

Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry

# VIRAL BULLETIN

23 January 2022

3rd Sunday of 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](http://www.northburychurches.org.uk)



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# Third Sunday of Epiphany

## Luke 14.14-21

OVER THE YEARS I have often found myself with other ministers discussing the question of what makes for a good sermon. Is it rigorous Biblical study to make sure that the Scripture shines through? Is it offering anecdotes that draw people in to want to hear more, because you have made connections with their lives? Or is it having the correct level of nurture and challenge, to encourage inward and outward faith? In truth it can, and probably is, any and all of these things. Either way, what does appear to be universal in my experience, is how often the phrase “nice sermon Vicar” is part of an appraisal that also includes the phrase “nice and short”.

This week, in the reading that we have from the Gospel of St Luke, we have Jesus offering a sermon, based upon words of the prophet Isaiah. And yes, to all those who are a part of the preacher’s union, there is encouragement to be stingy with the words that we use. For the sermon that Christ preaches is most certainly short. “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing”. Unsurprisingly though, despite the brevity, this sermon is one that is deep and rich in content. And this is content that sees it sit comfortably in the season that is Epiphany, because it reveals so much during this, the season of revelation, about the one who is doing the preaching, namely Jesus Christ himself.

As it turns out, the Scripture that Jesus decides to read today is also rather on the short side; more importantly its choice is also significant. As it happens there is a fair degree of editing of these two verses from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah by Jesus, but this is exactly for reasons of making sure that the theme of the words that Christ is reading, and therefore the message of Christ’s minimally worded sermon, is clear. And this theme? Well to use just a single word that we have heard today from Isaiah – release. As indicated by Isaiah it is release for those who may be considered downtrodden and down-cast. This is no real surprise, for of course it matches exactly the theme of so many other words that we find in the Gospels. Words such as the Magnificat sung by Mary; words such as the Sermon on the Mount, a preaching gig where Jesus was found to be rather chattier – but where again the theme was equally well laid out as it has been today.

What we notice then, whether using many words or a few, and whether repeated or not, is that the thing revealed in this Epiphany passage is that release will be offered to those that are on the outskirts of society. People on

the outskirts such as those who are poor and without. And this in any way or form – financial, emotional, or spiritual. People such as those who are captives - perhaps in terms of real imprisonment or again maybe figuratively. People whose captivity is to behaviours and situations that they need to be freed from, released from, perhaps even via the freedom that is forgiveness of sins. People who are blind, with this again being the literal case for so many people that Jesus went on to encounter in his ministry on Earth, but maybe also those who need their eyes opened to the wonders that the world has to offer through release from situations that have clouded their judgement. And people who are oppressed. Those who need freedom because, people, society, the systems within it, or maybe even themselves, are keeping them from living with the equality that God truly wants for his people.

Of course, the real revelation of the sermon that Jesus preached was that he was the one who was to do all of those things. That day, as he said, all of these things mentioned by Isaiah are to be done by the one who the crowd was hearing say them. Jesus was revealing that through his life, ministry, death and resurrection he was and is the one to offer release to those in need – all of those in need spoken of by the great prophet many years before. This Scripture was, as he said, to be fulfilled by him.

Now, just like for those listening to Jesus all those years ago, for those of us who hear or read this passage today, the most important word in the sermon that Jesus preached is the one that appears at the beginning – “today”. For just as the wonderful truth of Scripture written about Jesus so many years before was true that day in Nazareth, so too are these words true for us today – on this day 2000 years after Jesus first said them. The final deep and wonderful revelation that comes from our passage today, is that Jesus can still perform these wonderful acts of release, offering fabulous good news to those who are poor, captive, blind, oppressed – to all those who are deemed outcasts. And this is of course, through those who are his followers today, people like you and me.

With Jesus and the truth of his words as our inspiration, and in the knowledge of his boundless love and forgiveness that he has offered to us in our time of need, we can seek out and offer release to those who are in need in whatever way. We can do this because we have offered our lives to the One who has been anointed to bring good news to the world, through the power of the Spirit of the Lord. The One who can and should be the one Word that each and every one finds has been revealed to them when anyone gets up to preach, not least during this time of revelation that is the season of Epiphany – Jesus.

*Andy Miller*

Lark Valley and North Bury Churches

## SERVICES WEEK BEGINNING 23 JANUARY

### 3rd Sunday of Epiphany 23 January

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Parish Communion (CW)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Parish Communion (CW)	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	Culford
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	Fornham St Martin
11.00am	Parish Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
12noon	Holy Communion (BCP)	Flempton
2.00pm	Holy Baptism	St John's, Bury St Edmunds

### Tuesday 25 January Conversion of St Paul

8.30am	Morning Prayer (CW)	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
6.00pm	Solemn Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds

### Wednesday 26 January Timothy and Titus, companions of St Paul

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 27 January

9.30am	Eucharist (CW)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
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### Friday 28 January Thomas Aquinas, priest, philosopher, teacher of the faith

7.30am	Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
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### Candlemas / 4th Sunday of Epiphany 30 January

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Parish Communion (CW)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	Fornham St Martin
11.00am	Parish Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
3.00pm	Christingle*	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
3.30pm	Christingle	Lackford

\* PLEASE BOOK for the 3pm Christingle Service at St George's with Val:

Email [valgagen@hotmail.com](mailto:valgagen@hotmail.com) Phone 01284 361963 Text 0787 406 7371

## 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 is later posted onto our website [www.northburychurches.org.uk](http://www.northburychurches.org.uk)

## CHURCH on ZOOM

Our *Zoom Service* is at 11am on the second Sunday of each month. All are welcome.

Please email [clairerose1953@gmail.com](mailto:clairerose1953@gmail.com) to receive the link.

# Christmas Viewing

My Dad was able, pre-Covid and before two falls, to participate in the worship at St John's by coming to the service when staying with me. He loved it, bringing back memories of his Anglican times! On meeting Mum and marrying he had worshipped at the Methodist Church in Cambs and that was my upbringing.

He remembered incense, procedures and much I didn't realise he had experienced. Since his physical presence is not possible at the moment he looks forward to his weekly online viewing. With diminishing sight he listens intently and loves the fact he feels close to me. He really enjoys the services and also David the organist at the end, joining in the clapping from home.



I was very fortunate to have my parents for Christmas and I share this picture of Dad listening to the Christmas Eve service on Christmas morning. We must never doubt the importance of online services, made obvious to me by my Dad. Thank you St John's.

*Debbie Knight*

*A prayer attributed to*

# Desmond Tutu

*adapted from an original prayer by Sir Francis Drake.*

Disturb us, O Lord  
when we are too well-pleased with ourselves  
when our dreams have come true  
    because we dreamed too little,  
because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, O Lord  
when with the abundance of things we possess,  
we have lost our thirst for the water of life  
when, having fallen in love with time,  
we have ceased to dream of eternity  
and in our efforts to build a new earth,  
we have allowed our vision of Heaven to grow dim.

Stir us, O Lord  
to dare more boldly, to venture into wider seas  
where storms show Thy mastery,  
where losing sight of land, we shall find the stars.  
In the name of Him  
    who pushed back the horizons of our hopes  
and invited the brave to follow.

Amen



## **2022: The Year of Nature?**

*This year the biodiversity crisis will come further to the fore. Andy Atkins, Chief Executive of A Rocha UK explains why, and how we can respond effectively.*

If last year was the year of climate in the UK, in terms of public awareness of big environmental issues, 2022 is likely to be the ‘year of nature’. It’s not that climate change has gone away or been sorted. Far from it. We must keep pressing for faster government and business action on climate change, of course. But its twin crisis – biodiversity loss – is likely to get a high profile in 2022.

So, what will bring it up the agenda, and how can we Christians who care about God’s creation harness this to drive effective *action*?

A big and early international nature ‘moment’ will be ‘COP15’ – the next meeting of the parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. It will meet in Kunming, China, for two weeks in late April and early May and is tasked with setting new international goals to avoid mass extinction of species. Though far from the UK, we can still expect the event to catapult nature to the top of the news agenda, as scientific bodies and international

nature conservation charities release their latest findings and proposals in advance of the conference.

Closer to home, it will be the first year of the new Environment Act, passed by Parliament last November. Environmental charities will be looking to the government for rapid implementation of its promises. They will also be alert to any attempts to use its loopholes to carry on 'business as usual' which has been so damaging to our environment in the last fifty years.

The UK is one of the most nature-poor countries in Europe. For many conservationists the Environment Act is our last best chance to turn around this continuing decline before it really is too late for dozens of species.

Within the Churches too, nature will come up the agenda. As more denominations commit to achieving Net Zero carbon emissions, they are urgently looking at how to do this. There is no substitute for getting off fossil fuels fast, improving energy efficiency in church buildings etc.

But there is also increasing awareness that land can play a role too – and the Church Commissioners, for example, own a large portfolio of land. Where there is land, there is potential habitat for wildlife of course. Whether the land is a highly mechanised farm, a city housing estate or a postcard-pretty country churchyard, the way it is managed can help absorb greenhouse emissions and provide a home for nature, or it can do the reverse.

**In tackling climate change the churches will not be able to avoid nature.**

These are just three reasons we can expect to hear a lot more about nature in 2022. History suggests, however, that 'issue profile' does not necessarily lead to 'issue solutions'. It takes public action and pressure on governments to convert the temporary noise to lasting action.

So, 2022 would be a very good year to get our local church community paying more attention to nature as part of Eco Church or a similar scheme. In June we can join with churches nationally in the Churches Count on Nature initiative, recording wildlife in our churchyards.

And we can resolve to speak up more often in defence of voiceless nature via, for example, A Rocha UK's Wild Christian community: the free bulletin contains regular news on relevant campaigns and how to participate. You can sign up [here](#).



Wednesday 2 February 2022 at 7.30pm

St John the Evangelist St John's Street, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1SN

# Candlemas

Presentation of Christ in the Temple



## Candlelit Procession

*(coronavirus precautions permitting)*

# Solemn Eucharist

President and Preacher:

The Revd Ali Miller, Team Vicar

The St John's Singers

David Honeyball, Organist

followed by a party **ALL ARE WELCOME**

Affirming Catholicism ~ St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

*All are welcome to join us at our meetings*

We are a movement of inspiration and hope in the Anglican Communion, bringing together and strengthening lay and ordained people who recognize the positive, inclusive and joyful currents in the catholic tradition of Christianity. We value models of love, friendship and community for all seeking to follow the gospel, irrespective of ethnicity, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

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IN AID OF ST MARY'S CHURCH, WEST STOW

ST MARY'S, WEST STOW

# WINE TASTING

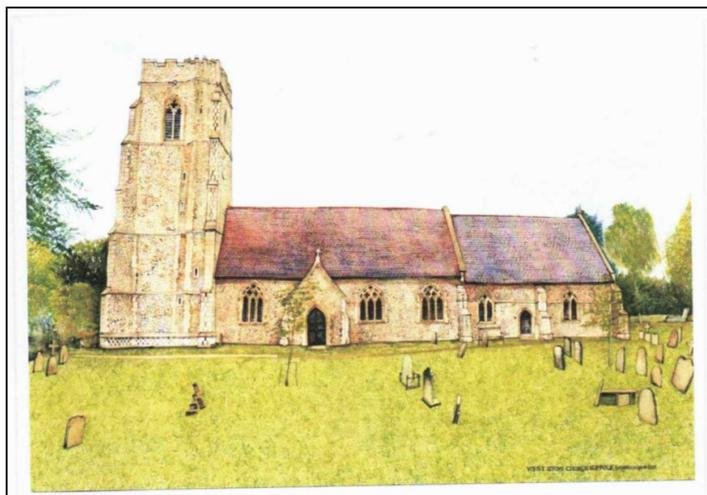
with auction of an original  
watercolour by Kim  
Whittingham

SATURDAY 12TH  
FEBRUARY, 7.30PM

WEST STOW HALL

TICKETS £15

AVAILABLE FROM  
EILEENGILBERT54@AOL.COM  
OR  
MRSLUCYFISHER@GMAIL.COM



If you cannot attend the wine-tasting, but you would like to place a sealed bid for the painting, please send your bid in confidence by email to Eileen Gilbert, [eileengilbert54@aol.com](mailto:eileengilbert54@aol.com), or deliver it to West Stow Hall.

***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 forthcoming events at your church.

***Please note the deadline for next week's Viral Bulletin  
is Monday evening 25 January.***