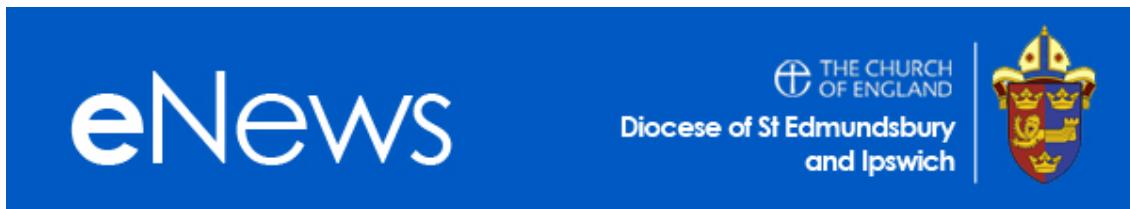


Our regular round up of news and forthcoming events from our diocese [View this email in your browser](#)



Thursday 26 November

[Printable version](#)

Growing in God

The Bishop of London, the Rt Revd Sarah Mullally, has welcomed the publication of the Government's Covid-19 Winter Plan, detailing that places of worship will be permitted to reopen for public worship from Wednesday 2 December. 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.**

Comfort and Joy



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 features contributions from Kate Bottley, Jonathan Bryan, Bob Chilcott, Martha Collison, Stephen Cottrell, Guli Francis-Dehqani, Chine McDonald, Sally Phillips and Justin Welby. Sign up [here](#).

Join Lightwave for **Doorstep Carols** on Wednesday 16 December 6.00-7.00pm - 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 on DAB and also on [BBC Sounds](#). www.light-wave.org.uk.

On Christmas Eve in East Bergholt Comfort and Joy will be brought to the village with a **procession of 15 floats and two Nazarenes with a donkey**. The Churchyard will be decorated with lights, a star and a Nativity scene in the porch. The project also includes a donkey trail as 15 small donkeys, kindly made by East Bergholt High School, take up their positions in the village.

Would you like to follow the '**Footsteps through Advent**' with Barrow Benefice? Artworks are being installed in Barrow and Risby, one for each day from 1 December to Christmas Eve, including a nativity scene produced by local school children. The project was supported by funding from the Diocese Growth Fund. Further information is available on www.barrowbenefice.org.uk.

Journeying through Advent with St Edmundsbury Cathedral

The season of Advent starts with a special **Advent Sunday service**, on Sunday 29

November, at St Edmundsbury Cathedral. The service, starting at 5.00pm, includes readings and music for Advent led by Bishop Mike and will be livestreamed on the Cathedral's Facebook page [here](#).

A **Cathedral Posada statue** (the figures of Mary and Joseph) will be visiting various locations and community groups in Bury St Edmunds, as we ask the question, "What does 'Comfort and Joy' mean to you?" Since 1586, Mexicans have used Las Posadas to celebrate the nine days of Christmas, which represents the nine month pregnancy of Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ. Many Christians in this country have honoured this tradition by hosting a 'Posada' statue for the night – sheltering Mary, Joseph and the unborn Christ for the night. Follow Mary and Joseph on the Cathedral's Facebook [page](#) as they make their journey.

Also, each day at 2.00pm, you can open a door of the **musical Advent Calendar** [here](#). A range of seasonal music awaits, including organ and choral recitals.

'Christmas will be different this year, like it or not, but it doesn't have to be without comfort and joy,' comments the Very Revd Joe Hawes, Dean of St Edmundsbury. 'As we move through Advent, let's focus on the comfort and joy you can bring to others this year. That might be by standing on the doorstep of your neighbour who you know will be on their own this year, by the shopping trip you make for someone who is vulnerable or by making a donation to your local Foodbank.'

Get your digital channels ready for Christmas

However your church is planning to celebrate this year, your digital channels will play an important part in inviting the community to come along, whether online or on site. Here are a few tips:

- Update your bios on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to include a line about Christmas and change the link to point to a web page about your services.
- Update your pinned posts on Facebook and Twitter to provide visitors to your page more information about how your church community is celebrating this year.
- Review your Instagram highlights to include important details of what's and a sneak peak of the preparations.
- Update your newsletters for Christmas and include what's coming up ahead to keep your church community informed.
- Think of the journey you want to take subscribers and followers on. For example, this week you may want to introduce your Advent and Christmas theme online, followed up by some resources and a reminder the following week in an email and social posts.
- Did you miss the recent Comfort and Joy webinar which explored this year's resources and shared ideas on how you can use them within your community? With Adrian Harris, Sandra Millar and Amaris Cole from the Church of England, you can watch it again [here](#).

A Church Near You

Have you added your Advent, Christmas and Epiphany services and events yet? Use the new tags on ACNY to make sure your services are found easily, they have even added a tags for 'Event held outside, live stream or pre-recorded service'.

The Resource Hub has also been improved to help make it even easier for editors to access the wealth of resources. With 70 Advent, Christmas and Epiphany carols, organ accompaniments and contemporary songs for use in your services and a new social media generator tool, which allows you to create Comfort and Joy graphics for Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. A video generator tool which allows you to add your own text to a Comfort and Joy video is coming soon.

Live-streaming your Christmas services

Monday 30 November 11.00am - 12.20pm. By Zoom

What's the best set up for a live-stream for broadcasting inside or outside? How do we capture audio from a group of musicians? How can we use pre-recorded music in a live-stream service?

Join Sam Poch, Content Producer, and James Newhook, Audio Producer from the Church of England Digital Team in this special Christmas-themed webinar to answer your questions and help your events run as smoothly as possible. This live webinar will be recorded. Please sign up [here](#) if you wish to receive the recording.

Christmas Reality Check

Friday 4 December 11.00am - 12.30pm. By Zoom

The Church of England invite you to another Evangelist & Discipleship webinar, hosted by Sandra Millar (Life Events and Welcome), Mark Betson (National Rural Officer and a member of the Church of England's Recovery Group) and the National Digital Team.

This webinar will focus on the art of the possible in the light of the Government guidance about Christmas and the actual situation for churches and worship. Last minute ideas, reassurance – and practical insights. To book please click [here](#).

Publicising your Advent and Christmas events and services on Facebook

Monday 7 December 11.00am - 12.20pm By Zoom

No doubt, your Advent and Christmas plans are underway, now it's time to invite your community. Join Emma Sijuwade, Social Media expert, with Amaris Cole and Liz Morgan from the Church of England Digital Team, as we share tips for promoting your events in your local community using Facebook. Covering free advertising as well as an introduction to paid advertising, ideal for novices and anyone seeking fresh ideas.

This live webinar will be recorded. Please sign up if you wish to receive the recording. Sign up [here](#).

The Last Things - Advent series with Bishop Mike

Tuesdays 7.30 – 9.00pm. By Zoom

This four-part Advent series will look at themes of death, judgement, heaven and hell. Advent has traditionally been a season associated with awaiting Jesus Christ's coming again "in glory to judge the living and the dead". While the traditional scripture readings have preserved this emphasis and with it a focus on the 'last things' - death, judgement, heaven and hell - there has in recent times been little reflection on such themes, with the ever increasing stress on Christmas and preparations for Christmas tending to overshadow Advent. These sessions are ideal for individuals or Advent study groups. Free of charge, but please register for each session on Eventbrite:

[Tuesday 1 December - Death](#)

[Tuesday 8 December - Hell](#)

[Tuesday 15 December - Judgement](#)

[Tuesday 22 December - Heaven](#)

Notices:

Foreign Aid

As many of you will be aware, there are rumours that the government is considering temporarily cutting the UK aid budget from 0.7% to 0.5% of Gross National Income (GNI). This would be disastrous for many people in developing countries who are struggling because of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is estimated that at least 100 million people worldwide would be pushed back into extreme poverty if this happened.

MPs across seven parties have urged the government to stick to their election pledge and maintain the 0.7% of GNI which goes on foreign aid. Britain is one of the few countries that actually meets the United Nations' 0.7% target. Apart from the humanitarian arguments, the UK's reputation as an aid superpower gives it clout on the world stage. It gets the UK onto international tables where otherwise it might not sit. It is a symbol of soft power and global leadership that is the envy of many nations.

Can we urge you to write to your local MP asking them to support those MPs who are arguing that the aid budget should be maintained? A short, polite letter pointing out the key issues can have an effect. There are countless relevant Biblical references we can quote, but the most telling is from Amos 5:24 'But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.' Thank you.

Richard Stainer and Carol Mansell, World Development Advisers. For further information please visit [here](#).

Fundraising

The [National Lottery Heritage Fund](#) is staging a phased reopening of their lottery funding programmes. The first phase of reopening – grants between £3,000 to £10,000 and £10,000 to £100,000 – focuses on supporting organisational resilience and inclusion (it is not available for capital works). Click [here](#) for information. The second phase – grants between £100,000 to £250,000 and £250,000 to £5,000,000 – will include provision for capital works and begins in February 2021. The CEO's blog available [here](#) gives a steer about what the priorities will include.

[St Thomas's Church Ipswich](#) is getting creative with fundraising! Director of Music, Simon Clark, is going to perform a two hour marathon of hymns and Christmas carols! We are asking as many people as possible to sponsor this incredible event. The coronavirus restrictions have created a huge hole in the parish finances, and these funds are urgently needed to reduce this deficit. All contributions are greatly welcomed! Simon is going to play a selection of 50 pieces, and his skill and dedication is worth your support. He might even be playing your favourite. To find out more and donate please click [here](#).

Coronavirus vaccine volunteer opportunities

Work with NHS colleagues across two counties to enable them to be ready to deliver a COVID-19 vaccination programme. The NHS are seeking great volunteers to work as stewards at local vaccination centres which will be open from 8.00am-8.00pm seven days a week. If you are interested in joining this unique new team please contact us by email epunft.recruitment.covid-19@nhs.net Please see the web page for full details: <https://eput.nhs.uk/about-us/working-at-eput/vaccine-recruitment/>

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
[Pioneer Evangelist for Ipswich Centre of Mission](#) | Closing date: 14 January 2021

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



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