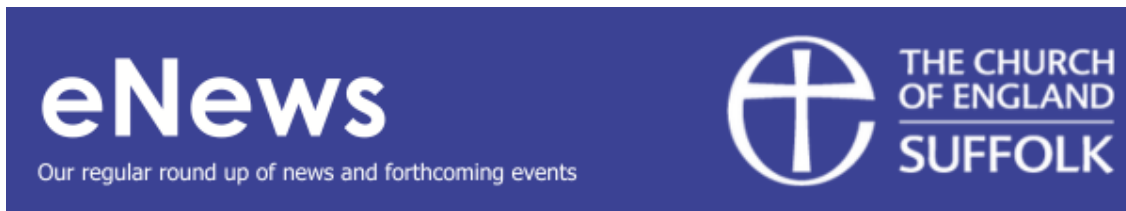


**Thursday 8 January 2026**



**The Welcome and Enthronement of the Right Reverend Dr Joanne Woolway Grenfell as the 12<sup>th</sup> Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich**

**Saturday 24 January 2026 at 2.00pm | St Edmundsbury Cathedral**

We are pleased to share that a limited number of congregational places are now available at the above service. Approximately 200 places available and they will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. If you would like to register your interest, please do so from 8.00am on Friday 9 January by clicking [this link](#). If you are unable to use the online form, please call the Cathedral Office on 01284 748720.

Please note that registering your interest does not guarantee attendance. If your registration is successful, you will receive further details and a ticket for entry on or by Saturday 17 January. You will also be notified by email if you are not successful. The link should be used to register individuals only, not groups. However, it may be used more than once, so if more than one person wishes to attend, each person can their register interest separately.

The service will be live-streamed to [the Cathedral's Youtube Channel](#) for those unable to attend in person.

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**Youth café attracts dozens of young people to St Augustine's Church, Ipswich**



The youth café takes place every Thursday at St Augustine's Church, offering a host of fun games, table sports and a popular tuck shop. Andy Carson joined the church as a youth worker three months ago and says the café is one of the highlights of the week.

*"It's becoming very popular," he said. "In the last few weeks we have gone from around 20 young people to around 35 a week. We get a good mix, some who attend the church but many who don't. The café acts as a chill out zone for the young people, somewhere they can come along to have fun and meet new friends. We want this to be a space people know is somewhere they can turn up for the whole two hours, a space they can walk in and where people will know their name."* Read the full story on [our website here](#).

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## Suffolk Churches Ride and Stride / Pedal and Drive



We are delighted to reveal that the money raised in sponsorship and donations to Suffolk Historic Churches Trust, from their annual fundraising day was £212,020, beating last year's amount.

This was raised by cyclists, walkers, drivers and horse-riders together. The money will be divided between a church, chapel or meeting hall of the participants choice, and the Trust who give grants towards essential church building repairs, conservation and to enable community use such as installing kitchens and toilets.

This is a popular fundraising day amongst both church goers, people who love local history, and those who just like a challenge, next year the events will be held on Saturday 12 September 2026 - pop this date in your diary now! [Read the full story here.](#)

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## Chance to win a painting from renowned artist Maggi Hambling

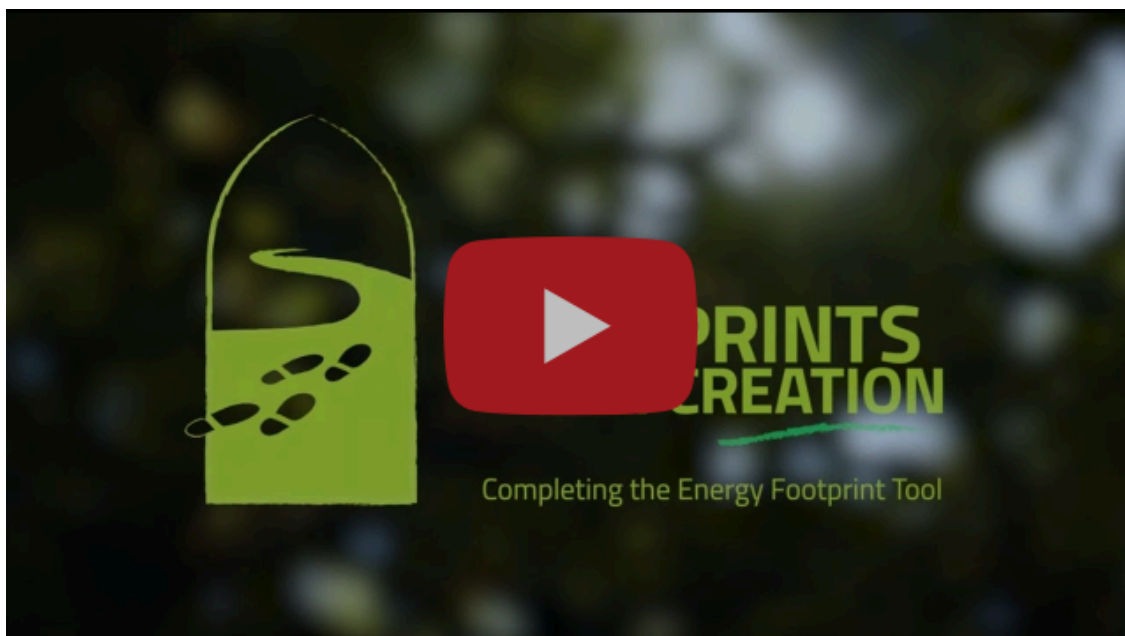
St Mary's Church in Woodbridge, Suffolk, needs to raise about £200,000 after its boiler broke and needed to be replaced. Nick Cottam, chair of the Friends of St Mary's Church, said the church wanted to install a low-carbon heating pump, which would also help toward the Church of England's net zero target. To help partly fund this, the church is offering tickets to win a painting by Suffolk-born Hambling, which Mr Cottam hoped would raise £10,000.

Read the [full story here.](#)

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## Congratulations, St Mary's Mildenhall!

We are delighted that St Mary's Church in Mildenhall has broken the Guinness World Record for the most mini nativity scenes in a church, having surpassed the previous record of 2,150. Each nativity scene has been handmade or loaned by people living in the community, including children at the local primary schools, scout and brownie groups and members of other local churches. Please do join us in congratulating them for their success as the new record holders. Learn more [here.](#)



National Church video on the Energy Footprint Tool

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### Energy Footprint Tool launches on 12 January 2026

The Energy Footprint Tool (EFT) is now open for churches to enter energy use from 2025. You can complete the EFT from 12 January until 30 June 2026. Every footprint we leave behind shapes God's creation. Recording your energy use is an unseen but essential act of caring for people and the planet. By measuring and reducing energy use, we take practical steps to combat the impact of climate change and live out our calling to love our neighbours. Completing the EFT is a simple but powerful way to support the Church of England's shared journey to net zero. Each year's data builds a clearer picture of our carbon footprint and helps us act more strategically together. To complete the EFT, you'll need:

- Gas, electricity and other fuel bills covering **January–December 2025**
- Readings or billing information for each supply
- Basic details about your building(s)

You can save your progress and return at any time during the open window. Complete your EFT on the Parish Returns Portal [here](#). If you require log-in details or any other assistance with the online portal, please email [statistics@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:statistics@cofesuffolk.org). If you need help with the EFT please email [James Rolls](#), our Net Zero Carbon Officer.



Daily prayers will be resuming next week beginning 12 January 2026 led by the Revd Diane Grano.

### Mission and Ministry Events



**Plough Sunday and Farewell Service for Archdeacon Sally Gaze** | Sunday 11 January, 3.30pm | St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS

Please join us for Archdeacon Sally's farewell service on Plough Sunday. The service will include blessing of the plough, refreshments, a thank you to Sally for all she has done and a Lightwave Celebration with stories from across The Lightwave Community. [To book please click here.](#)

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**Eco Church Support** | Tuesday 13 January 2026 - 6.00pm - 7.00pm | Online

These regional Eco Church support sessions are an opportunity to share successes, obstacles and challenges you may be experiencing, seek support and support others. Whether you're seeking advice, wanting to listen in to the chat, or have lots of experience you're happy to share, please join us for this informal session for people to chat about what you are doing to work towards Eco Church Awards. Rosie Venner from Just Money will join this session with a talk about greener finances for churches, including banking, purchasing and investing, with time to answer your questions. [Book for the Zoom link here.](#)

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**Exploring the Old Testament** | Wednesday 14, 21, 28 January; 4, 11, 25 February; and 4 March 7.30 - 9.30pm | Earl Stonham Village Hall IP14 5HJ

The Old Testament 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. 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. [Book here.](#)

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### **PCC Treasurers – ACAT Training, free membership**

All our PCC treasurers are entitled to free membership of ACAT (Association of Church Accountants & Treasurers) through our diocesan block membership. If you would like to become a member please email [Julie Podd](#), Parish Resources Manager. Once you have joined ACAT you have access to their online training (at a small cost), their latest courses are listed below. We also encourage you to join our diocesan online **Treasurer Forum** which is a great place to network with other treasurers, and we regularly post useful information and resources for treasurers. Please email [Emma Denton](#) to receive your invitation to join.

Click to book: [Introduction to Computer Security for churches](#) | Wednesday 14

January 12.30pm – 1.30pm

Click to book: [Being a Treasurer: The Basics](#) three session course: Thursday 29 January, 5 and 12 February, 7.00pm - 9.00pm

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### **How to use Canva for your Church** | Thursday 15 January, 12.00pm to 1.00pm

Canva is a free design tool which offers a number of great features to help you create logos, flyers, social media posts and much more. In this free webinar, the national church team will guide you through Canva's essential features, giving you an introduction to the tool and showing you how to create eye-catching content for your church.

Book [here.](#)

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**Connect Essentials** | Saturdays: 17 January, 21 February, 21 March, 18 April, 16 May, 20 June and 18 July, in Earl Stonham Village Hall.

We are relaunching our Connect course as Connect Essentials, compiled by the national church training team: [Children's Ministry Essentials \(CME\) | The Church of England](#). In the course, we will look at child development, learning and spiritual styles, discipleship, intergenerational worship, and how we walk with families through life's key transitions. Please [register on Insight here](#). For more information please email [Charlotte Gooch](#), Diocesan Growing Younger Project Support, or phone 07802 428626.

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### **Handling Conflict Constructively** | Saturday 17 January 9.00am - 4.30pm |

Saxmundham Church Hall, Saxmundham IP17 1ES

As part of the commitment to equip Church Leaders for the challenges of ministry, we are running a Bridge Builders 'Handling Conflict Constructively' training day. The day will start at 9.00am with welcoming drinks, with the course starting promptly at 9.30am. Lunch is included. For more information on Bridge Builders as an organisation [please see their website.](#)

Places are free of charge but numbers are limited and are being offered on a first-to-respond basis. If you would like to take up the offer of this valuable training, please register [here](#). (Please note: this link is for Clergy and LLM only - log-in is required).

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**The only way is Ethics!** | 20, 27 January; 3, 10, 24 February; and 3 March | 7.30 – 9.30pm | Earl Stonham Village Hall IP14 5HJ

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. This module, led by the Revd Rachel Revely, 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.](#)

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**Draw Near: Life-giving habits for Lent** | Wednesday 21 January at 12.30pm | Online



Join this special webinar to explore Lent and Easter 2026 resources for churches. The Church of England's theme for Lent will be **Draw Near: Life-giving habits for Lent**. The resources have at their heart the theme of a 'rhythm of life' – habits and patterns which help us grow as disciples of Christ day by day, especially as we prepare to celebrate the great mystery of God's saving love at Easter. [Sign up here.](#)

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**Church of England Talk Series** | All starting at 7.30pm | Ipswich Minster IP1 3BN or on YouTube [here](#)

Join this talk series offering a blend of established and emerging theologians, writers and commentators, all exploring what a good Church of England should look like for the nation it seeks to serve.

21 January, Dean Mark Oakley - The Imagination

29 January, Archdeacon Rich Henderson - The Rural Church

There will be a Q&A session after each talk and refreshments will be served for those attending the Minster. All welcome, no booking required. To find out more please visit [Ipswich Minster on Facebook here.](#)

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**Enhancing Pastoral Ministry** | 28 January; 4, 11, 25 February; and 4, 11 March | 7.30pm - 9.30pm | Earl Stonham Village Hall IP14 5HJ

Enhancing Pastoral Ministry is a six-session course for people who are involved in pastoral care (for example, Readers, Lay Elders, clergy, pastoral visitors) as well as those interested in a deeper understanding. Guest speakers will include: Karen Galloway and members of the Diocesan Safeguarding team; Annabel Turner, member of the Diocesan counselling team, and the Diocesan Growing Younger team. [Book here.](#)

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**Religious Life Come & See Weekend** | St Mary's Convent, Wantage, Oxfordshire OX12 9AU | Saturday 7 February, 10.30am to Sunday 8 February, 2.30pm

A weekend residential experience with the Anglican Sisters of the Community of St Mary the Virgin in Wantage, near Oxford, for anyone in the Church of England wishing to explore a possible vocation to the Religious Life. The weekend will give the opportunity to experience 24 hours in a Convent setting joining the Sisters in various aspects of their daily life and rhythm. There will also be opportunity to chat with the Sisters and ask questions. [More details here.](#)

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**Fieldwork: Celebrating Rural Mission and Ministry in Suffolk** | 28 February 2026, 9.30am to 4.00pm | Wingfield Barns, Nr Diss IP21 5RA

Join this Diocesan day conference for church members, PCC members, those in our church schools, lay ministers and clergy from our rural parishes. We will hear from a great keynote speaker, the Revd Jo Neary – Tutor in Rural Ministry and Mission (part-time) at Sarum College, Salisbury, alongside her part-time post as team vicar and pioneer priest in the Beaminster Area Team in Wiltshire, who will encourage us to think about the distinctive identity, calling and potential of the rural church. There will be time to share our stories of



joy and challenge, and be encouraged and inspired. It is being organised by rural ministers with the help of Diocesan staff and is free to attend. [To register please book here.](#)

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**In the beginning was the story... Approaching the New Testament** | Starts Wednesday 29 April 2026 for seven weeks at Earl Stonham Village Hall

Led by the Revd Canon John Parr, Approaching the New Testament takes a story-shaped approach to the heart of

Christian faith. 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 here.](#)

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**The Gathering** | Friday 24 April 6.00pm - Sunday 26 April 2.00pm | Vauxhall Farm, Great Wenham CO7 6QQ



The Gathering is a termly youth worship night organised in partnership with Ipswich CYM and youth leaders from across Ipswich. We have the excellent Tim Alford joining us on the Friday night who will do a great job in delivering a Gospel talk.

**Cost:** £110 per young person. Bookings are managed by CYM Ipswich using the online *Ticket Taylor* system. If

you have questions, please don't hesitate to email [Jamie Swinerd](#). To find out more and book please visit our website [here](#).

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**Flourish** | Saturday 2 May 2026, , 9.30am for 10.00am – 3.00pm | The Salvation Army Hall, Stowmarket IP14 1NE

An invitation to all Readers, Licensed Lay Ministers and Lay Elders to join us for our annual study day. The guest speaker this year is the Revd Dr Thomas Sharp from St Augustine's College of Theology. A core part of Thomas's teaching focuses on human flourishing, especially how Christians care for others in times of hardship. The morning session focuses on Pastoral Care in a Broken World and the afternoon session is on the Theology of Safeguarding – what does it mean to care? Reserve your free space now! Click here: [Flourish - Insight CofE Suffolk](#).

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### **Youthscape Essentials**

Youthscape Essentials is all-round training for every youth leader. The course covers 30 different topics; including insights into youth culture, practical skills to build confidence and the development of leadership characteristics. Sign up if you have sensed that God is maybe calling you into youth ministry, or maybe you are already there and want to be released further into your calling! Take time to invest in yourself and your youth ministry. There is a further option to become a Licensed Lay Youth Minister (LLYM) off the back of the course which would open further opportunities for training and funding to release you into your ministry. This course is free and includes an extensive training manual which will be given to you before the first session. (Sign up in good time to receive the manual before the first session). We are delighted that there are two learning streams available, online and in person. In person will be over three face to face days and one additional online evening. Online will be a monthly two hour Teams call.

Face to Face: 28 March, 9 May, 6 June with online top-up session organised with delegates | venue will depend on the location of the delegates. To sign up to the face-to-face stream please click [here](#) and use course code "2201492"

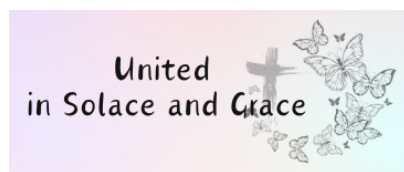
Online: (Weds 7.00 - 9.00pm): 16 September, 7 October, 11 November, 9 December, 13 January 2027, 10 February 2027, 10 March 2027, 14 April 2027, 12 May 2027 and 9 June 2027. To sign up to the online stream, please click [here](#) and use course code "2201540"

If you are interested in Youthscape Essentials but cannot make some/any of the above dates, then please do email [Jamie Swinerd](#), Diocesan Youth & Young Adults Enabler.

## Church Community Services and Events

**Epiphany Singers** | Saturday 10 January 2026, 7.30pm | St Mary's Church, Walsham le Willows.

An unmissable evening with conductor Simon Carrington and organist David Hill. The concert has taken place for over 50 years and the singers are from various choirs including King's Choral Scholars, Bach Choir and Tallis Scholars. No tickets required. The concert and service is such a special way to celebrate Epiphany and we'd love to share the weekend with more people, everyone is welcome.



**United in Solace and Grace** Upcoming Services for families, supporters and survivors of abuse of all kinds to mark It's Not OK Week:

- Saturday 7 February 2026 - St Edmundsbury Cathedral 11.00 am with exhibition by local artists and survivors organisations - United in Solace and Grace Light'
- Sunday 8 February 2026 - All Saints Holbrook, 4.00 pm - United in Solace and Grace 'Broken Vessels'

For more information about United in Solace and Grace please visit [www.solaceandgrace.co.uk](http://www.solaceandgrace.co.uk) or contact Revd Jenny Seggar at [rector2rivers@outlook.com](mailto:rector2rivers@outlook.com).

**Society of Catholic Priests (SCP)** | Thursday 26 February, 11.00am, St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS

The St Edmundsbury and Ipswich chapter of the SCP was relaunched three years ago. They meet four times a year, usually at the Cathedral, for a Eucharist, talk, lunch and conversation. The society is inclusive - for ordained men and women - and it celebrates humanity in all God-given diversity with respect to ethnicity, gender and sexuality. It is in the catholic tradition found within the Anglican communion and is centred on the Eucharist. If you are new to the diocese, recently ordained (including deacons), and feel this could be a spiritual home and place of encouragement and support for you, then come along. The next meeting lead speaker will be the Revd Canon Stuart Batten on Desert Spirituality. For more information please email [Mother Ali](#).

**Psalmscape** | Saturday 28 February 2026, 11.00am to 4.30pm, All Hallows Church, Ipswich IP3 0EN

Join the Cantus Firmus Choir for a day to explore the Psalms through music. You will sing a variety of music inspired by the Psalms, in a broad range of musical styles. There will be reflections on the Psalms, led by Revd Emma Steadman. The day will end with a short act of worship, incorporating some of the music learned during the day. The event is suitable for all who enjoy choral singing. Details and booking at [cantusfirmus.org.uk](https://cantusfirmus.org.uk)

## Notices

**Statistics for Mission:** Thank you to all parishes who have completed their Statistics for Mission forms - the data you provide helps to offer insights into trends such as attendance and electoral roll. The National Church deadline is 31 January 2026. Returns should be submitted via the Online Parish Returns System, which can be accessed here. [Parish Returns Online](#) If you require log-in details or any other assistance with the online portal, please email [statistics@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:statistics@cofesuffolk.org) Further information regarding Parish returns, including videos on how to submit, can be found here: [Stats for Mission - Insight CofE Suffolk](#).

**Parish Giving Scheme Updated Gift Form:** Please ensure that you are using the latest PGS Gift Form with the date 09/2025. For the latest Gift Form please go onto Insight [here](#) or if you would like us to provide you with a Gift Form complete with your details please email [pgs@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:pgs@cofesuffolk.org)

**Raffle for Free CollecTin More Contactless Device:** The Parish Resources Team have a CollecTin More device which we would like to offer to a parish **FOR FREE!** Churches must have Wi-Fi installed in the church for the device to work. Please apply by emailing [Julie Podd](#), Parish Resources Manager by 30 January 2026 if you would like to go into the draw. Churches will be notified by the middle of February if they have been successful and will need to send us a picture of the installed device to use in our promotion materials.

## Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme

The Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (LPWGS) closes on the 31<sup>st</sup> March this year (or earlier if the remaining £6m is claimed, whichever is sooner). If you can, claim now! The scheme allows listed places of worship of all faiths across the UK to reclaim the full amount of VAT they pay on repairs over £1,000. Last year, the government introduced a reduced pot for 2025/26 and a cap of £25,000 per eligible building each year.

As of the 6 January 2026, the stats are:

**Budget:** £23,000,000

**Funding used to date:** £13,885,403

**Value of grant claims in progress:** £2,910,343

**Funding remaining:** £6,204,253

A good way to keep this in the forefront of the government's mind is for churches to thank



their MP and invite them to see the works they have completed. The LPWG Scheme has attracted strong parliamentary interest and churches need the certainty of funding available from 1 April 2026. Strong take up of the funding available will help show that there is a need.

**George van Kooten's book: "Reverberations of Good News: The Gospels in Context, Then and Now."**

Based on the sessions George van Kooten led in the Bishops' Teaching Mornings, his new book has just been published by [SCM here](#).

**Mothers' Union is delighted to announce that Bishop Joanne has accepted their invitation to be their patron:** This comes at a milestone in the life of Mothers' Union as 2026 marks the 150th anniversary of the founding of Mothers' Union in 1876. As they look to the future, members will continue working to improve the lives of individuals, families, and communities around the world. At the heart of everything is their unwavering belief that faith and compassion can transform lives.

**Service Books Available:** Funerals at crematoria are making more and more use of TV screens for services and not books. The team at Ipswich Crematorium have decided to pass on their collection of books and wondered if churches and other groups can make use of some. They have been working with the Revd Canon Andrew Dotchin in Kesgrave and he now has a large store of Funeral Service Books, complete Mission Praise, and large print Hymns A&M (Revised). Many of these are in near mint condition and are free to anyone who can make use of them. To find out more email [Andrew](#) or call him on 07814 949828.

## Vacancies

[Team Vicar](#) | [Sole Bay Team](#)

[Team Vicar](#) | Forest Heath Team Ministry (House for Duty - Sunday + 2 days)

[Children's Choir Leader](#) | All Hallows' Church | Closing date: 12 January

[Non-Executive Safeguarding Chapter Member](#) | St Edmundsbury Cathedral

[Cathedral Volunteers](#) | St Edmundsbury Cathedral

[Risk, Audit and Review Committee Member](#) | St Edmundsbury Cathedral

[Associate Chaplain](#) | Sizewell C

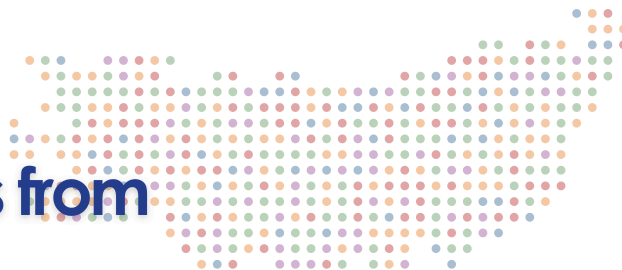
[Part-time Youth Worker](#) | All Saints' Church, Ipswich

Royal Naval Chaplaincy is seeking to recruit leaders who can underpin, build and sustain the spiritual foundations of sailors, officers and Royal Marines, for both [Regular \(full time\)](#) and [Reserve \(part time\)](#) Commission. If you would like to know more, or discuss the role, please email the Chaplain Recruiter, The Revd [Alastair Blaine](#) RN.

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



## Watch our stories from around Suffolk



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