

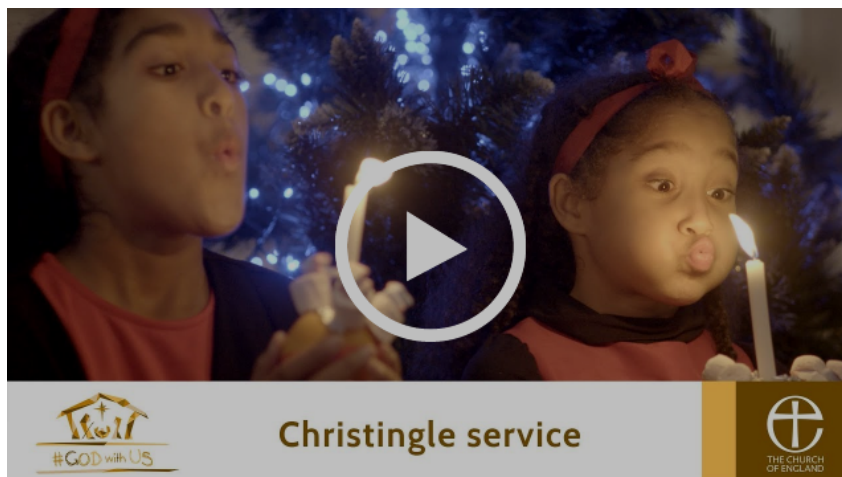
**Thursday 14 December**

Please let your congregations know that they can sign up to receive this newsletter [HERE](#). Please print this off or include key points in your newsletter for those who do not have email.

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## Growing in God

Find out what's happening across the diocese via our [Events Diary](#) and [Map](#). Add your own events via this [form](#).



Second of the Church of England's Christmas messages.

**#Godwithus**

A brief look at the wonderful things you are doing this Christmas. Keep an eye on our Facebook page (@cofesuffolk) for more of these updates.

**Bishop Mike praises volunteers helping the homeless**

The Bury Drop In Centre is based at the Trinity Methodist Church in Bury St Edmunds, and it helps people across the region with guests coming from Bury St Edmunds, Stowmarket, Sudbury, Haverhill - and beyond. The Centre prepares more than 130 meals weekly and welcomes more than 50 people at its sessions on Tuesday and Friday.

Bishop Mike visited the centre on 12 December and heard how volunteers are playing a major role in integrating neglected men and women back into society. Many of the Centre's guests have found accommodation and some have been given

jobs. Bishop Mike said: *"The Bury Drop In Centre is a wonderful example of Christians expressing their faith and the love of Jesus through practical service of those who are among the most vulnerable in the local community".*

Guests are given clothes, toiletries and food, and representatives from many organisations attend to give advice on numerous issues including sexual health and housing. Bury Council's Rough Sleeper Prevention Worker also attends to try to find them a place of safety in a hostel. Other projects guests can get involved in include the 'Street and Volunteer Choir' as well as art projects, all designed to raise guests' self esteem, build friendships and offer hope.

**Providing warmth in the cold**

For the last six years, the Ipswich Winter Night Shelter has worked with local churches, volunteers, community groups, services and supporters to provide a safe and supported



shelter during the three coldest months of the year.

They also provide guests with support to find accommodation: liaising with housing providers, attending housing interviews with guests, helping guests move in to their new accommodation, setting up and attending appointments to get specialist advice and helping with paperwork. As one guest says *"It's not just having a roof over your head, it's having staff to support you."*

If you would like to donate to either of these projects or find out more please visit [www.iwns.org.uk/donate/](http://www.iwns.org.uk/donate/) or <http://together.ourchurchweb.org.uk/stedmundsbury/bury-drop-in/burydropin/>

### The Advent Sleepout Challenge



Eight intrepid folk, including The Rector Simon Pitcher raised over a £1000 for the Church Urban Fund (CUF), by spending the night sleeping on the floor in the newly rededicated St Edmund's Church in Southwold. CUF helps marginalised people in our communities to transform their lives. One of the volunteers Jill Horne said *"Sleep eluded most but it was truly inspirational to sleep in our beautiful nave and be watched over by the angels suspended from our roof."*

### Rucksacks for the homeless



The 'Light Group' at St John the Baptist's Church in Saxmundham donate money each week in lieu of paying for tea and coffee. When deciding what to do with the tea money, Carol Cotton suggested supporting The Bus Shelter [www.thebusshelteripswich.co.uk](http://www.thebusshelteripswich.co.uk)

With the help of local shops in Saxmundham and Framlingham and the kindest of donors over 60 rucksacks have been filled with underwear, toiletries, food items and sleeping bags for the homeless in Ipswich and nearby areas.

Not so much feeding the 5,000 but helping keep the 60 warm: quite a miraculous return from a few teas and coffees!

### The life-sized 'Knitivity'



The 'Knit and Natter' group, who meet weekly at the Fairfield Centre in Aldeburgh, have knitted Joseph, Mary, the three Wise Men and of course, baby Jesus - all life sized!

The knitters have generously agreed that the 'Knitivity' can be used to raise funds for the church and for the work that it does. The joy of this project is that it is community based and has the potential to grow and involve others.

The 'Knitivity' is on display now in Aldeburgh Parish Church and visitors are very welcome.

Picture caption: The Revds Mark Lowther and Joanna Mabey in Aldeburgh church with the Knitivity. Picture by Sarah Lucy Brown EADT.

### On a similar theme...



83 teddies, knitted by the 'Knit and Natter' group of Exning parish, were blessed at St Etheldreda and St Phillip's Chapel, prior to being sent to Chita Primary School Zambia for every new child starting school in January.

### Experiencing Christmas outreach by Diane Grano

180 children in groups of 30 came to St Christopher's Church in Red Lodge over the course

of three days. The children brought some amazing and creative gifts to baby Jesus from teddy bears, gold and even a bottle of wine! Our volunteers were an incredible blessing, each one telling their part of our Saviour's story.

Volunteers from three different churches stepped in to support the outreach in Red Lodge. We are grateful to see the wall of the church building become invisible and the family of God serving with joy alongside each other. We also received resources, like a manger for Jesus, which was especially built and donated by a member of High Street Church in Isleham.

So many precious moments as you can imagine, when bringing the Gospel to little children. My favourite has to be the little boy of five who, on his way out of the Church, who announced "I am going to tell my mummy all about baby Jesus when I get home!"

## News from Kagara



Bishop Darlington's wife, Emelia, and others and others visited Ngara District prison.

Editha Jasson Mothers' Union (MU) worker says "Bwana Yesu asifiwe. Girls' kits were distributed to the women prisoners, where we shared the word of God, and prayed together. We also provided cooked food, toothpaste, toothbrushes, body oil, soap and clothes for young children. Thank you for your support because your donations helped to buy some items that we gave to these women. They were very happy to receive the gifts. May God bless you."

Picture caption: Lidia is a volunteer in the MU sewing room.

## Christians Against Poverty (CAP) - Rural Debt Centre

St John's the Baptist Church, Saxmundham  
Wednesday 10 January 7.00pm



An open meeting to talk about CAP, who operate through local debt centres. The meeting will look at the process of creating a Rural Debt Centre based in Saxmundham to service a large proportion of Suffolk (postcodes IP12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19).

Indebtedness is a hidden problem within our society today, and CAP is widely regarded as Britain's most effective debt management organisation. 91% of CAP clients respond that their experience with CAP is "life transforming". More information is available: [www.capuk.org](http://www.capuk.org).

The meeting will address how working in partnership with all Churches (all denominations) and others we can create this new service.

Would you, your church or your contacts be

willing to partner with us in this important ministry in East Suffolk?

If you are interested in attending this event please contact [stjohnsyncwork@talktalk.net](mailto:stjohnsyncwork@talktalk.net).

## Parish Giving Scheme



The Diocese has invested in the innovative national Parish Giving Scheme which aims to reduce the workload for parishes while increasing the giving potential. It is a tried and tested free resource to help your church members plan their giving and, where appropriate, do so tax efficiently.

Details of the scheme appear on our [website](http://www.parishgiving.org). Please come and find out more and hear presentations from members of the national team, representatives of parishes in Suffolk already running the scheme and Stewardship Advisors from dioceses that have used the scheme and seen parish income increase. To book please follow the links:

11 January 7.30pm St John's Church, Saxmundham  
<https://pgs-saxmundham.eventbrite.co.uk>

31 January 7.30pm Edmund Room, St Edmundsbury Cathedral  
<https://pgs-bse.eventbrite.co.uk>

20 February 20, 7.30pm Whitton Church Hall, Ipswich  
<https://pgs-ipswich.eventbrite.co.uk>

## Illuminate Youth Leader Ministry Training

The Mix, Stowmarket IP14 1BB  
Saturday 12 January 2018 9.15am to 12.30pm



A morning to give youth leaders and volunteers from across the Diocese a chance to learn new ways of youth ministry. There will be an opportunity to interact with those already working in these ministries, to network, resource and gain support in delivering youth work/ministry.

Our keynote speaker will be Dr Kate Middleton who is Assistant Pastor at Hitchin Christian Centre and a Director at The Mind and Soul Foundation.

Tickets are £8, to book please visit <https://cofesuffolk-illuminate.eventbrite.co.uk>

### Ministers as Teachers Course

Stowupland Church Hall, Church Road,  
Stowupland IP14 4BQ  
Tuesdays 9, 23 and 30 January, and 6 and 13 February 7.30 – 9.30pm



A course which aims to help ministers – lay or ordained – prepare and lead small groups effectively. Led by the Revd Barbara Gallagher, the six sessions explore learning in the Gospels and learning in Church; theories of, and obstacles to, learning; theories of faith development; what to consider when planning a group course; methods of Bible study; the use of published materials. There will be an opportunity to put this into practice through writing, and delivering a

small part of, a teaching session on a given topic.

IME1 training but open to clergy, Readers and LLMs. Contact [ruth.dennigan@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:ruth.dennigan@cofesuffolk.org) or 07468 474252 for more information about the course. Cost £20 (free of charge to trainee Readers), book at [ministers-as-teachers-2018.eventbrite.co.uk](https://ministers-as-teachers-2018.eventbrite.co.uk). If you are a minister (clergy, Reader or LLM), you may use your CMD grant and attend for free. More information from Lesley Steed at [lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org) or 01473 298510.

### Local Giving Advisor Training

St Nicholas Centre, Cutler Street, Ipswich IP1 1UQ  
5 and 12 February 2018 7.00pm to 9.00pm



An introduction to the role of Local Giving Advisor (LGA). LGAs work with clergy and PCCs to address issues of generous living. They are a vital part of the generous living and generous giving element of Growing in Depth.

This training will cover: Church finances, Stewardship, How to raise generosity in a parish, Using The Generous God, Generous People/Giving in Grace resources.

For more information please contact [graham.hedger@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:graham.hedger@cofesuffolk.org). This is a free event, please book on [Eventbrite](https://eventbrite).

### Building Online Success

St Nicholas Centre, Cutler Street, Ipswich IP1 1UQ  
Thursday 15 March, 10.00am to 4.00pm

- Do you manage the PCC Facebook page but not sure if you get the best out of it?
- Do you want to boost posts on Facebook but are not sure how?
- Do you think you should have an Instagram account but don't know where to start?
- Does your PCC website need an overhaul?



We are offering a one day workshop led by Amaris Cole, Content and Communications Manager in the National Church of England Digital team. Amaris heads the development of 'A Church Near You' and managed the social media content for the #Godwithus campaign.

This event will cover: social media, website content and key messaging with the aim of maximising your online presence. This is a hands-on learning session so please bring a laptop (to use with our free wifi). If your church has social media accounts already, please bring the log-on details with you! Offered to those working at any

level, as the team will work with you as much as possible during the session.

The event includes a light lunch and drinks. For more information please contact [leonie.ryle@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:leonie.ryle@cofesuffolk.org)

Spaces are limited to ensure the personal support is available, cost is £15. To book please visit <https://building-online-success.eventbrite.co.uk>. If you are a minister (clergy, Reader, LLM or Elder), you may use your CMD grant and attend for free. More information from Lesley Steed at [lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org) or 01473 298510.

## Committee members needed in L'Arche



L'Arche builds communities with people who have learning disabilities. The faith led group in Ipswich opened in 2006 offering a family home, where people live with their live-in assistants. They share day to day tasks, meals, family days, house meetings, celebrations and prayer.

L'Arche Ipswich is seeking volunteers and committee members to give their time and share their knowledge. They are particularly interested in those who have knowledge of property, housing, legal services and/or fundraising.

As well as being rewarding and fulfilling, assistants and volunteers often grow in confidence, make great memories and new friends. For those interested in joining the committee, meetings are normally held in the evenings in Ipswich. Previous charity work experience is not essential but an interest in L'Arche and its community is important. If you are interested or would like some more information, please contact Emily Nunn at [emily.nunn@larche.org.uk](mailto:emily.nunn@larche.org.uk) or telephone 01473 216409.

## Youth Worker Vacancy



Working with the Porch Project the ideal candidate will be self-motivated, a good team player and have experience with working with young people. Salary is between £19,000 & £21,000 pa depending on experience and qualifications.

The hours are 37 per week involving evening and some weekend work. Although based in Hadleigh you will be working in both Hadleigh and Great Cornard. This is a great opportunity to join our vibrant and enthusiastic team.

For full details and application form contact Ben, Youthwork co-ordinator [youthworker1@porchproject.co.uk](mailto:youthworker1@porchproject.co.uk).

Closing date for applications is 15 December 2017. The Porch Project is a registered Charity no. 1143203



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### Our mailing address is:

Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich  
St Nicholas Centre, 4 Cutler Street, Ipswich  
Suffolk, England IP1 1UQ  
United Kingdom

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