









## Saint Francis with Saint Clare





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St Francis with St Clare is a diverse and caring church built at the heart of its community, growing as the Chantry estate was developed in the 1950's. It is much more than a church building or landmark – to the people who worship here, it is a space of sanctuary where family gather together. To those in the community it is a safe haven in times of need, and a place of celebration in times of joy.





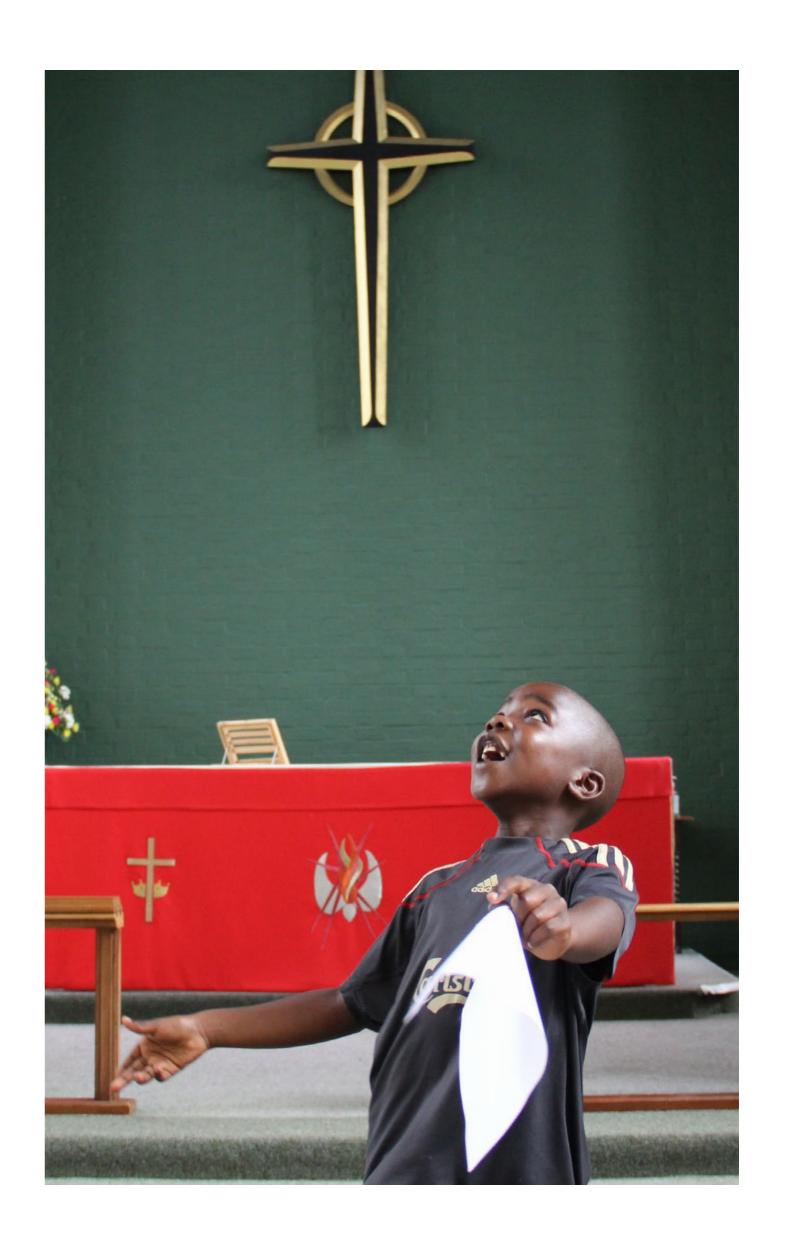
## A New Beginning

After 25 years as partners in a large multi-church parish, we find ourselves about to enter a new phase of our journey. On August 1st, we became a single-parish benefice again and a community whose vision is firmly fixed on the two communities of Chantry and Pinewood. Whilst there have been many positive things about working in partnership with two other churches across a wider area, we see this new beginning as an exciting opportunity for us to embrace being a local church for local people.

This new phase also comes at a delicate stage, following on from the Coronavirus pandemic and the challenges that has presented to our church over the past 18 months. Financially, we face the challenge of paying our parish share as an individual parish (Over the next five years we are seeking to increase our parish share fivefold). Additionally, our Reader, and a key member of our ministry team, has had to step back for health reasons. It is a position from which some rebuilding needs to be done.

But there have also been some exciting developments, such as the news that there will be a Church Army schools evangelist who will be based in the parish (funded for five years) alongside an ordinand joining our team for the next two years. We have seen our Basic Life Community Pop Up Shop come into its own during the pandemic and in the Spring, we started a youth café which has been very successful.

So, whilst there are challenges to overcome, we have hope and expectation as we enter this new beginning that God is calling the right person to lead our church forward.





### Our Parish

#### **Chantry and Pinewood**

Our parish, which covers the two communities of Chantry and Pinewood, is one of the largest in our Diocese with an estimated 19,400 people within its boundaries.





#### Chantry

Our church building is located right in the heart of Chantry – a large estate which was developed in the 50's and 60's, firstly as an area of council housing and then with private housing extended around the original development. It is a community with its own identity within Ipswich and many people who grow up there continue to live there as adults. It is also an area that has seen an influx of people from multicultural backgrounds over the last few decades and the local schools are diverse and vibrant.

Directly opposite our building is a shopping parade which is a major hub of community life in Chantry. Each day, several hundred children and young people travel through on their way to school and hundreds more residents visit for their shopping or to deliver parcels to the post office. In February of 2020, shortly before Coronavirus intervened, a small group of volunteers gave out 140+ hot chocolates to young people heading home from school.

#### **Pinewood**

Pinewood has been developed from 1994 onwards and is a smaller estate of privately-owned housing on the outskirts of Ipswich. In the past, St Francis had a sister church called St Clare in the Pinewood area, but this burnt down in the late 90's and there hasn't been an Anglican presence in the area since. One of the most significant features of Pinewood is Suffolk One, a large sixth form college for 16–18-year-olds from across the county.



Photo: Hot chocolate giveaway



#### **Schools**

There are a high number of schools in our parish with four primary, two secondary and a sixth-form collage. Two of these, Stone Lodge Academy and The Bridge School, specialise in supporting students with additional needs. With over 4000 pupils in our locality, there are huge opportunities to build on our current work with children and young people.

#### **Other Churches**

We are sandwiched between St Mark's Roman Catholic Church and Chantry Methodist. We have good links with the Methodist church, having had joint services together with them in the past. Greenfinch Church and Shepherd Drive Baptist are also in our parish.

#### **Parks**

There are many parks and green spaces in our locality. Chantry Park backs onto the Chantry Estate and is the largest park in Ipswich. It has a range of play parks, playing fields and also has a mansion which is now used as a care home. Ed Sheeran held his "homecoming" gig in the park in 2019. Other parks include Gippeswyk, Stone Lodge and Ellenbrook. Outside the Chantry Library, a short walk from our church building, there is a purpose-built all-weather sports pitch with football and basketball regularly played there.

Photo: Andy & Donna



#### Schools and Colleges Numbers

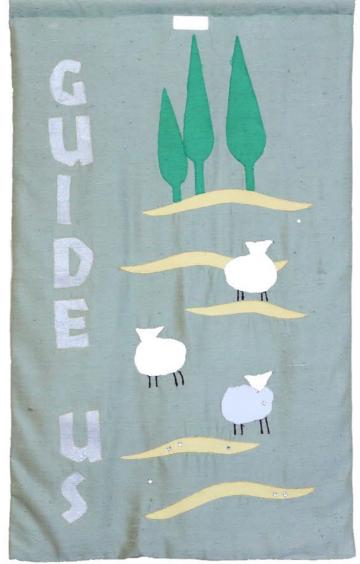
Gusford (Primary)	595
Sprites (Primary)	402
Oaks (Primary)	391
Bridge (Primary)	152
Chantry (Secondary)	799
Stone Lodge (Secondary)	120
Suffolk One (Post 16)	c2000



### Vision

Our vision at St Francis is summed up in the two movements of breathing — inhaling and exhaling. These two movements can't be separated and need one another — trying one without the other doesn't work for very long. An inward breath and an outward breath. Worship and engagement. Prayer and action.









So, as a community of the body of Christ in Chantry and Pinewood, we are called to live these two movements:

- Dwelling in the abundant love of God.
- Extending outward towards our community the same abundant love of God.

Our dwelling is reflected in our worship services, our study of the Bible, and our prayer groups as well as our wider community life.

Our extending outwards is reflected in the lives of our congregation – in their workplaces, networks and in their family life. It is also reflected in our collective service of our local community and we have begun to work out what that looks like moving forward.



As part of Inspiring Ipswich, our deanery Strategic Development Fund project, we have formed a learning community with the task of developing a vision for our shared outreach. This group has come up with three main goals for engagement with our community:

#### 1 Pop Up Shop Community Breakfast/Brunch Church

Our Basic Life Pop Up Shop has developed over the past six years, and we would like to build on those relationships by exploring a breakfast/brunch/café church for the community that has formed. Initially we intend to explore this as a monthly gathering.

#### 2 Developing a Youth Congregation

Building on the links established at Chantry Academy and following the successful launch of the Youth Café in Spring 2021, we would like to establish a youth congregation for young people in Chantry. A team has formed and relationships with young people have been established.

#### 3 A Messy Church for Children and Families

This area is the least developed and needs significant groundwork – but we would like to start a Messy Church for children and families in the area. This would be monthly and could be in our buildings or using one of the many primary school sites in our parish.

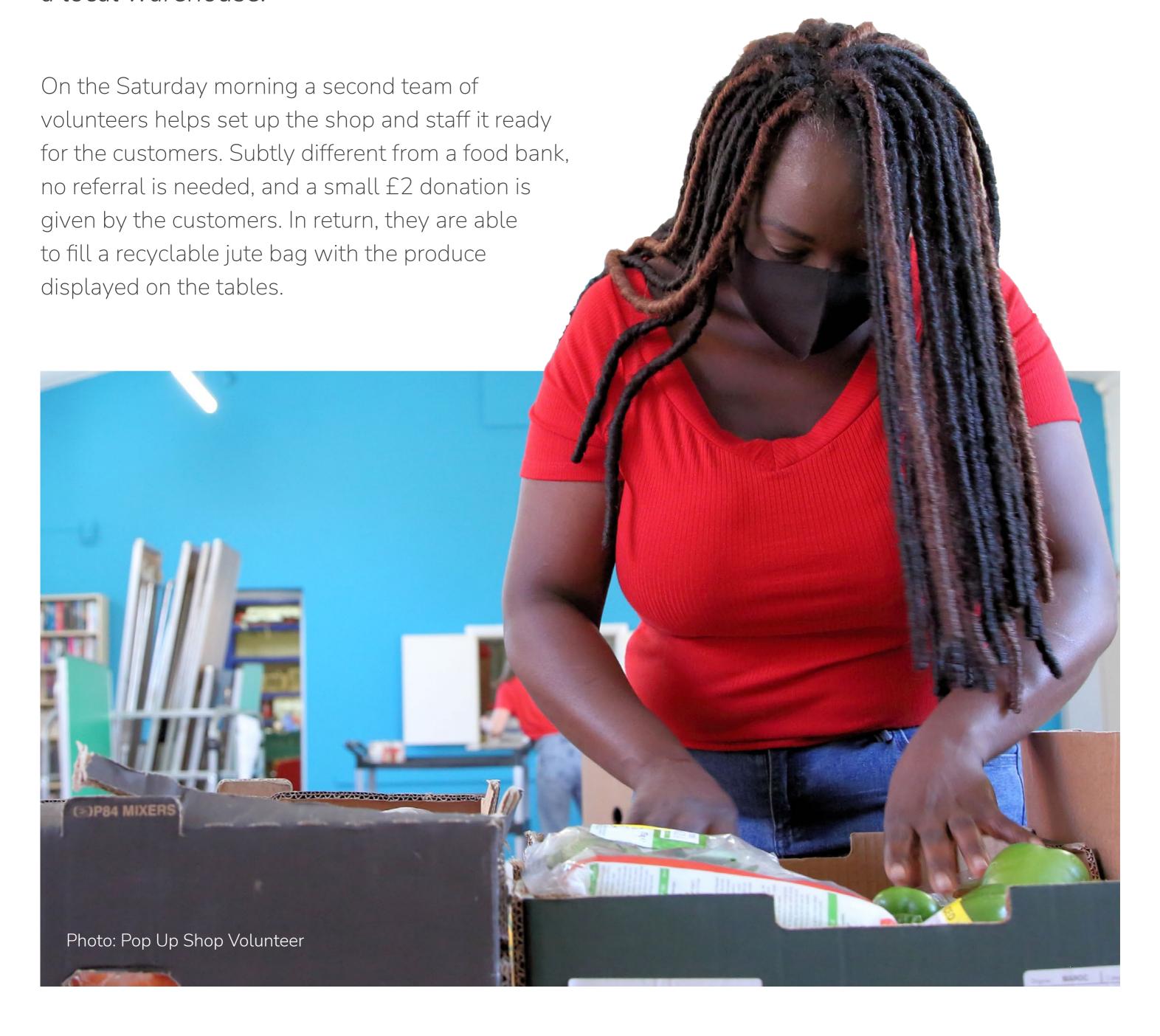
#### (4) Pinewood

Pinewood is an area of the parish which has the potential to be a fourth goal in the medium to long term. As our parish is one of the largest in the diocese and our current church building is rooted at one end of the parish, this challenges us to consider how we might best serve the community of Pinewood at the opposite end. The potential for a church plant in the future is there. What shape this takes is very much up for discussion but we are looking for a new Priest-in-Charge who will work with the Bishops on this.



### Our Pop-Up Shop

Our Basic Life Pop Up Shop started in 2015 and is supported by both the Basic Life charity and local supermarkets. Our volunteers collect left-over food that would otherwise find its way to landfill and we supplement this with stock purchased from a local warehouse.





#### Our Pop-Up Shop Cont.

During the pandemic this service has been an important support for over 80 people from postcodes across Ipswich. In addition to the bags, we also provide food vouchers and support to pay for people's gas and electricity when in need. As one of the earlier adopters, we have been delighted to see several other churches in Ipswich start pop up shops of their own over the past eighteen months.









### Youth Work

During the pandemic we have established a strong relationship with Chantry Academy, a local secondary school a short distance from our Church. Andy Jefferson, our ordinand, has worked closely with CYM (an Ipswich-based schools' charity) and Ant, their Chaplain. Together they have run three wellbeing groups for Year 9 pupils and built a good reputation with staff at the school.







Photos: (l-r) Knitting, Table Making, Andy & Ant.

In May 2021, they invited young people to a youth café in the church hall. Because of Covid restrictions, this was limited to Year 9 only and three young people came on the first week. Since then, we have had 21 young people attend with 18 regulars from one year group. The young people have tried knitting, built coffee tables out of pallet wood and a small group have even been learning Japanese! Each week we finish the session by gathering together and having a short discussion and sometimes a simple testimony from one of the leaders.

Over the summer we have paused the café and our team are gearing up for September with a new year group being added and the addition of a prayer space for young people. Our longterm goal is to develop a youth congregation that will engage with young people who wouldn't normally go to church. We are delighted that a strong group of volunteers have formed, a combination of people from our church and also some who go to other churches and are inspired by what is happening.



## Children's Work

Children and families are an important feature of our Sunday worship. Our Junior Church meets during the main service and features activities around a Bible story. At the end of the service, the children are invited up to the front to share with the congregation what they have been doing.



During the week, our hall is well used by children's groups from the community. There are a number of uniform groups connected to our church from the Scouting and Girl Guide movements.

Before the pandemic, we ran Tots and Toast for toddlers and their parents which we are restarting on September 29th 2021.

With several primary schools in the parish, we see huge potential for more engagement with children and families in our area. One of our three identified areas for development is launching a Messy Church.



### Our Team

Local Lay Team
Our PCC





#### **Local Ministry Team**

Our local ministry team currently consists of congregation members who lead worship and are continuing the work of our pastoral care and social committee teams. We expect our new Priest-in-Charge to chair this group in the future.

#### Our PCC

Our recently formed PCC is comprised of 8 members. Some are experienced members who have held positions before and some are new faces who are learning on the job.

#### **Learning Community**

Formed as part of the Inspiring Ipswich project, this group has been meeting regularly to work on our parish plan. Facilitated by Canon Linda Church, our Mission Accompanier, we have identified three areas of development (see our *Three Planes Ready for Take Off*) and are now turning our attention to implementing this strategy.

#### **Church Army Evangelist**

This role has yet to be appointed but the Church Army are establishing a Centre of Mission in Suffolk and one of their Pioneer Evangelists will be based in our parish. This role will likely be known locally as a Schools' Worker and will see the person connecting with many of the different schools in our parish. One possibility is that will be the person who leads our Messy Church along with a team of volunteers from our church.

#### Ordinand

From September, Andy Jefferson joined us as an ordinand on a two-year course with Eastern Region Ministry Course. Previous to this, he had been developing our youth work and volunteering at the Pop Up Shop and brings pioneering experience from his previous role as a Pioneer Developer with Inspiring Ipswich.

#### Services

Sundays at 10am
Eucharist / Morning Prayer / 2@10 / Cafe Church (35-40 people\*)

Thursday at 9.30am

Eucharist / Morning Prayer (15-20 people\*)



## Our New Priest-in-Charge

#### What are we looking for?

- A pioneer with a pastor's heart. We are looking for someone who can both lead us in mission and also encourage, equip, and nurture our existing congregation.
- Someone who can help us hit the ground kneeling a prayerful person who can help us discern where God is calling us and walk alongside as we set out on the journey together.
- We are looking for someone who will fit in with our ethos as an inclusive church with an open and welcoming theology.
- Our tradition is 'central' with a variety of worship styles. We are looking for someone who is comfortable with both traditional services and more informal services.
- A wounded healer who listens well someone who is self-aware and compassionate. A good sense of humour is important including about themselves.
- While we hope that our existing plans for mission come across as attractive and exciting, new ideas are welcome.
- A team player someone with the ability to lead a team and work collaboratively with others. Support for our Church Army Evangelist and supervision for our Ordinand as well as our Lay Leaders will be an important part of the role.
- Experience of working in areas of multiple deprivation would be an advantage.
- Our aim is to be working across generations with older people, children learning their ABCs, and young people taking their GCSEs. Whilst we don't expect candidates to be proficient across all age groups, we are looking for someone who will take an interest in all.
- Someone with a particular passion to see children flourishing, both from our Sunday congregation and from our wider community, would be a bonus.



## Evariste's Story

#### Finding a Family at St Francis

My name is Evariste and I was born a long way from Ipswich in a small town in Rwanda. Below is the story of how my wife and I with our three sons found a family here at St Francis.





In 2011 I had to leave my country and I came to England where I claimed asylum as a refugee – this was the beginning of a process that would have many twists and turns. Leaving Rwanda was very difficult for me because it meant leaving my wife and son and moving to a country where I didn't know anyone. I arrived in Ipswich and lived in a flat in the parish of St Francis.

As a Christian, I knew that finding a church would be very important to me and I visited several churches in Ipswich. After a little while, and almost by accident, I decided to come to visit St Francis for the Sunday morning service. My experience there was different to the other places I had visited – it was very friendly, people introduced themselves and made an effort to talk to me as a new person. I felt at home and with my wife and my son far away in Rwanda, I found a welcoming community.

In April of 2013, I received news that my application for asylum had been rejected. I was supposed to go to Birmingham for the appeal but then the solicitors who were due to represent me went out of business. It was a very worrying time for me, yet it was also a time when my church rallied around to support me. The congregation were very generous and raised money to pay for a solicitor to represent my case. A month later I heard that my appeal had been successful, and I was granted leave to remain in this country.



By November, my wife Seraphine and son Isaac were able to join me. I was delighted but I didn't have any furniture or a washing machine! The generosity of the church came to the rescue again and they bought everything that we needed. Seraphine and Isaac have both found a home here and we have since welcomed Joshua and Gideon to our family.

Several years later and I am now a qualified social worker with a job here in Ipswich. Several members of the congregation would read through my essays and help improve my English. We no longer live in the parish, but my family still come to St Francis. My children love Junior church and the opportunity to play with other children each Sunday. During the pandemic, they have kept asking when they can go to Church again. For us as a Rwandan family living in a place where we have no relatives, and no other Rwandans living nearby, St Francis has become like a family to us.



## Diversity in Worship

Cafe Church

Junior Church

Festival & Feast Days

Together Time

Sunday Eucharist

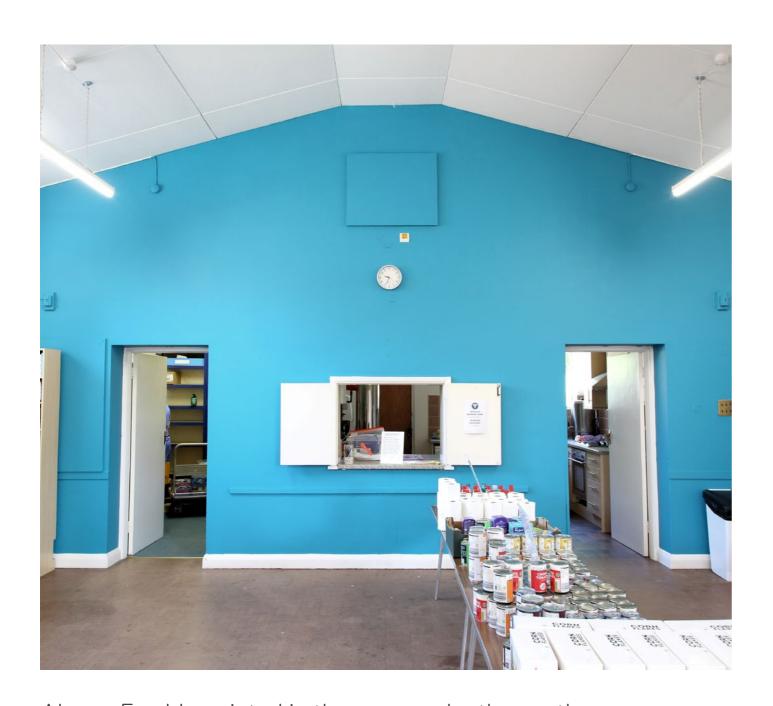
Service of the Word

Our worship is a bit like this mixing board there's plenty of colour and variety though some of us aren't always sure what all the different buttons do!



### Our Buildings

Our church building was built in 1957 to serve the growing community of Chantry.



Above: Freshly painted in the summer by the youth group.

It's in good order and continues to be improved. There are chairs in the church providing a versatile space. To the left of the church we have a Holy Cross Chapel that is used for our midweek services and as a meeting room. We have a small kitchen in the adjoining hall which is used for coffee after church. We have raised funds to have this renovated and fitted with a second sink making it fit-for-purpose as a kitchen that can be used to serve food to our community. Within the crush hall we have one easy access toilet and two others in good working order.

Below: Our hall set up for the youth group.





#### Our Buildings Cont.

The vicarage was built at the same time as the church and is located behind the church. It's a four-bedroom detached house with driveway, garage, study and utility room, lounge, a dining room, kitchen and entrance hall. There is central heating and the windows are double glazed throughout the house. It also has a good-sized private garden.















#### All are welcome here

We extend a special welcome to those who are single, married, divorced, widowed, gay, confused, comfortable, or struggling.

We extend a special welcome to wailing babies and excited toddlers.

We welcome you whether you can sing like Pavarotti or just growl quietly to yourself. You're welcome here if you're 'just browsing', just woken up or just got out of prison. We don't care if you're more Christian than the Archbishop of Canterbury, or haven't been to church since Christmas ten years ago.

We extend a special welcome to those who are over 60 but not grown up yet, and to teenagers who are growing up too fast. We welcome keep-fit mums, football dads, starving artists, tree-huggers, latte-sippers, vegetarians, junk-food eaters. We welcome those who are in recovery or still addicted. We welcome you if you're having problems, are down in the dumps or don't like 'organised religion.' (We're not that keen on it either!)

We offer a welcome to those who think the earth is flat, work too hard, don't work, can't spell, or are here because granny is visiting.

We welcome those who are inked, pierced, both or neither.

We offer a special welcome to those who could use a prayer right now, had religion shoved down their throat as kids or got lost and wound up here by mistake.

We welcome pilgrims, tourists, seekers, doubters... and you!

#### Jesus bids you welcome and we will not turn you away.

Words not our own but sentiment very much ours – a sign you will see in our church





#### Strengths

- Ministry Team
- Pastoral Team (Home Communions)
- Faithful, friendly and committed congregation
- Established Weekly Pop Up Shop
- Tots and Toast
- Youth Café
- Young Families
- Pioneer Evangelist
- Learning Community
- Experienced Safeguarding lead
- Connections with local government
- Location in middle of estate

#### Weaknesses

- Financial challenges
- Need support for Children's work
- Shortage of musicians
- Administrative Challenges

#### Opportunities

- Develop a Youth Congregation
- Develop a Breakfast Church with Pop Up Community
- Develop a Messy Church
- To develop links with the local Methodist Church
- Local Schools (both Primary and Secondary)
- Baptisms
- Uniformed Organisations and other Groups who use the hall
- Care Homes
- Growing the prayer life of the church

#### Threats

- Challenge to pay Parish Share
- Ageing Congregation
- Upkeep of building (ageing but not historic church)



## Moving to Ipswich?

#### Ipswich and Suffolk

Ipswich is the County Town of Suffolk, it has a rich history with every modern amenity. We have a stunning waterfront that has undergone extensive regeneration in the past few years, with its quayside restaurants and bistros, a Dance House of international excellence, a university, and river cruises to help you enjoy the peace and beauty of the River Orwell. The town has many beautiful parks, including Christchurch Park. Within its grounds is a mansion that regularly hosts must-see art collections.

Suffolk is a truly wonderful place to live, with Constable Country, the area around Dedham Vale made famous by the great artist, just 10 minutes' drive away. Close by are the Suffolk Wool Towns of Lavenham, Long Melford and Kersey. A short drive up the A12 will bring you to the gems of Woodbridge, Aldeburgh, Snape Maltings and Southwold. Not to mention our fantastic links to London. You can be in the capital in 1 hour 15 minutes.





## Inspiring lpswich

Inspiring Ipswich is an imaginative and exciting new initiative of the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich.





It spans six years from early 2019 until the end of 2024 and during this period it seeks to strengthen the existing 24 churches within the deanery of Ipswich, helping them 'to communicate good news and make new disciples', as well as adding 25 new worshipping communities into the mix. Front and central is the overall aim of praying for and nurturing the faith of 1500 new Christians across the town.

With the help of a substantial and unprecedented grant from the Church Commissioners and a central Inspiring Ipswich team the project aims to support every parish with regular learning community gatherings and with a highly skilled Mission Accompanier. Central courses such as 'Leading your Church into Growth', Evangelist training, Alpha training and the 'Growing Leaders' course are part of the offer and the support of two full-time Deanery Pioneer Developers is available for those leading fresh expressions of Church.



#### Inspiring Ipswich Cont.

The Deanery aims in everything to be 'relational, pastoral, missional and inspirational' and aspires to offer a good welcome and ongoing support to all its clergy, primarily through its Deanery Leadership Team, its Deanery Chaplains, clergy chapter meetings, Missional Leaders' Lunches and through the Archdeacon's ministry, which is focused solely on this one area.

One of the primary goals of Inspiring Ipswich is to help at least 5% of the population (around 7,500 people) enjoy an opportunity to explore faith and our prayer is to offer Alpha or an equivalent to hundreds of people each year across the deanery.



In short, we believe that any prospective priest-in-charge of St Francis with St Clare would find themselves at the heart of an inspiring vision and team in the deanery.





# St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

#### Where are we?

The Diocese covers the county of Suffolk, excluding the area around Lowestoft in the northeast, and one parish in Essex. It is a mainly rural Diocese with a large number of small villages, plus market towns including Woodbridge, Halesworth, Sudbury and Beccles and the cathedral town of Bury St Edmunds with its historic ruins of the old Abbey. Ipswich is the county town with a population of about 137,000. Suffolk's population is c 650,000. The county embraces historic places of interest such as Sutton Hoo, culture at Snape with the famous annual Aldeburgh music festival, is on the Heritage coast and is a haven for lovers of natural history and birdlife. The busy port of Felixstowe is at the end of the A14 which runs via Cambridge to the Midlands and the A12 which gives access to London and the Norfolk Broads.

#### Who are we?

We are often known as 'the Church of England in Suffolk'. The diocesan bishop is the Right Reverend Martin Seeley, and the suffragan bishop is the Right Reverend Dr Mike Harrison. Both work from the Bishop's House in Ipswich. They work together closely to help us shape our vision and strategy, and amongst a plethora of other tasks offer regular teaching mornings to nurture the faith of people in our congregations – and a regular Vlog which can be found on Facebook. There are 3 archdeaconries and over 450 churches where visitors will find a wide range of worshipping styles, from the traditional to contemporary, as well as Fresh Expressions and growing numbers of 'Lightwave' groups for those who haven't connected with traditional church previously. The Cathedral of St Edmund and St James in Bury St Edmunds is the mother church of the Diocese and is proactive in offering support to clergy and parishes including welcoming parishes on pilgrimage. We also work closely with our 88 Church of England primary schools. All this is, of course, supported by a small and committed diocesan staff based in the diocesan office in Ipswich.



#### What is our vision?

Our diocesan vision is to be 'Growing in God', aiming to grow 'flourishing congregations making a difference'. This vision was accepted by Diocesan Synod in 2014 and since then we have been focussing on four key priorities:

- Growing in Depth: responding to the call of Christ in every part of our lives
- Growing in Number: drawing the contacts we have into the life of God's kingdom
- Growing in Influence: reaching beyond ourselves in our impact on the wider world
- Growing Younger; building churches whose age-range reflects our communities

Parishes are encouraged to use a simple Mission Action Planning tool to help us all to focus on these priorities and how they might be worked out in each different context. We are trusting God that this vision, underpinned by a commitment to Christian stewardship, will bear fruit as we look to the future.

As part of this vision, we have recently received Strategic Development Funding for two major projects: Inspiring Ipswich, overseen by the Archdeacon of Ipswich which aims to grow the church in Ipswich though church planting and reaching out to those who live in the town, and 'Growing God in the Countryside', overseen by the Archdeacon for Rural Mission, which focusses on developing Rural Resourcing Churches and nurturing and discipling new Christians through small Lightwave groups.

We have also been part of a pilot scheme exploring how we can use our church buildings more creatively both for those who worship regularly and for the benefit of our communities and many churches have benefitted from this.

We are broadening our vision through a growing partnership with the Diocese of Kagera in Tanzania, with fruitful visits and links being established.



#### How can we do this?

We value our huge range of different ministries: we have over 100 stipendiary clergy, plus many SSM and PTO clergy as well as lay and ordained chaplains who can be found in such diverse places as schools, prisons, hospitals, hospices, the army, RAF and the police. Some clergy are ordained to serve in their local benefice through our pioneering 'auxiliary ordination pathway' which enables people's vocations to ordained ministry to be discerned within the Diocese.

All clergy work alongside lay ministers – Readers, elders, and the growing number people exercising recently introduced licensed ministries: pioneer ministers, evangelists, youth ministers and children's and family workers. Our ministry deployment principles encourage teams or clusters of lay and ordained ministers to work together so that clergy feel less isolated and ministry resources the mission of the church more effectively. We are just beginning to develop the principle of 'local ministers' in our benefices, releasing people's gifts to serve in their locality.

We are excited about these new developments which are playing an important part in our diocesan vision of Growing in God.

#### So, in summary:

As our Growing in God vision states, we aspire to be people who know that 'God is with us, gathering us as Christ-centred communities, calling us to make Christian disciples, sending us in loving service, empowering us by the Holy Spirit'.

We hope you will come and join us on our journey!

To find out more, visit www.cofesuffolk.org



#### What's next?

We hope you have been inspired by what you have read and that you will consider applying for this exciting post.

For an informal conversation about the parish please contact Archdeacon Rhiannon on <a href="mailto:archdeacon.rhiannon@cofesuffolk.org">archdeacon.rhiannon@cofesuffolk.org</a>

For an application form and to see the Role Description please go to the Diocesan Website <a href="www.cofesuffolk.org">www.cofesuffolk.org</a>

#### Address

St Francis with St Clare
192 Hawthorn Drive
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP2 000

Please be assured of our prayers