

Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry

VIRAL BULLETIN

3 January 2021

2nd Sunday of Christmas / Epiphany

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



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Epiphany *or*

'The Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles'

Isaiah 60.1-6 Ephesians 3.1-12 Matthew 2.1-12

As science has developed, astronomy (the study of the heavenly bodies) is no longer bound up with astrology (a study of their believed influence on human fortunes), though old ideas linger and horoscope columns survive. However, some ancient Egyptians, Babylonians and Persians did have detailed knowledge of celestial movements; as the earth was thought the centre of all Creation, interpretations were made particularly for it and seen as reliable wisdom.

Attempts made to identify some heavenly phenomenon as the Star of Bethlehem, over the likely years of Christ's birth, have been fairly fruitless. No other source mentions the Magi either, though there are hints in prophecy. Matthew's text does not say they were kings, nor how many there were of them (we say three, but the Eastern Church says twelve). Nor does it say they were from different countries. That they are said to have gone inquiring at Herod's court implies a certain standing, or importance, and the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh would have been very expensive. The whole story underlines the over-arching significance of the Child born, beyond the little Jewish nation.

Lancelot Andrewes, 17th Century Bishop of Winchester and noted scholar, preached to King James I's court on the Epiphany. He assumed the Magi met bitter wintry weather; in fact he called it 'an uneasy journey', 'at the worst time of the year'. T. S. Eliot, centuries later, adopted Andrewes' words in his more famous poem, but Eliot does not mention the star. For Andrewes, the star was for Gentiles, and so is ours too. The wise men came in our names as well as their own, he says, coming through difficulties and not waiting for an easier time. So likewise we are urged not to delay or make excuse, but to come to Christ making sure we follow the guidance of whatever form the leading light will take – our star.

A star is still a convenient metaphor for a leading sign, or portent. We use it to mark out whatever needs special attention, or very high praise. We speak of 'star quality' and of course 'stars' in entertainment. The night sky still holds power to inspire awe, - when we can observe it without mundane artificial light pollution.

In our lives we have our own personal leading lights that have led us on our way to the great light, the Light of the World. For some of us there is a sudden

blazing occasion that can be called an 'epiphany', a rare extraordinary event. For many the journey is more gradual, with lesser revelatory points, 'little epiphanies'. We know that St. Paul, originally secure in his educated Judaism, met his great epiphany (literally blinding) on the Damascus road. The part of his writing set for this feast speaks of the mystery of God's purpose to include the Gentiles, long hidden, but at last sending Paul as apostle to them.

We make Epiphany a season straight after Christmas; at Christmas we are glad to say Christ came for the whole world. This may somewhat overshadow, even blunt, the sharp significance of Epiphany. St. Paul however reminds us of the vital importance of the revealing of Christ to the Gentiles, the non-Jewish world. It should strike home to us that we are equal inheritors, not hangers-on. We are indeed a stage further on from where most Biblical authors would see us. And if the full inclusion of 'Gentiles' had to wait for God's good time, what more is waiting to be revealed? Epiphany isn't tied to the past, any more than is the present living world. God does not age, or lose power, however much our world gets distracted by developing problems. We must look forward with hope and trust; if we turn to Him, He will not turn away. For this we must never cease to give thanks.

Marianne Atkinson



Lark Valley and North Bury Churches **SERVICES THIS WEEK**

Sunday 3rd January *2nd Sunday of Christmas / Epiphany*

9.00am	Parish Communion (BCP)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
9.30pm	Parish Communion (CW)	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
9.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Timworth
10.00am	worship@fornham	Fornham All Saints
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	West Stow
11.00am	Parish Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds

Tuesday 5th January

8.30am	Morning Prayer	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	Fornham St Martin

Wednesday 6th January

9.30am	Eucharist for the Epiphany (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
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Thursday 7th January

9.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
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Friday 8th January

7.30am	Eucharist (CW)	St John's, Bury St Edmunds
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Sunday 10th January *Baptism of Christ / 1st Sunday of Epiphany*

8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Culford
9.00am	Parish Communion (CW)	All Saints', Bury St Edmunds
9.30pm	Parish Communion (CW)	St George's, Bury St Edmunds
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	Fornham St Martin
10.00am	Eucharist (CW)	Lackford
11.00am	Parish Eucharist (CW)	St John's, 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	

News from

Suffolk Refugee Support



The last few months have been extremely busy at Suffolk Refugee Support as we have adapted our services to the changing Covid-19 guidelines. Earlier in the Autumn we were able to arrange a few socially distanced activities, such as a family Halloween trip to Holywells Park that the children enjoyed hugely. Once lockdown measures were reintroduced, we switched back to remote work, with a focus on supporting more of our clients to access services online. We're delighted to have 80% of our registered English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students attending English classes online, with 36 people who had never used Zoom before attending lessons with 1- to-1 support from us. We've also seen excellent attendance at our online women's group meetings and yoga classes.

More generally, many of our clients are suffering the adverse effects of delays in the system. A record 76% of asylum seekers are waiting more than six months for a decision, increasing the already high levels of uncertainty and stress they face. The tribunal system is also struggling with backlogs. One client of ours and her elderly mother, who has a heart condition, twice travelled to London for an appeal hearing that was cancelled through no fault of their own. Others are waiting much longer to receive biometric cards that are the key ID documents proving their immigration status, with one refugee waiting since March for his wife and child to receive their cards.

Our working clients have also been adversely affected by Covid-19, with many working in jobs with a higher exposure to the virus, or in sectors which have suffered a greater loss of income and employment. Although the majority have good spoken English they can struggle with reading and writing and find using Universal Credit challenging, particularly as they often lack the computer or printer needed to upload the documents they are asked to provide.

The Home Office published their latest immigration statistics recently, and given the media coverage of the issue this year, you might be surprised to learn that asylum applications in the UK actually fell by 8% in the year ending September 2020. More than 75% of asylum seekers are now waiting more than 6 months for a decision. The figures also show that, including appeals, well over half of all asylum claims in this period were successful, meaning the majority of people proved they were in genuine need of protection.

Earlier this year, we were one of 270 organisations who signed a letter calling for asylum support rates to be increased during the pandemic. Now the rate has been increased...by just 3p per week (to £39.63), meaning charities like ourselves will have to continue supporting people with the essentials of life. The organisation Asylum Matters recently released a shocking report showing the harsh reality of life on asylum support.

On a brighter note, shortly before the second lockdown we met up with Osama, who we supported when he was an asylum seeker in Ipswich. Osama has refugee status now and is working once again as a TV presenter in London. He was visiting Ipswich to film a piece with ITV Anglia about his journey and to work with us on the 1000 Dreams refugee storytelling project. Osama told us how important it was “to have my children with me in Ipswich...to walk with me in the same streets I walked alone.”

It was lovely to see the whole family reunited again, and to hear how they are settling into their new lives.



Refugee

We think of him as safe beneath the steeple,
Or cosy in a crib beside the font,
But he is with a million displaced people
On the long road of weariness and want.
For even as we sing our final carol
His family is up and on that road,
Fleeing the wrath of someone else's quarrel,
Glancing behind and shouldering their load.
Whilst Herod rages still from his dark tower
Christ clings to Mary, fingers tightly curled,
The lambs are slaughtered by the men of power,
And death squads spread their curse across the world.
But every Herod dies, and comes alone
To stand before the Lamb upon the throne.

Malcolm Guite

from Sounding the Seasons, published by Canterbury Press

Outdoor Crib Service at All Saints' Bury St Edmunds



Over 30 people braved the cold weather and a brief shower to enjoy carols together on Christmas Eve. It was lovely to see families who had not been in church since March, together with some new families. Let us hope that it is not too long before we welcome them into the building again.

Claire Rose

Communications and Bookings Co-ordinator

We are pleased to announce the appointment of **Stefanie Inger** as the Communications and Bookings Co-ordinator for the Lark Valley and North Bury Team Ministry. The job will bring three smaller jobs together to make one 15 hours a week paid role.

Stefanie will:

- help clergy with the administration associated with baptisms, marriages and funerals
- look after room bookings at All Saints', Bury
- assist with our social media communications (websites, Facebook, Twitter) for all our churches

We expect Stefanie to start in mid-January, further details will be announced when we know them.

Peter Rose

Lark Valley and North Bury Churches

Praying Together

January 2021

For the wider community and church

- 1 F For all those affected by coronavirus
- 2 S For all facing debt after Christmas

- 3 S The town's shops and businesses
- 4 M Moyse's Hall Museum
- 5 T St Edmundsbury Cathedral
- 6 W St Edmund's Place sheltered housing
- 7 T Northgate Lodge sheltered housing
- 8 F Cryspen Court sheltered housing
- 9 S The housing, shops and businesses in and around St John's Street

- 10 S The Society of Friends
- 11 M The Salvation Army
- 12 T St John's church
- 13 W *Growing in God* worship, work & witness at St John's
- 14 T The Centre in St John's Street
- 15 F *Just Traid* shop and café
- 16 S King Edward VI School

- 17 S St Edmundsbury CEVAP School
- 18 M Sexton's Manor School, our *Open the Book* ministry there
- 19 T Thingoe Lodge sheltered housing
- 20 W All who live in Fornham All Saints
- 21 T Fornham All Saints church
- 22 F *Growing in God* worship, work & witness at Fornham All Saints
- 23 S Fornham All Saints Centre for Creative Learning

- 24 S Fornham All Saints Community Centre
- 25 M Fornham All Saints Village Hall
- 26 T Marham Park; Marham House Care Home
- 27 W Heath Farm Business Centre
- 28 T For all refugees & asylum seekers; Suffolk Refugee Support
- 29 F For those facing religious persecution
- 30 S For increased understanding between members of different faiths

- 31 S For those with no faith



The RSCM Music Sunday Anthem Competition 2021

The Royal School of Church Music is inviting composers to submit an anthem to celebrate Music Sunday 2021. The winner of the competition will receive a prize of £350 and the winning composition will be published by the RSCM and broadcast as part of the Big Music Sunday Service at Lichfield Cathedral on Sunday 6 June 2021, and locally by parish choirs using it in their Music Sunday services.

The Anthem, to be titled ***God of all creation*** (words below), must be for Sopranos, Altos and Unison Lower Voices with no divisi. It may be unaccompanied, or accompanied by organ or piano to a level not exceeding Grade V. The work submitted must be new and composed in 2021.

The Adjudication Panel will include the Director of the RSCM, Hugh Morris; Director of Music at Lichfield Cathedral, Ben Lamb; and Head of Publishing, Tim Ruffer. The decision of the panel is final, and they reserve the right not to make an award if the standard of entries does not, in their view, warrant it. The adjudicators will not enter into any correspondence with competitors.

Deadline for submissions, which must be in pdf format, is 12:00 GMT on Monday 1 March 2021 and should be sent to composition@rscm.com. There is no entry fee for the competition. Submissions should not bear the name of the composer; please use a pseudonym. Entrants are required to submit the PDF(s), with an accompanying e-mail supplying your name, address, e-mail address, and telephone number, and confirmation of the pseudonym you have used on your score. Also required is a statement by you as the composer that your submitted composition is entirely your own, original work, and that it has never been published or performed in public.

Words of the Anthem: God of all creation.

God of all creation, for whom the church, in liturgy and song,
has borne faithful witness through the centuries;
let us be your instruments of praise,
that in us may be found that new dimension of sound
which tunes our souls and bodies to the infinite beauty of your truth
and the profound glory of your eternal light.

*(Text by Gordon Giles, responding to a hymn by Fred Pratt Green, from 'Choir Prayers'
by Gordon Giles and Andrew Dow, to be published by the RSCM in 2021)*

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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