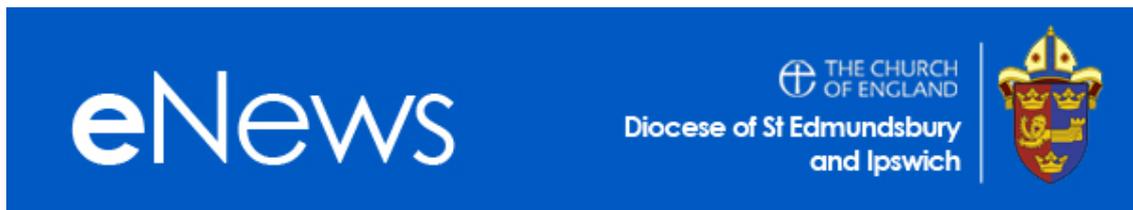


Our regular round up of news and forthcoming events from our diocese

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Thursday 2 February 2023

Bishop Martin has raised concerns in the House of Lords about vulnerable families suffering from fuel poverty - and says that Suffolk families are having to choose between heating or eating as he presses the Government to do more to help those in need. Speaking as a member of the House of Lords, Bishop Martin highlighted concerns that vulnerable families may not be able to access information about where they can get help and support with paying fuel bills. Bishop Martin raised these concerns during questions in the House of Lords on Tuesday 31 January about helping vulnerable households with energy costs and the role of Ofgem in delivering affordable energy.

Bishop Martin told peers he was voicing concerns raised by clergy and churches in Suffolk who are at the front line of helping people in Suffolk. He said, *"one of the biggest challenges that vulnerable households are facing as they try to pay their energy bills is accessing information, particularly when it is available only online."*

Bishop Martin asked for assurances from the Government that information should be available in different ways, not just online, because those needing help with bills often have limited or no online access. He further asked the Government to consider partnering with other service providers such as foodbanks to ensure those who needed help with fuel costs could easily access the information they needed. Afterwards Bishop Martin added: *"when we know families in Suffolk have to choose between heating or eating, we need to do all we can to make sure those who are struggling with fuel bills get all the support they can."*

For information and support on the cost of living please click [here](#).

Preaching Matthew, with Professor George van Kooten

Saturday 25 February 9.30am to 12.30pm

Salvation Army Hall, Violet Hill Road, Stowmarket IP14 1NE

Bishop Martin invites you to a follow-up of the November 2022 study morning 'Preaching on the Gospel of Matthew'. This session includes guest speaker Professor George van Kooten from the Faculty of Divinity at the University of Cambridge. To book your place please visit here: [Bishops-preaching-Matthew-2023.eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/bishops-preaching-matthew-2023). Please note the other Bishops' study morning dates in 2023 are 17 June and 25 November.

Contactless giving rolled out across Suffolk



Contactless donation devices have been installed in another 39 churches across Suffolk after a hugely successful national pilot scheme last year.

A total of 30 Suffolk churches were given donation devices from September 2021 as part of the pilot, giving people in their communities the opportunity to donate using a card rather than cash. The scheme was a big success in the county, raising more than £34,000

in its first year alone. On top of this, a further £8,800 was given through QR codes and online giving. This meant churches raised an average of more than £1,400 each from their community's generosity as part of the national pilot.

Julie Podd, Parish Resources Manager at the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, said: *"We are delighted the donation devices have been so popular – it's nice to be able to help our parishes and give people flexibility if they decide to make a contribution to our wonderful churches. Many people now don't carry cash, as contactless payments have become so popular. This has been a fantastic way to provide an easy and convenient way for people to donate and shows how much people value their churches. We are hugely thankful and appreciative of every donation made. The money helps fund a range of community projects and ministry as well as maintaining our beautiful church buildings."*

Picture caption Pinky Palmer, Churchwarden at St Peter and St Paul's church in Eye. To read more on this story please visit [our webpage here](#).

A focus on Ministry

Dear friends,

It has been such a joy to be working as our Diocesan Director of Ordinands (DDO) for the last 18 months. It's been a privilege to meet people from so many different backgrounds, ages, traditions and contexts to explore with them what it is that God might be calling them to in his church. In the next few editions of eNews we are going to put some ministries in the spotlight, I hope that you enjoy reading the stories of these people as they have sought to follow God's call on their life.

If you would like a chat about your vocation journey please do email [me](#). Or perhaps you could chat with one of our newly appointed Vocations Champions, to find one, please click [here](#). I would also be really glad to come and talk with incumbents and PCCs about how we can encourage and support vocations in our parishes, benefices and deaneries, again do email [me](#). In the meantime here are a few reminders for you:

- The Church of England celebrates **Vocation Sunday on 30 April** this year.
- If you have responsibility for planning or leading services, please do look at our Vocations Sunday Padlet. On the Padlet you'll find a Communion service, Service of the Word, Intercessions as well as some suggestions for homilies.

- The Cathedral is hosting our Vocations Fair again this on **Saturday 29 April from 10.00am – 1.00pm**. Please do come and have a look around our stalls and have a chat with the people there. Why not come with a group from church and then have lunch at the Pilgrims' kitchen café ?
- I'm going to be running a **SHAPE** course on Zoom in the weeks following Vocation Sunday. This is a six-session course designed to help consider how God is calling us and gifting us for ministry. Registration details will follow as soon as available.

With every blessing, The Revd Stuart Batten. DDO

Elders Ministry



We are delighted that Archdeacon Jeanette went to Alde Sandlings benefice on Sunday 8 January and commissioned and recommissioned 12 Lay Elders. The wonderful benefice service welcomed them and celebrated their ministry. Recommissioned Elders included Fran Smith, Julian Worster, Ros Macallister, Tim Haxell, Susan Henderson and Mo Blackburn. While, Sheila Brechin, Jill Brown, Jenny Digby, David Gordon, Catherine Palmer and Marie Szpak were commissioned for the first

time.

All 12 come from the four churches in the benefice. The benefice was recently in vacancy and when the Revd Sarah du Boulay arrived, she noticed and discerned their calling early on. Sarah said, *"some people had been working well together during the vacancy and some people were already attending a Wednesday morning prayer gathering, others I contacted directly. I noticed their calling very early on in my own ministry here – they are so obviously on fire for God!"*

The group did some interactive and theologically based training together, looking at our own faith, how we sustain ourselves, our ministry going forward, the practicalities of being an Elder, and of course, Safeguarding. The age range of the Elders is between those in their 50s and one in their 90s - just showing it's never too late! Some will have a pastoral role and others are liturgical Elders. Sarah says *"Having 12 Elders is a huge blessing to our benefice. It enables us to do more, both in the churches and in our communities. Each person brings a wealth of experience and their own gifts to the role. It is wonderful to be able to honour and celebrate the role that lay people have in spreading the Good News of the gospel"*.

To learn more about Elders ministry please click [here](#).

Jenny Digby. Newly commissioned Lay Elder at St Peter and St Paul's church, Aldeburgh says

"Six years ago I was enjoying my recently retired life when out of the blue, my eldest son Lee, who was just 42, was diagnosed with cancer. I was not a churchgoer but Julian

Worcester, a Lay Elder who was also a Town Councillor at the time, asked if I would like him to add Lee's name onto the Prayer List at church for 'Those Who Are Sick' and Lee's name would be mentioned each day in prayer.

When I found myself in this dire situation, I turned to God, like I'm sure so many other people do. So I decided I would attend Morning Prayer each Wednesday and pray for Lee myself. Sadly, Lee passed away last January 2022 after five years living his best life with his lovely wife Michelle. I gradually became a little more involved with the church and when asked if I would like to train to be a Lay Elder, I decided it was the best way I could give something back. I now lead Morning Prayer two mornings each week, and I've started writing articles on a regular basis in the Benefice Newsletter called, 'Meet The People, Our Unsung Heroes'. My life has changed in more ways than one. Being involved and making a difference is the perfect place to be when you are grieving". Full story [here](#).

Chaplains needed!

The Cathedral welcomes over 75,000 visitors a year and an important part of the visitor ministry is the team of chaplains. They form a quiet presence, on hand to speak to visitors, particularly those in need and to offer public prayers at 12.00pm and 3.00pm. Chaplains are usually on duty daily (except Sundays) from about 10.30am to 3.30pm between March and November. The Cathedral offers a lunch voucher and a car parking space to its visitor chaplains. If you would like to get involved (ordained or lay chaplains are welcome), and could spare a day a month, we would be pleased to hear from you. Please email sarahfriswell@stedscathedral.org to find out more.

Plans for Growth – The Revd Phil Dykes

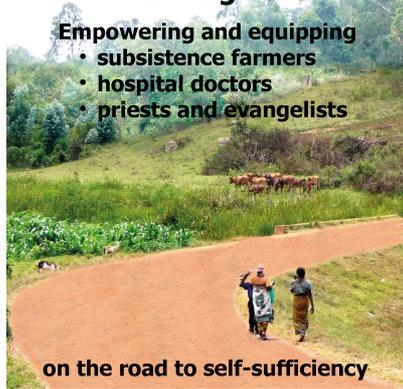
The Plan for Growth process is simple and straightforward but will transform the mission and ministry of your benefice as you put it in place. Once we know where God is leading you, we will be able to support you as you go forward. If your benefice has already finished yours – please share your plan with us [here](#). If you would like my support to develop your own Plans for Growth, I am here to help – do email our Mission Project Officer helen.prior-townsend@cofesuffolk.org to arrange a chat or have a look at the resources available to help you on our website here:

[Growing in God](#) | [Plan for Growth - Incumbent and PCC resources](#) | [Growing in God - Parish resources](#)

2023 Bishops' Lent Appeal for Kagera

Lent Challenge booklets are flying off the shelf. Have you ordered yours yet? One churchwarden told us that they had so much fun doing the last challenges at her own church that she's suggested it to all those in her group of churches - 150 booklets have gone to them. Another home group has ordered 25 because they enjoyed using it as a basis for discussion during Lent in previous years and want to do it again. And we are really happy that some other churches have come on board for the first time this year. Do order yours now! We also have plenty of posters and bookmarks if you'd like those as well.

2023 Bishops' Lent Appeal for Kagera



For more information or to donate visit cofesuffolk.org/bishops-lent-appeal



Have you thought of taking part in 'Buy a Bishop'?

We've already had one bid! Can you or your church or group think of an exciting challenge for our bishops, or invite them to join you doing something they wouldn't normally do? Contact Chris and Anji Dawkins on kagera@cofesuffolk.org to order posters, bookmarks, leaflets etc or to buy a bishop. To access all of our resources and to donate [please click here](#).

Events

Engaging All Ages in Worship workshop and service

19 February 2.00pm - 4.00pm

St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS



Join this workshop with Sara and Sam Hargreaves and explore how you can include a range of ages, spiritual styles, learning modes and all the senses in gathered worship. Followed by an hour worship service at 4.30pm, ideal for families, putting into practice ideas from the workshop. Tickets cost £10 - CMD grants are applicable to those who are eligible. Find out

more: <https://steds cathedral.org/events/engaging-all-ages-in-worship>

Journeys - Lent course offered by The Clewer Initiative

The Clewer Initiative has produced a new resource for Lent 2023. 'Journeys' will be based on the 'Stations of the Cross' and through five mini-films and an accompanying devotional resource, it will take churches and individuals on a journey, challenging them to take action against modern slavery and not be a bystander. It can be used in in-person small groups, individual study or online. The films will include interviews with church members, experts and community leaders who have done significant anti-slavery work. They will highlight the journeys that they have been on to deliver their work. Sign up [here](#).

Living your life with God

Starting 28 February, 7.00pm - 8.30pm by Zoom

Brother Lawrence wrote about how he lived his Christian life in the 1600s and his very slim work "Practicing the Presence of God" has been massively popular ever since. Through Lent, Bishop Mike (and an occasional guest!) will be offering five Zoom sessions looking at how his insights can be applied in everyday life, with plenty of room for discussion on the

way. For more details and to book your place [please click here](#).

Step Forward

Saturday 11 March 10.30am

Bishophthorpe Palace, near York

Step Forward is a day for anyone aged 18 to 30 considering ministry in the Church of England. The Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, will be preaching at the opening worship for the event and will take part in a question and answer session in the afternoon. This has always been a particularly fruitful and formative event for those who attend, and can be a key step on the vocational journey of many potential candidates. To find out more and book please visit: www.stepforwardanglican.org.uk

Praxis East - Treasures Old and New

Thursday 16 March, 7.00 – 9.00 pm, Zoom

Come and explore the tensions between traditional and contemporary expressions of worship. This is another opportunity for liturgy and worship practitioners across the eastern dioceses to come together. Using a peer-led discussion on Zoom, clergy and lay ministers can share experience, ideas and expertise. To book your place please email Helen: helenbent99@gmail.com.

Financial Planning During Ministry for Retirement and Beyond

Wednesday 10 May, 9.30am, Zoom

The aim of this seminar is to help clergy (and their partners) demystify financial matters, and to help you plan for your financial future no matter how far you may be from retirement. Key speakers include those from the Church of England Pensions Board, clergy pension and housing teams; plus independent financial advisers from Ecclesiastical Financial Advisory Services. They will address personal financial planning issues and questions that in their experience face most clergy. To book your place, please email Lesley-Anne.Marriott@peterborough-diocese.org.uk

Oxford University Theology Summer School 2023

Running from 30 July - 12 August

If you are interested in expanding your knowledge this summer, why not take the opportunity to attend the Oxford University Theology Summer School this year? Live and study at Christ Church, one of Oxford University's largest and most beautiful colleges. Learn and socialise with clergy and theologians from around the world. Attend for one or two weeks. The ever popular summer school has been running for over 20 years and draws participants from all over the world, and from a wide variety of Christian denominations. Details of the application process can be found on their [website](#). If you require any further information, please contact theologysummer@conted.ox.ac.uk

Notices

Statistics for Mission: Thank you to all parishes who have already submitted their Statistics for Mission forms. **The national church deadline has been extended to 31 March 2023.** Returns are to be submitted on the [Online Parish Returns System](#), if you require login details or any other assistance regarding the online portal please contact Alison Barker by [email](#). Further information is available on our website [here](#).

Parish visits to St Edmundsbury Cathedral: Parish visits are now available from Sunday 26 February. These provide an opportunity to enjoy a reflective pilgrimage of the Cathedral and to experience the Cathedral Choir at Choral Evensong, followed by tea and cakes in the Cathedral Centre where you will meet with members of the Cathedral's community, clergy, and Friends of the Cathedral. Spaces are limited and the maximum number for one booking is for 30. Spaces are taken very quickly, dates will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis, so please book early by emailing Naomi Sturges at liturgy.admin@stedscathedral.org. For more details click [here](#).

Vacancies

[Rector, Benefice of Rattlesden, Brettenham, Hitcham and Thorpe Morieux](#) | Closing date: 3 February 2023

[Sales Assistant | St Edmundsbury Cathedral](#) | Closing date: 8 February 2023

[Priest-in-Charge, All Hallows Church, Ipswich | \(Five year fixed-term post\)](#) | Closing date: 12 February 2023

[Head of Operations | River Church](#) | Closing date: 19 February 2023

[Growing Younger Project Support](#) | Closing date: 19 February 2023

[Communications and Media Manager | River Church](#) | Closing date: 19 February 2023

[Rector | Rougham, Beyton with Hessett and Rushbrooke](#) | Closing date: 21 February 2023

[Priest in Charge 0.5 | Exning St Martins with Landwade, Exning St Agnes](#) | Closing date: 28 February 2023

[Priest in Charge | Alde River Benefice](#) | Closing date: 28 February 2023

[Rector | Claydon and Barham, Great Blakenham and Henley](#) | Closing date: 28 February 2023

[Giving Advisor, Parish Resources Team \(Grants\)](#) | Closing date: 28 February 2023

[House for Duty Priest in Charge | The Wrentham Benefice](#) | Closing date: 4 April 2023

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2/28/23, 12:01 PM

Weekly eNews 2 February - your weekly line up of news from across the diocese

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