

THE MAGAZINE

 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Diocese of Norwich

WINTER 2019/20

A photograph of a woman with brown hair tied back, seen from behind, holding a baby in a white onesie. The woman is wearing a grey sweater and blue suspenders. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

New beginnings

**A new chapter in
a longer story**

PAGE 6

**With: youth community
at the convent**

PAGE 16

Singing a new song
in Great Yarmouth

10

Beginning in
Reader ministry

12

The Good Vyker:
Richard of Caister

25

Focus On:
Dersingham

28

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Image from a valuation day at St. Andrews Church, Deopham



From the Editor

The theme for this edition of *The Magazine* really suggested itself. This is the first quarterly Winter issue that spans the change of year. It coincides with Advent as the start of the Christian year and we have a new Bishop of Norwich. A confluence of "new beginnings"

Personally, I've taken on a new role in addition to editing *The Magazine*. My colleague Katherine, who amongst other things handles the press and media relations for the Diocese of Norwich, is on maternity leave and I'm covering that part of her role. I think Katherine has taken on the more challenging new beginning that is first-time parenting! She and her beautiful baby, Bertie, grace our front cover.

As a parent now of a young adult and teenagers, I am experiencing parenting as a journey that comprises a series of new beginnings and new starts as our children grow and develop. And so it is with our journey of faith. From first turning to Christ to walking with him through all circumstances – this is a theme which you'll find recurring throughout this edition.

In our Comment article (pg 4), Rosie Sexton talks of embracing change and Emmanuel – God with us in the good and difficult times. Archdeacon Karen highlights the often necessary endings before the new can begin (pg 5).

A new junior choir has begun at Great Yarmouth Minster (pg 10) which has brought fresh experiences for those joining and for those already at the Minster.

Surya from India describes his journey into finding a new faith and church community in Thetford (pg 11). An invitation to make your New Year's Resolutions at Norwich Cathedral is offered by Andy Bryant (pg 14) and James Fawcett shares the new plans for the convent at Ditchingham to reimagine community, prayer and service, with young people at the heart of them (pg 16).

The main feature, written by Bishop Graham about his new beginning in the Diocese, perhaps sums up the theme most appropriately:

As we come, and as we go, Christ is always slipping in alongside us, continually inviting us to come and follow him, on a journey into the unknown but to a place full of hope.

Wherever you are on your journey of faith, may this edition bring you inspiration and hope.

Blessings,



Barbara

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*The next issue (deadline 15 January)
focuses on "faith in sport & outdoor
spirituality".*

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Cover photo: Katherine and her new born baby, Bertie.



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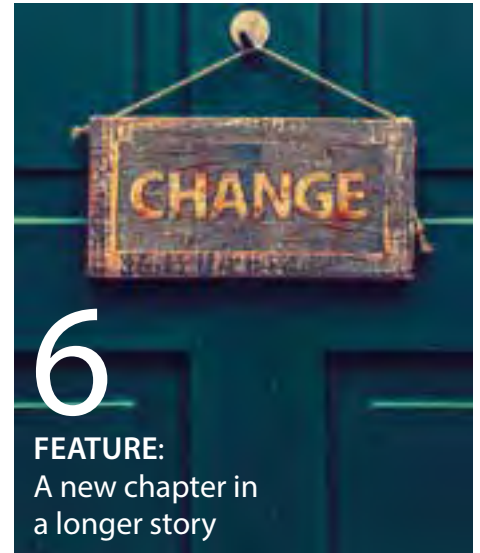
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Contents

THE MAGAZINE | WINTER 2019/20

4 COMMENT: Embracing change

5 PAUSE BUTTON: New shoots
and fruits



6 FEATURE:
A new chapter in
a longer story

9 REVIEW: Books on the theme

11 Everyday faith: Surya's story

14 Cathedral: Valuing New Year
Resolutions

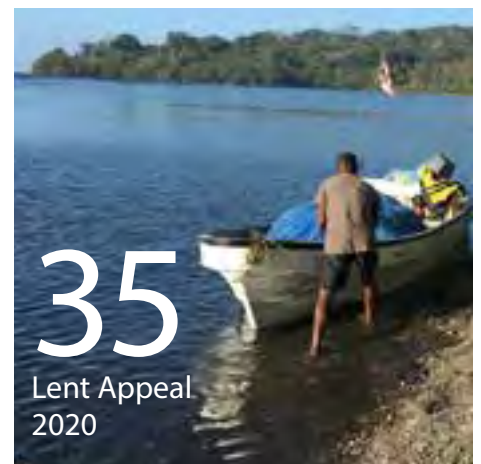
15 A fresh start at Emmaus

21 CYF: Starting high school

22 Photo gallery: Bishop
Graham's welcome service

26 RESOURCES: Extra

32 OUT & ABOUT: Parish
happenings



35
Lent Appeal
2020



Embracing change



When we came to the UK, it was the fourth country we had moved to as a family in seven years. It was both exciting and daunting, starting all over again. There was so much loss, and yet it was an adventure, and one that we had chosen.

We had no home of our own, so we invaded my long-suffering parents' neat and tidy house, looked for schools, a church, new community, and tried to understand this place where we should have felt at home, as I was supposedly English, but where as a family we were in fact strangers. The children's accents gave them away, but those soon faded. Were we starting to fit in? Having family here eased the process of figuring out how life worked, but I did get strange looks from the cashier for not knowing how to pay for my groceries at the till.

We had chosen our move to the UK, but others don't have this luxury. Many of the refugees I meet through the English classes I run in Norwich have a very different story to tell.

Suzan recounted how becoming a Christian had had catastrophic consequences. She lost her job and her home, her family rejected her, and she had to flee her country following imprisonment and torture. When she

arrived in the UK, she had none of the support I had. No family or friends, she didn't speak or look English and her future was on hold until others decided if they believed her story or not.

All of us face new beginnings at many points in our lives, some big and some smaller. Some are full of hope of a fresh start and of positive change, but for others, things are not easy. Some changes we choose and others are forced upon us.

What makes the difference when we face change? For us, moving here, it was the support of family, both immediate and wider, it was people who were open to getting to know us, taking time to let us join in with their already busy lives.

Also, as Christians, it is knowing that God walks through both the joys and pain with us. Even in the darkest valleys, the loneliest times, prayers are heard, even if not answered in our way and timing. We know the truth of Emmanuel, God with us.

We can also choose how we respond to new beginnings. As John Newton said, "His love in times past forbids me to think he'll leave me at last in troubles to sink." As so often mentioned in the psalms and repeated to me by refugees who have had difficult new beginnings, by

“For us, moving here, it was the support of family, both immediate and wider, it was people who were open to getting to know us, taking time to let us join in with their already busy lives.”

reflecting on God's faithfulness, guiding and answered prayers, we can face the uncertain future with confidence and gratitude.

As Augustine said, God alone is the place of peace that cannot be disturbed, and he will not withhold himself from your love, unless you withhold your love from him.



Rosie Sexton is the founder and director of English+, a Christian charity seeking to help newcomers to Norfolk feel welcome and integrate, helping to make a more positive new beginning.



New shoots and fruits

It's extremely exciting to have our new Bishop of Norwich at last beginning his ministry amongst us. It feels like a long time in the waiting, but all is in God's good time, of course.

People often ask about the vacancy process in parishes, and why there has to be a gap between vicars. Sometimes there is a longer gap than we would like, but usually a gap is needed in order to properly let go of the person who has left, and to be ready to welcome the new beginning.

A year ago, many of us were very sad to be saying goodbye to the much-loved Bishop Graham James. And it would have been very difficult for a new bishop to pitch up the next week and say, "Here I am!"

So, a year's space has been important for us in the gradual letting go and starting to look forward. I think there is now a real sense of excitement, of looking forward to getting to know the unique person that is Bishop Graham Usher, and all that he will share with us.

One verse that often comes to my mind when considering new beginnings is John 12:24. As Jesus speaks about his coming Passion, he says, "very truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies it bears much fruit."

The new beginning, the shoot and then the fruit, comes out of an act of letting go, of apparent death and ending. Often when we have a new beginning there's been a letting go before it can happen.

Starting a new school, college or job – there has been a series of goodbyes to what has been left behind. Some who have heard God's call to plant new churches have had to leave behind a community where they were loved and secure. It is often a leap of faith – that God goes with us in that transition and will bless the new beginning.

In churches we tend to be quite good at starting new things, but not so good at letting things die. It is a good discipline when taking on something new, whether as an individual or as a church, to ask yourself what you will stop doing in order to make time and space for the new beginning. There is no shame in following the pattern of John 12:24, of having a proper ending to something as you release it "into the earth" and pray for the new shoot to come forth and bear fruit in due season.

As we enter this winter period where all around us the natural world appears to echo the first part of that verse, we look forward to all that the New Year will bring – the new shoots in the earth and in our lives. And may we bear much fruit!

“Very truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies it bears much fruit.”

John 12:24



Karen Hutchinson
Archdeacon of Norwich

A new chapter in a longer story

The new Bishop of Norwich, Graham Usher, shares his thoughts on new beginnings, a few months into his arrival in the Diocese.



Life has certainly felt very new for me over the last few months. A new diocese, new colleagues, new home, and a new sense of place. My inner compass has had to get used to living in a new part of the country. There has also been much talk of *beginnings* as I prepared for the services of welcome and began to meet many of you and learn about the Diocese.

The season of Advent is one when we particularly think of new beginnings. It is, of course, the start of the church's year, and there is a rhythm to the cycle of the seasons – Advent prepares us for Christmas, Christmas leads to Epiphany, Epiphany's dark nights to the light of Candlemas. As we enter anew into this cycle, so the story of salvation, beginning with the expectancy and experience of Emmanuel, God with us, is unfolded.

A turnaround the common table

Each Sunday at Taizé, the monastic community in France, children bring forward the items to go on the bare wooden altar in preparation for the Eucharist. Along with the candles and chalices, a folded altar cloth is carefully carried and, with a quick action, unravelled from its corners with great beauty, like reverse origami, and laid on the altar. The holy table is made ready, unfolding before us, as God will be unfolded for us in bread and wine.

The unfolding of the liturgical year provides a stunning covering to the common table around which we are all invited to sit, to return from whatever things we are doing and to turn from whatever ill things we are doing. Turning around and changing one's mind are at the root of the word repentance. God constantly calls us to new beginnings, "to turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ", as the liturgy of Ash Wednesday reminds us.

Those words also echo through Advent, with John the Baptist's call to repent and begin anew with a change of heart and mind. This always shifts the direction of our life. Many a new beginning has been traced on the map of life when this call has been heard and lived. The hymn writer, John

Newton, who was once a slave ship owner, set a new course for the ship of his life, later writing, "My chains fell off, my heart was free." From the sense of sorrow for all that lay in his past, a joyful new hope was found which dwelt more fully in God's grace. A life was reoriented; a new direction set; a new beginning.

A letting go

New beginnings can also mark a freeing from the past. When thinking about this, I'm drawn back to the words of Nelson Mandela reflecting on the day that he left prison after 27 years in captivity: "As I walked out the door toward the gate that would lead to my freedom, I knew if I didn't leave my bitterness and hatred behind, I'd still be in prison. ... You will achieve more in this world through acts of mercy than you will through acts of retribution." Living in fear makes prisons around us, and we imprison others. Mandela realised that in his new life of freedom he could free others as well. It was a brave new beginning.

The reality is that new beginnings are part of a long journey into the future, inhabited from within the story of the past with its riches and sorrows, and lived in the sacrament of the present moment. We need to trust that this journey began with God and will end with God. That's where hope comes in. Hope is an incredible gift and sets any new direction in a positive frame. I love the way that the Croatian theologian, Miroslav Volf, describes hope as "love stretching itself into the future".

As we turn the pages of scripture, we find countless stories of new beginnings within the framework of a linear narrative. Some people, like Abraham, set off on a new journey. Some people, like Zacchaeus, turn from living unholy lives to walking in new paths. Some people, like Elizabeth, become pregnant when they thought that they never would. Some people, like the unnamed woman who was haemorrhaging, are healed from infirmity that is crushing them, and a host of other people find life in great abundance in a stranger's conversation, in an invitation to "follow me", and in bread being broken and the sharing of a cup of wine.

Each has a new beginning.



A rhythm and continuity

A new beginning can be both daunting and exciting. I have certainly felt both in recent months. Lots of other people feel the same: parents of a newly born child, a couple getting married, a new job or the loss of a job, starting a new school, being baptised or confirmed. We are surrounded by new beginnings, they are part of life's surprises, and yet also part of its rhythm and continuity.

I often hear, when licensing a priest to a parish, that this is a "new beginning" for a parish, or even, "the start of a new period of ministry". I tend to draw back from such phrases and also from the word "interregnum", which literally means "between reigns", for ministry is sustained throughout a vacancy, often with the help of our dedicated Readers, AWAs and retired clergy. Rather than focusing on individuals, I prefer to understand ministry in terms of the gifts God gives to the whole church to exercise care and compassion, healing and hope, challenge and cooperation, harvest and hallelujah.

Likewise, being called to be your bishop is not a new beginning but a stepping into a linear story of what God has been doing, is doing, and will do within the Diocese of Norwich. I am just the tenant slotting in as number 72 in Norwich!

“The reality is that new beginnings are part of a long journey into the future, inhabited from within the story of the past with its riches and sorrows, and lived in the sacrament of the present moment.”

I am enormously grateful for all the advice and guidance Bishop Graham James has shared with me, together with colleagues, as well as those who have taken the time to write to me, or with whom I've had conversations on deanery visits. Thank you.

Please forgive me that I come with no grand plan for the Diocese of Norwich other than to be faithful to Christ. I see the role of a bishop as being to prayerfully watch, listen and discern, together with the whole people of God, and to create bridges that link a diocese together, to our neighbours, and the wider church. Out of that will come both consistency and change. Perhaps some will have already spotted aspects of both, because I come, like us all, with a unique set of experiences and sense of calling – and some unique inadequacies and failings!

In recent weeks, I have particularly valued a prayer from the Lutheran Church that sums up much in these reflections:

Lord God,
you have called your servants
to ventures of which we cannot see the ending,
by paths as yet untrodden,
through perils unknown.
Give us faith to go out with good courage,
not knowing where we go,
but only that your hand is leading us
and your love supporting us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

As we come, and as we go, Christ is always slipping in alongside us, continually inviting us to come and follow him, on a journey into the unknown but to a place full of hope. Thank you for allowing me to share that journey with you, and I look forward to the joyous adventure that lies ahead.



The Rt Revd Graham Usher is the Bishop of Norwich. He is a member of the Church of England's Environmental Working Group, a board member of the Human Tissue Authority and a member of the International Commission for Anglican Orthodox Theological Dialogue.

Review



A selection of books on the theme of new beginnings, reviewed by Steve Foyster.

Something Needs to change: A call to make your life count

David Platt

*Authentic Books (2019) £9.99
Revelation price £8.00*



What happens when a well-known pastor has his deepest convictions rocked by darkness? Fresh from a trek through some of the highest mountains and remotest villages in the world, David Platt found himself overwhelmed with some deep questions: If the gospel is true and God really is good, then where is God amid extreme poverty and pain? If hell really is a place, does it last forever? Is Jesus really the hope for the world?

In this compelling account of that treacherous trek, the author invites us to eat what he ate, drink what he drank, see the faces he saw, and feel the emotions at every turn. Hopefully you will find yourself eye to eye with some of life's most challenging questions and face to face with the God who desires to use your life in greater ways than you might have imagined.

If you want to walk on water, consider staying in the boat

Jeff Lucas

*CWR (2018) £7.99
Revelation price £6.00*



"Life itself, with all its ups and downs, is the classroom; our everyday academy; wisdom takes a lifetime to develop. What matters is that we learn from the wrong turns and mistakes to continue to grow," says Jeff Lucas.

From many years in Christian leadership the author has learnt a fair few lessons; from the profound to the painful, the embarrassing to the hilarious. Lucas hopes that the reader will benefit from some of the things he wishes he'd known a little earlier on his journey, such as the fact that we are all broken; heroes often go uncelebrated; and sometimes, in order to look afresh, our adventure requires us to faithfully stay put!

Following Jesus: Finding our way home in an age of anxiety

Henri Nouwen (foreword by Richard Rohr) Edited by Gabrielle Earnshaw

*SPCK (2019) £12.99 Hardback
Revelation price £10.00*



At one of the lowest points in his life Henri Nouwen gave a series of lectures on the importance of following Jesus in an age of anxiety. Drawing on those talks, this new book reveals the deep turmoil and sometimes chaotic inner life of a man who has become an icon of compassion and vulnerability.

In his inimitable eloquent style Nouwen writes about calling and purpose, fear and hope. The bestselling author offers a compelling case for rediscovering Christianity as relevant, beautiful, intelligent and necessary in the modern world often apparently devoid of love.

Undivided: Coming out, becoming whole and living free from shame

Vicky Beeching

*William Collins Publishing (2018 paperback edition) £9.99
Revelation price £8.00*



Vicky Beeching began writing songs for the church in her teens and by 30 she was a household name on both sides of the Atlantic. However, the poster girl for evangelical Christianity lived with an inner battle; she was gay. Vicky knew that if she ever revealed her sexual identity it would cost her everything.

Despite losing so much upon "coming out" she gained far more; she was finally able to live from a place of wholeness, vulnerability and authenticity. She found peace and became a champion for others, fighting for LGBT equality in the church and beyond, urging people to celebrate diversity and become "undivided". A compelling, moving and profoundly important read.



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Singing a new song

Great Yarmouth Minster's massive wooden door bursts open and in dash children, with parents and carers in tow. It is a Thursday at 4.45pm and the Choristers' Club gathers to sign in. Volunteers – trained adult choir members – are ticking registers, serving simple refreshments and taking contact details from parents of newcomers. The air is full of excitement and enthusiasm.

At 5pm a chord strikes up on the piano, parents leave and the young teams of Cantoris and Decani dash into their places in the stalls to sing. It may be a church anthem or a pop hit from the musicals. Whatever it is – they pick up the music and dive in with enthusiasm, learning as they go.

The Choristers' Club was set up by the Minster's Director of Music Outreach, an experienced teacher and choirmaster, Martyn Marshall, after a year of ministry in the parish:

"We wanted to offer a regular social music club in the Minster for local youngsters – partly based on the existing work of the Minster's Music Outreach project. I hoped it might bring in new singers for special events and re-invigorate the Minster choir.

"I took the plunge and personally visited several local primary schools, explaining what the Minster had to offer their young people in the way of music and community opportunities. I took assemblies at each school and left flyers for them. We had a few keen takers – 10 in the first week, and since then it's really spread by word of mouth as young people and their families realise what a great opportunity it is."

"I'm just amazed at how much my daughter has grown," smiles one mum, "She's really come into her own through singing." One of the volunteers, Ian Dracup, echoes the sentiment with a grin, "I'm so impressed at their growing confidence – they all volunteer to sing solos now – it's an example to the adult choir!"

This growth in confidence is due in large part to the care and kindness that are a foundation of all the club activities.



"The leaders and volunteers work hard to make this a safe place for children to flourish and find their voice," says Team Vicar, Jemma Sander-Heys. "There is only encouragement in the rehearsals, and the children work hard but also socialise together regularly, which is really important, and we couldn't do any of it without the support of the young people's families."

Perhaps most important for this new beginning has been the support of the existing Minster choir members as

volunteers. Rosemarie Brown describes what it has meant to her:

"After my career as a midwife was cut short by a serious back injury many years ago, I lost all my confidence; singing gradually gave me a new lease of life. And though this was a challenge – being brave enough to come and help as a volunteer – it is such a joy to see the children's delight in music, their focus, and how they grow in confidence. It's been lovely, feeling of use again – a new beginning for us all!"



A new-found faith and community

Surya Teja Reddy Vajrala shares his everyday faith story of a move from a village in India to a new community in Thetford, discovering his faith as part of that journey through embracing new experiences.

Although I grew up in a nominally Hindu family, my grandmother introduced me to Christianity at an early age. She got me to read the Bible and was the one who first suggested that I go to church – and my family were happy for me to do that. From then on, I was praying and reading the Bible every day, not in a Christian sense, almost in a rhythmic sense. I was interested in it but had not really met with Jesus at that point.

When I was older, I left India and came to study (Master's Degree) in the UK and started my part-time work. One day, I met Sol and Anna who had visited my home village on holiday. The conversation moved to talking about Jesus and I explained to them that I read the Bible and then they invited me to their church.

At the time, I had no car and my boss was not happy with me taking Sundays off to go to church. But I had decided that I needed to get

to church, no matter what. I managed to get a bike and cycle the 13 miles to get to church. It took about an hour and a quarter to make the trip. Once I was there, I started making friends, getting into the community and enjoying being at church. It was great!

My boss still wasn't happy with me taking off the Sundays and asked me to leave. My attitude was; fine, I'll find something else. I left Bury St Edmund's and came to Thetford, but I didn't stop going to church. I didn't let my situation

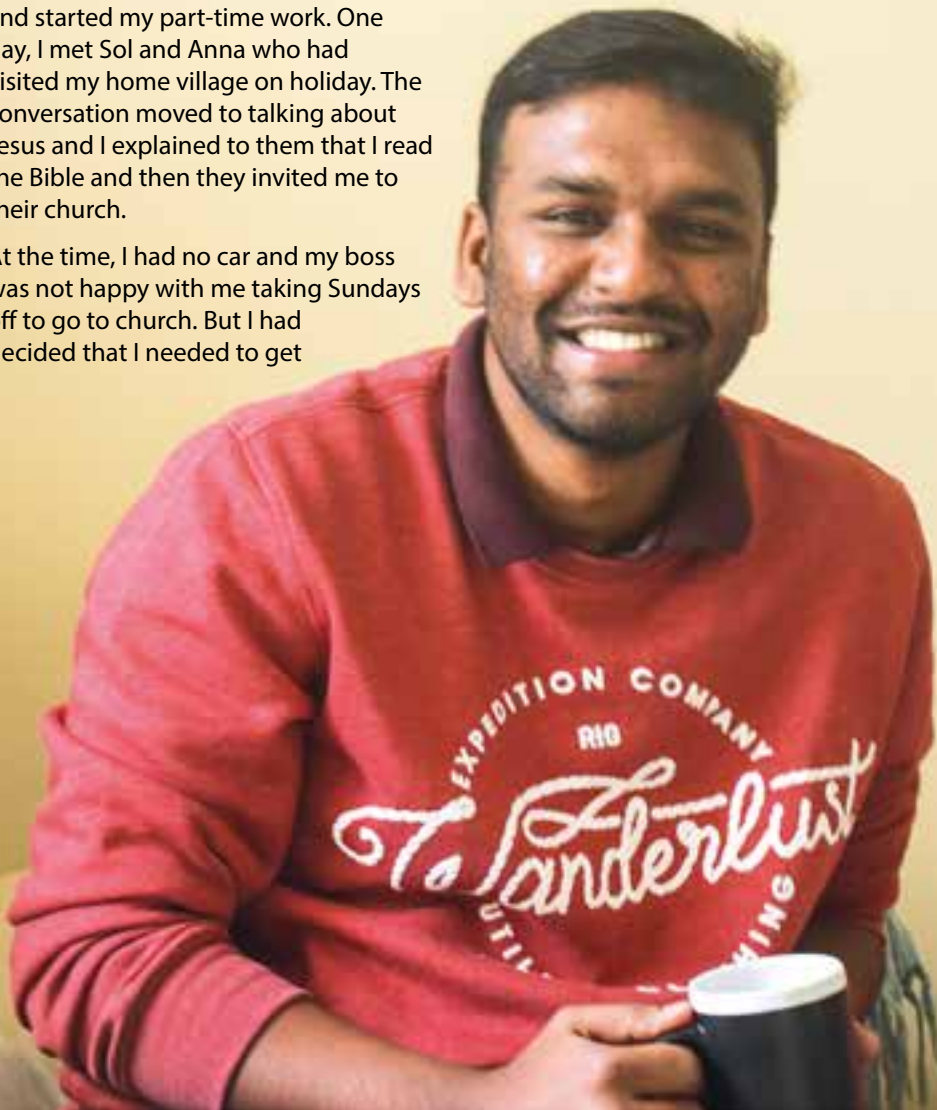
upset me, I just kept praying and praying to God that he would provide for me – not lots of money or anything, just what I needed.

Then I met Helen Jary (then Team Vicar in Thetford) and she introduced me to church community and to Nigel and Glenda who then agreed to take me in for two weeks while I got sorted. After six days staying with them, they came to me and said, "stay with us until you find your feet – however long that is." They treated me as a family member. Glenda now introduces me as her adopted nephew.

I now go to Hope Church with Nigel and Glenda and have met many new friends my own age. I have been welcomed into the family of the church and it is great. People smile at me as I walk around my neighbourhood and are friendly – I feel part of a community.

Recently, I got a phone call from a local delivery company in Thetford, offering me a job. I now have my own car and a job, and I've nearly finished studying. Even so, I would rather stay in Thetford than get a "better job" somewhere else because I love the community and the church so much. I am looking forward to my family coming over from India soon to see me.

“I didn't stop going to church. I didn't let my situation upset me, I just kept praying and praying to God that he would provide for me – not lots of money or anything, just what I needed.”





Beginning in Reader ministry

In September, four new Readers were Licensed and five who have recently transferred to this Diocese were welcomed in a Readers' Day Eucharist that highlights the importance of this essential ministry. The new four share some of their journey.

Gus Woodcock



"Whilst, over a number of years, friends both inside and outside church had observed that I'd 'make a good vicar', and I had certainly felt a pull toward some form of church ministry, I guess my uncertainty had found me waiting for that 'voice of God' moment to give

me the confidence to take a first step on my vocational journey. Or better still, a letter in the post from God simply saying 'yes, I do mean you!' But when I attended a 'LifeCalling' day (which I highly recommend, by the way) it was suggested to me that all those voices around me had the same discernment and affirmation as getting a Saul-like thunderbolt from above.

"Training has been a challenge, both in terms of volume of work and the challenging of some of my own views and beliefs, but the teaching staff have been tremendous. Working alongside other students also makes the whole learning and formational experience more enjoyable and rewarding. With every Reader ministry being unique to itself, I am both excited and nervous about what God has in store for me as I take this new step.

"Although Forrest Gump might say that life (and maybe Reader ministry) is like a box of chocolates and 'you never know what you're gonna get', I know I can be confident that, whatever direction my Reader ministry takes me in, God will be right there beside me."

Fiona Tibbitt



"About eight years before I started training, a Reader at my church asked if I had considered it. I thought it was a ridiculous suggestion; there was no way I could stand up in front of people and speak!

"Over the next few years I became more involved with worship. I found this an incredible privilege, feeling so tangibly close to God. I could feel his Holy Spirit leading me, strengthening me. The stronger my faith became the more I wanted to share it with others. How could I help people to understand my faith, to feel God's love for themselves?

"I became an Authorised Worship Assistant (AWA) for our church and while I enjoyed the training, I didn't feel it was enough for what I was being called to do by God. Through many hours of prayer and discussion with my Vocations Advisor, my path became very clear: Reader ministry.

"I work as a Business Manager in a Church of England Primary School which has strong links with my church. I was where God wanted me to be and through Reader ministry, I would be better equipped to share my faith with those I work with.

"Reader training has been a wonderful journey; hard work but so fulfilling. It has given me a better understanding of Scripture and built my confidence so that through the grace of God I can now stand and preach. I have met so many amazing people along the way and made lifelong friends. I look forward to finding out what the next steps of my journey with Christ will be."

Helen Grogutt



"When I wrote my review at the end of my first three years as an AWA, Bishop Alan replied to thank me for thoroughly embracing the role and to ask if I had considered further ministry. I was quite excited by this prospect. Urged on by close friends who told me that I would make a good Reader, I began the process leading to application and selection.

"It hasn't been easy, fitting in training with a full-time job and care of my elderly parents, but I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience especially the opportunities to learn and worship with the ERM community, forming close friendships with both Ordinands and Trainee Readers. I have learnt an enormous amount and gathered a huge collection of books still to be read, but then initial training is really just the beginning of the journey.

"I have found a new confidence in sharing my faith. Now, rather than seeing my job as getting in the way of my serving God, I see my job as very much part of my ministry in which I can live out my faith and provide pastoral support for children, their families and staff. After all God's love is everywhere. I very much look forward to continuing to serve the community in Rackheath, Salhouse, The Plumsteads and Witton and to whatever other doors God may open for me."

Lesley Cox



"As I approached retirement from full-time teaching, I arranged a meeting with my incumbent to consider how I might become more involved in serving my local church. A few days prior to our meeting she received a letter from the

Diocese about recommending people for reader ministry. Praying together about this, we both felt that the letter described some of the ways in which I might be called to serve, so I contacted a vocations adviser and was recommended for training.

"Having completed my training during our subsequent vacancy, I have had many practical opportunities for beginning to develop ministry here, in particular leading café church. It is difficult to summarise all the ways in which my spiritual awareness, academic understanding and personal formation have been promoted through training with ERM but suffice to say it has certainly been a journey worth undertaking. I look forward to serving in the Tas Valley Team Ministry more fully alongside my fellow pilgrims on this life-changing journey."

Might God be calling you to Reader ministry?

If you think you may be interested in finding out more about Reader ministry, take a look at the Diocese of Norwich website on how to become a Reader and talk to others in your church community, including your vicar.



Newly Licensed Readers:

Lesley Cox, serving in the Tas Valley Team Ministry Benefice; Helen Grogutt, serving in the Great & Little Plumstead, Rackheath with Salhouse & Witton Benefice; Fiona Tibbitt, serving in the Aylsham & District Team Ministry Benefice; Gus Woodcock, serving in the Lakenham Group (St John & Tuckswood) Benefice

Readers Welcomed:

Janice Cruse, serving in the Diss Team Ministry Benefice; Joy Fernando, serving in The Fountain of Life Benefice; Martin Purnell, serving in the Gaywood Benefice; Emma Sivyler, serving in the Flegg Group (Martham) Benefice; Veronica Mowat, serving in the Wroxham Benefice



Valuing New Year's Resolutions

By Andy Bryant

© Paul Hurst

You have a glass in your hand and the chimes for midnight have begun. At the first strike of midnight you all raise your glasses and silently make your New Year's Resolutions. This year it will be different; this year you will change. By the end of the first day of January your new year resolve is looking a little fragile and by the end of the first week you know it is not going to happen. Ah well, you reassure yourself, there is always next year.

New Year's Resolutions: so easily become the thing of jokes but they can be something precious, even life changing. They represent our desire to turn things around, to be able to begin again, to make this new year different, better than the year we are leaving behind.

Beginning again is an essential part of the Christian journey. The dawn of each new day is a chance to start afresh. Each time we join in the words of the Confession in church, and hear the Absolution spoken, it is the gift of being allowed to start again. Kneeling at the

altar rail and, with hands out-stretched receiving the Body and Blood of our Lord and Saviour, is the opportunity to begin anew. Each rising from the altar rail can be a renewal of our desire to walk the path differently.

For those less schooled in the rhythms of the church, New Year's Resolutions can be their own sacramental moment. We need to find ways to give value and significance to this widely shared desire to both reflect on the old year and to make a commitment to do it differently in the new year.

At Norwich Cathedral we encourage those wanting to make New Year's Resolutions to come into the building on New Year's Eve. We provide cards for people to write their resolutions, and an envelope to seal the card in so that it remains confidential to them. Then they are invited to place the envelope in the crib, in a basket beside the image of the infant Christ.

A member of our mission team is present to encourage visitors to engage with this

idea and if, appropriate, talk with them about their reflections on the year that is passing and the year that is arriving, and maybe pray with them. Candles are also available for those who wish to light a candle before the manger scene.

We also offer the option of posting their resolution back to them three months into the new year to remind and re-affirm them in what they have pledged. We also tell them that all the resolutions will be offered up at our Midday Eucharist on New Year's Day, asking God to help them keep their pledge.

It is clear that people value this opportunity to make more of their New Year's Resolution. In a gentle way it takes seriously their desire to change, to do things differently, to make a fresh start. It is our witness to the wonderful grace of God.


NORWICH
CATHEDRAL

A fresh start at Emmaus:

Janine's story

I have struggled with alcohol for over 30 years. I first started drinking at 17 but that was just socially and at weekends. At 21, I got into a relationship that became violent and I started to rely on alcohol for confidence to see him. I got out of that relationship after nine months, but the drinking continued.

At 25, I had my first child, and went on to have two more children. Two of them are now in their 20s and my youngest is 14. I found it easy to stay clean and sober while pregnant and breast-feeding, I didn't even think of drinking at all, but I always went back to it.

I was a single mother for 19-odd years, drinking and doing a lot of drugs throughout that time. From 2012, I did a diploma in counselling, completed a two-year Foundation Degree, and won a trophy for the most outstanding student on an access to higher education course. I was doing well considering I was in a bad place emotionally and mentally, but I became homeless and couldn't finish the final year.

Eventually I moved into a supported housing project in the countryside and got help. My support worker there was amazing, and after she had seen how much I enjoyed a project to restore an old greenhouse and how it had helped me to not drink, she suggested I think about finding work.

I was terrified: I have a history of being bullied in workplace environments, as well as in social situations and within my family. I wasn't sure I could cope and didn't have the confidence. Then I found out about Emmaus Norfolk & Waveney, and moved here in March 2019.

I mainly work in Emmaus House sorting clothing and bric-a-brac donations and

talking to customers. It makes me feel like I have a purpose, keeps me busy, and makes the day go quick. The best part is knowing that working isn't just helping me – it helps the other companions and the community too, which is what makes it meaningful.

The environment of Emmaus is amazing too. The staff and other companions are extremely supportive. It is more than just a place to live. We all eat together, both staff and companions, and Eamon, who is another companion at Emmaus, cooks amazing food which really brings everyone together.

Since being here, Emmaus has helped me get on a drug and alcohol programme in Norwich and I'm over three months sober. I have also been meeting with Stacey from Heart of the Matter who visits the community to have sessions with companions. She helps me feel valued.

Now that I am settled in at Emmaus, I want to continue rebuilding trust with my children who put up with a lot over the years. There was never a big argument, but they were frustrated, upset and disappointed in what I was doing, and I understand that. I now have two grandchildren too and was so excited to buy them each a present instead of spending my money on alcohol.

I know at Emmaus I will have the stability and the time to re-establish myself as a new person.

“The best part is knowing that working isn't just helping me – it helps the other companions and the community too, which is what makes it meaningful.”



emmaus
Norfolk & Waveney

To find out more about how you can support the work of Emmaus Norfolk & Waveney and help to make a difference to the lives of people who have experienced homelessness, please visit emmaus.org.uk/norfolk-waveney

with: a new youth prayer community at the convent

James Fawcett is part of a group of Christians who work with young people that have a “crazy story” about taking over a convent in Norfolk. He shares this exciting new beginning at a venue familiar to many Magazine readers.

I was born in the Norfolk and Norwich and have spent over 20 years of my life in Norfolk, with family roots and history and obviously a deep love for the county.

All over the UK there are these beautiful, historical, prayer-soaked buildings that have housed religious communities for years. One such site, called All Hallows, is in the tiny Norfolk village of Ditchingham. The place has this amazing heritage. For a century and a

half All Hallows has been home to a life of prayer, community and service. The work of the sisters over the last 150 years started work programmes, a school, a hospital and much more. Interestingly, working with young people has always been central to what's gone on there.

Over the last 15 or so years, due to the dwindling number of the sisters, the site just became too big for them and parts of it have been given away to house a Christian conference centre and a project

working with homeless people. What remained was a big, 30-bedroom convent house, the massive chapel and three other detached houses.

And so, the remaining sisters came to an incredibly brave and generous decision – to give the rest of the site away and continue the life of the community together offsite. They launched what was basically a competition, searching for a vision for the future of this site and invited ideas.





“Everything that happens on site at All Hallows is going to be done “with” young people.”

We, a group of youth workers, applied with a simple idea, to carry on the work of All Hallows, to reimagine community, prayer and service, with young people at the heart of it. We had to outline our vision, create business plans, risk assessments; all the things we hate about youth work!

Eventually we ended up in what can only be described as a ‘Dragon’s Den’ style room, pitching our idea to a bishop, two nuns and various other interested parties, missing only the giant stacks of cash by everyone’s seats.

On the way home we got a phone call saying we’d won. There was screaming, tears were almost shed. And then along came a realisation; this fun project we’ve been doing in our spare time with no real thought that it could amount to anything was about to take over our lives.

Twelve months later, and it has, but in all the right ways. In fact, it’s been quite an odd year. We’ve quit jobs, had endorsements from Archbishops, found priceless bits of church history and abandoned mobility scooters around the site, laughed at jokes with a monk and taken ownership of a tractor known as “Big Red”.

We want to create a space for young people to pray. A space for those who work with and care about young people to pray for and with them. We want to create a community of people committed to living a life of prayer for young people, some of them living in this mad convent we’ve been given, but others dispersed around the country.

We want to create a retreat space that is specifically for and tailored to those who work with young people. We want to

create a retreat centre for young people to come away to and pray, to engage in spiritual practices, for digital detoxes, for time with nature, for time with each other, for time with God.

And we want to create a way for young people to continue that journey with Jesus after they leave. That word ‘With’ has become really important to us. It encapsulates a lot of what we’re about. We’re done with doing stuff “to” young people, or creating things “for” young people. Everything that happens on site at All Hallows is going to be done “with” young people. So that’s who we are. We are With. Here’s what we’re going to do:

- **WITH: Community**, a body of Christians living on site and beyond, dedicated to a rule of life and prayer, with a shared commitment to serving young people.
 - **WITH: Retreat**. A retreat centre facilitated by the community, where young people, and those who work with them, will come for single and multi-day retreats to receive spiritual nourishment, explore their relationship with God in engaging and creative ways, and improve their physical and mental wellbeing, learning new skills and reclaiming old ones that will enable them continue in their life of faith for years to come.
 - **WITH: Online**. An online reflection of the rule of life in the form of an app, which will connect the physical With community with a wider digital community, enabling those who have been on retreats or aren’t able to be present at the site to follow the With prayer rhythms remotely.
- We have no desire to reinvent the wheel – this whole project is testament to that – we will be looking to work with many others who work with young people in complementary ways across the whole area to create the best possible opportunities for young people.
- It will take time. A lot of work needs to be done to the site to make it a safe, welcoming space for young people. We need to figure out the dynamics of the community and rule of life that we’re inviting people into. With these things in mind, we’re welcoming the community on site from September 2020 and opening the doors for young people from January 2021.
- Here’s the thing – we want you involved. We’re not an existing youth work charity. We’re just a few mates who know each other through the world of youth ministry, and our vision for With is that it’s reflective of that community. Please:
- Pray for us – we really need it. Sign-up to our newsletter for latest prayer points. **www.bewith.community**
 - Pray with us – we’re looking for people to join our community and pray with us for young people, on site or beyond. Get in touch at **hello@bewith.community**
 - If you’re excited by the idea of bringing young people on site for a retreat, get in touch now and we can pencil you in!
 - And the awkward bit – we need money. We’ve been hugely blessed to be given this site rent free, but the place needs quite a bit of love to get it up to scratch. That’s why we’ve launched a crowdfunding campaign. Whatever you, your friends, your parents, your PCCs can give, would be hugely appreciated. **bewith.community/donate**



CAP – the art of Budget. Save. Spend.



New beginnings; sometimes they are a total and liberating fresh start, sometimes they are about re-evaluation, changing tack and heading in a new direction. Anna Main looks at a Christian scheme enabling young people to take control of their finances and avoid falling into the debt trap.



National charity Christians Against Poverty (CAP) witnesses the whole spectrum of new beginnings from working to support households to become debt-free, to partnering with churches to train CAP Money Coaches who can deliver courses to educate people in the practical skills for budgeting, saving and spending.

In Autumn 2017 over 30 individuals trained as coaches with the specific aim of delivering the CAP Money Kids course, and steadily over the past 20 months courses have been run by volunteers in a variety of locations and contexts across the Diocese.

Cub Scouts is all about equipping children with life skills as well as having fun. That's one reason Liz Daves, Akela of 1st Aylsham Cubs, invited Jonathan and Anna from the Children, Youth & Families team to deliver the CAP Money Kids course with her pack.

Liz says, "It's effective because the Cubs had to do all the thinking; discovering what a budget is and how to create one. How can we generate income for ourselves and then balance that with our expenditure? All of this was explored in two 90-minute sessions using games, quizzes and visual clues.

"The overall effect was that the Cubs started to realise that there's a connection between income, expenditure and avoiding debt. Following the course one of the Cubs, Leeland, told me, 'I got £50 for my birthday and instead of spending it all on sweets I am going to save some of it instead'. It's a great course and perfect for a group of 8 to 10-year-olds. One of my Cub leaders, Sarah, expressed appreciation too: 'The course has been so good, it should really be taught in schools.'"



And that was the inspiration of one headteacher after hearing about CAP Money Kids at a headteachers' induction day. Suzanne Halliwell, Headteacher at Garboldisham Church Primary School, felt it would be invaluable for her Year 6 children to experience the course in preparation for going up to high school and the new challenges of having to self-manage lunch money, bus fares or other expenses.



looks at how to manage student finance based on receiving lump sums at the beginning of term”, explains Steph.

“Completing the budget spreadsheets, it dawned on the pupils that the student maintenance loan really is just a maintenance loan. Having paid rent and food it leaves no slack for extras which must be gained through sourcing additional income. A former pupil just finishing her third year at university came in and was interviewed, sharing insights such as, ‘If I had known before uni what I know now, I would never have had the overdraft facility. I could have managed my money differently and avoided putting myself under additional stress.’”

It is positive to see these young people engaging in the important subject of money management and recognising its value, together with learning life skills to help them successfully manage their own finances as they begin to step out into greater independence.

Peter Smith, PCC Governor at the school (and retired railwayman!) sat in on one of the sessions in June. “This was the first of two Fridays during which Steph from Integrate Youth For Christ (YFC) and Jonathan from the Diocese of Norwich led the children through many aspects of money – why you need it, how you earn it, how you spend it and importantly, how you can avoid debt and what to do if you are in debt.

“The class was split in to three teams with points awarded for participation and answers. I feel that this was an important topic, covered sympathetically and with enthusiasm by the team. My only personal regret being that, when going through the possible areas of employment (income), nobody wants to be a train driver anymore. How the generations change!”

Steph Richardson, Director of Integrate YFC, delivered the course and observed, “The responses from the pupils were thought-provoking. It was interesting seeing how different pupils came to the fore, and how their enjoyment of the activities evoked responses in them. One pupil who experiences difficulties at school was able to grasp the idea of being in work and how he would have to manage his money in the future.

“It was nice to be able to talk about generosity and compassion as part of the course and see that linked to some

of the Christian Values of the school and to another project some of the pupils had done looking at issues of poverty in developing countries.”

Alice Rickatson was one of the pupils who participated: “The activities were very entertaining! We had to put together a budget holiday with a set amount of things you could do, and the aim was to try and not go over budget. We thought about what was important and not so important to spend money on. Overall it was a brilliant experience and taught me a good lesson for the future.”

Learning to take positive control of your finances is a key element of successful independent living and yet something that many people find hard, which was why Integrate YFC – who also work in Diss Sixth Form running an informal mentoring programme – decided to offer a CAP Money Students course.

Steph and Daniel, Integrate YFC workers, had noticed the amount of stress young people face around exam results and their feelings about how they will manage going to university, so they offered to run the course. The school agreed to promote it and 12 pupils optionally signed up and paid a nominal cost of £10 to attend.

“Alongside the CAP principles of income, expenditure and budgeting, the student course is particularly good because it

“It was nice to be able to talk about generosity and compassion as part of the course and see that linked to some of the Christian Values of the school and to another project some of the pupils had done looking at issues of poverty in developing countries.”



For further information, contact
CYF Administrator Liz Dawes on
liz.dawes@dioceseofnorwich.org
01603 882335



You can help someone out of homelessness this Christmas

NMX19



Starting High School

Joel Capron (pictured below) began high school in September and in his own words he describes the experience of his first weeks as a new pupil in year 7.

At first, starting a new school with new friends, you're bound to have a few worries; first, you leave Year 6 at the top of the chain and before you know it, you're back at the bottom in Year 7.

"Making friends may be a concern, and is on the first day; however after a week or two you start to find that you have more friends than you first came with. The best way to make friends on the first day is to make a good impression of yourself or who you think you want to be.

"Also joining clubs is a great way to make friends. School clubs provide enjoyment and new friendships, some of them unexpected, with people that you know you have at least one thing in common with.

"Finding your way around school isn't too hard, although it depends on the size of the school. Some students can help if you see them, though don't go running around the school trying to find them. Or ask a teacher – just knock on the door of a classroom and ask for directions. At the end of class follow a classmate to the next lesson. At break time try and find your friends so you can agree on a meeting point for lunch and the following break.

"Be polite, it'll make a teacher's day if you show respect. It makes a teacher feel their effort was worth it and if you say "hi" in the corridor, most teachers will be kinder to you in lesson if you have that class that day, however, not

all teachers do it so don't expect this to happen! There's more variety of lessons than at primary school and the lessons get better the more you have them.

"I really enjoy being part of my church youth group. I was able to talk to others, including some who are older than me, about going to my high school and those who are going to different high schools and their experiences. They have given me advice and it is good to know I can talk to so many people."

For many young people like Joel, they can find ways to successfully manage this transition to high school, but for others it can be more challenging and as churches there are ways we can support young people during this critical changeover period.

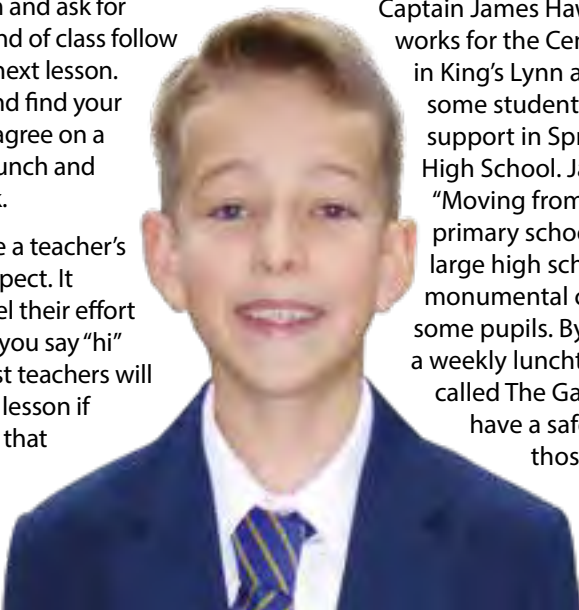
Matt Schwarzenberger, Transition Worker at Fountain of Life Church, Ashill, says, "Many churches are asking young people to start a new youth group at the same time as they begin high school. One important way in which we help reduce any undue pressure on our young people when they move up to high school is by transitioning them from kids' groups into our youth provision during Year 6."

Captain James Hawksworth works for the Centre of Mission in King's Lynn and provides some student pastoral support in Springwood High School. James says, "Moving from a small primary school to a very large high school can be a monumental challenge for some pupils. By setting up a weekly lunchtime group called The Games Club we have a safe place for those struggling to fit in; a



“I really enjoy being part of my church youth group. I was able to talk to others, including some who are older than me, about going to my high school and those who are going to different high schools and their experiences.”

place of peer to peer support and a way for individuals to find friendship through play. I can see the positive effect on pupils. Because they know we are championing them, these young people feel a sense of empowerment which is enabling them to take ownership for the group and, in turn, to support other pupils."



Welcome Bishop Graham

On Saturday 9 November, in a cathedral packed with 1,800 people the Rt Revd Graham Usher was enthroned as the seventy-second Bishop of Norwich in a service rich with symbolism.

Entering into a history that stretches back another four centuries beyond the foundation of this Diocese of Norwich, Bishop Graham was welcomed, placed into the Bishop's seat and anointed for ministry.

"I pray that finding such life in all its abundance in Jesus Christ will be what is 'normal for Norfolk'. Seeking to tell others how Christ has surprised and heartened us on the way will be 'normal for Norfolk'. As it will be to hear him saying, 'This is my body, broken for you,' every time bread is shared; 'This is my blood, shed for you' every time we raise a glass; 'normal for Norfolk' that every dining table, every kitchen table serves as Christ's altar."

from Bishop Graham's sermon





"Vision and gladness and hope are what this ancient place of prayer and all 650 churches in our Diocese stand for; treasure troves of their communities' memory and imagination, marking the making and breaking points of human existence. Fonts of living water stirring new life. Holy ground hallowing vows of marriage. Resting places where the mournful are held in God's gentle hands. Palaces of prayer and hospitals of healing, libraries of learning and cafés of chatter. Crucibles where salt is made, light is generated, and the prayer of silence meets the silence of prayer – all more than we can ever dare imagine."

from Bishop Graham's sermon



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The Good Vyker – Richard of Caister

By Biddy Collyer

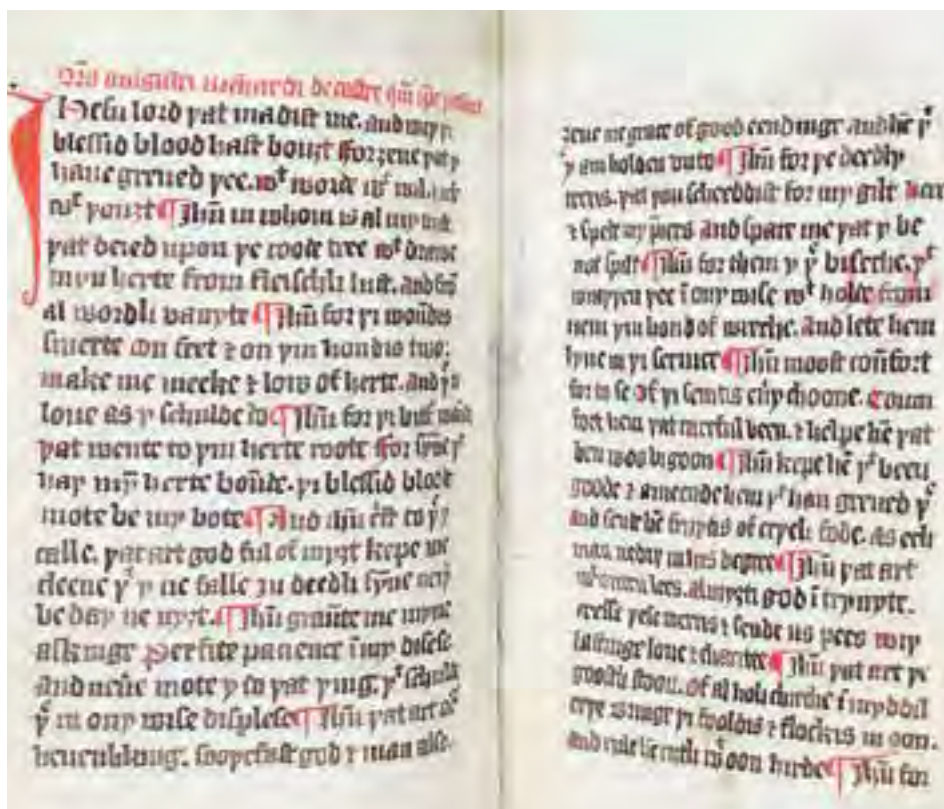
In my gloved hand, I held a lead medallion that was around six hundred years old. It looked strange. A man with a halo in medieval robes, raising aloft an oversized hand and standing in a pulpit with a dove hovering above. This medallion was one of many that had been found in south-east England, depicting the priest Richard Caister, vicar at St Stephen's Church in Norwich from 1402 to his death in 1420. The medallion was a pilgrim badge, signifying that its past owner had made the pilgrimage to his shrine in St Stephen's.

I was at the Museum of London and one of the curators had brought several up from their archives. Together with the late Catherine Tye, I was keen to see more of these artefacts. As the story of the "Good Vyker" unfolded, the church decided that his life and works should be commemorated and made known to a wider public.

Richard Caister was a younger contemporary of Mother Julian and he acted as confessor for Margery Kempe, the prophetic, peripatetic woman from King's Lynn, whom Richard also defended from a charge of heresy.

What marked Richard out from most of his contemporaries is that he preached in English rather than Latin. His concern was that the good news of Jesus should be understood by his parishioners in their vernacular rather than in a language of which they had little knowledge.

Not only that, but we can also see from his will that although he left money for the purchase of liturgical resources, the bulk was left for the poor of his parish.



Caister prayer

He was a man of and for the people. This is made clear from the only other piece of writing that remains, his metrical prayer of 14 stanzas. The first eight are to Jesus in the language of penitence, asking for forgiveness of sins. What is exciting is that the following six show him directing his readers to pray to Jesus for themselves, without the need for their priest to intercede.

In order to commemorate this godly man, St Stephen's have planned to celebrate him in 2020. As part of "Grant me Grace": The Richard Caister Project, there will be nine lectures on topics about medieval Norwich and its spirituality, lasting from February to October.

Richard of Caister Pilgrimage Badge



As well as an exhibition in the church, there will also be the inauguration of a medieval pilgrimage path around the city; a booklet of meditations based on a re-working of his prayer; workshops for children in conjunction with the Castle Museum; and a special evening with the Revd Dr Malcolm Guite, himself a poet and priest, like Richard.

To wind everything up, there will be an evening service in October featuring his metrical prayer together with songs and music written by present and past members of St Stephen's at which the Bishop of Norwich will preach.

Come and join us at St Stephen's to find out more about this amazing medieval priest.

www.ststephensnorwich.org/the-caister-project





Resources

General and seasonal resources and ideas to inform, inspire and enable.



New Mission Hub area helps signpost resources

The Diocese of Norwich's refreshed website will contain an area dedicated to highlighting practical resources, organisations, websites and more which support and enable churches in their mission.

Supported by the Celebrate stream of the Diocesan Mission Strategy 2021, the aim of this new website area is to make knowledge of existing mission resources and experiences of them easily accessible.

You can search and filter resources by theme, audience, age groups and type. So, for example, look for "dyslexic-friendly Bibles" or "Bibles for young people aged 12–18", or choose from categories such as mental health, poverty, the environment, evangelism, discipleship and worship. You will also be able to find seasonal recommendations such as resources for Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost.

"We would love to hear recommendations of good resources either you or your parish or benefice have used and found helpful," says Gordon Darley, Director of Marketing and Communications, "Please visit the website and let us know via the buttons on the page what resources you'd recommend to others. You can also leave comments against resources such as how you've found a particular resource helpful."

Visit www.DofN.org/missionhub



Forest Church: Earthed Perspectives on the Gospel

This new study from the Grove Books publishing stable explores the missional potential for Forest Church to speak to those who find their most profoundly spiritual moments outside, in nature. It examines the theology of connecting with nature, shares insights from practising groups and sets out practical advice on running a Forest Church.

"Our evangelistic language can often fail to do justice to the breadth of the good news of Christ, in particular humanity's care and stewardship of the natural world and the acknowledgment that we are part of a far wider created order."

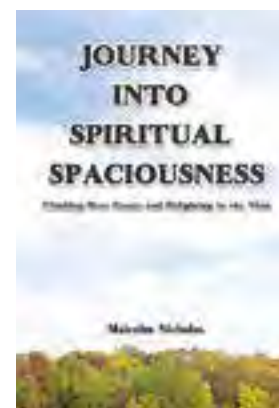
The booklet is authored by Cate Williams, Mission and Evangelism Officer for the Diocese of Gloucester. She co-facilitates Robinswood Forest Church and is a Fresh Expressions Associate. Price £3.95, available from www.grovebooks.co.uk **01223 464748**.



Journey into spiritual spaciousness

A new book by local author Malcolm Nicholas explores our relationship with the divine, our neighbour and the world using everyday starting points. "It's an invitation to risk setting aside the barriers that limit our spiritual vision," he explains. "It is for any who may find their religion constraining, who long for the space to be self with integrity, to question without condemnation, to journey in exploration rather than mere compliance, and to be excited by God's love."

Bishop Anthony Footitt, Honorary Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Norwich, says, "Malcolm writes in a direct and refreshing way. I thoroughly recommend this book as much for a seeker looking for signposts to the way, as for surer wayfarers needing some fresh insight in their journey." Price £10, available online and at local Christian bookshops.



Youth-focused lectionary card deck

A youth worker in the Diocese of Bristol has designed a pack of cards to encourage young people to learn about the lectionary. The "LecDeck" is a deck of 52 cards, each printed with a Bible reading selected from the principal service that week. Dan Jones, Youth and Children's Adviser said: "I am incredibly excited about the LecDeck. The deck of cards can be used at youth clubs, home groups, Christian Unions, families at home, personal study or given to young people to flick through in a pew. LecDeck costs £8 (free P&P). www.bristol.anglican.org **01749 685134**.



Finding God in everyday life

Everyday Faith is a Church of England discipleship campaign starting on Sunday 13 January 2020 (Plough Sunday). Reflections and prayers to help you find and follow God in everyday life will be available through campaign emails, an app, social media, audio and a booklet from Church House Publishing.

Journey with Victoria, a hairdresser, Mike, a police officer, and, on the buses, a couple called the Trenemans. These stories feature in a new booklet from LICC: *The one about... 8 stories about God in our everyday.*

Read about each story and watch the short animations to gain insight into how Victoria, Mike and the Trenemans have discovered more of God in their everyday lives. Through the stories and reflections, and by starting and ending each day with prayers of invitation and reflection, learn to find and share your own 'One about...' – to consider where God is in your everyday life.

www.churchofengland.org/everyday-faith



New mental health workshop for churches

The charity Livability has launched a new mental health workshop, Live Well Together, to help churches building a "community of well-being" for people living with mental illness. A spokesperson explained: "Live Well Together offers a whole-church approach, to build communities that can go beyond crisis support to flourish together day in and day out." www.livability.org.uk/resources/live-well-together
020 7452 2000



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Dersingham Benefice



A regular feature focusing on a benefice or parish in the Diocese of Norwich, written by someone from that community.

Nestled between the Sandringham Estate and the RSPB bird reserve at Snettisham is the Benefice of Dersingham, Anmer, Ingoldisthorpe and Shernborne. In the winter thousands of pink footed geese set off daily over the villages looking for food, returning at dusk: a truly wonderful spectacle and a delight of the locals. All four of our parish churches are open daily (or access available).

Although it's a beautiful area, there are challenges for many in the communities through which we serve; the Dersingham PCC are seeking to respond to some of these challenges as an expression of our faith in Jesus Christ.

Worship variety

Across the benefice there is a great breadth of worship styles. Anmer offers Prayer Book and, in summer months evensong – culminating with choral harvest evensong led by the Dersingham church adult choir.

Shernborne, a farming community, has a rich and long Christian heritage with a claim to fame as one of the original locations where the missionary, Saint Felix, shared the Gospel in 630AD.

Ingoldisthorpe has a beautiful church; the Church of England school next door has great pride in being associated with it, holding full church school services and being involved in the community.

Dersingham is blessed with many talented musicians and singers who offer their gifts in worship. The choir has been joined by other members of the community and congregation and sung at three "Big Sings"; at the one last Christmas they sang part of the Hallelujah Chorus.

We had two "new beginnings" last year, as both a junior choir and a youth worship band called Blaze were started. They both offer opportunities for the young people of the worshipping community to grow in leading worship, and we pray for an exciting future.

The desire to encourage growth through worship bore fruit in the introduction of the accessible contemporary worship, "The Gathering", which offers another string to the bow of the worship styles available. Combined services during the year include Harvest, Mothering Sunday and special celebration occasions that blend organ, choral, contemporary and accessible worship.

The Gathering contemporary worship also offers children's teaching in different groups. Full immersion baptism has now taken place for the first time in church following on from an Alpha course, with more to follow. It is a team effort in the benefice and so many people offer their gifts and skills in a huge variety of ways sustained by invaluable prayer support.

Children and young people

Little Nippers, a Baby and Toddler group was started three years ago, initially from an initiative called "Tea and Tissues". Working with the schools, we invited parents who were dropping off their little ones to school for the first day an opportunity to come and talk to parents and grandparents who had been there before over a cup of tea and cake where tissues were in large supply!

This was the springboard for the group, which quickly reached capacity and continues to have a waiting list. The group meets in the warm St Nicholas Church, with action Bible stories and prayers. There are lots of toys to play with, and during the popular snack time all the children sit together at a long table to eat, the youngest in a row of high chairs.



“In the winter thousands of pink footed geese set off daily over the villages looking for food, returning at dusk: a truly wonderful spectacle and a delight of the locals.”

Jesus' instruction, "Let the children come to me", has been a big encouragement.

In early teen years young people have many pressures to live through and identity issues to face in a challenging environment where to be Christian is not easy. A youth group was started as a response to the numbers of young people coming to church for worship. This youth group has the Bible at its centre, and also offers an opportunity to meet with others of their own age. The group enjoy visual Bible study, often using Christian bands and their music videos ('Unspoken' and 'For King and Country') which have become an integral part of the weekly times together. The group chose the name "Elevation" which works on many levels!

Festivals

We will have our sixteenth Christmas Tree Festival this year from 6 to 8 December. The real trees are decorated by various groups and societies within the village. Another delight of the festival is the firm favourite; the annual concert by the Bilton Silver Band, a show band from Rugby. Flower Festivals happen each year in July: members of local flower groups join us to enable a

wonderful display of flowers in our church concluded by a new favourite, a "Hymns and Pimms" service.

Baby basics

A local expression of a national Christian charity, Baby Basics West Norfolk, works out of the church in Dersingham. Volunteers help vulnerable mothers in poverty; those who may be homeless or in financial difficulties, even if only temporarily; asylum seekers; and those fleeing domestic violence and trafficking. Lovely Moses baskets, given to provide a safe bed to sleep in, are packed full of essentials such as nappies, wipes, maternity pads, as well as blankets, towels and baby clothes from newborn to three months. For some, these are the only items they may have for their baby. Baby Basics shows God's love in action and all the baskets are prayed over. The team work with, and support, midwives, health visitors, social workers and family support workers.

Looking ahead

We are seeking to respond actively to the increasing impact of dementia in our communities and are hoping to become a Dementia Friendly Church. Plans are also

progressing well at improving the facilities for worship and welcome: accessibility and flexibility for people of differing ages, and facing physical or mental challenges.

St Felix Festival May 2020

The four churches of the Dersingham Benefice launch the festival on Saturday 16 May with a talk and discussion by Dr Rebecca Pinner, exploring the history and achievements of St Felix and the historical context of his mission and ministry. There will also be a lecture by Aidan Heart, an artist who paints sacred subjects and creates iconography, and who has recently completed a bespoke screen painting in Anmer church. Paper raft racing will be held on the River Babingley and a prayer walk to the ruins of St Felix church in Babingley. The Bishop of Norwich will be leading a special thanksgiving service for one of his missionary predecessors – the first Bishop of the East Angles! More information at: www.stnicholasdersingham.org.uk

Out & About

happenings across the Diocese

A round-up of some of the parish activities over the past few months.
Do send in your photos to news@dioceseofnorwich.org or
tag  @dioceseofnorwich  @DioceseNorwich  @dioceseofnorwich

Mautby footpath launch

As part of the Paston600 project, Dr Rob Knee launched the Paston Pathways walk from Mautby Church to Caister Castle in August. Margaret Paston lived the early and latter years of her life at Mautby and is buried at the Church. Visitors will find maps and information on the Paston family are available at the Church.



Mag with Mag up high

After attending the Mothers' Union national AGM in Portsmouth, members from Diocese of Norwich took *The Magazine* up 110 m to read in the Spinnaker Tower Sky Garden. Thanks to Marguerite for posing with her copy. Do share your far-flung *Magazine*-reading pics!

From ASHS to anywhere

A previous student of Archbishop Sancroft Highschool has been posted to The Band of the Coldstream Guards in London. Her first engagement was the state opening of parliament, a big step up from performing at the Diocese of Norwich tent at the Royal Show some years previously! Congratulations Georgia!





Little Barningham Pop-up Pub

The last pub closed its doors decades ago, but the drinks were flowing in Little Barningham once again as the parish church hosted a Pop-Up Pub evening for the whole community. "It was fantastic to see everyone here enjoying a night out, a great pint, and a real laugh. We can't wait to do it again in the future," said Revd Jack Branford.



Earth chapel at St Peter Mancroft

"We were delighted that the Bishop of Norwich dedicated our new Earth Chapel," said The Revd Edward Carter. "Our hope is that it will enable local people to focus quietly on the part they can play in caring for the earth: taking responsibility to live creatively and sustainably in a world of finite resources."



Gorleston Church celebrates ten years of drop-in lunch

St Mary Magdalene celebrated ten years of its weekly drop-in lunch, The Bridge, serving up to 70 people a free three-course meal each week. Carl says, "I first came to The Bridge for food and support with my housing a year ago. I come every week for food and some company."

Mothers' Union festival service

"What a wonderful morning at Norwich Cathedral as we gathered for the Mothers' Union Diocese of Norwich annual festival service!" exclaimed their Chaplain, the Revd Andrew Whitehead. "We made and then broke paper chains to symbolise our resolve to break the sin of modern slavery."



All Saints Chedgrave eco-warriors

Over 70 people came to an eco-café at the regular Xpressions Café with exhibitions and prayer prompts; give-and-take clothing exchange; human resource library; discussion and debate. This was followed by vegan and vegetarian food to taste, which spilled into an impromptu fun lunch. The event enabled the local church and its community to engage on environmental issues.





News in brief

Updates from across the Diocese

Diocese to launch refreshed website

The Diocese of Norwich will soon be launching a new website aimed at parishes and those who hold key roles in the church. "At six years old (technically that's old!) the previous site was creaking with the weight of documents and pages, and it had become particularly hard to quickly and easily find information given the poor search functionality," explains Gordon Darley, Director of Marketing & Communications.

"The new site changes that with an excellent search function at its heart and clearer and simplified navigation. New content has been added and existing content reviewed, rewritten and refreshed.

"As well as highlighting training and learning opportunities across the Diocese, it features a new area called the Mission Hub, which signposts



resources for mission: everything from evangelism, discipleship and worship to topical resources on mental health, poverty and the environment.

"Please take a look at www.dioceseofnorwich.org and let us know what you think!"

Lay Ministry Course highly praised

Church of England reviewers have praised the Diocese of Norwich course which trains Readers.

Four reviewers visited the Diocese in May to see the Reader training course and meet students. They also reviewed the Eastern Region Ministry Course which provides most of the academic content for Reader training and the Reader training course in the Diocese of Ely. All three courses were rated highly.

The reviewers were impressed by the high standards of teaching and learning and especially by the sense of community and support on all three courses. They singled out the Reader training course in Norwich for the way in which it gives students opportunities to attend a summer school and for the support given to students in training.

The Director of the Reader training course, the Revd Charles Read, said: "This glowing commendation of the course reflects the hard work put in by our volunteer staff who help our students through their studies. It also reflects the high value we place in this Diocese on well-resourced lay ministry."



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: 18–25 Jan

Using the story from scripture of the shipwreck of St Paul on the island of Malta, the materials for this year's week of prayer focus on "Unusual Kindness" – showing hospitality. The full set of resources can be found at www.ctbi.org.uk/weekofprayer

Locally, Norwich Cathedral will be hosting the annual service on Thursday 23 January from 10am to 4pm in St Luke's Chapel. Fifteen-minute slots are shared by churches in Greater Norwich from across the denominations and traditions and supported by the Ecumenical Canons.

Everyone is welcome to join in praying for Christian Unity at any time during the day. If you are a church and would like to take one of the slots, please get in contact with Catherine Howe, County Ecumenical Officer: catherine.howe@dioceseofnorwich.org



New PlayVan worker

Bethany Whitnall is the new worker for PlayVan, the Diocese of Norwich project that supports and encourages sustainable playgroups in rural areas.



"I am really enjoying being out and about all over rural Norfolk in the PlayVan, meeting little ones and their parents and carers in churches, the Cathedral, schools, village halls and even on the beach!" says Bethany. "Being able to chat to people out in the community about Christianity is a real highlight for me. I am very excited for the launch of several new PlayVan groups over the coming months – especially our collaboration with Norfolk Wildlife Trust in Cley. When I'm not at work, you will find me exploring Norfolk with my husband and our dog, Betty the Beagle!"

WHAT'S ON

Highlights of events and learning opportunities across the Diocese December 2019 – February 2020

For more head to www.DofN.org/events

DECEMBER

Advent Carol Service

Sun 1 Dec | 6pm

Address: All Saints, Lime Kiln Lane, Upper Sheringham NR26 8AE
Don't miss this ever-popular start to the Advent Season with the Kelling Consort, led by the Revd Angela Dugdale, MBE.

Admission: Free. Contact: Sue Morton, 01263 826078, suejmorton@gmail.com

Christmas Concerts

Wed 4 Dec & Thur 5 Dec | 7pm each day

Address: St John's, Horning Road, Hoveton, Norwich, NR12 8NY
Hayley Moss (Soprano) and Benjamin Lake (Tenor) come to delight us with show songs and classical songs this Christmas.

Admission: £12.50. Contact: Sarah Tomkins, 01692 630892, sarahetomkins@btopenworld.com

St Nicholas Church Christmas Tree Festival

Fri 6 Dec - Sun 8 Dec | 10am - 5pm Fri and Sat, 12 - 5pm on Sun

Address: St Nicholas Church, Manor Road, Dersingham, PE31 6LN
A family-fun weekend of Christmas trees, festive food, and music filling St Nicholas Church.

Admission: Free. Contact: Pauline Martin, 01485 544561, secretary@stnicholas.org.uk



Christmas Evening

Fri 6 Dec | 6.30pm

Address: St Peter & St Paul's, Main Road / Mill Road, Mautby NR29 3JA
Seasonal evening of rhymes, readings and carols. Commence your Christmas celebrations by joining us for our popular event. Admission includes glass of wine or fruit juice and festive fare.

Admission: £5 Adults, £2 Children.
Contact: Shirley Travis, 01493 732746 shirleyat9@btinternet.com

In Dulci Jubilo - A Christmas Celebration

Sat 7 Dec | 7.30pm

Address: The Central Baptist Church, Duke Street, Norwich NR3 3AP
A Christmas Celebration by the Framingham Earl Singers which will include audience carols.
Admission: £10 in advance, £12 on the door, under 16s free. Contact: Sheila Spelman, 01603 663983, sheila.mcd54@gmail.com

Write for Rights Amnesty International

Sat 14 Dec | 10am - 3pm

Address: St Peter Mancroft, Hay Hill, Norwich NR2 1RD
Write a letter. Change a life. The Norwich Amnesty Group invites you to write a message of hope to people detained and ill-treated around the world.
Admission: Free. Contact: Joanna Kinnaird, info@norwichamnesty.org.uk

Cinderella – Walk Through the Story

Sat 14 Dec - Sun 15 Dec | 11am - 4pm Sat, 11am - 5pm Sun

Address: St Peter's, Wolferton, PE31 6HA
Find highlights of the Cinderella Story amongst the Christmas decorations as we invite you to walk round and follow the fairytale. Candles make the church quite magical once it gets dark!
Admission: Free. Contact: Mrs Jacqueline Candy, 01485 542625



Christmas Alive

Sat 14 Dec - Sun 15 Dec | 3pm - 6pm

Address: The Well Christian Centre, Swaffham Road, Ashill, Thetford IP25 7BT
Enjoy the sights, aromas and flavours of ancient Bethlehem! Wander through our atmospheric living nativity village. Then, come inside for an interactive musical performance of SCROOGE 're-worked'.
Admission: Free. Contact: Karen Gower, admin@folchurch.co.uk, 01760 441902
For tickets, email: registration@folchurch.co.uk

Trimingham Christmas Tree Festival

Sat 14 Dec - Fri 3 Jan | 10am - 3pm each day

Address: St John the Baptist, Church Street, Trimingham NR11 8EG
Come to see our delightful Christmas trees bedecking the church. On Saturday only there will be a chocolate tombola, mince pies, and mulled wine in the church and refreshments will be served in the Pilgrim Shelter nearby.
Admission: Free. Contact: Dot Bradley (after 6pm), 01263 833249

Bawdeswell Christmas Wreath Fair

Sat 14 Dec | 10am - 1pm

Address: All Saints, The Street, Bawdeswell, Dereham NR20 4UX
We will be selling Christmas wreaths made by the local Flower Club, and Christmas cakes and puddings made by one of the local farmer's wives. There are also local produce and craft stalls.
Admission: Free. Contact: Robin Taylor, robin.taylor@bawdeswell.net, 01362 688268



St. Mary's Singers Christmas Carol Concerts

Wed 18 Dec - Thu 19 Dec | 7.30pm

Address: St Mary the Virgin, The Street, Hemsby NR29 4EU

Choral and popular Christmas songs in a candle-lit church, with surprise special guests. Tickets include mulled wine and mince pies.

Admission: £6. Contact: Donna, 07860 136099, donna1970markwell@gmail.com; or Maureen, 01493 732493



'The Twelve Days of Christmas' Flower Festival

Wed 25 Dec - Mon 6 Jan | 11am - 3pm

Address: St Mary's, Church Road, Yelverton NR14 7PB

Over the 12 days of Christmas this small country church will be filled with flowers and themed arrangements in a riot of colour and joy.

Admission: Free. Contact: Mary Fewster, 01508 492059, m.fewster59@btinternet.com



JANUARY

Presence in Ministry

Wed 8 Jan | 9.30am - 3.30pm

Address: Norwich Cathedral, The Close, Norwich NR1 4DD

Join Stuart Reid and Keith James for this one-day workshop, to deepen your understanding and practice of presence in ministry using lessons from theatrical improvisation.

Admission: Free. Contact: Lesley Lofts, lesley.lofts@dioceseofnorwich.org, 01603 882338



NCCL: How are we saved?

Sat 18 Jan | 10am - 12.30pm

Address: Norwich Cathedral, The Close, Norwich NR1 4DD

This session will consider various Christian doctrines of Atonement, including a look at the Eucharist and sacrifice.

Admission: £10. Contact: NCCL Admin Team, NCCL@cathedral.org.uk, 01603 218443



Ecumenical Chain of Prayer for Christian Unity

Thur 23 Jan | 10am - 4pm

Address: Norwich Cathedral, The Close, Norwich NR1 4DD

Please join the Ecumenical Chain of Prayer for Christian Unity in St Luke's chapel. The theme this year is 'Unusual Kindness' and all denominations and traditions are very welcome.

Admission: Free. Contact: Catherine Howe, catherine.howe@dioceseofnorwich.org, 01603 270360

FEBRUARY

NCCL: Open faith

Sat 1 Feb, Sat 8 Feb & Sat 15 Feb | 10am - 12.30pm each day

Address: Norwich Cathedral, The Close, Norwich NR1 4DD

The belief of the Church: These three sessions will provide an introduction to the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (AD381), unpacking the content of the Creed and setting it in its historical and theological context.

Admission: £10 for one session, or £25 for all three booked together. Contact: NCCL Admin Team, 01603 218443, NCCL@cathedral.org.uk

At the Heart on the Edge

Wed 12 Feb | 10am

Address: St Peter Mancroft, Hay Hill, Norwich NR2 1RD

Exploring mission, sharing ideas, uncovering solutions and finding support; a day with Revd Dr Sam Wells and guests. Discussions on congregation, commerce, compassion, and culture.

Admission: Free. Contact: Keith James, keith.james@dioceseofnorwich.org, 01603 882339

Helping Churches in Times of Tragedy and Trauma

Tue 25 Feb | 9.30am - 4pm

Address: Norwich Cathedral, The Close, Norwich NR1 4DD

This workshop will explore the nature of trauma and its effect on lives and communities. It will also point to good practice, pastorally, practically and liturgically and deepen understanding of longer-term responses to shock-events, and the importance of ministerial support.

Admission: Free. Contact: Lesley Lofts, lesley.lofts@dioceseofnorwich.org, 01603 882338



SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday 16 May from 10am - 4pm

All are called!

Bishop Graham invites you to join him at Norwich Cathedral for a day of worship, reflection, workshops, and activities for all age groups as we think together about our call as Christians in God's world.

More details to follow.





Lent Appeal 2020

Driving forward mission in Papua New Guinea

By Joanna Fisher

The year is 1891; two missionaries land in Milne Bay Province, Papua New Guinea. Through their unique message of peace and love in Christ, the local warriors convert to Christianity, and then gift the plateau 1,000 feet above the sea where they have traditionally done battle. On this ground, the missionaries build a chapel made of bush materials and mark the start of the Anglican mission in Papua New Guinea. It is not easy; the nearest town is miles away across the sea, but they do not give up.

One morning, they awake to discover that one of the corner-posts of their bush chapel has sprouted. Quickly, they dismantle the chapel and begin to tend the post; which sends out roots and grows branches. The missionaries name it the Modawa Tree, so it becomes the symbol for growth and hope for the Church of England in Papua New Guinea.

Almost 130 years later, the mission in the Diocese of Dogura is now a thriving community of 1,000 people working together to further the message of the gospel. The sapling work of the missionaries has grown vigorously. They do, however, still face some of the same problems as their predecessors; particularly that of the distance to the nearest major town, Alotau.

Transport from the Dogura plateau to Alotau currently involves descending from

the plateau to a boat ride across the sea, then up to a two-hour wait for the “bus” – a truck from Awaiaima – which may not arrive at all. This situation makes it difficult to reach people or get supplies and is rapidly becoming untenable. Without a more reliable means of transportation, the Anglican mission in Dogura may have little choice but to uproot and move to a more accessible location – leaving the history, cathedral, and Modawa tree behind.

Through the Bishop’s Lent Appeal 2020, we want to enable the community of Dogura to remain on the site of their heritage and grow stronger; to continue their good work throughout their Diocese; and to reach essential supplies for themselves and those they serve. The Rt Revd Tennyson Bogar, Bishop of Dogura, has asked us to fund a car, a Landcruiser or similar, for use by the many vital staff who populate the plateau. “It is one of our most urgent needs,” he told Bishop Jonathan, on his recent visit.

Dogura is home to many public-serving institutions run by the church, including two schools, a hospital and most of the Diocese’s central administration. The high school there is one of only two church secondary schools in the country, and it attracts students from across Papua New Guinea. The hospital



treats a range of needs, from young mothers and paediatric illnesses to those suffering with tuberculosis.

Your generosity is vital to nurture the work of these places and make them flourish. With a car, the people of Dogura will be able to let their light shine before others, that they may see the good happening on the plateau and glorify God. They will spread roots across their Diocese and draw others into the life and light of Christ.



See over the page for website link and resources.

Support from your
church is needed for the
Bishop's Lent Appeal 2020

Your gifts will help provide a car
so the church in Dogura can
serve their local community

Request free resources for your church
at **www.dioceseofnorwich.org/lent**
or call **01603 880853**



Leaflets



Posters



Bookmarks



Jam Jar labels