

Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry

VIRAL BULLETIN

19 December 2021 Advent Christmas Epiphany

Please forward this to anyone you know who might not be in our Google group.
For links to information about us please visit: www.northburychurches.org.uk



Ivory Panels, c1280-1300, Calouste Gulbenkian Collection, Lisbon

Iain McKillop

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4th Sunday of Advent 2021

Micah 5.2-5a Hebrews 10.5-10 Luke 1.39-55

When was the last time you did any leaping I wonder?

For some of us it may be quite some while ago ... maybe so long ago that you can't remember even! But maybe some of you can remember hearing some joyful news and then you might have leapt for joy? I'm sure I've done a bit of leaping about, when I've heard the news of a new grandchild.

In our gospel reading today, we hear that the baby in her womb leapt for joy when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting. Mary had gone to visit Elizabeth, who was her older cousin.

Now today on the 19th December is just 5 days before Christmas Eve, and Jesus has yet to be born. And so we must still wait and perhaps wonder. We may wonder about the world that Jesus has already made his own, within Mary's womb.

John Pridmore talks of Elizabeth's exultation, as being like a window on that world. Her unborn son, the boy they will call the Baptist, leaps for joy when Mary, the mother of his Lord, greets her. This is the joy which everyone will have when the Messiah comes.

We don't know what was in Mary's heart or mind, as she made her hurried way to Elizabeth. She was no doubt taken up with the excitement and the shock of what was to happen to her.

The prophet Micah talks about a shepherd king who will arise from an obscure village and establish another kingdom. When she who is in labour has brought forth ... it is from an unexpected source that a new thing comes. From the unknown and un-named, and seemingly insignificant, will come a new birth and a new kingdom. Had Mary heard of this prophecy I wonder?

She may not have related it to herself ... but she must have been perplexed at finding herself in such a situation. She must have wondered if she would be able to cope. Was she equal to the challenge of such a wonderful and terrifying vocation?

But she had been caught up within God's drama ... finding her life turned upside-down ... or perhaps the right way up ... Tom Wright describes her as being 'gripped at the heart with God's mysterious presence, feeling the warm

breath of his love, discovering a sense of direction, to which ... [she] ... has no choice but to be obedient.'

She accepts God's will ... even though it may be difficult ... she is completely willing for God to use her life. But her life has been truly turned around ... God's spirit has changed her from being an insignificant girl ... to become the mother of the Messiah!

God's spirit can change us too.....if we are open to his call.

Can we be receptive, like Mary, so that the things of God can come to birth within us? Are we open to the spirit working in our lives?

Some of you may have heard of the charity, Toy Box ... I have a brightly coloured stole purchased from their sales catalogue. They help street children in South America. A little while ago I had a letter from them which was printed upside-down. The headings and the pictures were one way round and the writing was upside-down.

It certainly made you look at it properly ... it was a good sales gimmick! But it also said something about longing to turn Christmas upside-down. To forget the commercialism, and to recapture the meaning of a very special celebration. To try to turn life upside-down for the street children ... by helping them out this Christmas.

But it is the love of Jesus working in us, which will eventually succeed in turning the world upside-down. As it says in one of Patrick Appleford's hymns:

O Lord, all the world belongs to you,
and you are always making all things new,
what is wrong, you forgive, and the new life you give,
is what's turning the world upside-down.

Mary's world has been turned upside-down, and in her wonder at being chosen to be the mother of the Messiah, she praises God. Her song, the Magnificat, praises the God of surprises, who turns the world, and its ways, upside-down!

Mary's song anticipates a great concern for social justice in Luke's gospel. Luke frequently displays Jesus' actions on behalf of the poor, the sick, the rejected and the insignificant.

But in his second book, the Acts of the Apostles Luke doesn't show the church campaigning for social justice as part of its response to the love of Jesus. No, instead, Luke points to the changed character in which the power of the good news is seen ... He shows us people full of the Holy Spirit, responding to the love of God.

Are we in the Lark Valley and North Bury churches ready to respond to God's love with new love, new patience, new boldness, new joy and wisdom ... all through the power and presence of the Spirit of Jesus at work within us? This is what will change the world and turn it upside-down.

Like Elizabeth, we may feel that something is leaping within us, so that we may truly know the presence of Jesus among us, which could become, once more, the signal, and the means of fresh vocation, obedience, hope and joy this Christmastime.

A very Blessed and Happy Christmas wish to you all!
Val Gagen



Maz Callaby writes:

Here is a photo of St George's Candlelit Carols and Readings 2021, covid version. We followed our traditional format of traditional readings and amusing readings. Everyone sang with masks on and numbers were limited. Afterwards we spoiled ourselves with mince pies and Jim's delicious mulled wine.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from St George's.

SERVICES IN ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

4th Sunday of Advent 19 December O Radix Jesse (O Root of Jesse)

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Lackford
8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Parish Communion (CW)	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
10.00am	Christingle	West Stow
10.00am	Parish Eucharist (CW)	Fornham All Saints
10.30am	Family Service	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
11.00am	* Parish Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
3.00pm	Nine Lessons and Carols	Timworth
5.00pm	Nine Lessons and Carols	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds

Monday 20 December O Clavis David (O Key of David)

Tuesday 21 December O Oriens (O Morning Star)

8.30am	Morning Prayer (CW)	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
6.00pm	A Quiet Space	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
7.00pm	Nine Lessons and Carols	Fornham St Martin

Wednesday 22 December O Rex Gentium (O King of the nations)

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 23 December O Emmanuel (O God with us)

9.30am	Eucharist (CW)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
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Friday 24 December CHRISTMAS EVE

3.00pm	Chocolate Nativity and Crib Service (please book with Val Gagen - 01284 361963 - 07874 067371 - rev.valgagen@gmail.com)	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
3.30pm	Crib Service	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
4.00pm	With much regret, the Crib Service at Fornham St Martin has had to be cancelled.	
4.00pm	Crib Service	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
11.30pm	Midnight Mass	Fornham All Saints
11.30pm	Midnight Mass	West Stow
11.30pm	Midnight Mass	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
11.30pm	* Midnight Mass	St John's, Bury St Edmunds

Saturday 25 December CHRISTMAS DAY

8.00am	Christmas Day Eucharist (BCP)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Christmas Day Eucharist (BCP)	Timworth
9.30am	Christmas Day Eucharist (CW)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
10.00am	Christmas Day Eucharist (CW)	Lackford
10.00am	Christmas Day Eucharist (CW)	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
10.30am	Christmas Day Eucharist (CW)	Fornham St Martin
10.30am	Christmas Day Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds

Sunday 26 December St Stephen deacon, first martyr

11.00am	Team Sung Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
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Monday 27 December St John Apostle and Evangelist

10.00am	* Patronal Festival Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
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Tuesday 28 December The Holy Innocents

6.00pm	Solemn Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
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Lark Valley and North Bury Churches

SERVICES IN CHRISTMAS & EPIPHANY

Wednesday 29 December Thomas Becket, archbishop, martyr

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

Thursday 30 December

9.30am Eucharist (CW) All Saints', Bury St Edmunds

Friday 31 December John Wyclif, reformer

7.30am Eucharist (CW) St John's, Bury St Edmunds

Saturday 1 January Naming and Circumcision of Jesus

11.00am Solemn Eucharist (CW) St John's, Bury St Edmunds

Sunday 2 January The Epiphany (transferred)

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
9.30am Parish Communion (BCP) Timworth
9.30am Parish Communion (CW) St George's, Bury St Edmunds
9.30am Parish Communion (CW) All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
10.00am Eucharist West Stow
10.00am worship@fornham Fornham All Saints
11.00am * Parish Eucharist (CW) St John's, Bury St Edmunds

Tuesday 4 January

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 5 January

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 6 January

9.30am Eucharist (BCP) All Saints', Bury St Edmunds

Friday 7 January

7.30am Eucharist (CW) St John's, Bury St Edmunds

Sunday 9 January Baptism of Christ

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 * Parish Eucharist (CW) St John's, Bury St Edmunds
11.00am Zoom Service Please email clairerose1953@gmail.com to receive the link.
6.30pm Team Epiphany Carols St John's, Bury St Edmunds

LIVE-STREAMED WORSHIP

* indicates that the **Eucharist** is live-streamed from St John's on Facebook [@StJohnsBSE](https://www.facebook.com/StJohnsBSE) and is later posted onto our website www.northburychurches.org.uk

CHURCH on ZOOM

Our **Zoom Service** is at 11am on the second Sunday each month. Link from clairerose1953@gmail.com

The Holy Innocents (Refugee)

Poet and priest **Malcolm Guite** writes:

'The fourth day of Christmas, is the feast day of the Holy Innocents. It is the day the Church remembers the story, told in Matthew's Gospel of the appalling cruelty and wickedness of Herod in ordering the massacre of innocent children, in a bid to



protect his own power-base. Appalling, but only too familiar. What Herod did then, is still being done by so many present day Herods. This scarred and wounded world is the world into which Jesus was born, the world he came to save, and amongst those brought by his blood through the grave and gate of death and into the bliss of Heaven are those children of Bethlehem who died for his name without ever knowing him. But he knows them, as he

knows and loves every child in Syria, and he says of them, to every Herod, 'Whatsoever ye do unto the least of these, ye do it unto me.'

We think of him as safe beneath the steeple,
Or cosy in a crib beside the font,
But he is with a million displaced people
On the long road of weariness and want.
For even as we sing our final carol
His family is up and on that road,
Fleeing the wrath of someone else's quarrel,
Glancing behind and shouldering their load.
Whilst Herod rages still from his dark tower
Christ clings to Mary, fingers tightly curled,
The lambs are slaughtered by the men of power,
And death squads spread their curse across the world.
But every Herod dies, and comes alone
To stand before the Lamb upon the throne.

From *Sounding the Seasons: Seventy Sonnets for the Christian Year*
by Malcolm Guite, published by Canterbury Press Norwich

Don't believe the migration myths

The UK should not abandon its obligations to refugees, argues *Church Times* columnist **Paul Vallely**

IT IS one way of drawing attention to yourself, I suppose. The *Times* columnist and former Conservative MP, Matthew Parris, has proposed that Britain should abandon its assent to the Geneva Convention as it relates to refugees. It was designed for a temporary resettlement programme after the Second World War, he suggests, and is not appropriate for today's seemingly unending migrant crisis.

Mr Parris bases his argument on the supposition that the British, like all island peoples, will always take a hard line against settlers arriving uninvited in boats. This supposed fact is underscored by the fact that the number of people who have illegally crossed the Channel this year is ten times the number who arrived in 2019. To defend territory against intruders is an animal impulse that cannot be ignored, he opines.

There are many myths about immigration put about by politicians seeking votes or readers. Prime among these is the idea that there are a few genuine refugees escaping persecution, but a flood of what Mr Parris calls "chancers" who have come to steal our jobs.

What gives the lie to this commonplace is the fact that almost 75 per cent of these illegal immigrants eventually have their applications of political asylum approved by the Home Office. About two-thirds of them are fleeing conflict and persecution in Iran, Syria, Iraq, Sudan, and Eritrea. Among Syrians, 88 per cent are granted asylum or leave to remain, as are 80 per cent of those fleeing Eritrea.

Then there is the idea that all migrants want to come to Britain.

Again, not true. France accepted 150,000 asylum-seekers last year, in comparison with just 30,000 in the UK — perhaps because, contrary to the



myth that Britain offers more generous benefits, payments in France are higher. France also allows asylum-seekers to find jobs, unlike British politicians who enforce idleness on them.

Another myth is that French politicians allow an unobstructed tide of migrants to cross the English Channel in flimsy boats. The reality is that co-operation is good between Britain and France behind the scenes; it is only in public that our Government seeks to cover the failures of Brexit with belligerent Francophobic bombast.

But the greatest myth is the idea that the British are hostile to strangers. That is not the story told by the piles of shoes and clothing provided by the people of Manchester when Afghan refugees arrived here after the fall of Kabul with only the clothes they stood up in. *(To which we could add the work carried out by Suffolk Refugee Support here in Suffolk, including Bury St Edmunds.)*

The recent tragic deaths of 27 people in the Channel have given a human face to the problem. The young man who braved the deadly waters to earn money for his sister's medical treatment; the bride hoping for a surprise reunification with her husband; the family who received a voice message asking "just pray for us" — all these force us to stop seeing "migrants" and start seeing people.

Matthew Parris is wrong. It is not the Geneva Convention that is our source of inspiration: it is a basic British decency rooted in two millennia of Christianity which tells us that there, but for the grace of God, go we.

And that is a realisation to which we can never abandon our assent.

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Lark Valley and North Bury Churches

Praying Together - January 2022

For the wider community and church

- 1 S For all affected by coronavirus

- 2 S The town centre shops
- 3 M Moyse's Hall Museum
- 4 T The Apex venue & The Arc shopping centre
- 5 W St Edmundsbury Cathedral
- 6 T St Edmund's Place sheltered housing
- 7 F Northgate Lodge sheltered housing
- 8 S Cryspen Court sheltered housing

- 9 S The housing, shops and businesses in and around St John's Street
- 10 M The Society of Friends
- 11 T The Salvation Army
- 12 W St John's church
- 13 T *Growing in God* worship, work & witness at St John's
- 14 F The Centre in St John's Street
- 15 S The Old School Café at Just Traid

- 16 S King Edward VI School
- 17 M St Edmundsbury CEVAP School
- 18 T Sexton's Manor School, our *Open the Book* ministry there
- 19 W Thingoe Lodge sheltered housing
- 20 T All who live in Fornham All Saints
- 21 F Fornham All Saints church
- 22 S *Growing in God* worship, work & witness at Fornham All Saints

- 23 S Fornham All Saints Centre for Creative Learning
- 24 M Fornham All Saints Community Centre
- 25 T Fornham All Saints Village Hall
- 26 W Heath Farm Business Centre
- 27 T For all refugees & asylum seekers; Suffolk Refugee Support
- 28 F For all who belong to other faiths
- 29 S For those facing religious persecution

- 30 S For increased understanding between members of different faiths
- 31 M For those with no faith



LIVING IN LOVE & FAITH

A five-session course to be held at
The Church Institute, Gt Barton IP31 2RG
Wednesdays at 7.30pm
12, 19, 26 January, 2, 9 February 2022

Facilitated by Rev Canon Sharon Potter (Diocesan Advocate for LLF) and Mr John Dixon (Lay Chair, Thingoe Deanery)

To book a place contact:

Rev Canon Sharon Potter – revsharon2@gmail.com or
telephone: 01284 828599 / 07825 086063 by 23/12/2021

Course booklets can be downloaded
at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/living-love-and-faith>
or hard copy: £5 (please indicate when booking if required)

‘Our experiences, learning and discernment will be gathered, listened to and reflected on by bishops together with members of General Synod, as they discern the way forward for the Church of England regarding questions of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage’

St John's Kneelers

Great sewing progress has been made by the children from Westley School. Each group has been to approximately seven sessions and most children have cross-stitched one complete side. Some have started stitching the picture on the top of the kneeler.



They are pleased with their achievements and will return at the start of the new term to continue with the project.

Valerie Wilde



The severe crisis in Afghanistan is pushing 8 million people to the brink of famine. In this freezing winter, vulnerable women, men and children urgently need your help.

Families are struggling to survive.

Will you take a church collection to help our sisters and brothers?

For many years, I've been working on Christian Aid's response to emergencies, and this is one of the gravest humanitarian crises I have ever seen. My colleague in Afghanistan reports that "We are witnessing suffering like never before". That's why we're joining forces with DEC charities to respond to this disaster. With your help, together we can save lives now.

Right now, we're working tirelessly with our longstanding local partners in Afghanistan to be ready to support people of all faiths and none. We're acting fast to bring emergency food, hygiene kits and shelter to vulnerable people, especially women and girls who are most at risk.

But we need your help.

If we don't act now, many lives will be lost in this freezing winter.

With sincere thanks

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Mosselmans".

christianaid.org.uk

Michael Mosselmans Head of Humanitarian Christian Aid

Coming up ...

JANUARY

Saturday 1

ST JOHN'S, BURY ST EDMUNDS

Naming and Circumcision of Jesus - Solemn Eucharist 11am

Sunday 9

ST JOHN'S, BURY ST EDMUNDS

Benefice Epiphany Carol Service 6.30pm

NOSTALGIA CORNER



Pre-viral Midnight Mass at St John's

Don't forget to let

Julie Hooton - NBTLVB@outlook.com and the

'Viral Bulletin' - adrian.mann@btinternet.com

have details of forthcoming events at your church.

We send to all our readers best wishes for a safe and very **Happy and Holy Christmas.**