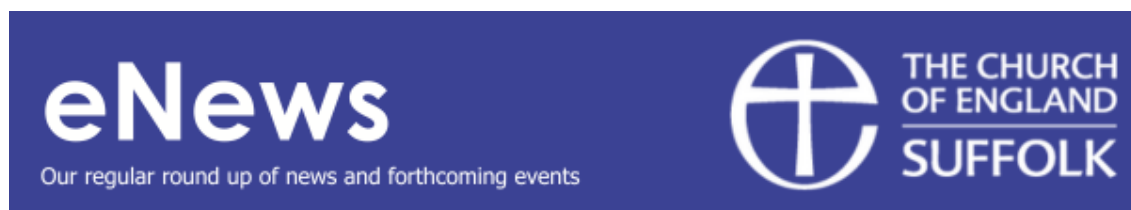


Our regular round up of news and forthcoming events from our diocese

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Thursday 25 September 2025



Bishop Joanne's flying visit to Suffolk



We are delighted that Bishop Joanne is starting to explore our diocese before her official arrival. Today, she was welcomed to REACH, a Haverhill-based charity that is actively working to tackle poverty in the community. Guided by CEO Henry Wilson MBE and his dedicated team of staff and volunteers, Bishop Joanne toured the Food Bank warehouse before engaging in valuable conversations with the team and the Revd Max Drinkwater, the Revd Cat Cox

and Hannah Bloom, CEO of the Suffolk Community Foundation. Topics included the growing reliance on food banks, financial insecurity, limited employment opportunities and the challenges of rural public transport—all of which underscored the importance of partnership working across sectors.

This afternoon Bishop Joanne attended Bishop's Council before venturing to Felixstowe to spend the evening connecting with young people at Level 2 Youth Services. Tomorrow the Bishop will be meeting Rachel Keaton, Chief Inspector of Suffolk Police, to learn more about Suffolk before heading to Hadleigh to meet headteacher, Matt Vale and students at the local Forest School. While in Hadleigh Bishop Joanne will also meet the Very Revd Jo Delfgou and James Rolls, Diocesan Net Zero Carbon Officer, to learn about eco projects in the Diocese.

Bishop Joanne said *"It is wonderful to be visiting the Diocese and I hope to fit in a couple more visits over the next few weeks. We are in the process of planning our move to Suffolk while we wait for the Bishop's house renovation to be completed and at the moment I am surrounded by numerous moving boxes! The next step is to pay homage to the Sovereign later in the year, and then I am very much looking forward to finally settling in during January 2026."*

Commissioning of Ordinands and Trainee Readers

Last Sunday we celebrated the commissioning of Ordinands and trainee Readers into training at St Edmundsbury Cathedral. The service was led by Bishop Graeme and Dean Joe alongside Precentor Canon Katy Cunliffe. We commissioned four trainee Readers:



Martin Davies (Pakenham with Norton, Tostock, with Great Ashfield, Hunston and Stowlangtoft), Carole Edwards (Walton and Trimley), Malcolm Gibbs (Ipswich St Thomas) and Ros Pitcher (Rougham) who will train on a two-year pathway; and nine ordinands: Roz Armstrong (Bungay), Lyanne Brendt (Ipswich St Thomas), Ali Hobson (North Samford), Lauren Crisp-Hihn (Ipswich St Augustine), Cathie Fraser (Melton and Ufford), Margaret Maybury (Lavenham

with Preston), Chris Palmer (Ipswich St Thomas), Sarah Smith (Stour Valley) and Clare Usmar (Shoreline Benefice), some of whom will train on our local ordination pathway and others who will attend national training colleges and courses on one, two or three year pathways. At the end of the service Bishop Graeme blessed the ordinands and trainee Readers and presented each of them with a prayer book. Our afternoon concluded with sharing refreshments in Pilgrims' Kitchen, the Cathedral's restaurant.

The Revd Canon Stuart Batten, Diocesan Director of Ordinands said, *"I was delighted to welcome dozens of supporters and well-wishers to the Cathedral on Sunday afternoon for a service of Choral Evensong, welcoming our new Readers and Ordinands. It was a joy to be present at the start of their journey and I look forward to journeying with them over the next two to three years as they develop their skills and knowledge in readiness for licenced ministry"*

LoveRural Conference Unites Rural Church Leaders for Vision and Renewal



More than 170 lay and ordained delegates from a wide spectrum of denominations gathered at St Edmundsbury Cathedral for the LoveRural Conference, a dynamic 24-hour event dedicated to rural mission and discipleship. Hosted by the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, the conference offered inspiration, strategy, and connection for those passionate about growing faith in the countryside.

Keynote speaker Rt Revd Mike Harrison, Bishop of Exeter, opened the conference with reflections on 'Bringing out of the treasure what is new and old'. The conference also spotlighted the Growing in God in the Countryside Project, including its Lightwave Community. From forest church to preschool outreach, from creative frameworks to quiet revivals, the LoveRural Conference affirmed that rural ministry is not only alive—it is leading the way in reimagining church for the future.

Read the full story [here](#).

Green Eco Award: We are delighted that Jackie Orbell won the BBC Radio Suffolk Green Award at their 'Making a Difference' awards ceremony! Jackie played a key part in

achieving the Gold Eco Church award in St Gile's Church in Risby and to see Jackie in action [do click here to watch our recent video](#). Jackie is also Thingoe Deanery Environment Champion and a member of the Diocesan Environment Group.



Generosity Week is next week!

Starting on Sunday 28 September, Generosity Week is almost upon us. Take a look at this [final 2025 newsletter here](#) and pick 'Just One Thing' to start the generosity ball rolling in your church. Or have a look at the [national resources available for Generosity Week](#), the materials enable you to deliver your own Generosity Week at times suitable for you. Further resources are

available on our Insight [here](#).



Together we Pray will be led by Archdeacon Sam next week. Please do join the morning prayers on the [Bishop's Facebook page here](#)!

Growing Younger eNews – Stay Connected in Ministry

Are you involved in children's or youth ministry—or simply passionate about helping young people grow in faith? Growing Younger eNews is a new half-termly email designed to support and inspire those ministering to children and young people. Each issue includes:

- 🎓 Training opportunities
- 📁 Resources
- 🗨️ Networking news

Whether you're a seasoned leader or just starting out, this eNews is for you. [Click here to sign up today](#) and be part of a growing movement to nurture faith in the next generation.

Open Your Heart, Change a Life

The Suffolk Fostering and Adoption Service is reaching out with open arms, looking for

kind-hearted individuals and families who can offer a safe, loving home to children in need across Suffolk.

You don't need to be perfect—just willing. Whether you're considering weekend fostering or adoption, what matters most is your commitment to nurture, support and care. Every child deserves a place to feel safe and cherished, and you could be the one to make that difference. Come discover how you can help shape a brighter future. Visit www.fosterandadopt.suffolk.gov.uk to learn more and connect with our friendly, supportive team. Together, we can build a community where every child feels at home.

Mission and Ministry Events

Called Together 2025 | Saturday 27 September, 3.30pm | St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS

Our annual service to celebrate licensed lay ministry in the Diocese. Every year we gather at the Cathedral to support those being newly licensed by the Bishop, and also to join with existing licensed lay ministers from across the Diocese to celebrate and thank them for their ministry. Everyone is welcome!

Enhancing Worship | Starting 1 October, 7.30pm | Earl Stonham Village Hall, Earl Stonham IP14 5HJ

An exploration of the nature of worship and varieties of worship in the Church of England. This six-week module provides an opportunity to explore the nature of worship, varieties of worship in the Church of England, and the practical skills needed to both design and lead acts of worship. These acts of worship may be in parish churches or new worshipping communities, seek to be inclusive of all ages and backgrounds and enable all to live confidently as disciples in everyday life. Different speakers with expertise in various types of worship will deliver teaching, and each session begins with a different style of worship. Sessions take place on 1 October, 8 October, 15 October, 22 October, 5 November and 12 November. [Book here.](#)

Lay Elder Training and Social Morning 2025

Saturday 11 October, 9.00am | The Salvation Army Hall, Stowmarket IP14 1NE

We are delighted to invite you to an Elders' training and social morning. As part of our two-year cycle of training and celebrating, we are holding an Elders training and social morning with special guest speakers from across the Diocese. The workshops have been designed to help and resource you in your ministry. We are also very pleased that our keynote speaker will be the Ven Dr David Jenkins, Archdeacon of Sudbury. To register, please [click here.](#)

Line Management Skills for Incumbents | Wednesday 15 October, 10.00am | The Sanctuary, Diocesan Office, Ipswich IP1 1UQ

A training day exploring good people management practice for incumbents who manage employees such as administrators, children's and families' workers, youth workers, and

others. Led by the Diocese's People Director, Penny Longford, and Diocesan Mission Enabler, the Revd Katie de Bourcier, it will explore good practice and employment law to help you manage people well so that they flourish in their roles and contribute to the life and growth of their parish(es). Only 20 spaces are available, to book click [here](#). Please ensure you are logged into Insight to book this session. For further information please contact Vanessa Kidd, vanessa.kidd@cofesuffolk.org or call 07394 568406.

Chaplaincy Day | Tuesday 21 October, 9.30am to 3.30pm | All Saints' Church, Kesgrave IP5 1AA



We are holding a Chaplaincy Gathering for chaplains in service across Suffolk in all sectors – a fantastic opportunity to network with others. The keynote speaker will be The Revd Canon (Sqn Ldr) Matt Buchan, Station Chaplain at RAF Marham. Other chaplains and diocesan staff will also be providing input. Registration begins at 9.30am when you will be welcomed with coffee, then the first session will begin at 10.00am. A light lunch will be provided. Please sign up [here](#) before

1 October and share this link with your chaplaincy team so they can register and join us too.

Handling Conflict Constructively

Monday 3 November, 9.00am - 4.30pm | Lavenham Village Hall, Sudbury CO10 9QT or
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 two separate Bridge Builders 'Handling Conflict Constructively' training days. The days 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 book the date and let us know if you can make the alternative date, if necessary. To register please [click here](#).

Clergy and spouse Preparing for Retirement Retreat Day | Thursday 13 November, 10.00am | Pleshey House of Retreat, Pleshey, Chelmsford CM3 1HA

By popular request from those who have attended our Clergy Preparing for Retirement Conference, we warmly invite clergy who have reached the age of 60yrs and their spouse to this additional event. Enjoy a day together in the quiet surroundings of Pleshey Retreat House that may help you – practically, psychologically and spiritually – prepare for this next transition in life. The day will include professional input from a psychotherapist and guest speakers. For more information please [click here](#).

Introduction to Preaching | Starting Saturday 22 November, 9.30am | St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS

Preaching is just one way by which we can grow in depth as disciples of Jesus Christ. In the Church of England this is a public ministry and a vital part for those exploring faith who visit on a Sunday or attend a baptism, wedding, or funeral. Equally those who are attracted to an activity of a new worshipping community event can benefit from an opportunity to hear the word of God explained and applied to living out faith in everyday life. If this is something you feel called to then we want to encourage this gifting by offering an accessible means to enter this ministry. The course runs on 22 November, 24 January, 7 March, 20 June and 11 July. For more information, [click here](#).

Theological Refreshment in Ministry (TRiM) 2025 | *Wisdom from the Desert: A Reflective Retreat Inspired by Charles de Foucauld, Carlo Caretto and the Desert Fathers* | 10.00am Monday 24 November - 2.00pm Tuesday 25 November | The House of Retreat, Chelmsford CM3 1HA

Immerse yourself in stillness, community, and spiritual insight. This retreat for clergy and Licensed Lay Ministers will be led by the Revd Canon Stuart Batten and offers space to explore life lessons drawn from the spiritual writings of Charles de Foucauld, Carlo Caretto, and the Desert Fathers. You'll experience time for personal reflection rooted in desert spirituality and sacred themes, with quiet times to allow for rest or solitude or to walk and spend time in nature. There will be time in community; time to talk and share, to pray, eat and contemplate. [Book here](#).

Events and training

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

Join this new 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.

Thursday 25 September | Fr Dragos Herescu, Cambridge Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies | *Ecumenism: a perspective from the Orthodox Church*

Wednesday 15 October | The Revd Dr James Hawkey, Canon Theologian of Westminster Abbey | *The English Constitution*

Wednesday 12 November | Miriam Lorie, Rabbi of Kehillat Nashira | *A perspective from Judaism*

Wednesday 26 November | The Revd Kiran Lotay, Mission Priest | *Urban Estates*

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

Eco Church Support | Zoom | Tuesday 30 September, 6.00pm to 7.00pm

Come along to hear about the opportunities for improving churchyards for biodiversity and how they can be used for Forest Church. Register here: elydatabase.org/events

Association of Church Accountants & Treasurers (ACAT) Block Membership and Courses

The Diocese offers free ACAT membership for all our parish treasurers, to access the free membership please contact julie.podd@cofesuffolk.org for details. ACAT provides lots of useful information for treasurers including helpful online training which you can access once you are registered. Some courses coming up are listed below:

The Church Treasurer: Insights into the Role and Responsibilities – Tuesday 30 September, 7.00pm–8.00pm

Being a Treasurer: The Basics – three-part course, Thursdays 2, 9 and 16 October, 7.00pm–9.00pm

Gift Aid: Maximising the Benefits and Reducing the Pitfalls – Monday 24 November, 6.45pm–8.45pm

Register with ACAT first and then you can book your courses at www.acat.uk.com/training-events.

Ignite: How to share faith, build community and do church, differently

Tuesday 7 October 2025, 7.00pm | Online

Authors Debbie and Patrick Ellisdon will present the highly acclaimed, tried-and-tested, Ignite project. Attendees will experience how an Ignite session works, hear a short history of how Ignite was created and hear a leader's perspective on what it's like to run Ignite. There will be a video about Ignite and there will be time to ask questions. [Book here.](#)

PCC Workshops | Zoom

You are invited to join topic-based one-hour Zoom meetings led by Diocesan staff and parish experts. Suitable for Treasurers, Churchwardens, PCC members and administrators, as well as clergy and LLMs. Each session will involve sharing information and a short presentation. Here are the details of the workshops:

Gifts in Wills | 12.00pm, Thursday 23 October | [Book here](#)

Digital Giving | 12.00pm, Wednesday 12 November | [Book here](#)

Friends | 1.00pm, Thursday 13 November | [Book here](#)

Talking Toddlers | Thursday 23 October, 10.00am -11.30am, Webinar

Join Hope Together to explore how to make Christmas a welcoming and inclusive time for every child aged 0-4. Explore how toddler groups can create simple, accessible celebrations - especially for children with additional needs. [Please sign up here.](#)

Church Heating Q&A | Zoom | Thursday 23 October, 7.30pm to 8.30pm

Come along to this session to learn about the impact of moving to electric heating in your church, digging into the detail of running costs, and how to go about choosing the right system. This session is for anyone in the Dioceses of Ely, Norwich, Chelmsford, St Albans and St Edmundsbury and Ipswich. [Register here.](#)

Talking Money: Preaching and Teaching Generosity | Thursday 23 October, 12.00pm - 2.00pm | Online

The aim of this one-hour session is to equip clergy to teach and preach about giving - to

encourage a deepening of discipleship in believers and to stimulate a culture of generosity within churches as they outwork their vision. We will explore the spiritual foundation of giving in scripture and introduce you to a variety of resources to support small groups within churches as they explore and deepen their own experience of generosity. The session will be run by Jonathan de Bernhardt Wood, the Director of Giving and Income Generation and the Regional Giving Advisor Team from the Church of England's Giving Directorate. [Book here.](#)

Digital Surgeries

Join members of the Parish Resources Team to find out more about enhancing the digital giving presence in your parish. Come along and have a one-to-one session with one of our Giving Advisors to find out about purchasing or borrowing a contactless device, setting up online giving (including QR codes), get your contactless device repaired or updated with new campaigns, and finding out how to have an effective online giving presence on your ACNY or website pages. For more information email [Emma Denton](#), Diocesan Giving Advisor.

Wednesday 5 November - Diocesan Office, 4 Cutler Street, Ipswich from 2.00pm - 4.00pm | [Book here](#)

Tuesday 18 November – St Edmundsbury Cathedral from 10.00am - 12.00pm and 2.00pm - 4.00pm | [Book here](#)

Light Up a Life Remembrance Events | St Nicholas Hospice

Various locations starting from 23 November. Full list of dates and locations [available here.](#)

The Light Up a Life events are free and open to all, not just those connected to someone cared for by St Nic's. They offer a meaningful way to come together as a community during the festive season and share a moment of reflection, with music and readings. You are invited, should you wish, to have the names of those you want to remember read out at an event. You can do this by visiting their [website here.](#)

Understanding Science and Religion

The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion is a Cambridge-based interdisciplinary research institute improving public understanding of religious beliefs in relation to the sciences. They have a Christian ethos, but encourage engagement with a wide diversity of opinions concerning interactions between science and religion. They aim to provide accurate information in order to facilitate informed debate and hold many public courses, lectures and seminars, all detailed on their informative website: www.faraday.cam.ac.uk.

Church Community Services and Events

United in Solace and Grace Services | Sunday 28 September, 6.00pm | St Mary the Virgin, Burstall IP8 3DP and Sunday 30 November, 6.00pm | St Mary, Virgin and Mother, Chapel St Mary IP9 2EL

United in Solace and Grace is a series of reflective church services which are designed to reach out to survivors of abuse **of all kinds**, their families, supporters and professionals. To find out more about these services please visit the [website here.](#)

Annual County Harvest Festival Service | Sunday 5 October, from 11.00am | St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS

We would love you to join us at the Cathedral for a wonderful celebration of Harvest in our glorious county. The Harvest Festival brings Suffolk together to give thanks for what has been gathered from land and sea, showcase the excellence of Suffolk's culinary delights and collect provisions for local foodbanks. There will be farm animals and machinery on the Edmund Green outside the Cathedral from 11.00am, and food and drinks will also be available to purchase. Our Harvest Service will then take place at 3.30pm inside the Cathedral. The service at 3.30pm will include the reception of the Love British Food Harvest Torch, interviews with Suffolk farmers, live sheep and well-known harvest hymns. For more information or to book a stall please contact: [Graham Miles](#), Diocesan Agricultural Chaplain 07413 683368.

Homelessness Sunday | 5 October

This year, the Homelessness Sunday theme is 'Love thy neighbour'. With rough sleeping continuing to rise, the aim is to raise awareness of the issues surrounding homelessness. By taking time to reflect church congregations could consider what they can do in their own community to alleviate homelessness, suffering and poverty. [Please find the resources here](#) to support church communities if you would like to run your own Homelessness Sunday Service at a time to suit you.

Mendlesham Armoury Conference | Saturday 11 October, 10.30am | Mendlesham Primary School, Stowmarket IP14 5RT

Come along to an exciting day including presentations by eminent historians, armour specialists and volunteers of the Armoury Research group, funded by a grant from the National Heritage Lottery Fund. Cost of the day is £40, including coffee and lunch, and will conclude in the church with visits to the unique Tudor armoury, led by Toby Capwell.

Sight Loss Sunday, 12 October

Sight Loss Sunday is an initiative by Torch Trust, an organisation dedicated to enabling blind and partially sighted people to encounter Jesus, grow in their faith and thrive in Christian community. There is a whole suite of resources available on their [website here](#) including a fully planned all-age service, a recorded sermon, a video celebrating the leadership gifts and experience of those with sight loss and lots more.

Safeguarding Sunday | 16 November

This initiative, spearheaded by Thirtyone:eight, invites communities to come together to reflect on their safeguarding journey, and highlight all the good work that is being done to create safer places. [Find out more about Safeguarding Sunday and read our Frequently Asked Questions](#). Last year over 5,000 churches took part in Safeguarding Sunday, with an estimated reach of 250,000 people. This year, can we make an even greater impact to vulnerable people across the UK. If you [register](#) you will have access to lots of free digital resources to help make your event a success including sermon ideas, children's talks, intergeneration service ideas, bible study, videos, victim-survivor support and much more!

Notices

Public Consultation on the Abbey of St Edmund, Reborn Project: You are invited to have your say on the *Abbey of St Edmund, Reborn* project at an exhibition being held in St Edmundsbury Cathedral on Friday 26 September, 10.00am – 5.30pm, Saturday 27 September, 10.00am to 4.00 pm and on Sunday 28 September, 12.30pm to 3.00pm. The exhibition will outline the project's emerging ideas, proposals and priorities. Feedback is encouraged and will play a vital role in shaping the next stages of planning and development. There is also an opportunity for review and feedback at a public meeting at The Guildhall on Wednesday 1 October at 6.30pm, organised by The Bury Society for its members and the public.

Articles of Enquiry: Each year we ask churchwardens to fill in a short survey about their church and parish. The survey provides a useful insight into current church life across Suffolk. The survey is available now until the end of September to complete on the Online Parish Return System (OPRS) and can be accessed [here](#). If you have any queries completing the survey, please email statistics@cofesuffolk.org

eNews trial: Over the next couple of weeks we will be experimenting with new subheadings and display methods to present our information in our eNews. If you would like to provide feedback please email [Vanessa Kidd](#). We are working towards developing eNews in the coming months and if you would like to be involved in a focus group to help guide us with our changes please email Vanessa. Thank you.

Digital Transformation Update on Downtime: The Parish Giving Scheme has confirmed the revised downtime dates for the PGS website. The PGS website will be taken offline from 3.00pm Monday 13 October, remaining unavailable until the new system launches on Thursday 30 October. Updates will be shared via email to Statement Receivers and Givers over the coming weeks, so please keep an eye on all communications from PGS to stay informed. If you need any help or assistance please contact the PGS directly info@parishgiving.org.uk or the diocesan Parish Resources Team pgs@cofesuffolk.org

Vacancies

[Children and Families' Worker](#) | All Saints', Sudbury | Closing date: 26 September
[Organist and Assistant Director of Music](#) | Ipswich Minster | Closing date: 26 September
[Vicar](#) | St Peter & St Mary's Church, Stowmarket | Closing date: 28 September
[Children and Families' Worker](#) | Alde Sandlings Benefice | Closing date: 30 September
[Part-time Associate Priest](#) | Carlford Benefice | Closing date: 10 October
[Team Vicar & Associate Priest](#) | Blyth Valley Team Ministry | Closing date: 10 October
[Team Vicar](#) | Forest Heath Team Ministry | Closing date: 15 October
[DAC Chair](#) | Voluntary Role | Closing date: 30 November
 Treasurer | All Saints' Church, Thorndon | Closing date: 30 November | Please [email here](#) for more information.

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

[Team Vicar](#) | Sole Bay Team

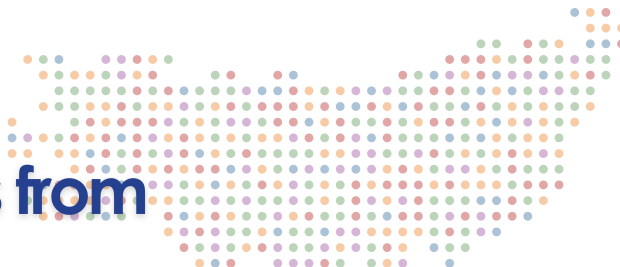
[Associate Chaplain](#) | Sizewell C

Part-time Youth Worker | All Saints' Church, Ipswich | Please [email here](#) for more information

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