

Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry

VIRAL BULLETIN

4 October 2026

18th Sunday after Trinity *Creationtide ends*

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



By the River Lark in Bury St Edmunds

In this issue:

18th Sunday after Trinity: Julia Mann * Worship this week * The Revd Mary Hall * Fr Raúl Arkaia * The Generosity of God * Have you seen? - two exhibitions * Special Harvest Caption Competition - Result * Praying Together ~ October 2026 * Football - Lessons the Church could learn: Dave Walker * Contacts * Events coming up

18th Sunday after Trinity

Isaiah 5.1-7 Psalm 80.8-16 Philippians 3.4b-14 Matthew 21.33-end

There's a lot going on this Sunday. We've been keeping the season of Creation, which ends today on the feast of Francis of Assisi – 4th October. This Sunday is also the one when several of our churches are celebrating their Harvest Thanksgiving services while others will mark Harvest next Sunday. The key to Harvest is the word 'Thanksgiving' for all the blessings and good things that God has given us.

God gives us gifts out of his love for humanity, not according to whether we deserve it or whether we have earned it. This means that when we look at the glory and blessings given to us in God's Creation we always need to remember that there should be sufficient resources for everyone.

So perhaps we need to focus more on Francis. He is a favourite saint. Many people have a statue of him in their gardens preaching to the birds as his love of the natural world is so well known. His Canticle of the Sun refers to particular parts of the natural world as Brother or Sister – such as Brother Fire and Sister Water. He therefore speaks of the sibling relationship of humanity with the natural world.

Francis was born in Italy in 1181 into a wealthy cloth merchant family and it was expected that he would continue in the family business. His conversion to Christ followed a time when he was captured during the war between Assisi and Perugia. One day as he prayed in St Damian's church in Assisi he heard a voice telling him to 'go and repair my church which is falling down.' Francis sold some of his father's goods and started to repair the little church and this led to estrangement from his family.

Then he began to live very simply and so others were drawn to this life of poverty, repentance and preaching the gospel. In due course this way of life became the Franciscan order with its focus on Christ crucified. The ethos of simplicity, love for the natural world and devotion to Christ continues in the Franciscan way of living the religious life. There are Anglican Franciscan communities for women and men – as well as the third order for anyone drawn to the Franciscan ethos but who is not a friar or a sister.

Perhaps we all need to learn something of the simplicity of Francis and of the simplicity of life that Franciscans – and indeed all of us – should aspire to follow. Our reading from the letter to the Philippians tells us how Paul had all the advantages of an educated, confident Jew of the time. He had everything going for him and had once felt it was his duty to try to stop the followers of Christ from proclaiming the good news of Jesus. But now he says that all these advantages were rubbish compared with the ‘surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.’ Both Paul and Francis experienced suffering because of their devotion to Christ.

In our gospel reading Jesus seems to have our reading from Isaiah in mind as the vineyard is often used as a symbol for the people of Israel. Jesus points out that the bad tenants of the vineyard will be ejected by God the land-owner, and new tenants put in. The vineyard represents the kingdom of God and we, who are God’s current tenants, are reminded that we are to be ‘a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom.’

The Franciscan call to simplicity and seeking first God’s kingdom still applies to us – especially when we contemplate the climate emergency. Our own demanding consumerism can mean that someone else in our world has to go without. Climate change affects many Christians all around the world, especially in places where there is poverty and little or no assistance from their governments. If Creation is plundered by some individuals and nations, it is the poor and marginalised who must bear the bad effects of climate change, changing weather patterns and relentless economic hardship.

So, as we try to follow Jesus – and Francis – in reassessing our lives, perhaps we should focus on examining how we live, what we eat and how we travel, and seek to disentangle ourselves from the burden of longing to possess things. In this way, we may grow in our fidelity to Christ in Creation and follow in the footsteps of Francis.

Such was the humility of Francis and his devotion to the crucified Christ that, towards the end of his life, he received the stigmata, the marks of the wounds of Christ on the cross, on his body. He died 800 years ago, in the evening of 3rd October 1226.

Julia Mann

Lark Valley and North Bury Churches

SERVICES WEEK BEGINNING 4 OCTOBER

SUNDAY 4 October 18th Sunday after Trinity *Creationtide ends*

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	Harvest Thanksgiving Eucharist (CW)	West Stow
10.00am	All Age Harvest Thanksgiving	Fornham All Saints
11.00am	Sung Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
3.00pm	Wonder Club Harvest Thanksgiving	Lackford

Monday 5 October

Tuesday 6 October William Tyndale, translator, martyr, 1536

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

Wednesday 7 October

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 8 October

9.30am	Eucharist (CW)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
6.00pm	Adoration and Benediction	St John's, Bury St Edmunds

Friday 9 October Denys, bishop, and companions, martyrs, c250

Robert Grosseteste, bishop, philosopher, scientist, 1253

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

Saturday 10 October Paulinus, bishop, missionary, 644

Thomas Traherne, poet, spiritual writer, 1674

SUNDAY 11 October 19th Sunday after Trinity

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Culford
8.00am	Harvest Thanksgiving Communion (BCP)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Harvest Thanksgiving Eucharist (CW)	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Harvest Thanksgiving Eucharist (CW)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	Fornham St Martin
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	Lackford
11.00am	Harvest Thanksgiving Eucharist (CW) <i>& lunch</i>	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
3.00pm	Harvest Thanksgiving w. Salvation Army Band	St George's, Bury St Edmunds



The Revd Mary Hall

This photograph, kindly provided by Gail Bate, shows (third from the left) the Revd Mary Hall, who died peacefully at her care home in Scotland on 18th September. Prior to her marriage to the Revd Professor Stuart Hall and her move to Scotland, she was known to many of us as the Revd Mary Elliott. *Gail comments:* 'I know that we all remember her with great respect for her wisdom and service in the Lark Valley.'

Mary's funeral will be held on Friday October 2nd at 2pm and is to be live-streamed. The link is www.westreamitfunerals.co.uk/hallm

More about Fr Raúl Arkaia

Fr Raúl Arkaia is a Navarrese (Basque) priest born at the foot of the Pyrenees, who will be with us on placement from 11 October to 22 November. He was ordained at St Edmundsbury Cathedral, as a deacon in June 2024 and as a priest in June 2025.



Currently Fr Raúl ministers across villages in the Forest Heath area, including at All Saints', Gazeley, and St Mary's, Kentford. He is a Companion of the Oratory of the Good Shepherd.

Fr Raúl worked as a journalist in Spain before moving into ministry, holding a BA in journalism from the University of Navarra in Pamplona. He earned a BA in Theology from Vitoria-Gasteiz (Navarre) and an MA in Theological Ministry and Mission from Durham University.

Jesus, money and giving

Continuing our series of articles on Christian Giving

Last week we thought about the generosity of God and how that flows out to us in Creation and in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ - the word made flesh. God's giving underwrites our gratitude, thanksgiving and generosity. Now we consider some of what Jesus himself had to say about money and about the place of generosity in our lives.

But firstly we must heed a warning. We must beware the danger of subscribing to the false idea that money is an 'unspiritual' subject, and that it's not quite nice for Christians to talk about it. That idea is dualist nonsense, pitching the spiritual against the material, whereas in fact, as William Temple pointed out, Christianity is in fact the most 'material' of religions: in Jesus's Incarnation the spiritual and material meet and become one. The word became flesh and dwelt among us.

Material things, including money, should therefore be 'home turf' for Christians. We should not be surprised that Jesus actually talked about money quite a lot. Nor that he thought we should use it to express the living-out of our faith in our lives.

BUT, as Jesus well knew, money is a very serious power in our lives, and it can lead us to deceive ourselves about what our priorities really are, which is why he spoke about it so much.

This can come in the form of a warning - the story of the rich young man and the following discourse about the danger of riches appear in all three synoptic gospels (*Mark 10.17-27, etc*). We find the similarly trenchant parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke (*16.19-31*).

Or it can come in the form of a celebration, as in the story of the call of Levi and the following feast attended by Jesus at Levi's table (*Luke 5.27-32*) or as in Jesus's encounter with Zacchaeus (*Luke 19.1-10*).

It has often struck me that Zacchaeus was taking a bit of a risk by saying that he would give half his property to the poor and also reimburse fourfold any profits he had made from cheating. That sum could very easily have led to a

minus figure on the bottom line. Jesus says different things to different people according to their circumstances. He calls for different outcomes from different characters.

But the underlying message is always the same: "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Our money, and what we do with it, is an attitude signifier. Gaining, saving, spending. What we spend it on, where we give it out, says a lot about where we stand and what is important to us.

There's an old story about a man approaching the pearly gates, clutching his well-thumbed Bible and a disintegrating prayer book as evidence of his piety. St Peter, however, asks to have a quick flick through his bank and credit card details instead.

Is that a test we would pass? We can never match the generosity of God, but our lives and actions should reflect that generosity to those around us. Do we reflect the generosity of God in what we do with our money?

Adrian Mann

Canon John Parr to Visit the Holy Land



Bethlehem Bible College

Canon John Parr, who has served the Diocese for more than 25 years in parish (including a time as Team Rector in the North Bury Team), Cathedral and ministry development roles, is preparing to visit the Holy Land next week.

John previously visited Israel and Palestine with the Amos Trust in 2022, meeting families, farmers and community projects supporting people affected by conflict and injustice. He was deeply moved by the hospitality, faith and resilience he encountered.

This year, through connections with Bethlehem Bible College and local Christian leaders, John will spend eight days visiting Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Ramallah and Nazareth. His aim is to listen to and learn from Holy Land Christians, hearing their experiences and exploring how faith in Jesus shapes their commitment to justice, peace and reconciliation.

The visit will contribute to a book John is writing on Jesus and the continuing impact of his presence in the land where he lived and ministered. He asks for prayers for those he will meet and looks forward to sharing what he learns with churches across the Diocese on his return. John said: "Most important for me is to listen to and learn from Holy Land Christians, so that when I return home I can share their stories".

Contacts

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Revd Ali Miller	01284 728714	teamvicarlvnb@btinternet.com
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We also have assistance from our Curate, Jonathan Boast, our Assistant Priest, Sarah Gull, and 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, but please don't forget to ask permission of those who may therefore appear in the Viral Bulletin.

Read on in the online edition for events coming up

The Wonder Club

Story
Wondering
Craft
Prayer
Cake



St Lawrence
Lackford
Sunday
4th October
at 3pm

The Mead Singers

— featuring —

The Young Meads

Thankyou for the Music

Thursday 1st October
Thetford Methodist Church
7.30pm

Monday 5th October
Culford Village Hall
7.30pm

Tuesday 6th October
Beck Row Methodist Church
7.30pm



Coffee Morning

Donations to



Tuesday 6th October

10:00 - 11:15 am

Coffee or tea, cake and chat

All Saints Church

All Welcome

Lark Valley & North Bury Team Ministry

www.northburychurches.org.uk

As part of Hospice Care Week, join us 8 October 2026



We invite members of faith communities to a welcoming space drop in session

Do come along and find out more about how we serve our community.

We would love to meet you on the 8 October in The Garden Room, St Nicholas Hospice Care from 2pm – 4:30pm.
Refreshments provided on the day



*because
you matter*

**St Nicholas
Hospice Care**

A Registered Charity No. 287773

Please e-mail education@stnh.org.uk or call 01284 766133 if you would like to book in to attend this session, alternatively do drop in on the day.



St Nicholas Hospice Care, Hardwick Lane,
Bury St Edmunds, IP33 2QY.

St. John the Evangelist
Bury St Edmunds IP33 1SN

Lark Valley and North Bury Churches

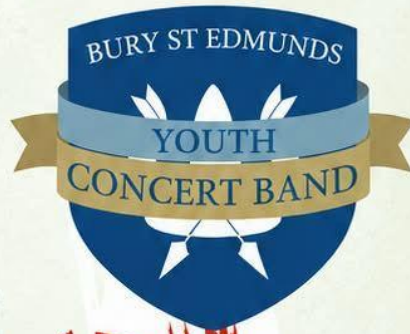
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction



Thursday
8th October

6pm

for half an hour



Proms

at All Saints

Saturday 10th October 2026

All Saints Church, Park Road,
Bury St Edmunds

Concert starts at 6:30pm

Tickets available on the door
£5 Adults | £2.50 Under 16's

Refreshments available
Including Apple Pie, Cakes and drinks

*Come along and enjoy an evening of
wonderful entertainment!*

*St John's Church invites you
to join us for our*

HARVEST FESTIVAL LUNCH

from 12.15pm on Sunday 11 October

Our I Am Sung Eucharist with harvest hymns is followed by a parish lunch featuring a chance to sample local produce sourced from the shops of St John's Street and other local outlets.



*Any gifts should be non-perishable,
please, for Lucy Adams House*

- * Dried foods - pasta, rice or noodles
- * Tinned goods - beans, tuna, fruit, tinned meats
- * Hot beverages - coffee, hot chocolate, sugar (*few tea drinkers*)

All are welcome



ST GEORGE'S CHURCH

Anselm Avenue, IP32 6JZ

**issues a warm welcome to you all
to join us on**

**SUNDAY 11th OCTOBER at 3.00pm
at our**

HARVEST FESTIVAL

featuring the



**NORTON
SALVATION ARMY
BAND**

~

tea and cakes to follow

**There will be a collection of non-perishable tinned food,
packets of cereal, rice, pasta etc. and essential toiletries
like soap or toothpaste and so on.**

~

Your welcome gifts will go to local food banks