

Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry

# VIRAL BULLETIN

27 September 2026

17th Sunday after Trinity, in Creationtide

*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)



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*17th Sunday after Trinity*

*Ezekiel 18.1-4,25-end Psalm 25.1-8 Philippians 2.1-13 Matthew 21.23-32*

## *Harvest Thanksgiving*

*Deuteronomy 8.7-18 Psalm 65 2 Corinthians 9.6-end Luke 12.16-30*

### **The Sacred Covenant**

A few years back I used to rent an allotment in Bury, off the Nowton Road. The soil there is very dry and I wasn't very good at growing vegetables. The pigeons ate the lettuces, so I covered them with netting, which meant the slugs got them instead.

My next door neighbour on the allotment watched my efforts with a more experienced eye - he had been a market gardener, and knew how to produce infinite quantities of rhubarb and strawberries, which he shared generously, along with his wisdom: "You do realise that vegetables are made of water", he kept reminding me.

I settled for growing tulips from left-over bulbs from the Abbey Gardens, and dye plants, which have the habit of seeding and then popping up everywhere, rather than the neat straight rows that the Council prefer. I started getting letters, threatening me with eviction unless I kept more order. I would plead that the place was important for my mental health, and if they would be lenient and give me another year's grace, I promised to make more effort.

Eventually, my neighbour became too ill and stopped coming. I made the decision to hand the allotment back as I had plenty of other places to tend of my own. We were both transient members of that place which was not our own.

Looking back, I gained far more from that small patch of land than anything that was produced. There was something about joining in with the rhythms of the seasons, and watching things grow from seed, and obsessing over compost, and working alongside my neighbours, that was hugely satisfying. The whole cycle of life and death was there for us to engage with. The harvest itself was a bonus.

I like to imagine God as the land-owner of an allotment. He wouldn't need to bother with letters from the Council, but might write a few letters

himself as he rolled his eyes at the activities of his temporary tenants. It is not hard to see how far humanity has drifted from a balanced connection with both each other and the rest of Creation. That Ancient Garden cries out to be managed better for its very survival, as we bear witness to drought and rising temperatures. The tenants ignore their tenancy, and ignore the landowner.

We can look to our readings to reflect on our own position in this setting. The passage from Deuteronomy describes the expansive and fertile nature of the natural world, so full of life and abundance, as a Gift from God.

The danger lies in thinking too much of ourselves as its creators and masters, with our tendency to forget God, particularly if things are going well for ourselves. We are reminded of the Covenant God gave to Abraham<sup>1</sup>, which was one of unconditional and everlasting blessing for those who were loyal to Him.

That same covenant is repeated in the New Testament when Mary sings of her exultation as she announces her pregnancy: *according to the promise He made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.*<sup>2</sup> Jesus went on to demonstrate how that covenant might be enacted through his own obedience to God as he sought to restore our full humanity in relationship to both God and His Creation.

Jesus' Parable of the Rich Man is funny if it wasn't so tragic. The man has an abundance of crops - much too much for just himself. Slightly bizarrely, he hatches a scheme to take down the barns he already has to build larger ones. This might have involved a lot of scheming and business acumen: was he going to sell when the price went up later in the season? Was he calculating whether it was more profitable to save land with one big barn rather than several smaller ones?

Whatever the reason, he had forgotten that God is the one in charge, and the man dies before anything happens. His mental energy, his material wealth and his crops were all wasted, and nothing had been achieved. He never knew the feeling that comes from sharing with his neighbour. He lost the chance of being generous. The harvest of all he had worked for was gone as he had forgotten his covenant towards God. He was not *rich towards God*.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.thenivbible.com/blog/abrahamic-covenant-with-god/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%201%3A46-55&version=NRSVA>

Jesus encourages us to look beyond the basic physical requirements of our daily lives to become rich towards God. We ask for our daily bread every time we say the Lord's Prayer. We also ask that His will be done on Earth. As the Creator of all He might expect his tenants to care properly for the land and to nurture the plants and animals that live there.

Unlike the tenants on an allotment, we too, are part of God's Creation. We cannot exist in isolation, and need God's compassion, along with His forgiveness. We can become rich towards God if we worry less about the material aspects of daily living. We can connect more with the beauty in the world around us and come to sense its own transience and vulnerability along with our own. Material wealth can never achieve the perfection of a wild flower, and diverts us from a simple reliance on God.

In this Season of Creation we are reminded of all the gifts that God provides. We become enriched by His love for us and for all His Creation. His allotment is our common home, and we neglect this at our peril. God's Grace can soften hearts and make life flourish even in parts of the world where hope seems far away. It is a timely reminder of the sacred covenant to which we are committed.

Thanks be to God!

*Sarah Gull*



# Lark Valley and North Bury Churches

## SERVICES WEEK BEGINNING 27 SEPTEMBER

### SUNDAY 27 September 17th Sunday after Trinity *Creationtide*

|         |                      |                              |
|---------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| 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                     |

### Monday 28 September

### Tuesday 29 September Michael and All Angels

|        |                       |                            |
|--------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 6.00pm | Solemn Eucharist (CW) | St John's, Bury St Edmunds |
|--------|-----------------------|----------------------------|

### Wednesday 30 September Jerome, translator, teacher of the faith, 420

|        |                     |                              |
|--------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 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 1 October Remigius, bishop, 533;

*Anthony Ashley Cooper (Earl of Shaftesbury), social reformer, 1885*

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

### Friday 2 October

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

### Saturday 3 October George Bell, bishop, ecumenist, peacemaker, 1958

### SUNDAY 4 October 18th Sunday after Trinity

*Final day of the 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 | 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                     |

# St Mary's, West Stow ~ Church Deep Clean



The team takes a break from the deep cleaning for pizzas, tea, coffee and other refreshments.

*Thanks to Ian Hobley for the photos, and apologies to those whose feet appear twice.*

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## Fr Raúl Arkaia - with us on placement from 11 Oct to 22 Nov

Fr Raúl Arkaia is a Navarrese (Basque) priest born at the foot of the Pyrenees. In addition to Basque and Spanish, he speaks a little bit of English, yet his French is very poor. He is 54 years old and married to Keeley. His passions are mountaineering - not much in Suffolk though! - writing, history, cinema and gastronomy. He loves motorcycles - and Motörhead, amongst other metal bands.

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.



# The Generosity of God

*Beginning a series of articles on Christian Giving*

We experience the generosity of God, I think, in two main ways. *Firstly, in creation.* It is so very appropriate to think about this during the Season of Creation, for everything else stands upon it. The book of Genesis (from the Greek, meaning *source*) begins with Creation, as does the Gospel of John.

Human enquiry, with each round of discovery, tells us more and more about just how complex and mysterious creation is. From the infinitely vast to the infinitesimally small, behind and beyond all that is, above and below all that is, within and without all that is, unconstrained by any or all of the dimensions there might possibly be, but *causing* all that is ... is God.

And the only thing that can explain all that there is, is a quite inconceivable, completely unlimited, somehow self-emptying, outpouring of life and energy and creativity and love from that God. And that is, in the end, impossible for us to fully take on board, to get our heads around. *Which brings me to the second way we experience the generosity of God.*

For that infinite love outpoured in creation is also emptied out for us in Christ - a human being like us. The infinite God is, yes, totally beyond our human understanding. But that God comes to us in Jesus Christ, *knows* us better than we know ourselves, *loves* us better than we love ourselves. Faults and all.

This idea - which theologians call the Incarnation - is so extraordinary that we have spent two thousand years trying to get to the bottom of it. I suppose we never will, in the end it is unfathomable, but our lives together have to be about that generosity, about celebrating what underpins all that we are and all that we have: the generous love of God.

And following from that we know that Christian lives have also to be about gratitude and thanksgiving. Gratitude and generosity must be intrinsic to the Christian way of life. And so thanksgiving must be the driving force, the engine at the centre of Christian life and devotion, the key to all worship.

The Eucharist, which *according to Our Lord's command* is at the very centre of Christian worship, simply means *thanksgiving* in Greek. Thanksgiving for the overwhelming generosity of God is our theme as we approach the altar, and again as we go out into the world, offering thanks and praise.

Between the lines of the famous story of the Pharisee and the tax-collector, found in Luke's Gospel, Jesus is showing us a radical view of thanksgiving. The Pharisee gives thanks, but not in the right way. He judges others and absolves himself. He is accordingly thankful - but, in a sharp reversal, it is the despised and outcast tax-collector who goes home justified.

Jesus is more concerned, it seems, with a penitence that throws itself upon the mercy of God, than with all our misconceived attempts at self-justification. "God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

We think of the Jesus Prayer. Much used in the Eastern Church, it is simple, stark and profound. "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner." We are thankful that God is generosity in his very being: that he is merciful and gracious to us - a giving God. And we do not take it for granted.

## Reasons to be thankful

*The General Thanksgiving is a standard bearer in the life of Anglicans, and it can be a starting point for our own prayer about all the ways we should be thankful to God:*

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you most humble and hearty thanks for all your goodness and loving kindness.

We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And give us, we pray, such a sense of all your mercies that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days;

through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit be all honour and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

*adapted from The Book of Common Prayer*

It is not a bad idea to use this as part of our daily prayer, a launching-pad for self-examination and meditation on those things for which we should thank God. We can never match the generosity of God, but our lives and actions should reflect that generosity to those around us.

And we can reflect how such generosity can shine a searchlight on the devious little Pharisee who lurks inside each one of us - for as soon as we say to ourselves "thank goodness I am not like that Pharisee" we have joined him in the self-same trap. It's a tricky old road at times.

But being together regularly at the Eucharist,  
Absorbing the rhythms of the Jesus Prayer opening us to the mercy of God,  
Pondering the General Thanksgiving in our private prayer,  
these are gifts we have been given to help us on our way.

Adrian Mann

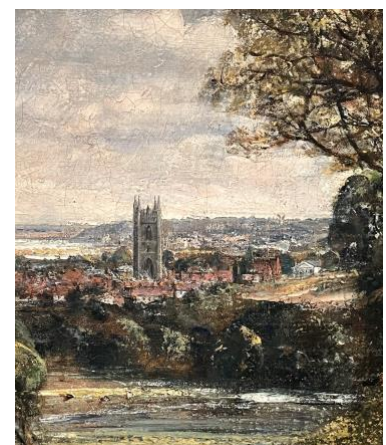
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## Have you seen?

*Two exhibitions are drawing to a close in Suffolk soon, and both are well worth seeing before they close on 4th October.*

At Moyse's Hall Museum in Bury St Edmunds **A King will fall, a Saint will rise ...** traces through a wide range of exhibits the context of St Edmund's life in Anglo-Saxon East Anglia; his fatal encounter with the Great Heathen Army of the Vikings; his death and the legends arising from it; through to the great importance in medieval Christianity of his role as Patron Saint of England (amongst much else) and of the abbey dedicated to him in Bury St Edmunds, with its vast church and resplendent shrine, destroyed at the Reformation but still now influencing the character of the town. [www.moysesshall.org](http://www.moysesshall.org)

And at Christchurch Mansion in Ipswich **Walking Constable's Landscape** movingly engages visitors with the emotional depth of his relationship with the landscape in which he was brought up and of the paintings that relationship produced. The connection between place, faith and human love in Constable's life and art becomes increasingly evident as the intense walk around the exhibition evokes the artist's own dedicated footsteps around his home territory. Works from the V&A, Tate, Royal Academy, National Gallery & National Galleries Scotland are included, making a unique gathering. [www.ipswich.cimuseums.org.uk](http://www.ipswich.cimuseums.org.uk)



*Dedham Vale (detail)  
John Constable, 1828  
National Galleries Scotland*

# Special Harvest Caption Competition RESULT



*The judges enjoyed the inventiveness of this week's entries, then they legged it:*

'Hi! My name is Boris and I live inside your device ...' *Henry Allen*

The newest parishioner's hairy legs were causing consternation among some members of the congregation. *Mary McGuire*

'Eight legs, good. Two, four, six legs, bad.' *Frederick Gipping*

'In so many ways, our lives are dominated by the World Wide Web.' *J C Higginbotham*

Not everyone approved when the Rector installed a new Acme Intruder Startler to deter burglars. *Mary McGuire*

Lonely Boris was disappointed with the dating app he'd downloaded from the web. *Victoria Spivey*

'The cleaning team at St John's has not helped the homelessness situation.' *Julie Morrison*

'Please welcome the new Benefice Web Administrator.' *Sam Morrison*

'I wish I'd remembered to shave my legs before he took this!' *Valerie Wilde*

But the winner is **Lesley Langley** with:

In times gone by, Harvest offerings would not have included bananas.

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Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry

# Praying Together ~ October 2026

## *For the wider community and church*

- 1 T All with financial difficulties
- 2 F Homeless people; Lucy Adams House & Britannia House
- 3 S All who work in and visit the King's Forest
  
- 4 S For our initiatives in dealing with the climate change emergency
- 5 M Lark Valley farms; Lark Valley Path & St Edmunds Way walkers
- 6 T All Saints' Church, Wordwell (Churches Conservation Trust)
- 7 W All who live in Wordwell
- 8 T Moseley's Farm Business Centre
- 9 F All who live in Fornham St Genevieve
- 10 S Hall Farm Business Park
  
- 11 S Park Farm Business Centre
- 12 M All who take care of the fabric of our churches
- 13 T All who visit our churches as tourists
- 14 W All those preparing for baptism, marriage or confirmation
- 15 T All whose funerals have taken place recently
- 16 F All who mourn
- 17 S West Stow Country Park & Kings Forest Caravan Park
  
- 18 S West Stow Club
- 19 M St Mary's Church, West Stow
- 20 T *Growing in God* worship, work & witness at West Stow
- 21 W All who live in West Stow
- 22 T Sports clubs & golf courses
- 23 F Fullers Mill Garden; Chimney Mills Gallery
- 24 S The Suffolk Wildlife Trust at Lackford Lakes
  
- 25 S St Lawrence's Church, Lackford
- 26 M *Growing in God* worship, work & witness at Lackford
- 27 T All who live in Lackford
- 28 W All our Clergy, our Reader & Lay Elders
- 29 T For vocations to the ordained and other ministries
- 30 F That we may all grow in faith
- 31 S That our congregations may grow in numbers

Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry

# Praying Together ~ October 2026

## *For the Lark Valley and North Bury family*

- 1 T Hannah Strange
- 2 F Margaret Sutherland
- 3 S Mandy & Michael Trodden
  
- 4 S Brenda Turner
- 5 M Dave Turner
- 6 T Kyra Turner
- 7 W Rose, Ben & Edward Turner
- 8 T Wendy Underwood
- 9 F Polly Upperton
- 10 S Emmanuel & Maureen Uzor

- 11 S Suzanne Veal
- 12 M Elizabeth & Justin Veitch
- 13 T Jenny & John Vereker
- 14 W Marc Wallage
- 15 T Miriam Webb
- 16 F Christopher Wells
- 17 S Jane & Tim Whelehan

- 18 S Janet Whymark
- 19 M Michael & Valerie Wilde
- 20 T Georgina Wilson
- 21 W Valerie Wood
- 22 T Jennifer Woolley
- 23 F John & Margaret Woolmore
- 24 S David, Margaret & Philip Yates

- 25 S For those not yet on our Electoral Rolls
- 26 M For those receiving communion at home
- 27 T For those who live in care homes in our benefice
- 28 W For housebound members of our congregations
- 29 T For all visitors to our churches
- 30 F For new members of our churches
- 31 S For all seeking to know more about our faith.

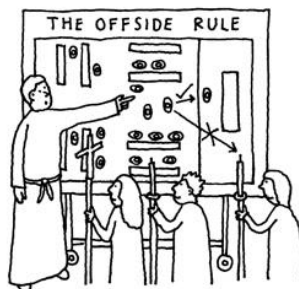
To change, add or remove names please contact the Revd Julia Mann. Email: [jc.mann@btinternet.com](mailto:jc.mann@btinternet.com)

# FOOTBALL

LESSONS THE CHURCH COULD LEARN



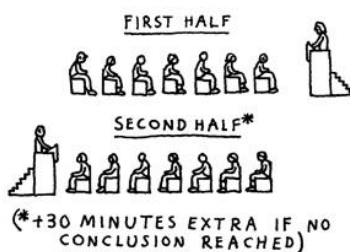
TRY TO AVOID  
OWN GOALS



IT IS IMPORTANT TO  
EXPLAIN THE REGULATIONS



IT IS ACCEPTABLE TO  
EXAGGERATE INJURIES



CHANGING ENDS AT HALF  
TIME ADDS VARIETY



PUNDITS DON'T ALWAYS KNOW  
WHAT THEY ARE TALKING ABOUT



CHANTING



TRAVELLING  
GREAT DISTANCES



WEARING  
THE KIT



STICKER ALBUMS

IT IS GOOD TO DEMONSTRATE  
ENTHUSIASM

CartoonChurch.com

## Contacts

Revd Dr Andy Miller .... 01284 728714

[teamrectorlvnb@btinternet.com](mailto:teamrectorlvnb@btinternet.com)

Revd Ali Miller ..... 01284 728714

[teamvicarlvnb@btinternet.com](mailto:teamvicarlvnb@btinternet.com)

Team Office ..... 01284 700400

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

*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](mailto:NBTLVB@outlook.com)

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

# **CAFÉ**

**Saturday September  
26th**

**10am -12 noon**

**Culford Village Hall**

**Savouries and cakes.**

**Tea and coffee**

**Jigsaw puzzle swap**

**Donations gratefully  
received for Lackford St  
Lawrence church**

**EVERYONE WELCOME**

# MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

Fornham All Saints Church

10:00am -  
12:00pm

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> September



Lark Valley & North Bury Team Ministry  
[www.northburychurches.org.uk](http://www.northburychurches.org.uk)



Lark Valley and North Bury Team  
**St George's Church**

Please join us as we...

**KEEP CALM**



**AND**



**EAT CAKE**

for Macmillan Cancer Support

**MACMILLAN  
CANCER SUPPORT**

**COFFEE  
MORNING**



**10:00 - 12:00  
Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup>  
September  
2026**

# The Wonder Club

Story  
Wondering  
Craft  
Prayer  
Cake



St Lawrence  
Lackford  
Sunday  
4th October  
at 3pm

# Coffee Morning

Donations to



Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> October

10:00 - 11:15 am

All Saints Church

Coffee or tea, cake and chat

All Welcome



Lark Valley & North Bury Team Ministry

[www.northburychurches.org.uk](http://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](mailto: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  
8<sup>th</sup> October

6pm

for half an hour



# **ST GEORGE'S CHURCH**

**Anselm Avenue, IP32 6JZ**

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

**SUNDAY 11<sup>th</sup> 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**