

Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry

# VIRAL BULLETIN

29 August 2021

13th Sunday after Trinity

A home for all

Season of Creation 2021

*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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# 13th Sunday after Trinity

Deuteronomy 4.1-2,6-9 James 1.17-end Mark 7.1-8,14-15,21-23

Are you one of those Christians who finds the Old Testament a bit problematic? Too much blood and violence. Too genocidal, even. Well, you wouldn't be the first. Early in the second century Marcion of Sinope thought that the antics of the God of the Old Testament were quite incompatible with the teaching of Christ. His canon of scripture consisted solely of parts of Luke's gospel and a heavily edited set of Paul's epistles. It would at least have made the Bible shorter, if nothing else.

The scriptures of what are called the Abrahamic faiths, the religions of the book - Judaism, Christianity and Islam - have had an enormous effect on the history of (*what we euro-centrally call*) the Middle East and of the whole world. That effect lives with us today and will long outlive us.

Look, for example, at Moses' words from our passage from Deuteronomy: "... give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the Lord ... is giving you." Words which reverberate today in the actions of Israeli settlers on the West Bank. It's *still* about the land, and words of scripture are used to justify ejecting people from where they've lived for centuries.

These are complicated issues, but all this emphasises the need to read the Bible intelligently, rigorously and enquiringly. The Bible should question us and challenge us, but we should question it, too. If we don't, our faith will become unintelligent and unintelligible in today's world. So why don't we line up with Marcion?

Well, as the early church realised, we simply can't. The Hebrew Scriptures were Jesus's scriptures, too. They were also the scriptures of the New Testament writers, who filled their writings with concepts, quotations and references which come straight from the Hebrew Scriptures. We can't understand the New Testament if we don't digest, consider and reflect upon the Old. It simply wouldn't make sense. That's why we use the Hebrew Scriptures in our services. Jesus would have prayed and worshipped with the Psalms, with all their comprehensive grip on the light and dark of human emotions. And so do we.

Let's think some more about the land. It's a very important theme in the Hebrew writings. It's about the Covenant, God's deal with his people, which says in effect: Worship me and behave yourselves. Then you can have the land, and keep it.

This idea is key to what has been called Deuteronomistic history: the theory that a long strand of Old Testament writings, beginning with the book of Deuteronomy itself, is an agonised reflection upon the exile to Babylon. It's an attempt to explain the disaster of the destruction of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah and the *loss* of the land, concluding that this has all happened because God is displeased with their worship and behaviour, and because they did not reject, eject and destroy other people from the land and their inferior home-made gods along with them.

This is a profound meditation on cause and effect as seen in human history. But it is also a way of thinking which can inexorably lead to an exclusive mindset, to dreams of racial purity and to a desire to reject and expel others - ideas which can become toxic, especially if given *religious* authority.

But these are not the only ideas around. The Bible is not a book, it's an entire library about the story of a people's encounter and relationship with God, about divine revelation as experienced in an evolving culture, containing arguments for differing interpretations of key people or events. So there are other strands in the Hebrew Scriptures which have a contrasting emphasis, which do not insist upon Israel's exclusive privilege in quite the same way. Indeed, there is a strong emphasis on the need to care for the orphan, the widow and (notably) the stranger, which can be found in the book of Deuteronomy itself. And elsewhere Israel's special relationship with God remains, but is one which brings with it a vocation to serve which *must* come out of that special relationship.

A high point of this alternative strand is the second part of the book of the prophet Isaiah, where we find the Songs of the (Suffering) Servant. The figure of the Suffering Servant can be seen as being the Nation of Israel, which goodness knows has suffered enough. And Christians have seen it as speaking of Jesus, his vocation, his suffering and his ultimate vindication.

In both cases service is the message, service to the point of self-sacrifice. And this is the context within which we read, as so often and as in our reading

from Mark's gospel, of Jesus in debate with the Pharisees. The Pharisees get a very bad press, but we should not forget that in many ways they had much in common with Jesus. They took their faith extremely seriously and in the New Testament we are shown them issuing a call to fidelity and seeking to enforce a rigorous application of the external legalisms of that faith.

In opposition to this Jesus quotes a passage from Isaiah which attacks hypocritical religion and insists upon the need to give attention to what's going on *inside* as being far more important.

So maybe the message for us is to take up the phrase from Deuteronomy: "Take care and watch yourselves closely." *Think, and notice what is happening within*, in the human heart. Care for the orphans, the widows and the strangers, all who are vulnerable or despised, and remember we follow one who offered the ultimate in self-sacrificial service.

Adrian Mann

# SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS

IDEAS FOR SOME GOOD ONES

BIBLE PASSAGE	THINGS YOU WILL NEED	BIBLE PASSAGE	THINGS YOU WILL NEED	BIBLE PASSAGE	THINGS YOU WILL NEED
BUILDING THE TOWER OF BABEL	HYMN BOOKS	MOSES ASCENDING MOUNT SINAI	PULPIT ELDERLY MEMBER OF CLERGY	HEALING THE PARALYSED MAN	CHURCHWARDENS ON ROOF, SLEDGEHAMMERS
THE FLOOD	WATER BAPTISTRY CRECHE TOYS	DESTRUCTION OF THE CITY OF JERICO	REDUNDANT PEWS PROCESS AROUND 7 TIMES, THEN DESTROY	CALMING THE STORM	FONT HAIRDRYER
THE PLAGUE OF DARKNESS	ATTENTIVE SIDEPERSON LIGHT SWITCH	BEHEADING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST	SCISSORS FLOWER ARRANGEMENT	MARY AND MARTHA	DILIGENT COFFEE ROTA VOLUNTEER LESS DILIGENT COFFEE ROTA VOLUNTEER

## Lark Valley and North Bury Churches

# SERVICES THIS WEEK

### 13th Sunday after Trinity 29th August

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

### Tuesday 31st August Aidan, bishop, missionary

8.30am	Morning Prayer	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
6.00pm	Meditation	St John's, Bury St Edmunds

### Wednesday 1st September

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

### Thursday 2nd September

9.30am	Eucharist (BCP)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
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### Friday 3rd September Gregory the Great

7.30am	Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
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### 14th Sunday after Trinity 5th September

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

## CHURCH on ZOOM

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

Please email Claire for the link at [clairerose1953@gmail.com](mailto:clairerose1953@gmail.com)

## LIVE-STREAMED WORSHIP

The **Parish Eucharist** is live-streamed from St John's every Sunday at 11am on Facebook and is later posted onto our website

[@StJohnsBSE](https://www.facebook.com/StJohnsBSE)  
[www.northburychurches.org.uk](http://www.northburychurches.org.uk)

## Dear all *The Team Rector writes (twice)*

It is hard to believe that as I write we are only a week or so away from the service at All Saints Church in Bury when I will become the Team Rector and Ali Team Vicar in the Lark Valley and North Bury Team. During our time since we moved into West Stow on the 21<sup>st</sup> July, we have slowly but surely been getting to know the area and settling in to what is a completely new part of the world for us – and for our daughters, Lucy and Beatrix. So far this has been a great joy as we have found Suffolk to be a beautiful place.

Naturally though one of the great joys after the service on the 26<sup>th</sup> August will be getting to know all of you so much better. The chance to hear your stories and worship alongside you, is, for me, one of the most important and fabulous parts of coming here to minister and serve. Please rest assured that you have been in our prayers – and will obviously remain so as we begin and continue our roles. I very much hope that we are in yours, so that in God's strength we can move forward together as God's people in this place.

Once again, Ali and I look forward to our time as Team Rector and Vicar, and look forward to meeting you all.

**\*\*\* AND STOP PRESS on 27th AUGUST \*\*\***

Letters and articles from me saying hello are coming thick and fast at the moment, which shouldn't really come as too much of a surprise as Ali and I begin our time as Team Rector and Team Vicar in the Lark Valley and North Bury Team.

However, what has moved me to write these words today, the day after we were installed and licensed to our roles within the Team, is a desire to thank those who organised and attended the service and the wonderful refreshments afterwards. It was both uplifting and moving to have such a kind welcome and so much support from the people of our new parishes (and thank you too to those of you who assured us of prayers and good wishes but couldn't attend – this bolstered us spiritually!).

I would also say that it was a really lovely opportunity to begin to get to know the people of Lark Valley and North Bury, something that both Ali and I want to put at the forefront of our time here as we begin our ministry in this place. It is through getting to know each other, hearing our stories and becoming better acquainted with who we are, that we can move forward together as God's people – buoyed and supported naturally by the prayer that I mentioned. Ali and I were already looking forward to getting to know you and praying alongside you before the service last night, and we are now even more uplifted and moved to get to know the Lark Valley and North Bury Team as we begin and continue our ministry in this place.

With prayers and best wishes,

**Andy**



*As COP26 approaches  
our course for the  
Season of Creation  
September 2021  
is*

# Caring for Creation

Written by Brian Davis

Originally planned to take place during Lent, this course will now run during the Season of Creation, which begins this week. With extreme climate events now hitting the headlines with unnerving regularity, and with the world's attention soon to be focused on the COP26 gathering in Glasgow, this gives members of our churches the opportunity to think and pray about this hugely important topic.

You can pick a time and a venue which suits you, and you can move around the different groups as you wish.

The groups will be led by members of our staff team, and Andy and Ali Miller will be joining in the meetings as they are able so as to meet as many people as possible.

*Meetings will be held in churches across the benefice.  
Just turn up on the day, or make contact as shown.*

*At Fornham St Martin on Tuesdays at 11am  
beginning on September 7th*

*contact Sylvia on 724899*

*At St John's, Bury St Edmunds on Wednesdays at 7pm  
beginning on September 1st*

*contact Julia and Adrian on 753984*

*At All Saints', Bury St Edmunds on Thursdays at 2.30pm  
beginning on September 2nd*

*contact Bob and Marianne on 752075*

*At St George's, Bury St Edmunds on Saturdays at 10am  
beginning on September 4th*

*contact Val on 361963*

“an informative course ... **Caring for Creation** digs deeper into issues, and is particularly good at calling out misplaced Christian attitudes”  
*(Church Times)*

The human race is facing its greatest challenge:  
simultaneous threats to biodiversity  
and accelerating climate change.

Faith in our Creator God  
should urge and enable us  
to see what is actually happening,  
and strengthen us to respond.

# Lark Valley and North Bury Churches Praying Together September 2021

## *For the wider community & church*

- 1 W Beetons Lodge residential home
- 2 T Lancaster Avenue Gospel Hall
- 3 F The Presbyterian Church
- 4 S St Olave's Road shops and residential area
  
- 5 S The Christian Resource Centre (Pentecostal)
- 6 M West Road Church
- 7 T All Saints, Bury
- 8 W *Growing in God* worship, work & witness at All Saints, Bury
- 9 T All Saints Bury church hall
- 10 F All Saints Bury Pre-School, Fellowship, Parent & Toddler Group
- 11 S All Saints church pop up café
  
- 12 S The Priors Estate
- 13 M The Priors Estate Residents' Action Group
- 14 T Kings Road & Queens Road housing areas
- 15W Out Risbygate housing and business areas
- 16 T St Peter's House residential home
- 17 F Jankyn's Place sheltered housing
- 18 S St Andrew, Timworth
  
- 19 S *Growing in God* worship, work & witness at Timworth
- 20 M All who live in Timworth
- 21 T St George's, Bury
- 22 W *Growing in God* worship, work & witness at St George's
- 23 T The Anselm Community Centre
- 24 F The Mildenhall Road Estate
- 25 S The Mildenhall Road Estate Residents' Association
  
- 26 S Chestnut Court sheltered housing
- 27 M Acorn House
- 28 T Northumberland Avenue Methodist Church
- 29 W Kingdom Hall (Jehovah's Witnesses)
- 30 T Maltward Avenue, Winthrop Road & Westley Road areas

# Coming up ...

## SEPTEMBER

Monday 20 ST EDMUND'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH CRYPT  
**Churches Together in Bury St Edmunds and District**  
Annual General Meeting, 7.30pm

## OCTOBER

Saturday 30 ST MARY'S, WEST STOW

**Tea, Talk and Tunes**  
4.30pm onwards

Late afternoon entertainment in aid of St Mary's church funds ~ beginning with tea and featuring Clive Paine on the history of the church and a performance by the Suffolk Church Singers.

## NOVEMBER

Saturday 13 ST GEORGE'S, BURY ST EDMUNDS

**Grand Christmas Fayre**  
11.30am -2.30pm

refreshments *including* hot food and drink ~ a grand raffle ~ terrific tombola ~ win a bottle of wine game ~ 'new and unwanted' gift stall ~ homemade cakes and preserves and much more ...

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***Don't forget to let the 'Viral Bulletin' have details of forthcoming events at your church.***

***What are your plans for a Harvest Festival?***

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## ***DO YOU HAVE ANY PHOTOS ... ?***

*... of your church and people which you can submit  
(with permission from anyone depicted)  
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](mailto:adrian.mann@btinternet.com)