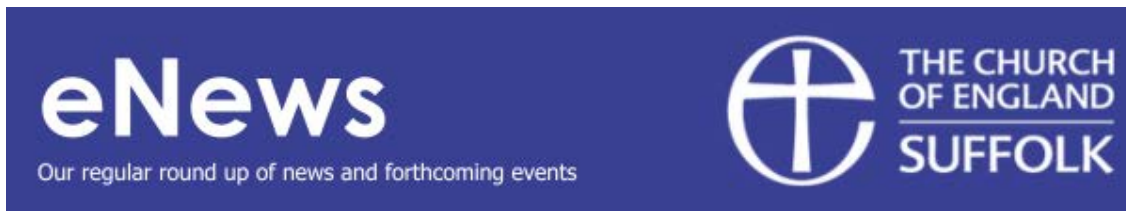


Thursday 28 November 2024



Bishop Martin writes...



I have been thoroughly enjoying this year serving as President of the Suffolk Agricultural Association, alongside my day job. I am about two-thirds of the way through the year in this role, and will in fact finish just three days before I retire as Bishop at the end of February.

The highlight of course has been the Suffolk Show, which I have loved since I first went in 2015, and this year was very special, not least because the first day of the show coincided with my 70th birthday. I have also loved getting to know more farmers, visiting more farms, listening to a wide range of experiences of farming, and learning about the joys and the challenges of the

industry.

Read the full story on our [website here](#).

Suffolk's chaplains gather to highlight breadth of crucial work



Dozens of Suffolk's chaplains gathered in Ipswich to celebrate the incredible breadth of work they do across the county. The event was hosted by the Diocese, held at the Diocesan Office on Tuesday 26 November, led by Archdeacon Rich Henderson. Its purpose was to shine a light on the huge impact chaplains have in Suffolk across a wide variety of sectors.

Archdeacon Rich said: *"The work of chaplains touches all areas of Suffolk life – from prisons and police to the military, healthcare, education, farming and much, much more."*

It has been incredible to hear some of the stories, the experiences of those who do this important work every day, touching the lives of thousands with kindness, care and support."

Four speakers took to the stage to provide 'snapshots' of what it is like to work as a chaplain, and how they work with people of "all faiths and beliefs". Read the full story on [our website here](#).

Cathedrals at Night brings history to life at St Edmundsbury Cathedral



'Cathedrals at Night: History Comes Alive' was held on Friday 22 November, offering a unique evening to experience the Cathedral after hours. Visitors enjoyed interactive crafts, storytelling, and activities (including LEGO!), throughout the Cathedral, and experts from the Ancient Library were on display with experts on hand to show visitors the secrets of some of the books from the

library.

Cathedral at Night concluded with the choir leading Compline, an ancient night prayer sung by monks, providing an intimate glimpse into medieval worship practices.

Environment News:

Changes to A Rocha Eco Church Award Scheme: A Rocha has launched its new Eco-Church Survey. Any church which has not yet registered for an award will sign up to this new survey. Our Eco Church Support team are planning training sessions next year to help churches understand and work with the new survey. If your church is registered under the old survey, you have until the end of January 2025 to apply. If you want help to do this, the Eco Church Support Team can offer advice. They are: [Diane Ekins-Powell](#) | [Jackie Orbell](#) | [Mike Turton](#) | [James Rolls](#) (Diocesan Net Zero Carbon Officer)



Morsbags: The Morsbag project turns unwanted materials, such as old curtains, into bags which are then given away. Not only does it reuse, it also cuts down the use of plastic and provides opportunities for people to get together to make and distribute the bags. You can join in by donating fabric, making a Morsbag following a basic pattern, track how many you make and meet

other bag makers, use your Morsbags or give your Morsbags away – perhaps at a Christmas fair! This is a worldwide initiative, for more information please visit www.morsbags.com.

Want to kickstart a net zero project in your church? St Peter & St Paul Church,

GIVE TO GO GREEN

Pettistree has raised a fantastic amount of money to improve and reduce the carbon emissions of their church hall by taking part in Give to Go Green. The Churchwarden of the parish said: *"It is sometimes easy to feel powerless in the face of climate change but our church enthusiastically embraced the recent opportunity of Give to Go Green. We have raised over £22,000 as at the end of the initial six week campaign period."*

If your church is interested in taking part and raising money to reduce your carbon emissions, take a look at the Give to Go Green [webpage](#) or get in touch with James Rolls at james.rolls@cofesuffolk.org or on 07394 568404.

Events

Give to Go Green events

St Peter's Church, Stoke Park, Ipswich IP2 9TH

St Peter's are looking to raise £10,000 to be match funded to replace their church windows. Up until 15 December there will be a number of Christmas-themed events - please do book and join!

Wreath Making | Monday 2 December, 10.30am and 7.00pm. Costs £15 with all materials you need to make a wreath, and snacks included. [Book here for the 10.30am session](#) | [Book here for the 7.00pm session](#)

Christmas Film Night | Friday 6 December, 6.00pm. £5 per person or £10 for a family including a drink and popcorn. [Book here.](#)

Santa's Grotto – Saturday 14 December, 3.00pm. £5 per child including the visit and a present. [Book here.](#)

Christmas Market 2025

Thursday 28 November to Saturday 30 November, 10.00am – 4.30pm
St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS

The annual Christmas Market will welcome all and it includes a variety of stallholders from Suffolk and beyond who will join to showcase their products, with some familiar faces as well as new businesses. There will be over 50 stalls, including those selling gifts, jewellery, baked goods, alcohol and woodcrafts. Visitors will get the chance to browse stalls while also taking in the beautiful setting of the Cathedral. In addition to the shopping experience, there are plans for entertainment for visitors from local schools and performers and special Tower Tours will be available to pre-book [here](#).

Trees in the Tower

St Mary le Tower, Ipswich
Friday 29 November to Sunday 8 December

The Town and Civic Church of Ipswich, St Mary le Tower, due to be redesignated Ipswich Minster in 2025, looks forward to welcoming thousands of visitors for its famous Christmas tree festival. 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. For more information visit www.stmaryletower.org or follow on social media @stmaryletower.

Clare Christmas Fair

Friday 29 November 5.00-8.00pm and Saturday 30 November 10.00am-7.00pm
St Peter & St Paul's Church, Clare and Clare Town Hall

The Christmas Fair will have over 70 stallholders offering a fantastic shopping opportunity with refreshments, including mulled wine, available. On Friday, we will have carols in the church with the Treble C Choir and on Saturday the Long Melford Silver Band will play. Clare Christmas Lights will be switched on on Saturday evening. Free entry.

Come and experience "The Road to Christmas"

St Mary's Church, Honey Hill, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1RT
Saturday 30 November, 10.00am - 3.00pm

Come along to the church which will be set out to tell the Christmas story using actors in costume. Each scene is interactive, providing the chance to hear the Christmas story and ask questions. Tours run every 20 minutes from 10.00am until 3.00pm and are free. They are suitable for all ages but children must be accompanied by adults. This is a great opportunity to see an event which works well in both schools and the community and we particularly invite visitors interested in doing something similar.

More information: jennifer.aston@btinternet.com

Advent Carols with The Copt Hall Singers | Sunday 1 December at 6.00pm

St Mary at the Elms, Elm Street, Ipswich IP1 2EF

CB Jackson's One-Man Christmas Carol | Sunday 8 December at 6.00pm

St Mary at the Elms, Elm Street, Ipswich IP1 2EF

A spellbinding performance of Dickens' much-loved masterpiece as CB Jackson inhabits the character of Ebenezer Scrooge. £8 for adults, £5 for children (9 - 17 years). Not suitable for under-9s.

Booking in advance [here](#) until 1 December or pay on the door. Supporting the Samaritans and church funds.

Christmas Fair

Saturday 7 December, 10.00am - 12.30pm

St John the Baptist, Felixstowe IP11 7PW

Come along to a Christmas Fair with plenty of stalls from local craft makers - find a variety of gifts for your friends and family. Entrance costs £3 and includes tea/coffee and a delicious homemade cake or savoury item. Children's admission is free. Proceeds will be going towards a much needed upgrade of the lighting at St John's.

Great Blakenham Christmas Events

Come along to a variety of Christmas events, held by St Mary's Church, Great Blakenham IP6 0LP

Christmas Fayre | Saturday 7 December, 11.00am-2.00pm

Christmas Tree & Cracker Themed Festival | Saturday 7 December - Sunday 8 December, 11.00am -2.00pm

Carol Service | Sunday 15 December, 5.00pm

Village Carol Singing | Friday 20 December, 6.30pm start

Christingle Service | Tuesday 24 December, 4.00pm

Felixstowe Parish Christmas Events

St John's Church IP11 7PW and St Edmunds Church IP11 2HR

From 7 December

Christmas Cracker Fair - Saturday 7 December, 10.00am, St John's Church IP11 7PW

Christmas at Pitstop - Saturday 7 December, 11.00am - 1.00pm, St Edmunds Church IP11 2HR

Get Messy For Christmas - Wednesday 11 December, 3.45pm, St John's Church IP11 7PW

Nine Lessons and Carols with Ipswich Deaf Signing Choir - Sunday 15 December, 4.00pm, St John's Church IP11 7PW

CTF Advent Event - Tuesday 17 December, 12.00pm, St Edmunds Church IP11 2HR

Eucharist with Carols - Thursday 19 December, 10.30am, St Edmunds Church IP11 2HR

Pitstop Carols - Friday 20 December, 6.00pm, St Edmunds Church IP11 2HR

Nativity - Sunday 22 December, 3.00pm, St John's Church IP11 7PW

Midnight Mass - Tuesday 24 December, 11.00pm, St John's Church IP11 7PW

BCP Eucharist and Eucharist w/ Carols - Wednesday 25 December, 8.00am and 10.00am, St John's Church IP11 7PW

Depden Living Nativity

Wednesday 11 December - Saturday 14 December, 5.30pm and 7.00pm

Depden Care Farm, Bury St Edmunds IP29 4BU

Twice nightly performances of the Depden Living Nativity near Bury St Edmunds for the second year running. Experience the magic of the Christmas story as you travel around the farm meeting the animals, with local people taking on the starring roles. Cost is £12 for adults, and £6 for under 11s. Full details of the performance and tickets [available here](#).

Waking the Women

Tuesday 7 January, 7.00pm - 8.30pm by Zoom

Women over the age of 40 are by far the biggest and the most active demographic in the Church of England. But while a huge proportion of any given congregation will likely have experienced menopause, it still remains largely unacknowledged, unspoken and unaddressed. Join Jayne who will be discussing her book *Waking the Women*, the menopause and the church with the Diocesan Advisor for Women's Ministry, the Revd Ali Miller, on Zoom. All are welcome to come and join the discussion. [Click here to register](#).

Youthscape Essentials

Earl Stonham Village Hall, Stowmarket IP14 5HJ

Tuesdays 14 January, 21 January, 28 January, 4 February, 11 February, 25 February, 4 March, 11 March, 18 March and 25 March 2025, 7.30pm - 9.15pm

Youthscape Essentials training is for all youth workers, youth ministers and youth helpers! Led by skilled practitioners using discussion, videos, skills practice, young people's insights and much more, to gain a foundational understanding into the lives of young people and how we can disciple them to know and love Jesus. Cost of the course is £10, including the course handbook. To sign up and find out more, please [click here](#).

Connect Family Ministry Course

The Woolpit Institute, Woolpit IP30 9QH

Saturdays 18 January, 22 February, 29 March, 24 May, 21 June and 19 July

In this course, we look at what families look like in the Bible and how the early church ministered to families. We then look at child development, learning and spiritual styles, discipleship, intergenerational worship, schools ministry and how we walk with families through life's key transitions. This course is perfect for anyone already doing some children or family ministry who wishes to consolidate their learning, access new resources and join a network of like-minded people who share their enthusiasm for this ministry. Please sign up [here](#).

The Only Way is Ethics

Earl Stonham Village Hall, Stowmarket IP14 5HJ

Tuesdays 21 January, 28 January, 4 February 2025, 11 February 2025, 25 February 2025 and 4 March 2025, 7.30pm - 9.30pm

The Christian Ethics module is a six-session course which explores the history of ethical thought and also everyday issues and moral questions from capitalism to the environment. Led by the Revd Rachel Revely, the course aims to further develop moral thinking, appreciation and judgment that is appropriate within the context of Christian teaching and pastoral ministry, and Christian living. [Book here](#).

Enhancing Pastoral Ministry

Earl Stonham Village Hall, Stowmarket IP14 5HJ

Wednesdays 22 January, 29 January, 5 February, 12 February, 26 February and 5 March 2025. Registration and coffee at 7.00pm, sessions 7.30 – 9.30pm

Enhancing Pastoral Ministry is a six-session course for people who are involved in anyway in pastoral care (for example, Readers, Lay Elders, clergy, pastoral visitors) as well as those interested in a deeper understanding of this ministry. The course is open to all and is free of charge. For more information on the course, please contact Lesley Steed at lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org, and to book onto the course please [click here](#).

Exploring the Old Testament

Earl Stonham Village Hall, Stowmarket IP14 5HJ

Wednesdays 22 January, 22 January, 29 January, 5 February, 12 February, 26 February, 5 March and 12 March 2025. Registration and coffee at 7.00pm, sessions 7.30 – 9.30pm

In many of our churches, where the weekly service may be some form of the Eucharist, the Old Testament nowadays is never read. And even where it is, it is often ignored. But it is the larger part of the Bible and has far more to say than the New Testament about

things like the life cycle (birth, marriage, death), sickness and health, daily work, the environment, social justice, and so on. In other words, it relates to life as we know it on a day-by-day basis. Of course, there are some challenging bits which need also to be confronted in an honest manner, but they should not deflect us from the riches of what was, after all, Jesus' Bible. (Where did he get the first and great commandment ... and the second is like, namely this...?) In this short course, Hugh Williamson will try to open our eyes to some of this wealth by surveying in an engaging manner all the different types of material in the Old Testament, very much with an eye on how we can apply it in our own times in both church and society. To book your place on this course please [click here](#).

The Big Weekend

Friday 11 April, 11.00am - Sunday 13 April 4.00pm
Sizewell Hall, Leiston IP16 4TX

The Big Weekend is organised by the Church of England here in St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, and run by experienced youth workers from around Suffolk. It's a weekend of craziness, worship, games and friendship all focused around learning more about living as a Christian in the C21st. The event is for young people from school years 7-13. Whilst it is Christian in ethos and focus you don't have to call yourself a Christian to be able to attend and have fun! Cost of the weekend is £60 per person. [Book here](#).

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

Earl Stonham Village Hall, Stowmarket IP14 5HJ
Wednesdays 30 April, 7 May, 14 May, 28 May, 4 June, 11 June and 18 June, 7.30pm - 9.30pm

This course looks at the beginnings of what became Christianity, in the writings of the New Testament, and explores their narrative features. Led by the Revd Canon John Parr, Approaching the New Testament takes a story-shaped approach to the heart of Christian faith. To book your place please [click here](#).

Building a Generous Church conference

Saturday 17 May, 9.30am
Bridge Community Church, 68 Queen's Road, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3EW

We invite you to join Archdeacons David and Rich; Gary Peverley, Diocesan Secretary; Diocesan staff and others to be inspired by keynote speakers focusing on compassionate communities and the impact on our society, and how to put generosity at the heart of our lives. There will be a choice of 12 workshops to attend to help your church become more informed and better resourced to grow a generous culture and reach financial sustainability. Bishop Graeme will open the conference. All those who are part of the Church of England Suffolk community are welcome. For more information and to book please click [here](#).

Rural Mission and Ministry Course

Royal Agricultural University, Gloucestershire GL7 6JS
Tuesday 20 May - Wednesday 21 May 2025

The Rural Mission and Ministry Course is designed for lay and ordained church leaders across the denominations entering a rural appointment, and those already in rural ministry

who feel the need for a 'refresher'. The two-day programme employs a variety of approaches including practical sessions, group work and workshops led by practitioners, and includes sessions on understanding rural contexts, mission and growth, leadership, farming and work with children and young people in the countryside. The course costs £300. [Book here](#).

Save the Date- Growing in God in the Countryside

22-23 September 2025 | St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS

Join us for a National Rural Mission Conference to explore and share key learning about this context from the last decade of initiatives. This event will bring together senior leaders, pioneers, rural resource church leaders and other partners. We will share learnings from Suffolk and other Strategic Development Funded (SDF) projects across rural England. There will be opportunities to connect with others and explore new opportunities to make and grow disciples in the countryside. Email [Suzie Wall](#) or phone: 07729 854510

Notices

Diocesan Elections: There are many ways in which you can support the mission and ministry of the church across our 443 parishes and one of them is to help us to exercise sound governance. We encourage a wide and diverse cross-section of our members to become involved. If you feel called to work collaboratively, assisting in openness of communication and ensuring clarity of decision making, then please do come forward to offer your time and talents. We currently have elections for **Bishop's Council, Diocesan Board of Education (DBE), Diocesan Board of Patronage** and **Vacancy in See**. The deadline for nominations is at midday on Friday 29 November 2024. For full details, key dates and nomination forms please visit our website [here](#).

National Lottery Heritage Fund update

Anne Jenkins of the National Lottery Heritage Fund gave an insightful talk about the 2033 Heritage update. Find out more and view the [PowerPoint here](#).

Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme - Online Tool to contact your local MP

Since 2001 the Listed Places of Worship Grant (LPWGS) has enabled communities which care for our historic churches and other listed places of worship to reclaim VAT on repair works. The grant scheme comes up for renewal in March 2025, and we are calling on people to write to their local MP to alert them to the potential threat of closure of the scheme, and the disastrous impact this would have on historic churches. Without this scheme, many historic and architecturally important buildings will be at risk of closure. **IMPORTANT:** After inserting your details, click 'submit' - despite the name of this button, this doesn't submit the letter, it just takes you to the template letter, and when you're happy with the letter you then submit it. The tool is available to use [here](#).

Follow the Star: Calm and Bright: The Church of England's theme for Advent and Christmas 2024, Follow the Star: Calm and Bright, draws on the world-famous carol, Silent Night: "Silent Night! Holy Night! All is calm, all is bright..." More information and resources are available [here](#). Join a Christmas themed webinar:



Let's create on Canva Thursday 5 December, 11.00am - 12.30pm

Links for this event and lots more are available [here](#).

Giving during Advent and Christmas: There are resources available to parishes to help you use digital devices and online Give A Little accounts to set up Christmas Campaigns. For further help and assistance

please contact Emma Denton at emma.denton@cofesuffolk.org or call 01473 298556. Alternatively watch this Generosity at Christmas webinar [here](#).

Vacancies

[Associate Minister for Mission with Children, Families and Young People](#) | St Margaret's Church, Ipswich | Closing date: 29 November

[Precentor](#) | St Edmundsbury Cathedral | Closing date: 6 December

[Chief Finance Officer](#) | St Edmundsbury Cathedral | Closing date: 9 December

[Organ Scholar](#) | St Edmundsbury Cathedral | Closing date: 14 January

[Part time Associate Priest](#) | Carlford Benefice

[Diocesan Correspondence Secretary](#) | Mothers' Union

[River Church Opportunities](#) | Kids Pastor (full-time), Debt Centre Manager (part-time) and internships | Ipswich

[Part-time Youth Worker](#) | Brandon | Please email enquiry@stpetersbrandon.co.uk

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

Watch our stories from around Suffolk



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