



**Thursday 25 March 2021**

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# Growing in God

**Please visit the Church of England page [here](#) and the Diocesan guidance page [here](#) for the most up to date information and guidance for churches during the Covid-19 pandemic.**

Please note that the guidance is being updated today to reflect the Stage 1a roadmap lockdown recovery.

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## A message from Bishop Martin

Once again, we find ourselves preparing to celebrate Holy Week and Easter living under Covid-19 restrictions. During this past year, we have experienced so much grief and loss, but the celebration of Jesus' resurrection from the dead gives us the hope we need even in the very hardest of times. The power of Easter's message, of unquenchable light in the midst of darkness, is a message we need this year more than ever.

I am so grateful that many of us are able to celebrate Holy Week and Easter in our church buildings this year, unlike last year, in whatever ways we are able to do so. I pray that each of us will be strengthened in the hope God gives us at Easter, that love is stronger than death.

With every blessing,

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"I am pleased to share with you our new Diocesan video " Flourishing Congregations" which tells something of our story during this pandemic and encourages us forward as we seek to serve the Kingdom of God. At the heart of the video are the themes of deepening faith and deepening service. My gratitude goes to everyone who in whatever way is serving Christ in the Diocese. Please do share this link widely, with your congregations, on your websites and via [www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com). The video will be shared on our Diocesan social media feeds over the coming weeks".

Bishop Martin

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Flourishing Congregations

## Latest news

**Sir Robert Hitcham CEVAP Primary School** in Debenham was able to purchase laptops for those children without access to devices, thanks to the help of St Mary's Church in Debenham which opened a fundraising Just Giving page. A lovely reminder of God's generosity.

**St Margaret's CEVAP Primary School** in Ipswich has received the National Well-being Award for Schools and is the first school in Suffolk to do so. For more on this story, please see the [East Anglian Daily Times](#) (EADT). Further information on this award is available [here](#).

**It's more than just Easter chicks....!** Bucklesham Friends Group gives people in Bucklesham of all ages the opportunity to take part in virtual activity groups to help maintain general well-being during a time of social isolation. Lots of different groups are involved including Birdwatchers, Gardeners, Knitters, Children, St Mary's Church and many more. With 177 members, the group has already knitted a 7ft Christmas tree and made a community quilted wall-hanging for the Church, held a juniors 'bake off' and many are now busy knitting, crocheting and sewing Easter chicks. Each chick will be filled with a creme egg and given to the children, teachers and staff at Bucklesham Primary School.

Don't forget to advertise your activities and events on [www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com)!

## VACCINAID - Give the world a shot (Unicef)



The Church of England is supporting the 'VaccinAid' campaign which aims to help fund the biggest vaccination drive in history. Led by UNICEF UK, with the online fundraising platform Crowdfunder, the campaign offers people a practical way to give thanks for their Covid-19 vaccination by making a voluntary donation to help pay for jabs for others around the world.

It aims to help fund almost two billion Covid-19 vaccines for health workers and the most high risk and vulnerable people on our planet. Local churches are

being encouraged to join the campaign and to find more information on the campaign go to [www.vaccinaid.org](http://www.vaccinaid.org) to donate or begin fundraising.

## Holy Week and Easter at St Edmundsbury Cathedral

The Cathedral is preparing to offer a mix of online and in person services and events to meet people's needs and the current restrictions as we mark this important time of the Christian year. For details of how to attend services please visit the Cathedral website

[here](#). Please note that pre-booking is required and if you wish to attend in person, please email [cathedralinvitations@stedscathedral.org](mailto:cathedralinvitations@stedscathedral.org) or visit [here](#) for a full listing of events.

"The blend of joy at being back in the building to mark the events which define our faith, the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is challenged by our requirement to keep each other safe by avoiding much of the physicality of how we observe Holy Week," comments the Very Revd Joe Hawes, Dean of St Edmundsbury. "So no foot washing, no anointing, physical distance maintained and numbers limited. We keep these holy days with longing for the day when all will be restored."

On Easter Day, Sunday 4 April, Bishop Martin Seeley will preach at the main Festival Eucharist at 11.00am. The Cathedral choristers will sing at this service as well as at Choral Evensong at 3.30pm.

During this period, the Cathedral is open for personal prayer and worship only. The Cathedral Shop and Pilgrims' Kitchen will re-open on 12 April. The hope is to re-open to visitors from 17 May 2021.

## **InHarmony Easter videos update**

St Edmundsbury Cathedral's InHarmony series of music video resources for the Lent-Easter period is almost complete, with 47 videos covering a range of music and worship styles available [here](#). Around 100 people, mainly from Suffolk churches, have been involved in singing, playing and speaking on these videos, from professional musicians to family groups. It is believed to be the largest resource of its kind from any English cathedral, and all the material is available for churches to use in creating their own online services. Full details are available [here](#).

## **Events**

### **Recovering Christenings: connecting with families again**

Monday 19 April 10.00am-11.00am

Sandra Millar looks at how we can help families to celebrate, pray and belong through baptism and blessing services as we begin to open doors again. To register please visit [here](#).

### **Bereavement Support: Meeting a need**

Wednesday 21 April 10.00am-11.00am

Recent research showed that 91% of people have experienced a bereavement in the past five years. Over 60% think the church might be there for them with spaces and places and people. Sandra Millar with Katy Tutt of Loss and Hope explore simple, practical ways churches can help. To register please visit [here](#).

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## **James Halsall Farewell**

After 31 years of serving the Church of England in Suffolk, James is retiring and moving on to work on new projects.

James says, "I have been to some wonderful places and worked with practically all of Suffolk's magnificent church buildings. Perhaps more importantly, I have met many friendly and dedicated people. As I enter the next phase of my life I will be constantly reminded of my career when I pass a Suffolk church. You just can't avoid them! Less visible will be the people I have met and it will be they (you!) who I will miss the most. I am honoured to have played a part and being involved in the repair and improvement of our diocese's churches. Thank you". For a more detailed message please click [here](#).

James leaves us on Wednesday 31 March. Charlotte Hodgson will be our Acting DAC Secretary for the next few months.

## **Notices**

**Suffolk County Council (SCC) Plug-in EV** - SCC is keen to hear from our most rural parishes who might be interested in providing a charging point in their church/church-hall car park. The background to this project is [here](#). It would be helpful if intending parishes routed their interest via the Revd Mark Haworth, Diocesan Environment Officer, on [environment@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:environment@cofesuffolk.org)

**Parish Giving Scheme (PGS)** - PGS has supplied a social media guide including content

posts to help parishes introduce PGS to their social media community, as a simple and secure way to give regularly. If you would like to promote PGS please download the resource pack [here](#).

**Diocesan Bereavement guidelines for schools** - The guidelines aim to offer clear suggestions for coping in the event of a death in a school community and have been written for church and community schools. Available on our [website](#), together with further resources to help with bereavement.

**Clergy cloak:** A retiring priest offers a clergy cloak. Although the cloak is second-hand, it seems in good order. The current owner is a tall lady, but the cloak could be shortened if necessary. Please contact Lesley Steed if you are interested. 01473 298510 or [lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org).

## Vacancies

[Learning Manager at St Edmundsbury Cathedral](#) | Closing date: Monday 12 April 2021  
[Anglican \(Warren Hill\) Prison Chaplain](#) | Closing date: 12 April 2021

**Please note the next eNews will be issued on 8 April 2021.**



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