Lark Valley & North Bury Churches

www.northburychurches.org.uk
GENERAL INFORMATION

Team Rector North Bury & Priest-in-Charge Lark Valley Benefice
The Revd Canon Mark Haworth,
The Rectory, 59 Bennett Avenue, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 3JJ
Tel. 01284 755374 & 07932 160009
rectornorthburyteam@btinternet.com

Westcott House, Cambridge
Date of ordination: 1990 Ely Cathedral
Length of time in the benefice: NB 6 years by July; LV 5 years by December 2019
Other responsibilities and duties: **Rural Dean of Thingoe** from August 2014
  - Training incumbent
  - Diocesan Synod
  - Bishops Council
  - Diocesan Safeguarding Panel BC rep.
  - Diocesan Church Music Committee & RSCM C’tee Chair, Culford Village Hall Committee

Previous posts and experience: **Vicar of Rochdale** & training incumbent
  - RSCM Chair for Manchester Area

**Team Rector, Salford All Saints Team Ministry & Borough Dean of Salford,**
  - Bishop’s Council, Diocesan Synod,
  - Church & Society C’tee vice-chair & Communities Task Group convenor,
  - and training incumbent

**Bishop's Chaplain**, Peterborough
**College & School Chaplain**, Framlingham, Suffolk

**Vicar of The Swaffhams & Reach**, Diocese of Ely
  - **Rural Dean of Fordham**
  - Archdeaconry Sub-Warden of Readers
  - Diocesan Synod
  - Diocesan Pastoral Committee
  - RSCM Ely Area C’tee
  - Member Diocesan Mission Agencies C’tee
  - Millennium Planning Officer
  - SCP Chapter Secretary

**Assistant Curate**, Cherry Hinton & Teversham
  - Cambridge Deanery Chapter Clerk
  - Sessional Chaplain, Ely Cathedral

NATURE OF VACANT POST

**Team Vicar**, ultimately to be based in West Stow Rectory when that property is vacated by the DDO & Director of New Ministries; for the time being a 50% fte post as part of the team, shared with the Barrow Benefice 50% fte parish priest, housed in Barrow Rectory, and working across both, with access to the team office in North Bury.
THE LOCAL SETTING

The area served by the two benefices can be seen on www.achurchnearyou.com and on the team website.

The town
Bury St Edmunds is an attractive market and cathedral town whose population continues to expand and now exceeds 35,000. It retains a large rural hinterland and therefore has more social and cultural facilities than its size might suggest. The town is generally prosperous, although the Benefice has some of the more deprived wards in West Suffolk.

The population of Bury St Edmunds has historically drawn from Suffolk and post-war London overspill. It has recently become more diverse, and includes growing Muslim, Portuguese and East European communities. The North Bury Team (NBT) Benefice came into being in 2002, and comprises the three parishes of All Saints, St John and St George, with a population of approximately 26,000 in the northern half of the town, expanding with Marham Park’s 1100 new houses, and the planned development adjoining Westley of 450 houses and the re-sited hospital; the Lark Valley Benefice with its seven churches and population of approx.3,000 was a united benefice from 1997, and has been run together with the NB since December 2014; the new team of North Bury & Lark Valley with its 10 churches awaits legal formality this summer. Within the Lark Valley are the redundant CCT church of All Saints Wordwell, and the private chapel at Hengrave Hall where we are invited to conduct services of blessing after civil marriage in the Hall.

The variety of housing in the town is reflected in the benefice by: four former council estates (now owner-occupier and social housing); Victorian and Edwardian housing close to the town centre; semi-detached and detached suburban housing; streets of small Victorian artisan housing; and new infill housing built on brown-field sites. The town is well served by public transport and cycle paths, with good east-west road and rail links (Cambridge, Ely and Ipswich are all approx.30 miles away). The villages range from the town-edge commuter-rural to four remoter villages of 100-150 dwellings, and one of just 20. Culford School (a Methodist Foundation) is a major feature in its village where the parish church is also the school chapel.

Major employers include the West Suffolk Hospital, British Sugar, Greene King brewers, local government and light industry. The West Suffolk Hospital includes general, mental health and children’s wards, and St Nicholas' Hospice shares the same site. There is a well-established private hospital in the town. The team area includes several GP surgeries and dental practices.

Within North Bury there are four primary schools (one CE Voluntary Aided), a middle (academy) school, three upper schools (one CE Voluntary Controlled, one RC, one county) and West Suffolk College & University campus. There are no schools in the Lark Valley parishes, apart from Culford School (independent, Methodist-foundation with its own chaplain), no shops or garages, no doctor or health-centre, and just two public houses, one hotel, and three golf courses.
THE NEW TEAM BENEFICE

Prior to the creation of the North Bury Team Ministry in 2002, St John’s and St George’s had shared a priest-in-charge for 5 years, and the vicar of All Saints became the first team rector, of which the current post-holder is the third. The North Bury Team and Lark Valley Benefice have shared a ministry team for the past four years. The Pastoral Reorganisation uniting the two comes into effect later in 2019.

The new benefice comprises ten parishes, each of which has its own PCC:

St John the Evangelist, Bury St Edmunds

The church is near the centre and market place of the town, on St John’s Street. It was built in 1841 and serves the town’s retail, industrial and transport quarter. Of the three town churches, St John’s has the most obvious identity. It developed a Tractarian tradition in the nineteenth century, and now represents the affirming and inclusive strands of the Anglican Catholic tradition.

St John’s observes all feast days and festivals and hosts a Walsingham Cell. It also celebrates with the monthly ‘World of Worship’ service.

St John’s (electoral roll 59) combines older, long-standing members with some younger couples, children and single people. In term-time we welcome parents and children into Small Church after school, for a snack and chat followed by a short service.

The church is used by many choirs and organisations, and has been host to town trails and exhibitions.
St George’s Church, on the Mildenhall Estate.

St George’s Church, on the Mildenhall Estate.

St George, Bury St Edmunds

The church stands on Anselm Avenue, on the northern edge of the town. The church opened in 1951 and serves two post-war former council-housing estates (Mildenhall Road & Howard), and will include the new development at Marham Park.

St George’s (electoral roll 32) has the smallest congregation, most being elderly who live in the parish, with low car-ownership. They may be small in numbers, but they are very active and put on many concerts, fayres and seasonal services.

An active craft group meet monthly in the vicarage, next door to the church.

All Saints Church, in Park Road.

All Saints Bury, Bury St Edmunds

The church is on Park Road, at a high point of the town near the iconic water tower. The church began in 1953 and serves the western and more suburban area of the town part of the benefice.

Most worshippers at All Saints Bury (electoral roll 62) are aged over 50, with some younger families and young people.

The church and hall host many community activities, eg RCSM Music exams, Brownies, Hart Beeps for babies, U3A among many others. Choirs, musicians and the local Stagecoach Company often choose All Saints for their performances. The Ofsted-rated ‘Outstanding’ All Saints Pre-School is in the hall weekdays.

The church’s outreach includes a pop-up café in church (mostly catering for the families of the preschoolers), a Fair Trade stall, an Over 60s Fellowship Group and a Parent and Toddler Group.

A group from the church regularly go into Sexton’s Manor primary school to deliver Open the Book.
All Saints, Fornham All Saints

The church occupies a prominent position in the village and is well cared for by the community. The village itself has a pub, small businesses and a coffee shop.

All Saints (electoral roll 44) has a lively Family Service at the start of each month, with a worship band. Families are also ministered to through Messy Church which takes place during school holidays. The adults enjoy it as much as the children!

A sheltered housing complex, Thingoe Lodge, is located behind the church. Once a month the church provides Teas for the residents, which is greatly enjoyed. There is also a monthly Evening Praise service which is equally well supported by residents and villagers.

St Martin, Fornham St Martin

The church is situated on the main road to Bury St Edmunds, between the pub and the recreation ground. It is well known for its brightly coloured hassocks and warm welcome.

Most worshippers at St Martin’s (electoral roll 27) are aged 50 or over. They regularly host concerts, fundraising for the ‘Tower Project’ which aims to rehang the bells and create a kitchen.

The church family are very active in the community, supporting a weekly communion service in Fornham House Nursing Home. The grounds of the House host the annual Fete, organised by the church. It is hugely popular, as are the regular Book Sales which see the church transformed with thousands of books for the day.
St Mary, Culford

The church (electoral roll 20) is to be found in the parkland of Culford Independent School (a Methodist Foundation), next to the old Hall. The School use the church regularly for its own services and there is a good relationship between the two communities.

Clergy go into Culford Pre-Prep fortnightly to engage the children through reflective storytelling, and the children are involved in decorating the church for major festivals. They do a beautiful job!

Many past pupils come back to get married in their old School Church, as do local people as the old Hall provides a wonderful Wedding Reception venue. The church has a real ministry to these couples who are always bowled over by the warm welcome that they receive.

St Lawrence, Lackford

St Lawrence is situated on the edge of Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Lackford Lakes. The church is in a beautiful position on a walk between the Lakes and the village and people often stop to admire it. Unfortunately its position away from the village means that it cannot be left unlocked every day, as our other churches are.

The church (electoral roll 10) recently reordered the back end to provide a kitchen, toilet and tower meeting room to provide community space for the village. In the spring and summer a weekly 'Coffee and Catch Up' in the church sees a regular group of villagers coming together.

Lackford hosts the annual Pet Service for the Benefice in July, which is always well attended by pets and people alike. Both are remarkably well behaved!
St Andrew, Timworth

St Andrew’s church is situated away from the tiny village of Timworth, surrounded by fields and well appreciated by the many dog walkers who pass by it.

The church (electoral roll 18) is purely Prayer Book, celebrating Mattins and Holy Communion each month. It is also famous for its hospitality – the bakers in Timworth are renowned! In the summer the church hosts a Cream Tea with summer music which is just lovely.

St Catherine, Flempton and Hengrave

St Catherine’s (electoral roll 6) is the parish church for the villages of Flempton and Hengrave. It sits on the crossroads in Flempton and is the only community space in either village. The churchyard is managed for wildlife and is home to many wildflowers, insects, birds and snakes.

Nearby Hengrave Hall is a popular wedding venue, where clergy regularly take Wedding Blessings.

St Mary, West Stow and Wordwell

St Mary’s (electoral roll 16) is well loved and has a Family Service at the start of the month which begins with breakfast. The church is fundraising for a ‘pews and loos’ project which will remove some pews from the back of the church and install an eco toilet in the churchyard.

In the tiny village of Wordwell All Saints Church is in the care of The Churches Conservation Trust and is well worth a visit.
**WORSHIP**

There is however an eclectic mix of spiritualities across the benefices, with people who feel at home with Celtic and Taize worship, Walsingham, Spring Harvest and Greenbelt. Generally it can be said that we put energy and resources into our music ministry. All our churches welcome the full ministry of women.

The current pattern of Sunday and weekday services is shown below, all services are Common Worship unless indicated. Seasonal changes and additions as announced, with the full keeping of Holy Week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>8am</th>
<th>Holy Communion (BCP) [5-16, av 10] [3-9, av 5]</th>
<th>All Saints, &amp; Lark Valley</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.30am</td>
<td>Parish Communion (Family Service 2nd Sunday) [12-25 av.17]</td>
<td>All Saints</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9.30am</td>
<td>Parish Communion [32-55, av 40]</td>
<td>St John</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.30am</td>
<td>Holy Communion (BCP) 1st Sunday, Matins (BCP) &amp; Sermon 3rd Sunday</td>
<td>Timworth</td>
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<tr>
<td>10am</td>
<td>Family Communion [20-35 av 23] except Family Services FAS &amp; West Stow (both 1st Sundays)</td>
<td>Lark Valley</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.30am</td>
<td>Family Service (3rd Sunday) followed by Team Lunch</td>
<td>All Saints</td>
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<tr>
<td>11am</td>
<td>Sung Eucharist (25-48, av 38)</td>
<td>St John</td>
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<tr>
<td>3pm</td>
<td>Invitation services and events as announced</td>
<td>St George</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6pm</td>
<td>Benefice Evensong (BCP) &amp; Sermon followed by refreshments [20-35, av 24]</td>
<td>Lark Valley</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6pm</td>
<td>'A World of Worship’ – Taize, Celtic, contemporary styles of prayer (4th Sunday)</td>
<td>St John</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Choral Evensong (BCP) &amp; Sermon (5th Sunday)</td>
<td>St John</td>
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<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>8.30am</th>
<th>Morning Prayer Mass Walsingham Cell Mass (monthly)</th>
<th>LV/month St John St John</th>
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<tr>
<td>6pm</td>
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<tr>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>8.30am</th>
<th>Morning Prayer Eucharist (8-16, av.12) Meditation</th>
<th>St George Fornhams St John</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10am</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>8.30am</td>
<td>Morning Prayer Eucharist [10-19, av.15] Mini Messy Church (1st week)</td>
<td>St John St John All Saints</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.30am</td>
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<tr>
<td>10am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>8.30am</td>
<td>Morning Prayer Eucharist (1st &amp; 3rd BCP) [3-15, av 7] 'Small Church'</td>
<td>All Saints All Saints St John</td>
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<td>9.30am</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.30pm</td>
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Occasional offices 2018

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Baptisms</th>
<th>Weddings</th>
<th>Church Funerals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lark Valley</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>St George</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Saints</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St John</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
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Funerals are also conducted at the local West Suffolk Crematorium, and Borough Cemetery – 100 per annum. Divorced people are remarried in consultation with the Bishop, and the team maintains an open and encouraging position regarding the administration of Holy Baptism, admission to Holy Communion from the age of 7, but candidates for Confirmation are few and far between, though our CEVAP school is working towards celebrating a termly at least school eucharist.

MINISTRY AND MISSION

The Team & Benefice see ministry as the response of all baptised people to the call of God to serve his mission through the Church and in the world. Clergy and laity work together in such areas as pastoral care, ministry among children and families, leading worship, administration and routine maintenance. All the parishes have engaged with the diocesan ‘Growing in God’ initiative, and not least via the united Team & Benefice Council, which like the deanery synod meets three times/annum. A monthly village magazine (Church-run) serves all 7 Lark Valley villages, and we now have a quarterly ‘Lark & Linnett Journal’ for all 10 churches, shortly to be superceded by a new Team Newsletter; pilgrimages, retreats, quiet days and other events are all planned into our Calendar, which is refreshed and published monthly. In St John’s and St George’s the Full Measure Project is an important part of church life; it is lay-led and encompasses Christian stewardship of money and non-specialist pastoral visiting; All Saints similarly with ‘Giving in Grace’, and the Lark Valley parishes are addressing regular and committed giving alongside legacy encouragement. Home and study groups currently meeting are mostly lay-led. We maintain a strong ‘Praying Together’ monthly prayer-cycle of all ten electoral rolls and ‘wider belonging’, alongside daily prayers for particular parts of the communities we seek to serve.

Our staff team of authorised ministers comprises the Team Rector, a Team Vicar (post currently vacant), a House for Duty Priest, an SSM curate, two stipendiary curates, an Assistant Priest (SSM), an AOP ordinand, 3 PTO clergy, one Reader,
with the DDO & Director of New Ministries resident in the benefice who assists monthly. The staff team works collaboratively in a lively, hospitable, humorously self-deprecating, purposeful, manner at which it organises and reviews our ministry & mission, and the weekly Pew Sheet, at a weekly staff meeting. There are also away-days with a team facilitator three times a year. Other clergy who worship with us regularly and who have the Bishop’s PTO (but who are not on the staff team) offer invaluable help with ministry and services. A team of 5 Lay Elders assists with pastoral ministry and some worship; and we hold full ‘ministry team’ meetings from time-to-time.

Education

Members of the staff team and the congregations serve on the governing bodies of schools in the benefice. The Team Rector, HfD Priest and curates have considerable input into several schools via weekly/fortnightly Collective Worship or other classroom involvement, and are building and developing links across the town. All the primary and the one middle school hold seasonal services in team churches. A group of lay people from All Saints visit Sextons Manor Community primary school fortnightly as part of the Open the Book Project, which presents Bible stories as part of collective worship. We try to offer a sessional chaplaincy presence at the West Suffolk College & University campus. Church members contribute to the work of the joint Diocese/Cathedral sponsored Discovery Centre, which includes projects and storytelling in schools across the Diocese.

Children, young people and families

Work with children is concentrated at All Saints, with its Pre-School, and Parent and Toddler Group with monthly Mini Messy Church. Children can be prepared to receive Holy Communion before Confirmation in all our churches. There is at present no work with teenagers at any of our churches because of a combination of natural cycles and very successful youth ministry in other (non-Anglican) churches in Bury St Edmunds, though we have the chance to share in that in the Anselm Centre at St George’s, run by our Presbyterian colleagues, and will do so at All Saints Bury when possible also.

Older people

Clergy visit many of the local residential homes regularly, and provide Holy Communion for residents, one weekly and a number of others monthly. Members of the staff team and Lay Elders also take Holy Communion to the homes of those who are sick or housebound. Lay people are actively involved in giving lifts to church for those who would otherwise have difficulty in making their way to worship.

Health and healing

Following up the care of our own parishioners, and we regularly visit any who find themselves in West Suffolk Hospital, and two of our PTO clergy are volunteer chaplains at St Nicholas’ Hospice. St John’s has prayers for healing (including laying on of hands and anointing) monthly after the 3rd Sunday service, also at Fornham St Martin at the 1st Tuesday 10am service.
Parish, Deanery and other organisations

The Full Measure Project plays an important social role at St John’s and St George’s. St John’s has a Walsingham Cell and links with Affirming Catholicism, Inclusive Church and the Guild of the Servants of the Sanctuary. The All Saints’ Fellowship serves the over-60s, and its ‘Singing for Fun’ meets monthly on a Saturday afternoon. Laity and clergy play an active part in the Deanery and in Churches Together in Bury & District, where we are involved in Christian Aid and regular learning events and courses. People from all our churches are involved in other organisations, including Mothers’ Union, Samaritans, various choirs and the local Hospice.

Buildings and the wider community

St George’s is linked to the Anselm Centre, a community centre which the church uses on Sundays. It is run by the local residents’ association and we attend their management meetings. All Saints’ Bury is linked to its own church hall and Osborne Room, which are used daily by a wide variety of church and community groups, and choirs. The Team & Benefice Office is based at All Saints. The former St John’s Infant School, now The Centre, stands next to the church and has been substantially improved. It is run by an ecumenical trust, which employs a part-time Community Development Worker, and includes Just Traid, a Fairtrade shop and community café which is open five days a week.

Growing Church and nurturing faith

Since 2008, about twenty people (clergy and lay) from across the benefice have attended *Leading Your Church Into Growth* (LYCIG) courses. The benefice hosted a diocesan LYCIG taster day in autumn 2014; the team rector is a member of the National Estate Churches Network (NECN) and he and colleagues attend the annual provincial day in Birmingham or London. We use *Emmaus* and more recently *Pilgrim* nurture material among our congregations, as well as with those who are interested in learning more about Christian faith, to give members more confidence in speaking about their faith. St Johns maintains a full stock of ‘Gospel Imprint’ leaflets, being a town-centre church open daily dawn-dusk. The benefice has Delta and St George’s Study Groups, and has three Lent Groups each year, there are also Lent Lunches across the Lark Valley.

Staff Team members are encouraged to make at least one annual retreat, attend study days, CME and ‘improving events’, and to take a designated but flexible rest-day; a Holidays & Time Away Calendar is maintained to assist in the planning of services and events.

Expenses

Clergy expenses-of-office are always paid in full and split between the two benefices.