Our regular round up of news and forthcoming events from our diocese [View this email in your browser]

Thursday 6 August 2026

eNews

Our regular round up of news and forthcoming events

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND SUFFOLK

Former Archdeacon of Suffolk, the Ven Geoffrey Arrand will be fondly remembered



We are saddened to hear of the former Archdeacon of Suffolk, the Ven Geoffrey Arrand's passing on 30 July 2026.

Born in 1944, Geoffrey was educated at King's College London and was ordained in 1968. After curacies in Washington and South Ormsby he was Vicar of Great Grimsby from 1973 to 1979, Team Rector of Halesworth from 1979 to 1985, Dean of Bocking from 1985 to 1994, and Rural Dean of Hadleigh from 1986 to 1994. He led Suffolk in faith through his archdeaconry spanning 15 years from 1994 to 2009.

Geoffrey's faithful service to the Church touched countless lives and encouraged many in their vocation. With wisdom, humility and quiet kindness, he exercised his ministry with grace, encouraging clergy and laity alike and strengthening the life of the Diocese through many years of devoted leadership. As archdeacon his pastoral heart, gentle spirit and steadfast faith earned him deep affection and lasting respect amongst clergy and congregations.

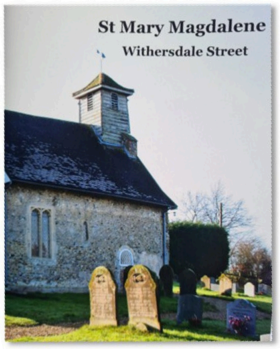
He and his wife Margaret retired to Lincoln where he continued to serve in a variety of roles.

We give thanks for all that Geoffrey shared with us in his ministry in Suffolk.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Welcoming people into the life of this historic church

A Diocesan Growth Fund grant of £900 has helped St Mary Magdalene, Withersdale, in



the Sancroft Benefice take an important step in sharing its story, strengthening community connections, and welcoming new people through its doors.

With funding support, the church was able to professionally produce a detailed yet accessible guidebook exploring the history of this beautiful rural church, which is one of the oldest places of Christian worship in Suffolk. The guidebook was launched at a special community event in May 2026. This increased awareness has already led to a new feature on the parish council website, helping to clarify information that had previously confused the church with nearby historic sites. Plans are already being made to welcome a local historical association for a future meeting and talk, and new information gathered since publication could contribute to an expanded second edition. Through a simple but well-planned project, the church has shown how investing in heritage, communication and welcome can open doors.

Read the full story here. The Growth Fund is available to support your church engage creatively in mission in your context. We can offer grants up to £1500 to support you in outward-looking projects to develop your local mission to the wider community. If you would like to apply for a Growth Fund grant all the information you need is on our website here.

The Elizabeth Pathway: A Local Route to Ordained Ministry

The Elizabeth Pathway is a nationally-accredited training route designed for those in whom the Church discerns a vocation to ordained ministry, particularly people who feel called to serve in the communities where they already live and work. Delivered in partnership with Ripon College Cuddesdon, this two-year programme combines theological study, spiritual formation and vocational discernment. If you would like to explore whether ordination might be for you, click HERE.



Case study: The Revd Rosalyn Armstrong: Before beginning my journey towards ordination, I spent many years working as a stockbroker and financial planner. In 2022, I retired after sensing that God was calling me to leave Nottingham and move to Suffolk where I became involved in my local church, serving as Parish Safeguarding Officer and becoming a trustee of Lightwave. I enrolled on a course to become a spiritual director and eventually I felt called to ordained ministry. The Elizabeth Pathway was the perfect route for me. As a mature candidate, I was looking for a programme that allowed me to combine theological study with existing commitments and responsibilities. The part-time structure provided exactly that balance.

One of the most valuable aspects of the Elizabeth Pathway has been how it has deepened my understanding of Scripture, it has encouraged me to approach the Bible with greater curiosity, exploring not only the text itself but also its historical, cultural and theological contexts. This has significantly enriched both my personal faith and my preaching. It has

also reinforced an important truth: learning does not end at ordination. Ministry is a lifelong journey of formation, growth and discovery.

Today I serve as a Curate in the North Suffolk Benefice. as my ministry develops, I hope to expand my involvement in pastoral visiting, community engagement and hospital chaplaincy placements.

Read the full story here.

Growing Younger in our Diocese

Youthscape Essentials is all-round training for every youth leader

Take time to invest in yourself and your youth ministry. The course is free and includes an extensive training manual which will be given to you before the first session. In 2026 there were two streams available for Youthscape Essentials, online and in-person. In-person is now fully booked, but you can still join us online from 7.00pm – 9.00pm on Wednesdays: 16 September, 7 October, 11 November, 9 December, 13 January 2027, 10 February 2027, 10 March 2027, 14 April 2027, 12 May 2027 and 9 June 2027. Please sign up here. *If these dates don't work for you, or if you would prefer face to face training, please email jamie.swinerd@cofesuffolk.org to register interest*

Deep Rooted 2026 | 14 August 2.00pm to 9.00pm | Red Lodge Sports Pavilion, IP28 8FQ

Calling all young people aged 11–17! Join Deep Rooted, a FREE youth event in Red Lodge packed with fun, friendship and faith. Our vision is to see young people rooted and established in their community, knowing they are loved by God and truly valued. Expect an exciting afternoon/evening featuring: live music, inflatables, graffiti wall, Nerf wars, burgers and much more!

Whether you can bring along members of your youth group, want to come with friends, or attend on your own, you're very welcome. This event is open to anyone across the Diocese who wants to engage, encourage, and bless young people. Come and be part of something special! Sign up here.

Diocesan and Mission & Ministry Events

Chaplaincy Gathering | Wednesday 7 October, 10.00am | St Felix of Dunwich Church, Woodbridge IP12 2GG
A day of encouragement, inspiration and connection to equip and strengthen chaplaincy

across Suffolk. This special day brings together chaplains serving in a wide range of settings for encouragement, reflection, and fellowship. Hosted by Archdeacon Rich, with contributions from Bishop Joanne and keynote speaker Dr Josh Hunt, Chaplain at Felixstowe School, the gathering will offer fresh insights, inspiration and opportunities to connect with fellow chaplains. Lunch provided. To register, please click here.

National Church Talking Money Training for Curates and Clergy (Online)

Curate session on Talking Money: 12.30pm, Tuesday 22 September on Zoom
This 60-minute training session is aimed at new curates, is a chance to explore the topics of money, budgeting, giving and generosity. These are really important elements of parish life, but many clergy don't have much training on them before starting their ministry. Click link to find out more and book Talking Money 2026

Curate session on Talking Money: 7pm, Thursday 24 September 24, on Zoom
Repeat of the above session. Click link to find out more and book Talking Money 2026 (repeat)

Curate session on Teaching & Preaching Generosity: 12.30pm, Tuesday, 13 October on Zoom
This one-hour session aims to help equip curates to teach and preach about generosity - to encourage a deepening of discipleship in believers and to stimulate a culture of generosity within churches as they outwork their vision. Click the link to find out more and book Talking Money 2026 - Teaching & Preaching Generosity

Clergy Training – Fundraising: 12.30pm, Tuesday, 20 October on Zoom
This one-hour session covers the different elements of fundraising you might need to do in your church, from running fundraising events to securing funding from grants to asking people to leave a gift in their will. Click the link to find out more and book Talking Money 2026 - Fundraising.

Digital Surgeries
Join members of the Parish Resources Team for a one-to-one session to find out more about enhancing the digital giving presence in your parish:

Wednesday 30 September | Abbey House, Bury St Edmunds | 9.30am, 10.30am, 11.30am, 2.00pm or 3.00pm
Tuesday 3 November | Diocesan Office, Ipswich | 1.30pm, 2.30pm or 3.30pm.
Click here to book any of these dates.

A service at the start of Creationtide to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Eco Church | Saturday 5 September, 3.30pm | St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1LS

Join us for our service of celebration to mark the 10th anniversary of A Rocha's Eco Church Awards. Please register so we are aware of numbers, Please register here so we know you are coming to this free event!



PCC Workshop on Parish Giving Scheme: Monday 14 September, 11.00am

Join a monthly PGS webinar with the Parish Resources Team to find out more about the scheme, the benefits and how to join. The PGS is dedicated to serving givers and churches in a shared ministry of giving. Book here: September

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PCC Online Workshop – Linking our faith to living a generous life | Thursday 24 September, 1.00pm
Join us for an online session where we will explore how our faith links to living a generous life, a subject that lies at the heart of our relationship with God and with one another. We will give you an insight into how you might approach the topic of giving and generosity with your congregation, fellow church members, and those in the wider community. This webinar is suitable for clergy and PCC volunteers, and we will share examples, ideas and preaching resources, together with plenty of time for discussion. Book here.

Enhancing Worship (2026) | Wednesday 30 September | Earl Stonham Village Hall, Forward Green, Earl Stonham IP14 5HJ
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. This module is open to all, it is also a requirement for Elders who lead worship and those on the Elizabeth Pathway. For information and to book please click here.

A morning with Julia Mourant | Saturday 3 October, 10.00am to 1.30pm | Salvation Army Hall, Violet Hill Road, Stowmarket IP14 1NE
You are invited to attend a morning offered by Julia Mourant, author of 'The Spiritual Director: Practising the Charism of Presence and Attention', writer and Spiritual Director. She will explore the distinctive nature of spiritual direction as both vocation and spiritual gift, grounded in experiential formation, theological reflection, and the capacity for personal growth and transformation. The cost will be £10, payable in cash only on the door. Please register here.

Chaplaincy Gathering | Wednesday 7 October, 10.00am–3.00pm | St Felix of Dunwich Church, Rendlesham IP12 2GG
This special day brings together chaplains serving in a wide range of settings across Suffolk for encouragement, reflection and fellowship. Hosted by Archdeacon Rich, with contributions from Bishop Joanne and keynote speaker Dr Josh Hunt, Chaplain at Felixstowe School, the gathering will offer fresh insights, inspiration and opportunities to connect with fellow chaplains. Whether you serve in education, healthcare, the workplace, community settings, the emergency services or other sectors, this is a valuable opportunity to share experiences, deepen relationships and be renewed in your ministry. Lunch will be provided. Book here.

Christian Activism in Today's World – a study day for Lay and Ordained Ministers | Saturday 10 October, 9.30am Salvation Army Hall, Violet Hill Road, Stowmarket IP14 1NE
Supported by Mark Sheard (Diocesan World Mission Officer) and Richard Stainer (former Diocesan World Development Adviser) and joined by speakers from the CAP (Christians Against Poverty), Open Doors and the Mothers' Union (on Modern Slavery), this promises to be a rich day of exploration and reflection. For further information and booking please click here.

PCC Workshop: Digital Giving (contactless and online, including QR codes) | Tuesday 13 October
Understand the need, options, availability, cost and impact of Digital Giving. Every parish should have some form of online giving available (includes 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. Book here.

Safeguarding Sunday
Safeguarding Sunday is an annual awareness campaign led by Thirtyone:eight, held on 15 November (or when you are able). This year's theme is *Love Protects*, helping churches explore safeguarding as an expression of care, protection and love. Registration is now open for free resources including service-planning materials, and ready-to-use content. Many of our churches hold a Safeguarding Sunday during the year and find it a really positive experience. If you would like some assistance or would like to know more, email safeguarding@cofesuffolk.org

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Safeguarding Training: To book all safeguarding courses - for any in-person safeguarding training visit Insight, where you, or your local safeguarding officer, can book you a place to attend a course. 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.

Church Community Services and Events

Organ Recitals | St Mary's Church, Woodbridge
You are invited to a series of five recitals presenting music from across the centuries. Mark Blatchly on 8 August, Claudia Burgess on 15 August, D'Arcy Trinkwon on 22 August and David Flood on 29 August. Each concert starts at 12 noon and refreshments are available.

Hitchin Concert Band on Tour | Friday 14 August, 7.30pm | St Peter's Church, Ipswich IP2 9TH
Join this programme of epic movies and TV music with showstoppers all suitable for the whoel family. Conducted by Alison Eales with guest soloist Richard Ingham (saxophone). £8 adult and £4 per child (family tickets available). Book here.

From Hunter Gatherers to Henges; The Deep Time Sacred Gathering Place of Freston | Thursday 20 August, 7.00pm | Freston Village Hall IP9 1AF

Enjoy an illustrated talk by professor of Anthropology, Tristan Carter. Cheese and wine are provided, tickets cost £10 in advance or £15 on the door. In aid of St Peter's Tower Repair fund. Email Tessa Paul on tessa@hillsidefreston.com to book tickets.

Bereavement Cafe | Saturday 22 August, 2.00pm | Great Blakenham Parish Room IP6 0LN
A safe space to come and talk about your loss, no matter how recent. You can also just sit and be with others if you prefer. Tea, coffee and biscuits provided. For more info please email wendyatstmaryschurch@gmail.com.

Art Journalling Day | Saturday 19 September 2026, 9.30am | St Edmund's Church, Felixstowe IP11 2HR
This is a relaxed day where you will learn how to make an accordion journal in the morning and then in the afternoon we will begin to create in it, looking at creation using Genesis and the Psalms. Cost £20.00, all art materials included, just bring a packed lunch. To book please contact Penny on rev.pennybrinkley@yahoo.com.

Village Haymaking | Saturday 19 September, 10.00am | St Mary's, Stoke by Nayland CO6 4QU Churchyard
All welcome to a family friendly morning haymaking! The morning will also include a scavenger hunt and Colchester Morris Dancers. Light refreshments available.

Suffolk Harvest Festival | Sunday 4 October, 3.30pm | St Edmundsbury Cathedral.
Bringing the community together for a county Harvest Festival to celebrate people and organisations across Suffolk who work the land and sea, and to give thanks to God for this year's harvest.

Faith Community Drop in Session | Thursday 8 October, 2.00pm | St Nicholas Hospice Care, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2QY
Come along to a welcoming drop in session for members of different faith communities - find out more about how the hospice serves theiir community. Refreshments provided. To book your place, email education@stnh.org.uk.

Notices

STAND for SYNOD

Stand for Synod: General Synod is the national assembly of the Church of England—often described as the Church's Parliament. It plays a vital role in shaping the life, mission and future direction of the Church. It agrees new forms of worship, debates matters of national and international importance, and approves the annual budget for the work of the Church at national level.

New clergy and lay members are being elected to General Synod this year – and you are invited to stand as a candidate. Almost anyone who attends church regularly is likely to be eligible to stand as a lay member. You don't need to be a member of a PCC, Deanery Synod or Diocesan Synod. Those elected will serve for five years.

If you think you could help shape the future of the Church please consider standing for General Synod - you can find all the information needed on our website here. This includes a handy timeline and the next key date is **14 August when nominations open.**

General Synod Elections
An introductory letter was issued on behalf of Kevin Wilson, the Presiding Officer for the diocese on 29 July. This letter outlines the election process, key dates, and voting procedures. Please check your email or post to ensure you have received this important update. A paper copy was posted to those without email.

What is General Synod?
The General Synod serves as the national parliament of the Church of England. Elected members serve a **five-year term** and actively shape the Church's future by:

- Approving new forms of worship.
- Debating major national and global issues.
- Voting on the national church budget.

Why You Should Stand
Elections are happening now for both **clergy and lay members**. You do not need experience on a PCC, Deanery Synod, or Diocesan Synod. If you attend church regularly, you are likely eligible to run and help guide the mission of the Church.

Important Next Steps

- **14 August:** Nominations officially open. All qualified electors will receive an invitation to nominate.
- **The Portal:** The elections are managed online via **Civica Election Services**, with paper alternatives available for those without email.
- **Get Involved:** Find more details and download laity nomination forms on the diocesan website here.

For queries or help with the process, contact the election team directly at elections@cofesuffolk.org.

Need to contact CollecTin for support? When submitting support requests to CollecTin, identifying which CollecTin More model and card reader the church is using enables CollecTin to diagnose and resolve issues more quickly and efficiently. Click here to find out how to quickly identify your device.

Launch of Suffolk Churches Ride and Stride/Pedal and Drive 2026
Cyclists, walkers, vintage and classic car owners and even horse-riders, can start to plan their route for Suffolk Churches Ride and Stride and Pedal and Drive day, which will be held on Saturday 12 September**.** Details of how to get involved are now in churches and on the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust website here.

Can you recycle a bicycle for Africa? At Re-cycle the mission is to send bicycles to rural communities in Africa. Using trusted partners donated bikes are collected and shipped to Africa where a bike can improve an individuals health and well-being, as well as provide new work and education opportunities. You can donate your unwanted bicycles to

Re-Cycle and help continue to change lives in Africa. You can find out more and find your nearest drop off location here.

Vacancies

Children and Families Worker | Great Barton and Thurston | Closing date: 28 August
Rector | North Bosmere Benefice | Closing date: 1 September
Rector | Sancroft Benefice | Closing date: 30 September
Team Vicar | Forest Heath Team Ministry
Associate Mission Priest / Lightwave Hub Leader | Bungay Benefice
Kids Pastor | Full-time | River Church
Internship for 18-30s with theological training from St Mellitus College | River Church
Volunteer Manager | Senior Fundraiser | Tenor Vicar Choral | Non-Executive Safeguarding Chapter Member | Volunteers | Risk, Audit and Review Committee Member, Finance Committee Member | Senior Non-Executive Chapter Member | St Edmundsbury Cathedral

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