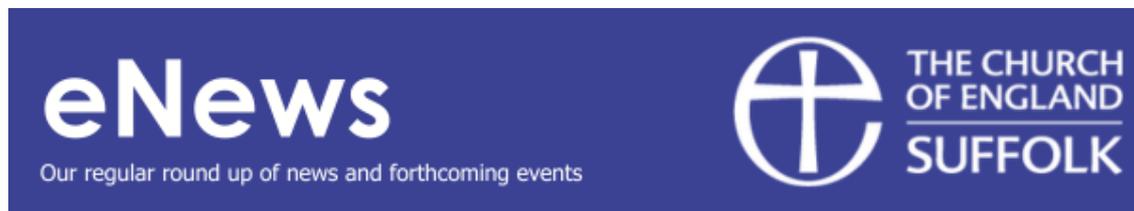


Thursday 19 February 2026



Three Tanzanian bishop visit Worlingworth VC Primary School



Bishop Darlington Bendankeha of Kagera, Bishop Godfrey Mbelwe of Lweru and Bishop Vithalis Yusuph of Biharamulo met teachers and children at Worlingworth VC Primary School during their visit in January having travelled to Suffolk to be part of Bishop Joanne Grenfell's enthronement.

The school had been raising money through a host of fundraising activities – including cake sales, a walking challenge and a Christmas jumper day – after the school council chose to support the campaign. The school raised nearly £1,000 for a new water tank for a village

in the African nation, and they presented the cheque to Bishop Darlington.

During their visit they also went to Haverhill Arts Centre to watch the Centre Stage Company's Little Red Riding Hood performance and had they enjoyed a traditional Tanzanian lunch at BME Suffolk Community Hub Services in Ipswich, which offers a food bank, community café and drop in advice and support service for individuals from a diverse background. Read the full story [on our website here.](#)

Together we pray: We are delighted that the Revd Laura Mumford is leading 'Together we Pray' from Monday 23 February. Tune in at 8.30am on the [Bishop's Facebook page](#) to watch live or visit the page to watch again later in the day.



The Revd Laura Mumford will be leading next week's Together we Pray.

DRAW NEAR LIFE-GIVING HABITS FOR LENT

Draw Near: Life-giving habits for Lent: The Church of England's theme for Lent 2026 is Draw Near: Life-giving habits for Lent. This year's 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. All resources are

listed on the Church of England website here: [Draw Near: Life-giving habits for Lent](#)

Online Lent Course: Framing the Future, Wednesdays during Lent at 7.00pm

Each week, beginning on 25 February, this year's Lent course at St Edmundsbury Cathedral will explore 'visions of a future church', responding to a lecture in the Cathedral given by Abbott Christopher Jamison on Shrove Tuesday titled 'Framing the Future. Find out more about our speakers, and register [here](#).

Diocesan Confirmation Service

This year's Diocesan Confirmation Service at St Edmundsbury Cathedral is on Sunday 3 May at 3.30pm. If you would like to present candidates at the service, please be in touch with Canon Katy by emailing precentor@stedscathedral.org.

Mission and Ministry Events

Conservation of Wooden War Memorials | Thursday 24 February | Online

Historic England's Technical Conservation Team, provide free webinars, offering an in-depth look at a range of technical conservation topics. This particular webinar will explore the conservation of external timber war memorials across England, focusing on their material and technical aspects. Join to gain insights into common deterioration issues and learn about appropriate conservation techniques, including timber repair, protective treatments and maintenance. [Book here](#).

Interested in Reader Ministry? Saturday 21 March, 10.00am to 12.00pm | Best Western Brome Grange Hotel, Norwich Road, Nr Eye, IP23 8AP

Come along to our informal Coffee Morning - an opportunity to find out more about Readers (Licensed Lay Ministers). Led by Diocesan staff and those currently serving as and training to be Readers. Even better, there will be cake! Please email [Lauren Moore](mailto:Lauren.Moore@diocese.org) to express your interest, ask any further questions and to enable us to arrange catering.

Lark Rise Retreats

'The Pilgrim's Progress - exploring the themes of John Bunyan's novel' a study day led by Jane Jennison on Saturday 28 March at St Nicholas Church, The Ferry, Felixstowe

'The resurrection appearances of Jesus', a quiet day led by the Revd Penny Brinkley on Saturday 11 April at St Nicholas Church, The Ferry, Felixstowe

'Faith on the edge - Jesus heals at the margins', a retreat day based on Luke 8.40 to 56, led by the Revd Helen Rengert on Saturday 9 May at St Edmunds Church, Langer Rd, Felixstowe

Days run from 10.00am – 4.00pm and cost £27/person including refreshments and lunch. A bursary fund is available. More details and bookings are on www.larkriseretreats.org or call Catherine Bond & Jane Pearse on 01394 284213.

In the beginning was the story. A different approach to 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.](#)

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



The Gathering is a residential weekend organised in partnership with Ipswich CYM and youth leaders from across Ipswich. The excellent Tim Alford will be joining for the Friday night who will do a great job in delivering a Gospel talk. The cost for this weekend is £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](mailto:Jamie.Swinerd@ipswichcym.org). To find out more and book please visit our website [here](#).

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](#).

Youthscape Essentials

Youthscape Essentials is all-round training for every youth leader. This course is free and includes an extensive training manual which will be given to you before the first session. We are delighted that there are two learning streams available, online and in person.

Face to Face: 28 March, 9 May, 6 June with an 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 by TEAMS: (Weds 7.00pm - 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.

Preaching Hope in Troubled Times | Saturday 20 June, 10.30am – 4.00pm, St John the Evangelist Church, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 1SP

Women's Voices is back in Bury! With Liz Shercliff and Kate Bruce who will share their wisdom and learning, insights and enthusiasm with us. The theme this year will include Preaching Hope into Despair - Discipleship as Trauma - The Hope of Incarnation - Preaching Hope into Trauma. The event is open to all, women and men, but preachers and those in ministry - lay and ordained - will find this invaluable. Refreshments are provided but please bring your own lunch; alternatively enjoy lunch in the town. Save the date or email Mother Ali, Diocesan Adviser for Women's Ministry, for further information: teamvicarlvnb@btinternet.com

Church Community Services and Events

Living Christ's Mercy, Justice and Hope | Tuesday 10 March, 10.30am - 3.30pm | The Abbey Centre, London SW1P 3BU

Join the Rt Revd Rachel Treweek, Lord Bishop of Gloucester and Anglican Bishop for HM Prisons in England and Wales, and friends including the Welcome Directory, Prison Fellowship and Spring Harvest for a day of encouragement, mutual learning and reflection. [Register here.](#)

St Michael's Illuminated | Saturday 14 March, 6.30pm-8.30pm | St Michael's Church, Beccles NR34 9HE

St Michael's Church will host a spectacular light show designed by visual artist William Lindley, a former chorister at the church. His installations have been commissioned for

historic buildings, festivals and public areas across the country. No booking needed. Visitors will be able to come and go throughout the evening. They will be invited to make a donation. Refreshments will be for sale.

Cherishing the Earth Day Conference | Saturday 21 March, 9.30am-4.00pm | St John's Church, Woodbridge IP12 1HS

Come along to a day conference dedicated to supporting church through caring for the environment. With address from the Rt Hon Lord Deben, John Gummer. Cost £5 to cover refreshments, please bring your own lunch. [To book, please click here.](#)

Considering ordination in the Church of England? | Thursday 26 March, 1.00pm or 7.30pm, Zoom

Oak Hill College is running a one-hour online event is designed to help you explore whether God may be calling you to ordained ministry in the Church of England. Join on Zoom for an hour of biblical reflection, honest insight and practical guidance. You'll hear from experienced church leaders who have each walked this path and now serve in significant roles within the Church as well as from some current ordinands. For more info and to sign up click [here](#).

Cursillo Retreat | Friday 17 April 10.00am Saturday 18 April 4.00pm, at Sizewell Hall IP16 4TX

Join this retreat with the theme 'Fishers of men', to look at how God has called us to serve him.

Cost £145.00 per person. For more details and to book before 7 March please email bev.frost@ntlworld.com.

Clergy Women Sailing Retreat | 6 June

Join this Clergy Women Sailing Retreat with Morning Star Trust (MST). Offered for £25 each, and bring your own lunch and snacks. MST's mission on the East Coast is, of course, youth work afloat and they run taster days for local church/youth leaders as well a week for a local women's refuge too. The MST office team can provide further information about bookings, please contact bookings@mst.org.uk

Please note, you can apply for CMD Grant or SMDP funding (if you've done the SMDP leadership programme). So please make use of this if you can. You'll need to book and pay for yourself first so that you can secure your place.

Notices

Energy Footprint Tool launched on 12 January 2026: The Energy Footprint Tool (EFT) is now open for churches to enter energy use from 2025. Recording your energy use is an unseen but essential act of caring for people and the planet. 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 If you need help with the EFT please email [James Rolls](#), our Net Zero Carbon Officer.

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 13 March 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 Further information regarding Parish returns, including videos on how to submit, can be found here: [Stats for Mission - Insight CofE Suffolk](#).

Vacancies

[Church Administrator](#) | Christ Church Felixstowe | Closing date: 20 February
[Rector](#) | North Bosmere Benefice | Closing date: 23 February
[Youth Minister](#) | St John's Woodbridge | Closing date: 27 February
[Growing Younger Team Leader](#) | Closing date: 4 March
[Benefice Administrator](#) | Alde Sandlings Benefice | Closing date: 6 March
[Safeguarding Trainer and Training Co-ordinator](#) | Closing date: 8 March
[Children and Families' Worker](#) | Alde Sandlings Benefice | Closing date: 3 April
[Lightwave Pioneer Leader](#) | Bridge Communities, Suffolk
[Team Vicar](#) | Sole Bay Team
[Team Vicar](#) | Forest Heath Team Ministry
[Team Vicar & Associate Priest](#) | Blyth Valley Team Ministry F/T Stipendiary Post
[Non-Executive Safeguarding Chapter Member](#) | [Cathedral Volunteers](#) | [Risk, Audit and Review Committee Member](#) | St Edmundsbury Cathedral
[Associate Chaplain](#) | Sizewell C
Royal Naval Chaplaincy | email the Chaplain Recruiter, the Revd [Alastair Blaine](#) RN.
[Children's and Families Minister](#) | Parish of Whitton

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TOGETHER WE ARE
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
SUFFOLK

Watch our stories from around Suffolk

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THE BIG WEEKEND
18-20 April 2025

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE
A SCHOOL GOVERNOR

KAGERA, TANZANIA 2024
GROWING YOUNGER



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