



Thursday 10 December

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Growing in God

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

Doorstep Carols



Sing along with Radio Suffolk on Wednesday 16 December 6.00-7.00pm. Parishes are warmly invited to organise carol singing on doorsteps across the county this Christmas to spread some much needed cheer and raise funds for local charities with the help of Radio Suffolk. Tune in to Radio Suffolk at Ipswich - 103.9 FM | West Suffolk - 104.6 FM | Lowestoft - 95.5 FM | Aldeburgh - 95.5 FM. This is also on DAB and on [BBC Sounds](#).

You will find invitations and carol sheets which you can customise with local Christmas information at www.light-wave.org/doorstep-carols. Links to charity giving and the national doorstep carols website will also appear there. For further information, email [Archdeacon Sally](#). If you are a Facebook user, please use the 'Doorstep Carols Suffolk' group to post about your preparations and good news stories about Christmas in your community or you can share them via an email on the webpage above. Looking forward to singing with you!



St Edmundsbury Cathedral is joining Doorstep Carols on 16 December.

Lightwave Christmas Services

Carol Café, Stonham Barns, Saturday 19 December 3.00-4.00pm - Join Lightwave for mince pies, chocolate logs and hot Christmas drinks in their pop-up carol café - with live Christmas music and the Christmas story. **Carols by Car Light, Debenham Community Centre**, Sunday 20 December 2020 (time to be confirmed). Come along and sing your favourite carols by car light.

All information is available on www.light-wave.org.

Drive-in Christmas Carols, festive songs and readings - under the stars

Friday 18 December, Trinity Park, Ipswich IP3 8UH
Doors open 6.00pm, Carols to start at 7.00pm

Join in with a selection of traditional and modern carols, interspersed with readings and festive joy. Includes a live band with readings by a selection of local church leaders. Suitable for all ages. Drive or walk in (socially distanced picnic benches available). Please register [here](#).

Soap for Christmas

Attractively-packaged soap may be a typical Christmas present for loved ones close to home, but Richard Stainer, our World Development Adviser, is urging you to save lives this Christmas by helping to provide soap for some of the world's most vulnerable families.

Richard and his wife Christine travelled from their home to rural Ethiopia with Christian Aid in October 2019 to see projects helping communities access water and adapt to the climate crisis which is pushing families into extreme poverty. They saw how water pumps in rural communities were transforming the lives and health of villagers. But just months after their return coronavirus became yet another threat and this year locust swarms also destroyed precious food sources in Ethiopia.

In remote communities Christian Aid is helping women use the drought-resistant aloe vera plant to make soap to not only protect their families' health but also to sell for a source of vital income. Richard and Christine are now urging people to consider buying a £15 [Charity Gift](#) from Christian Aid to train a woman in soap-making or £30 to provide clean water. To support Christian Aid's Christmas Appeal please visit caid.org.uk/hope

Christmas News from the Revd Cathy Bladen, The United Benefice of Stanton.

In many of our rural villages our church buildings and our church life stand in the centre



and at the heart of our communities. This year in Stanton the church and community have really worked together...which has been wonderful. There has been a huge and generous response to support the food bank with many many donations being left in the church porch. The Parish Council put up the Christmas Tree in the churchyard early this year and we as a church thought it would be lovely to have a life size Nativity Scene in the churchyard to bring a smile to people's faces and help to focus on the true meaning of Christmas. Having discussed the idea with a few folk in the village, a couple of them got together and ran with the idea. Wood was donated,

someone drew out the figures, which were then cut out. The figures were painted and varnished, and last Sunday afternoon with the help of the churchwarden, the Rector and people from the village we erected our Nativity scene.

We have invited the village to decorate the low branches of the trees in the churchyard with stars... and new stars are now appearing daily. Next Saturday afternoon, following on from our Carol Service we intend to go out into the churchyard and sing carols around the Nativity scene. It will be wonderful to have the Nativity scene at the centre not only of our Carol singing but also at the heart and centre of our community this Christmas. For more information please visit Facebook [here](#).

St Mary's, Woodbridge and St Mary's, Great Bealings Church



These churches celebrated the Feast of St Nicholas with a collection of toys and games and were able to donate sacks full of toys to two local charities 'Suffolk Baby Bank' and 'West Villa and East Villa Centres for Homeless Families, Ipswich'. The new Rector, Father Nigel Prior, said "We had a fantastic response and

people were incredibly generous, including one person who had hand-made Church Mice and lots of knitted cuddly toys. The age range was literally from 0 to 18 years old in the gifts represented and the Parish very much hope that children and families in need will be their top priority this year"

St Nicholas Hospice Light up a Life Services

From Monday 14 December

St Nicholas Hospice is inviting you to remember your loved ones in a number of ways. You can share a loved one's name to be included in the St Nicholas book of remembrance and be part of a series of pre-recorded virtual services released on their website. The services will include the names of loved ones accompanied by music, poetry and a selection of images. Also, for the first time, they are offering an online Book of Remembrance in which the names of loved ones can be recorded and shared.

For more information please visit their website [here](#). #alwaysremembered.

Tracking numbers online during Advent and Christmas

Friday 11 December 11.00am - 12.15pm

Are video views the same as people on seats? What does page views really mean? What numbers should I track with Google Analytics? Impressions, reach and engagement - which really have value?

Numbers this year have been a little different as we've all embraced new online platforms, and it's not always been easy to determine which numbers to take note of.

Sign-up to this free webinar as we talk through some of the numbers that really count, and how to track growth across your websites and social media this Christmas. Sign up [here](#).

How to adapt and present training online

Wednesday 27 January 2021, 10.00-11.00am

A one hour interactive webinar in which we can explore how we can use online platforms to deliver existing discipleship and training materials such as Basics. Facilitated by Ruth Dennigan who has adapted a number of learning and training modules to be deliverable online, and also draws on her wide background in education. What are the benefits of online learning, what are the drawbacks and how can we mitigate the shortcomings? To book your place please visit <https://adapting-training.eventbrite.co.uk>

Growing Younger Sunday

Sunday 31 January 2021

On this Sunday in January we would love each and every church in our Diocese to take a step in considering children and youth in their services on that day. This could range from praying for them and their leaders; right up to having them plan and lead a service. We are encouraging all churches to do something on this Sunday to recognise that young people are co-pilgrims on our journey of faith, and can teach and share and reflect in a relevant, reverent and innately spiritual way. To support you in this we have ...

- A prayer written for and by children and young people is being commissioned by our Bishops.
- A Padlet of resources which will be released in the early New Year.
- A vlog by the Bishops
- Zoom sessions with Q&A – dates will be available via Eventbrite in the New Year.

Growing Younger is a huge part of our Diocesan Strategy and our Bishops will be involved in various services and activities throughout the Diocese on this day. We are aware that this is also Candlemas Sunday. Don't think of this as an 'either/or' - Why not use this as an opportunity to get children and young people more involved with your service, talking about themes of candles and light; belonging and blessing?

For further information please contact Hilary Wordsworth-Sewell hilary.wordsworth-sewell@cofesuffolk.org (Children's and Families) or Matt Levett matt.levett@cofesuffolk.org (Youth and Young Adults).

Census 2021

Sunday 21 March 2021

The diocese has been approached by the Census Engagement Managers for Suffolk and East Cambridgeshire to ask for your help in promoting the Census to those members of our community who may need extra support to complete it.

In particular they are looking for local support for the over 80's, low income households, people over 65 with low digital skills and people whose first language is not English, to ensure that they fulfil their legal requirement to complete the Census questionnaire.

This provides an excellent opportunity to build upon our presence in every community and the widespread response that so many churches and parishes have made during the COVID-19 pandemic to those most vulnerable, often alongside other county counterparts. The Church in East Cambridgeshire has already begun to put plans in place for communicating information via parish newsletters and offering their churches and buildings as venues for those needing help to complete the forms via drop-in events and cafés.

Please could you discuss amongst your Chapter whether there was a similar offer that could be made in your deanery so that the Church can be at the heart of the response in Suffolk also. If any churches are able to participate, please could they let Louise Carson and Timothy Buttle know directly by emailing them both: louise.carsen20@field.census.gov.uk and timothy.buttle84@field.census.gov.uk, copying in Michael Robinson (michael.robinson@cofesuffolk.org) so that we have a record of the collective offer.

Notices

Independent Faith Engagement Review – call for evidence - The government has launched an independent faith engagement review. Recommendations from this review will shape the future of how the government engages with faith groups during the COVID-19 recovery phase and beyond. The survey can be accessed [here](#). The survey closes on 11 December.

Parish Giving Scheme opening times during Christmas and New Year - The

helpline and telephone line will close on Tuesday 24 December 2020 at 12.00pm and re-open on Monday 4 January 2021 at 9.00am. Please note: Tuesday 22 December will be the last day they can accept changes for 1 January 2021 gifts (this includes: increases, decreases and cancellations). Should you need to cancel your gift after 22 December, please liaise directly with your bank.

Gavin Stone's Farewell - After 23 years of serving the Church of England in Suffolk in an employed role; five working with young people in the community of his local parish, five as Diocesan Youth Adviser, eight as Assistant Diocesan Secretary and the past five engaged with strategy, transformation and communications; Gavin Stone is moving on to become the Director of External Relations at the Royal Hospital School.

Gavin says, "It has been a huge privilege to serve and support the ministry of six Bishops, their senior staff, and the people and parishes of the diocese - notably as part of the Diocesan Office team alongside the Bishop's Office and Cathedral, all with such amazing colleagues, from whom I have learnt so much. I am thrilled to be continuing my working life in Suffolk, the county of my birth that I am so passionate about. I look forward to continuing to contribute to God's mission as a Lay Minister."

Gavin leaves us on Friday 18 December. Leonie Ryle, Communications Manager, continues to be the first-point-of-contact for communications matters whilst longer-term plans are explored.

Vacancies

[Assistant Administrator \(Mission and Ministry\) Maternity Cover](#) | Closing date: 15 December 2020

[Pioneer Evangelist for Ipswich Centre of Mission](#) | Closing date: 14 January 2021



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