Back to the question at hand: What Would Jesus Do? To paraphrase Rowan Williams: you get the impression that wherever there was the sound of a party, Jesus would be there. Would Jesus flip tables because of people dancing or engaging with art or pondering the interface of science and religion while gazing on a large fossil? Hmm. I don't think so.

I think Jesus just might flip tables because of the way we routinely fail to show hospitality in our churches, or the way we treat people because of colour or gender or sexuality. I think Jesus just might flip tables because we can't seem to treat each other with decency and kind words, and that we can't get our house in order around safeguarding and caring for those who have been abused.

As Christians, maybe we should think about how we are taking our eyes off the big things, the wider injustices in church and society, rather than wasting time being po-faced about a paltry disco. Flipping tables – metaphorically so – has a place but not because of dancing.

So, we hold the tension. The Word became flesh. Jesus points us to the presence of God in the everyday and ordinary as well as in the sacred and set apart. Whether you contemplate the murder of St Thomas of Canterbury amid the flickering glow of pilgrims' candles or are throwing shapes beneath colourful lights at Murder on the Dance Floor, the truth is God is there.

In the hallowed stones, in the reserved Sacrament, in the scriptures, of course, of course. But also in the very people moving around whether they are praying or pogo-ing. God has chosen to dwell with us and in taking on flesh means God is to be found in the tremendously holy and messy blur of the sacred and the secular.

Just on occasion, maybe God is a DJ.

Ali Miller

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## World Day of Prayer

## Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March

The theme of our World Day of Prayer service this year is *"I beg you, bear with one another in love."* It was written by a group of Palestinian Christian women, before the current conflict, and deals with their own personal experiences. Their hope was to encourage and inspire other women around the world to bear with one another in troubled times. As has often happened before, this year's service has been overtaken by a tragic set of events.

The Day of Prayer is celebrated in over 146 countries. It begins in Samoa and prayer in native languages travels throughout the world - through Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas before finishing in American Samoa some 38 hours later.

The services in the town this year are **10.30am at Garland Street Baptist Church**, Pump Lane, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 1HN and **7.30pm at the Quaker Meeting House**, St John's Street, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 1SJ. Everyone is welcome.

For further information and resources, together with details of other services in the area, see the WDP website: [wwdp.org.uk](http://wwdp.org.uk)

Claire Rose

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## Lark Valley and North Bury Churches

### SERVICES WEEK BEGINNING 3 MARCH

#### SUNDAY 3 March 3rd SUNDAY OF LENT

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

#### Tuesday 5 March

8.30am	Morning Prayer (CW)	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	Fornham St Martin
6.00pm	A Quiet Space	St John's, Bury St Edmunds

#### Wednesday 6 March

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

#### Thursday 7 March Perpetua, Felicity and companions, martyrs, 203

9.30am	Eucharist (BCP)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
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#### Friday 8 March Edward King, bishop, 1910; Felix, bishop, 747

*Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy, priest, poet, 1929*

5.30pm	Evening Prayer (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
6.00pm	Stations of the Cross	St John's, Bury St Edmunds

#### Saturday 9 March

10.00am	Lent Course: Bread of Life	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
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#### SUNDAY 10 March 4th SUNDAY OF LENT Mothering Sunday

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

#### LIVE-STREAMED WORSHIP

*The Parish Eucharist is usually live-streamed from St John's on Sundays at 11am on Facebook [@StJohnsBSE](https://www.facebook.com/StJohnsBSE) and later posted onto [www.northburychurches.org.uk](http://www.northburychurches.org.uk)*

# The Why? Who? How? and What? of Safeguarding

Valerie Wilde

## Why do Safeguarding training?

- To look out for ourselves and each other, to listen and talk to each other, passing on our concerns to the right people.
- To make and foster safe environments.
- To know what warning signs to be aware of relating to children, adults, the elderly, vulnerable people and visitors you may have in your church.
- To ensure that people in your parish are confident and supported in making decisions which may prevent harm occurring.

## Who needs to do the training?

- There are some roles in our churches where you must have the correct level of safeguarding training – your Parish Safeguarding Officer can tell you what these are. Everyone who is part of the church community would benefit from the training, not just members of the PCC or those with ‘jobs’ in church.
- You may think you know what to be aware of but there are many aspects of Safeguarding you may not have thought about.

## How do I do the training?

- Basic training will take just 1 1/2 hours of your time.
- You may access it on-line or face-to-face.
- It is easy to follow, interesting and thought provoking.

## What do I do next?

- Talk to the Parish Safeguarding Officer for your church for further information or for help with doing training on-line.
- All Saints & St George’s – Valerie Axton  
[valerie\\_axton@hotmail.com](mailto:valerie_axton@hotmail.com) Tel. 01284 747283
- St John’s – Valerie Wilde  
[wildev1953@gmail.com](mailto:wildev1953@gmail.com) Tel. 01284 767415
- The Lark Valley parishes – Sarah Cooledge  
[sarah@cooledges.plus.com](mailto:sarah@cooledges.plus.com) Tel. 07557 998384

# CAPTION COMPETITION RESULT



In the frame this week we find:

Something was definitely afoot.

*(Wide fitting required)*

Steve and Andy are rubbish at Hide and Seek.

*(Gina Robertson)*

'Don't worry, it's not bleeding too badly and we've called an ambulance. Just try not to move.'

*(Disqualified)*

A new and different competition this week!  
Whose legs are these?

*(Hugh Belsey)*

The auditions for Naked Attraction  
didn't quite go as planned.

*(Gina Robertson)*

'Can you take a peek and see how many have turned up Steve?'

'Why can't you look?'

'I would, but they terrify me.'

*(Julie Morrison)*

'Andy, I really don't think this is the  
Burton's changing room.'

*(Steve Robertson)*

And the choice of fairtrade wine or chocolate goes to:

I'd rather be the other side to see what is going on!

*(Penelope Carter)*

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LARK VALLEY NORTH BURY TEAM BENEFICE

## BREAD OF LIFE



GUEST BOOK



### BREAD OF LIFE

A 6 session course for Lent

Saturdays, 10am, St John's, Bury St Edmunds

17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> February

2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> March

Each session stands alone

For more info, phone Revd Ali Miller: 01284 728714

Bring your faith to life this Lent!

This year we are doing the **Bread of Life** course - six sessions all at 10am at St John's, Bury St Edmunds. Each session is stand-alone, so it's not an issue if people cannot make all of them. The course is free and open to everyone. We'll watch videos, listen to short talks, and have time for discussion with opening and closing prayers. We'll be looking at themes of togetherness, reconciliation, scripture, prayer, Christ's presence, and mission and how this relates to the Eucharist. It is a great way to deepen our faith!

*Ali Miller*

## The Wonder Club

Story  
Wondering  
Craft  
Prayer  
Cake



St  
Lawrence,  
Lackford  
3<sup>rd</sup> March  
3pm

## LENT LUNCH

WEDNESDAY 13TH  
MARCH

12.00 - 1.30PM

West Stow Church

IP28 6ET



**Soup, Rolls,  
Fruit, Tea,  
Coffee**



**Donations towards the  
Bishop's Kagera Fund**

# News from St George's

The Coffee Morning on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February raised £63.40 for the Bury Drop-In. Thank you to all the bakers and to all who came.

Val Gagen

## KIRBYE VOICES



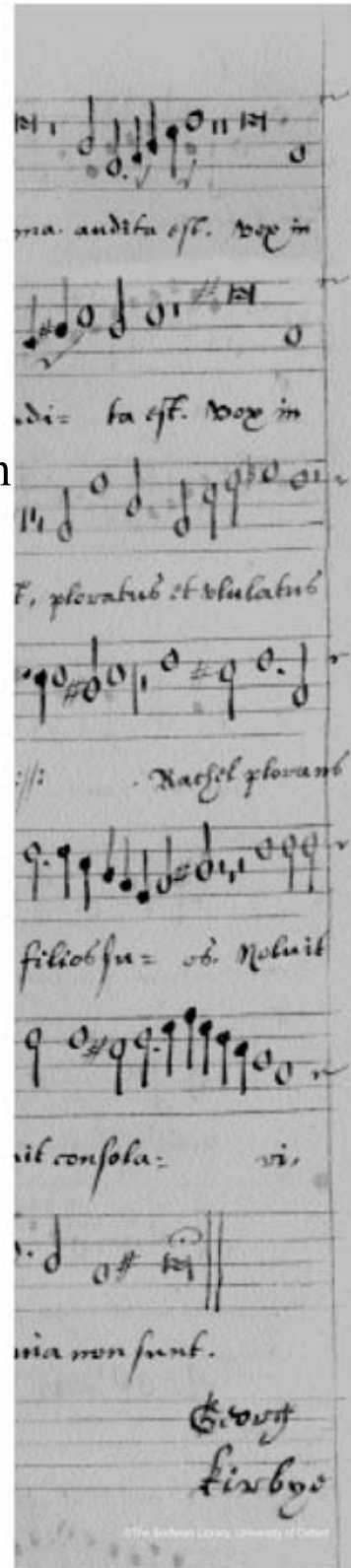
Reflective choral music with  
Kirbye Voices and friends

To include music by  
Purcell, Poulenc,  
Mozart and Elgar

Thursday 21 March, 7:30pm  
St John's Church  
St John's Street  
Bury St Edmunds  
IP33 1JY

Retiring collection

[www.kirbyevoices.org.uk](http://www.kirbyevoices.org.uk)



## Coming soon in the benefice ...

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March 12noon-2pm

### **Lent Lunch for the Bishops' Lent Appeal for Kagera**

at Duncliffe, next to the village hall in Culford

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 3pm

### **The Wonder Club** at St Lawrence's, Lackford

Stories ~ Wondering ~ Prayer ~ Craft ~ Cake

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 10-11.15am

### **First Tuesday Coffee Morning** at All Saints', Bury

Donations to the Bishops' Lent Appeal for Kagera

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 12noon-1.30pm

### **Lent Lunch for the Bishops' Lent Appeal for Kagera**

in St Mary's Church, West Stow IP28 6ET

Soup ~ rolls ~ fruit ~ tea ~ coffee

*Replaces the usual First Wednesday Coffee Morning.*

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March 3pm

### **Mead Singers' Passion Sunday Concert**

at St George's, Bury St Edmunds

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March 7.30pm

### **Reflective choral music with Kirbye Voices and friends**

at St John's, Bury St Edmunds

To include music by: Purcell ~ Poulenc ~ Mozart ~ Elgar

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## Contacts

Revd Dr Andy Miller .... 01284 728714

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Team Office ..... 01284 700400

[NBTLVB@outlook.com](mailto:NBTLVB@outlook.com)

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

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## Please don't forget ...

to let Julie Hooton [NBTLVB@outlook.com](mailto:NBTLVB@outlook.com)

and the 'Viral Bulletin' [adrian.mann@btinternet.com](mailto:adrian.mann@btinternet.com)

have details of events which have happened

and events which are coming up at your church.

And your photos are always welcome, jpeg or png format preferred.

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