



Weekly news, readings and prayers

Sunday 11th January

The Baptism of Christ



Mosaic in Saint John Bosch's church, Paris.

I wonder what you most enjoy about the story of Jesus' baptism? Perhaps you have that image in your mind of the dove descending on Jesus - the Holy Spirit of God and a sense of peace. Perhaps you imagine the upside-down-ness of it: John baptising the one who he believes should be baptising him. Perhaps you hear those words 'with him I am well pleased'.

We happily bring our children for baptism - wanting to bless them. Cherish them. Celebrate their place in the world. If we were not baptised as children, as we grow older, we might wonder if we believe enough to be baptised. If we're good enough. If we can be or do enough to hear God say to us 'this is my child, in you I am well pleased'.

Jesus did nothing to merit or deserve baptism. He didn't have to prove himself. As far as we know, to this point he had lived an ordinary life, growing up in a carpenter's household. And yet, he was called beloved.

As Lutheran pastor, Nadia Bolz Weber writes, 'that's God for you... because in your own baptism, God claimed and named you as God's own. Not as an act of faith that you or someone was giving

to God on your behalf. But an act of God upon you, in your life, because you already belong to God. You are already loved by God. A love that is yours quite apart from what you do or don't do. A love that creates belovedness in the one it rests upon.'

That love will lead us in the way. That love will draw us into loving action in the service of God, neighbour and church, the beloved bride of Christ. But for today, it is enough to know that you are loved.

Revd Sarah

PS if you are not yet baptised, you are enough and you are ready. Just as you are. Just ask Rev Sarah or Rev Helen and we'll arrange a time and place.

January Prayer Diary

Services this Week

Livestreamed services are marked (L). Please use the button below to view services at the times given or to catch up at anytime.

Sunday 4th January

8 am BCP Holy Communion [30 mins]

10 am Café Church in the Church Centre [45 mins]

6 pm (L) Choral Communion [60+ mins]

This Week

Tuesday 13th January

8 am Morning Prayer in Church

Wednesday 14th January

9 am School Service

12 pm Holy Communion in the Chapel

7 pm Prayer Gathering in Church [30-60 mins]

Thursday 15th January

3.15 pm onwards - 5 pm 'Together' in the Church Centre: faith, food and fellowship afterschool for children and their families.

Friday 16th January

8am Morning Prayer in Church

Saturday 17th January

8.30 -10.30 am Men's Breakfast in the Church Centre: faith food and fellowship

We look forward to welcoming you to St Margaret's Church.

Parking is available in St Margaret's School car park for Sunday services. During the week, the children are in school and we cannot use the playground as a car park. Please drive slowly and carefully through the gates. We are grateful for our partnership with the school.

The church will be open daily for private prayer, reflection and visiting from 10am to 3pm.

[Click here for Livestreaming](#)

Lectionary

This Sunday

Isaiah 42.1-9 ([KJV](#)) ([NRSVUE](#))

Acts 10.34-43 ([KJV](#)) ([NRSVUE](#))

Matthew 3.13-17 ([KJV](#)) ([NRSVUE](#))

Read in traditional language - King James Version - at the 8am service and from the New Revised Standard Version (Updated Edition) at other times.

Church News

Services from January 2026: Sundays 8am, 10am & 6pm: Wednesdays 12pm

Click [here for all the details](#) of the new service pattern. The services from January 2026 are all set out inside the Christmas leaflets, so do take a copy home to put on your fridge.

It will take us all time to adjust to these changes. We may arrive at the wrong time or be surprised if the format of service is different to the service that we planned to attend. Those leading the services: stewards, ministers, readers, intercessors, musicians and many others will also be getting used to the changes.

In the coming weeks let us be gentle and kind to one another. Bearing with one another in love as we grow more deeply into the breadth of our worshipping traditions. As the former 9.30am and 11am worshipping communities learn and grow together in God and with one another may we find fresh rhythms to our worship that will encourage, challenge and sustain us as we seek to live out God's love in our lives and in the world today.

The Enthronement of The Right Reverend Dr Joanne Woolway Grenfell as Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich: 2pm Saturday 24th January 2026

There are a number of tickets available for this service at St Edmundsbury Cathedral. Tickets are being allocated on a first come first served basis. For more details, click [here](#) or telephone the Cathedral Office on 01284 748720. The service will be livestreamed on the Cathedral's You Tube channel.



Taking Down the Christmas Decorations : Tidying Jobs - Help Please

If you can spend some time in church over the next week please let Rev Sarah know. There are still two Christmas trees to be taken down. The Christmas decorations and flower cupboards need some sorting and tidying and there are three boxes of candles with their drip holders that are waiting to be cleaned up and put away for next time. Thank you.

Christmas Cards - recycling

Please save your Christmas cards - we will be collecting them all up to gift to All Hallows Church who will re-use them in the making of Christmas Cards for next year, which they sell to raise

funds. Those that All Hallows cannot use will be recycled.

Visitors from Biharamulo, Kagera and Lweru

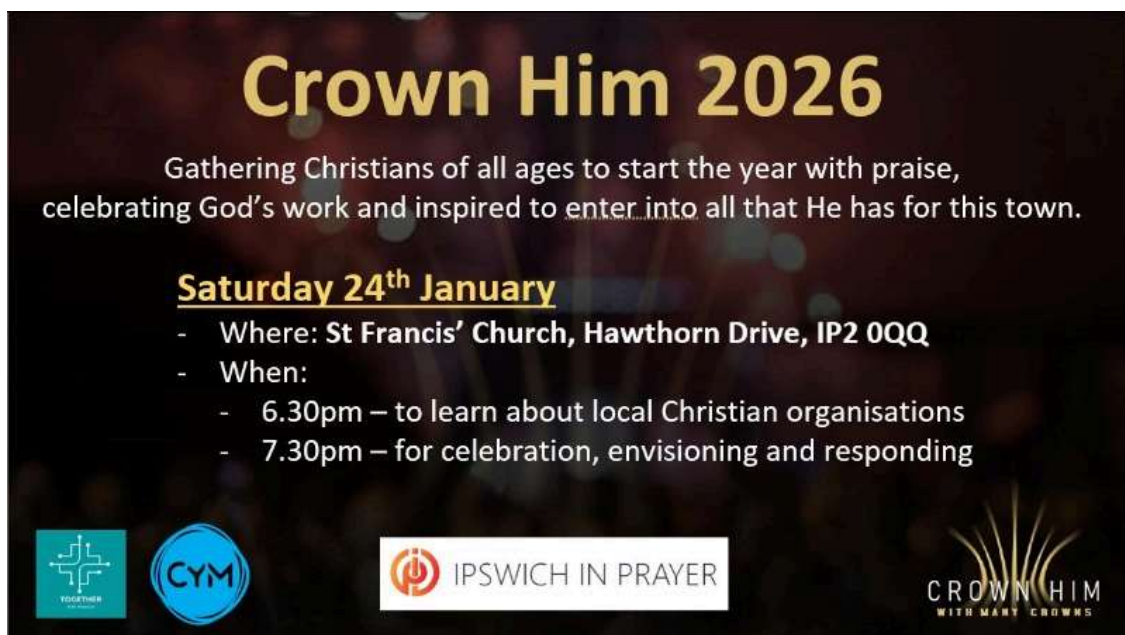
Bishop Vitalis, Bishop Darlington and Bishop Godfrey are visiting the Diocese at the end of January to support Bishop Joanne as she is licensed as our new Diocesan Bishop. Adam Geileskey is arranging their programme - it is already quite full, but there may be opportunities for some or all of them to spend some time with us at St Margaret's, learning about ordinary Suffolk life. Do speak with Adam if you have a spare room, might like to host for a meal or join them for a walk to chat about life in Suffolk. Wouldn't it be lovely to have more invitations than their programme permits!

Cornerstone

There will be no meeting in January.

Trianon Concert and other events

There will be a Trianon Concert in Church at 4pm, Saturday 14th February 2026, generously raising funds for the work of this church. The Events and Fellowship committee of the PCC are meeting this Thursday (15th January at 7pm) to look at other dates for events, fellowship and fundraising activities this year. If you'd like to be involved, let Rev Sarah know.



Crown Him 2026

Gathering Christians of all ages to start the year with praise, celebrating God's work and inspired to enter into all that He has for this town.

Saturday 24th January

- Where: St Francis' Church, Hawthorn Drive, IP2 0QQ
- When:
 - 6.30pm – to learn about local Christian organisations
 - 7.30pm – for celebration, envisioning and responding

Logos at the bottom: FIDELITY, CYM, IPSWICH IN PRAYER, CROWN HIM WITH MANY CROWNS

Growing Deeper

Prayer

Praying for our community: residents, visitors, businesses passers-by this week as we pray for Byford Walk, Ellisons Crescent, Meridian Rise, Discovery Drive, Permian Lane and Braeburn Close.

Thanksgiving

We are grateful this week for the many ways that as individuals we are present across our local community, often serving as volunteers: FIND food bank, Suffolk Refugee Support, AA, Friends of the Earth, Dora Brown, The Lighthouse... the list goes on. Thank you.

Support

Remember our Pastoral Team are here to support members of the St Margaret's community whether ill or in need of a friendly listening ear, details can be found towards the bottom of this email.

Social Action

The food banks are often inundated with gifts at Harvest and Christmas time. Do remember we have a box at the back of the church all year round to collect contributions of food and toiletries.

Growing Greener

Green Tip of the week

How do you get around?

If you drive, this year might be the time to consider moving to an electric or hybrid vehicle depending on your needs. Most of our journeys are less than 30 miles so even with a plug-in hybrid you should be able to do most of your journeys using electricity. Full electric vehicles are ideal for slightly longer commutes. Of course, your carbon saving will only be significant you have signed up to a renewable energy tariff!

Or maybe you already make good use of public transport? Sharing costs and energy, enabling affordable travel to everyone and reducing rural isolation by helping Suffolk communities stay connected.

Revd Richard Stainer's weekly tips return soon.

Loving God · Care for Creation · Love Our Global Neighbours

Forthcoming Services

Sunday 18th January

8 am BCP Holy Communion

10 am (L) Family Communion

6 pm Time Out [45 mins] a reflective service with contemplation and meditation

Tuesday 20th January

8 am Morning Prayer in Church

Wednesday 21st January

9 am School Service

12 pm Holy Communion in the Chapel followed by a soup lunch in the Gladwyn Room

Thursday 22nd January

8 pm Compline - Night Prayer by zoom. [Click here to register and receive the zoom link.](#)

Friday 23rd January

8am Morning Prayer in Church

Sunday 25th January

8 am BCP Holy Communion

10 am (L) Sunday Worship

6 pm Choral Evensong (L)

Tuesday 27th January : Holocaust Memorial Day

8 am Morning Prayer in Church

Wednesday 28th January

9 am School Service

12 pm Holy Communion in the Chapel followed by a soup lunch in the Gladwyn Room

Friday 30th January

8am Morning Prayer in Church

Saturday 31st January9.30am "Breakfast for All" in the Church Centre. [Click here](#) to confirm your dietary requirements.

All welcome - £ a donation.

Forward Dates**Saturday 28th January 2026**

The Confirmation of Election of The Right Reverend Dame Sarah Mullally as the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury is taking place at St Paul's Cathedral today.

Saturday 14th February 2026

4pm Trianon Concert at St Margaret's Church

Offertory

The life and mission of St Margaret's is financially sustained through generous giving. If you have been giving regularly as part of your practice of gratefully living in God's service, thank you. If you're new to the community, or would like to think about celebrating life in this way, you may find the following helpful: we receive no income from 'The Church'... we are the church! So, thank you – for anything and everything that you are able to give in response to God's generosity.

In church you can give in a couple of ways on the day:

- **Collection plate** – during services a collection plate is sometimes passed among the congregation, but you will more often find it at the South door as you leave or arrive. Do use a yellow envelope if you're a tax payer so gift aid may be re-claimed.
- **Tap giving** – during services a tap giving machine is located on the pillar on the west wall, to the left of the bell tower – do consider tapping your card or device. As well as giving regularly, this is also a good way of offering an occasional additional gift.
- **Regular Giving** – St Margaret's is registered with the [Parish Giving Scheme](#), allowing you to be in control of your giving and to give securely and safely online by Direct Debit.
- **Online giving** – If you wish to make a one-off or extra gift online, you can do so securely via the [Parish Giving Scheme](#).
- **Gift Aid** – if you are a tax payer, St Margaret's can claim back the basic tax you have already paid to the government. To make the appropriate declarations, please speak with the treasurer, [John Grierson](#).
- Leaving a **gift in your will** or making a **donation in memory** of a loved one – no matter how large or small, every gift makes a difference. If you would like to talk about this with someone, in confidence, then please consider speaking with the treasurer, [John Grierson](#) or the Vicar, [Sarah](#).

Contact us:**Revd Sarah Geileskey - Priest-in-Charge**Email: revsarahgeileskey@gmail.com

Address: The Vicarage, 32 Constable Road, IP4 2UW

Telephone: 07841 687879

Sarah's rest days are usually Thursday each week and the second Friday of each month**Revd Helen Prior-Townsend - Curate**Email: helenptstmags@gmail.com

Telephone: 07541 707543

Helen's rest days are usually Monday each week and every fourth Tuesday of each month.

George Woodward - Licensed Lay Minister (Reader)

Email: reader.stmagsips@gmail.com

Telephone: 07990 573258

George's quiet days tend to be Wednesdays and Fridays.

Churchwardens

Margaret Woodward

Email: churchwardens.stmagsips@gmail.com

Office

Email: office.stmagsips@gmail.com

Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9.30am - 2.30pm

Number: 07733 609661 and leave a message.

Church Office and Contacts during the Church Administrator's period of Maternity Leave

We are taking the opportunity to rationalise email addresses. With immediate effect, please use office.stmagsips@gmail.com for all correspondence. The verger.stmagsips@gmail.com will be monitored until the end of August. There is a plan in place to maintain the current office opening hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Fridays 9.30am - 2.30pm. However, if you have a particular reason for visiting the office, do email or call ahead of time to confirm.

Pastoral Support: The Pastoral Care Team are a small group of volunteers who try and support people in a variety of situations by offering a listening ear, a helping hand or by providing useful information. Please click [here](#) for more information or contact Maggie Conder at pastoralteam.stmagsips@gmail.com.

Safeguarding: This parish recognises that the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is paramount and that we have a duty of care when they are in our charge. We will do everything that we can to provide a safe and caring environment whilst they attend our activities. When there is a disclosure of harm or there are concerns about the welfare of any children, young person or vulnerable adult, all adults in our church community are expected to share their concerns and allegations with one of the following:

Carol Klug - Parish Safeguarding Officer. Email safeguarding.stmagsips@gmail.com

Frederike Jacob is our assistant Parish Safeguarding Officer

More information on how you can report any safeguarding concerns is available from The Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich [here](#)

Newsletter Contents

Please send any items for next week's newsletter to the Church Office (office.stmagsips@gmail.com), ideally by email, by **Thursday lunchtime please**. If you would like to receive this mailing each week please [complete this form https://stmargaretsips.churchsuite.com/connect/mydetails/submit](https://stmargaretsips.churchsuite.com/connect/mydetails/submit)