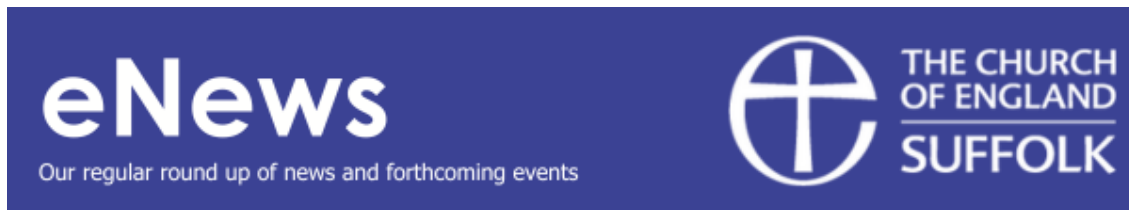


**Thursday 16 November 2023**



**The Church of England has awarded £9 million to dioceses for repairs and specialist advice to parishes.**

A total of £2.8 million has been allocated for 30 Church Buildings Support Officers across the country to give specialist advice on the management, conservation, repair and development of church buildings, including community use alongside worship. A further £6.2 million has been allocated across 41 dioceses for making grants of up to £12,000 for repairs to churches.

The grants come from Buildings for Mission, funded by the Church Commissioners and administered by the Archbishops' Council over the period 2023 to 2025. We are delighted that

our Diocese is one of the thirty that has been allocated funding for a Church Buildings Support Officer. This role is also funded in partnership with the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust.

To read more on this story, [please click here](#).

**Deanery Drop-In Sessions - are here to help!**



This week we held the first Deanery Drop In Session, designed to help benefices with their Plans for Growth. We met at the Salvation Army in Stowmarket, and various teams from the Diocesan office were there offering their advice on Children's and Families' Ministry, Youth Ministry, Giving, Grants, Discipleship, Communications and Vocations – a real opportunity to have conversations and help people. Do you have a burning question that you need advice about? Tell us in advance and we will be ready for you!

Our next Drop In Sessions are on:

Wednesday 6 December | St Mary's Church, Hadleigh IP7 5DT | 3.00pm to 5.00pm

book [here](#) or 6.00pm – 8.00pm book [here](#)

Tuesday 23 January | Zoom | 3.00pm to 5.00pm book [here](#) or 6.00pm – 8.00pm book [here](#)

Tuesday 6 February | Thomas Clarkson Centre, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3JT | 3.00pm to 5.00pm book [here](#) or 6.00pm – 8.00pm book [here](#)

Monday 13 May | St Augustine's Community Hub, Ipswich IP3 8TH | 3.00pm to 5.00pm book [here](#) or 6.00pm - 8.00pm book [here](#).

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### **Safeguarding Sunday - 19 November**

Safeguarding Sunday is an awareness-raising campaign for churches run by the charity Thirtyone:eight. Each November, thousands of churches from diverse backgrounds and traditions across the UK come together to reflect on their own safeguarding journey, and to highlight and celebrate all the good work that is being done by so many behind the scenes to protect vulnerable people. To find out more about what is happening and to download resources for your church, please [click here to visit their website](#).

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### **Vocations Spotlight - Jo Pitt, School Foundation Governor**



"I am keenly aware of the stresses suffered by the young today and believe that if children can get an understanding of the love of God, that may just help them at a time of crisis and hopefully lead them, in the fullness of time, to a greater relationship with God and greater spirituality. As a Foundation Governor I attend Collective Worship about once a term... I join the Headteacher and the other Foundation Governor for meetings once a term where we discuss developments and ideas for demonstrating the ethos of the school. The Foundation Governors carry out interviews with the children to give them a voice... I truly believe that the ethos of our school provides the very best beginning for all its students". Read Jo's full story on her vocation journey on our [website here](#).

### **Advent and Christmas Events**

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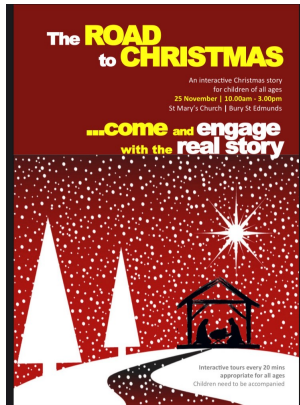


**Advent Vigil – singers needed!** St Michael's Church, Framlingham IP13 9BJ is hosting an Advent Vigil on Sunday 10 December. Music will be directed by Christopher Borrett, with the choir of St Mary-le-Tower, Ipswich; Framlingham College Chapel Choir and

the Sing Praise! school choir. As well as traditional advent carols there will be anthems by Weir, Warlock, Heyburn and Rutter. Additional singers are invited to join by attending the final rehearsal at 2.00pm on the day. Tea will be provided before the service commences at

5.30pm. If you would like to sing, email [musicadmin@stmaryletower.org](mailto:musicadmin@stmaryletower.org)

### The Road to Christmas:



Experience the Christmas story - complete with actors, costumes and scenery. Come along to St Mary's Church, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1RT on 25 November. Tours every 20 minutes from 10.00am until 3.00pm. Suitable for all ages. Children to be accompanied by an adult.

**Christmas Tree Festival:** St Mary le Tower, Ipswich looks forward to welcoming you to its famous free Christmas tree festival opening on 30 November. A celebration of the life and community of Ipswich, the festival will include more than 100 real and artificial trees sponsored or bought by a whole variety of businesses, charities, community groups and individuals. This year, money donated will be split between the Mayor of Ipswich's charities and the church. For more information visit [www.stmaryletower.org](http://www.stmaryletower.org).



**Follow the Star: Join the Song:** Inviting choirs and singing groups of all ages to learn and sing a new version of The First Nowell. Find out more [here](#). All the free downloads are on [www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com), including downloadable music tracks, logos, poster templates, social media graphics, web banners and more.



### Suffolk Carols

This is a joint initiative from Suffolk Sounds Radio and Lightwave to promote carol singing in all sorts of venues, strengthen community and raise funds for local charities. It's really easy to take part: any community carol-singing event between 4 and 24 December can join in. Please visit 'Suffolk Carols' [here](#), and register your event and the charity you are raising funds for and this will be advertised on Suffolk Sounds radio programmes and via the Suffolk Carols Facebook presence.

**St Matthew's Church of England Primary School raising funds for charity with a new Christmas song:** The song and video by children from 21 schools will be available on YouTube, Spotify and Amazon this Friday. Chris Warren, Music Coordinator, wrote the song focusing on some really relevant themes. He said, *"My motive for the song was 'think bigger and do better' and I wanted the children to know they are not on their own, and that there is real meaning behind the words of the song"*. Ask your smart speaker to play 'Children of the World' by Chris Warren to raise funds or visit YouTube [here](#) from Friday.

**Christmas Market at St Edmundsbury Cathedral:** St Edmundsbury Cathedral will

once again welcome all to their Christmas Market from Thursday 23 November to Saturday 25 November. Doors will open from 10.00am – 4.30pm each day offering over 50 stalls, entertainment from local schools and the Haverhill Silver Band plus special Tower Tours.

**Inspiring Angels:** Get creative and join our Christmas campaign. Angels are a symbol of love, of presence, pointing the way to the moment it all changed, when God came in the person of Jesus to be with us in the world, to share in love and pain alongside us. Angels appeared to tell us about the birth of a baby in a manger. Angels sang, bursting with joy, to some shepherds, and told them, "Go and see!" All the resources for this campaign are available on our website [here](#).

**Drawing near to God in Advent: prayer, postures and practices:** Tuesday 28 November 7.00pm - 8.30pm, online. Bishop Mike will lead four Zoom sessions through Advent looking at aspects of prayer (e.g praise, intercession...), Christian postures (e.g. peace, joy...) and associated practices to help us grow closer to God over Advent. These will run on Tuesday 28 November | Tuesday 5 December | Thursday 14 December and Tuesday 19 December. There will be plenty of time for questions and discussion. All are very welcome! Book [here](#).

#### **Adventurous Advent: Zoom recording**

The Adventurous Advent Zoom meeting was recorded so you can view the ideas discussed and the sharing of resources for individuals, study groups, family activities and [more here](#).

**The festive season can be difficult for many:** Cruse Bereavement Support volunteers are trained in all types of bereavement and are available to help those grieving. They would be delighted to hear of any services being held, enabling those who are struggling without loved ones at Christmas to be able to reflect and celebrate their lives. Please contact [Dawne.Hart@cruse.org.uk](mailto:Dawne.Hart@cruse.org.uk) if your church would like to arrange a meeting or visit. To enable Cruse to continue offering this much valued service they would be grateful if you were able to fundraise for them during your Christmas giving: [www.cruse.org.uk](http://www.cruse.org.uk)

## Events

### **Messy Messiah**

Saturday 18 November, 6.00pm

St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS



Join us for a unique performance of Handel's famous oratorio, Messiah, with over 200 performers. As well as the usual adult choir and orchestra, there will be a children's choir drawn from local primary schools, as well as up to 60 dancers. The evening will be introduced by Mr Handel himself, in full period costume. Not to be

missed! Tickets on sale at £5 each (under 16s free), available [here](#).

## **Civic Celebration of Faith and Community**

Saturday 18 November, 2.30pm to 4.30pm  
Ipswich Town Hall, King Street IP1 1DH

Inter-Faith week offers a time for dialogue and deeper understanding between people of different faiths and during the week the Diocesan Facebook page will be hosting a number of profiles from people of different faiths in Suffolk. We hope that this small initiative will act as a catalyst for the building of relationships between the Church of England and other faith communities locally. If you would like to find out more, please email [the Revd Tom Mumford](mailto:the.Revd.Tom.Mumford), Diocesan Interfaith Advisor.

### **Fundraising From Statutory Funders**

Tuesday 21 November, 12.00pm - 1.30pm (aimed at larger churches/cathedrals), [Book here](#) or 7.00pm – 8.30pm (aimed at small/medium churches) [Book here](#)

This webinar is designed specifically for people who are looking to secure funding from statutory sources for carbon-cutting projects. Statutory funding is funding from government sources, and churches often don't realise that this is even an option and overlook it. Statutory funding can take the form of grants, contracts and initiatives, from bodies at national, regional and local levels, including local councils.

### **Big Band Jazz with Horn Factory**

Wednesday 22 November, 7.00pm  
St Mary's Church, East Bergholt CO7 6TG

Come along and witness an exciting Big Band Jazz with Horn Factory performance in aid of church funds. Tickets cost £10 and are available from [www.ticketsource.co.uk/east-bergholt-pcc](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/east-bergholt-pcc) or by emailing [lesley.cherry@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lesley.cherry@hotmail.co.uk) or calling 07843 644318.

### **Early Steps Information Evening**

Thursday 23 November, 8.00pm



An opportunity to explore and learn more about fostering, adoption and supported lodgings. Also a chance to ask any questions you may have. To book your place, please [click here](#).

### **Early Steps**

### **PCC Workshops**

**Insurance for Parishes** | Wednesday 29 November | Book [here](#)

**Gifts in Wills** | Thursday 30 November 12.00pm to 1.00pm | Book [here](#)

### **The Work of the Bury St Edmunds Cathedral Archaeologist**

Thursday 30 November, 7.00pm  
St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS

Come along for the final 'Cathedrals at Night' session with the Cathedral Archaeologist,

Alison Dickens BA MCIfA. Alison will talk about what being a cathedral archaeologist entails, looking at the legal setting, responsibilities and how the archaeology of the Cathedral Precinct sits within the broader context of the historic Abbey of St Edmund. Tickets are just £10.00 for the talk, refreshments and a tour. [Book here.](#)

### **Bishops' Teaching morning: The Gospel of Mark, with Professor George van Kooten**

Saturday 25 November 9.30am - 12.30pm

Salvation Army Hall, Violet Hill Road, Stowmarket IP14 1NE

Bishop Martin and Bishop Mike invite you to a study morning on the Gospel of Mark with guest speaker Professor George van Kooten from the Faculty of Divinity at the University of Cambridge, who will be asking what is the genre of Mark's gospel, what is its wider context and the thrust of its argument? Book early to avoid disappointment! Free of charge, please book [here](#). Enquiries to Lesley Steed on 07485 348889 or [lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org).

### **Vocation Conversations**

Tuesday 5 December 7.00pm - 8.00pm by Zoom



This is the second in a series of evening conversations for anyone who is thinking about the question 'how do I know what God is asking me to do?'. Everyone is welcome to join us on Zoom, this time Archdeacon David will share his vocational journey, with plenty of time for comments, questions and conversations. To book, please

[click here.](#)

### **Emergency Services Carol Service**

Monday 11 December, 7.00pm

St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS

You are invited to the annual carol service for our emergency services – police, fire and ambulance - from across the county. It is an opportunity for you to gather to thank them for all they do to protect people in Suffolk. The address this year will be given by Bishop Mike, there will be traditional carols, and music from the Suffolk Rock Choir, the Stowmarket Salvation Army Band and County High School Chamber choir. Please come along and join in, all are welcome.

### **In the beginning was the story... Approaching the New Testament**

Starts 1 May 2024 7.00pm to 9.30pm

Earl Stonham Village Hall, Forward Green IP14 5HJ

This course looks at the beginnings of what became Christianity in the writings of the New Testament, and explores their narrative features. The New Testament writers passed on the gospel of Jesus Christ not as a collection of facts or doctrines, but as a series of stories that shaped people's lives. What can we learn from them about the challenges we face in doing the same in our day? Please book early [here](#).

**Statistics for Mission Returns:** Following Bishop Martin's email dated 20 October, if you have not already done so, we encourage you to complete your Statistics for Mission via the National Church's Online Parish Returns Portal. The portal may be accessed here: <https://parishreturns.churchofengland.org>. The Statistics for Mission team recently held two webinars on using the portal from a parish and diocesan perspective. The team, along with Archdeacon David, also outlined the importance of capturing data at various levels. Videos of the webinars are available to watch [here via YouTube](#). If you have any questions on statistics, or issues accessing the portal, please contact [statistics@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:statistics@cofesuffolk.org) and one of the team would be happy to help you.

**Dwelling in Word Passage for 2023-2024:** At Advent 2023 we will change our Dwelling in the Word passage from Col 1.15-29 to a new passage - please forward suggestions for that passage (which we use at many diocesan meetings and other gatherings through the Church's year) by email to [Bishop Mike](#).

**Avocado plant looking for a new home:** Bishop Martin is looking for a warm home for the 2.5m potted avocado tree from Kagera that he has nurtured the past four years. It no longer fits in his house and over the Winter it mustn't fall below 10 degrees at night, so he is looking for a tall warm greenhouse or similar space, or else he will have to cut the top off. If anyone can help, please get in touch with the Bishop's Office on 01473 252829.

### **Vacancies**

[Rector](#) | Walton and Trimley | Closing date: 20 November

[Team Rector](#) | The Forest Heath Team Benefice | Closing date: 24 November

[Events and Fundraising Assistant](#) | St Edmundsbury Cathedral | Closing date: 29 November

[Director of Music](#) | Woodbridge

[Priest in Charge and Archdeaconry Mission Enabler](#) | Sproughton with Burstall, Copdock with Washbrook and Belstead

[Rector](#) | Beccles

River Church, Ipswich are recruiting various posts - all details at:

[riverchurchipswich.org/vacancies](http://riverchurchipswich.org/vacancies)

[Click here to print and share with others](#)



**Our mailing address is:**

Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, 4 Cutler Street, Ipswich. Suffolk, England IP1 1UQ

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