A glimpse of Ipswich deanery over the last year

March 2023
QUEEN ELIZABETH II

The Queen’s Jubilee celebrations played a big part in our deanery life, giving us opportunities to reach out to our communities and talk about her extraordinary faith.
Then in September many churches marked the passing of Her Majesty the Queen offering quiet places for reflection, such as here at St Mary Elms and St Mary le Tower saw over 2000 who came to pay their respects.
Speaking of church leaders, 2022 was the year that ‘Together for Ipswich’ started, uniting 80+ churches in the town so we can work together on things that really matter...
The first ‘Together for Ipswich’ Steering Group met with the Leader of the Borough Council.
A vigil for the people of Ukraine was arranged

Ipswich Vigil for the people of UKRAINE

5:30pm Wednesday 9th March
Cornhill/Town Square

Archdeacon of Ipswich
Vigil led by the Vicar of St Mary Le Tower
Welcome bags were assembled and distributed
The Whitton Rectory was furnished for two Ukrainian families.
And many opened their homes to Ukrainian families
Here are some of our new Ukrainian friends six months on...
Other important initiatives have also started and over 25 warm spaces in our churches have been provided over the winter.
‘Crown Him’ in January brought lots of Ipswich churches together
And here is our first delivery which will help us get the TFI Sanctuary Day Centre for asylum-seekers off the ground, co-ordinated by St Mary le Tower. Due to open soon.
TOP UP SHOPS

And there’s been the extraordinary ministry of our eleven Top Up Shops helping those in food poverty or ‘just about managing.’ Here are just a few of them...
Here are the amazing volunteers at St Matt’s...
And at St Helen’s/Safe Harbour
And at St John’s (MIE)
Wellbeing groups have taken off too, such as the Lighted Candle Renew Café who have recently celebrated their 1st birthday!
And the St Peter’s Wellbeing Group are shown here packing the bags for the first ‘Messy Vintage’ outing in St Margaret’s parish.
This year our Inspiring Angels project went Suffolk-wide so we were able to sprinkle the angel dust even wider than last year!
Churches across the deanery, like Lindbergh Road Community Church, (LRCC, a plant from St Augustine’s) threw some pretty spectacular Christmas parties for their communities.
NEW DISCIPLES

Above all, it has been exciting seeing new disciples being added to our number in the deanery
Here’s Aidan being baptized at Safe Harbour Church
And later confirmed at one of our five deanery Confirmation Services this year (32 have been confirmed)
And here is Emma from St Thomas sharing how she came to faith. She is one of over 100 new disciples across the deanery this year.
Prayer continues to be central to all we do. Here’s our new Prayer Space resource being used at St Peter’s
And at St Matthew’s...
For some following God’s call is helped by joining the Deanery ‘Growing Leaders’ Course
For others, it may be joining ‘River College’ at River Church
For others, like Linda, Dimitri and Nancy, last year it was ordination.
NEW ARRIVALS

Yet again, God seems to be sending us lots of new people to help with the harvest
Last year we welcomed the Revd Heather Livingstone as the new Priest-in-Charge of St Francis with St Clare in Chantry
The Revd Emily Swinerd as the new Priest-in-Charge of St Peter’s Stoke Park
The Revd Sophie Cowan as the new Priest-in-Charge of St Mary Stoke
The Revd Susan Allison as the new Priest-in-Charge of St Luke’s, St Helen’s and Holy Trinity
The Revd Sarah Geileskey is joining us soon as the new Priest-in-Charge of St Margaret’s.
And the Revd Alan Comfort is on his way as the new Vicar of Rushmere St Andrew
God keeps equipping us and feeding us too. The monthly Missional Leaders’ Lunch group met in the summer at St Thomas and enjoyed copious amounts of cheese!
Lots of people keep coming back to our ‘Mobilise’ meals to equip lay people for mission
As a deanery we continue to minister to all ages, from babies to young people to those in their 80s and 90s. River Church is one of several churches running a baby & toddler group.
The PCC at St Thomas discuss how to reach out to young people
The BEATS (as in Beatitudes) Youth Group at St Francis design Stations of the Cross
Young cadets come to worship at Whitton Parish Church
All ages gather at All Saints
And at WT&W, St Helen’s and St Luke’s new Messy Churches have started
At the other end of the age spectrum hundreds of ‘Messy Vintage’ bags were distributed to care homes throughout Ipswich
For the Inspiring Ipswich core team it has been another exciting year seeing more coming to faith, more new worshipping communities starting up and more people exploring faith.
And we always love to gather over food. Here are the Deanery Treasurers getting to know each other in September.
The first Together for Ipswich Steering Group meets with the Leader of the Borough Council.

And some of our churchwardens at a breakfast a few weeks ago.
GOING DEEPER

Our Deanery Conferences and the visit of Archbishop Rowan have helped us to go deeper
Archbishop Rowan comes to St Mary le Tower for the weekend
In May we gathered in celebration and thanksgiving for where God has been at work
Pastor Harold inspired us at the Autumn Trailblazing conference & we are just getting ready for our Spring conference next Saturday.
We are learning a lot along the way and this year we have been pleased to share some of this with Peterborough, Ely, Chichester and Christchurch (New Zealand) dioceses.
Just a tiny flavour of what God is doing in our midst
And a foretaste, we hope, of all the good things He has in store for us for the future
Bring on the rest of 2023!
March 2023

Music: We stand together
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