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# THE LINK

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ISSUE 69

MARCH/APRIL/MAY 2026



**IN THIS  
ISSUE**

EASTER  
SERVICES AND  
CHRISTMAS  
RECAPS

**Spring Butterfly**  
Contributed by Jennie Fielding

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Thank you all for your contributions towards the last edition of The Link, it was great to see all that is happening across the circuit. In this edition we hear what Churches have been up to over Christmas and look towards Easter. So make a cup of tea and settle down for a good and informative read.

In Tony's words 'The Link is intended as information for ourselves, a means of praying through all that is happening, and something to give to visitors to our Churches.'

Please send any contributions for the next issue to the details listed here.

## Deadline

**FOR THE JUN - AUG EDITION  
SATURDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> APRIL**

**Please send information for  
publication to Hannah Martin**

Please include details of activities  
up to the end of August

 **Email: [cnc.thelink@gmail.com](mailto:cnc.thelink@gmail.com)**

 **Phone: 07538281707**

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# Minister's Letter

Dear Friends,

Over the years I have found writing letters like this quite interesting. I am writing today as snow lies on the ground and the temperatures outside have been sub zero and we have been told that there is more snow to come. All being well Lent will have begun by the time you are reading this and we will be heading towards longer hours of daylight and warmer weather.

During our March, April, May plan we will see the Christian journey lead us through Lent and into Holy Week. One of the things I find fascinating about living in the Central Norfolk Circuit is that we have several what I would call heritage sites, and the main one is perhaps Walsingham, a village that has been a centre for pilgrimage for centuries.

We had a group who made an overnight stop at Trinity church on their walk with the cross to Walsingham and it made me think about the whole issue of pilgrimage. This is very different to partaking in a long distance walk, this is about walking in the footsteps of those who have gone before. The participants take it in turn to carry the cross, which is an experience of walking in the footsteps of Christ, and it is a witness to the wider world that this is an outward expression of faith.

Another sign of our heritage experience in this circuit is the wonderful East Anglia Methodist Heritage Centre in Wighton and I want to say thank you to those who work hard, committing time and energy to this important work. During the last year the team have secured finances and scheduled work to upgrade the facilities. I would encourage you to take time out to visit Wighton and maybe combine it with a visit to Walsingham, both these places are treasure within our Circuit.

As we reflect on the journey of faith that has existed in this part of East Anglia it is important to remember that we are the pilgrims in the modern day. As a leadership team we are trying to change the narrative of the Central Norfolk Circuit to give us a more missional agenda for the future. In recent years the narrative in Methodism has centred on being a dying Church. I believe that we stand on the threshold of new, creative, dynamic ministry and as the dark days of winter give way to joyous days of spring, I believe that there is hope for the journey ahead.

*With love, Derek*

# Norfolk and Waveney Churches Together Talk

A cold and damp evening did not deter 40 people gathering together for the Norfolk and Waveney Churches Together talk on Saint John Henry Newman on 22<sup>nd</sup> January during the week of prayer. Walsingham Methodist Church was the host and people travelled some miles. It was only the second year of this NWCT talk event.

The evening opened with a welcome and prayer by Aileen Fox. She gave a brief history of the chapel. Dr Ian Watson the County Ecumenical Officer spoke about Norfolk and Waveney Churches Together (NWCT) and in this week of prayer how it was necessary for us to come together in unity not uniformity. He emphasised how it really matters deeply in today's world. Unity at the heart of Christian faith particularly as expressed in the Nicene Creed. He then went on to introduce Fr. Michael Rear the speaker with the subject 'The Enduring relevance of Saint John Henry Newman for Christians today.'



Newman was an Anglican priest whose journey led him to become a Catholic convert and eventually to saint and Doctor of the Church. Fr Michael suggested this was in “itself an ecumenical story and one marked by intellectual honesty, deep prayer, and a refusal to take easy or polemical paths.” Fr. Michael’s recent book is Doctor of the Church: An introduction to St John Henry Newman (2025)

A full report of this event from Dr Ian Watson can be found on the Network Norwich website and can be reproduced with credit to him.

[www.networknorwich.co.uk/Articles/732754/Network\\_Norwich\\_and\\_Norfolk/Partners/Churches\\_Together\\_in\\_Norfolk\\_and\\_Waveney/The\\_Annual\\_NWCT\\_Talk.aspx](http://www.networknorwich.co.uk/Articles/732754/Network_Norwich_and_Norfolk/Partners/Churches_Together_in_Norfolk_and_Waveney/The_Annual_NWCT_Talk.aspx)

Following the talk refreshments were shared and lively and friendly conversation.

The report by Ian Watson really is worth reading, contact Aileen if you need a paper copy.

**Photo credit Aileen Fox**

# Circuit Leadership Team Spotlight:

## *Aileen Fox* *Senior Circuit Steward*



**Q. Where are you from?**

I was born and lived in the Bedford area until my husband's job took us to Bury St Edmunds in 1984. After 7 happy years there he went for promotion in another Local Authority and we moved in 1991 to Norfolk.

**Q. How did you get to do what you are doing now?**

I put myself forward as a Circuit Steward in the last year of Fakenham Wells and Holt Circuit as I was keen that with the merger coming up, there might be opportunities to do things differently. Having worked in various roles in the public and charity sectors including the Methodist Connexion I hoped these skills could be of use. I stayed as Circuit Steward for 5 years but couldn't fit in all the daytime meetings. A few years later I was encouraged back.

**Q. Please describe yourself in three words: I try hard.**

**Q. What are your hobbies/interest?**

I love all sorts of craft work particularly sewing, tapestry, machine embroidery but I've also done printing, glass fusing and other workshops. In fact I've tried lots of different crafts and I'm shortly to do a weaving day, plus I have a voucher for a pottery wheel workshop. I also enjoy flower arranging, reading and photography. I tried Pilates last year and go weekly plus when time permits walking and of course travel. Problem is fitting it all in. I do love reading though at the moment its quick crime novels, but I can get so immersed in a book I stay up late or don't do the outstanding tasks or get enough sleep.

**Q. Is there a book you've read recently that you'd recommend?**

Not a recent read but my favourite Wind in the Willows by Kenneth Grahame. I led a workshop last year and I asked people to identify as one of the 4 main characters, I supplied biographies. Many of us identified as Mole but also saw other traits creeping in. To me it represents us in our life journey and how we are at various stages.

**Q. What is the best thing about being a Methodist?**

Whilst I get as cross as anyone about bureaucracy I do feel more connected to others and I prefer the preaching aspect and not always being tied to a liturgy. I suppose it's freedom not being part of the establishment like the Church of England, and democratic for the most part.

**Q. What makes you grumpy?** People ignoring me.

**Q. Which is your favourite Bible verse and why?**

(Authorised KJV Hebrews 6 v19 a) 'Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast.' This is where the Boys' Brigade motto 'Sure and Stedfast' comes from and I was a BB Officer. It's a reminder of the hope in Jesus and that he is always there like an anchor on a boat.

**Q. Which is your favourite Hymn?**

StF 67 This this is the God we adore- it says it all, our faithful unchanging friend, then Jesus praising him for all that is past and trust for all that's to come. I heard it when a momentous church decision was made in Bedford when a teenager, it stayed with me. I had it at my wedding and my husband's funeral. Other friends also used it and my aunt chose it for her own funeral. Its special.

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## Visit Walsingham Methodist Chapel

Services on 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month at 4.30pm followed by a meal if you wish to stay.

Everyone welcome (no need to book for the meal unless special dietary needs)

The chapel isn't always open on weekdays at the moment, the circuit weekly newsletter will carry updates. If you wish to arrange a visit please contact:- Aileen on 07787156335 or 01328 856494

Email [aileenfox123@gmail.com](mailto:aileenfox123@gmail.com) or [walsinghammethodist@gmail.com](mailto:walsinghammethodist@gmail.com)

Please give as much notice as possible.

We will try and arrange a mutually suitable date and time. There are regular school visits and other groups already booked in.



**Save the date June 13th Summer EA District Pilgrimage.  
Wells - Walsingham led by Sarah Friswell and Aileen Fox.**



**THE HIVE**  
CREATIVITY ~ SPIRITUALITY ~ WELL-BEING



**EAST ANGLIA PILGRIMS**  
— Walking in Faith —

What a joy to find ourselves in partnership with other missional initiatives!

The new season at The Hive has just got underway. We have begun with Celtic Journeys and end with the launch event for an innovative series of Pilgrim Walks.

The series is being spear-headed by Sarah Friswell who has been instrumental in establishing the East Anglia Methodist Heritage Centre in Wighton.

No better than to hear from Sarah, herself, about the Pilgrimage project.

She writes –

*“Pilgrimage is an ancient tradition which has had many meanings over the years. Often seen as an exclusively religious activity, it is now widely understood in the secular world too. Thousands of people undertake pilgrimage journeys each year, with the ‘Camino’ in Northern Spain being the most popular route. TV programmes follow groups of celebrities on pilgrimage. There are shelves full of books on the topic. The benefits of taking time out from our busy lives, surrounding ourselves with nature, having conversations with fellow pilgrims on the way and striding out and getting some exercise are not to be underestimated. Pilgrimage is good for the body and the soul.*

*This year, a series of walking pilgrimages is being planned in East Anglia. This starts with an event at **The Hive, on Saturday 28 March**. This will give a chance to hear about pilgrimage locally and discuss what it might mean to us today, with guest speaker, **Josiah English, from the Julian Shrine in Norwich**. The presentation will be followed by a short ‘taster’ pilgrimage walk around Great Cressingham.*

*Other one-day pilgrimages are planned for **May (Starting at Over, Cambridgeshire) and June (starting at Wells-next-the-Sea)** with more dates to follow, including a longer walk from The Hive taking in significant pilgrimage locations such as **St Mary’s, Houghton on the Hill**. If you are a budding pilgrim (all pilgrimages are open to all), look out for further information via the District website, or contact me, Sarah Friswell, on [sarah.friswell@btinternet.com](mailto:sarah.friswell@btinternet.com) to be kept up to date with details.”*

This chimes so well with The Hive’s already established series of ‘Walk and Talk’ and we hope our Hive community will want to venture into other parts of Norfolk and beyond as they join East Anglia Pilgrims.

Here is the full programme for the current season. Once again, there is something for everyone. Susan focuses on lower back pain for her well-being Yoga class on Saturday 7 March and on Friday 13 March, David takes us on a whistle-stop tour of historic Norfolk Railways.



**SPRINGTIME AT THE HIVE - 2026**

**SAVE THE DATE!**

Friday 23 January 11.00 - 12.30 | **CELTIC JOURNEYS - TREE OF LIFE**

Thursday 29 January 3.00 - 4.00 | **THOUGHTS ON THURSDAYS**

Sunday 1 February 2.30 - 5.00 | **OPEN PLAY-READING - An Inspector Calls**

Friday 6 February 11.00 - 12.30 | **CREATIVITY from CHAOS in WW1**

Saturday 14 February 11.00 - 3.00 | **RETREAT DAY - ANCHORS & ARROWS**

Thursday 26 February 3.00 - 4.00 | **THOUGHTS ON THURSDAYS**

Saturday 7 March 2.30 - 4.30 | **YOGA for LOWER BACK PAIN**

Friday 13 March 11.00 - 12.30 | **NORFOLK RAILWAYS - A LOST HERITAGE**

Saturday 21 March 2.30 - 5.30 | **SPRING SING - CASUAL CHOIR**

Thursday 26 March 3.00 - 4.00 | **THOUGHTS ON THURSDAYS**

Saturday 28 March 11.00 - 3.30 | **PILGRIMAGES with JOSIAH ENGLISH**

Follow us on facebook

All our events are free - donations welcomed

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**THE HIVE**  
CREATIVITY - SPIRITUALITY - WELL-BEING

The best way of keeping in touch with the programme at The Hive is to follow us on facebook. View the QR code on the right through the camera app on your smartphone and tap the link that pops up. If you want to get in touch, you can email us at [thehiveplace@gmail.com](mailto:thehiveplace@gmail.com) or by texting or calling 07976 286245. Looking forward to a fruitful season.



*Sarah Rodgers*  
*January 2026*

# Living Well Together: Food, Faith, and Consideration

People can be vegetarian for health, ethical, eco and/or religious reasons or out of necessity. I regard it primarily as an expression of my faith. Vegetarians, and those with other dietary requirements, are always very appreciative of food choices made with them in mind. Methodists are famous for their inclusivity, hospitality and catering! However, if you are not vegetarian yourself and are cooking/baking for those who are, you may not be aware of what is acceptable as vegetarian. Likewise, you may not realise that just talking about non vegetarian food can make some vegetarians feel extremely uncomfortable.

It is not enough to avoid meat, poultry, game, fish and shellfish. I once ordered a vegetable curry in an Indian restaurant. It wasn't long before I spotted some pieces of chicken in it so it was taken away... and the same dish was brought back minus the chicken. That's still not veggie! (Those who eat fish but not other flesh are pescatarian rather than vegetarian).

Would you be on safer ground with a cheese and tomato quiche? Sadly, the answer is no. When made with lard, the pastry contains white pork fat. There is a veggie alternative, however, listed later. Second, cheese made in the traditional way is not vegetarian either; the rennet is probably derived from a calf's stomach. I find it frustrating that even in 'vegetarian' cookbooks, Parmesan (Parmigiano Reggiano), for example, is erroneously classed as vegetarian. When choosing cheese, (and most other foods) look for 'Vegetarian Society approved', 'suitable for vegetarians', 'V', wheat 'tick' or small leaf logo.

The following checklist of vegetarian alternative store cupboard/fridge essentials should help you create dishes with confidence.

<b><u>Non-Vegetarian</u></b>	<b><u>Vegetarian Alternative</u></b>
Beef/Chicken stock cubes	Vegetable stock cubes or bouillon powder
Beef suet	Vegetarian suet (e.g. Atora)
Cheese: Cheddar, Red Leicester, etc Parmesan	Check for the 'v' or small leaf logo Vegetarian hard Italian cheese
Eggs from hens kept in cages or barns	Free range eggs
Lard	Vegetarian 'Cookeen' or 'Trex'

Dripping /Goose fat	Sunflower or olive oil: ordinary for cooking. Extra virgin olive oil for dressings Flora, Flora Butterly or butter can be used for spreading, frying, cooking and baking
Gelatine, made from animal bones, cartilage and skin	Agar agar (seaweed derivative) / Pectin Gelatine finds its way into yoghurts, marshmallows and sweets as well as savoury foods. Please read all labels carefully!
Jelly (gelatine)	Vegetarian jelly granules from a health food shop
Meat/ chicken stock	The liquid vegetables are cooked in / stock made with hot water and vegetable bouillon powder
Milk	Organic milk appreciated
Whey powder containing rennet in some packet/other foods	Vegetarian whey powder

It is so wonderful to have vegetarian options labelled clearly and served separately. On behalf of all vegetarians, may I say a big thank you for reading this and bearing it in mind or doing this already!

*Elizabeth Lodge,  
Tittleshall Methodist Chapel*

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# Lectionary Readings & Weekly Hymns

**If you need the Lectionary Readings or Weekly Hymns, use the link below, scroll down and choose the date on the calendar that you want to look at - it will then show you hymns under one tab, and prayers under another:**

**[www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/resources](http://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/resources)**

# Christmas at Swaffham

By the time we read our new copy of 'The Link', Christmas 2025 will probably seem a while ago and we will have moved on to new things for 2026 but, as with all Christians, we hope and pray that the good news messages of Christmas will remain throughout the year.

Here is just a flavour of Christmas 2025 at Swaffham Methodist Church ...

As usual, our **Christmas Fayre** (Saturday 6th December) was a very happy and enjoyable event. It was also a great success. Yes, we raised a very welcome amount of money for church funds, but more importantly than that was being able to welcome into our building such a lot of different people – many of whom we have not seen before in our building. Everyone seemed very happy to be there, and it was wonderful to be able to welcome in and chat to 'new faces' about our church and what would be happening during the Christmas period. After browsing our stalls, people enjoyed a cuppa and a cake or scone with more chat and more of the lovely atmosphere. (photos taken before 'the rush'!)



Sadly, we didn't manage to take photos of our Café-style Candlelit Carols (Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December) but the church was full – including families and many young people – with everyone enjoying their teas or coffees and mince pies while hearing and taking part in the wonder of the Christmas story. We sang carols, of course, and heard Bible readings but we also enjoyed Christmas music, poetry, some beautiful singing from a group of very talented young people and a special Christmas box-making craft activity, based on the Methodist Church Christmas 'Gifted' resources. Again, it was lovely to be able to welcome so many people that we do not normally see in church.

The Thursday Swaffham Friendship Group had a lovely time at their Christmas lunch on 18th December and enjoyed a good meal and good company.

Another opportunity for a cuppa, mince pies and carol singing (oh, and the usual toast and jam, quizzes and chat!) was at The Meeting Place Christmas Drop-In (Tuesday 23rd December) before a two-week break from Drop-In activities.



We thank Revd Neil very much for giving us a lovely, moving Christmas Eve service, attended by 25 people, at which we were able to celebrate the birth of Jesus at midnight – on the dot! Swaffham hasn't had a late-night Christmas Eve service for a long, long time so we hope we may be able to do it again next Christmas. Thank you also, Revd Neil, for a joyous and very special Christmas Morning service on the theme 'Behold your Light!'

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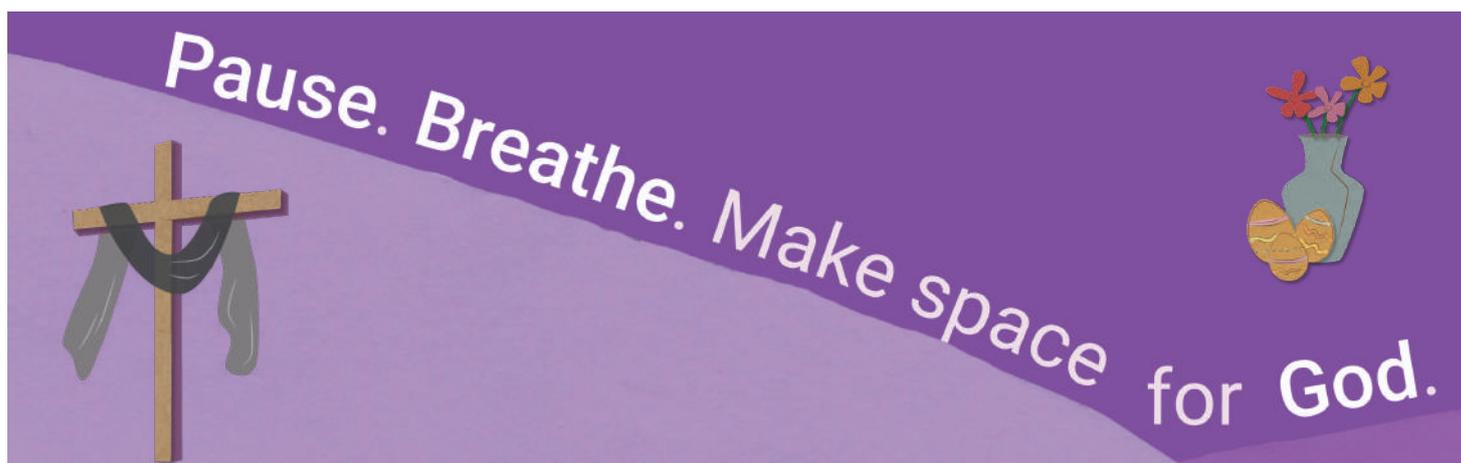
## Photo Competition

Are you a budding photographer or a keen artist?

We're looking for artwork or photographs for the front cover of The Link Magazine.

Anything summer themed would be appreciated! Please do send over any submissions and we'll pick one for the next issue, crediting the artist or photographer.

**Email submissions to [cnc.thelink@gmail.com](mailto:cnc.thelink@gmail.com) or call 07538281707 for postal address.**



# Helhoughton Monthly Charity Coffee Mornings

Here are the amounts raised in November and December:

- QE Hospital - £175 for pillows
- Save the Children - £175

From our 12 Coffee Mornings in 2025 a total of £1,437.50 was raised! Thank you so much to everyone who has supported these events.

Our next upcoming Tuesday Coffee Mornings are in aid of:

- Ukraine Relief on **31st March**
- Mid Norfolk Foodbank on **28th April**
- Mind (mental health charity) on **26th May**

All are welcome any time from 10:00 a.m. in Helhoughton Village Church Hall on The Street and we close at midday. Come and enjoy a hot drink and a homemade bake or two, including options made with vegetarian/vegan/gluten free/low sugar ingredients, in a warm and friendly atmosphere! Just donate what you can afford.

We also act as a collection point for items for the Mid Norfolk Foodbank; toiletries and cleaning products as well as tinned/packet food items.

**Elizabeth Lodge,  
Tittleshall Methodist Chapel**

## Lent Course at Holt Methodist Church

Following *The Nail*, by Stephen Cottrell  
during Lent 2026

7pm on Thursdays  
26<sup>th</sup> Feb - 26<sup>th</sup> March  
in the Loades Hall





















# **It's all the same to you**

**by Andrew Fielding**

**They drank your wine in Cana  
no one ever knew  
water wine wine water  
it was all the same to you**

**They drank your wine at supper  
was it really true  
wine or blood blood or wine  
it was all the same to you**

**I drink your wine on Sundays  
I'm bewildered too  
death or life I'll have life  
for I'm everything to you**

# News from Churches

## Holt

Holt Afternoon Teas continue to be a very popular monthly event enjoyed by local people and visitors alike. My team and I work hard to ensure that top quality homemade cakes and scones are available to eat in or take away. Customers always comment on the quality of the produce and the friendly atmosphere in which to enjoy the tempting treats. Whilst there you can browse the book stall, craft and other bits and pieces or win some goodies on our Prize every time Tombola.

If you've never been, why not come along and relax in a pleasant, happy atmosphere. Have a look in our cake cabinet then take a seat and be waited on by one of our friendly waiters/waitresses. There is something to suit all tastes, choose a Savoury Tea, consisting of a Pot of Tea, Cheese or Cheese and Chive or Stilton and walnut Scones with a portion of cheese and chutney or perhaps you would prefer a Cream Tea with Pot of Tea, fruit scone, butter, jam and clotted cream. Our very popular Norfolk Shortcakes, Bakewell tart and Fruit Loaf are always available along with many other cakes. Gluten free and Dairy free items are available.



Our teas are on the Third Friday of each month unless otherwise advertised. From 2 till 4.

You are assured of a warm welcome! We look forward to seeing you,

Joselyn, Sally, Dee and the rest of the team. (Many working behind the scenes, setting up, advertising and of course the all important washing up. Mary on Books etc and Anita and Micky on Tombola.)

# SPRING PARTY

12 PM 24<sup>TH</sup> MAY

BBQ, MUSIC AND  
WORSHIP AT  
**HOLT MEMORIAL  
GARDENS**

## Litcham

Wow!! This year has started as quickly as the last year ended!! Even my 16 year old said "time is going so quickly," so now I don't feel so bad or so old!! But as we are amazed at the way time is flying and look at everything that is going on in the world today, I am struck by the fact that we sometimes get caught up in Life, we don't enjoy it, we just get through it. Maybe we should STOP once in a while and think about the blessings around us. Whether it be joy at being surrounded by our friends and families, the thrill of meeting up with our church family through the week or just simply enjoying the beauty around us. Let's take time to appreciate how lucky we are.

When life is going at a ridiculous pace, do we remember to thank God, to ask him for help, to just simply sit with him?

At our last service I shared with my church family "7 promises for today". This was not written by me but came up on my social media feed (it has it's uses sometimes!).

I will fight for you – Exodus 14:14

I have plans for you – Jeremiah 29:11

I will never leave you – Deuteronomy 31:6

I will give you peace – Isaiah 26:3

I will meet your need – Philippians 4:19

I will bless you – 2 Corinthians 9:8

I will lead you – Proverbs 3:6

Perhaps we should remember all of these as we go through life. Let's make a resolution for 2026 to walk more closely with God and to take the time to listen to him.

If anyone would like to visit us in the beautiful village of Litcham, we would love to welcome you. We have a few events taking place over the next few months:

- Every Friday from 20<sup>th</sup> February to 27<sup>th</sup> March 10.00 am we will be holding our Lent bible studies
- Ordinarily the third Friday of every month at 10.00 am we run a bible study
- 21<sup>st</sup> March at 10.00 we are holding a coffee morning in aid of the Air Ambulance
- 29<sup>th</sup> March will see us join others to process around the village for Palm Sunday
- 3<sup>rd</sup> April is our Good Friday walk of witness from Tittleshall to Litcham
- Every Thursday morning 10.30 – 12.00 we hold a coffee morning.

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## Mattishall

We joined with the Anglicans for the annual visit of the Dereham Salvation Army Band to Welborne in December and enjoyed a time of singing familiar carols and fellowship together.

The Joint Bible Study began again in January this time focusing on Elijah.

We will be hosting the village World Day of Prayer service on 6th March prepared by women from Nigeria on the theme "I will give you rest, come".

# Saham Hills

A happy new year and warm blessings to everyone, we only have a service every fortnight since last summer as we are so few in number and it has taken a while to adjust for those of us who cannot travel to another church. One must find time to keep in touch with God in our everyday lives, a few minutes quiet is all it needs but I know our small congregation is missing the Sunday social time in prayer but we do thank and appreciate all the preachers who come to support us.

We always decorate our chapel with fresh flowers for each service and we usually go to town for Remembrance Sunday but last year we did not have a service on that day so Marian constructed a display to stand outside the chapel, the stones around the base carry the names of the village men who did not return from fighting in the war. Many of the names are still in the village today.

Our Christmas Tinsel Fair was held on November 22<sup>nd</sup> and was well attended by our very generous local residents, stalls with pottery, jewellery, Christmas gifts, books and craft did very well and the excellent cake stall, including iced Christmas cakes, sold quickly whilst everyone enjoyed tea and mince pies served by Anjie and Dave. Overall the day was a great success. We then held two Carol Services in December, Saham Toney and Watton Women's Institute used the chapel for their Carol Service on December 1st. It was lovely to see the chapel pews full and they kindly gave us a donation for the use of the chapel which was brightly decorated with lights and trees.



Our own Carol Service was held on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup>, fewer people attended but Jackie Woor in her usual entertaining way gave us a lovely service and it is always nice to sing carols with tea and mince pies to follow isn't it? As we didn't have another service before Christmas it was a nice way to enjoy Advent in a happy social get together and look forward to the festivities to come.

In June this year we celebrate 150 years our chapel has been in the village, so we are planning something special for such an important day, us few congregation will have to put our heads together soon.

**Dot McIlroy**

# Sculthorpe & Fakenham

Christmas Tree in Chapel - At our Carol Service we collected £155 for Action for Children.

Christmas Tree in Parish Church raised £262.49 for Action for Children.

Coffee Morning held on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2025 raised £665.96 for Chapel funds.

A big thank you for to everyone for their help and support at these events.



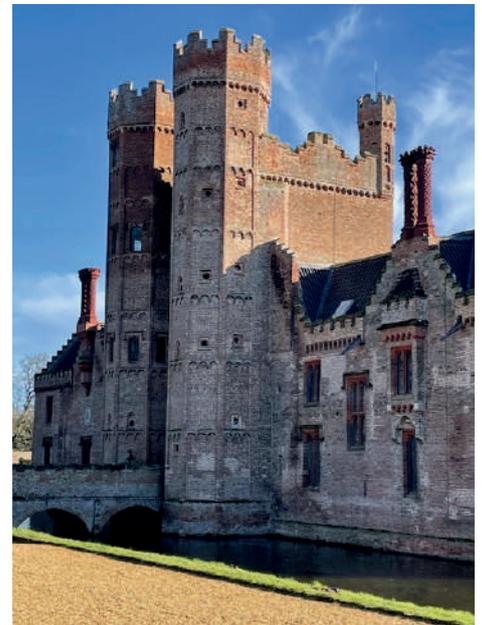
In December the congregation presented me (Avril) with a lovely planter for outside my door, a gift for All We Can and a beautiful card. It was for my 75 years at the chapel - a sincere thank you to everyone.



# Swaffham

At the end of the Ecumenical Week of Prayer we visited the chapel at Oxborough Hall where the snowdrops looked wonderful.

I didn't take a picture of the chapel but the hall is impressive with its moat. We were taken into the hall by Lady Mary and Sir Henry Bedingfeld and given refreshments. A truly lovely last day of praying together with other churches in Swaffham.



## Wells

Things have been a relatively quiet in the Church in Wells recently. Christmas was an enjoyable time when we joined with Churches Together in supporting the St Martins Housing Trust. We also put our “little grey cells” to work in tackling the Christmas Quiz devised by one of our members.

In November we held an “Afternoon tea with poetry” which drew in many people who are not regular members of the congregation. It was enjoyed very much by all and so many brought poems to read that there was not time to hear all of them. By popular demand another afternoon is planned in February.

This year, it is our turn to host the joint service during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity at the Methodist Church on Sunday 25 January.

Future dates are:

- Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April - the Pilgrim Cross group of young people will be staying in Wells Methodist Church for the night again on their way to Walsingham for Easter.
- Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April - A Spring Sale, including plants, cakes and refreshments, will be held in Wells Methodist Church in the afternoon (details tbc).

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## Walsingham Crib Festival

Walsingham Methodist Chapel was the setting for a display of nativity cribs from 5<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2025. It was the second year of holding the exhibition.

We are truly grateful to all who helped with stewarding and other tasks, plus distributing flyers/invitations to households nearby. We think over a hundred people visited, with people asking about 2026! A big thank you to everyone. It took over 5 hours to set up the exhibition and longer to take it all down and pack it away.

The collection belongs to Aileen and we thought with additions last year it was about 86 in total. A quick count made it 106!



The chapel opened daily and being able to display them in such an historic building with LED candles and tealights glowing as it grew dark and carol CD's playing quietly in the background it made for a really special atmosphere and a sense of peace.

After a initial slow start people began to come in and to ask questions. Why cribs? How did the collection start? Would it grow? Where do you store them? What is your favourite? It was an opportunity to share thoughts on how we view the nativity and the birth of Jesus; it was always too a time to listen to peoples own stories, plus their interest in the chapel and its history. Many photographs were taken and a video by one visitor has apparently been shown to family and friends in Ireland.

The collection really started following a holiday Aileen had in Prague, Czech Republic. Friends took her to a touring exhibition in Plzen where exquisitely carved old European cribs were on display. This exhibition started a collecting interest and whilst supposedly not being added to, has grown (even a week before the exhibition) quite a bit!

Over the years several open house displays took place at her home, and when much smaller the collection went to Blakeney Methodist for two crib services. Individual sets also featured over the years when Aileen was leading Advent or Christmas services.

Some cribs were bought by Aileen and Roger on holidays, others were gifts, or from Walsingham shops or fairly traded outlets, many have sentimental associations. Roger encouraged Aileen to add to the collection, though the very large crafted wooden sets from Austria and Poland were a step too far for size and cost. For a few years after Roger's death Aileen couldn't face having the whole collection out, now she sees the pleasure and interest others receive from seeing them and in the beautiful surroundings at Walsingham Methodist Chapel.

The cribs vary from traditional Olive wood from Bethlehem to modern metal ones from India, ceramic from Peru, wooden from European Cities, glass from Venice plus felt from the Middle East and Poland. There are knitted figures from Walsingham and colourful child friendly play sets, with culture and national identity influencing many sets.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> December the exhibition closed with the carol service. Many people attended sharing in the celebration of the coming of Christ. Looking at the cribs the message shared was Christ worshipped by rich and poor- shepherds and wise men, Jewish and non-Jewish people. Christ today is for everyone and his Love is for all.

# Dates Around the Circuit

## Beetley

**Services:** 10.30am on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays  
6pm on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays

**Big Sunday:** 10.30am on 1<sup>st</sup> March & 31<sup>st</sup> May

**Drop-In:** 2 - 3pm. Wednesdays. 4<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> March, 1<sup>st</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> April, 6<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> May

**Knit 'n' Natter:** 2 - 3pm. Wednesdays. 25<sup>th</sup> March, 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 27<sup>th</sup> May

**Coffee Mornings:** 9.30 - 11.30am. 28<sup>th</sup> March (25% to St.Martin's Housing Trust)  
23<sup>rd</sup> May (25% to Cancer Research)

## Dereham Trinity

**Services:** Every Sunday at 10.45 am

**Ladies Anniversary:** 3<sup>rd</sup> May at 10.45am, led by Rev Val Spencer

**Mid Week Communion:** 10.30 am. 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 7<sup>th</sup> May  
(Contact Jacky Woor 01362 697860)

**Lunch Club:** 12 noon. 12<sup>th</sup> March, 9<sup>th</sup> April, 14<sup>th</sup> May  
(Contact Katharine Smith 01362 691225)

**Coffee Mornings:** 10 -11.30 am. 19<sup>th</sup> March, 16<sup>th</sup> April, 21<sup>st</sup> May  
(Contact Jacky 01362 697860)

**Cards & Chatter:** 10-12 noon. 26<sup>th</sup> March, 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 29<sup>th</sup> May  
(Contact Sylvia Meredith 01362 693425)

**Women's Own:** 2.15 pm. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup> March. 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> April.  
5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> May. (Contact Olwyn Brough 01362 692799)

**Coffee Morning:** 10-12 noon. 30<sup>th</sup> April  
at the home of Sylvia and Richard Meredith (Contact 01362 693425)

**World Day of Prayer:** 6<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm

## Fulmodeston

**Services :** 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month at 2.30pm.

**Chapel Anniversary:** 19<sup>th</sup> April led by Mrs Beryl Flood

## Garvestone

**Services: Most Sundays at 3pm.**

## Gressenhall

**Services: 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month at 2.30pm**

We have a special service for Mothers Day and Holy Communion on Easter Sunday. A warm welcome to you all.

Jams and Marmalade are always on sale at 12 Chequers Lane NR20 4EU all proceeds to Chapel funds.

## Hingham

**Services: Every Sunday at 10.30am**

**Coffee Shop with stalls:** 10am - 12noon. 7<sup>th</sup> March, 11<sup>th</sup> April, 9<sup>th</sup> May

**Ecumenical Soup Lunch:** 12noon - 2pm. 11<sup>th</sup> March

## Holt

**Services: Every Sunday at 11am**

**Friday Prayer Time:** 9.30am on Fridays

**Afternoon Teas:** 2 - 4pm. 20<sup>th</sup> March, 17<sup>th</sup> April, 15<sup>th</sup> May

**Lent Bible Study:** Thursdays. 26<sup>th</sup> Feb, 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> March

**Spring Party:** 24<sup>th</sup> May at Holt Memorial Gardens at 12noon

## Litcham

**Services: Every Sunday at 9.30am**

**Coffee Mornings:** Every Thursday 10.30am - 12noon

**Bible Study:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Fridays at 10am

**Lent Bible Study:** Fridays, 20<sup>th</sup> Feb - 27<sup>th</sup> March at 10am

**Coffee Morning:** Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March at 10am, in aid of Air Ambulance

**Palm Sunday Procession:** 29<sup>th</sup> March at 10.15am

**Good Friday Walk of Witness:** 3<sup>rd</sup> April from Tittleshall to Litcham

## Mattishall

**Services: Every Sunday at 2.30pm**

**Weekly Bible Study:** Thursdays at 2pm. Alternating with Garvestone Methodist Church (Contact Fred on 01362 850750 for venue)

**World Day of Prayer:** Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm

## New Holkham

**Services: Last Sunday of the month at 2.30pm**

## Saham Hills

**Services: Every 1st & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday at 10.30am**

**Mothering Sunday Service:** 15<sup>th</sup> March at 10.30am

**Hot Cross Bun Coffee Morning:** Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April at 10.30am

**Easter Sunday Service:** 5<sup>th</sup> April at 10.30am

**Plant Sale & Coffee Morning:** Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> May at 10.30am

## Sculthorpe & Fakenham

**Services: Every Sunday at 11am**

### **Good Friday Walk of Witness 2026 in Fakenham**

Once again Churches Together in Fakenham will be leading a Walk of Witness on Good Friday April 3rd 2026.

We start at St. Anthony's Catholic Church ( 29 Wells Road, Fakenham NR21 9EN) around 11:45am and will conclude in the Market Place. We will then congregate in the Salvation Army Hall for coffee and Hot cross buns.

## Stibbard

**Services: 11am on 29<sup>th</sup> March**

**Last Service: Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May**

## Swaffham

**Services: Every Sunday at 10.45am followed by refreshments**

**The Meeting Place Drop-In:** 10am - 12noon. Every Tuesday  
Free refreshments. Warm welcome for everyone.

**Soup & Pudding:** Follows Drop-In, Tues 17<sup>th</sup> Feb. Choice of soup & puddings.

**Power of Prayer Group:** 9.30am. Fridays. (Contact 07468518084 for venue)

**Church Coffee Mornings & Stalls :** 9.30am - 12noon. 7<sup>th</sup> March, 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2<sup>nd</sup> May

**Swaffham Friendship Group:** 2.30pm. Thursdays  
12<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> March, 9<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 14<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> May

**Ecumenical World Day of Prayer:** 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2.30pm at Swaffham Baptist Church

**Mothering Sunday Service:** 15th March at 10.45am. All Age Worship with Holy Communion. Led by Rev Neil Vels

**Maundy Thursday Service:** 2<sup>nd</sup> April at 7pm. Led by Rev Neil Vels

**Easter Sunday Worship & Communion:** 5<sup>th</sup> April at 9.30am. Led by Rev Neil Vels.  
**Easter Sunday Fellowship Service:** 5<sup>th</sup> April at 10.45am

## Tittleshall

**Services: Most Sundays at 9.30am. Occasional Joint Services at Litcham.**

**Coffee Mornings:** 10.30am - 12noon. Every Wednesday

## Toftwood

**Services: Every Sunday at 11am (Bring & Share Lunch on 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in month)**

**Weekly Lace Group:** 9.30 - 12noon. Every Monday

**Carpet Bowls:** 1.45 - 4pm. Every Thursday

**Coffee Shop & Stalls:** 10am - 12noon. 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month.

**Mothering Sunday Service:** 15<sup>th</sup> March

**Good Friday Service:** 3<sup>rd</sup> April at 9.30am

## Walsingham

**Services: 2nd Sunday of the month 4.30pm followed by a meal. All Welcome.**  
8<sup>th</sup> March, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 10<sup>th</sup> May

## Watton

**Services: Every Sunday at 10.30am (mostly live-streamed)**  
**Evening Services: 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays at 6.30pm**

**Coffee Mornings: 9.30am - 11.30am. Every Wednesday in the Methodist Centre.**  
Delicious refreshments and a friendly welcome to all.

**Tuesdays at Two: 2pm. 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays of the month at Methodist Centre**  
All are welcome to a variety of activities. Suitable for all abilities with refreshments.

## Wells

**Services: Every Sunday at 11am**

**Spring Sale: Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April**

## Wendling

**Services: 10.30am 15<sup>th</sup> March, 5<sup>th</sup> April, 3<sup>rd</sup> May**

## Circuit Dates

**Circuit Meeting: Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March, 10.30am at Toftwood**

**Circuit Treasurer's Meeting: Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April, 7pm at Trinity Dereham**

**Circuit Meeting: Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July, 7.15pm at Swaffham**

# Regular Dates

Day 	 Activity	 Location	 Time
<b>Monday</b>	Weekly Lace Group	Toftwood MC	9.30am - 12noon
	Community Lunch	Wells	12 noon
<b>Tuesday</b>	The Meeting Place Drop-In	Swaffham MC	10 - 12noon
	Women's Own	Dereham Trinity MC	2.15pm
<b>Wednesday</b>	Coffee Shop	Watton Centre	9.30am
	Coffee Morning	Tittleshall MC	10.30am - 12 noon
	Prayer & Praise	Wells	10.30am
<b>Thursday</b>	Coffee Morning	Litcham MC	10.30am - 12 noon
	Carpet Bowls	Toftwood MC	1.45 - 4pm
	Ecumenical Bible Study & Discussion Group	Garvestone /Mattishall MC	2pm
<b>Friday</b>	Prayer Time	Holt MC	9.30am
	Power of Prayer Group	Swaffham	9.30am

**If you have a prayer request, please contact Glyn Constantine  
glynandang@gmail.com**

# The Link Magazine

PRODUCED FOR THE CENTRAL NORFOLK CIRCUIT

Phone: 07736 467831



[www.centralnorfolkmethodistcircuit.org.uk](http://www.centralnorfolkmethodistcircuit.org.uk)



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