Thursday 23 April 2026

eNews

Our regular round up of news and forthcoming events

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND SUFFOLK

Bishop Joanne meets school children at agricultural show



Bishop Joanne was delighted that more than 4,000 children have been learning first-hand from farmers and volunteers about agriculture at the Suffolk Farm and Country Fair event at Trinity Park in Ipswich.

The children and their teachers experienced many different aspects of farming, food production and the environment through demonstrations and interactive "hands-on" exhibits. Bishop Joanne said: *"Many volunteers help towards making the day a success, including more than 180 farmers who act as stewards to help guide the pupils around the day. This enables the children to have direct contact with a member of the farming community."* Read the full story here.

Bishop Joanne highlights the impact of job creation for young people



Bishop Joanne visited the construction project at Sizewell C recently with the Revd Clive Mobbs, the lead chaplain at the site. The new nuclear power station in Suffolk will provide jobs and skills for young people in our county. Bishop Joanne said: *"Sizewell C will undoubtedly lead to the creation of new jobs, skills and training opportunities in east Suffolk, bringing with it the prospect of highly skilled local jobs in the future. This means that more of our young people can stay here at home in Suffolk, rather than leaving the county to find skilled roles. I was incredibly impressed by the apprentices and students who clearly had major ambitions. It was enlightening to hear about their individual journeys through study, training and employment".* Read the full story here.

St George's Day poem

The Revd Kiran Lotay, of Triangle Church on the Triangle estate in Ipswich, goes by the rap name Hybrid, and has been publishing his music on his Youtube channel for years. His poignant St George's Day poem delves into how communities can sometimes feel divided by symbols designed to unite us, what it means to be English and the need for a more empathetic type of patriotism.

Kiran said: *"I wrote the poem a number of years ago when I was at theological college, before much of the recent controversy over flags. My poem explores what it means to be English and how we can unite communities. It's not that I don't think we need to have robust conversations about the flag and how it is perceived – I do want to acknowledge those tensions. But my poem is about my longing to take some of the rage out of the discussion."*

Kiran has recorded a video of him performing the poem, which is shown below.



St George's Day Poem by The Revd Kiran Lotay.



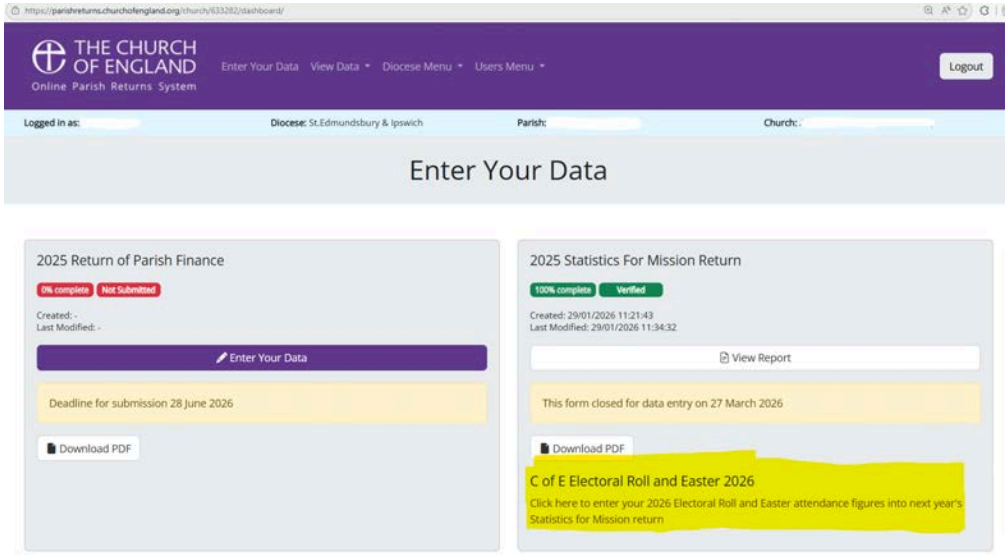
The Revd Max Drinkwater will be leading Together we Pray next week, at the usual time of 8.30am on the Bishop's Facebook page.

Electoral Roll

By **1 July each year**, the PCC Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary or the Electoral Roll Officer

must notify the Secretary of the Diocesan Synod of the number of names on the Electoral Roll as at the date of the APCM. Anyone aged 16+, baptised, who lives in a parish or regularly worships there, and declares themselves a member of the Church of England, is eligible for the Church Electoral Roll. For a more comprehensive list of rules, please refer to 'Parish Resources' here.

As of this year, please submit your Electoral Roll number via the Online Parish Returns system here. Once logged in, navigate to the 'Enter Your Data' section, as per highlight below to record your Electoral Roll number.



If you require login details, are unable to submit the figure online, or you need any other assistance regarding the online portal, please email: statistics@cofesuffolk.org. Please do not send the Electoral Roll itself, as this would breach data protection regulations.

Diocesan and Mission & Ministry Events

Vocations Fair | Saturday 25 April, 10.00am to 12.20pm | St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP31 1LS
We are holding our annual Vocations Fair and we would be delighted to see as many of you as possible. Come along by yourself or with congregation members to meet the Revd Canon Stuart Batten and his team who are ready to greet you and share the latest news about training and opportunities available in this Diocese.

Doctrine: The Apostles' Creed | 7.00pm to 9.00pm | 28 April, 5, 12, 19 May, 2, 9 June
The Doctrine module is a six-session course 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. The course will be run online on Teams and the link and material will be sent to you a few days before the first session. Please book here.

Safeguarding Training
There are various in-person safeguarding courses taking place over the next few days/weeks. To book your place on any in-person safeguarding training visit Insight, where

you, or your local safeguarding officer, can book you a place to attend a course.

Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse Training:
Bury St Edmunds, Wednesday 29 April, book here.
Huntingfield, Wednesday 24 June, book here.
A future course in 2026 will be held in Ipswich.
Basic Awareness Training:
Bury St Edmunds, Thursday 14 May, book here.
Ipswich, Tuesday 15 September, book here.
Foundation Training:
Bury St Edmunds, Tuesday 30 June, book here.
Ipswich, Tuesday 29 September, book here.
Leadership Training:
Earl Stonham, June and July (ten courses available), book here.

Additional dates for in-person and online Leadership courses will be published soon. For those people who want to get a head start on completing the pre-work for their Leadership Training, please click here to view and download the Leadership pre-work materials that all participants need to complete before attending their first booked session of Leadership Training.

Child Exploitation Awareness Training
Are you working with children and young people? Ensure you have the knowledge and confidence to keep them safe with Child Exploitation Awareness Training. Claire Prosser, Criminal Exploitation Project Manager from Suffolk County Council, is delivering this course on 7 May 2026 in Ipswich. Please register to attend here.

Lark Rise Retreats
'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 Edmund's Church, Langer Road, 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 and Jane Pearse on 01394 284213.

PCC Workshops



Friends Group Workshop: Come and hear how a Friends group can benefit your church and get new people involved from the wider community to help share the load. Emma Denton will take you through the process of the best way to set up a Friends group to help with your fundraising and how it put it to good use. Book here.

Grants and Funding Workshops: Come and join Giving Advisor Emma Denton and guest to find out about how the Cornerstone database can help you navigate the grants and funding options available. Also, how the Diocese can help advise and source grant funding for you, and hear about first hand experiences, and success stories. Book here: 30 April Workshop | 4 November Workshop

Why should your Parish join the Parish Giving Scheme? Join a monthly PGS webinar with the Parish Resources Team at St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Diocese to find out

more about the scheme, the benefits and how to join. This is a short session to explain how to get started, ask questions, with the offer of support around next steps. A charity whose origins are within the Church, the PGS is dedicated to serving givers and churches in a shared ministry of giving. They are committed to easing the administrative burden for churches, while empowering all generations to give with confidence and to feel valued. Book here: 12 May | 12 June

PCC Buildings Workshop Do you have a pending project for fabric repairs in your church? Would you like some help on the steps to take? If so, this is the PCC Workshop for you! We will guide you through the process of where you need to start, who you need to involve, and any permissions required. If you have a vision for your church building to save its heritage and increase its use do sign up. Come and join Julie Alcock, Historic Church Buildings Support Officer; Toby Hart, Church Buildings Support Officer and Emma Denton, Giving Advisor, as they guide you through the process. Book here: PCC Buildings Workshop 7 July 2026.

Digital Giving (contactless and online, including QR codes): Understand the need, options, availability, cost and impact of Digital Giving. Every parish should have some form of online giving available (including QR codes) and we can help you find the best option, including tips on how best to promote it to your congregation and wider community. A contactless donation device might be right for your church, and we will show you what's available to buy or you might choose to borrow one of our diocesan devices for an event or trial. We can help you find the best solution for your parish. Book here for 13 May, 12.00pm | Book here for 13 October, 12.00pm

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Eco Church Support | Tuesday 28 April, 6.00pm to 7.00pm on Zoom
Join this online support group for an interesting talk by Nigel Cooper about using Creation Care to engage with your local community. Register 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 our Diocesan Giving Advisors: emma.denton@cofesuffolk.org or trudie.harkin@cofesuffolk.org.

Wednesday 29 April | St Edmundsbury Cathedral | 9.30am, 10.30am, 11.30am, 2.00pm or 3.00pm
Wednesday 8 July | St Michael's Church, Framlingham | 9.30am, 10.30am, 2.00pm or 3.00pm
Tuesday 4 August | St Peter and St Paul's Church, Lavenham | 9.30am, 10.30am, 2.00pm or 3.00pm
Further dates across the county to follow. Click here to book any of these dates.

Net Zero Carbon Heating | Zoom | 30 April
'Decarbonising Church Heating Systems - Voices of experience'
Come along to this session to learn from other parishes in the eastern region that have been on their journey of installing new heating systems/technologies. Learn from their experiences, understand the processes involved, the practical side of installing different

technologies and pick up useful hints and tips!
Offered by the Regional Net Zero Carbon team. Click here to book.

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.

Faith Story - Archdeacon Sam | 7.00pm, 18 May 2026 | Teams
All are welcome to join us for the next 'Faith Story' in our series as the Ven Samantha Brazier-Gibbs, Archdeacon of Ipswich, shares her faith journey with us. Have you asked 'How do I know what God is asking me to do?' Come and join the conversations with others about their faith journey. Book here.

Preparing for Retirement Conference 19-21 May 2026 | The Retreat House, Chelmsford CM3 1HA
This is suitable for any clergy members considering retirement in the next 5 years, stipendiary or SSM, to reflect on transitioning from ministry to retirement. For clergy, and especially those who have been in full-time ministry for many years, retirement raises questions about identity and meaning. If you would like to join us, book here. The conference cost will be covered by the diocese and won't come from your CMD grant. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to email Lesley Steed.

Plugged in – technology for remote and rural communities | Saturday 30 May, 10.00am **|** St Felix of Dunwich Church, Rendlesham, IP12 2GG



This one-day workshop will offer a range of cost-effective suggestions whether you are starting from square one or looking to upgrade or improve existing systems. It will be led by David Jordan, who has deep experience of finding technological solutions to support mission and ministry in his own rural multi-parish benefice. Come with your questions and learn from David and each other. Diocesan staff from the Parish Resources team will also be there to talk about digital giving and grants. A free lunch will be provided. Book here.

Leading your Church into Growth

Leading your Church into Growth, 12-13 June 2026 at Debenham Community Centre
Following the positive feedback from our Leading your Church into Growth (LyCiG) conferences in 2024 and 2025, we are delighted that the LyCiG team are coming back to lead another conference for us in 2026. The Insight booking link will be shared shortly. For more information, please email: the Revd Katie de Bourcier, Diocesan Mission Enabler, or Lisa Hicks, LyCiG Coordinator. To book please click here.

LoveRural Conference | 19–20 October | Yarnfield Park, Yarnfield Lane, Stone, Staffordshire ST15 0NL

Early bird bookings are open, offering a discounted rate of **£190** until end June 2026. Special offer at £130 for young adults too: Spaces are limited, so we encourage you to secure your place soon and take advantage of these reduced rates. Click here for information.

Please note: Preaching Hope in Troubled Times - the next Women's Voices event, due to be held on 20 June, is postponed until next year, date to be confirmed.

Church Community Services and Events

St Edmundsbury Cathedral Pilgrimages
Saturday 25 April | Lavenham Parish Church to the Cathedral – a day's walk of 17 miles along St Edmunds Way.
Saturday 9 May | Rogationtide Walk 'Beating the Bounds' of Exning & Newmarket Parishes.
Saturday 16 May | Little Gidding Annual Pilgrimage from Leighton Bromswold to Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire

For more information on all pilgrimages and registration please contact Cathedral Chaplain, Revd Canon Mark Haworth markhaworth@stedscathedral.org.

Hope Against Hope | Sunday 26 April 3.00pm to 5.00pm | St Mary's Church, Woodbridge
An opportunity to come together to share stories and music with local Ukrainians and join a conversation with Sir Nick Young, formerly chief executive of the British Red Cross. Refreshments available. In conjunction with Suffolk Refugee Support and Kesgrave and Woodbridge Ukraine hub.

An evening with Julian and Jiaxin Lloyd Webber, Saturday 2 May 7.00pm. St Andrew's Church, Rushmere St Andrew, Ipswich IP5 1DH.
This evening, with internationally renowned cellists Julian and Jiaxin Lloyd Webber, launches St Andrew's 2026 May Festival which includes something for everyone: concerts, exhibitions, Christians in sport breakfast, evening meal, talks, children's events and special services. The theme this year is 'Drawn to Jesus?'. Tickets £25, under 18s £10. For more information and booking: www.standrewschurchrushmere.onesuffolk.net

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New Awakenings Concert, Saturday 9 May 7.00pm | St Andrew's Church, Ipswich IP5 1DH
St Andrew's May Festival invite you to a concert evoking new life in Christ given by the Cantus Firmus Choir under direction of Richard Hubbard with guest violinist Natasha Petrovic. Tickets £13, under 18s £5. To book, please click here.

Bury Male Octet with Eddie's SwingSisters | Saturday 9 May, 7.30pm | Hitcham Church
An easy listening programme ranging from the Medieval to modern - including popular songs from WW2, Frank Sinatra and pop. The Bury Male Octet, who appeared at the Theatre Royal in February, will sing acapella whilst Eddie's SwingSisters will have backing

music, both choirs will sing together for the second half. Hitcham Church is off the B1115. Parking is in the church car park which is accessed from Fen Lane (What3Words expel.materials.magically) with a short walk up to the church. Tickets are just £5 and include tea and coffee. Raffle. In aid of church funds, please email RNFCurrie@gmail.com for more information.

Art Exhibition | Saturday and Sunday 9/10 May | Village Hall, Old Newton IP14 4ED
Come along to a creative art exhibition, refreshments available, in aid of St Mary's Church.

'**Drawn to Imperfection' |** Wednesday 13 May **|** St Andrew's Church, Ipswich IP5 1DH
Come along to an exhibition of twenty-one portraits of biblical characters by renowned artist Dave Nevarad. Exhibition opens with a cheese and wine evening Wednesday 13 May from 7.30pm and then open daily 10.00am to 4.00pm until 20 May. For more information please click here.

Model Railway Exhibition Saturday 16 May, 10.00am – 4.00pm, St Peter and St Paul Church, Lavenham
Layouts of all kinds, in a range of scales, regions and countries (with special focus on East Anglia), together with trade stalls. Refreshments available. Adult admission £7.00, family tickets £12.00 (purchased in advance here to guarantee entry). In aid of Christian Aid.

Folk Concert for Christian Aid | Saturday 16 May, 6.00pm, St John the Baptist Church, Needham Market IP6 8AE
Come along to a folk concert held to raise funds for Christian Aid. Performances from Maggie & Stan, Wildflowers, Joka and Folk on the Hill. Entry costs £8 (cash only) on the door including interval tea and biscuits. There will also be a raffle.

Mildenhall Deanery Quiet Day | Tuesday 19 May, 10.00am-3.00pm, St Martin's Church, Exning CB8 7HG
Old Testament Prophecy in Bible, art and music with The Revd Dr Naomi Wormell, lecturer in Old Testament, Westcott House, Cambridge; Rector of The Cheveley "Group", Ely Diocese.
All are most welcome – please bring a packed lunch. Enquiries to Revd Canon Chris Childs Rural Dean of Mildenhall on 01638 429212 or revcchilds@aol.com.

The Conference of Birds | Saturday 30 May, 3.00pm | St. Peters Church, Great Livermere IP31 1JR
Come along and witness the performing ensemble of Planet Birdsong, a global citizen science initiative that connects people with birdsong. Tickets cost £15 for adults, children under 16 half price. Refreshments available, tickets can be purchased on the door. All profits to go to the church toilet fund.

Notices

Parish Accessibility Fund: Full details of the scope of the Parish Accessibility Grants' scheme are here and the VAT rules are here. As a first step you should contact contact Toby Hart at the Diocesan Office via email toby.hart@cofesuffolk.org

Sizewell Hall Fundraiser: Sizewell Hall stands as a sanctuary where the Word of God is taught and lives are changed. The Trustees have an exclusive opportunity to purchase the hall, to preserve and continue to use it for the advancement of God's kingdom. Could you help? Please download the letter here for more information.

Inspire Counselling: Low-cost, professional, safe and confidential counselling service offered in Ipswich for individuals aged 18 years and over, currently accepting new clients. All the counsellors are Christians. Open Tuesdays and Thursdays. For further information please contact Inspire on 01473 217694, email contact@inspirecounselling.org.uk or visit their website here.

Energy Footprint Tool: Complete your EFT on the Parish Returns Portal here. It should take about 15 minutes to do, and completion of the tool will make your church eligible for various sources of funding for net zero and energy reducing projects in your buildings. There is funding from £5,000 up to £80,000 available over this triennium to support net zero projects in your parish. 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.

Vacancies

Operations Manager | St Augustine's | Closing date: 15 May
Kid's and Families Pastor | St Augustine's | Closing date: 15 May
Vicar | Kesgrave with Little Bealings & Playford | Closing date: 20 May
Rector | North Bosmere Benefice
Team Vicar | Forest Heath Team Ministry
Team Vicar | Sole Bay Team
Rector | Box River Benefice
Team Vicar & Associate Priest | Blyth Valley Team Ministry F/T Stipendiary Post

Tenor Vicar Choral | Non-Executive Safeguarding Chapter Member | Volunteers | Risk, Audit and Review Committee Member, Finance Committee Member | Officer Manager | Senior Non-Executive Chapter Member | St Edmundsbury Cathedral

Organist or Pianist **|** United Benefice of Stanton | For more information please contact Ali Wakelin on 07717 125743.

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TOGETHER WE ARE
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
SUFFOLK

Watch our stories from around Suffolk



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