

GOOD NEWS

FOR NORWICH & NORFOLK

Easter 2014: FREE

Inside

New chief - 3
Act of faith - 4
New churches - 6
Spiritual battle - 9
Church pioneer - 10



Norfolk Who Cares? mission is ready to go

■ **NORFOLK:** Christians were trained for the Who Cares? mission at the end of March, and are now equipped to transform the lives of Norfolk people by listening and responding to their concerns. Over 150 people from Norfolk churches attended the training held at the King's Centre in Norwich on March 29 and 30.

Delegates were guided through the two stages of the mission: the Listening Phase whereby local people are asked the question "What hurts the most?" and the Responding Phase when churches address the concerns raised in specific and relevant ways.

Who Cares? project leader Rob Tervet, along with Julian Bryant and Lucy Parker led the

sessions on how the mission will be conducted.

Advice was given on how to ask people the question 'What hurts the most?', including role play of different situations and video clips of how the conversations might go.

Some churches might choose to leaflet-drop their local area - or approach people directly. Some respondents may answer the question face-to-face, others anonymously through the Who Cares? website. A softer way to answer the question is 'What's the one thing in life you find hardest to handle?'

The key to this part of the mission is that it is the listening phase. The survey will be conducted between June 1 and August 2.

After the data has been analysed, it will be made available to churches so they can understand the responses and take action based on the needs raised. Examples of how to respond include Alpha courses, sermon series to specifically address the top issues raised, pastoral visiting service and special events. Rob Tervet asked people to be thinking about creative ways to respond to the results of the survey.

Rob Tervet and Toby Skipper of King's Community Church, Julian Bryant of Tearfund UK, Ailsa Magee, from Newday, Lucy Parker, Ian Dyble from St Thomas' Church and evangelist Eric Delve also ran sessions.

By Helen Baldry



First female Dean of Norwich is appointed

■ **NORWICH:** The Queen has approved the nomination of the Revd Canon Jane Hedges (above) as the next Dean of Norwich, the first female Dean in the Cathedral's 900-year history.

Canon Hedges (58), who is currently Canon Steward of Westminster Abbey, will succeed the Very Revd Graham Smith who retired in September.

Commenting on her appointment, Canon Hedges said: "My move from Westminster Abbey to the Deanery of Norwich will be both exciting and challenging. I am particularly looking forward to working with Bishop Graham and his senior staff team and getting to know Chapter colleagues and the community at the Cathedral as we explore together how to take forward its ministry within the Diocese in imaginative ways. "Being part of the community at Westminster Abbey has taught me an enormous amount about Benedictine spirituality and hospitality and so it is a great joy to be joining another community where the Benedictine principle of welcoming all people is at the heart of its life. My family and I are looking forward to getting to know people throughout the Diocese and to exploring the beautiful countryside and coast of East Anglia and to welcoming people to our home in the Deanery."

The Bishop of Norwich, the Rt Revd Graham James, said: "I am delighted to welcome Jane Hedges to be Dean of Norwich and look forward greatly to working with her. Jane has a wide experience in ministry in parishes, a cathedral and most recently at Westminster Abbey. Jane is well known in the Church of England for the quality of her pastoral and teaching ministry.

"I am sure that she possesses the gifts we need at this stage in the life of Norwich Cathedral and the Appointment Panel was unanimous in wanting Jane to be our next Dean. I look forward enormously to her installation on Saturday June 21. Jane and her husband Chris can be assured of a very big welcome to Norwich and the Diocese."

Canon Hedges trained for ministry at Cranmer Hall, Durham, in 1978, before women could be ordained as deacons and priests. She was made a deaconess in 1980 and was ordained deacon when the Church of England changed its laws to allow female deacons in 1987. She was one of the first women to be ordained priest in 1994. She spent the early years of her ministry in parishes in Fareham and Southampton before becoming Stewardship Adviser in the Diocese of Portsmouth in 1988.

In 1993, Canon Hedges became Canon Residentiary of Portsmouth Cathedral, then spent a further five years in parish ministry in the Diocese of Exeter before being made Canon Steward of Westminster Abbey in 2006.

Back from Brazil to Norfolk mission

With the England football team heading for Brazil this summer to play in the World Cup, two Norfolk Christian missionaries have travelled in the opposite direction after spending four years working in the slums of Belo Horizonte where a very different world exists. Helen Baldry reports.



Beckie and Dave Ward back in Norwich.

Beckie and Dave Ward have spent the last four year in Brazil with their two sons Gideon aged 15 and Josiah 17, working for Christian development charity Youth With A Mission (YWAM) in the favela - or slum - of Belo Horizonte.

Beckie studied art and worked as a teaching assistant in Norfolk before working in Brazil so she used these skills in a local community centre where she worked with children and visited local families. She taught them Bible stories, organised sports and events.

Dave's work focused around adults in the slum, particularly working with drug addicts and alcoholics. His work involved practical tasks such as taking people to hospital and praying with them.

The work in Brazil was exhausting said Beckie and they were at times overwhelmed by the

amount of work to be done. During their time away, the family faced language barriers, local riots and continuous requests from people in dire poverty. "So much had been so different for us," she said.

"But in all the fun, difficulties, frustrations, successes, failures, hard work, relaxation, enjoyment and impossibilities, God never changes. He is always good,

always faithful, perfect in every way, beyond our understanding and ever present with us through everything."

Now back in Norfolk, living in Dereham and attending Dereham Baptist Church, the couple continue working in Christian ministries. Beckie manages the coffee shop at St Stephen's Church in Norwich and Dave works for the Congregational Federation in

the Eastern region.

Beckie has been managing the coffee shop since January this year. The majority of the customers are regulars which creates a welcoming, friendly atmosphere. But Beckie is keen to welcome new customers and build up the community. "It's a place that welcomes all people in. People find friends here as well as a cup of coffee," she says.

Beckie says she would like to build stronger links with the community: "The policy of the cafe is eat, drink, pay what you think, which means everybody is welcome, whatever they can afford."

New developments planned include setting up a craft group where people can bring along a project they are working on or learn a new craft skill from others. Beckie said: "It's about friendship and creativity."

Dave is now the area worker for the Congregational Federation in the East, which comprises 26 independent free churches in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Essex. Dave responds to whatever needs the churches have, which includes organising events, fundraising and preaching. Dave helps them reach out into their local communities. Before his stint in Brazil, from 2008 - 2012, Dave worked for Youth For Christ and has a missional outlook on the work he does with a desire to love people and show them Jesus.

Beckie describes coming back to Norfolk as a chance to have a rest and reconnect with friends and family before refocusing to take on new challenges.

GOOD NEWS

FOR NORWICH & NORFOLK

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 This will not only encourage those Christians involved in similar activities but also inform leaders in other churches who are contemplating similar forms of outreach.

■ The deadline for material for the Celebrate edition is Friday May 2. Distribution is from Friday May 23.

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That's not all folks, says God of resurrection

■ For many years, the name Mel Blanc has been associated with Warner Brothers Looney Tunes. At the end of every cartoon, you'd see Bugs Bunny pop up and say 'That's all folks!' – that was the voice of Mel Blanc.

When he died in 1989, Mel Blanc's family put an inscription on his tombstone: 'That's all, folks!'

The question is: Is it true? Is death the full stop at the end of the sentence of life? Is that all, folks? Or is death a comma, a doorway to the next part of God's eternal plan? The answer from the empty tomb on Easter Sunday rings loud and clear: 'no, that's not all, folks!'

However, Easter is not just about physical resurrection. 'Eternal life' is so much more than just living forever. Many people worry about their physical wellbeing and future far more than they worry about their spiritual well-being and future.

The great Methodist preacher William



Rev Matt Stone is a minister in the Norwich Area group of United Reformed Churches.

Sangster had his ministry, except prayer, painfully cut short by a disease which progressively paralyzed his body, even his vocal chords. But on the last Easter Sunday he spent on earth, still able to move his fingers, he painstakingly wrote a note to his daughter: 'How terrible to wake up on Easter and have no voice to shout, 'He is risen!' Far worse to have a voice and not want to shout.'

Easter is not just about the hope of living forever, as wonderful as that is. It's about living for, with and in God - starting today and flowing into eternity. It's about spiritual resurrection! Jesus said to his disciples after his death and resurrection, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.' And with that he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit' (John 20:21-22).

Do you need a spiritual resurrection this Easter? Has worship become a routine, prayer a shopping list, church a frustration?

Do you need a fresh dose of God's love, joy, hope and Spirit? If so, the good news is that God offers us the greatest gift he could give us: the gift of himself.

Jesus said: 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.' By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive.' (John 7:37-39).

Best is yet to come

Rev David Adams, one of Norwich's longest serving and most influential ministers retired at the end of March, aged 66. Now he and his wife, Sandra, are looking forward to how God will use them in the future. Jenny Seal reports.



David and Sandra Adams.

On Sunday March 30, Rev David Adams retired from leading Witard Road Baptist Church, where he had been the Pastor since the mid-1990s.

David leaves the church, on the edge of the Heartsease estate, with an impressive, recently redeveloped building with the capacity to provide conference and training facilities for up to 250 people. But as he reflects on his time at Witard Road, it is not the physical improvements that David counts as his success.

He said: "Several people have said to me: 'what a wonderful legacy you've left', in the context of how the whole site has completely been redeveloped. But that isn't how I see my legacy at all.

"I never came into ministry to build a building. It happened because it was needed, and God opened up the way and provided for it. But my legacy, I hope, will be in the lives of many, many people who have seen something more of Jesus because of what we've been able

to do."

When David reflects on his ministry, it is always in terms of serving as a team alongside his wife Sandra. The couple both grew up within 150 yards of Witard Road, became Christians on the same day and have been married 45 years. Sandra has played a significant role in the life of the church, particularly sharing the pastoral visiting and providing a sounding board to David.

David said: "Sandra is the balancing force in my life. I see the vision, I run towards things, I don't always stop and consider. Sandra is the one who says: "yes, but..." However people would regard the fullness of the ministry that we've had here, it would not have been anything like so full had we not done it together."

While their training and early ministry took them to Texas and Kidderminster in the 1980s, the couple returned to Norwich in 1987 to establish a Bible teaching organisation, Christ for England. It was then that David got

involved in the Together for Jesus project, which organised March for Jesus, and later became Unite.

Over the past 25 years, David has helped lead many of the initiatives that have brought Christians together in prayer and worship across the city, including three city-wide Praise Pageants, Prayer in the Park in Chapelfield Gardens and the Global Day of Prayer.

He said: "When Christians across the board come together, particularly in prayer and out of that anything else that God leads them into, then that is a very positive thing and a very positive witness for the city."

The couple are retiring to Lower Thorpe where, as well as spending more time with their family, they are looking forward to how God will use them next. David has joined the UK board of World Outreach International, which trains indigenous pastors for unreached peoples groups, but is open to exploring other things.

Sandra said: "We are excited about what the Lord will open up for us. It could be supportive work in the local church, but it could be something quite different. We are both in good health, so we are hoping that God will show us what that avenue is."

David said: "I feel it confirmed in my heart that this is the right time for us to go onto the next phase of our lives. I hope to see that the best is yet to come for Witard Road however good things have been, and they have been good. God has been really faithful in so many ways. But God is still God, and the best is yet to come and we move on with Him."

Paying tribute to David, Phil Thorne, Senior Pastor of City Church, Norwich, said: "David has been an active participant in city-wide events. He loved the thought of churches working together and has remained committed to meeting together in prayer and friendship. David is well loved and appreciated right across the city. I, along with so many, wish David and Sandra the very best in this next season."

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New world for new chief



Paul Martin, new CEO of The Matthew Project.

On the face of it, moving from an international development charity working in isolated communities across the world to leading a Norfolk-based charity working in the field of drug and alcohol recovery might seem like two totally different worlds.

But for Paul Martin, his move from being Head of Strategy & Communication, for MAF UK, to being Chief Executive of the Matthew Project does have a number of common threads.

Both are Christian-based projects, both aim to offer a mixture of help alongside hope and both have innovative, committed teams reaching out to isolated communities.

"At MAF we served remote and isolated communities in far off Africa and elsewhere in the developing world," said Paul. "Yet across Norfolk and Suffolk we have isolated communities and people in real unmet need too. I have been so impressed by the commitment, innovation and teamwork I have seen so far at The Matthew Project to meet these needs by working in strong partnerships."

After graduating with a science degree, Paul has worked for multi-national companies and in the public sector, leading environmental and public protection services and regeneration plans in Kent.

At MAF, Paul's role grew to encompass strategic planning, income generation, marketing, supporter services and volunteer management across the UK as well as developing the charity's work globally.

Moving from Kent with his wife Kaela, who

Norwich-based drug and alcohol charity, the **Matthew Project**, has appointed **Paul Martin**, from **Missionary Aviation Fellowship UK**, as its new chief executive. **Keith Morris** met him.

works with children with special educational needs, Paul was also involved in community work with his local Baptist church and it is the grassroots nature of the Matthew Project's work which was part of the attraction for him.

"I wanted to do something more local in terms of UK community," he said. "The Christian ethos stuck out for me and the non-judgemental commitment which turns faith into action for people and affects and helps change their lives."

"It is also an opportunity to lead an organisation in times which are both very exciting yet challenging for charities in the UK," said Paul, who replaced former CEO Rosalie Weetman, "as we can take a greater role in delivering vital services across the community."

"The staff I have met so far are pioneering and very committed while facing lots of challenges. The Matthew Project is an organisation which has the right heart for the work and an almost insatiable desire to meet those needs and do things in a better way. That also means that part of my role is to protect and look after the

staff as well as providing really good services - it is trying to balance those two elements.

"Our work is about support, advice and empowerment. We also work with service users with more serious substance misuse issues including offenders and people who have slipped into the early stages of addiction," he said.

"For some it requires a more partnership approach - a mix of people such as ourselves, the NHS, the criminal justice system and people who work with young people in terms of prevention. All of those professionals are coming together to help a much wider range of people."

The Christian background of the project is still key, said Paul: "Some of our staff are Christians and some are not but they all tell me that they feel the Christian ethos is really important to them because they feel that the organisation cares about them and also they felt supported by their colleagues."

Paul is spending his first 100 days finding out as much as he can about the issues that the project addresses, getting to know its 130-strong team and its partners and understanding the services that it aims to provide: "Then I can consider where new needs will be and how we can fund growing those services," he said.

As if that is not enough on his plate, the Matthew Project is celebrating its 30th anniversary with a skydive involving the Bishop of Norwich in May. And in June there is a 1930s Ball at Sprowston Manor Hotel.

www.matthewproject.org.uk

news in brief

New pastor as church celebrates

■ NORWICH: Norwich Elim Church has a double reason for celebration after marking a 50th anniversary and appointing a new pastor.

The church, located on Trory Street, near Chapelfield Gardens, recently celebrated its 50th anniversary in the current building. It has also recently appointed a new pastor, Rev Adam James (pictured below).

Adam follows in the footsteps of retiring minister Gerry Turner, who was at Elim for the past 17 years. Adam said: "Gerry's ministry has been greatly appreciated and he has left a wonderful church."

Ipswich-born, Adam moved to Great Yarmouth to work with his father in the ministry, where he met his wife Rachel, before going to Bible College.

In 2004 he entered the Elim ministry, first pastoring in St Helens and then Knottingley in Yorkshire.

However, Adam and Rachel began to feel a stirring to move back to their roots last September and consequently they decided to move to Norwich in January this year to pastor Norwich Elim Church.

Adam and Rachel have three young girls and are excited about being back in Norfolk and working for God.

"I have a heart for the lost and long to see the church come alive with the good news and love of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit," said Adam. "I hope to see the church in Norwich become even more of a light in the community."

Rachel is a freelance writer and author. www.elimchurchnorwich.org.uk




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Care centre is act of faith

A unique national award-winning care complex in **Aylsham**, which is celebrating its second anniversary, is testament to the sacrifice and dedication of a Christian father and his Baptist minister son. **Sandie Shirley** reports.

The six-acre St Michael's Complex in North Norfolk heralded a triumph for its innovative mix of health and social care, features a nursing home, health centre, pharmacy and housing care scheme but at its heart is a thriving Christian charity for spiritual and practical support for all ages, especially the elderly.

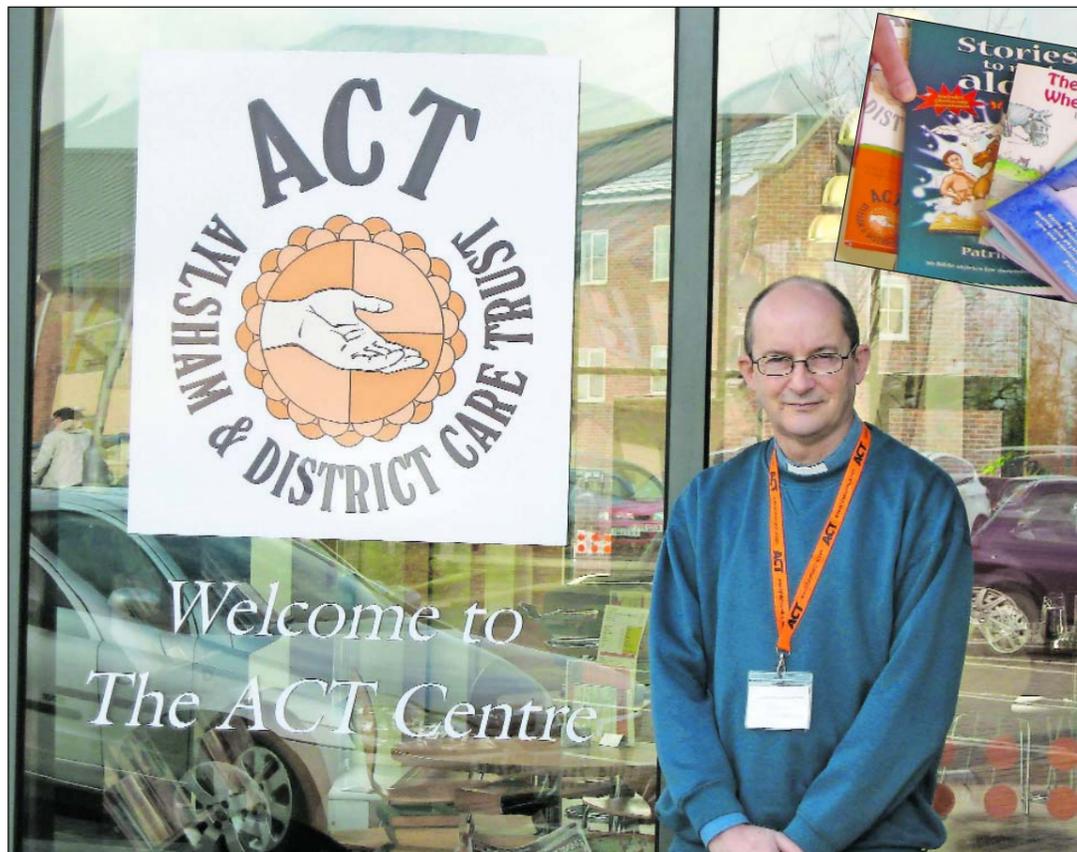
The centre celebrates its two-year anniversary in March and has helped inspire a new publication: *Never Too Old* - a ministry resource for older people, written by its chaplain after years of experience working with this sector of the community.

The ACT Centre (Aylsham and District Care Trust) is the vision of pensioner and pioneer Rees Coghlan. For nearly 30 years the active 89-year-old has been determined to share the love of Jesus in the community. He particularly wanted older people to have continuity of care in their immediate vicinity so they could live independently for as long as possible.

The million-pound centre has been the lead partner in the St Michael's Complex which is helping to foster Rees' dream and was officially opened by the Duke of Edinburgh last October.

Rees' son, Patrick, a Baptist minister, counsellor and prolific author, is continuing to direct its Christian mission as chaplain. He has been faithfully offering God's refreshment to those in need for decades, believing he was inspired to continue serving others through an angel encounter 25 years ago when he was at a low ebb.

The centre is manned by volunteers



Rev Patrick Coghlan outside the ACT Centre in Aylsham and, inset, some of the books he has written.

including the local church community and reaches out with a strong arm of support to help ease physical and mental health issues and personal and social isolation explains Patrick. Wide-ranging activities from counselling to carpet

bolous, dance classes to dementia care support, church services to chiropody and table tennis to alcohol and drug recovery are bringing personal empowerment to every sector of the community.

The ACT Centre with its counselling and conference rooms, purpose-built hall and thriving café is attracting people throughout the week. The successful formula involves working with local clubs, societies and outside agencies and includes hosting courses led by City College Norwich. All this goes a long way to promoting health, well-being and diversity while paying for the running costs of the venture.

While Rees pioneered the vision in the early days, Patrick watched its foundational stirrings, catching the vision in earnest as it received fresh momentum more than two and a half decades later.

Its fruition has come through personal sacrifice. The land for the complex was originally bought by Rees for his son, an aspiring horseman. As a young man, Patrick turned the rural acreage into an equestrian and breeding centre with stables, grazing land, two riding arenas and a selective horse breeding programme but five years later the venture folded because it was not viable. Patrick turned to new things and the land was rented out for grazing until the vision received fresh impetus.

"It was quite painful that the establishment did not work and sometimes I can still envisage it but I know that it says in Romans 8:28 that God turns everything to good," says Patrick who still rides horses and has written novels about them.

That Bible promise has since been more than evident. The land became functional when a new plan was hatched to provide an all-inclusive care complex. Various service providers got on board when Rees donated the land towards the scheme amid a succession of miracle

turnarounds that happened when the adjoining site was developed by a house builder. Under a planning decree it meant that unexpected access was granted to the 'social benefit' site and the charity was paid the value of the land for the complex by the developer which went a long way towards paying for the centre.

"After all that ACT has put into the community over a number of years we are now seeing a harvest," says Patrick.

It includes the provision of personal support assistants who are trained at the centre to help enable the elderly and housebound live independently. The assistants tackle domestic and household tasks including shopping, cleaning, cooking and visits to the GP as well as support with joining a club or activity. The centre also offers social outings and a voluntary car scheme for vital health appointments.

"We prepared the ground, planted, watered and weeded it but the miracle for its growth has been from God. It has been like a 'Joseph' story with all the components coming together. When the building was complete we dedicated it back to God at a special service so that it would be used for his work," said Patrick.

Neighbouring churches have developed a respect for ACT and its practical witness and it has helped bring the churches together. Nearly everyone who comes here is moved by the warm, caring atmosphere.

"During the opening dad showed the Duke of Edinburgh around the complex and today he is still involved by sitting on most of the committees and organising lunch clubs outside the centre. He also lunches regularly at the café with mum and both are enjoying independent living," says Patrick who lives next door to his parents in Aylsham.

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Church vows to fight back after hall blaze

A Norwich church community has vowed to fight back after a fire devastated its historic hall in Earlham causing thousands of pounds of damage after a suspected arson attack.

St Anne's church hall, on the junction with The Avenues and Colman Road, was engulfed in a fire shortly after 4pm on February 17, when suspect(s) broke into the premises before starting a fire inside in a blaze that wrecked the building and its contents.

The building had survived the Second World War and was even used as a temporary church after St Anne's was bombed during the war.

But vicar of Earlham, the Rev Clare Dowding, has been heartened by support from the local community which has rallied around to offer help.

She told the Evening News: "It is heartbreaking because it is a building that is used and loved by people in the church, and also lots of people in the community who use it for groups and events."

But she vowed to bounce back after receiving support from the congregation and local community.

"These sorts of things happening are terrible but they can be a really powerful way of demonstrating how communities work together," Rev Dowding said. "One thing that has been really heartening is the community support. I have spoken to a number of people asking how they could help and I've had lots of emails, texts and tweets."

The church hall was used by lots of community groups, including mothers and toddlers, and it is hoped that they can use the nearby church and scout hut instead for



Pictured above is St Anne's Church hall the morning after the devastating fire

the moment.

Rev Dowding said that she thought the building would have to be rebuilt because of the scale of the damage.

Around 15 firefighters from three fire crews took about half an hour to get the fire under control.

Fire investigator Brian Walshe said: "It's devastating for the community who use the

hall for all their activities," he said

Two teenagers have been arrested by Norfolk Police investigating the fire.

The boys, aged 13 and 15, were arrested on February 23 as part of enquiries into the fire at St Anne's.

The teenagers were questioned by police at Wymondham and released on bail until 15 April while enquiries continue.

Young evangelist starts in Norfolk

■ **SOUTH NORFOLK:** A 25-year-old rural evangelist has been appointed by the Diocese of Norwich in South Norfolk to enable, equip and encourage people in rural churches to become more effective in sharing their Christian faith with others.

Jessie Walrond, who studied Christian Apologetics at the Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics (OCCA) has been appointed as a part-time Rural Evangelist to work with rural churches of all denominations within Norfolk.

Jessie said: "I feel like I've got my dream job, it's a privilege to be doing this work and I'm excited about what God's going to do!"

"At the moment I am just building relationships, getting to know people in and out of the church in the local areas, and making links with anybody else doing similar work.

"I've helped to start a mums and toddlers group in our village Swainsthorpe, which is a great opportunity to serve the community and meet a

need, and it's fun too! I've met with some others who are also passionate about linking up young Christians in rural areas, and equipping them for what they're doing. We have exciting plans already to connect and support young adults based in rural churches.



"Basically, I'm trying to find out what God's already doing here, and get involved. I believe God loves the countryside as much as he does the towns, and while ministry in these areas is often a lot more difficult, it gives us the opportunity to be creative! I'm excited to try new things, and encourage others to do the same. I honestly don't know how this will all turn out, but I'm trusting that God knows, and He's never let me down yet."

Jessie's work will include offering training seminars on apologetics and will involve collaborating with churches to inspire and support them in serving and reaching their communities for Jesus. Jessie will also be involved in helping to create and sustain a network for young Christians (18-30 years) in rural areas.

If you would like to link up, please contact Jessie at jessie@tasvalley.org or on 07527 907712.

Norwich Diocese launches Open Churches guide

■ The Diocese of Norwich has published the free 2014 Open Churches Booklet with interesting historical facts and weekday opening times of over 500 churches in Norfolk and Waveney, as an encouragement to explore the treasures they hold within.

The booklet lists information about the churches, and the communities they serve, as

well as opening times.

The Bishop of Norwich, The Rt Revd Graham James, said: "The great majority of our churches are open regularly on weekdays as well as Sundays, so everyone can be confident of finding the churches in this booklet open, many with activities of different sorts taking place.

"Our church buildings are treasure stores from the past that are also treasures in the present in the communities they serve and as places in which the worship and praise of God still takes place week in, week out."

The booklet is now available at Tourist Information Centres, museums and libraries and downloadable from the Diocesan website.



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New churches open do

In contrast to reports of declining church attendances, three new churches have started services, or are set to start, in Norwich over the past few weeks. **Keith Morris reports.**

Life is set to be breathed back into St Peter's Church on Park Lane in Norwich just a few weeks after its previous Methodist congregation left to join together with Jessopp Road URC to form a new local ecumenical project.

King's Community Church is set to launch its third site on Easter Sunday, April 20, at St Peter's, as the next step in its vision to "build a church of 1000+ followers of Jesus, serving the city through multiple ministries in multiple locations".

The new City West site will be led by Steve Hope and a team from King's, who will be joined by around 70 members from their City Centre site on King Street in Norwich. They plan to hold a regular Sunday afternoon service at St Peter's from 3-5pm, starting on Easter Sunday.

Steve, who is also a project manager for a TV company, has been on staff part-time at the King's Centre for the last three years helping with the conferencing and business side of the venue.

Steve explained: "The service will be suitable for all ages, including families with children. It is not just aimed at those of student age.

"King's is one church in multiple locations currently meeting in the city centre at 10am, at Mile Cross at 11am, and now at St Peter's on Sunday afternoons. The same message will be preached at all three services.

"Doing church in this way enables us to have different services while drawing on the resources of one church. At City West we will have all the back-up and experience of the whole King's team so we won't be doing it all by ourselves.

"We aim to engage with the communities in the different locations we meet in. At City West the Who Cares? initiative will be key, working alongside other local churches. At this stage we have no plans beyond that but we will be looking at how we can serve the local community."

On a typical Sunday, King's sees about 500 people attend its various services and counts its membership at around 450.

"We will hopefully be taking 70-100 with us to City West on a Sunday which will also create space at our King Street venue for more visitors," said Steve. "It can get pretty full on some Sundays during the year there. It will also be an opportunity for other leaders to emerge and be released into serving."

"We were

already looking for a new venue in the city when St Peter's became available," explained Steve. "Mile Cross has been going for five years now and numbers are around 100 with good links to the local community and council.

"City West already has Small Groups in the local area and we would hope to grow them as people join us for the journey.

"The Methodist church have been very hospitable and offered us the hire of the main church and hall on a Sunday," said Steve. "I think that they are pleased that it will continue to be used for worship."

The Methodist congregation has now joined with the URC congregation at the nearby Jessopp Road after working with them for several years on various projects including an annual May Day family event in Heigham Park.

Margaret Culley explained: "We have also been working alongside St Thomas' and St Anne's Heigham on the May Day event. Over the years it has grown and is eagerly anticipated by local families who have come to expect a day of fun and entertainment for all ages.

"This year the event will take place on Bank Holiday Monday, May 5, from 11am until 4pm and everybody is welcome."

Steve Hope outside the former St Peter's Methodist Church.



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International church launches Norwich

An international church, with its origins in Ghana, Africa, has just launched a new branch in Norwich.

Victory Bible Church International (UK) launched a new congregation in Norwich, on March 16 with the name VBCI Paradise Way Sanctuary. The new church holds its services in The Hewett School, Hall Road, NR1 2PL in the South Hall.

Victory Bible Church International began in Accra, Ghana, in 1985 and over the past 28 years has spread worldwide with membership in Europe, America, Africa and the Middle East. The church was registered in the United Kingdom (as Victory Bible Church International UK) in 1993, as a general charitable organisation with the UK Charity Commission.

Its core area of operation is in the advancement of the Christian faith in the United Kingdom and other parts of the world. Other areas of activities involve the relief of poverty, sickness, famine and financial hardship through various practical means.

According to the Sector Overseer for VBCI - UK Bishop Clement Asihene: "There are two kinds of ways one can live his or

her life - The great King Solomon talks about life lived Under The Sun. (Ecclesiastes 1:3, 9, 2:11) Living life under the sun is full of vanity. But there is another life lived Above The Sun. That is life lived in heavenly places with Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:6). Thus this house is going to experience the latter kind of life; Paradise Way Sanctuary."

The Senior Pastor of VBCI Paradise Way Sanctuary, Pastor Alfred Kpodo, said: "We are here to join in the good work being done by many great churches in Norwich and Norfolk reaching many people for Christ. VBCI Paradise Way Sanctuary is here to provide shelter for many who have lost hope in life because of disappointments, hurts and all manner of upheavals they have encountered.

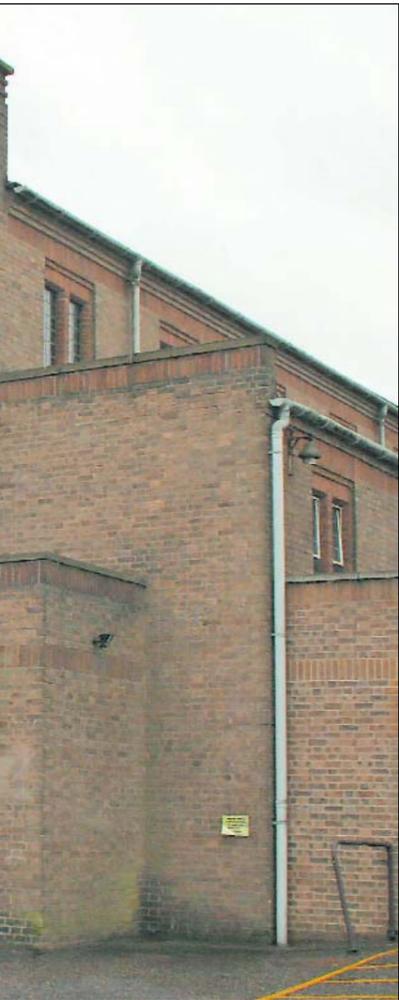
"We are a Charismatic church offering people the chance of relevant Bible teachings, vibrant praise and worship; opportunity to dance before the Lord like King David danced. We also want people to have the time to pray more without ceasing (Luke 18:1-5) to receive life-changing testimonies."

The church meets on Sundays at The Hewett from 10am to 12 noon. www.vbci.org.uk



Pastor Alfred Kpodo, right, from VBCI in Norwich.

Churches in Norwich



Church branch



Pictured from left, Lindsay Howes, Leila Howes, Alan Howes, Gabriella Howes, Paul McHenry.

Church with a difference

■ A new church with a difference launched in a new community centre in Cringleford near Norwich on Sunday March 23.

Living Stones Christian Fellowship is led by Alan and Lindsay Howes together with Paul McHenry, who say that they feel a calling to start a church fellowship group to reach the new Round House development in Cringleford, Eaton and beyond.

"Just out of the blue one day it was as if the Lord said to us that He wanted us to plant a new fellowship," said Alan. "How, when and where we had no idea, but as we have prayed and sought the Lord the doors of opportunity have been literally swinging open."

"We feel really blessed to have been led to the new Willow community centre in Cringleford which is a fantastic multi-purpose centre with brand new facilities and is spacious both inside and out, with real opportunities to reach out to residents and those living city-wide," said Paul.

The name Living Stones comes from 1 Peter 2 v5 where believers, called living stones, are being built into a holy temple or spiritual house.

"We feel very excited and challenged and sense from God the expectancy rising," said Paul. "We have not set up yet 'another' Church because there is only one Church but we are just one of many fellowships across Norwich. Even though we may have a different style and emphasis, we always encourage fellowship with others and been blessed to receive many well wishes from fellow believers and leaders around the county.

"We have also met with Heather Cracknell, who is the Diocese of Norwich's first curate pioneer minister, and has established some excellent work reaching

out to the Round House community. Living Stones will be looking to attract believers from all over the county who desire the same style of worship.

"Our format differs to most traditional style churches," said Alan. "There isn't one person leading the worship, for example, but all have the opportunity to bring a song and play an instrument if they so feel led. There are opportunities for open participation to pray, bring a scripture, revelation, tongue and interpretation and to ask or comment on anything concerning the teaching that is brought. And yet with this openness of fellowship we encourage everything to be done decently and in order as the Scripture commands," he said.

"We see two things as very important amongst many other things," said Alan; the teaching of the Word of God and the participation of all believers.

"It seems clear from scripture that the early believers continued in the Apostles' doctrine and that the whole church had the opportunity to participate. This is what Living Stones wants to be known for. The Holy Spirit needs to be active in both these things if indeed we are to be 'living' stones and not dead, dry stones," he said.

Living Stones meets at the Willow Centre, Willowcroft Way, Cringleford, Norwich, NR4 7JJ from 10.15am on Sundays.
www.livingstoneschristianfellowship.org.uk



Church venue the Willow Centre.

New pastor for church

■ **ATLEBOROUGH:** A packed congregation has welcomed a new pastor's ordination at Attleborough Baptist Church in South Norfolk. Pastor John Rose was ordained in front of a congregation of over 100 people on February 15, some 28 years after he first received a sense of calling to the ministry.

John and wife Judy came to Attleborough and the Baptist Church in 2006. The couple have two grown-up children, James and Jessica.

Six years later he was called by the congregation to be their assistant pastor. Since then he was encouraged to seek formal recognition of his ministry, which was granted by the Eastern Baptist Association in November 2013.

"It has taken over 28 years to have my sense of calling confirmed, and my deepest thanks are offered to my family and closest friends who have stuck with me through all the highs and the lows over so many years," said John.

"Now, at Attleborough Baptist Church, we have a congregation of around 50-60 people and are primarily aware of God's purposes in all of this. We rejoice in all He is doing, which in part we believe is that of equipping us as a church, along with all other churches in the town, to face an Attleborough which seems likely to undergo significant expansion in the near future. By His grace, we will be ready to meet the challenge."
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The Horrox family, heading for Letton Hall.

New family join team leading Letton Hall

■ A new family is set to join the residential management team at Christian conference centre Letton Hall in Mid Norfolk.

In April, Bill and Val Crudgington will be retiring, after 11 years of faithful and dedicated service at Letton Hall and the team will be sad to see them go.

The Letton Hall Trust have announced that Jon and Gill Horrox, together with their daughter and son, Molly and Archie, will be joining the team from late April.

They bring with them a wide experience in both residential and youth ministry and will be a great asset to Letton Hall.

After serving for 11 years in the Royal Air Force, maintaining aircraft radar systems, Jon worked for Norwich Youth for Christ for five years and over the last 13 years has worked for various outdoor adventure centres, in Scotland and Devon amongst other places.

Gill's working background started in hotels and catering, then moved

on to food sciences. Whilst the children were growing up, Gill acquired administration skills, which allowed her to work from home, and in some of the very remote places that Jon found employment.

The family, have just returned from 4½ years in Australia where Jon was working at an outdoor facility run by a private school and Gill ran a canteen for a primary school.

Mollie is 18 and graduated from High School just before leaving Australia. She is hoping to study

Illustration at NUA. She would love to be a published author one day. Archie is 16 and has completed the equivalent of GCSEs in Australia and hopes to study Maths, Physics, Music and Product Design at A level. He is a very keen bass player and loves mountain biking.

Jon and Gill will work closely with Danny and Alison Pritchard as a management team, to lead the work at Letton and the Trust are excited to see how the new couple will help the future ministry of the Hall.



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Binding sticks act of spiritual unity

Two dozen Norfolk church pastors publicly declared their spiritual unity with a symbolic binding together of sticks at a Prayer for Revival event on January 6.

The symbolic act took place at Norwich Family Life Church and was based on a prophetic word taken from Ezekiel 37.

Organiser, pastor Phil Thorne, said: "Ezekiel's vision and prophecy applies uniquely to Israel, but there are certain prophetic principles we drew from it that we can apply to us across Norwich and Norfolk today. I believe this is the era to collectively shape our future with our words and connect with God's plan."

"The call is for church leaders in this new era to step up beyond a theologically understood 'unity of the Spirit' into a theologically maintained 'unity of the Spirit,' the kind that fulfils Psalm 133's commanded blessing - life forevermore."

"The journey we, as the church in Norwich and the region, have been on has over the last 20 years been very beneficial, but with so much talk of unity and togetherness across the nation, we have a great opportunity to see even greater things across this whole area. We could, through the momentum of this prophetic action, see established a spiritual undergirding framework for those greater things."

The 24 sticks were bound together as pastors stood shoulder to shoulder in agreement with the declaration of: Kingdom thinking and speaking: choosing to honour one another: speaking well of one another: praying for each other: standing together as brothers and sisters.

Churches, whose pastors added sticks, were: City



The symbolic act of binding the sticks.

Church Wymondham; Call to Prayer, Norwich; City Church Norwich; Wroxham Rd Methodist; Norwich, Sprowston CofE Parish Norwich; Christ Embassy, Norwich; Liberty Church Frettenham; Liberty Church Bungay; NFLC, Norwich; Victory Villages Church, Nth Elmham; Radical Church, Norwich; Rivers of Life, Norwich; Burn, Norwich; Cornerstone Church, Norwich; The Way, Hunstanton; NCBC, Norwich; Firerunners, Norwich; St Stephens CofE; Norwich, Mulbarton CofE; Tas Valley Team CofE; Bowthorpe Church, Norwich; Gateway Vineyard, Norwich; Fakenham Baptist Community Church; Salvation Army Norwich Citadel.

Other churches can add their stick to the bundle at any public meeting with a prayer of blessing and a declaration of intent.

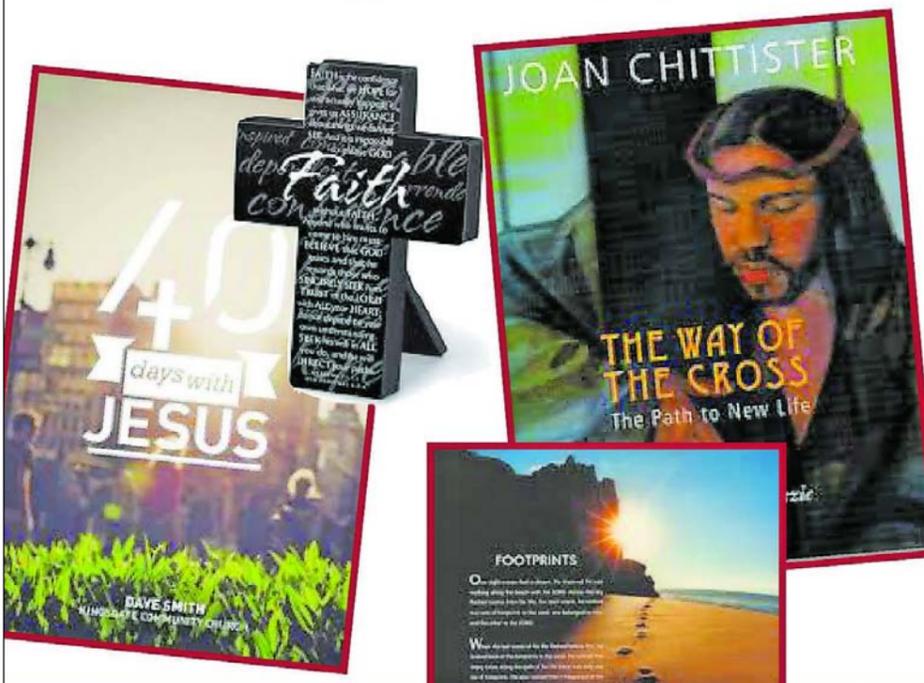
Daniel Holland, pastor of The Way Christian Fellowship, Hunstanton, said: "There was a wonderful sense of the love of God and hearts drawn together."

Craig Deal, leader of Gateway Vineyard, Norwich, said, "We are told that Jesus is returning for His Bride not brides, in His eyes there is one Church, all different, all doing different things and all sent to reach different people. The Church isn't in competition with each other, we are all part of one church under Jesus."

Rev Nigel Fox, pastor of Wroxham Road Methodist, said: "The simple yet expressive action of binding together of sticks for each church said so much. Prayers were offered to bless churches represented, as well as those not represented, that they may be a blessing in all our communities. That has to be a good thing."

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Soldiers carried pocket scriptures into battle

The new replica of the Active Service John's Gospel issued in the Great War and a soldier reading in the trenches. Picture by John Warwick Brooke/IWM.

As the British Army reached a peak of four million men, an estimated 12,000 Norfolk men died in the conflict, 6,000 from the Norfolk Regiment alone. In some cases, the treasured pocket Testaments were returned to grieving families back at home. The troops often used these Testaments as tiny albums to hold pictures of loved ones. Some soldiers scribbled messages - even their "last will and testaments" - on spare pages.

Inside the cover of the Testaments, designed to fit into the top pocket of uniforms, was a replica handwritten message to the troops by Field Marshal Lord Roberts, saying: "I ask you to put your faith in God. He will watch over you and strengthen you.

"You will find in this little Book: guidance when you are in health; comfort, when you are in sickness; and strength when you are in adversity."

It has often been said of trench warfare that "there are no atheists in foxholes," and there are many reports of men coming to faith amid the conflict, while others may have carried the pocket Testaments as a type of good luck charm.

However, the Testaments also had a page for a "decision form" where soldiers could, and did, record their personal faith in Christ, based on the Bible promise that "as many as received Jesus, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them who believe on His name." (John 1:12).

Millions of Testaments and gospel booklets were distributed by churches, chaplains, mission and social agencies and even local businesses during the Great War. Scripture Gift Mission (SGM) alone distributed an incredible 43 million items of Scripture, including New Testaments and Gospels for British troops.

For many of the 100,000 men from Norfolk who were caught up in the horror and carnage of World War I, there was one item that brought a measure of spiritual comfort and hope in life-or-death situations: a pocket-sized 'Active Service' New Testament that thousands of soldiers took into battle. Mike Wiltshire reports.

Thousands of chaplains were recruited to serve alongside the 5.4 million men from the UK and seven Empire territories who fought in France and Flanders (the Western Front); 956,703 men were killed in action.

From the start of the conflict, the SGM was inundated with orders for Scripture booklets on a scale unseen in the (then) 28 years of the mission or the 138 years of the Naval and Military Bible Society.

Now, to help people reflect on this wartime landmark, SGM (now re-named SGM 'Lifeworlds') has developed a replica edition of the Active Service John's Gospel, for use in schools, memorial services and civic events. It contains first-hand stories and newly-commissioned artwork, but looks and feels just like the original Gospels that were distributed to soldiers a century ago.

During his military career, Lord Roberts, a committed Christian and a leader much admired by his troops, wrote a remarkable prayer that was issued by Neville

Chamberlain to commanding officers to be read out to men in the Services.

The prayer, written in the name of Jesus Christ "who loved us, and laid down His life for us", began with the words: "Almighty Father, I have often sinned against Thee. O wash me in the precious blood of the Lamb of God. Fill me with Thy Holy Spirit, that I may lead a new life. Spare me to see again those whom I love at home, or fit me for Thy presence in peace."

In October, 1914, the Pocket Testament League gave out 400,000 New Testaments to soldiers on Salisbury Plain. The League was founded by Helen Cadbury from the famous chocolate company. Helen became a believer in Jesus Christ at the age of 12, and later encouraged her Christian friends to distribute pocket gospels - in time, the League gave away 110 million gospels worldwide.

Today, most of the 700 parish churches of Norfolk still have a memorial to those who died in the First World War.

World class composer Patrick Hawes has been commissioned to write a major new work for adult and children's choirs, solo soprano and chamber orchestra. This piece will receive its world premiere at Norwich Cathedral on July 12.

The music celebrates the courage and faith of nurse Edith Cavell, who was executed for treason after helping Allied soldiers escape occupied Belgium to the neutral Netherlands.

It will be performed by the English Chamber Orchestra, soprano Elin Manahan Thomas, the Sheringham and Cromer Choral Society, and students from international Britten Music Course.

You can obtain copies of the SGM Gospel from www.sgmlifeworlds.com



Majors Andrew and Ingrid Diaper-Clausen

Majors back in city to lead Citadel

■ NORWICH: Norfolk is a special place for Majors Andrew and Ingrid Diaper-Clausen as they returned to the county last year to lead the Salvation Army Citadel in Norwich. Helen Baldry reports.

Andrew has lived in Norfolk four times, on three occasions as appointments for the Salvation Army. Andrew and Ingrid were appointed in August last year. Andrew has been an ordained minister for 22 years and Ingrid for 21 years. They met at Salvation Army training college.

Andrew attended Thorpe Grammar, which is now Thorpe St Andrew School. He said: "I've come back to the church where my formative years were."

This is unusual for officers in the Salvation Army because they can be appointed to go anywhere. The couple have served the Salvation Army in Dundee, Bath and, more recently, five happy years in Dereham. They have two children - Daniel, 16, attends City College and Sophie, 19, is studying teacher training at university.

Andrew said: "Our children were brought up in the Norwich area and we are very pleased to be back."

The Citadel has a regular congregation of around 200 people. Andrew said: "It is a place where people feel they are welcome, where they can encounter Christ and belong to a loving fellowship."

People identify with the practical approach of the Salvation Army, whether it be the well-known Toys and Tins Appeal, the soup run, or provision for lonely people on Christmas day. Andrew said: "The doors are always open and people do respond."

Regular ministries include providing food, clothing and furniture to people in need and Andrew and Ingrid plan to maintain this focus on serving the community as they review the outreach activities of the Citadel.

The Norwich Citadel employs around 20 people and they rely on a team of around 100 volunteers. Andrew describes this as a 'good mix': "We also truly believe that Jesus Christ has his hand on our appointment to Norwich Citadel."

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Fresh approach to church

A national research report published in January found that the Anglican Diocese of Norwich has experienced a boom in the rise of Fresh Expressions of church throughout the past seven years. Jenny Seal reports

The term 'Fresh Expression of church' was devised by the 2004 report Mission Shaped Church to describe new churches, mostly within traditional denominations, that are established appropriate to lifestyle and culture primarily for the benefit of those who don't go to church, either because they have never been or because they have drifted away or had a negative experience.

Since 2006, 51 different fresh expressions of church have started in the Anglican Diocese of Norwich meeting on at least a monthly basis with a total of almost 3,000 people attending. With this increase, fresh expressions now represent 10% of the churches within the Diocese.

The report produced by the Church Army's Research Unit has given the Church of England reasons to celebrate as these new churches bring growth, attracting non-churched people as well as a younger population with over 40% of those attending aged under 16.

While they necessarily come in all shapes and sizes, appropriate to the community they are seeking to serve, the report found that almost a quarter of fresh expressions in the Norwich Diocese are Messy Churches.

These family friendly services featuring biblically-themed craft activities and a shared meal can be found across the county with congregations reaching over 100 in Dereham and Heacham.

Andrea Woods, Joint Messy Church Co-ordinator for Norfolk, is not surprised by how

popular and widespread Messy Churches are within the Diocese and beyond. She said: "I think there are a lot of families out there who want to go



to church but once they have children get very self-conscious. Messy Church offers an alternative. It offers a space where they can worship together without worrying about noise levels. It is noisy. It is messy. It is lovely."

Andrea started a Messy Church in September 2010 based in St Andrews, Eaton in Norwich where she is the Children, Young People and Families' Worker. The congregation meets monthly on a Sunday afternoon and now has a core of around 35 people, representing 8-10 families who don't do any other form of church.

One challenge she admits is how do you disciple? She said: "For those families who started with us in 2010, how do we move them on in their faith? How do we say there is more to this than a fun family afternoon; it's about God, and your walk and journey with God?"

Andrea and her team are currently looking at ways to address this issue, a challenge that fresh expressions are commonly aware of. Indeed the report found that 71% of fresh expressions of church in the Norwich Diocese are seeking to provide some form of discipleship.

In Norfolk, fresh expressions of church have been started in suburbs, housing estates, town and city centres and 25% in rural settings, which have historically been deemed difficult for starting new congregations.

In the Chet Valley Benefice, in rural South Norfolk, Richard Seel and Alison Ball oversee a multi-faceted event called Xpressions Café based in All Saints, Chedgrave that has been going since 2007. On the first Sunday morning of each month, members of the community come and enjoy one or more of the three different zones which are simultaneously on offer.

The Café Xpresso zone is a place to read the Sunday papers and enjoy a

Above Cringleford Pioneer Mininster, Rev Heather Cracknell and, left and right, examples of fresh expressions across Norfolk.



free coffee. Upstairs in the church centre Xpressions offers activities and worship for families with crafts, songs and stories based around a theme. The theme is shared within the Xplore zone which offers informal discussion and also a final Xplore Together session using video or music prompts for those exploring faith.

Richard said: "In Xpressions Café people choose what they will do or not do. One of the things we love is that partners can come and read the papers and drink coffee while other family members might be in Xpressions or Xplore enjoying different activities."

"We do not see Xpressions Café as a stepping stone to 'proper church' but rather we are looking for ways to develop it as church for those who come and for ways in which we can help people along a road of discipleship."

Almost 75% of the fresh expressions in the Diocese use an existing church building, perhaps because in rural locations these are among the community's main facilities. But what happens when a community has no shared buildings?

Rev Heather Cracknell was the first Pioneer Minister trained by the Diocese of Norwich and is now a Pioneer Curate serving the Round House Park housing development in Cringleford with a remit to establish a fresh expression of church in that place.

When Heather moved to the estate in 2011 there were no community spaces and people spent a lot of time in their cars driving off the estate for work,

school and social activities. Her focus became exploring ways of enabling people to live well there and to create a sense of community.

During the first few months she walked her dog around the development and invited anyone she engaged in conversation to curry nights at her house. There she encouraged her neighbours to consider what other groups they might enjoy. Since then she has started a host of activities including a book club, a culture club, a new parents' group as well as running one-off events such as wine tasting, a community art day and a picnic.

Heather now runs a website called Cringleford Hub which acts as a local social networking site helping people meet one another and start new groups. In March, after two-and-a-half years of working on the estate, Heather is now launching an informal, fortnightly all-age worship event in the new school.

She explained: "This is about the church serving the needs of the local community. For this place loving service means trying to help a community spirit develop. In other places it might look different to that, it might be more explicitly around issues of poverty. It depends on your context."

"All of our contexts are really different so we need to pay attention and listen to what people need and then do that, and do that because God loves them and because we love them and because we want to be a positive, shining light in their lives."





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Olive Leaf team is expanding its services



Janet Brenkley.

■ **NORWICH:** Five years after launching a successful community project for young mums with babies under a year old, as well as for mums-to-be, the Norwich 'Olive Leaf' team is expanding its services.

In April, the service will be extended to Hayman Lodge, a modern community centre set in 70 acres of rural woodland at Catton Park, two miles north of Norwich city centre.

The project is the vision of Janet Brenkley, who in March organised a Mother's Day fun event at the timber-framed lodge to launch the new sessions.

One of the distinctives of Olive Leaf, which was originally a mostly church-based service, is to provide a venue where young mums who

may feel vulnerable "can find a real welcome and never be left alone, by offering ideas to help them stay happy, well and healthy," says Janet.

The sessions at Hayman Lodge will run on Tuesdays from 10.30am to 12.30pm.

Olive Leaf calls on the help of volunteers and professionals who are experienced mothers. The team, with a strong Christian ethos, networks with agencies and authorities, to help meet the needs of young mothers and expectant mums whether they are homeless, unemployed, fighting addiction, without parental support or just wanting a helping hand.

Janet, who is an energetic grandmother and a former lecturer in sociology, hopes to develop

special sessions for parents with children up to teenage years.

Ultimately, she would like to arrange practical and inspirational sessions aimed at men and women where they can develop their potential and share their talents in many areas ranging from home decorating and environmental walks to crafts and keep-fit sessions.

"Many people wonder if they are getting enough out of life, so we aim to be good neighbours and inspire others," says Janet. As a committed Christian, she is fond of the phrase: "I'm not afraid of tomorrow because I know God is already there."

For more information on Olive Leaf, email oliveleaf@nm2b.org or call 01603 471067

By Mike Wiltshire

Retirement means liberty for Barrie

■ **FRETtenham:** Retiring from full-time work implies entering a season of rest and relaxation. Not so for former dentist, Barrie Lawrence from Frettenham, near Norwich. With the support of his wife Wendy, he is an author, sought-after speaker, traveller, president of a businessmen's fellowship chapter and a "de facto" leader of a church. **Kevin Gotts reports.**

The church called "Liberty" was founded in the family home; Barrie explains, "We responded to a clear vision for a new testament church, where we take the Bible as the final authority of God, and being led by the Holy Spirit."

Barrie is very passionate about what he does and is keen that each person within this church recognises their gifting and call from God.

"Opportunities are provided, creating a relaxed forum so people don't mind having a go."

Remarkable healings have been reported following the laying on of hands and prayer.

Many of the core congregation of around 20 people have previously been frustrated at the lack of opportunity for using their gifting in churches they have attended.

Outreach services have attracted higher numbers and opportunities for church growth. And nearby Spixworth Methodist Church is now rented for Liberty's Sunday 6.30pm services.

Barrie has also self-published his second book "A Dentist's Story". He writes of his early years in Norfolk, social and clinical life in London, with amusing tales and traumas of life while running country dental practices. His sense of God's presence and leading, with a personal relationship with Jesus underpins this life story. It is available from Easter 2014.



Get ready to Celebrate

Preparations for the Celebrate Norwich and Norfolk flagship event at The Forum in Norwich city centre from June 13 to 15 are well underway with news of a sold-out exhibition, new deputy project director, youth event and the opportunity for film and video to be shown on a giant screen.

Celebrating Community is this year's theme and the Celebrate exhibition inside the Forum has already sold out with over two dozen Christian organizations and churches booked in. A few spaces are still available outside and a waiting list can be joined in case of any late cancellations.

Meanwhile, the Celebrate team has appointed a new deputy project director, Danny Doran-Smith, from ENYP, who will be working closely alongside project director John Betts to arrange and co-ordinate this year's event.

Danny, along with a team from ENYP and Engage, will be organizing a Saturday night youth event, featuring Christian rapper GuvnaB, on Saturday June 14 from 7.30pm St Stephen's Church on Rampant Horse Street. For more details and tickets (£2 or £3 on the door), email: administrator@enyp.org.uk or ring 07599 544038.



Christian rapper GuvnaB who will be at the Celebrate Youth Event.

Another innovation this year is the opportunity for a programme of short Christian videos and films to be shown on a giant

screen due to be erected on Millennium Plain from mid June by the Forum Trust.

If anyone has a high quality

video of the work of their church or Christian organization that they would like to be shown, or ideas and access to other suitable films that can be shown publicly, please contact keith.morris@networknorwich.co.uk with details.

A full programme of art, music and entertainment is being organized for Millennium Plain on Saturday June 14 and on Sunday June 15 a celebration service inside the Forum Atrium area is being planned.

Project director, John Betts, said: "We are delighted that the exhibition inside the Forum is now full and alongside that we aim to offer a unique combination of social action organisations, evangelism, resources, the arts and local churches, all together at a major event, in the public arena."

"I am sure that we will once again be able to celebrate, demonstrate and communicate the work of the Norwich and Norfolk Christian community to the tens of thousands of people who visit the Forum every day."

Exhibition and other enquiries should be directed to: Jenny Drake, Project Administrator, Celebrate Norwich & Norfolk, 2 Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2HX. Ring 01603 617905 or e-mail jenny.nhcc@virgin.net www.celebratenorfolk.co.uk

Christian Police to hold Norfolk conference

■ The Christian Police Association is to hold its annual national conference in Norfolk this year for the first time in its 130-year history.

It will be held over the first May Bank Holiday weekend at Belsey Bridge conference centre in Ditchingham with delegates attending from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The theme of the weekend is Rest and Fellowship based on Psalm 37:7.

Thanks to the generosity of Snellings there will be subsidised

places to enable partners and children to attend, making the weekend family orientated and meaning a well-earned break for many police officers and staff with their families.

CPA Eastern Region coordinator, Rachel Foster, said: "The Norfolk branch of the CPA is hosting the event just four years after the branch was re-launched. The branch is indebted to the Network Norfolk website for its assistance in getting churches across the whole county to become involved in praying for the

re-launch of the branch and for many churches now continuing to support the work of CPA both in prayer and practical support.

"The weekend is being supported with three different churches providing music ministry on each of the three days and a full programme of children's activities all day Saturday."

The Norfolk branch, led by Sgt Marie Reavey, has established prayer groups and CPA reps in many areas across the constabulary and the ministry has steadily grown over

the past four years.

There are plans to hold a work-based Alpha course at force HQ in Wymondham later this year and courses will be held elsewhere for staff as required.

The conference is open to any who are interested in the work of CPA and details can be obtained either from CPA Eastern Region Coordinator, Rachel Foster at rachel.foster1@btinternet.com, or from CPA Head Office. Tel 01234 272865 info@cpaUK.net

To find out more about our work, or to offer help in any of the above ways, please contact us at: 10-12 Stanley Avenue, Norwich, NR7 0BE, on 01603 439905 or info@hebrontrust.org.uk



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Supporting youngsters in need

■ case studies

■ One of the young people whom Cathy and Rob have supported is Steph, aged 17, who was forced to leave her family home because of constant arguments with her guardian.

The YMCA Norfolk Supported Lodgings staff assessed Steph, to understand all of her needs and through a careful matching process, arranged for her to meet the couple.

Steph felt immediately at home and arrangements were made for her to move in.

"I have been here for almost two months now and it is so much easier than at home. I am back in contact with my guardian and her children now and I visit them occasionally and we can spend time together and not clash anymore. I've become more confident and much happier in myself."

Steph is at college two days a week, placement one day, she attends climbing, singing and drama clubs at the Open venue and is studying for a health and

social care level 3 BTEC diploma. She has a clear idea of her future.

"I eventually want to become a social worker by going to university and working my way up through the ranks," says Steph.

Steph can now look forward to the future and would like to stay with Cathy and Rob until she finishes her course.

"I am settled in here and I like it when there are other people around, I am a very social person and I would not want to be on my own. Being here allows me to open up and show something of who I am as a person."

■ Monica, aged 23, also lives with Cathy and Rob. She was living with a so-called friend in Norwich who was taking advantage of her by charging a lot of money for her to share a room.

"I contacted the council, who contacted the YMCA," said Monica. "They found a place for me with Cathy and Rob, where I have been for the last six months. They are nice people and I have a nice room. I work as a hotel cleaner and I am studying hospitality and catering at City College. Now my mind is occupied and not just full of negativity."



Cathy and Rob Robinson, centre, with Monica, left and Steph, right.

Cathy, a former care assistant, and Rob, a retired car mechanic and now full-time artist have, over the last ten years, welcomed literally scores of homeless young people with nowhere else to go, into their modest city home.

"Our daughter Della told us that one of her friends was sleeping on the floor of somebody's shed with no bedding, no blankets, no nothing," explains Cathy. "Della was feeling bad and so we said he could come and sleep in one of our spare bedrooms for a while. It was then that we noticed an advert for the YMCA Norfolk Supported Lodgings scheme and we have not looked back since."

Rob said: "We have three spare bedrooms since our own children moved out and we love having young people around. It is fun and they help keep us young and active."

The Robinsons provide a home and an individual bedroom for a minimum period of three months up to two years. The idea is that during that time the young people feel equipped for independent living, by experiencing a family home, budgeting, cooking, washing and feeling more confident to make positive life choices.

Rob said: "Their rooms are their own space and they are responsible for them. They look after themselves and we can have more of an equal adult relationship with them as they feel more comfortable. They let us know when they are in or out and what they are up to. We are helping to prepare them for independent living."

"We have full 24-hour support from the YMCA, so in many ways you don't have to worry," said Rob. "The support worker will bring the young person around to meet us first and see the room and if we think we can get on with each other. But if, very occasionally, it doesn't work out then the support worker will sort it all out."

So why do they do it? Cathy says: "We don't like the idea of homeless youth and it is the feeling of satisfaction when they move out and get their own place and are doing really well – that is the real reward – though we do get paid something for doing it."

Rob adds: "If you are living in a big house and rattling around in it, then it is ever so nice

It was when they discovered that one of their daughter's friends had been sleeping on the floor of a garden shed that first prompted Norwich couple Cathy and Rob Robinson to find out more about the YMCA Norfolk Supported Lodgings scheme. **Keith Morris reports.**

to have young people about who you can chat to and talk about all kinds of things with. Some of them come back and visit and tell how they are getting on. One has gone on to be a hairdresser and is looking at setting up her own business, another became a care assistant and some go back to college."

Supported Lodgings Acting Manager, Grahame Sheeran said: "The young people often come from a crisis situation where they have been at risk. What our providers offer is a safe, warm, long-term secure environment, with emotional and practical support. In everything we do, the safety and welfare of young people and our providers is paramount and the process of risk and needs assessing is thorough and restorative. It's a crucial service that enables young people to develop their skills and experience appropriate family life. It gives young people a safe, secure platform to make positive life choices and go on to be confident, independent individuals."

If you have a spare room in your home and would be prepared to open it up to a homeless young person, you could receive up to £120 a week.

■ If you would like to find out more please contact; Grahame Sheeran, YMCA Norfolk Acting Manager on: 07436106534 or email: grahamesheeran@ymca-norfolk.org.uk or visit www.ymca-norfolk.org.uk/supportedlodgings

CAN YOU HELP TRANSFORM YOUNG LIVES IN NORFOLK?

Would you like to support YMCA Norfolk?

■ Do you have a heart for young people?

■ Do you have a spare room in your house?

■ Do you want to receive up to £120 tax free a week?

Supported Lodgings

We are looking for fantastic people to help equip young people to gain skills and grow in confidence to take on their own tenancy and live an independent life.

We need people who are owner-occupiers, council tenants or renting privately and who are prepared to offer a temporary home to a young person across Norfolk.

You won't be alone in this as YMCA Norfolk will help by providing training and regular support.

connecting people with places



We know you will have questions, so visit www.ymca-norfolk.org.uk/questions or contact Grahame Sheeran, Acting Housing Manager. Tel: 01603 621263 ext 118 or email referralteam@ymca-norfolk.org.uk

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