



Thursday 19 November 2020

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# Growing in God

**Information and guidance for churches during the Covid-19 pandemic is being updated. Please visit the Church of England page [here](#) and the Diocesan guidance page [here](#) for the most up to date information.**

## A message from Bishop Martin

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

### Independent Faith Engagement Review – call for evidence

The government has recently launched an independent faith engagement review, and I want to encourage everyone to participate in the call for evidence. Recommendations from this review will shape the future of how the government engages with faith groups during the COVID-19 recovery phase and beyond. It is vitally important that the government hears what the church has been doing in this time. The survey is very straightforward and takes approximately 20 minutes, depending on how much you wish to comment on your answers.

The survey can be accessed [here](#).

The experience of COVID-19 has brought into sharp focus the vital work churches do day in day out, often unnoticed, to support the most vulnerable in society. It is often the case that churches support the people who fall between the gaps of different statutory services. This is an opportunity for policymakers and politicians to understand who we are and the contribution we make to building a stronger, more caring society. If we do not take this opportunity, our voice will not be heard at this critical time.

Please share this widely. The survey closes on 11 December,

With every blessing

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Martin' with a cross symbol above the first letter.

## Diocesan Environment News

Bishop Martin is delighted to announce that the Revd Canon Mark Haworth has been appointed as the new Diocesan Environmental Advisor following the retirement of the Revd Canon Sandie Barton. The diocese is already in a strong position not least due to Sandie making progress in our eco church awards. Mark will bring energy and creativity to the role and we look forward to working with him in the environment group and more widely.

In addition, the Revd Richard Stainer has kindly volunteered to undertake some scoping work, particularly on how we move to a net zero carbon emissions diocese by 2030, following the General Synod setting of this ambitious target for the Church of England. Richard will be undertaking this work through to May 2021, working closely with the environment group and others.

## Comfort and Joy



Our Christmas campaign holds together the hope that Christmas will bring joy and celebration after a uniquely difficult year with an acknowledgement that – for those who have lost loved ones or livelihoods, or who are potentially still not able to be together with loved ones – it may be the Church's role, both nationally and locally, to provide consolation, rather than assume everyone will be ready to join in jubilation.

There are many resources available on our website to help you plan Christmas 2020 please visit our new page [here](#). A few highlights are detailed below:

**Reflections: Nine Lessons and Carols for Christmas** for each day from Christmas Day to 2 January feature contributions from Kate Bottley, Jonathan Bryan, Bob Chilcott, Martha

Collison, Stephen Cottrell, Guli Francis-Dehqani, Chine McDonald, Sally Phillips and Justin Welby.

Look out for **The Ipswich Noël**, a Christmas blessing released on 5 December 2020 at 5.00pm. This ecumenical project is produced by the Revd Matt Key and the Revd Amy Key and will be available on social media.

### Doorstep Carols

Wednesday 16 December 6.00-7.00pm  
Sing along with Radio Suffolk

Parishes are warmly invited to organise carol singing on doorsteps across the county this Christmas to spread some much needed cheer and raise funds for local charities with the help of Radio Suffolk. Tune in to Radio Suffolk at Ipswich - 103.9 FM | West Suffolk - 104.6 FM | Lowestoft - 95.5 FM | Aldeburgh - 95.5 FM. This is also on DAB and also on [BBC Sounds](#).

You will find invitations/carol sheets which you can customise with local Christmas information at [www.light-wave.org/doorstep-carols](http://www.light-wave.org/doorstep-carols) from Monday. Links to charity giving and the national doorstep carols website will also appear there. For further information, email [Archdeacon Sally](#). If you are a Facebook user, please use the 'Doorstep Carols Suffolk' group to post about your preparations and good news stories about Christmas in your community or you can share them via an email on the webpage above. Looking forward to singing with you!

### Looking for Christmas Resources?

**AChurchNearYou.com** - This website includes a Resource Hub providing free adaptable content (such as customisable videos, images and approaches to online giving). Please also register all your Christmas services on the site [here](#).

**Printed materials** - Bookmarks, Christmas cards, banners, flyers, posters, booklets and other printed items will be made available for churches to purchase from [Church House Publishing](#).

**InHarmony Christmas 2020** - Providing music videos for your Christmas services. The videos will be available via the InHarmony [website](#) where you can find a list of what will be available. Buiresi Consort is currently specialising in providing high-quality pre-recorded music for use during the uncertain months ahead please click [here](#) for more information.

**Christmas Word Searches** - Kindly produced by the Revd Canon Tim Jones please find a weekly word search for each Sunday in December:

[29 November](#) | [6 December](#) | [13 December](#) | [20 December](#) | [27 December](#)

Please download this week's [word search](#) suitable for Sunday 22 November.

**Inspiring Ipswich** have developed 10 ideas to get your creative juices flowing, please click [here](#).

## A - Z of Online Church

2.00pm – 3.00pm

Thursday 26 November (to be repeated Monday 30 November 7.30pm) by Zoom

The first of a series of three webinars as we discern God's leading when we engage online with existing and new congregations. Lockdown 2.0 means we need to reassess the importance of our online presence. This webinar will offer an opportunity to share good practice from across the Diocese and beyond via a facilitated conversation following short introductions that will stimulate our thinking.

- Growing Disciples online (Dave Gardner)
- Developing online giving (Lee Jukes)
- Use of all aspects of social media (Lauren Bridgewater)
- Practical set up for streaming services (Leonie Ryle)
- Thinking Younger – how can we engage with Children and Young People (Matt Levett)

The meeting will stay open for 30 minutes after the session end for informal chat. This session will be useful for leaders both ordained and licensed and others keen to develop online church services. Please book your place at:

Thursday 26 November <https://a-z-of-online-church-1-day.eventbrite.co.uk>

Monday 30 November <https://a-z-of-online-church-1-eve.eventbrite.co.uk>

Numbers will be limited to encourage effective engagement so please sign up early.

## St Edmund's Day

Friday 20 November

St Edmundsbury Cathedral will mark St Edmund's Day online with videos and information about St Edmund including a children's craft activity to make a crown and arrows decoration, two pilgrimage trails which you can download and walk during the day and a recipe for St Edmund's buns. Full information can be found on the Cathedral's website <https://stedscathedral.org/events/st-edmunds-day>.

The day will culminate with a special service of Vespers at 5.30pm. This is a service similar to what would have taken place in the Abbey of St Edmund and includes a performance of Vêpres du commun by Marcel Dupré sung by the Cathedral Lay Clerks and accompanied by Dan Soper, Choir Organ, and William Saunders, Grand Organ. The service will be livestreamed via the Cathedral's Facebook page [www.facebook.com/stedscathedral](http://www.facebook.com/stedscathedral).

## Power of Prayer week

Power of Prayer week finishes this Sunday with a county-wide Ecumenical celebration at St Edmundsbury Cathedral at 3.30pm, which will be livestreamed from the Cathedral Facebook page [here](#). This service will be led by Dean Joe Hawes, Bishop Mike Harrison and Archdeacon Sally Gaze with contributions from ecumenical leaders across Suffolk and music from the Cathedral choir and the InHarmony project.

## Notices

**Dwelling in the Word - new text for Advent 2020 forwards** Having dwelt on Ephesians 4.1-16 this past year we are now changing texts to Mark 2. Each time there are two options here - either Mark 2.1-12 or Mark 2.13-27 - the whole chapter being a little long for one reading. For further details please click [here](#).

**Growing in God Growth Fund** - Many thanks to those of you who have applied to the fund. Applications for this year's funding have now closed and we are in the final stages of distributing these funds. Please keep your eyes open in the new year for some good news

stories from this funding and for details on next year's Growth Fund applications.

**Ride and Stride** the annual fundraising event for Suffolk's church buildings went ahead in September and the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust are pleased to announce that the total far exceeds last year's achievement. So far, with more money still coming in, sponsorship has raised £150,000, exceeding last year's total of £128,223. Pedal & Drive also raised an additional £15,000. Thank you to everyone who took part. In 2021 Suffolk Churches Ride and Stride, and Pedal & Drive, will be held on Saturday 11 September.

**Growing Good Growth, Social Action and Discipleship in the Church of England** (also known as the Grace Project Report), offers its very welcome insights on the Church engaged in social action, Church growth and discipleship. You can find the report, jointly produced by Theos and the Church Urban Fund, [here](#).

**2020 'Hidden Needs in Suffolk' report** taking national statistics and turning them into an accessible and detailed picture of the local need across Suffolk. It looks at six broad themes, Children & Families, Compassion in Crisis, Education, Learning & Life Skills, Health & Wellbeing, Older People and Thriving & Safe Communities. This is an invaluable tool that will help us target our efforts where our help is needed most. The report can be found [here](#).

**Email scams** - It appears internet scammers are targeting parish church officers in a rather sophisticated way by using information from parish websites to make the content appear very realistic. This particular scam references Amazon gift vouchers but there could be others. If you think you have a scam email, do not click on any links in the scam email, do not reply to the email or contact the senders in any way, if you have clicked on a link in the email, do not supply any information on the website that may open and finally do not open any attachments that arrive with the email. If you think you may have compromised the safety of your bank details and/or have lost money due to fraudulent misuse of your cards, you should immediately contact your bank. You can report an attempted scam [here](#).

## Vacancies

[Priest in Charge \(Bungay\) and Pioneer Leader of the Lightwave Hub](#) | Lightwave | Closing date 30 November

[HMP Highpoint : Anglican Chaplain \(Ref: 39011\)](#) Closing date: 1 December

[St Matthew's Ipswich, Mission Enabler](#) | Inspiring Ipswich | Closing date 2 December

[Digital Communications Manager](#) | St Edmundsbury Cathedral | Closing date 3 December

[Diocesan Mission Enabler](#) | Closing date: 9 December

**Communications and Bookings Co-ordinator** | All Saints' Church, Bury St Edmunds. Please apply to [Astreas013@gmail.com](mailto:Astreas013@gmail.com) for a full job description and application form. Closing date: 30 November.




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Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich  
St Nicholas Centre, 4 Cutler Street, Ipswich  
Suffolk, England IP1 1UQ  
United Kingdom

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