Learning Together

Opportunities for learning and development for lay people, ministry teams and authorised ministers

This issue of Learning Together includes the usual wide range of learning opportunities, some of which are seasonally related. Look out for Tuesday Evenings during Lent at the Cathedral, and Lent resources from Living Faith in Suffolk. There are conferences to enrich worship, and help church members to work together well. Pastoral resources include dementia-related seminars and courses. There is a wide range of spirituality material, details of the Ministries Fair at the Cathedral and an event to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Reader Ministry. As we promised last year, there are extra lectionary days on the Gospel of John in March. And you’ll find details of courses from Sarum College and the Anglican Centre in Rome.

On behalf of the Ministry, Education and Training Team, I hope you have a blessed Advent, Christmas and New Year.

With all good wishes

John Parr (Director of Ministry, Education and Training)
Conferences and Day Events

**Praxis: Enriching Worship Today**

Praxis East are organising a number of events during 2016 for the Eastern Region.

- **Reader Ministry: 150 years of worship, theology and mission.** Saturday 5 March, 10.00 am – 3.00 pm at Bar Hill Church Centre, Cambridge. 2016 marks 150 years of Reader Ministry in the Church of England. To celebrate this anniversary, this day will offer an opportunity for Readers, and those who work with them, to consider and develop responses to the ever-changing needs of the contemporary Church in its worship and mission. The cost for the day is £10 for Praxis affiliates, or £15 for non- affiliates. Contact Gill Ambrose at gill.ambrose@happyserver.co.uk or 07855 513506.

- **Empowering Children as Ministers.** Thursday 12 May, 10.00 am – 3.00 pm at Bar Hill Church Centre, Cambridge. Led by Gill Ambrose and Ally Barrett, this event will celebrate and explore the ministry of children, from traditional roles through to a range of contemporary good practice examples of how the ministry of children is enriching worship and church life, nurturing vocation and encouraging discipleship and growth in faith. The day will include input from children who are involved in ministry, as well as a presentation of new research on the impact of undertaking ministry roles on children and on the churches where they minister. The cost for the day is £10 for Praxis affiliates, or £15 for non-affiliates. Contact Gill Ambrose at gill.ambrose@happyserver.co.uk or 07855 513506.

**Tuesday Evenings at the Cathedral**

Tuesday Evenings at the Cathedral are being re-launched in 2016, with a series of talks, discussions and debates addressing issues at the interface of the church and wider society. During Lent there will be five weekly sessions focussing on Religion and Violence, beginning on Tuesday 16 February at 7.30pm. The programme will continue after Easter with monthly meetings looking at Religion and the Media, Loving the Planet, Science and Theology, and Religions and their Scriptures. Further details will be published in the New Year.
Suffolk Theology Forum

Organiser
Suffolk Theology Forum

When
Thursday 14 January 2016 7.30 – 9.15 pm **Playing with God? Exploring the place of play in life human and divine** Dr Nicholas Wood, Dean & Director of the Centre for Christianity and Culture, Regent’s Park College, Oxford


Where
The Co-Op Education Centre, 11 Fore Street, Ipswich IP4 1JW. Free on-site parking accessed from Waterworks Street IP4 1JG. Pedestrian entrance: 11 Fore Street.

Information
The Forum is run by members of different churches and aims to explore issues of Christian theology in an open, non-partisan way. Cost £5 (£4 for retired, students) at the door, or free to Forum members. No need to book.

Queries: Elizabeth Moore 01359 230161 eymoore@talktalk.net. Annual programme: www.sifre.org.uk/stf

Living Faith in Suffolk Learning and Training Events

are a series of half-day and whole-day sessions to build up our confidence in ministry and mission. They support Growing in God, the Diocesan Vision for Growth.

The following sessions will be offered during **2016**:

- 23 January: Working Well Together – Facilitating Groups
- 27 February: Working Well Together – Conflict and Creativity
- 8 and 19 March: Lectionary Day – John’s Gospel
- 16 April: Developing Faith – using the opportunities of baptism
- 14 May: Visiting well – communicating and keeping safe
- 11 June: Leading prayers in public worship
- 9 July: Listening, loss and bereavement
- 13 and 17 September: Lectionary Day – Matthew’s Gospel
• 8 October: Greening the Faith – Christianity and environmental issues
• 22 and 26 November: Lay Ministers’ Day – Enhancing Worship

Further information is available from the Ministry, Education and Training (MET) office; contact Lesley Steed on 01473 298510 or lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org

Working Well Together – Facilitating Groups
Saturday 23 January 2016 – 9.30am to 12.30pm
All Saints Church, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3QW

Church life involves being with other people. Worship, learning, planning and activity bring us together in groups and teams. Sometimes what makes us different and unique gets in the way. How can we overcome these inevitable challenges and obstacles, so that we learn to work together well?

Working Well Together will examine what we need to know and understand if we are to harness our gifts and perspectives in the groups and teams we belong to. It will inform our experience of being with others by drawing on insights from the Bible, theology and contemporary thinking. And it will set all this in the context of prayer and worship.

Working Well Together is open to anyone who wants to learn more about the experience of being with others. It will be particularly useful for members of church-based groups and teams and their leaders.

Cost: £4, refreshments included. To book, please phone 01473 298510 or email lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org. Lay Elders, Readers and clergy may use CMD grants.

Working Well Together – Conflict and Creativity
Saturday 27 February 2016 9.30am – 12.30pm
The Hyndman Centre, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3JT

Church life involves being in communities which in some ways resemble families. People also join teams and groups that take the church’s work forward. Sometimes our different perspectives and concerns create conflict, and make it challenging, and occasionally impossible, to work together. How can we learn to see conflict as an asset rather than an obstacle?
Working Together Well is open to anyone who wants to learn more about the experience of being with others. It will be particularly useful for members of church-based groups and teams and their leaders.

Cost: £4, refreshments included. To book, please phone 01473 298510 or email lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org. Lay Elders, Readers and clergy may use CMD grants.

**Passion and Resurrection in the Gospel of John**

*Tuesday 8 March 2016 9.30am – 3.30pm*

*The St Nicholas Centre, Ipswich IP1 1UQ*

*or*

*Saturday 19 March 2016 9.30am – 3.30pm*

*The Hyndman Centre, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3JT*

These two days will include the usual mixture of presentations and workshops, with a seasonal, preaching / liturgical focus. We look forward to welcoming Dr Bill Brosend, Professor of New Testament and Preaching at the School of Theology in the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee to the Saturday event on 19 March. More details will be in the next issue of Learning Together.

**Seminars on Dementia**

Many, many people have found the ‘**Contented Dementia**’ approach to caring with someone with Dementia very helpful and we are fortunate indeed to have an accredited trainer, Lynne Kentish, who lives in Bury. Lynne is running a seminar in Bury this year, with five further sessions to be offered across the Diocese in the spring of 2016.

**Tuesday 8 December at Christ Church, Lawson Place, Moreton Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP32 7EW from 6.00 pm to 9.00 pm.**

To secure your place, please contact Kathleen Ben Rabha on 01473 683323 or at kathleen.benrabha@cofesuffolk.org

The seminar is free, with donations possible towards the funding of other seminars.

Kathleen Ben Rabha - Officer for Community Affairs
Worship for Today’s Church: Nurturing Local Liturgical Leadership

Organiser Sarum College
When 2 February 2016, 10.00 am to 4.00 pm
Where Sarum College, Salisbury SP1 2EE
Cost £45, includes lunch and refreshments
Description Increasingly the church is encouraging a broad range of people to develop their knowledge of liturgy, hone their practical skills, and grow in confidence in leading worship.
Published by Church House Publishing, the Worship 4 Today course has been used to train worship leaders and musicians for the past nine years in Sheffield Diocese and beyond. It has been recognised nationally and internationally as a valuable training tool. Its vision is to inspire and refresh all those who are called to lead God’s people in worship, especially in churches with few resources.
This day is a great opportunity to learn from the Worship 4 Today project, foster good dialogue between clergy, lay leaders and musicians and discover some of the best liturgical and musical resources available.

Information Contact Alison Ogden for all booking enquiries at courses@sarum.ac.uk or 01722 424826

The Book of Ruth

Organiser Sarum College
When 8 February 2016, 1.00 pm to 11 February 2016, 2.00 pm
Where Sarum College, Salisbury SP1 2EE
Cost £215 non-residential; £365 residential
Description Ruth is the story of the ancestry of David and Jesus that starts when the ‘house of bread’ (Bethlehem) has run out of bread.
Off to a bad start hindsight might not be all there is to this tale. Is this an agricultural idyll or a brutal tragedy? Is this an example of feminist liberation or patriarchal oppression? Is this a tale of ancestry begetting and begotten or a theology of redemption? Should we wonder about the ethics of immigration or individual Christian discipleship?
With more than 2000 years of interpretation history there is a deep and very diverse well to drink from. But not all that glitters is gold and not all questions have unambiguous answers.

Not for the fainthearted, the course traces the outrageous friendship of God from Jesus Christ to Ruth and back again. In a close reading of this ancient Hebrew text we do not only encounter history, geography, culture, literature and art but also passion, cruelty, theology and ethics. Welcome to the biblical study break on Ruth.

Information  Contact Alison Ogden for all booking enquiries at courses@sarum.ac.uk or 01722 424826

Courses

Creative Congregations

Do you want to be a dementia friendly church?

Organiser  BrightShadow

Description  Brightshadow’s Creative Congregations programme equips churches and faith organisations to understand the challenges associated with dementia and to explore creative ways to meaningfully support people affected by it, both within and outside their own church community.

Creative Congregations helps faith organisations to ● keep people connected to their church communities ● facilitate the continued expression of faith ● reach out to people in the wider community

Creative Congregations can be delivered as a half or whole day training event, or as part of a larger festival or conference programme. Session topics available include: Dementia Awareness ● Communion for people with dementia ● Dementia inclusive services ● creative activities for groups of people with dementia ● dementia & spirituality.
Anglican Centre in Rome – Courses in 2016

Women’s Leadership in Christian History 9 - 14 April 2016: An intensive experience of sharing past and present models of Christian women’s leadership in the Church. Through visits to sites in Rome associated with key women leaders of the Church, then discussion of the relation between their lives and ours, we will work together in a creative re-thinking of present models of ordained women’s roles in the Church today. An integral part of the course will be the sharing of our own stories of ministry. Course fee €500

The Art of Preaching 30 May - 4 June 2016: Refresh your preaching ministry in Rome as we hone the skills to construct and deliver the world-class sermons Anglicans were once famous for. Bishop Michael Marshall and ex-President of the Oxford Union, Marcus Walker will lead classes and workshops on preaching styles and techniques before you have the chance to practise these in some of the more exciting churches in Rome. Course fee €500

Christian Leaders 5 - 11 September 2016 This course will develop you as an inspiring and influential leader with a servant’s heart. The course is based on Biblical scholarship, case studies of exemplary leaders past and present, and field work in Rome and Assisi. Attending this course will strengthen your ability to lead and to make a positive difference in the world, doing God’s work most effectively, and believing you can have a positive impact. Course fee €780

Division and Hope in the Holy City: Learnings From Rome and Jerusalem 25 October –1 November 2016 A Joint Course with St George's College, Jerusalem. Course venue: Jerusalem. We focus upon Christian diversity and ecumenism and will include sessions on historical councils and church divisions, visits to several of the thirteen official Jerusalem churches with their varied liturgies, and conversations about current affairs in ecumenical dialogue. The course will address the main issues in the ecumenical dialogue, the challenges shared by Christian churches today, the differences that divide, and the hope for greater strength in unity. The course will be led by Archbishop David Moxon.
For information on course fees and registration go to www.saintgeorgescollegejerusalem.com

The Francis Effect Then and Now: A Close Walk With Pope Francis and His Inspiration, Francis Of Assisi 14 - 18 November 2016 St Francis of Assisi transformed the Church and world of his day by the way he and St Clare lived and spoke; Pope Francis is renewing and re-orientating Christian living and mission now. The Joy of the gospel enlightens and moves people with the Francis effect; what does this mean for us? Let your Christian imagination be stirred and empowered in your own way, with God the only true source of our transformation and hope. Course fee €500

Course fees cover tuition, guided visits, entry fees, local travel costs and field trips. Accommodation and meals are not included. For residential courses other arrangements apply. For all information about courses see www.anglicancentreinrome.org or contact pa-courses@anglicancentre.it

Mindfulness and Contemplative Prayer
Organiser Sarum College
When 22 January 2016, 6.30 pm - 24 January 2016, 2.00 pm
Where Sarum College, Salisbury SP1 2EE
Cost £140 non-residential; £199 residential
Description The practice of mindfulness has become extremely popular, with its benefits experienced by many thousands. This weekend will explore how various Christian contemplative prayer traditions have historically cultivated the values of a mindful presence, compassion, and connection with others, together with a uniquely Christian devotion in prayer.
Information Contact Alison Ogden for all booking enquiries at courses@sarum.ac.uk or 01722 424826
Do you ever have a sense that your Christian faith is pushing you towards something new, something particular? There are of course all kinds of circumstances that faith in Jesus Christ might be lived out, whether at home, at your place of work or education, at the pub, at the shop – wherever, and in all kinds of ways!

But sometimes some people have a more definite, more “pointed” sense that God is prodding or calling them towards serving him in a defined role. This might be experienced as a clear vocation to a certain ministry, or a more vague feeling, a prayerful wondering. Maybe it is a welcome feeling; maybe it is not welcome at all. The Bible is full of occasions when God calls people, and they react in all kinds of ways.

The Ministries Fair at the Cathedral on 23 April 2016 will provide information, speakers – and people to speak to – from a wide variety of ministries, such as street pastors, Prison Fellowship, spiritual direction, church administration (Churchwardens, Treasurers, Secretaries, Safeguarding Officers, etc.), Volunteering Matters (formerly CSV), ordained ministry, Reader ministry, school teaching, commissioned local ministry (Elders/parish evangelists & pioneers), Church Army, Church Mission Society, Us (formerly USPG), monastic life, children’s ministry (Sunday school, Godly Play, Open the Book), Samaritans, youth ministry, fostering, Church Housing Trust. The Pilgrims’ Kitchen at the Cathedral will make refreshments available for purchase, and there will be space for personal reflection and prayer.

For many people, this will be an opportunity to taste and see the variety of possibilities available, perhaps sparking an idea for some kind of ministry within or beyond the Church community not specifically featured at the Ministries Fair. For others, it will be an opportunity to learn more about something in particular, perhaps something that has been lurking in the background for a while.

Week by week we pray for our church to flourish and grow. Such flourishing happens when we are a people who offer ourselves to God, when we serve God in the countless ways that God makes possible. The
Ministries Fair is an opportunity to discover more about what that might look like in your life. It’s an opportunity to think about how you might give your discipleship more focus.

Ministries Fair 2016 is open to the public, but it would be helpful if we had a general idea of how many are coming – please let Lesley Steed know if you intend to be there, alone or bringing a parish group (lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org). For more information please contact Tim Jones (tim.jones@cofesuffolk.org) or Ruth Dennigan (ruth.dennigan@cofesuffolk.org).

**Follow 2016 – A Celebration of Christian Discipleship**

Follow 2016 is a day festival, sponsored by the Central Readers Council to celebrate 150 years of Reader Ministry, and is open to everyone of any age or denomination. The event takes place on 16 July 2016 at De Montfort Hall, Leicester. Tickets are £5 and will be available from 1 September from De Montfort Hall by phone (0116 233 3111) or through the website: www.demontforthall.co.uk/events/index.php?cat_id=10&level=1.

Speakers include Paula Gooder, writer and lecturer in Biblical studies, Mark Russell, Church Army Chief Executive, Mark Greene, author and speaker from the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity, Debbie Thrower, former broadcaster and champion of BRF’s ‘The Gift of Years’ initiative, and Paul Blakey, founder of the Street Angels movement.

Pete James, full time songwriter will be leading worship throughout the day and Roger Jones from Christian Music Ministries will be forming a scratch choir and performing his brand new musical “Barnabas”.

Activities available throughout the day will be a taste of Messy Church from Lucy Moore, children’s multi-sensory equipment from Leicester Diocese, 24-7 prayer space, adult and children bouncy castles, entertainment from Christian magician Steve Price, together with resource stalls across the site and world food available all day.
**Spirituality**

**Praying for Others Workshop**

*Led by Dr Jane Williams*

**Organiser**
Diocesan Spirituality Group

**When**
Wednesday 2 March 2016. There will be two sessions: 2.00 - 5.00 pm, repeated 7.00 - 9.00 pm (i.e. book for one session or the other, not both)

**Where**
All Saints Church, Park Road, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3QW

**Cost**
£5. The whole fee is due in advance. It is non-refundable.

**Information**
For more information about Dr Williams, see [www.stmellitus.org/academic-staff](http://www.stmellitus.org/academic-staff)

**Bookings**
To book contact Caroline Redman at The Cottage, Great Livermere IP31 1JG or [caroline@theredmans.co.uk](mailto:caroline@theredmans.co.uk). Please either email and make an electronic payment to St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Diocesan Board of Finance, Sort code 16-22-17, Acc No 12190090 or send a cheque made payable to “St Edmundsbury & Ipswich DBF” together with your details. Clergy and lay ministers may be able to use their CMD grant to pay for this event. Please confirm with Lesley Steed [lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org](mailto:lesley.steed@cofesuffolk.org) and then let Caroline know.

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**Chris Chapman: Seeing in the Dark**

**Thursday 4 May 2016, 10.00 am – 4.00 pm**

Christopher Chapman is the Spiritual Formation Adviser for Southwark Diocese. He helps to train lay pastoral workers, and is an experienced spiritual director. His recent book, *Seeing in the Dark: Pastoral perspectives on suffering in the Christian spiritual tradition*, looks at how we can draw on the Christian spiritual tradition to explore the part suffering plays within human growth and our experience of God.

This is a training day aimed for those involved or interested in the ministry of spiritual accompaniment but is open to anyone. Details of the day to follow.
Exploring Prayer
The date for the 2016 Exploring Prayer event has been changed to:

Saturday 2 July 2016, 10.00 am - 4.00 pm
St Edmundsbury Cathedral
As in 2015, there will be workshops leading prayer in different ways, as well as prayer stations and a labyrinth in the Cathedral. Details to follow.

Retreat Days
More information on opportunities for Quiet Days and Retreats can be found via [www.cofesuffolk.org/index.cfm?page=landf.content&cmid=354](http://www.cofesuffolk.org/index.cfm?page=landf.content&cmid=354)

Spiritual Direction/ Accompaniment
This is about taking the time to meet with another person and talk about one’s spiritual journey and prayer. If you want to know more see [www.cofesuffolk.org/index.cfm?page=landf.content&cmid=447](http://www.cofesuffolk.org/index.cfm?page=landf.content&cmid=447), and if you want help in finding a spiritual director/companion for yourself, the person to contact is now Mark Booth at spiritual.direction@cofesuffolk.org or on 01728 454349.

Spirituality Advisor
Anne is always pleased to hear what is important to you in prayer and spiritual life, and to hear from an individual or church wanting to explore spirituality further. She can be contacted on 01394 610065 or by email anne.spalding@cofesuffolk.org.
Lent Resources from Living Faith in Suffolk

Living Lent 2: Who is this Jesus? is already available on the LFiS page of the diocesan website (www.cofesuffolk.org), providing daily reflections from Ash Wednesday to Easter Day, with questions to stimulate further thought and supporting resources for those wishing to use these for group study. Or you might want to use some of the latest resources from Living Faith in Suffolk, looking at an overview of Luke’s Gospel (Living Luke 1) and characters in Luke’s Gospel (Living Luke 2).

Ruth Dennigan, Discipleship and Ministry Development Officer
Tel 01473 298503 or ruth.dennigan@cofesuffolk.org

LIFE exhibition
The excellent LIFE exhibition for schools and churches is returning from 4 - 11 March next year to St Peter’s Church, Bury St Edmunds. David Crofts is overseeing the exhibition in Bury. See: http://www.wearechurch.net/whats-on/life-exhibition
John Hamilton has the exhibition booked for St Andrew's Church in Ipswich a little later in April, having had it at St John’s last time. For more information email john.hamilton702@btinternet.com.

Do get involved or at least go and see the exhibition. It will inspire you and as Schools' Adviser, I be would be thrilled to see the exhibition in even more Suffolk venues. Contact David or John and book a visit in your diary now.

The exhibition is eminently suitable for Key stage 2 (9-11s) and fits work children may be doing on Gospel or Incarnation in their Religious Education lessons.

Helen Matter, Schools' Adviser. 01473 298570 (office) or 01449 780379 (home office), 07445 845 158 (mobile), helen.matter@cofesuffolk.org
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