

Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry

VIRAL BULLETIN

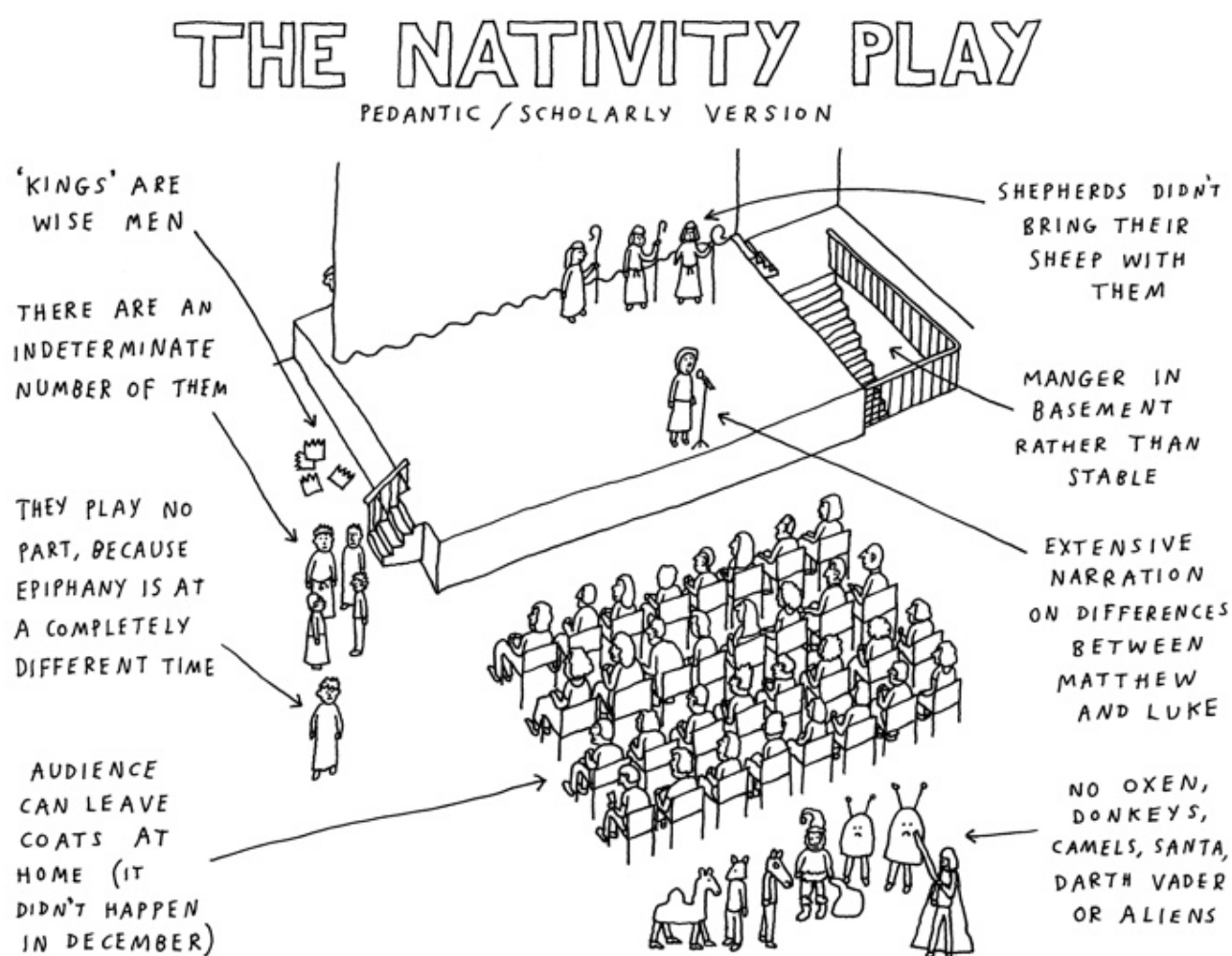
13 December 2020

Third Sunday of Advent

Please forward this to anyone you know who might not be in our Google group.

For links to information and worship during the coronavirus restrictions

please visit: www.northburychurches.org.uk



CartoonChurch.com

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Third Sunday of Advent

John 1:6-8,19-28 Luke 1:46b-55

Our Gospel reading this week for the third Sunday of Advent comes from John. Last week we heard about John the Baptist from the Gospel of Mark. John the Baptist was described in great detail ... what he wore, what he spoke, what he ate and what he did.

But this week's passage describes what John is not ... he is not the Messiah. John is not the one that everyone has been waiting for.

But he is the voice crying out in the wilderness ... he is preparing a way in the wilderness for others to enter into God's presence. So John the Baptist points the way towards Jesus. He shines a light on the one who is to come.

We are taken back to the very beginning of creation ... into the chaos ... when God spoke and the word that was heard came into being ... and the word was light. Let there be light, and there was light.

And so John is there to deflect the attention from himself, to direct it to the one who brings true light. Light that will bring with it joy and celebration and a new way of seeing and understanding the chaos that is all around.

John describes himself as the voice of one crying out in the wilderness and preparing the way for the true light that is to come.

This year many of us have found ourselves in a bit of a wilderness ... normal life has been turned upside down, inside out ... and we have had to disconnect not just from our usual routines but from the people most precious to us, too ... at least physically.

In this wilderness when pubs and clubs, schools and offices were all closed down earlier in the year, and even church doors have been locked ... many of us found our hope in God alone. I am reminded of the hymn ... Everything changes, but God changes not ... in this time of uncertainty God is our one constant through all the storms of life.

And so as we wait for the coming of the Saviour this Christmastime, we may think of Mary waiting for the birth of Jesus.

With Mary we may wait and wonder.

We may wonder about the world that Jesus had already made his own, within Mary's womb.

John Pridmore talks about Elizabeth's exultation, as being a window on that world. Her unborn son, the boy that will be called John the Baptist, leaps for joy, when Mary, the mother of his lord, greets her.

This is the joy that everyone will have when the Messiah comes.

And so we wait for the birth of the Messiah. We wait to see what happens ... we wait to see if vaccines might soon be available to all who need them.

We wait to again meet up with all our relatives in joyful celebrations.

But meanwhile our celebrations may have to be more simple, as at that very first Christmas.

But our hearts are full of hope, in the one who is to come, who will lead us through the chaos, as Emmanuel, God with us ... our light in the darkness. Amen.

Val Gagen



Photo: thanks to Claire Rose

Lark Valley and North Bury Churches

SERVICES THIS WEEK

Sunday 13th December

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
9.00am	Parish Communion (CW)
9.30am	Parish Communion (CW)
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)
11.00am	Parish Eucharist (CW)

Culford
All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
St George's, Bury St Edmunds
Fornham St Martin
Lackford
St John's, Bury St Edmunds

Tuesday 15th December

8.30am	Morning Prayer
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St George's, Bury St Edmunds

Wednesday 16th December

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

Thursday 17th December *O Sapientia*

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

Friday 18th December

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

7.00pm	Alternative Carol Service (<i>without congregational singing</i>)
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Culford

Sunday 20th December

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
9.00am	Parish Communion (BCP)
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)
10.00am	Christingle
11.00am	Parish Eucharist (CW)
3.00pm	Alternative Carol Service (<i>without congregational singing</i>)
3.00pm	Christingle & Pop-up Nativity (<i>booking essential</i>)
5.00pm	Traditional readings with Music for reflection

Lackford
All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
Fornham All Saints
West Stow
St John's, Bury St Edmunds
Timworth
St George's, Bury St Edmunds
All Saints', Bury St Edmunds

CHURCH ZOOM GATHERING

Everyone is welcome to join our Church Zoom Gathering at 11am on Sundays.

To do so, please email Claire for the link at clairerose1953@gmail.com

LIVE-STREAMED WORSHIP

The Parish Eucharist from St John's every Sunday at 11am on Facebook

[@StJohnsBSE](https://www.facebook.com/StJohnsBSE)

The service is then posted onto the benefice website www.northburychurches.org.uk

OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER

St John the Evangelist, Bury St Edmunds	Gatehouse foodbank collection point	11am-3pm daily
St Mary, West Stow		9-10.30am on Wednesdays and 10-11am on 1st and 3rd Sundays
		For access at other times please contact Ian Hobley (01284 728745) or Paul Luke (01284 729654)
Fornham All Saints		open every Sunday
St Andrew, Timworth		contact Alison Pettitt (01284 728379)
St Lawrence, Lackford		contact Harry Lidster (01284 728876)
Fornham St Martin	contact Beryl Dykes	(01284 704109) or David Yates (01284 705157)
St George, Bury St Edmunds		contact the Revd Val Gagen (01284 361963)
St Mary, Culford & St Catherine, Flempton		contact numbers are in the porch



St Mary's, West Stow

Photo: thanks to Ian Hobley

The Bury Old School Fund Educational Grants

This is a small local charity, which provides modest grants to students in both secondary and tertiary education to assist with costs such as travel and books. Applicants, or their parents, must live within the town boundaries of Bury St Edmunds in order to be considered for a grant. Applicants must also be under the age of 25.

For an application form, please e-mail osfclerk@greene-greene.com

All applications for the 2020/2021 academic year must be received by the clerk by close of business on **18 December 2020**.

Booking systems

are in place for some of our services during Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. Please note the following:

St Mary's, West Stow *Christingle*

Sunday 20th December at 10am

Booking is advised to make sure of a place. Please contact Ian Hobley, either text to 07557 107910 or email ianhobley@btinternet.com

St George's, Bury St Edmunds *Christingle & Pop-up Nativity*

Sunday 20th December at 3pm

Please contact Rev Val BY TUESDAY 15th DECEMBER by email rev.valgagen@gmail.com or text 07874 067371 to book a place. *No entry without booking. Thank you.*

All Saints', Bury St Edmunds *Traditional readings with music for reflection*

Sunday 20th December at 5pm

Please contact Claire Rose 01284 724497 or clairerose1953@gmail.com to book a place.

St John's, Bury St Edmunds *Midnight Mass*

Christmas Eve at 11.30pm

Booking is advised to make sure of a place. Please contact Janet Catton on 01284 615656 or email janet.catton@btinternet.com

St Mary's, West Stow *Midnight Communion*

Christmas Eve at 11.30pm

Booking is advised to make sure of a place. Please contact Ian Hobley, either text to 07557 107910 or email ianhobley@btinternet.com



Digital Christian Aid Week raises nearly 4 million

A message to our supporters

Christian Aid Week 2020 was certainly a Christian Aid Week we won't forget!

The coronavirus pandemic affected so much of your planned fundraising but you triumphed, you persevered, and you went online. We have been so humbled by the dedication you have shown to supporting Christian Aid - not even a global pandemic could stop you from standing alongside the most vulnerable.

In total you raised nearly 4 million pounds and we could not be more grateful for all your hard work and passion. Thank you.



Christian Aid Week 2021

Planning is well underway for Christian Aid Week 2021 and we are as committed as you are to this remarkable annual week, where thousands of churches stand together with the world's poorest and most in need. We're not sure what the coronavirus situation will be like next year yet but we're currently developing a range of ideas and activities for Christian Aid Week 2021 that will be suitable for whatever social distancing restrictions are in place then.

As we now look towards Advent and making the most of the Christmas period, we hope this serves as a reminder of how special our Christian Aid Community is and helps in your planning for next year. In the new year we will be in touch with more information about Christian Aid Week 2021. We will again focus on communities in Africa, picking up on the stories of how the climate emergency is perpetuating drought and flooding, endangering their livelihoods.

Message to East Anglian Churches

We hope this email finds you well. As the year is slowly coming to an end, we hope you have seen the power of what can happen when people come together. We have learnt that love never fails and if we have that, hope can be built to face any crisis. As we prepare for a Christmas like no other, we want to focus on climate change as our opportunity to help more communities like Kawite's in Ethiopia.

Thanks to the support of churches like yours, Kawite and her community were able to build a pond with the help of Christian Aid's local partner giving them access to a clean source of water. They were also provided with drought resistant seeds to boost the harvest, food for the livestock and goats and sheep to help the women build livelihoods. Without this help they would have been burdened with prolonged and unbearable droughts. This is just an example of how your support and love can change the lives of our global neighbours.

Now that we know that love never fails, that love unites, that love brings hope. Will you join us in prayer, fundraising and action to build hope around the world this Christmas?

We have the opportunity to shape a path to a world that is more equal, just, sustainable, and promotes human flourishing. Coronavirus has laid bare the huge inequalities in society. We can start to close the gap in a way that also addresses the huge injustice at the heart of the climate crisis. But we must act now and stay focused in 2021 to seize this opportunity.

DO YOU HAVE any photos of your church and people which you can submit (with permission) as an email attachment?

Items for the VIRAL BULLETIN are very welcome and can include photographs and illustrations. Please send them to Adrian Mann: adrian.mann@btinternet.com