

Blackbourne

This month, we feature some of the work and activities for children and young people. We hope you find it as encouraging and enjoyable as the leaders so evidently do. Ed

As I write this, it is two-thirds way through December, and in just over a week Christmas will have passed and we shall be on the threshold of another year. There will be parties, fireworks and all kinds of celebrations as we welcome 2012. Come the end of January the 'New Year' might not seem so new as life takes on its usual shape. Someone called Dan Cluster wrote: *Every morning is a fresh beginning. Every day is the world made new. Today is a new day. Today is my world made new. I have lived all my life up to this moment, to come to this day. This moment – this day – is as good as any moment in all eternity. I shall make of this day – each moment of this day – a heaven on earth. This is my day of opportunity.* Now that's a New Year's resolution worth thinking about! PG

Praying in the Churches, Thursdays 9-9:30am

Join Phillip and Liz for prayers in Gt Livermere Church, or Dinkie Williamson at Bardwell, in January. Common Worship Daily Prayer is used (text provided), with time to reflect together on the readings for the day. All are welcome. Prayers in February will be at St Peter's, Fakenham Magna. PG

Praying for the Parishes and those who minister

This month your prayers are asked for the congregation, PCC, Churchwardens and parishioners of St Mary's Ixworth with All Saints Ixworth Thorpe, and St Mary's Troston. Pray too for Phillip Garbett (Team Rector) and Liz Jump (Team Vicar) and their ministry among us

Team Service: January 22 at St Mary's Ixworth, 10am

This month, there will be a Team Service on the fourth Sunday (not the fifth Sunday) in celebration of *The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*. Our guest speaker will be Rev Robert Hufton, a Methodist Minister from Bury St Edmunds. Our dear friends from the Methodist Chapel in Ixworth will be joining us. PG

Small Service

Sunday 8 January. 11am

Ingham Church

Sunday Club

Sunday 15 January, 9.30am

Ixworth Church

Informal Worship

Sunday 15 January, 6.30pm

Ixworth Church

Men's Breakfast

Saturday 21 January,
8:15am

Great Livermere Hall

Team Service

Sunday 22 January, 10am

Ixworth Church

The Promise fulfilled

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:1-5,14)

The Promise to be fulfilled

This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven (Acts 1:11)

Kids' Stuff at Bardwell

Messy Church in Bardwell: Well, this has been our first year of offering *Messy Church* in Bardwell, led by Liz Jump. They have been held in the village primary school on Saturday afternoons before important church events: Mothers Day, Pentecost, Creation (Harvest) and Christingle (Advent). The numbers of families has steadily risen and our helpers have been a joyful crew of volunteers from around the village. It has to be said that young and old alike have really enjoyed getting messy, whether with making paper aeroplanes (Pentecost), icing cakes (Mothers Day) or making glittery angels (Christmas). We decided to focus on more unusual aspects of God's creation for harvest and enjoyed getting very messy with paint and glue making butterflies, frogs, spiders, worms and fish for an altar frontal (pictured below). This was hung in church



until Remembrance weekend. Our Messy times end with home made cakes (the brownies were popular!) and a very short act of worship. Messy Church does take time to plan and arrange a team -

thank you to all helpers! It's been great to be creative together and we pray for God's blessing on this as we plan for 2012!

The village school started *Cafe Church*, once a month, in the Autumn term. We are looking forward to the *Open the Book* team coming from Barnham in February to help Cafe Church to develop, with *Open the Book*, in the school assemblies. If you wish to know more and think you would like to help, please contact me. *Dinkie Williamson*

Kids' Stuff at Barnham

Messy Church takes place several times a year in the church usually before festivals. We normally have at least 20 children from 4-14 and lots of helpers. We all get very messy and have produced some lovely (we think) banners

Karen Burton runs the *Open the Book* which is incredibly successful. See page 5

For nearly 4 years, Barnham Church has taken coffee, scones and cakes into school as part of our Café Church project. Parents are invited and we have made a huge number of contacts through this. Many of our parents come from Thetford, and have not had the opportunity to meet anyone connected with a church before. The excellent

cakes and scones have helped to open their eyes. We now do this twice a month to coincide with the *Open the Book* as the parents come to Café Church and stay for *Open the Book*

Our monthly **Family Service** is about the Church being part of a world-wide family as well as a local family within the local church. It is not restricted – nor aimed – at the nuclear family. It is informal, may involve children, young people and those of mature years. We learn new choruses, have prayers prepared by the congregation and always end with food and drink! We are fortunate that our excellent links with the school have brought in many families who have become regular members of the Church. The leaders share the ministry amongst several people including children. We hope that anyone coming into the church feels welcomed, loved and at ease and not threatened by difficult liturgy or custom or consumed with trying to keep their toddler quiet!

One other thing: Sarah Rush's absolutely excellent **mother and baby group**. Sarah has done this for about 12 years. They meet in her house once a month on a Monday afternoon and are finished in time for older children to be collected from school. It is very simple – a reading and a prayer and tea, cake and fellowship. She hunts out those with babies who are new to the village or just been born and this has contributed to our church family hugely. I have always felt this is something which could be done in any village. *Sue Nutt*



Messy Church at Barnham

Children's Work Conference

Keynote speaker is Mary Hawes,
National Children's Advisor for the C of E

Saturday February 4, 10am-4pm
at St Edmundsbury Cathedral

A day to explore and celebrate children's work in
the Diocese

Does anyone get bitten at St Mary's 'JUST-A-BITE'?

A little girl who attends was heard to ask her mother *when does someone get bitten?* So maybe it's time for a 'taste' of what happens at *Just-a-Bite*

This activity for families with predominantly pre-school and primary aged children started in September 2010 with a view to bringing the whole family together to chat, have some food (hence just-a-bite!), learn about God, ourselves and each other, worship and have fun in a very informal fashion. The village hall is an ideal meeting place, and we have a team of helpers to organise everything from art and craft activities, to games, refreshments and setting up tables and chairs

In September we explored the theme of God as a loving parent through the bible story about the Prodigal Son. For those of you unfamiliar with the story – it involves a younger son asking his father to pay him half his inheritance in cash. The son then goes off into the blue yonder squandering all he has until he is reduced to eating with the pigs. Consequently, he decides that he is better off back home and is received back by his father with delight and forgiveness, this illustrating how God is always willing to receive and forgive us, whatever we may have done

The children (and adults) were enthralled as Jill Walker told the story, using figures and props on a mat on the floor. Our activities included:

Hunt the family groups – 'families' of soft toy animals were hidden around the hall and were hunted, found and regrouped. This was particularly appealing to the toddlers

Tears of God – Clear acetate teardrop shapes were cut. People then wrote on them what they thought would make God sad and attached them to a cross now displayed in the church

Guess the parts of the pig – easy ... if you happen to be a butcher!

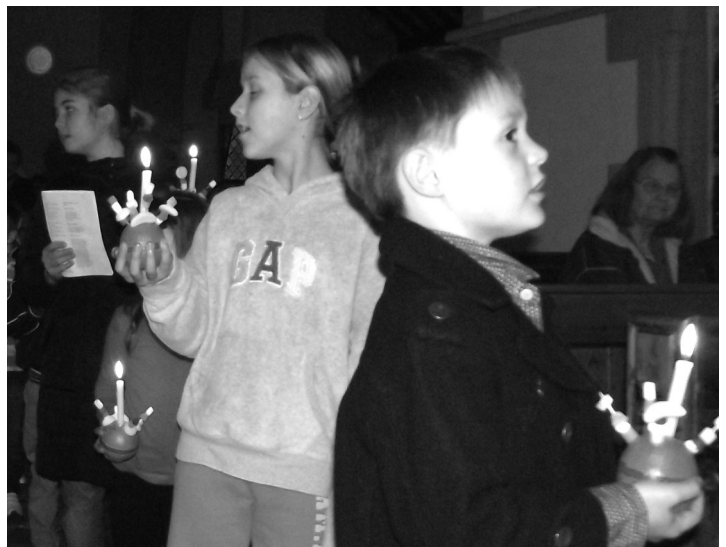
A banner in 3 parts – Fabric triangle shapes were cut and glued onto a sheet whilst thinking about the Trinity, God the Father, God the son and God the Holy Spirit. The second part will be constructed next month

Pigs in a Pen – Rich Tea biscuits were decorated with green fondant icing and pink pigs using chocolate sticks for fencing (yummm!). Some didn't make it home!

Pig Swill – Food items were hidden in a bucket containing a mixture of sawdust and earth. The challenge was to dip into the mess to find the food. We asked ourselves how desperate we would have to be to eat the found items. One boy was brave enough to wash off his carrot stick and eat it!

We then regrouped and Phillip reminded us of the initial story and caused us to think about its meaning for us. Action songs followed, with lots of shakers, bells, tambourines and rattles. We finished with a prayer and the hope that next month will be just as much fun

So, as you can see – nobody is bitten at Just-a-Bite. In fact, everyone is friendly and ready to chat and have a good time. Our themes for the rest of this term are 'Love your neighbour', 'Love your world' and 'The gift of love'. We are all looking forward to them and welcome any families who wish to join us. Ingrid Garbett



A Christingle Service in the Team

Sunday Service for Families at Ixworth ...

We are pleased to announce the beginning of a new service on the 3rd Sunday of the month that will appeal to parents and their children. After a short time together, children will enjoy their very own Sunday Club in the heated Tower Room, and rejoin their parents at the end of the service. Suitable for children aged 4 to 9 years, Sunday Club will be led by church members Ingrid Garbett, Hilary Pearce, and Nicola Flowitt (all of whom have been CRB checked). They plan some exciting activities to help children learn more about the Christian faith. The service will begin at the usual time of 9:30am and will last about 50 minutes. PG

... starts Sunday 15 January at 9:30 am!

PAT in Ingham

PAT's real name is Pre-School Activity Time - an activity group for small children and their Mums (and Grand-mums and Carers)

PAT started again, after a gap, because of a request from a mother who has two small children. It has resulted in a number of new residents becoming involved, as well as one or two from outside the village

We meet monthly on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, in Ingham Church, from 2 pm for about 3/4 hour

Attendance varies, depending on the situation of 'mother and child' - we have had as many as 6 to 8 mothers/carers and a dozen children. The little ones are able to play with toys and socialise while the parents can get to know one another. Refreshments are provided, and during the session a bible story is told. *Rosemary Boswell*

Ingham SMA11 (Sunday Morning at 11) Service

A short (35-40 minutes - hence Small) service aimed at young families, but equally popular with adults

Usually we sit in a circle which gives a sense of intimacy but also serves to keep the younger children in a confined space. A range of toys is available within the circle, as are colouring sheets, word searches etc. Sometimes the youngest children are joined on the floor by parents or helpers!



The idea is to create an atmosphere where children can behave like children surrounded by loving and caring adults. We hope children and parents alike will experience something of the inclusive love we are talking about

We believe that we learn more from what we experience

than what we hear - so that experience must be in accordance with what is being said. God is light, love, joy. He cares for all of us, whatever our age. He accepts us as we are. We try to do everything to illustrate what we are trying to share ... and we try to have fun! We aim for one simple teaching point presented in a number of different ways, often practical, and accessible to as wide a range of ages and abilities as possible

Coffee and chat (usually at the end) is an integral part of the service, and often lasts longer than the planned bit!

Behind each service is a committed planning group of seven (including when possible some of the younger members) who meet for a couple of hours the previous week

SMA11 services are held on the first Sunday in each month, in Ingham church, at 11am. *Jim Hartley*

Liz Jump goes to School

We have four primary schools within the team, at Ixworth, Bardwell, Barnham and Honington, and all are Church schools. This gives us a real opportunity to work with the children who attend them. I work particularly with Honington and Bardwell, and regularly take assemblies in both - though what used to be called *Assembly* is now often referred to as *Collective Worship*. This is because the focus of this time has changed over the years - it is certainly very different from the assemblies I remember at school. Each collective worship session is based on a well worked out programme from our Diocese, and covers topics such as generosity, courage, and peace. These topics are initially explored in assembly, but are often expanded upon throughout the week - and often in Tesco as the children spot me and chat! The children are given space to think and reflect in each time of collective worship, and to explore their own reactions to the topic being followed, before we pray together

As well as assemblies, I am in Honington and Bardwell schools as a Governor, and as a visitor to plays, concerts, and any other activities that may take place. Or, less formally, just as the Vicar, calling in to see how everyone is! The children attend church for festivals and for the end of term, and there is a real sense of being part of the church community. Being involved with the children, and their teachers, is a privilege, and one I hugely enjoy. We often worry that we don't see children in church, but in the schools I find children who feel part of the church, even though frequently their activities on a Sunday mean they can't attend then. The challenge for us, often, is how to build on the contact we do have with children, rather than feeling disheartened by their absence at our services. *Liz Jump*

Open the Book

Open the Book is a scheme seeing church groups go into local primary schools and act out Bible stories to the children. The stories are largely taken from the Lion Story-teller Bible, and are wrapped around with scripted introductions, reflection and prayers. Only the performing of the story is left to chance! *Open the Book* is a fantastic way of giving stories that belong to all of us to an audience who might never otherwise hear them. This is as true for the children as for their parents, who are also invited to watch

We began *Open the Book* in Barnham School at Easter - 'we' being a group of Christians from Barnham involved with St Gregory's and other local churches, with several mums from school. Earlier in the year, it had seemed

like such a good idea – but closer to the time was another matter! It was still an exciting prospect. We still wanted to do it. But you would not believe how much time and effort was spent worrying about costumes, props, learning lines and missing cues. (I'd like to say that we quickly moved beyond those worries, but the truth is that we still feel nervous, miss lines and forget what to do next... We're just much better at carrying on regardless!)

It's fair to say that the children had never seen anything like it, and they have embraced it wholeheartedly. They love it when we come! We always try to involve as many of them as possible and are swamped with volunteers every time. They can't wait to see what we will do next: they have loved eating bread among the five thousand, marching behind the Roman Centurion, being surprised by the party for the prodigal son, holding out flowers for the women to pick on their way to Jesus' tomb, being shocked when real water slapped poor Peter as he sank beneath the waves

And while we worried about starting with stories of betrayal and crucifixion, the children were completely absorbed. They were very thoughtful about what they had seen and talked about it amongst themselves and with their teachers. They also recognised us outside of school and asked us questions. In fact, when we bump into children from school they always want to talk about Open the Book. We've been pounced on while helping out at school or in the playground, shopping in Tesco, out walking the dogs and sitting poolside during swimming lessons



Open the Book has been a great success at Barnham School. It has been wonderful for the children - at our last visit the Headmaster said that he hoped we could continue for many years to come. It hasn't only had an effect on the school though. We could have predicted the fun that we would have with *Open the Book* – being in it all together, making new friends, and letting your imagination run riot. What we didn't foresee was the effect it would have on our own spiritual journeys

You can't help but be affected in performing His stories. The humanity of Peter's shaken confidence at the lake encouraged us, tales of healing and love made us feel strong and happy, while the crucifixion broke our hearts

Bringing these stories to life has encouraged us to want to learn more about our faith. This Advent there has been a study course in Barnham. The core of this group has been the *Open the Book* team. It has been an interesting course with lots to think about, and there is talk of continuing to meet next year. We don't all worship together at St Gregory's, but through *Open the Book* we have been encouraged to go on to learn together

If you are lucky enough to get a chance to join Open the Book, grab it! It will be wonderful and nerve-wracking, and will take you on a journey that you won't regret. *Karen Burton*

February 7 at 7:30pm, at All Saints Stanton

We are inviting all those who work with children, in groups or All-Age services, children's choirs and those working with young people, to a Deanery Evening solely for those working in this field ... to share good practice, to identify what is happening and where, to provide a support network throughout the Deanery

It is important that we support each other, and that your voices are heard

Clergy are welcome to attend and support the evening

FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE CONTACT EITHER

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Christianity Explored ...

... has now run its course! The group of four participants decided to continue to meet a further three times to engage with some optional material, making ten sessions in all. We are delighted to report that all participants want to continue meeting as a home-group in the New Year. PG

Men's Breakfast

Next breakfast is on Saturday January 21, 8:15 – 9:30am, at Great Livermere Village Hall. The speaker will be Peter Hicks, *On Scilly*

Troston All-Age Christingle at Epiphany

Sunday January 8, 11am

Informal Worship

Sunday 15 January, 6:30pm at St Mary's, Ixworth. An opportunity to enjoy a variety of traditional and more contemporary songs in a relaxed atmosphere. A small group lead the singing accompanied by keyboard. Each service has a theme that is explored in a variety of ways:

images, music, poetry, Bible reading, prayer and interactive activities for example. Open to all who wish to come. PG

Meditative Prayer Group

This group will resume meeting on Thursday March 1 and monthly thereafter – April 12, May 3, June 7, July 5: from 8 –9pm in Ingham Church. *Caroline Redman*

Plough Sunday at the Cathedral

Sally Fogden (Agricultural Chaplain of the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich) writes ... This year the Cathedral is marking Plough Sunday, January 8, with special prayers and *The Blessing of the Plough* during Evensong, starting at 3:30. At some point, the congregation will go out to the South door, where a tractor and plough will stand for the traditional blessing. In this still agricultural county, it is good to remember the work that is the basis of our arable farming. Everyone is invited to share in this event. (PS: If there is anyone in the benefice who is able to sign for the deaf, please let Sally know, as Society for the Deaf hopes to attend and would like our help)

Deanery HEALING Course

The Martin Room, St Mary's, Church Hill, Pakenham, IP31 2LN

Tuesdays, 10 January to 14 February, 7:30pm - 8:45pm

"Letting Jesus Heal"

The six sessions cover:

- Being open to the love of God, Experiencing Jesus
- Faith and power in prayer, Creating a ministry time
- Inner healing, Barriers to healing

More info & bookings: Peter Gibbs, 07553173826, email: gibbspdh@hotmail.com

Contacts

Rev Phillip Garbett, Team Rector
Tel 01359-234415
Rest day: usually Friday

Rev Liz Jump, Team Vicar
Tel 01359-269265
Rest day: usually Friday

February Newsletter to be published on January 29, 2012

Please submit items to Pearl Godfrey pmg@capstonesystems.co.uk,
by Thursday 26 January

The Blackbourne Team Ministry

The Blackbourne Team of Churches consists of the parishes of Bardwell, Barnham, Euston, Fakenham Magna, Honington-with-Sapiston, Ingham with Ampton & Gt & Lt Livermere, Ixworth-with-Ixworth Thorpe, Troston