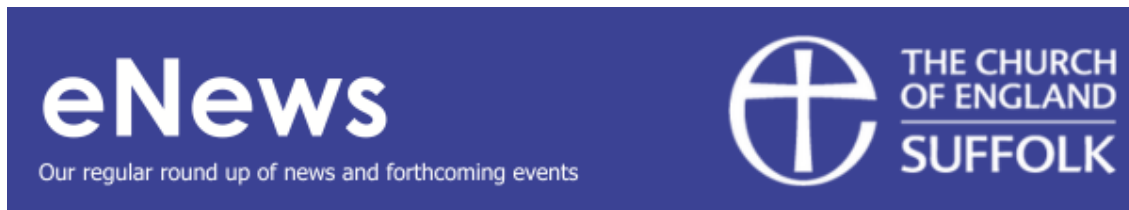


Thursday 9 November 2023



A church's online presence has helped it grow



The church serving Haverhill and Withersfield has gone from strength to strength with more people wanting to spread the word following the impact of the pandemic. St Mary's Church reached out to fill a gap when the pandemic struck and now it is reaping dividends with more people signing up to commit to helping others. A total of 17 adults were present for a confirmation service led by Bishop Martin, the most to

be confirmed at Haverhill in one service for 34 years. Bishop Martin said: *"Confirmations seem to be booming in Suffolk, as we can see from the confirmation of 17 wonderful people at St Mary's in Haverhill."*

The Revd Max Drinkwater said: *"Another strength is our online presence, which has attracted people in the local area. It gives people the option to engage in worship in a way that helps them to encounter God. Many people don't choose one or the other, but use both online and in-person worship at different times."*

Read the full story [here](#).

Warm Welcome Campaign

The winter is especially tough on people who feel lonely and isolated and difficult for those struggling to heat their homes or get enough to eat. The Warm Welcome campaign is a network of venues from community centres to churches providing warm, friendly spaces to keep warm, connect, and make new friends. You can now register your space to be part of a UK movement for a fairer and friendlier society, built by local communities, so everyone can thrive and knows where to turn to for warmth, welcome, friendship and support. Registering is quick and easy to do, and only takes a few minutes. Once you've registered, we will give you lots of help and support, and access to useful resources, tips, and guides. Find out more and register your warm space here: warmwelcome.uk.



Warm Welcome Campaign

Inter-Faith Week 13-19 November

Suffolk is a much more diverse county than many people think, not least when it comes to religious beliefs. We would be delighted if you join us at our Civic Celebration (details below) where representatives of faith communities will gather to talk, share, and build relationships. All are very welcome!

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, Diocesan Interfaith Advisor at tom.mumford@cofesuffolk.org

School celebrates 'good' rating from Ofsted

Pupils and staff at a Suffolk school are celebrating after achieving a 'good' rating from Ofsted – with inspectors praising the school's strong 'family feel'. Inspectors visited Stoke-by-Nayland Church of England Primary School, close to the Suffolk/Essex border, in September, rating it 'good' in each category. Read the full story [here](#).

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, 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. Customisable carol sheets will soon be available [here](#) and please use the Suffolk Sounds backing track if you haven't got musical accompaniment. 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.

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](#).

Hope Together: Christmas shop now open with beautifully illustrated gift books, perfect for stocking fillers, as well as Christmas cards to give out at Christmas carol services and events - while also supporting the work of Hope Together. Find out more [here](#).

Adventurous Advent: Wednesday 15 November, 7.30pm by Zoom: An invitation to all! If you feel inspired to create an impact with an Adventurous Advent in your parishes and communities, do join this Zoom meeting: an opportunity for conversations and the sharing of ideas and resources for individuals, study groups, family activities, as well as formal and informal worship ideas. Please register by emailing lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org and you will receive the Zoom link. We look forward to seeing you!

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](#).

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 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

Events

Deanery Drop-in Sessions

Monday 13 November | Salvation Army, Violet Hill Road, Stowmarket IP14 1NE

Wednesday 6 December | St Mary's Church, Hadleigh IP7 5DT



We will be offering a number of drop-ins around the diocese to give you a chance to meet with us and tell us what you need to deliver your Plan for Growth. Each drop-in will run from 3.00pm to 5.00pm, and then 6.00pm to 8.00pm. Come when you like and talk to us. If you have a specific question you can email us in advance so we know what you need – please send your emails to helen.prior-townsend@cofesuffolk.org. There will be resources available for you to take away, as well as members of different teams present on the day: finance, DAC, buildings, giving, parish support, mission

and ministry and so on. Do come along, we are really looking forward to seeing you.

PCC Workshops

Digital Giving | Tuesday 14 November 12.00pm to 1.00pm | Book [here](#)

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

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

How to edit a video for your church's social media and website

Wednesday 15 November, 11.00am - 12.00pm online

Recording a video is a great way to welcome, encourage and pray with your community online. In this webinar, you'll learn how to use the simple video editing tools on Canva.com and gain confidence creating and downloading a video. Sign up [here](#).

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](#).

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 or by contacting lesley.cherry@hotmail.co.uk / 07843 644318.

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.

Vocation Conversations

Tuesday 5 December 7.00-8.00pm
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](#).

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

The Bible is full of stories, so it's not surprising that the Jewish rabbi Jesus told so many. Or that he soon became the subject of the stories that his followers put together from

what they remembered of him. But the stories of Jesus, gathered up in the gospels, don't seem to have made much headway in the epistles, which hardly mention his ministry in Judea and Galilee. This reflects the transition from a story-based faith to something based on beliefs. Or does it?

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?

Book early [here](#).

Notices

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 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

[Priest in Charge](#) | Wickham Market & Pettistree | Closing date: 13 November

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

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

[Director of Music](#) | Woodbridge

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

[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

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



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