



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
SUFFOLK

Resources for local churches coming out of Covid-19

June 2021

As we have come to realise, there are no simple 'roadmaps' out of Covid-19 for churches. Timeframes move, expectations change, surprises continue to, well, surprise us, but Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and for ever and our confidence rests in being in his company, shaped and directed by him through his holy spirit as we move forward.

This document is offered as a resource for those whose role it is to reflect, to plan and to pray as we move forward and it is rooted in the riches of the Christian tradition, past and present, which, as ever, is a gift for 'such a time as this.' Please make use of it as and when you think it might be useful. It is necessarily an evolving document and if you have something important to add that may help others, please get in touch with helen.smith@cofesuffolk.org.

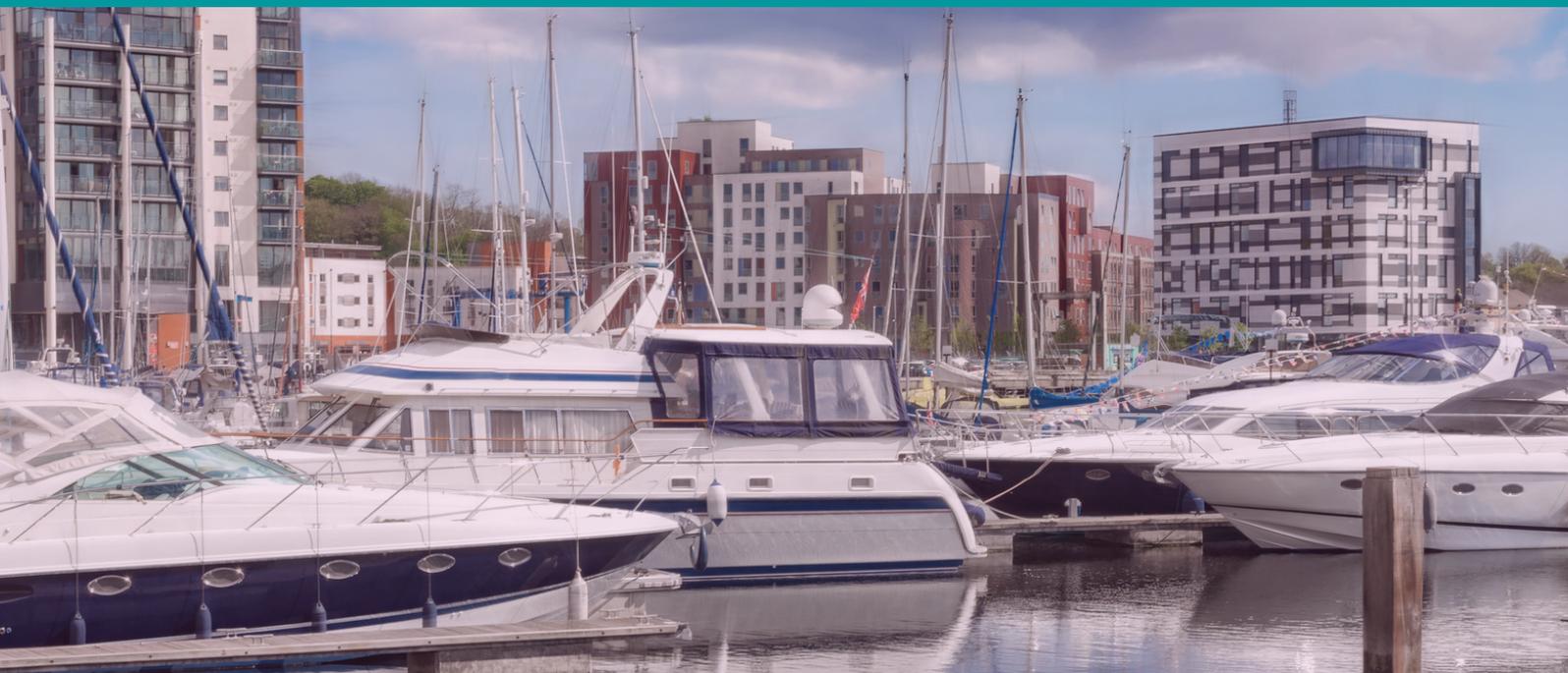
We pray that this may be a time of drawing more closely to our Lord and one another as we reflect, recover, reunite, revitalise, rejuvenate and rebuild.

With our prayers as ever,

Bishops Martin and Mike



Reflect | Recover | Reunite | Revitalise | Rejuvenate | Rebuild



'I am the Lord who heals you' Exodus 15.26

REFLECT

Restore and Renew

Reflection is looking back so that the view looking forwards is even clearer. When Christians reflect it is about discerning where God has been at work. For many, now is a good time to look again at the last year; to mourn, to lament and to reflect on what we have learnt about the important things in life, our worship, our faith, our communities, and our relationships. We will be doing more than just helping 'our own' when we reflect on such things. We will be supporting a whole nation as they try to process what has happened, encouraging people to turn their eyes and thoughts towards God in the midst of this. There are unprecedented opportunities to make a difference. Our Cathedral will be leading the way so do have a look at the resources, events and services on their website.

WEBSITES AND IDEAS

- Church of England Life Events Team (Remembering and Memorials, Lament, Thanksgiving and Restoration) www.churchsupporthub.org
- 'Hope spaces' (Hope Together) www.hopetogether.org.uk
- 'Remember When' resource from the Evangelical Alliance www.eauk.org
- 'Light a candle' project www.lightacandle.global
- The Examen is a prayerful reflection exercise www.cofesuffolk.org

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES

- The Allchurches Trust and the Henry Smith Charity have special funds at the moment to help churches.

FURTHER READING

Virus as a Summons to Faith Biblical Reflections in a Time of Loss, Grief & Anxiety' by Walter Brueggemann.

God and the Pandemic, A Christian reflection on the coronavirus and its aftermath by Tom Wright.

A PRAYER

Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy,
in this time of continuing uncertainty and distress.

Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can
separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen

WHO CAN HELP?

Dean Joe: dean@stedscathedral.org



RECOVER

Heal and Repair

'For I will restore health to you and heal you of your wounds, says the Lord'
Jeremiah 30.17.

God is in the healing and recovery business but it doesn't mean it's easy, especially if we have lost loved ones or are grieving in other ways. As congregations, though, we are well placed to be centres of healing and recovery in our communities, drawing on the rich resources of the Scriptures and the Church. It may be 'weeping with those who weep' or standing up for those who have been unjustly treated. Small things can make a big difference.

WEBSITES AND IDEAS

- Kintsugi Hope Wellbeing courses (used a lot in Ipswich) www.kintsugihope.com
- The Wellbeing Journey from Hope Together www.hopetogether.org.uk
- Death and Life Project www.deathlife.org.uk
- 'Thy Kingdom Come' resources are always useful www.thykingdomcome.global
- Prayer Walking (Hope Together) www.hopetogether.org.uk
- CRUSE (www.cruse.org.uk) and Grave Talk (chpublishing.co.uk)
- Church of England Life Events page www.churchsupporthub.org
- Church of England Mission & Public Affairs page for ideas on housing, Black Lives Matter and other important issues of the day www.churchofengland.org/articles/322
- Do come to the Celebration of Lay Ministries on 25 September 2021 at the Cathedral where there will be a special focus on healing and recovery.

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES

- Local Councils and the Suffolk Community Foundation www.suffolkcf.org.uk are especially keen to support wellbeing projects in the coming months and years.
- You can also contact lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org to use your Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD) funds for retreats and post-Covid-19 training.

FURTHER READING

'The Wounded Healer' by Henri Nouwen.

A PRAYER

O Lord our God, accept the fervent prayers of your people;
in the multitude of your mercies look with compassion upon us and all who turn to you for help;

for you are gracious, O lover of souls,
and to you we give glory,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen

WHO CAN HELP?

archdeacon.jeanette@cofesuffolk.org



REUNITE

Reform and Regather

With well over a year of not being able to meet together as we would like, 'how' we reunite will be important.

The timing and tone of such occasions will be key and will need to be judged separately in each place but these occasions could bring special moments of real joy and connection to our communities.

How good it would be if church congregations were at the centre of these, showing practical kindness, care for neighbours and examples of 'living life to the full'!

WEBSITES AND IDEAS

- On 4 July 2021 there will be a national 'Thank You Day' thankyouday.org.uk
- Suffolk Day on 21 June 2021 may also be a good time to get involved in our neighbourhoods. Listen to BBC Radio Suffolk and read the East Anglian Daily Times for more details.
- As-one.uk is a website full of practical suggestions for churches who want to organise village green or street parties.
- The Big Thanks and The Big Lunch (Eden Project) are projects many communities will be taking up. Might your church get involved and link it with missional activities at the same time?
- The Festival of Suffolk is being planned for June 2022 - how might your congregation get involved?
- The Festival of Britain and the Commonwealth Games will also be big events in 2022. How might we make the most of these opportunities locally?

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES

If you have a missional idea around this theme and need some seed funding feel free to submit an application to the Growing in God growth fund. Have a look at the diocesan [website](#) for more details.

FURTHER READING

'The Heavenly Party' by Michelle Guinness.

A PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we thank you that you love to bring people together in all our diversity.

Visit us, we pray, as we come together as communities.

Help us to live life in all its fullness, to be mindful of others, to be patient and loving, to seek out the lost, the last and the least and to give all the glory to you.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen

WHO CAN HELP?

archdeacon.rhiannon@cofesuffolk.org



REVITALISE

Renew and reimagine

Now is a really good time to do some re-imagining of our church life and what we focus on. During this last year we have been able to connect with all sorts of people online who normally don't have access to our services & community life. How do we continue to connect with them as well as re-start on-site activities? There are no straightforward answers but we have a great opportunity to adjust and adapt as we look forward together.

One of the best ways to start is to raise the level of prayer across your congregations, giving members accessible ways of joining in and feeding back their thoughts. Ask God to help you to see your neighbourhood and network through his eyes – what could you do to share the love of God? There's also the 'Growing in God' materials to help you explore what to focus on. Of course, there may be things you decide not to re-start as they have had their time.

When you're clear about your mission focus then there are all sorts of resources we can help you with. Local Ministry is a new project that is being piloted across the diocese to enable there to be a Christian presence in every community. Whatever you decide to do, adopt a 'let's give it a go' mentality and see what God blesses. It would be great to hear stories to share with others.

WEBSITES AND IDEAS

Rural Ministry www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk

CPAS seminars www.cpas.org.uk

Growing in God www.cofesuffolk.org

Leading your Church into Growth www.leadingyourchurchintogrowth.org.uk

Fresh expressions of Church www.churchofengland.org

Lightwave Community www.light-wave.org

Inspiring Ipswich www.cofesuffolk.org/exploring-faith/inspiring-ipswich

Fruitfulness on the Frontline www.licc.org.uk/ourresources/fruitfulness

Coming out of lockdown ideas www.blackburn.anglican.org

FURTHER READING

Learning from lockdown, Grove Booklet W246.

Environment, justice and the future, Grove Booklet E198.

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES

- Growing in God Growth Fund www.cofesuffolk.org
- Lightwave Rural Outreach Pioneer funding email lightwave.community@cofesuffolk.org
- If you minister in Ipswich see the recently circulated list of potential funding, especially the new Mission Innovation Fund.

PRAYER

See the back page for the 'Growing in God' prayer.

WHO CAN HELP?

phil.dykes@cofesuffolk.org Diocesan Mission Enabler
archdeacon.sally@cofesuffolk.org



REJUVENATE

Regenerate and refocus

The impact of Covid-19 on children, young people and families of the challenges of the last year is well documented – in schooling, employment and the socialisation of the very small – with a clear divide in access to opportunities. Financial anxiety and juggling work, home and schooling have often left little space for spiritual exploration or discipleship.

Churches have changed the ways they connect with families and despite innovation & energy, the Church of England estimates it has lost touch with thousands of under 18s with the commensurate loss of what they have to teach us about the Kingdom of God. We have also lost many of our best evangelists. Conversely, we have found new apps and technologies which can help secure relationships, provide support and offer new ways of being hospitable. Cooking together on Zoom? Craft packs for school classes and families? Exploring the outdoors through 'Wild Church'? Online resources made accessible at any convenient time? Storytelling across the ages and the miles? We must take these new experiences forward as we grow together.

For those in Suffolk who are serious about wanting to grow their churches younger, now is the time to think through how we can reach out more fruitfully and more radically.

WEBSITES AND IDEAS

- Church of England Going for Growth (resources and links for all ages) www.going4growth.com/home
- All the 'Sticky Faith' resources for leaders and parents fulleryouthinstitute.org/stickyfaith
- Ideas for prayer and craft flamecreativekids.blogspot.com
- 'Faith at home' connecting schools, churches and homes www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/faith-home
- Campaign for change for young people www.childrenssociety.org.uk/how-you-can-help/campaign

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES

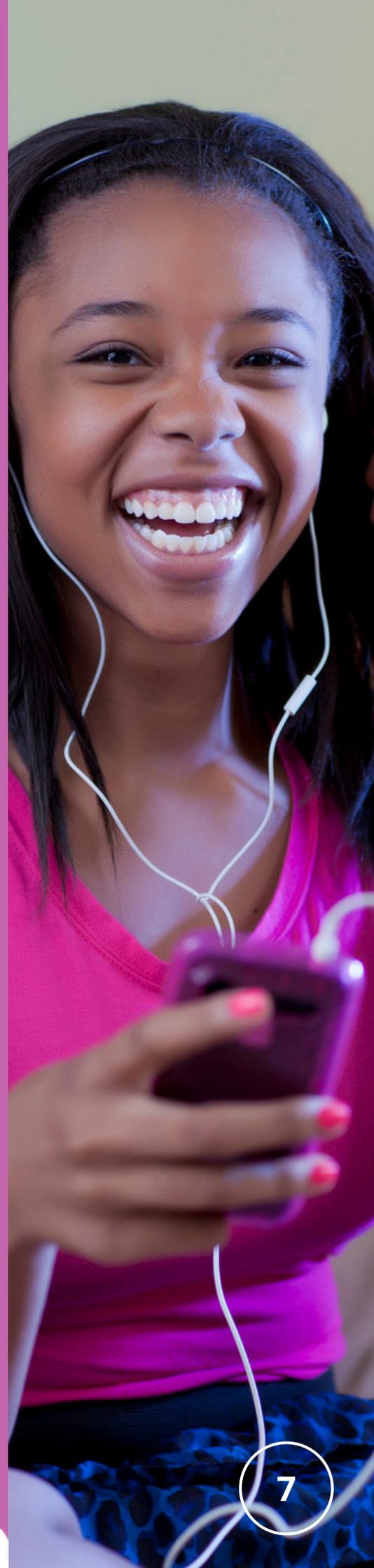
- Growing in God Growth Fund www.cofesuffolk.org
- If you minister in Ipswich see the recently circulated list of potential funding, especially the new Mission Innovation Fund.

FURTHER READING

- Messy Discipleship, ed. Lucy Moore, BRF (2021) ISBN 9780857469533
- 'Engage all Generations' a toolkit. Cory Seibel, ACU Press (June 2021)
- The Good Childhood Report www.childrenssociety.org.uk
- Tearfund, research with young people on climate change weare.tearfund.org/burning-down-the-house
- Church growth and Social action [here](#).

WHO CAN HELP?

matt.levett@cofesuffolk.org (Youth)
hilary.wordsworth-sewell@cofesuffolk.org
(Children and families)



REBUILD

Reimagining our church buildings

Our physical church buildings are an important part of our heritage in Suffolk, so as well as having the chance to rebuild in other ways, let us also consider how we might reimagine the buildings we have inherited. Are some ready for new purposes? A 'festival church', a more community-facing approach? A home for a new 'fresh expression', a café, a food bank, market, exhibition, wedding fayre and so on? If you'd like help reimagining your church buildings then do contact your Archdeacon in the first instance. We'd love to help.

WEBSITES AND IDEAS

- Grants are available via our Growing in God Growth Fund to improve technology so buildings can be used to live stream services, such as funerals, weddings and baptisms.
- When able, making our churches open and welcoming for worshippers and visitors makes a big difference. Why not publicise widely?
- The national Church of England has ideas regarding equipment www.parishresources.org.uk
- Explore contactless card and online ideas for easier giving to our local churches www.cofesuffolk.org

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES

- Ecclesiastical have produced a comprehensive covid-19 specific list of funders that support churches www.ecclesiastical.com/church/fundraising/funds/
- Funding 4 Suffolk allows you to search for funding quickly and easily www.idoxopen4community.co.uk/suffolk
- Also check out www.parishresources.org.uk

FURTHER READING

- 'Possible additional uses for church buildings' by Archdeacon David and team
- 'Church Buildings for People', [Grove Book](#) by Nigel Walter
- 'Repitching the Tent' by Richard Giles ISBN: 978-1853115714
- 'Reimagining church buildings' by Nigel Walter www.jubilee-centre.org

A PRAYER

Loving God, thank you for this house of prayer where we praise and thank you for all you have given us.

Help us to use each building to bring glory to you and

Help us to go out into the world, refreshed by your Spirit,

to do what you have called us to do in Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

WHO CAN HELP?

archdeacon.david@cofesuffolk.org

charlotte.hodgson@cofesuffolk.org





Flourishing congregations making a difference

The Growing in God Prayer

O Lord, our God, giver of life and growth,
grow in us a longing for you, that we might deepen our faith;
grow in us a compassion for your world, that we might serve our neighbours;
grow in us a vision for your kingdom, that we might proclaim your love.
By the power of your Spirit, and in Jesus' name. Amen.