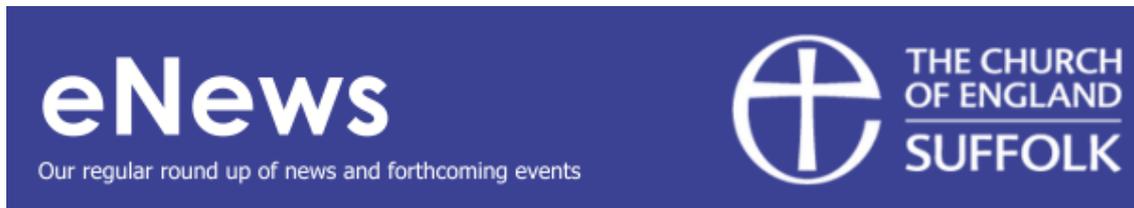


Thursday 7 March 2024



Special service marks 200th anniversary celebrations for the RNLI



The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) started its 200th anniversary celebrations with a service for supporters. The service was held at the lifeboat station in Aldeburgh where the charity has run the voluntary emergency service since 1852 – although lifeboat history can be traced back to 1826.

Bishop Martin was a special guest at a service on 3 March to mark the charity's bicentenary. He blessed the town's two lifeboats, the sea, and the volunteer crew who give up their time to ensure that Aldeburgh can fulfil the vision of the charity's founder Sir William Hillary.

To read the full story please visit our [website here](#).

Female clergy in Suffolk celebrate 30 years since first ordinations on International Women's Day

Friday 8 March is International Women's Day and this year it is also 30 years since the first female clergy were ordained into the priesthood in Suffolk. Our diocese has been at the forefront of progress and there are currently a total of 50 women clergy now serving their communities, making up over 40% of all priests across the diocese, while in Ipswich female clergy now make up half of all priests. The first group of women to be ordained as priests in the UK were ordained on Saturday 12 March 1994 with the first in Suffolk just weeks later. The Revd Canon Sally Fogden, who was among the first to be ordained at St Edmundsbury Cathedral, said she fondly remembers the day she heard she could become a priest. *"I was actually doing a children's group in the village hall at the time and one of my parishioners rushed in and said the vote had gone through,"* she said. *"At that time I was so sure it wouldn't go through, so I couldn't be more delighted when I heard the news."* Sally said her ordination was an 'overwhelming' experience. *"We had a large marquee outside St Edmundsbury Cathedral and there were huge crowds of people who wanted to be there,"* she said. *"The ordination day itself was overwhelming, it was incredible. To then be able to celebrate communion on my own with my parishioners, who had stuck with me throughout, was wonderful."*

Bishop Mike said: *"I trained with female ordinands in the late 1980s and it was incredibly frustrating to see such talented and obviously priestly women not being ordained with me*

as a priest in 1990. So I was over the moon when the Church of England agreed to ordain women – seeing some of my dearest friends and colleagues priested in 1994. Since then the fruits of their ministry have been apparent across the Church – and their contribution to the life of the Church has been incalculable".

We are running a short campaign to celebrate this on Friday, so please look out for our posts on Facebook [here](#), and also see information about the Bishops' teaching morning in April below.

Introducing our new Director of Mission and Ministry



The diocese is delighted to welcome the Revd Canon Sharron Coburn as our new Director of Mission and Ministry (M&M) on 1 March. Sharron is well known to many in Suffolk as she was ordained into this diocese in 2013 and served as a curate in the Stanton benefice before becoming Rector of Brandon where she has served for over seven years. Sharron is no stranger to M&M as she is part of the IME2 team and already works with other members of the team on the Suffolk Ministerial Development Programme. Sharron is married to the Revd Dennis Coburn who continues to serve in Brandon. Bishop Mike commented *"Sharron will hit the ground running with the experience she has and the relationships she has already established across the diocese - we are thrilled to see her appointment and look forward to exciting times ahead with Mission and Ministry "*

Events

Annual Arts Programme

All Saints' Room, All Saints' Church, Newmarket CB8 8ES
Saturday 9 March, 10.00am-12.00pm

See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these'. (Matthew 6:28-29) Jesus tells us: don't worry! It is like a command. Join this art session to be calm and learn from the flowers – creating a mixed-media collage to remind us of the Eden we have lost and the hope of the new Eden in the future. Materials needed: old magazines, PVA, scissors, paper and glue spreaders / brushes. No booking is required for these events, more information is available [here](#).

Motherhood and Ministry: Theology and Spirituality

Tuesday 12 March, 7.30pm - 9.00pm, via Zoom

The Revd Helen Collins, Vice-principal of Trinity College, Bristol will lead this seminar. She writes: *"Within this session, we will reflect together on some of the theological and spiritual themes which are raised by the intersecting experiences of motherhood and ministry. We will explore the life of Mary, the mother of Jesus, to think about the ways in*

which she embodied motherhood and ministry." To book your place, please [click here](#).

Lark Rise Retreat Days 2024

Lark Rise Retreats in Felixstowe provide a space and time for people to relax with God.

Upcoming events include:

- Thursday 14 or alternatively Saturday 16 March | The women who sat at Jesus' feet | The Revd Catherine Bond.
- Thursday 4 or alternatively Saturday 6 April | Exploring the resurrection appearances of Jesus | The Revd Penny Brinkley.
- Friday 7 June | Celtic, green and godly | The Revd Dr John Bell.
- Friday 7 June | Using imagination to unlock scripture | The Revd Dr John Bell.
- Saturday 8 June | Come and sing workshop | The Revd Dr John Bell.

To book, please visit larkriseretreats.org.uk or call 01394 284213.

Understanding Connectivity

Thursday 14 March, 12.00pm – 1.00pm, [Book here](#), or

Thursday 13 June, 11.00am – 12.00pm, [Book here](#).

Find out about the connectivity options available to your church - from WiFi to 4G - how to get your contactless devices connected, and what to do if you have no connectivity at all. We will be going through the connectivity options in relation to digital giving and how it can be optimised to make it easier in your church.

Walk the Way of the Cross with the Blyth Valley Churches this Easter!

This spring the churches of the Blyth Valley are giving you the opportunity to visit the Holy Land without leaving Suffolk! Across their 14 churches they are presenting an exhibition of original paintings by nationally acclaimed, local religious artist Iain McKillop which will be opened by Bishop Mike leading a full set of reflections for a seated congregation at All Saints', Blyford, at 7.30pm on Friday 15 March. The Queen's Head, Blyford, will be open afterwards so people may stay and buy refreshments. On Saturday 23 March, Team Rector Dominic Doble and colleagues will lead a pilgrimage presenting a short contemplation at each parish church in the benefices. All churches will be open during daylight hours. For all the details please visit [here](#).

Edmund Lecture | Dame Barbara Woodward DCMG OBE

Friday 15 March, 6.30pm-7.30pm - **NEW DATE**

St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS

Thank you so much for your patience, we are delighted that the Edmund Lecture with Dame Barbara Woodward DCMG OBE has been rebooked. The Ambassador will explore parallels between the Magna Carta, as the 'great charter' which laid the foundation for the modern British values of rule of law and equality before it, of liberty and rights, and the UN Charter, which established the international rules and values that have underpinned relative peace and stability since the Second World War. The Lecture will be followed by a special service of Vespers at 7.30pm to which all are welcome. Vespers is a liturgy of evening prayer that, for centuries, was part of the daily rhythm of prayer kept by the monks at the Abbey of St Edmund. To book your place, please click [here](#).

Seeing is Believing

Wednesday 20 March, 1.30pm

St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS

Join Tracy de Bernhardt-Wood, Suffolk icon painter, as she guides you through the art and significance of icons. This talk takes place in the Week of 'Lady Day' when the Church remembers the Virgin Mary. Tracy's talk will last approximately 30 minutes and attendance is free, please book by emailing ChrisEyden@stedscathedral.org. You can also visit Tracy at work throughout the week commencing Monday 18 March, during which time she will be working on painting an icon of Mary entitled 'Hodegetria, "she who points the way"'.

Deanery Drop in Sessions

We are offering you support to help you achieve your Plan for Growth. The following [drop-ins](#) are around the diocese to give you a chance to get the help you need, this is an exciting opportunity to meet the various teams from the Diocesan office who are there to offer advice on Children's and Families' Ministry, Youth Ministry, Giving, Grants, Discipleship, Communications, Vocations or anything else you'd like to ask – a real opportunity for us to have conversations and help people. For a full listing of the drop-in dates please click [here](#). Drop-in sessions coming up are:

St Luke's Church, Beccles NR34 9JQ Thursday 21 March	3.30pm - 5.15pm: book here	6.00pm – 8.00pm: book here
Thomas Clarkson Centre, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3JT Tuesday 23 April	3.00pm - 5.00pm: book here	6.00pm – 8.00pm: book here
St Augustine's Community Hub, Ipswich IP3 8TH Wednesday 15 May	3.00pm - 5.00pm: book here	6.00pm - 8.00pm: book here .

Here I am

Friday 22 March, 9.30am - 4.00pm

Ridley Hall, Cambridge CB3 9HG

A day conference for young women and non-binary people to explore ordination. Come to reflect on God's call, to hear about practicalities, to ask, to meet and to pray. Hosted by Church of England ministers from a range of perspectives and experiences, including the Revd Ali Miller from the Lark Valley and North Bury benefice. All are welcome. More information is available from the Revd Wendy Thomson at wendy@chatteris.org. To book visit [here](#).

Grants and Funding Workshop

Monday 25 March, 12.00pm – Online

Emma Denton (Diocesan Giving Advisor) will be joined by John Bailey from Beccles who has had considerable success in accessing grants and funding for his church. Emma will tell you about the advice and resources the Diocese can offer to support you as you apply for grants and fundraise for your projects, including the Church Grants database. John will share his knowledge and experience of what he has been able to achieve for his church. They will welcome questions at the end of their presentations.

Sign up [here](#).

Faith Story

Monday 8 April, 7.00pm - 8.00pm online

This is the third in a series of evening conversations for anyone who is thinking about the question 'how do I know what God is asking me to do?'. Everyone is welcome to join on Zoom, to hear Bishop Mike as he shares his vocational journey. There will be plenty of time for comments, questions and conversations. Please book [here](#).

Singing for Nature

Sunday 14 April, 2.30pm

St Mary's Church, Church Lane, Martlesham, IP12 4PQ

A vocal concert by singing duo 'Unusual Way' which promises to be a musical journey in song from operatic favourites to toe-tapping popular musical theatre items. Free, with donations shared between St Mary's Church and Suffolk Wildlife Trust's new nature reserve, Martlesham Wilds. Parking is available but please walk, cycle or car-share if you can.

Deanery Parish Resources Meeting

Wednesday 17 April 7.00pm

Brandeston Village Hall IP13 7AE

Please join the Parish Resources Team for an interesting talk about the Parish Giving Scheme, Digital Giving, Gifts in Wills, Grants & Funding. This is an open meeting - all are welcome to attend, whether Treasurers, members of PCCs, Churchwardens, or anyone else wishing to learn more about this important aspect of church life. It would be useful to know if you are able to attend the meeting, so please book by emailing stpeterscretingham@gmail.com.

Vocations Sunday | Vocations Fair

Sunday 21 April, 1.30 – 3.00pm

St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS

We believe all are called to serve God according to their given gifts, talents and context. Every Christian has a vocation, and it is the task of all those serving in ministry to help identify and nurture the gifts and callings of every member of the Church. Vocations Sunday is a wonderful time to encourage individuals to consider what God might be calling them to. There is a bank of resources available [here](#), or come along to our Vocations Fair and visit the many stalls representing our ministries for an informal chat to find the right ministry for you: Chaplaincy, Children and Families, Church Army, Elders, Pioneers, Evangelists, Lightwave Leaders, Mothers' Union, ordained ministers, PCC Officers, Readers, Recognised Local Leaders, School Foundation Governors, Spiritual Directors and Youth Ministers.

Digital Giving

Tuesday 30 April 1.00pm – online

Join the Parish Resources Team as they share why digital giving is so important for all churches to enable your generous congregation and wider community to give easily to your church. They will show you how to set up online giving campaigns using 'Give A

Little' and 'Sum Up' or 'Stripe' (payment providers) and how to share the online link and QR codes on your A Church Near You Page and/or your website as well as using it on pew sheets, posters and in parish magazines. They will also show you some donation device options for those churches with Wi-Fi, churches that have good mobile SIM coverage inside their church, and for those who need an off-line device, including different pricing options. There will be time to ask questions and to see the CollecTin devices that we can lend out to you on trial. Sign up [here](#)

Doctrine

Tuesdays starting 30 April 2024, 7.00pm to 9.00pm

Venue to be announced

A six-session course led by Bishop Mike unpacking the Apostles' Creed so we can apply this to our own lives, understand our faith better and be able to articulate the faith to others helpfully. Subjects include God (including as the Trinity); Jesus; The Cross; Resurrection; Holy Spirit and Eternal Life. Bishop Mike will provide notes beforehand so most of the sessions can be spent in conversation, Q & A and going more deeply into areas participants want to explore further. For more information please [click here](#).

Introduction to Online Giving

Friday 8 May, 3.00pm – 4.00pm

Take the first steps in setting up online giving for your church, including QR codes, web campaigns, accessing reports, and gift aid data. This webinar is helpful for newcomers to online giving, and also provides an opportunity for others to ask questions and think about how to optimise their online giving. Please [book here](#).

Supporting Bereaved Children and Young People

Thursday 16 May, 10.45am to 3.00pm

Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, Norfolk

Open to clergy and laity of all denominations and organised by the Guild of All Souls, an Anglican charity whose objects are praying and caring for the sick, dying, departed and bereaved. Visit their website [here](#). Cost of the conference is £20, including welcome coffee/tea and a two-course lunch. To book, please email mihoward@btinternet.com.

Working with Anger

Friday 17 May, 9.15am to 4.15pm

Colchester Road Baptist Church, Ipswich IP4 3DL (Entrance on Sidegate Lane)

Are you working with children or adults who struggle to regulate or safely display their angry feelings? Whilst exploring anger, this course offers creative ideas and hands-on activities that will help you better support the people you work with and care for. It is designed to be a creative and practical day and will give you the opportunity to share ideas and engage with others in a safe and confidential setting. To book and for further information please contact Inspire on 01473 217694 or email Carole Sherratt at contact@inspirecounselling.org.uk

Working with Anxiety

Friday 28 June, 9.15am to 4.15pm

Colchester Road Baptist Church, Ipswich IP4 3DL (Entrance on Sidegate Lane)

Are you working with children or adults who struggle with anxiety on a daily basis? Anxiety can also severely affect self-esteem, to the point where day to day life becomes difficult. Whilst exploring anxiety, this course offers creative ideas and hands-on activities that will help you better support the people you work with and care for. It is designed to be a creative and practical day giving you an opportunity to share ideas and engage with others in a safe and confidential setting. To book and for further information please contact Inspire on 01473 217694 or email Carole Sherratt at contact@inspirecounselling.org.uk

Clergy Retreat - Led by Bishop Martin

7 - 11 October 2024

St Andrew's Abbey, Zevenkerken-Brugge, Belgium

The best kept secret in the Diocese! Since 1960 when there was a formal link with Brugge a group of hardy clergy have braved the sea and weather to travel to the Abbey to spend time with the wonderful brothers at St Andrew's Abbey. Speakers in the past have spoken on a range of subjects from World Mission, The Psalms, and more. There are approximately 15 spaces available and you can come with spouses/partners. For more details or to book please contact the Revd David H Messer on 01964 563987 | davidharrymesser93@gmail.com.

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 **Sunday 17 March**. Returns should be submitted via the [Online Parish Returns System](#). If you require log-in details or any other assistance with the online portal, please contact statistics@cofesuffolk.org. Further help can be viewed on our website here: [Stats for Mission Help](#).

Cassock and Surplice available: A cassock and surplice with the following measurements: chest 46", waist 38", and full length from back of neck 62" is available free of charge to anyone who may be interested. For enquiries please contact sue@rowesfield.com, telephone 01359 241636.

St Edmundsbury Cathedral Pews for sale: St Edmundsbury Cathedral is evolving, and part of its change is introducing chairs to the Nave. This means Cathedral pews will be offered for sale to the community and local people in February, both as they are, and as refurbished furniture and useful items. If you are interested in buying a Cathedral pew, or hearing more about their refurbishment project with Rough Stuff, please visit their [website here](#).

Cathedral Kneelers: New additional collection date: Wednesday 13 March from 1.30 pm – 3.30 pm. With the arrival of new chairs at the Cathedral and the removal of the pews, we now have an opportunity to evolve how we use the kneelers in the Cathedral. We really want to keep the kneelers as they mean so much to our community, but we also enjoy the idea of giving them new life. With this in mind, we will be keeping 500 of the kneelers in

the Cathedral, each representing a parish or group. As most kneelers have a twin, we would love to offer it back to you to display in your church as part of the origin story of these items. If you haven't already been in touch but would like to arrange the collection of your kneeler/kneelers, please email visits@stedscathedral.org and let us know.

Vacancies

[Voluntary Diocesan MU Secretary](#) | Mothers' Union | Closing date: 20 March

[Diocesan MU Treasurer](#) | Mothers' Union | Closing date: 20 March

[Rector](#) | South Hartismere Benefice | Closing date: 4 April

[River Church Opportunities](#) | Ipswich

[New Opportunities in Ipswich](#) | Inspiring Ipswich

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