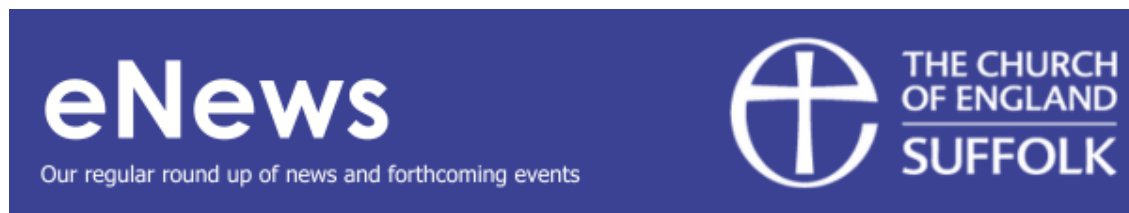


**Thursday 6 March 2025**



### **Bishop Graeme's letter**



Looking round St Edmundsbury Cathedral for my installation I was reminded just how important is this caretaker role of bishop in our Diocese.

The nave was full of supporters and well-wishers some of whom I knew, as I live in Bury St Edmunds, but there were some unfamiliar faces

who were there to support not just myself, but the Church as a whole in Suffolk.

Thank you to everyone who attended and also to those who were unable to be present but who have passed on their messages as I take over from Bishop Martin as Acting Bishop.

Bishop Martin's legacy is profound. After 10 years in Suffolk he has left us with strong relationships in farming, supporting young people, health, education, the military and local politics.

He also maintained the number of stipendiary clergy serving our villages, opened up a new way of training in Suffolk for locally ordained ministry and fostered a tremendous commitment to the farming community.

It is those relationships which I want to further, but at the same time I want to bring my own views to ensure that this is an interim period which does not stand still – but one which builds upon Bishop Martin's amazing foundations and keeps us relevant in a fast moving, ever-changing county and world.

At my stage in life, aged 73, it was a surprise and indeed a great honour to be asked to come forward and deliver as your Acting Bishop.

I know Suffolk well, having moved to Bury St Edmunds several years ago having previously served as a Bishop of Sodor and Man, Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, and Acting Dean of St Edmundsbury Cathedral before Dean Joe's appointment.

The county offers so much that is close to my heart, particularly musical events at Aldeburgh and Snape Maltings which bring back memories of my time as a singer and a precentor.

I will continue to live in Bury St Edmunds while working from Park Road in Ipswich and people can contact me in exactly the same way as they did with Bishop Martin, through the chaplains (email: [bishops.chaplain@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:bishops.chaplain@cofesuffolk.org)) and the Bishop's Office (01473 252829).

Bishop Tim Stevens, formerly Bishop of Leicester and now living in Bury St Edmunds, has kindly agreed to assist me. Bishop Tim knows Suffolk well, having been Bishop of Dunwich from 1995-1999, and our combined knowledge of what remains such a beautiful and traditional county will hopefully stand us in good stead as we tackle the next few months together.

The process of appointing a new permanent bishop is well under way and, although I am appointed for a year, I hope that a new bishop will be in place well before then, perhaps even by the Autumn.

In the meantime, thank you for everything you do to keep the Church of England at the forefront of our communities here in Suffolk. It is very much appreciated.

Bishop Graeme

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### **Diocesan Eastertide Confirmation Sunday 4 May at 10.30am**

St Edmundsbury Cathedral is hosting a **Diocesan Eastertide Confirmation** with Bishop Graeme leading the service and confirming those present. Benefices and parishes are warmly invited to present candidates by emailing the Revd Canon Mark Haworth with the completed form as soon as possible:

[Download the diocesan form for completion here.](#)

[Email the Revd Canon Mark Haworth here.](#)

Anyone seeking guidance on Confirmation preparation is welcome contact Mark. (Please note there is no Easter Eve Confirmation on Holy Saturday)

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### **Evaluation of Listed Place of Worship Grant Scheme**

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has commissioned research on the repair and maintenance of historic places of worship. The short online survey is to help build understanding of individual places of worship's experience of the [Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme](#). It will play a vital role in understanding the outcomes and impacts of the scheme. Please complete [the survey here](#), it is open until 25 March.

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### **Suffolk Radio Make a Difference Award**

These awards are run by the BBC to celebrate the amazing people who make Suffolk a better place. Can you nominate a fellow volunteer or colleague in an individual category?

Nominations end on Monday 31 March and the full details are available here: [www.bbc.co.uk/makeadifference](http://www.bbc.co.uk/makeadifference)

This year there are eight categories including Volunteer, Young Hero, Great Neighbour,



Active, Animal, Green, Fundraiser and Community Group. The winners will be announced on the awards night at Trinity Park, Ipswich, on the evening of Wednesday 17 September.

### **Bishop's Lent Appeal 'Bright Hope for Tomorrow'**

The Bishop's Lent Appeal officially started this week and you can follow the campaign's fundraising activities on our Facebook page [here](#) or download the full booklet of activities available on our website [here](#).

The appeal aims to support farming initiatives and good practice in agriculture, training of evangelists and clergy at Kagera Christian Theological College (KCTC), and resourcing of pastors in their parishes. We will also continue our support for healthcare in the region through the Diocesan hospital. Please give generously in 2025.



Watch our new World Mission video launched for the Bishop's Lent Appeal and International Women's Day.

## **Events**

### **A Spectrum of Song**

Saturday 8 March 2025, 10.00am – 4.00pm | St Mary's Church, Halesworth IP19 8LL

Led by Richard Hubbard, St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Music Development Director – an enthralling musical journey through Christian worship music. Tickets for the workshop cost £10. Admission to the service is free. [Booking and more information here.](#)

### **Diocesan Growing Younger Conference**

Saturday 8 March 10.00am - 3.30pm | St Michael's Church, Framlingham IP13 9BH  
Archdeacon Rich and the Growing Younger team are hosting a Growing Younger



Conference, and we are delighted that Lucy Moore, founder of Messy Church and who now leads the CofE Growing Faith Foundation, will be the keynote speaker. Last chance to book via [Insight here](#).

### **Lent Course - Christian Ethics**

Sundays 9 March, 13 April, 4.00pm - 5.30pm | Darsham Village Hall IP17 3FA

Discussing principles of Christian ethical thinking, going to war, medical ethics, justice, money and human rights. Led by the Revd Tim Rogers, with guest speakers: Major General (Retd) John Sutherland, David Burgess, Jill Stuchfield, the Revd Nic Stuchfield, Prof Lara Coleman. There is no cost, but donations toward the expenses welcome. Refreshments will be provided. All are welcome.

### **Online Lent Course: Unforgivable?**

Wednesdays 12 March to 9 April, 7.00pm – 8.15pm | online

The Cathedral's Lent theme in 2025 is 'Unforgivable', exploring the limits of forgiveness. Each week, experts in their subjects are welcomed to talk about and explore the limits of forgiveness. Hosted by the Canon Theologian, the Revd Dr Victoria Johnson, [book your place here](#).

### **Grandparents' Day**

Saturday 15 March 10.30am – 2.30pm | St John's Church, Cauldwell Hall Road, Ipswich IP4 4QE

Organised by the Mothers' Union and the Growing Younger team to bring together grandparents and honorary grandparents of faith (from little faith to strong faith) and of any denomination. Key speakers including the Revd Laura Mumford, Diocesan Growing Younger Enabler. [Free tickets available here](#).

### **Spring Open Day**

Saturday 15 March 11.00am to 1.30pm | St Mary's Church, Market Weston

Only a few years ago the windows at St Mary's Church were held up by props but since raising £100,000 with the support of local fundraising, legacies and generous grants from charitable trusts, including the Alfred Williams charitable trust and the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust, the project finally been completed. You are invited to view the new window along with a display of historical records which coincides with the blooming of over 20,000 spring bulbs in the churchyard.

### **Poetry and Prayer**

Saturday 22 March | St John the Baptist, Felixstowe

Poet and Priest Malcolm Guite will explore the links between poetry and prayer, particularly the ways in which poetry can enrich and deepen our spiritual life. He will focus particularly on George Herbert's poem *Prayer* and how each of the powerful images in that poem can unlock for us different aspects of prayer. £25 pp. There will be refreshments but please bring your own lunch. To book [www.larkriseretreats.org](http://www.larkriseretreats.org) or call us 01394 284213.

## **Scary Suffolk Stories**

Saturday 22 March at 6.30pm | St Margaret's Church, Stradishall IP29 4ND

Stradishall Church has recently discovered it needs £120,000 to repair its roof and is actively seeking to raise the necessary funds. Join an evening of storytelling with CB Jackson, a professional storyteller who appears frequently on BBC Radio Suffolk. To book please call 07708 899579. Further events can be found [here](#).

## **The F Word: Stories of Forgiveness**

Friday 28 March to Sunday 13 April | St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS

The Cathedral's Lent theme in 2025 is 'Unforgivable', exploring the limits of forgiveness. You are invited to the Lent exhibition offering a thought-provoking collection of arresting images and personal narratives exploring forgiveness in the face of atrocity. [More information available here](#).

## **Resound with Joy! Readers, LLMs and Elders study morning**

Saturday 29 March, 9.00am | Salvation Army Hall, Stowmarket IP14 1NE

Visiting Canon Theologian, The Revd Dr Victoria Johnson, will take us on an unusual journey to explore how the voice of God has been represented and portrayed in worship, art and culture leading us to ponder anew how God speaks to us today. The concept of 'voice', whether human or divine, encompasses the spoken, sung and heard. Her musings, through humour and wisdom, will broaden our own theological insight and deepen our spirituality. The morning will encompass both pragmatic responses to how we use our voices and the deeply spiritual. Elders, Readers and LLMS: [Reserve your free space now](#)

## **Digital Surgery with the Diocesan Parish Resources Team**

Join members of the Parish Resources Team at the second of a series of surgeries 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](#) or [Emma Rowlinson](#), Diocesan Giving Advisors.

- Wednesday 2 April - St Edmundsbury Cathedral from 10.00am - 12.00pm and 2.00pm - 4.00pm | [Book here](#)
- Wednesday 11 June - Diocesan Office, 4 Cutler Street, Ipswich from 2.00pm - 4.00pm | Book coming soon

## **In the beginning was the story... a different kind of introduction to the New Testament**

Wednesdays 30 April, 7 May, 14 May, 28 May, 4 June, 11 June and 18 June, 7.30pm - 9.30pm | Earl Stonham Village Hall, Stowmarket IP14 5HJ

This course looks at the beginnings of what became Christianity, by examining the New Testament as a series of 'stories we live by' rather than as the foundations of the doctrines

that emerged much later. It explores some of the pressures faced by multi-cultural churches in an uncertain and sometimes hostile world, to help us learn about ways of living with similar-but-different pressures in our own day. To book your place please [click here](#).

### **A Rocha UK Supporters' Day**

Saturday 10 May 10.30am - 3.30pm | Foxearth Meadows Nature Reserve, (what3words: charm.dragonfly.townhouse)

A great time to meet other supporters and encounter wildlife. To include updates on reserve projects, guided walk, a practical activity, finishing with a short time of worship outdoors. Bring a chair and lunch. All welcome. To book please email [sarah.leadham@arocha.org](mailto:sarah.leadham@arocha.org)

### **Building a Generous Church conference**

Saturday 17 May, 9.30am | Bridge Community Church, 68 Queen's Road, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3EW

We invite you to join Bishop Graeme; Archdeacons David and Rich; Gary Peverley, Diocesan Secretary; Diocesan staff and others to be inspired by three keynote speakers focusing on compassionate communities and the impact on our society, and how to put generosity at the heart of our lives. You can choose three workshops from a wide range of subjects to attend, to help your church become more informed and better resourced to grow a generous culture and reach financial sustainability. For more information and to book please click [here](#).

### **Christians and Assisted Dying - Day Conference**

Thursday 22 May 2025, 10.45am - 2.45pm | The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, Norfolk NR22 6EE

Listen to a range of speakers on the topics of Incarnation, Attitudes to Death and Assisted Dying. Open to clergy, ordinands and laity of all denominations. Cost is £25, and includes coffee/tea and lunch. Further details are [available here](#). To book your place, please email [mihoward@btinternet.com](mailto:mihoward@btinternet.com).

### **Ascension Day Prayer Walk**

Thursday 29 May 7.30 pm, bring your own picnic from 6.30pm | Foxearth Meadows Nature Reserve, (what3words: charm.dragonfly.townhouse)

Led by the Revd Ruth Ridge, enjoy a picnic together then walk and pray together as the sun sets.

A beautiful, reflective evening for all.

### **'Leading your Church into Growth': LyCiG is back for 2025!**

Friday 13 June, 5.00pm to 9.00pm and Saturday 14 June, 9.00am to 6.00pm | Debenham Sports & Leisure Centre IP14 6BL

We invite you to come with a team from your benefice, parish or worshipping community – that could be a team of three or a team of 12, the PCC or a few people keen on mission, or whatever combination works for you. This Suffolk-based LyCiG conference will be led by



## Leading your Church into Growth

guest speakers from the National LyCiG Organisation. It will take the form of an open seminar with interactive talks, practical exercises, workshops and time for personal reflection. The aims of the course are to:

- Inspire you as leaders to help lead your church(es) into growth
- Encourage you to feel that in your own way, at your own pace, and with God's help you can do it
- Equip you with a straightforward and workable strategy
- Give you teaching resources so you can share LyCiG with others in your church
- Enable you to create (or update) and implement a Growing in God Plan for Growth.

This is a free event! Spaces are limited so please ask your Incumbent or Churchwarden to book early. Please [visit here to book](#).

### Open Air Service

Sunday 22 June at 3.00pm | Foxearth Meadows Nature Reserve, (what3words: charm.dragonfly.townhouse)

An open invitation to join a midsummer worship close to nature. The guest speaker is Dr Andrew Crowson, moth enthusiast and supporter of A Rocha UK. Refreshments provided. Bring a chair. All welcome.

### Other up-coming events:

- **Being Missional Today: Disruption, Liminality and Reconciliation** | Tuesday 10 June, 9.30am - 5.00pm | Coventry Cathedral, 1 Hill Top, Coventry CV1 5AB | [Book tickets here](#).
- **All Together | Messy Church Conference** | Friday 20 June - Sunday 22 June 2025 | High Leigh Conference Centre, Hertfordshire EN11 8SG | [Find out more and secure your place here](#).
- **LoveRural - National Rural Mission Conference 2025** | Monday 22 September, 11.30am and Tuesday 23 September, 3.00pm | St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS | [To book please click here](#).
- **Elders' Training morning** | Saturday 11 October 2025, Save the date!
- **CofE NST Spiritual Abuse and Healthy Culture 2025** | Wednesday 11 June, Tuesday 8 July, Thursday 4 September, Wednesday 8 October, Tuesday 4 November. A series of sessions exploring issues of Spiritual Abuse: Coercion and Control within Christian organisations and communities alongside building Healthy Christian Culture. [For more information please click here](#).
- Fox Earth Nature Reserve Events for 2025. [Download this pdf](#) for a full list of events for 2025.

### Notices

**New Electoral Roll:** The current electoral-rolls (created in 2019) will be replaced with brand-new rolls this year (2025). Everything you need to help you with this is on our

website: [APCMs and electoral roll - Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich](#). In accordance with the [Church Representation Rules](#), following your APCM and no later than 1 July in each year, parishes should give the Diocesan Secretary written notification of the number of names there are on the roll of the parish as at the date of the annual parochial church meeting. To facilitate this requirement, please return your completed Electoral Roll Certificates by email to [diocesan.secretary@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:diocesan.secretary@cofesuffolk.org). We ask that wherever possible forms are returned electronically, however if you have no means to do this, they can be returned by post at the address: Diocesan Electoral Roll Officer, The Diocesan Office, 4 Cutler Street, Ipswich, IP1 1UQ.

**Statistics for Mission:** Thank you to all parishes who have completed their Statistics for Mission forms. The National Church deadline has been extended to 14 March 2025. 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 contact [statistics@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:statistics@cofesuffolk.org). Further information regarding Parish returns, including videos on how to submit, can be found here: [Parish returns - Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich](#).

**Day of Reflection for the COVID-19 pandemic: Sunday 9 March 2025:** This will be the fifth anniversary of the beginning of the pandemic, and this day will be an opportunity to remember those who lost their lives and to stand together with those who are grieving. [The resources are available here](#).

**Public consultation for the next Archbishop of Canterbury:** The process to nominate the next Archbishop of Canterbury is underway, and you are invited to give your views. The consultation will run until Friday 28 March and you can submit your views online or by post. [All the information you need is available here](#).

**Expanded £5 Million Grant Programme for Conservation Opens for Applications:** The Church of England's Cathedral & Church Buildings Department's expanded £5 million conservation grants programme is now open for applications on their website. Please find all information to apply. [here](#).

**Updated grants directory:** Are you looking for grants to help fund a local environmental project? The Church of England extensive online directory has been updated and lists organisations which may be able to help you - available [here](#).

## Vacancies

[Vicar](#) | St Peter & St Mary's Church, Stowmarket | Closing date: 20 March

[Rector](#) | North Bosmere Benefice | Closing date: 24 March

[Bishop Adviser for the Pastoral Care of Clergy](#) | Closing date: 24 March

[Rector](#) | Haughley with Wetherden and Stowupland | Closing date 14 May

[Rector](#) | Woolpit and Drinkstone Benefice | Closing date: 21 May

[Rector](#) | Barrow Benefice | Closing date: 5 June

[Part-time Associate Priest](#) | Carlford Benefice

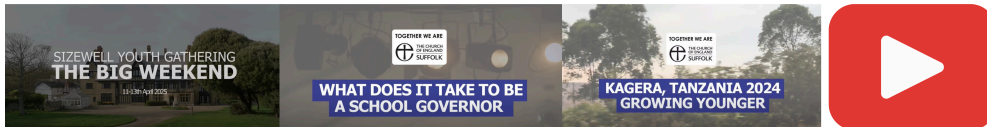
[Volunteer Independent Chair of Safeguarding Committee](#) | St Edmundsbury Cathedral



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## Watch our stories from around Suffolk



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