

Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry

VIRAL BULLETIN

20 July 2025

5th 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



Peacock butterfly near the River Lark in Bury St Edmunds

1 July 2025

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5th Sunday after Trinity

Genesis 18.1-10a Psalm 15 Colossians 1.15-28 Luke 10.38-end

Speaking, as I do, as one of nature's Marthas, my initial reaction is to feel that this passage from Luke is a bit hard on her. Why should Mary loll around while Martha does all the work? So unfair!

Let's think first about the famous ancient story about God's visit to Abraham at the oaks of Mamre. Abraham is also lolling about - it's hot (we know what that can be like) and he's sitting in the shade at the entrance of his tent. He looks up, and sees three men standing nearby.

Rapidly he switches from Mary-mode to Martha-mode. In spite of the heat, he rushes out straight away to greet them as his guests. His deep bow is not necessarily adoration. It is a sign of respect, part of a great tradition of hospitality, arising out of a nomadic culture, crucial in a terrain and climate which could be hostile and austere. You offer the stranger hospitality - for otherwise s/he may die. So Abraham offers his guests water, the washing of feet, some bread.

So far so good. Now let's notice the strangenesses about this story.

Well, it's striking that we're told that, in all of this, God is appearing to Abraham. Is God one of the three men, or present in all three of them?

Notice how, although there are *three* figures, Abraham addresses them in the singular. 'My Lord' he says. But we are told that *they* reply - that's plural. Is Abraham addressing just one of them when he uses the singular? Or is he addressing *all three* as one? It's no wonder this text has often been used by the Christian Church to speak of the Trinity.

And notice how, although Abraham's offer is simply a little water and a little bread, we find this to be a huge understatement when we are told what he does next. He goes into supercharged Martha-mode. Issuing orders for making cakes. Having a calf slaughtered, prepared and cooked for his guests.

I don't know about you, but this doesn't sound to me like a quick process. It's hardly a quick snack and 'on your way'. Does Abraham know he is dealing with God? Or is it just *us*, those hearing the story, who know?

As a good host, Abraham attends his guests while they eat. Not joining in the meal with them, he waits patiently for them to finish. Attentive conversation is also a part of hospitality, and they initiate it. Strikingly they ask after Sarah, who is inside and unseen, but lurking closely enough to hear what is going on, and they tell Abraham she will bear a son.

When Jesus arrives in their village, Martha welcomes him into her home. The events that follow are a sort of acted parable on the theme of hospitality ... with Martha seemingly bustling about doing this and that and Mary just sitting there doing nothing. Nothing, that is, but listen.

It's a brief story, with plenty of space for us to fill in the details if we want. Are Mary and Martha the sort of couple who both say they'd like the other one to be different but really need things to be the way they are? Does Martha enjoy having a whinge, to the point of lumbering an important guest with the minor irritations of her relationship with her sister? Even asking that guest to adjudicate on her behalf?

Notice the contrast between the way Martha speaks of Mary - rudely referring to her namelessly as 'my sister' - and Jesus's peace-making, but firm, reply: 'Martha, Martha ... '

We often think of the two sisters as exemplifying two contrasting ways of following Jesus - we might call them the contemplative and the activist - with Jesus coming down on the side of the contemplative.

But that is not entirely what Luke is trying to get across. He uses the same word for Martha's serving ('tasks' in our translation) that he uses when the first 7 deacons are appointed in the Acts of the Apostles. So he's not saying it's a bad thing to do.

It's more about the hospitality, the situation and due attentiveness to it. Jesus is there. Jesus is speaking. He is their guest. Mary is listening with full attention. But Martha is fussing about, even trying to suck Jesus into her grumpy mindset. It's clear who's got it right, as Jesus firmly points out. And, if we think about it, it's clear what the implications are for us.

We need to take time to be silent and attentive to Jesus. We need to give ourselves time to absorb what he has to say to us: in word and sacrament;

in the creation, which is God's primary word in action and the ground of our reality; in the writings of those who teach us about the faith; in our encounters, sometimes unexpected or surprising, with others.

Our prayer should not just, or even mainly, be like Martha: telling Jesus what we want him to do for us, as if he did not already know our needs. But it should involve simple and profound listening, like Mary, at Jesus's feet.

Particularly, we should also be attentive to him and absorb him in the Eucharist. The stories of Abraham by the oaks of Mamre and of Martha and Mary having Jesus as guest in their home come to us out of the ancient middle eastern tradition of hospitality. Martha had a bit to learn about the attentiveness of true hospitality.

Jesus uses that tradition of table fellowship as a focal point of his ministry. Eating and drinking with all sorts and conditions, even ... especially ... with those who were outcast, rejected or despised.

Today he offers us that hospitality taken to its ultimate conclusion in the sacrament of the Eucharist, where he calls us to him, where he is really present for us and allows us to absorb him into ourselves.

We must sit at his feet, pay full attention ... and listen.

Adrian Mann



Lark Valley and North Bury Churches

SERVICES WEEK BEGINNING 20 JULY

SUNDAY 20 July 5th 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	Matins (BCP)	Timworth
10.00am	Said Eucharist (CW) <i>gathering for breakfast at 9.15am</i>	West Stow
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	Fornham All Saints
10.30am	All Age Worship	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
11.00am	Sung Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds

Monday 21 July

Tuesday 22 July Mary Magdalene

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

Wednesday 23 July *Bridget abbess, 1373*

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 24 July

9.30am	Holy Communion (CW)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
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Friday 25 July James the Apostle

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

Saturday 26 July Anne and Joachim, parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary

SUNDAY 27 July 6th 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)	Fornham St Martin
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	Culford
11.00am	Sung Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
12 noon	Holy Communion (BCP)	Flempton

Thingoe Deanery Retreat Day ~ 3 July 2025

Gina Robertson

This year the Thingoe Deanery Day was held at Clare Priory. The theme was Celtic Spirituality, hosted by Archdeacon David. Archdeacon David's passion and enthusiasm for the subject drew you in.

I hadn't known there were already Christians in Ireland before St Patrick arrived. Palladius had been sent by Pope Celestine in 431 to minister to Irish Christians.

And speaking of Popes, a certain Fr Robert Prevost had spent time at Clare. There were black and white photos of visiting dignitaries with the future Pope. A smiling presence in the background, he wasn't the focus of the photo. I am sure there is a sermon in that!

The Irish Churches were modelled on the Temple of Jerusalem. There are low walls built to denote sacred ground rather than to physically protect the building. This made me think how we still use the idea of a wall or fence to separate the sacred today. In the Priory Garden there is a small churchyard fenced off with a chain. It would be easy to step over and go amongst the gravestones, but we don't. We respect the boundary.

The Romans never managed to get a foothold in Ireland, which is why their Church was different from the Anglian Church. The Archdeacon pointed out the strong links between Scotland and Ireland. I was shocked to learn Scotland derives from the Latin term Scoti which means Irishmen. I hadn't known the Irish had invaded Scotland.

We celebrated a Eucharist that used Celtic Prayers. The prayers were nature focused. The Penitence prayer lamented how we are so careless of the natural world. Clare Priory is Roman Catholic and I was touched that they were happy for us to celebrate Mass.

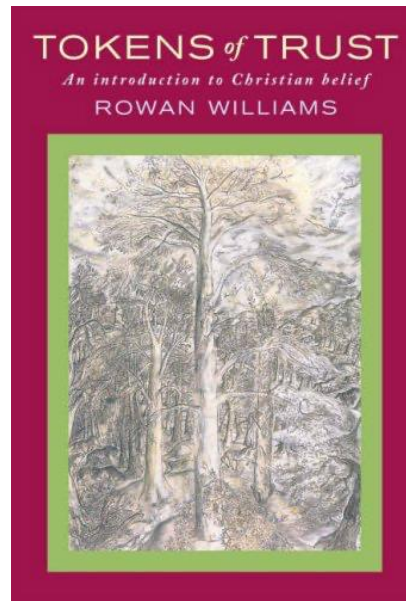
The 13th Century Priory is snuggled amongst beautiful gardens. It is a peaceful place teeming with tiny winged creatures. Full of little nooks to explore and benches to sit. If you ever get a chance to go there, seize the opportunity.

The Priory is holding a Craft Fair 12-13 July from 10:00-17:00. Although if you are travelling from Bury St Edmunds go via Long Melford - there are a lot of road closures around Clare!



Thanks to Gina Roberston for this photograph of a statue which stands in the gardens at Clare Priory. The title of the statue is a quote from ee cummings.

Summer Book Club



**2025 marks the 1700th anniversary of
the Nicene Creed.**

**It states what we believe as Christians –
but what is this?**

**Get a copy of *Tokens of Trust* by Rowan Williams and let's find
out together!**

Read the relevant chapter before each session.

Chapter 1 - 17th July - *Who Can We Trust?*

Chapter 2 - 24th July - *The Risk of Love*

Chapter 3 - 31st July - *A Man for all Seasons*

Chapter 4 - 7th August - *The Peace Dividend*

Chapter 5 - 14th August - *God in Company*

Chapter 6 - 21st August - *Love, Actually*

We will be meeting in Edmundo's, 7.30pm

To express interest, contact Revd Ali Miller

teamvicarlvnb@btinternet.com



Garden of Peace
Isaiah 32:14-18

PEACE WITH CREATION

SEASON OF CREATION 2025

The Season of Creation, from 1 September to 4 October, is an annual, ecumenical celebration of prayer and action for creation that Christians on six continents have commemorated for many years. It is a time to renew our relationship with our Creator and all creation through celebration, conversion, and commitment together. During the Season of Creation, we join our sisters and brothers in the ecumenical family in prayer and action for our common home.

Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I proclaimed 1 September as a day of prayer for creation for the Orthodox in 1989. In fact, the Orthodox church year starts on that day with a commemoration of how God created the world. The World Council of Churches was instrumental in making the special time a season, extending the celebration from 1 September until 4 October.

Following the leadership of Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I and the WCC, Christians worldwide have embraced the season as part of their annual calendar. Pope Francis established the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation in the Roman Catholic Church in 2015, and in 2019 started celebrating the Season of Creation as well.

In recent years, statements from religious leaders around the world have also encouraged the faithful to take time to care for creation during the month-long celebration. The season starts 1 September, the Day of Prayer for Creation, and ends 4 October, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology beloved by many Christian denominations. Throughout the season, the world's 2.2 billion Christians come together to care for our common home.

The official Season of Creation theme for 2025 is *Peace with Creation*.

arochoa.org.uk

CAPTION COMPETITION



Thanks to Margaret Steavenson for this photo of Alison and Carol at Timworth choosing CDs for hymns at a future service. A choice of fairtrade wine or chocolate awaits the person who can contribute the winning caption for it.

Please send your entries by Tuesday 22th July to the Viral Bulletin at adrian.mann@btinternet.com

Wonder Club

Story
Wondering
Craft
Prayer
Cake



St Lawrence,
Lackford

3rd August
3pm

From the Registers

Holy Baptism

15th June Jaxon and Ezmai

St George, Bury St Edmunds

29th June Carla Roche

St John the Evangelist, Bury St Edmunds

Holy Matrimony

7th June Hazel and Thomas Pumfrey

St Mary, Culford

21st June Eve and Liam Page

St Lawrence, Lackford

Wedding Blessing

6th June Grace and Harry Innes

St John Lateran, Hengrave

12th July Emily Rhodes and Aaron Mulford.

St John Lateran, Hengrave

Funerals

16th May Claire Pickering

St Catherine of Alexandria, Flempton
followed by burial in the churchyard

29th May Diana Bloomfield

West Suffolk Crematorium

26th June Margaret Gibbs

St Martin, Fornham St Martin
followed by burial in the churchyard

8th July Joanne Stibbards

both service and burial in
St Martin's churchyard

11th July Yvonne Beattie

All Saints, Fornham All Saints
followed by burial in the Fornham All Saints cemetery



CREAM TEA
on Saturday 9th August
from 3-5pm
in the Anselm Centre garden
IP32 6JZ

In aid of the
Bury Drop-In Centre and St George's Church



Everyone welcome
£6.00 per Adult £3.00 per child
To include scones, cream and jam
Unlimited tea, coffee or cold drink

To book your place contact either:

Wendy on 01284 768714 or

Maz on 01284 767758 or

Email: maz.callaby@btinternet.com

The poster features several decorative illustrations: a butterfly with orange and yellow wings in the top left; green leaves in the top right; a pink rose with green leaves in the bottom left; and a cluster of white and pink roses in the bottom right. The background is a light cream color with faint, larger-scale floral patterns.

BENEFICE

Bash

SUNDAY 17TH AUGUST

THE RECTORY, WEST STOW

6PM-8PM

Drinks and nibbles
provided

An informal occasion and a chance for all our
congregations to get together

Please bring a chair or rug to sit on

Park at the church

In-Person Safeguarding Training 2025

Bury St Edmunds



Basic Awareness

Date: Wednesday 17 September

Time: 9.30am - 12.00pm

Christ Church Moreton Hall, IP32 7EW



Foundation

Date: Tuesday 2 October

Time: 2.00pm – 4.30pm

Christ Church Moreton Hall, IP32 7EW



Leadership

Dates: Tuesday 11 and 25 November

Time: 10.00pm - 12.00pm

Thomas Clarkson Centre, IP33 3JT



Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse

Dates: Tuesday 2 December

Time: 9.00pm - 1.00pm

Thomas Clarkson Centre, IP33 3JT

To attend any of these events, please book on Insight:

<https://insight.cofesuffolk.org/>

If you do not have computer access to book a place yourself, please contact your Parish Safeguarding Officer.

For further enquiries please contact Lisa Hicks and Richard Peat, Diocesan Safeguarding Trainers:
safeguarding.training@cofesuffolk.org



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
SUFFOLK

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

THE BENEFITS



USE OF THE SECRET
MEMBERS-ONLY LOUNGE



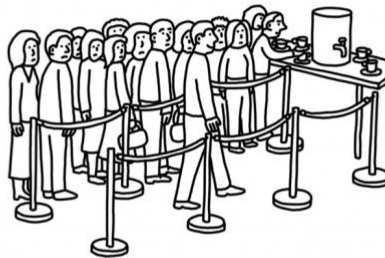
PREVIEWS OF SERMONS THE
NIGHT BEFORE RELEASE



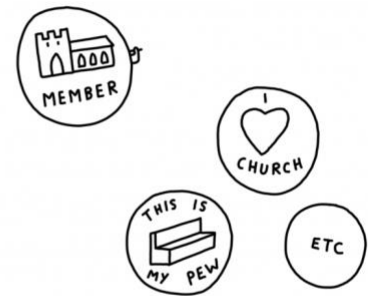
A SPECIAL BUMPER EDITION
OF THE PARISH MAGAZINE



A 'GET OUT OF A
ROTA FREE' CARD



PRIORITY LANE AT
AFTER-SERVICE COFFEE



A BADGE, AND
SOME STICKERS

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.
