

IPSWICH WATERFRONT CHURCHES



PARISH PROFILE 2022





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Welcome

We are Ipswich Waterfront Churches and if you are looking for your next move to an exciting part of the world, then we are here and looking forward to welcoming you.



*Churchwardens Christine Bell,
Hilary Smith and Mark Falla*

We have a faithful committed membership that desires a new direction and to become more family-focused.



Who we are

We are a family-based open evangelical Anglican church based in South-East Ipswich, close to the bustling waterfront of the town. We are a faithful and committed church community looking for a new minister who will guide and encourage us on the next chapter of our church life. We are looking for a new direction, intentionally growing as a family of believers of all ages.



Who we are looking for

We are looking for someone who has a pioneering attitude, ready to lead us on our intentional growth as a family of believers of all ages.

We are looking for a minister who will:

- help us seek God for a new vision for our churches
- shape and direct us on the journey God has in store for us
- have a heart for children and young people, and attract new families
- lead and work as part of a team
- grow the churches through encouragement and Bible-based teaching
- help the congregation to deepen their prayer life



Our Benefice

Ipswich contains some of the most deprived areas of Suffolk. As a consequence our benefice serves an area of Ipswich that has been the focus of regeneration that commenced in 1995. The benefice has a total population of 12,107 (2011 Census).

The benefice can broadly be divided into two areas that fall predominantly within the Alexandra and Holywells Wards situated in the northern and southern areas of the benefice respectively (see benefice map). The top half of the benefice consists of modern flats with older council housing, with a more diverse population but more deprived sectors. The bottom half has a less dense population, more privately owned properties and is a greener space.

While the benefice population is predominantly of a white ethnicity, there are other faiths and other large churches on our doorstep. Ipswich's main mosque and the large Hope Church are situated on the western edge of the Waterfront Churches benefice.

River Church, a new HTB-network church plant from St Augustines is also near to us.

We enjoy good relationships with the other benefices and organisations. This is helped by the Diocese providing funding for joint projects and education. Recent initiatives include the Inspiring Ipswich led Growing Leaders course and the biannual Conference. Church members also attended "Faith Pictures" (how to share your faith), a Church Army course.



The A12 and A14 trunk roads offer excellent connections to London, Cambridge and Norwich within the hour. Regular network rail services and nearby Stansted Airport, means Ipswich offers easy access to neighbouring communities, conurbations and beyond.

What we offer

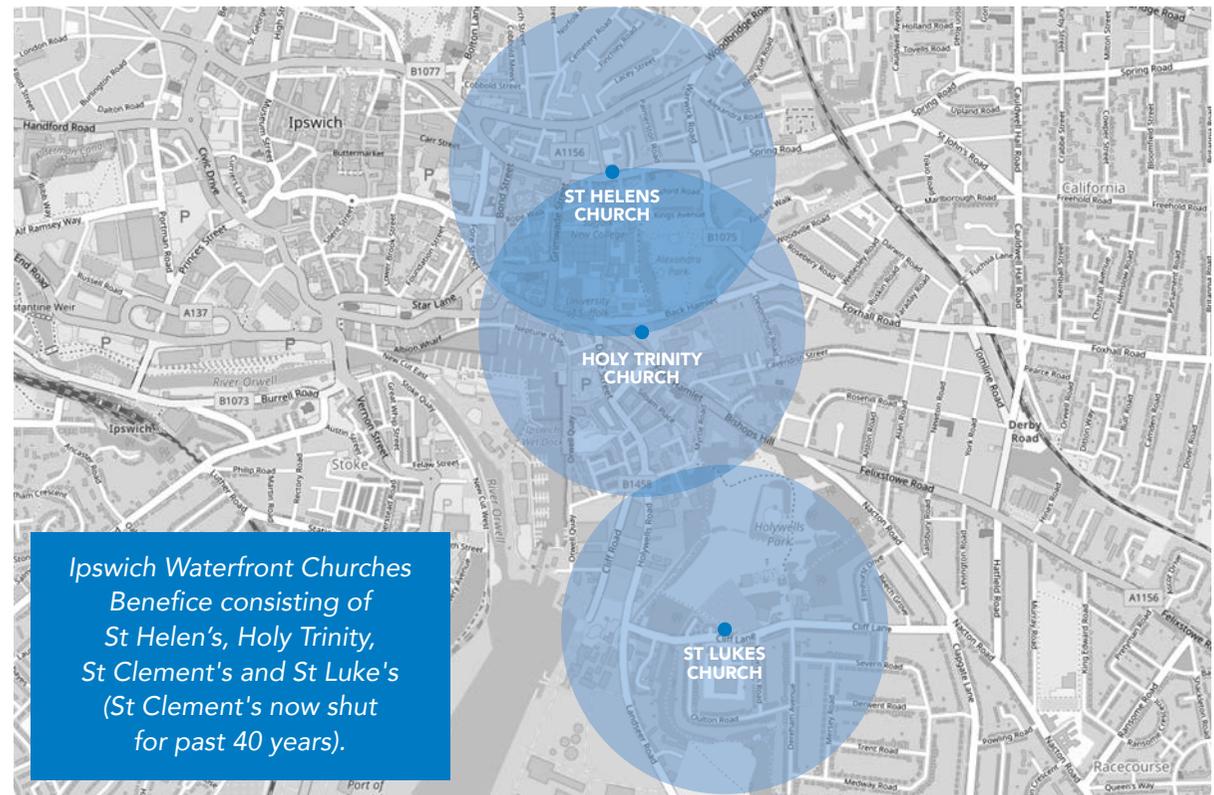
- a friendly spiritually gifted group of Christians
- a dynamic ministry team
- three great locations
- a love of food and social gatherings
- flexibility to change
- easy to manage
- excited by Inspiring Ipswich
- a close-knit deanery



The Churches

The Ipswich Waterfront Benefice consists of three locations, each building having unique characteristics and strengths. We currently meet as one worshipping congregation at St Luke's Church, Cliff Lane for a weekly Sunday worship at 10:30am and a fortnightly Sunday School during the morning service.

Within our benefice we have connections with our two local primary schools through Open the Book assemblies. The two schools are St Helen's Primary School and Cliff Lane Primary School.



Holy Trinity



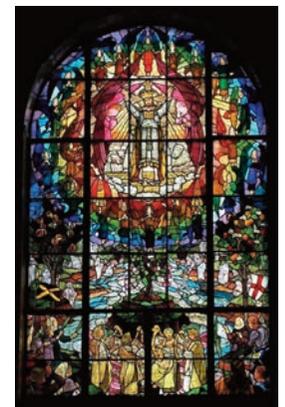
*A "distanced" Sunday Worship
at Holy Trinity, 2021*



*Holy Trinity Church located
near the Ipswich Waterfront*

Holy Trinity was built and dedicated in 1835. This is our biggest building and was our base for worship until September 2021 when, due to serious heating problems, we moved on a temporary basis to St Luke's. Holy Trinity is located a short walk from Ipswich's "The Hold", the flagship new Suffolk Archive facility/exhibition centre located on the University of Suffolk Ipswich campus. The University has 9,565 students with a chaplain who is known by our churches. Suffolk New College has 5071 students with a wide variety of courses to meet local needs.

We are currently renting out the small church bungalow, adjacent to the church, to a business helping those with social needs. Prior to lockdown we ran a 'Munch and Make' weekly café which allowed the community to share in a meal and enjoy a space to craft and chat with one another. Currently, this has not restarted since Covid.





St Helen's



A pop-up shop in St Helen's Church, 2021



St Helen's church

St Helen's is based behind the Waterfront, close to St Helen's Primary School. There is an active playgroup using the hall on weekdays. St Helen's also hosts a new Inspiring Ipswich initiative, Safe Harbour Church, which uses the church for a pop-up shop, a Tuesday worship gathering and a monthly community meal. Safe Harbour reaches out to those marginalised in the town through homelessness, mental health problems or substance abuse. Several of our church family members lead and help out. Safe Harbour operates under a Bishop's Mission Order.

St Luke's



Altar and window St Luke's church



St Luke's church

The current place for our Sunday worship, located on a housing estate and opposite the local Primary school. During the week the hall is rented out by community groups. We have re-launched our weekly Coffee Pot, a morning gathering for the community attracting many residents who live on the estate known as "The Rivers." Previously, we have run a successful after-school children's group, Kids Rock, for the local school communities. We also ran Grapevine, a bustling parent and toddler session which has led to lasting friendships and support being formed with the church. In addition, prior to Covid we had a spoken 8am monthly Holy Communion service as well as a midweek short and reflective service, Time with God, which ran after Coffee Pot.



Our journey as a benefice

The benefice was formed prior to 1999, joining together the three worshipping communities, St Helen's, St Luke's and Holy Trinity. Over the years, the churches met together for Benefice services on a fifth Sunday and for special services, which helped build relations and grow closer together as a Benefice.

It was decided by the PCCs to amalgamate the three churches, to be known as Ipswich Waterfront Churches and meeting at one location each week. This was a tough transition for the church, seeing some of the buildings halted for Sunday worship and a common style established.

The reasons for the amalgamation were:

- duplication of roles in the PCCs (however, we still operate under three separate PCCs)
- to make life more manageable for a half-time minister
- dwindling resources and static congregation numbers
- a desire to reach out more effectively to the benefice
- worshipping numbers were around 100 attending a service every Sunday
- a longing to re launch mission through the three centres from a stronger base



Our journey as a benefice (continued)

During this period some people left for other churches, some stopped coming and we saw the church journey through rocky territory. However we have continued to work together, finding routes of reflection to identify both blessings and hurts in our church history, and establish a congregation committed to our connected vision. We started some new initiatives, such as the 'Munch and Make' mornings and 'Food for Thought' (now Safe Harbour), which revitalised the congregation and helped us begin to build a mission and identity for our church. Food for Thought had up to 40 people attending on some nights and Safe Harbour looks set to match those numbers due to the town's current needs.

In 2020, the Covid outbreak saw the church activities stop as we battled with a national lockdown. We began online YouTube services each week, as well as transitioning our prayer meetings, Sunday school and fellowship groups to Zoom. As new lockdowns arose, we moved the Sunday services to Zoom too, with coffee break-out rooms to help our congregation stay connected and support one another throughout the pandemic.



Harvest meal at Holy Trinity hall

We also enjoyed socials throughout the year such as a family bake-a-long, church quizzes and a VE-Day afternoon tea, all online. In addition, we launched an Alpha course and provided an outreach Christingle service.



Our Family

Today, we are a small but committed body of Christians. The last electoral roll showed a church population of 85 people for the three churches.

We are a warm, welcoming and caring church family, passionate about Jesus and spreading the word of God.



Following Jesus together - together making followers of Jesus

We are a welcoming church family that exists to help one another know and follow Jesus Christ and to share the good news of Jesus Christ in our community so that they can know him too. We do this by meeting, praying, worshipping, learning, serving and reaching out with the gospel, united by our faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.



Our Activities

Sunday Services

Each week, our Sunday services include a period of sung worship, led by our band. We enjoy a mixture of both traditional hymns and contemporary songs.



We want our services to be inclusive to all members of the family and community. Once a month, we participate in the sharing of the bread and wine at our Holy Communion Service. We will extend communion times to once weekly within the benefice once a new minister is in post.

We have a ministry team that plans services and music along with three active wardens who support the Waterfront Churches.

Sunday School

Children continue to be a priority for us as we worship together. During the lockdown, we ran an online weekly Zoom Sunday School which saw the children explore Romans and begin an A to Z of God. Each week we would share a song, bible story and prayer together before having a craft to complete throughout the week. Since resuming meeting in person and due to having a small children's team, we run a fortnightly Sunday school for 3 to 7 year-olds. During our time together, we enjoy playing games, reading the bible, praying, and making crafts or edible items together.





Fellowship Groups

During the week, we encourage all members to be part of a home group. We currently have three home groups, with a fourth having to cease before the pandemic, being a daytime study serving the more elderly members of our congregation. Previously, the groups met in homes around the benefice, meeting fortnightly for a time to chat, study and pray. Currently, these operate on Zoom, with one group choosing to meet weekly. The home groups provide an opportunity to grow deeper in relationships and spiritual understanding in both bible study and prayer.

Prayer Meetings

We have a weekly Monday evening prayer meeting which has run for a number of years and is led by one of four members of the laity, covering a range of topics from our local needs, individual church family members and the wider world. We previously met in person but now meet on Zoom, which has proven a real blessing for the winter months and throughout the pandemic, allowing prayer to become a firm event in our church routine. We also have a small prayer breakfast on a Saturday morning. In addition, the Benefice operates a prayer chain, overseen by a church member, whereby members of the chain receive details of prayer requests by e-mail. Prayer requests can be made by anyone connected to the church who feels there is a special prayer need for a person or situation.



Church discipleship model





Social Gatherings

At the Waterfront churches, we believe that 'doing life' with one another helps grow connections and deepens our fellowship with one another. Throughout the year, we run various social meetups, which have utilised technology in the recent pandemic. Before lockdown, we had a monthly walk and talk group, and hosted several regular coffee and cake afternoons, including mince pies at Christmas and summer picnics in the park. Our soup and roll harvest festival meal were well attended and allowed the congregation to share together in a home-made meal. During the pandemic and going forward, we have a regular monthly quiz on Zoom on the last Saturday of each month, as well as various ad hoc socials (including walks, picnics or meals out and board games).



It's ladies' night at The Waterfront

Mission Work

We believe church is not just constrained to our three buildings or town. As part of our monthly financial giving and prayer we support two local and two international Christian charities. These are reviewed annually by the PCC to decide on the organisations to support. We provide 10% of our income to our mission partners.





Pastoral Care

Within the Benefice, we have a pastoral care team. Once a month, the team will visit parishioners who are unable to attend church and will offer them companionship and a short communion service with prayers and bible readings. Other members of the congregation keep in touch with those at home either by visiting or a with a phone call.



Finances

The financial challenge at this time is we are asked for £35,000 a year in parish share and currently pay around £25,000 of this. We have a desire to pay our full share in the future.

We are at present applying for funding of £25,000 to repair our Holy Trinity boiler with additional work needed on the ceiling.



The Location

Ipswich as a town has regenerated itself in the past decades. The BBC news website said in 2020 "Ipswich has been named among the world's top emerging destinations, according to TripAdvisor - thanks possibly in part to Ed Sheeran." The historic waterfront over the past 30 years has seen investment to regenerate the area into a vibrant location with a combination of modern apartments, various eateries and a popular luxury marina.

Throughout the year, it hosts community events such as the Ipswich Maritime Festival and regular live music. It is also home to the University of Suffolk, Suffolk New College and student accommodation. We are a short 20-minute drive to Felixstowe, a diverse coastal town hosting a container port and historic fishing hamlet.

We have various local attractions including Sutton Hoo, the recent setting for the Netflix film 'The Dig', Framlingham Castle, Snape Maltings and Jimmy's Farm. London can be reached within the hour by train, and a good road network connects the town to the Midlands and London area.



Ipswich Waterfront regularly holds community events including Race of the Classics.



Felixstowe Pier going green

Accommodation



The Rectory is located on the corner of our benefice, within walking distance to local primary and high schools, community shops and parks. It also sits on a good bus route to the centre of town. The house has five good sized bedrooms, three reception rooms, a family bathroom and a downstairs cloakroom. It also has a mature spacious garden with a border of trees and shrubs, a garage and space for two cars on the driveway.



Inspiring Ipswich is an imaginative and exciting new initiative of the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich. It spans six years from early 2019 until the end of 2024 and during this period it seeks to strengthen the existing 24 churches within the deanery of Ipswich, helping them 'to communicate good news and make new disciples', as well as adding 25 new worshipping communities into the mix. Front and central is the overall aim of praying for and nurturing the faith of 1500 new Christians across the town.



With the help of a substantial and unprecedented grant from the Church Commissioners and a central Inspiring Ipswich team the project aims to support every parish with regular learning community gatherings and with a highly skilled Mission Accompanier. Central courses such as 'Leading your Church into Growth', Evangelist training, Alpha training and the 'Growing Leaders' course are part of the offer and the support of two full-time Deanery Pioneer Developers is available for those leading fresh expressions of Church.



The Deanery aims in everything to be 'relational, pastoral, missional and inspirational' and aspires to offer a good welcome and ongoing support to all its clergy, primarily through its Deanery Leadership Team, its Deanery Chaplains, clergy chapter meetings, Missional Leaders' Lunches and through the Archdeacon's ministry, which is focused solely on this one area.



One of the primary goals of Inspiring Ipswich is to help at least 5% of the population (around 7,500 people) enjoy an opportunity to explore faith and our prayer is to offer Alpha or an equivalent to hundreds of people each year across the deanery.

In short, we believe that any prospective priest-in-charge of the Waterfront parishes would find themselves at the heart of an inspiring vision and team in the deanery.



Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

Where are we?

The diocese covers the county of Suffolk, excluding the area around Lowestoft in the north-east, and one parish in Essex. It is a mainly rural diocese with a large number of small villages, plus market towns including Woodbridge, Halesworth, Sudbury and Beccles and the cathedral town of Bury St Edmunds with its historic ruins of the old Abbey. Ipswich is the county town with a population of about 135,000. The county embraces historic places of interest such as Sutton Hoo, culture at Snape with the famous annual Aldeburgh music festival, is on the Heritage coast and is a haven for lovers of natural history and birdlife. The busy port of Felixstowe is at the end of the A14 which runs via Cambridge to the Midlands and the A12 which gives access to London and the Norfolk Broads.

Who are we?

We are often known as 'the Church of England in Suffolk'. The diocesan bishop is the Right Reverend Martin Seeley, and the suffragan bishop is the Right Reverend Dr Mike Harrison. Both work from the Bishop's House in Ipswich. They work together closely to help us shape our vision and strategy, and amongst a plethora of other tasks offer regular teaching mornings to nurture the faith of people in our congregations – and a regular Vlog which can be found on Facebook. There are 3 archdeaconries and over 450 churches where visitors will find a wide range of worshipping styles, from the traditional to contemporary, as well as Fresh Expressions and growing numbers of 'Lightwave' groups for those who haven't connected with traditional church previously. We also work closely with our 88 Church of England primary schools. All this is, of course, supported by a small and committed diocesan staff based in the diocesan office in Ipswich.



Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

What is our vision?

Our diocesan vision is to be 'Growing in God', aiming to grow 'flourishing congregations making a difference'. This vision was accepted by Diocesan Synod in 2014 and since then we have been focussing on four key priorities:

- **Growing in Depth:** responding to the call of Christ in every part of our lives
- **Growing in Number:** drawing the contacts we have into the life of God's kingdom
- **Growing in Influence:** reaching beyond ourselves in our impact on the wider world
- **Growing Younger;** building churches whose age-range reflects our communities

Parishes are encouraged to use a simple Mission Action Planning tool to help us all to focus on these priorities and how they might be worked out in each different context. We are trusting God that this vision, underpinned by a commitment to Christian stewardship, will bear fruit as we look to the future. As part of this vision, we have recently received Strategic Development Funding for two major projects: Inspiring Ipswich, overseen by the Archdeacon of Ipswich which aims to grow the church in Ipswich through church planting and reaching out to those who live in the town, and 'Growing God in the Countryside', overseen by the Archdeacon for Rural Mission, which focusses on developing Rural Resourcing Churches and nurturing and discipling new Christians through small Lightwave groups. We have also been part of a pilot scheme exploring how we can use our church buildings more creatively both for those who worship regularly and for the benefit of our communities and many churches have benefitted from this.

We are broadening our vision through a growing partnership with the diocese of Kagera in Tanzania, with fruitful visits and links being established.



Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

How can we do this?

We value our huge range of different ministries: we have over 100 stipendiary clergy, plus many SSM and PTO clergy as well as lay and ordained chaplains who can be found in such diverse places as schools, prisons, hospitals, hospices, the army, RAF and the police. Some clergy are ordained to serve in their local benefice through our pioneering 'auxiliary ordination pathway' which enables people's vocations to ordained ministry to be discerned within the diocese.

All clergy work alongside lay ministers – Readers, elders, and the growing number people exercising recently introduced licensed ministries: pioneer ministers, evangelists, youth ministers and children's and family workers. Our ministry deployment principles encourage teams or clusters of lay and ordained ministers to work together so that clergy feel less isolated and ministry resources the mission of the church more effectively. We are just beginning to develop the principle of 'local ministers' in our benefices, releasing people's gifts to serve in their locality.

We are excited about these new developments which are playing an important part in our diocesan vision of Growing in God.

So, in summary:

As our Growing in God vision states, we aspire to be people who know that 'God is with us, gathering us as Christ-centred communities, calling us to make Christian disciples, sending us in loving service, empowering us by the Holy Spirit'.

We hope you will come and join us on our journey!

To find out more, visit www.cofesuffolk.org



How to apply

For more information and for an informal conversation please email the Archdeacon of Ipswich, Ven Rhiannon King at archdeacon.rhiannon@cofesuffolk.org to arrange a time.

Deadline for applications: 26th January 2022

Interview dates: 9th/10th February 2022





University of Suffolk

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www.ipswichwaterfrontchurches.co.uk

