

## Celebrate shows church in action across Norfolk

The work of the Christian church in action across Norfolk will be showcased at three linked events across the county in June, in **Norwich, King's Lynn** and at the **Royal Norfolk Show**.

**C**elebrate Norwich & Norfolk will return to The Forum and Millennium Plain in Norwich city centre on Saturday June 10 with a free exhibition of over 20 Christian organisations, charities and churches, including OMF, Norwich Foodbank, Community Action Norwich, Christian Aid, Mothers Union, Christian Police Association, House of Genesis, Heartbeat, Christians Against Poverty, Pathway Café and the Leprosy Mission.

There will also be a Leaders' Breakfast, a professional theatre production of *Soul in the Machine*, a combined churches choir, a children's and youth programme from Norwich Youth For Christ and free food courtesy of the Norfolk Feeds 5000 campaign, in conjunction with ENYP and Hope into Action - see page 3 and 9.

Celebrate will also take place in King's Lynn for the second time, on Saturday June 3 from 10am to 4pm with a free, fun-filled community event for all of the family at The Walks, near the town centre.

A number of local churches will gather to celebrate the town and its community and there will be a wide variety of activities, games, sports and entertainment from the main stage including live music, free inflatables activities, free beauty treatments and refreshments - see page 10.

Celebrate will also be at this year's Royal Norfolk Show on June 28 and 29, where it is joining together with the Diocese of Norwich to put on an exhibition of the church in action across the region. The Diocese has a large exhibition marquee and a whole host of Christian groups and organisations will come together under the Celebrate banner to join in.

Features will include school choirs, children and youth activities, a reflective garden, interactive displays and a large café area - see page 12.



NORWICH FORUM



KING'S LYNN



ROYAL NORFOLK SHOW

Celebrate will be showing the Christian church in action at The Forum in Norwich, above, the Walks in King's Lynn, left, and the Royal Norfolk Show, below.



### The Soul in the Machine

■ Saltmine Theatre Company returns to Norwich with *The Soul in the Machine* on Saturday June 10 as part of the Celebrate Norfolk festival.

Inspired by the story of YMCA founder George Williams it will be performed at St Stephen's Church, Chapelfield, Norwich (NR2 1QP), from 7.30pm.

George Williams is a country boy who comes to the city of London in 1844 to find his place in the world and to make his mark. Appalled by the spirit-crushing rhythms of the worker's life he fights to spread the light of God, and create a place where the soul can be nurtured.

George, who went on to found the YMCA, said: "We are more than bodies to be fed to a machine. We are made for more than work. We have souls, we have spirits and somewhere in this dead city there must be a place for those things."

Commissioned by YMCA, created by Saltmine Trust, *The Soul in the Machine* is suitable for age 12 and over, the production will last about two hours total.

YMCA Norfolk CEO, Tim Sweeting, said: "I am delighted that Saltmine are returning to Norfolk to tell the story of how YMCA started over 170 years ago. The issues faced back then have remarkable parallels with life today and the light that YMCA shone into these dark situations is also similar to the great work the charity currently does around our county."

Tickets: adult £12.50, concessions £9, from 01603 617697 or at the café in St Stephen's Church (cash only).



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## GOOD NEWS

FOR NORWICH & NORFOLK

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■ Churches, Christian organisations and individuals from within Norwich and Norfolk are invited to send news, events and pictures which relate to the demonstration of the Gospel in social action, community care and evangelism.

■ The deadline for material for the Autumn edition is Friday August 18. Distribution is from Thursday September 7.

■ While every care has been taken in compiling this publication and the statements contained within are believed to be correct, the publishers cannot accept responsibility for any inaccuracies.

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# Showcasing work of Christian community

■ Celebrate is back again this year in Norwich, King's Lynn and at the Royal Norfolk Show showcasing some of the fantastic work of the Christian community right across Norfolk.

At the Forum and on Millennium Plain in Norwich city centre, at The Walks in King's Lynn and at the Royal Norfolk Showground you can enjoy music, choirs, activities for the young, drama, exhibitions etc.

Our highlight this year is the Norfolk Feeds 5,000 project, which you can read about in this newspaper. It shows that the church in Norfolk is at the forefront of feeding those most in need. We are not the only people engaged in doing so, but we are very much at the heart of feeding the hungry.

The stories of changed lives, because someone cared enough to freely give a generous food parcel, provide a meal or just a give a cup

**John Betts, director of Celebrate Norwich and Norfolk, looks at this year's Celebrate events**



of coffee, are wonderful to hear. We do this because Jesus calls upon us to do so and because we care for our communities.

There will be free food on offer in all of our centres. Teas, coffees and cake plus, in Norwich, smoothies and soup made from supermarket fresh food which they would otherwise have thrown away.

Wherever you look there are people who see an opportunity to help others even with what some would just put in the bin.

That's just like our message of the free grace of God towards those who don't deserve anything, but whom He loves because they are, Jesus said, his brethren.

Our aim, as we celebrate the work of the Christian community across Norwich and Norfolk, is to showcase a few of the many activities which go on 24/7 serving at all levels of our society. Frequently going where others don't go because the love of Christ persuades us to do so.

# Celebrating at the Forum

A full day of activities is planned in and around the Forum in Norwich city centre on Saturday June 10 to highlight some of the wide range of work undertaken by the city's Christian community, at the Celebrate Norwich & Norfolk festival.

**T**he official opening takes place at 10am, attended by civic dignitaries, leaders, exhibitors and visitors. There will be a short opening speech by the Salvation Army's Major Barry Willson, who co-ordinates the well-known nightly Norwich Soup Run. It will also provide a link to a key focus this year which is the Norfolk Feeds 5000 research project (see more from pages 5 to 8).

The main Christian Social Action and Services Exhibition in The Forum and on Millennium Plain will be open from 10am to 5pm (see page 9 for a full list of exhibitors).

Norwich YFC is bringing its Tracks van onto Millennium Plain to provide a performance area between 11am and 3pm, which will include music, church choirs and the Saltmine Theatre company.

Local charities ENYP and Hope into Action will be working together to highlight the Norfolk Feeds 5000 initiative. They will be providing free food and drinks and their teams will have a stand outside the front of the Forum from where they will distribute food to anyone who wants it, to feed people and to share God's love



in a practical way.

Danny Doran-Smith, ENYP Director, said: "Norfolk Feeds 5000 provides a practical and simple way for us to demonstrate kindness and love to Norwich. ENYP currently has a number of projects we deliver, to provide food to those in need and we are excited to be supporting this initiative."

During the Celebrate event, St Peter Mancroft Church, across from Millennium Plain, will be open for quiet prayer and refreshments.

At 12.30pm, sisters from the Community of All Hallows will stage a Midday Office service at St Peter Mancroft.

Saltmine Theatre Company returns to Norwich with The Soul in the Machine performed at St Stephen's Church, Chapelfield, from 7.30pm.

## NYFC making tracks

■ As part of the Celebrate Norfolk event, Norwich YFC, in partnership with a number of local church youth groups, will be delivering an outreach event outside on Millennium Plain.

The Tracks van and a performance area will be present with musical acts lined up throughout the day between 11am and 3pm, including four church choir groups performing from 11.45am and young people that are developing their music skills. Saltmine Theatre group will also perform a taster for their evening performance of Soul in the Machine.

There will also be a football cage for people to challenge their friends and a variety of fete activities for families to have fun with.

NYFC's Director, Nick Blanch said: "Our aim is to make it engaging and fun for young people and families and give the opportunity for them to take an interest in what the church is doing and accessing information about activities that are local to them."

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# Faith gave hope to hostage Terry Waite

**Terry Waite**, a former Middle East envoy for the **Archbishop of Canterbury**, was captured and held hostage in **Beirut** in 1987 for five years. Now a writer and humanitarian, he spoke about his newly published poetry book at an event in **Norwich** recently. **Helen Baldry** reports.

In the long, lonely years of captivity, often chained to a wall, blindfolded and tortured, Terry composed poetry in his head to keep himself mentally and spiritually alive.

He wrote a poem about torture based on his own experience. He muses "What manner of person can inflict such indignity and pain?"

Terry said that all poetry is putting experience into a condensed form that somehow tries to convey the depth of feeling of the experience. The uncertainty of Terry's time in captivity was very difficult for him. At any moment he could lose his life. On one occasion he was chained up in the bath while everyone else evacuated the building during violent shelling.

Terry was kept for 23.5 hours a day in solitary confinement and only had pen and paper on two occasions. Once was during his mock execution when he was told to write a note to his family – and once when a compassionate guard allowed him to have a piece of paper. He used the opportunity to scribble a picture of a penguin – so desperate was he to have access to a book. He hoped the guard could illegally procure him some Penguin books – rather than a breast feeding manual that was smuggled into him when he requested a book previously – the guards could not read English so didn't know what it was!

After nearly five years in solitary confinement, Terry was moved to be with other people. Whenever he was relocated, he was always wrapped up – sometimes in masking tape, or put in a pipe, and once in a fridge (An American fridge he jokes – he is 6'7"! the most unusual occasion was dressed as an Islamic woman!

Terry is very clear that the past is past. He said: "We make our life now. We put everything we've got into it now because tomorrow is another day." Another poem, *Waiting*, that was inspired by a visit to a friend's mother in a nursing home, reflects on this urge to make the most of every day. The final line is "God grant



Terry Waite, left, with Steve Foyster, manager of the Revelation Christian resources centre, at the Princes St URC in Norwich. Picture by Kevin Gotts.

us life while we still have earthly time."

Terry enjoys the serenity of Quaker worship. However, he was brought up in the Anglican church and was a chorister, which meant he had memorised many psalms and collects, which proved to be a comfort to him during his captivity. Bible verses provided great meaning when he was in darkness and afraid. He said, "It was there, lodged in my mind... Good language, like good music, has capacity to bring harmony into the soul."

Terry believes that words must be backed up with action, which forces people out of their comfort zones. He said, "Our faith is not just a matter of attending church. It is being a co-creator and having a responsibility for the environment and for others."

Since his release, Terry has worked in many prisons, particularly with the charity Storybook, which enables prisoners to record a story on CD or film for their children. He works with

Hostage UK, supporting the families of people who were killed by ISIS.

Terry is moved by the suffering of people. He said: "Unless something miraculous happens, humankind will destroy itself through pollution and war. We have that capacity." However, he believes it is important to keep hope alive: "Eventually these problems will be resolved by talking... the time will come."

Terry's ordeal happened 30 years ago and he has forgiven his captors. He believes that people who oppose each other must agree to put the past in the past and build a new life. He believes it is possible to make something creative from that experience – something he has done in his work and through his poetry.

■ Terry was speaking at the URC Church on Princes St, Norwich on March 29, at an event organised by Revelation Christian resources centre, where you can buy *Out of the Silence: Memories, poems, reflections* by Terry Waite.

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## Insights into leadership

■ A panel of Norfolk Christian leaders from the church and charity sectors will give personal insights into Christian Leadership in Today's World at a free breakfast seminar to be staged by Celebrate Norfolk in Norwich on June 10.

The panel of speakers includes: Tom Chapman, Pastor of Surrey Chapel, who will talk on "Taking the Medicine", Val Dodsworth, MBE, from The House of Genesis and an ex probation officer and prison chaplain, who will address "From Stable to Table" and Julian Bryant, Christian Aid Regional Organiser, charity consultant and ex Matthew Project Director, who will speak on "Preventing Spiritual Burnout".

Their short presentations will be followed by a question and answer session.

The breakfast will take place from 8am on Saturday, June 10 in St Stephen's Church, Rampant Horse Street, Norwich, before the annual Celebrate Norwich & Norfolk exhibition opens at 10am at the nearby Forum.

Celebrate Project Director, John Betts, said: "We are very excited about the opportunity for attendees to meet and listen to Christian leaders from across Norfolk and the possibilities which may arise from doing so. Our speakers represent the breadth and depth of Christian leadership experience and I know are well worth listening to."

"There will be opportunity to network over breakfast with fellow Church leaders and charity reps from our Celebrate Exhibition and the official opening of our Forum and Millennium Plain Exhibition is at 10am which participants are invited to join."

Churches and Christian organisations from across Norfolk are invited to send one or two of their leadership team to the breakfast. There is no charge as the costs have been covered by sponsor New Hope Christian Centre.

If you would like to attend, please email [celebrate@networknorfolk.co.uk](mailto:celebrate@networknorfolk.co.uk) asap. Places are limited and will be allocated on a "first come first served" basis.



Val Dodsworth after receiving her MBE.

# Don't come to church, says new minister

A new pioneering Norwich church missionary, who has ministered at car boot sales, shopping centres and spirit fairs, says his aim is not to get people to go to church. **Jenny Seal** reports.



Pioneer minister Rev Tim Yau.

**R**ev Tim Yau was licensed by the Bishop of Norwich on April 27 to begin an innovative new role as a Pioneer Missioner and Mission Enabler, based in Cringleford, supporting Fresh Expressions of Church in the Diocese of Norwich.

Tim is an Anglican priest with a calling to those outside of the church. His remit in this new role is to go beyond the existing Christian community, both in his own neighbourhood and to support others to do so in theirs, to create new communities: Fresh Expressions of Church.

Tim said: "My aim is not trying to get people to go to church, but trying to get the Church to go to the people."

It is a return to Norwich for the former nurse and youth worker, who lived and worked in the city from 1997-2002 as a Schools Evangelist for Norwich Youth for Christ.

Since then he has trained to be an Anglican Ordained Pioneer Minister at Ridley Hall in Cambridge and served his curacy in churches in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

For the past five years Tim has worked for the United Reformed Church as an 'Emerging Church Pioneer Minister for the Eastern Synod'. Similar to his new role for the Diocese of Norwich, Tim worked 60% of his time in Ipswich establishing missional projects across the town, and the other 40% of his time as the synod Fresh Expressions advocate working across East Anglia.

This innovative work led Tim to start a prayer stall at a regular car boot sale, run a monthly themed outreach to

shoppers and set up a free stall called 'Soul Space' at a Mind, Body and Spirit fair.

Now Tim, with his wife Deborah and two sons, will live on the Round House Park development on the outskirts of Norwich in Cringleford, building on the work of his predecessor, Pioneer Missioner Rev Heather Cracknell.

Tim's skillset and passion obviously fit the new role well. Tim said: "My wife and I had been praying about what to do next and we wanted to do something where we worked together."

"We wanted to do something where we were working in one particular community. And we wanted to do something where we could really build and grow a church. We went over to Cringleford and thought this looks like what we've been praying about".

"I just felt like I was the right person at the right time."

Being so close to the A11, the Norwich Research Park, and the Norwich and Norfolk University Hospital, Round

House Park has attracted a lot of professional people, young families and a diverse ethnic mix.

Tim said: "As a family, we are very excited about being in Round House Park; making new friends, exploring the culture of the place, discovering God's future for the community and having lots of fun on the way."

Tim's role goes beyond Round House as 50% of his time will be spend as a Mission Enabler for the Diocese, supporting and stimulating Fresh Expressions of Church.

"In the past, mission for an Anglican church meant you just opened the doors and said: 'we are here', but now we need to go out and go where the people are. The Anglican Church is in a good position to do that because we are everywhere. But we need to have that ongoing outward dynamic."

"We will be finding out who those people are in the church that are ready to go on that journey and we will work with them."

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# Church feeds 7,000 a month in Norfolk

New research has revealed that Christian groups and churches across Norfolk feed an incredible 7,000 people every month of the year, following the example and command of Jesus Christ to 'feed the hungry'.

The Norfolk Feeds 5000 survey of Christian organisations and churches right across Norfolk, by the team behind the website Network Norfolk, has shone a light on scores of different groups who are engaged in nightly soup runs, weekly community meals, emergency food parcels and lots of other initiatives.

The ubiquitous foodbank networks, all co-ordinated by churches and Christian groups, supply thousands of emergency three-day food parcels to families and individuals who are in desperate need, usually due to circumstances beyond their control.

The survey has spotlighted dozens of churches across Norfolk which run cafes or hold weekly or monthly community meals, mostly for free or a nominal donation, bringing together vulnerable and lonely members of their communities for breakfast, lunch or dinner and offering other activities and services alongside them.

The well-known nightly Norwich Soup Run provides hot food and drinks to around 40 people every single night of the year and other similar initiatives, on a smaller scale, are run in King's Lynn and to Big Issue sellers in Norwich for example.

Messy Churches, aimed at young families and offering different activities, and usually a meal of some sort, are run by dozens of churches across Norfolk.

Lunch clubs during the school holidays, youth clubs



**Soup Run - Norwich**

The Norwich Soup Run functions every night of the year, except Christmas day. Based at the charity stall at the bottom of the Haymarket (opposite Primark), teams of volunteers serve food and drink to people in need from 8.30pm. The Soup Run is co-ordinated by the Norwich Citadel Salvation Army and involves 14 different churches on the rota as well as numerous individual volunteers.

Numbers vary from 30-50 guests each evening, and a range of sandwiches are available, as are cakes, soup, hot chocolate, tea and coffee. This "staple" menu is sometimes reinforced by gifts of fresh fruit and other goodies.

This community initiative is made possible by more than 180 dedicated volunteers divided into teams. Regular supporters include Waitrose, the Co-op, Pret a Manger and Greggs.

In addition to food, volunteers offer a listening

ear and compassionate support as well as warm clothing, footwear, sleeping bags and blankets as they are available.

Major Barry Willson, The Salvation Army's Soup Run Volunteer Co-ordinator, said: "The Soup Run is a great example of local people working together to support local people in need. Our guests have a variety of needs – some may be experiencing homelessness, some may be sleeping rough, while others may be living in accommodation but struggling to make ends meet.

"Our volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds – some belong to a local church, others do not. Anyone is welcome to volunteer, although we do have a short waiting list. If you'd like to see how you can support our work we'd love to hear from you."

Contact: [barrywillson46@btinternet.com](mailto:barrywillson46@btinternet.com)

including free food, schemes that give surplus food to the homeless and simply taking people to a supermarket and then paying for the food they want to buy, are other examples of innovative activities run by Christian groups.

The research project is named after one of the well-known Bible miracles performed by Jesus - the feeding of the 5,000.

Network Norfolk publisher Keith Morris, who helped to co-ordinate the research, said: "Christians do not have a

monopoly on this kind of activity and there are other non-faith based groups in Norfolk doing similar things, but our research shows that the Church is more than pulling its weight.

"Collectively the Christian community has come up with dozens of innovative and inspirational projects to meet the basic needs of vulnerable and sometimes desperate people in our towns and villages, through the simple activity of sharing a free meal with them or providing food for their families."

Of the 90 plus responses to the survey, Christian and church-led projects that involve hundreds of volunteers (some Christian and some not) reported that every month of the year, an average total of around 7,020 people are either fed or provided with food to cook for themselves.

You can see the full results and project case studies at [www.norfolkfeeds5000.co.uk](http://www.norfolkfeeds5000.co.uk)

Follow a social media campaign about the project at [#norfolkfeeds5000](https://twitter.com/norfolkfeeds5000)

## West Norfolk

### King's Lynn foodbank

The King's Lynn foodbank started in October 2011 as an initiative of Churches Together in King's Lynn and now feeds over 300 people a month, providing emergency food to local people in crisis and providing support that is clear, practical and full of compassion.

Chairman, Adam Whittle, said: "We see people with some really big needs. They come to us because they need help with food but it's much more than that. Sometimes the problems are more than we can humanly process, but we have a big God and we have the opportunity to pray with people and we've seen some wonderful testimonies. We achieve incredible, life-changing things on the budget we have."

[www.kingslynn.foodbank.org.uk](http://www.kingslynn.foodbank.org.uk)



### King's Lynn FISH Club

King's Lynn foodbank also runs a 'Fun and Food In School Holidays' (FISH) programme to support children who receive free school meals in term time, but whose parents may struggle to provide nutritious meals during the holidays. Hot lunches plus fun and games are provided for around 35 children each day.

Contact: [adam@kingslynn.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:adam@kingslynn.foodbank.org.uk)

### The Fountain at Shouldham

The Fountain at Shouldham is a 'fresh expression' of church with a focus on children, attracting around 40 people who don't go to a traditional church. This includes Messy Church and Breakfast Church in Shouldham Village Hall, Forest Church in Shouldham Warren and an all-age church service at Shouldham School. The gatherings involve food, such as bacon rolls, pizza and barbeque.

Angela Caley, who leads the Fresh Expression with her husband Tom, said: "Because we do always make a point of having food, people always know that that social aspect is going to be something at least that they will like even if they are not so keen on the other activities. By eating together I think it provides that community that people feel that they can belong to with the events we put on. It is nice to give people that experience at a Christian event."

Facebook: [@thefountainatshouldham](https://www.facebook.com/thefountainatshouldham)

### Mary's Kitchen

Volunteers at Our Lady of the Annunciation Catholic Church in King's Lynn run a weekly soup kitchen in the town which feeds over 30 people a time.

Contact: [parishpriest763@gmail.com](mailto:parishpriest763@gmail.com)

St Mary's Church at Heacham puts on quarterly community lunches (donations only) for around 30 people.

St Peter's at Upwell and St Mary's in Syderstone run regular Messy Church events which include an afternoon tea (donation only) for around 30-40 people.

## South Norfolk



### Community Lunch

■ Cell Church Community Outreach Worker, Andy Cox, initiated a monthly Community Lunch in Newton Flotman Church Room, which he runs with a team of local volunteers.

Andy said: "There is a regular bunch of people from the village who just like to get together to have a meal and have a chat with their friends. There is nowhere else in the village that is a meeting place."

A minibus full of residents at the local care home, Olive House, attend through the Norwich Door-to-Door service.

Catering staff at Newton Flotman CE Primary School, cook the meal which is enjoyed by around 25 people each month for a nominal cost.

Facebook: @newtonflotmanvillage

### Village Vending Shop

■ St Mary's Church in Newton Flotman, is fundraising to become the first church in the country to provide a village shop vending machine within its building after it identified the lack of a village shop as one of the biggest needs.

There is a two-year plan to raise funds and redevelop an area within the church to provide an accessible, community facility that will house the Village Vending Shop to sell a full range of groceries, milk and eggs.

Rev Canon Sally Gaze said: "Our hope is that it will be stocked by a local business and would be the first one to go to a church. The vending machine will be a pull for people to drop-in to church, and we will provide other activities, tea and coffee alongside it."

<https://my.give.net/StMarysFuture>

### First Sunday Breakfast

■ For the past five years, St Mary's Church in Newton Flotman has been hosting a free drop-in breakfast on the first Sunday of each month, which attracts around 25 people each month. It leads into a lively all-age, family friendly service starting at 9.30am. Rev Canon Sally Gaze said: "We just think that serving food relaxes people and gives them the opportunity to chat and to share with each other." [www.tasvalley.org](http://www.tasvalley.org)

### Friends and Neighbours

■ Retired minister Rev Joan Evans, a member of the Church in Loddon (Holy Trinity and St John's Chapel), started and runs Friends and Neighbours which meets monthly in St John's Lecture Hall to share a communal lunch or afternoon tea.

The group was set up in September 2003, six months after Joan's husband died, and she identified a group of others who had lost their spouses.

"What they really enjoy is having food prepared for them and having someone to eat it with. I thought initially that people would come just in the aftermath of bereavement, but they said 'please could we meet every month' so we've been going ever since." The lunches attract around 30 people each month and the cost is divided between them. email: [joanevans936@btinternet.com](mailto:joanevans936@btinternet.com)

■ Waveney foodbank, based at Eye Airfield near Diss, distributes 200 boxes of emergency food every month.

## Do Drop In - Sheringham

■ 'Do Drop In' community cafe is located in Sheringham's St Andrew's Methodist Church and meets every Wednesday serving tea and coffee from 11am then a hot lunch.

Those who attend are a cross-section of the community and they include lonely, vulnerable older folk and adults with learning difficulties.

Team Leader Barbara George said "We seek to express the love of God in action which is the basis for building a strong community. We have seen the growth of love and care for each other among the members which is an inspiration."

The community meal attracts 30 to 40 each week and serves 140 meals per month. There is no charge but donations mean it is self-funding.

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



# Community matters

## North Norfolk

**T**he Community Matters Cafe is a free meal facility for anyone in the community, but predominantly for the socially excluded, those in financial difficulty and those with issues related to substance abuse and/or poor mental health and the elderly who wrestle with isolation.

Though overseen by the Methodist Church, it is run by volunteers from several churches and the core service team come mostly from the wider community. There are links with and support from Cromer & District Foodbank.

The cafe is now open twice a week, serving over 30 meals a week and 3000 in the last year. Donations come mostly from members of several churches who come to offer conversation and support.

The cafe is a hub for other areas of support, including sign-posting and advocacy. The newest project is a Support Store where clothing and household goods are available to those who find themselves in need.

Methodist minister, Rev Sharon Willimott, who runs the café, said: "Early in my ministry in Cromer I became aware of the very large, usually hidden, numbers of local people who suffer social disadvantage and loneliness, as evidenced by the need for the Foodbank that we host. I therefore wanted to give them access to good food as a gift from the church, dispel some of the social stigma surrounding exclusion by providing a safe space to enable such people to interact together."

"Clients say that the cafe is a lifeline for them, and for some the only place where they feel accepted and included. We have found that the non-judgmental service of all has transformed the confidence of many, and enables the community to see that the church still has relevance today as we express God's love and grace in action." [www.northnorfolkmethodist.org.uk](http://www.northnorfolkmethodist.org.uk)

■ Reepham CofE Messy Church provides an hour of Bible story related crafts and activities, then a short time with songs, puppets and a prayer, followed by a two-course meal. There is no charge but donations are welcome and it attracts around 50 people every month.

Rachel Richmond, co-ordinator, said: "Having a cooked two-course meal as part of our Messy Church, where helpers and families eat and chat together, builds our



### Aylsham MakeLunch

■ MakeLunch is a national initiative that works with churches to help fill the holiday hunger gap. Aylsham Community Church offers a free hot meal and fun activities to families struggling on tight budgets at its Jubilee Centre. They work together with the schools in the community to make sure the families that need it the most get invited.

Children and Families worker Ann Gallagher said: "Current statistics say that

1 in 4 children in the UK are living in poverty, and many of them receive free school meals. During the school holidays many children are left without regular hot meals. MakeLunch @ Jubilee is about more than just meeting a very real practical need, it's also about showing God's heart for family and friendship and demonstrating his love in action.

The weekly sessions during school holidays attract around 50-60 children each week. <http://aylshamcommunitychurch.org/>

sense of community, gives the mums a break and provides a good nourishing meal for families who are struggling to cope." [facebook.com/MessyChurchReepham](https://www.facebook.com/MessyChurchReepham)

■ Meet and Eat is a community meal offered by Lighthouse Community Church in Sheringham and is available every Thursday lunchtime. The meal comprises a two-course set meal for only £5 (to cover costs), is open to anyone in the community and now serves 100 meals a month.

"This is more than just turning up at the café for a meal" explained café manager Maggie Rothe, "The idea is that everyone sits together, chats, and gets to know each other." [www.lighthousesheringham.org](http://www.lighthousesheringham.org)

■ Christians in Holt work together to run a weekly community meal for up to 250 people under the title Holt Community Café. [www.holt-christians.net](http://www.holt-christians.net)

■ The Trimmingham Lunch Club provides a monthly community meal for 20 people at the Pilgrim Shelter.

■ St Nicholas Church in Blakeney runs a monthly Messy Church with the help of Holt Christians providing around 40 meals as part of the event.

■ St Margaret's Church Sea Palling runs a First Wednesday community lunch for around 10 people.

## CAP Food Shop

■ This food project, run by Christians Against Poverty (CAP) from Surrey Chapel in Norwich does exactly what it says on the tin... people who are struggling are taken for a food shop.

CAP clients who are unable to make ends meet financially, often in quite desperate situations, are accompanied to the supermarket with one of the CAP volunteers who will pay for the shop. Project Manager John Graver explains: "We try to go to one of the discount supermarkets, so the money goes further, and the clients put what they need in the trolley. We'll spend a minimum of £50 and it could be up to £150 for a family". In some cases, clients are on such a low income that CAP Food Shop will continue to buy food for them until their situation has stabilised.

"A common response to CAP Food Shop is for people to burst out crying. People are amazed and always ask, 'Why are you doing it?,' said John. "We just want to bless our clients and show God's love in practical ways."

## Doorway Drop-in

■ The Magdalene Group in Norwich provides a lifeline for women working in sex work and prostitution in Norfolk. One of its support services is a thrice-weekly lunchtime drop-in at its King Street premises. The team provide a hot meal and any other support the women may need such as help with housing, form filling, access to a computer or sign-posting to other support services.

Group CEO Suzi Heybourne said: "Our drop-in offers a safe and positive place with the opportunity to share a hot lunch, experience a rare sense of belonging, access a listening ear, support and friendship."

One woman who accessed the service said: "You're there for me when no one else is. You're like the family I never had."

## In brief

■ For more than 30 years, The Salvation Army has been transforming Christmases across Norfolk through its Toys & Tins appeal. Last year's appeal touched 4,793 people including 12,845 toys and 1,773 food parcels.

■ Oak Grove Community Church runs a weekly community meal project called Just Us regularly attended by over 100 people a month.

■ Norwich Elim Church runs a weekly drop-in community meal.

■ Community Action Norwich at the New Hope Christian Centre runs a twice weekly community meal for up to 60 people.

■ St Elizabeth's Church and the ENYP youth project runs a community meal and foodbox distribution project reaching hundreds of people each month.

■ Witard Road Baptist Church runs a monthly Messy Church project and a weekly community meal called The Link.



# Loaves and fish

**N**orwich foodbank is a phenomenon. In the last 12 months it has given out 8,790 food parcels to families in crisis – that represents an amazing 79,100 meals (nine per box).

It was the first foodbank to launch in Norfolk, back in October 2010, and now receives donations from 150 churches plus scores of schools, businesses, supermarkets and community groups. It operates through distribution centres based in ten city churches.

Project Manager, Hannah Worsley, said: "A sudden crisis such as an illness, family breakup, death, benefit delay or redundancy can leave people unable to feed themselves and their families. Such situations can quickly deteriorate sometimes leading to relationship breakdown, housing loss, crime and health problems.

"Norwich foodbank supports individuals and families who find themselves on the edge of disaster through the provision of emergency food supplies. They take the form of nutritionally balanced emergency foodboxes to cover an individual or family's basic needs for 72 hours: the critical time

gap before other support services kick in."

■ The FISH Food (and Fun) In School Holidays project runs school holiday clubs for low income families at multiple sites around greater Norwich, mostly linked to local churches.

The key elements are providing fun and food for children who normally rely on having free school meals and over the last year, the clubs have served around 2,000 meals to 300 different youngsters

Hannah said: "In the same vein as the foodbank model, I am saddened that FISH is needed, but encouraged and uplifted by the support we have received from volunteers, churches and businesses. It is a very practical response to a problem the foodbank identified - holiday hunger - and seemed a natural progression to try and address the issues.

"We have developed relationships with local families and been able to provide emotional as well as practical support, including inviting them along to other events the church or community is putting on, which is a great way to build up communities and friendships."

[www.norwichfoodbank.co.uk](http://www.norwichfoodbank.co.uk)



## Big Issue Soup Run

■ Norwich Vineyard church runs two food projects - a weekly Soup Run for Big Issue sellers in Norwich city centre and a monthly Foodstore project, collecting food donations from church members and creating two-day boxes for local families.

Peter Elwick, who organizes the Soup Run, said: "We walk a route through the city centre seeing the Big Issue vendors. We also look out for rough sleepers and offer them hot drinks and sandwiches.

"It is an opportunity to have a chat with somebody and just see how they are doing. It is really good to develop a relationship with them. Part of the motivation for me is the scripture in Matthew 25 where Jesus is saying very clearly, 'if you are not doing this for these people then you are not doing it for me'. I want to try to be a bit of Jesus really as we go around."

Contact: [peterelwick@gmail.com](mailto:peterelwick@gmail.com)

## Norwich

### Wednesday Lunch Club

■ St Luke's Church runs a Wednesday lunch club which provides a nutritious two-course meal for around 20 elderly people in the community, as well as good company and a varied programme of entertainment. Transport is provided if needed.

Roy and Mary Hansell have run the club for over 30 years, a commitment which was recognised in the Queen's birthday honours list in 2013.

Vicar of St Luke's Rev David Austin said: "I am proud of the volunteer work which has been established by church members who sacrificially offer their time in food preparation, fundraising, transport and befriending."

### Lunch for vulnerable

■ St Augustine's Church host a lunch club every Monday for up to 50 vulnerable or homeless members of the community. The club is run by volunteers from the church and from local Christian charity City Saints in Action.

The club provides a safe, welcoming, non-judgemental environment to people who are deprived both materially and relationally. There is no charge for the hot meal served, but a suggested donation of £1.

Vicar, Rev David Austin, said: "It is more than 'tea and sympathy' - but genuine friendship and concern for the welfare of those who attend - who often feel isolated, stigmatised or stressed."

### Free community meal

■ Every Friday, SOUL Church in Norwich serves a free hot meal to the community – and transport from the city centre so people are able to access it.

The meal, for around 70 people, is prepared by volunteers with mainly donated food from Tesco's Fareshare scheme, which aims to reduce waste and alleviate poverty.

Outreach Leader Katie Allen said: "We hope in the future to develop what we offer by running courses alongside, which would be of use to people. We do have a washing machine and shower available for the homeless community that visits."

### Messy Church meal

■ Messy Church, at Sprowston Methodist Church, provides a home-cooked early evening meal for around 30 people every month. Both the Messy Church team and the families that attend say that the meal is the most important part of the session. The adults can relax and spend time with other families over food and coffee or tea. Nobody is ever in a hurry to leave!

### Boxing clever

■ The Box is a long-running weekly youth group run by Sprowston Methodist Church. This year, along with the games, group activities and Christian based talk, the team started to trial serving a free sit down evening meal for the young people who attend.

Kirsty Deary, the Families Networker for Sprowston Methodist Church, said: "I thought that the kids would come, eat quickly and want to get on with the games, but actually they really enjoy just sitting and chatting while they are having their tea."

[www.rockyroad.org](http://www.rockyroad.org)

## East Norfolk

### Minster Mission - Yarmouth

■ A three-course dinner is served on weekdays at The Pathway café and Resource Centre with soup and a one dish main course on Saturdays.

Barbara Rowe, of the Great Yarmouth Team Ministry, said: "Our aim is to provide a safe and comfortable space offering friendship, respect, support and a hot meal to the vulnerable, lonely, displaced and homeless within our community."

"Sadly, we have recently been experiencing an upsurge in the number of clients requiring our services and advice – around 90 meals are served each session and an increased number of clients are seeking advice and/or signposting to local support agencies."

A hot meal and the breakfast is also provided at the Living Room night shelter to a dozen people daily. This project is run in conjunction with Imagine Norfolk Together (CUF).

Contact: [teamvicar@gtyarmouthminster.org](mailto:teamvicar@gtyarmouthminster.org)

### The Well – Gorleston

■ The Well is a caring community which aims to be a place where people feel accepted, loved and valued. They work with partners to support people with different needs. The services are all free and include a foodbank, a community lunch, mental health support, and a group to help with addiction.

Manager Liz Townson says "The Well is part of Gorleston Baptist's 'Drop in' initiative; a place where our local community can receive support, compassion and a free meal. It is a place of refuge and friendship to those who have perhaps fallen on hard times or who are struggling through a variety of reasons to support themselves."

"The Well aims to help and encourage the most hard-to-reach and disadvantaged members of our local area by being witnesses of God's love and demonstrating this through acts of service and compassion."

Up to 100 are served at each session.

Contact: [liztownson400@yahoo.com](mailto:liztownson400@yahoo.com)



### Poppies Community Cafe

■ The café is part of St Andrew and St Peter Church in Blofield's community outreach, open once a week, offering food, friendship and company to the lonely.

It meets in the old Blofield Court House in the centre of the village, allowing those from the nearby sheltered housing complexes and care home to walk or be brought by wheelchair and those starting on the dementia pathway are phoned with a reminder and lifts.

Around 30 people attend each week aged from 46 to 95 years and are offered a savory and sweet buffet with soft drinks. There is no charge, just a bowl for voluntary donations.

Organisers John and Elizabeth Stokes said: "During the last half hour we enjoy a sing-song of old familiar songs which is great fun, so we all go home laughing. We are learning 'to love our neighbour as ourselves'."

Contact: [elizabeth@johnstokes.co.uk](mailto:elizabeth@johnstokes.co.uk)

■ Great Yarmouth foodbank now provides up to 1000 people with emergency food supplies each month, up from just 100 a year ago.

■ St Mary's Martham and All Saints in Belton both run a monthly Messy Church including a meal for around 40.

■ The TLC project in Great Yarmouth until recently ran a monthly community meal called Open Door for around 15 people and a weekly Craft Café serving meals to around 60.

### Surplus food donations

■ The Horstead Centre is a residential youth activity centre set on the edge of the Norfolk Broads, run on behalf of the Diocese of Norwich.

Feeding up to 60 residents a day can lead to the problem of surplus food but Centre Manager, Josie Barnett ensures that this is not wasted as they donate any surplus food to Bishopbridge House night shelter in Norwich, providing around 20 meals twice a week.

Josie said: "As a family we have always taken food to the night shelter when we have over catered. When I came to work at The Horstead Centre it seemed a natural thing to take surplus food in the same way."

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



# Foodbanks feed 100s

## Mid Norfolk

**F**oodbanks across Mid Norfolk are helping hundreds of people every month with emergency food supplies.

The Mid Norfolk foodbank began in 2012 and last year supplied 1,849 emergency three-day food parcels to people in financial crisis across Dereham, Swaffham and Fakenham. It currently supplies around 180 parcels a month.

Its three distribution centres at Wellspring Family Centre in Dereham, Swaffham Baptist Church and the Salvation Army in Fakenham are run mostly by volunteers of the local Churches Together groups in the three towns. Those who access the foodbank are welcome to a drink and a chance to chat as well as redeeming their foodbank voucher for a food parcel.

The foodbank can only operate because of the huge level of community commitment to the cause within the three towns. Supermarkets including Waitrose, the Co-op and Tesco have hosted collections, and donations have been received from many churches and schools in the area as well as RAF Marham.

Project Manager David Pearson said: "We are so grateful for the ongoing support from over 100 local organisations and many individuals which enables us to help those in short term financial crisis locally. Without that support and the commitment from our volunteers we would not be able to be there when people need us. Thank you."

[www.midnorfolk.foodbank.org.uk](http://www.midnorfolk.foodbank.org.uk)

■ Thetford foodbank was launched in October 2011 as a Thetford Christians Together project and is headed up by Liberty Church.

Last year Thetford foodbank distributed 719 emergency food packages for 1,397 people living in Norfolk in desperate need (392 of which were children). This equates to around 13.5 tonnes of food distributed by the team of volunteers.

As well as meeting increasing need within Thetford, the project works with the local church networks to enable foodbank distribution centres in Watton, Attleborough, and Brandon in Suffolk. Each month the project dispenses around 60 packages within its Norfolk distribution centres.

The warehouse for Thetford Foodbank is



### Messy Church

■ The Church of the Nazarene in Thetford hosts a Messy Church which always includes a home-cooked evening meal and has turned into a fully functioning church appealing particularly to families.

One of the key elements of the successful Messy Church model includes providing hospitality in the form of a sit-down meal.

This, along with Biblically themed crafts and the celebration of God through songs and story, provides an accessible

way for families, who generally don't belong to another church, to come to church.

Mary Welham, who leads the Messy Church along with husband Paul, said: "The meal often attracts people because we have a really, really good cook who prepares home-cooked, beautiful food. It creates a good time of fellowship."

On the first Saturday of each month around 40 people gather for Messy Church in Thetford for a nominal costs of £1 per person.

[www.thetfordnazarene.co.uk](http://www.thetfordnazarene.co.uk)

based in the old science block of a former high school building, the Charles Burrell Centre, which is now used as a community and business centre.

The Foodbank can only run because of the generous donations received from local churches, schools, community groups and individuals via donation trolleys in supermarkets plus designated donation points around the towns said Voluntary Project Manager Ali James.

[www.thetford.foodbank.org.uk](http://www.thetford.foodbank.org.uk)

■ The Salvation Army in Dereham run a weekly Memory Café for a dozen people.

### King's Care in Norwich

■ Each week King's Community Church in central Norwich hosts a Sunday lunch from 2pm – 4pm giving those who are sleeping rough, or have other needs, a place of friendship to go to.

The King's Care project also provide clothes, laundry facilities and showers to people who do not have ready access to these things. Consultation with other services in the city indicated a gap in provision on Sundays and so this became the focus for the work.

Ralf and Linda Bowes, who lead King's Care, said: "We very much see King's Care as part of the hospitality of the church. The guests who come include those who are homeless, others are sofa surfing, some are elderly and come for company, some struggle with addiction and other challenges."

Around 60 people attend each week and there is often a queue to get in.

[www.kingsnorwich.com/kings-care](http://www.kingsnorwich.com/kings-care)

# Church in action showcase

The Celebrate Norwich and Norfolk Christian Services and Projects Exhibition will take place in the Forum and on Millennium Plain, in Norwich city centre, from 10am to 5pm on Saturday June 10. The line-up of exhibitors includes.

■ **OMF International:** is a Christian mission agency that serves the church and seeks to bring the gospel to all the peoples of East Asia. It helps to place Christians to share the love of Christ with East Asians worldwide.

■ **Norwich foodbank:** A Christian crisis foodbank project that offers free emergency food parcels to needy families across Norwich.

■ **Community of All Halls:** An Anglican Religious Community offering a programme of retreats at two retreat centres in South Norfolk and Norwich.

■ **The Norfolk Postal Bible School:** Uses the resources produced by Bible Educational Services to run correspondence schools through the postal system, and to supply groups, Bible classes, schools and Sunday schools.



■ **Community Action Norwich:** Meeting the needs of people through a pro-

gramme of community care in the Lakenham and Tuckswood areas of Norwich.

■ **Good News:** Good News aims to share the good news about Jesus Christ throughout the towns and villages of Norfolk.

■ **Christian Aid:** Reaching out to help the poorest communities around the world and has a local office in Norwich. We exist to change hearts in the rich world and change lives in the poor world. We help churches to pray, act and give to reduce poverty in some of the most deprived areas of the world.

■ **Mothers Union:** In the Diocese of Norwich there are 47 branches and 900 members, many of whom volunteer in their parishes and beyond. Activities include parent and toddler groups, church services, community cafes, knitting projects and relationship workshops.

■ **Diocese of Norwich (Church of England):** Explore our interactive map to see church activities and engagement in the community near you; find Messy Church, Café Church, children & young people groups, holiday clubs, prayer spaces and more! Discover resources and ideas for your church to promote their activities in your local area.

■ **Norfolk Healing Rooms:** Exists to offer prayer for healing to anyone, free of charge and without an appointment, for physical, emotional or spiritual needs in accordance with scripture.

■ **Christian Police Association:** aims to encourage and support Christians in the Police Service and help them to communicate in words and action the truth, message and hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ to colleagues and the communities they serve and build bridges between the Christian community and the police.

■ **Rafiki Creative Ministries:** was founded by Samuel Goffe as part of his final major project at college, where he designed his first spin art machine. Today we travel to many different events taking our spin machines, armed with paint, allowing people

of any age to have a go to express their inner creativity.

■ **Heartbeat Ministries:** is a Norfolk-based servant ministry that seeks to strengthen people to become healthy and active members within the Body of Christ. It has monthly meetings plus occasional conferences and events bringing in anointed men and women to minister to the wider region of East Anglia.

■ **Christians Against Poverty:** is a free debt counselling service, providing a holistic service that supports clients until they are released from the burden that debt brings. The service is available to all regardless of age, gender, background or belief. This nationally recognised charity is now partnering with a number of churches across Norfolk including Surrey Chapel in Norwich.

■ **House of Genesis:** Is a Christian charity, based in Norwich, tackling the issue of homelessness through providing accommodation for men on a short term basis.

■ **Noble Jewellery Designs:** offers fashionable jewellery to the modern Christian at affordable prices. We also offer a small selection of gifts.

■ **Norwich Healing Rooms:** Is a place where anyone can come for prayer, no matter what the need, whether physical, emotional, or spiritual concerns. Our Team is dedicated to seeing the same healings which took place in the Bible, take place today.

■ **Norfolk Feeds 5000:** Is a project set up to establish the extent to which the Christian church across Norwich & Norfolk is carrying out the simple command of Jesus Christ to "feed the hungry". ENYP and Hope in Action are teaming up to provide a live demonstration of this at the Celebrate Norfolk event on Millennium Plain. #norfolkfeeds5000

■ **Christian Vision for Men:** is a registered charity operating across the United Kingdom. Its mission statement is to "connect men to Jesus and the church to men".

■ **Pathway Café and Support Centre:**

Based in the Minster Mission in Great Yarmouth the team aims to provide a safe and comfortable space offering friendship, respect, support and a hot meal to the vulnerable, lonely, displaced and homeless within the community. Connections are also provided to local support services, health-care, housing, addiction support and finance.

■ **The Leprosy Mission:** Is an international Christian development organisation that diagnoses, treats and offers specialist care, including reconstructive surgery, to leprosy patients. It aims to transform and empower the lives of people affected.

■ **East Gate Ministries:** Thrigby Barn is part of the Gillett's windmill estate, a remote and quiet 2.2 acres between Acle and Caister. It is ideal for church away days, retreats and reflection. There is regular teaching days with speakers, prayer ministry and one-to-one help. Spend time meditating at the cross in the secluded field.

■ **Ecumenism:** What is it and why should we be celebrating it 500 years after the Reformation? John Myhill will provide information and an opportunity for discussion about churches in Norwich.

■ **St John's Cathedral:** The Roman Catholic Cathedral of St John the Baptist is a beautiful building and a place of prayer, open to everyone and free to enter

with Tower Tours and views from one of the highest spots in Norwich city centre. It also include the Narthex visitor centre with conference facilities, the Garden Café and the Cathedral Shop.



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**Saturday 2nd December "Advent Quiet Day"**

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## Food bags for refugees

■ A life group from a Norwich church has sent almost 300 emergency food bags to a refugee camp in Dunkirk, France, which was hit by a huge fire a few weeks ago, after a plea for help.

On April 10, a large fire broke out in the Grande Synthe camp at the Dunkirk, destroying shelters and volunteer-run kitchens. The camp was home to 1,700 refugees.

Members of a Gateway Vineyard Norwich Life Group met at the Green Pastures Plant Centre in Bergh Apton to pack as many bags as they could.

Group member Michelle Evans, also co-owner of Green Pastures, said "We knew this was something we could help with. We quickly put a shout out to all our life group members, the villagers of Bergh Apton and people attending the Yare Valley Filling Station (which meets at the garden centre).

"I also contacted our food suppliers to see if they would be willing to donate items. Each bag contains water, fruit juice, cereal and chocolate bars, dried fruit and nuts and tins of fish"

The group ended up packing almost 300 bags which were taken by a CAMCrag convoy to Dunkirk a few days later.

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Celebrate King's Lynn is all set for The Walks in the town with the College of West Anglia, left, a bucking bronco ride, above, and Christian motorbike groups from around the country, bottom, all set to be there.

# King's Lynn is all set to celebrate

With last year's first-time success still ringing in their ears, the Celebrate King's Lynn team are well under way to making it another memorable event.

The team is expecting an increase in the number attending as the people of King's Lynn gather for the free community event which will take place in King's Lynn town centre park The Walks on Saturday June 3, from 10-4pm.

This year's event will include the hair and beauty department from the College of West Anglia with a range of free beauty treatments, provided by the students. The National Citizen Award students will be joining us again as part of the volunteer team.

A bucking bronco ride is set to bring in the crowds amongst other inflatable fun.

The Bridge for Heroes will be attending for the first time this year. Other contributions include Open the Book, Sally Beadle's Bible Circus and Key to Life with Kevin Baldwin.

A number of local churches are involved with Celebrate again this year including:

- Church of the Nazarene
- King's Lynn Baptist Church
- King's Glory Church
- The Gateway Church

- King's Lynn Christian Fellowship
- North Lynn Methodist Church
- St John The Evangelist
- Terrington Parish Church
- Terrington Methodist Church

One of the organisers, Alison Hill, said:

"Christian motorbike associations will be travelling from across the UK as they make Celebrate King's Lynn an annual event. Joining together with friends old and new, they are looking forward to a great weekend with us as they share their faith and testimonies of the love of God in their own lives.

"The Celebrate team have been blessed by the ongoing connection with the Celebrate Norwich & Norfolk team as well as developing connections with various groups within Norwich including the Diocese of Norwich, Lay Pioneer Minister in Norwich Danny Doran-Smith and charity Dreams & Visions for generous grants."

Parking is available at the nearby, town centre multi-storey car park. For more details contact [alisonhilluk@gmail.com](mailto:alisonhilluk@gmail.com) or visit [www.celebratekingslynn.com](http://www.celebratekingslynn.com)



# City churches join together

Norwich's two Vineyard churches are set to merge at the end of May, following the retirement of Norwich Vineyard founding pastors Geoff and Annie Lawton.

**T**he merged church will be known as Gateway Vineyard Norwich and will be led by Geoff and Annie's daughter and son-in-law, Hannah and Craig Deal who founded and lead the existing Gateway Vineyard church in the city. It will meet on Sundays mornings at the Norwich High School for Girls as well as in Life Groups across Norwich and surrounding areas.

The church office will be at the former YMCA sports centre in Trowse and 'the place' community hub in Thorpe St Andrew will continue running a range of activities.

Norwich Vineyard has met in Thorpe St Andrew since 1997 when Thorpe Community Church joined the Vineyard movement. Just over ten years ago, Gateway Vineyard was planted in central Norwich and has now outgrown its parent church in size. The combined congregation will number around 250 on a Sunday morning.

Craig Deal said: "We are really positive about the change which will draw together the strengths of both



Annie and Geoff Lawton, left, are set to retire with daughter and son-in-law Craig and Hannah Deal leading the new combined Gateway Vineyard Norwich church.

churches and we are expectant for this new season. We have been exploring multi-site church over the last two years and are open to what this could look like in the future.

"Our leadership team is also focused on city-wide compassion

ministries which seek to show God's love in spiritual and practical ways, bringing life to the people they serve."

The combined church runs social action ministries including a food-bank, Saturday soup run, Food Store,

Grow Kids, football team, Baby Jam and toddler groups, a Hope into Action house and Drop-in Centre.

Craig said: "We are incredibly blessed and thankful for Geoff and Annie, for their leadership, love and sacrifice in serving the church and

city faithfully over many years."

Geoff and Annie will remain part of the church and Geoff is planning to continue working with the chaplaincy at Thorpe St Andrew High School where he is both a chaplain and governor. They will continue to work with Thorpe Town Council.

Geoff said: "Although Annie and myself will be retiring from church leadership, our heart is very much for the Vineyard family in Norwich and we plan to serve it as we are able.

"Time has gone so quickly. It only seems a short while ago since we were dreaming about starting a Youth for Christ Centre. We went on to work with the local church, then to leading one ourselves. We have sought to follow His call. It was mad at times but fun. We will seek to go on loving Jesus, loving His church and to serve His cause. We will join in wherever God leads and with the energy He supplies! We are looking forward to the next season of our lives."

Hannah Deal said: "We will continue to be very much one church in many communities; extending God's Kingdom together, everywhere in every way. Following Jesus, loving people and bringing life."

Geoff and Annie will be having a retirement service at 3pm on Sunday May 21 at Thorpe St Andrew High School, and the last regular Sunday service there will be on May 28 at 10.30am. All are welcome at both services.

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

## Join leprosy battle

■ The vital work of the Leprosy Mission will be highlighted in Norwich on June 10 at the Celebrate Norfolk event, including stories like Munia, a young woman from India whose family set her on fire and chased her away with knives when they suspected she had leprosy.

Victoria Granger, Regional Manager East of England for the Leprosy Mission, said: "Leprosy can see someone outcast from their family, sacked from their job, thrown off public transport and pushed to the very fringes of society?"

"Munia, a young woman from West Bengal in India, can testify that leprosy still destroys lives. She is profoundly disabled because her leprosy went unchecked for many years. A devastating combination of physical sickness and rejection led to a kind stranger rescuing Munia from her begging site at an Indian railway station. The railway station had become her home after her family had set fire to her and chased her away from her community with knives when they suspected she had leprosy. She was taken, traumatised, to The Leprosy Mission's Purulia hospital where she remains today."

Although leprosy is now curable, more than three million people globally live with irreversible disabilities because of late treatment from the disease.

You can hear more about the work of The Leprosy Mission at a seminar at Chantry Hall, The Chantry, NR2 1RF, in Norwich city centre at 11am on Saturday June 10, as part of the Celebrate Norfolk event at the nearby Forum.



## CELEBRATING 160 YEARS OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT ACROSS NORFOLK



**1844**

YMCA was founded by George Williams



**1844**

Reading rooms and refreshment areas help young men to adjust to urban life

**1851**

YMCA becomes global

**1855**

Henry Dunant convinced YMCA Paris to organise the first YMCA world conference



**1856**

Norwich Young Men's Christian Association is founded

**1891**

The American YMCA invents basketball and goes on to invent volleyball in 1895



**1894**

On the 50th anniversary of the YMCA, George Williams receives a Knighthood from Queen Victoria

**1959**

YMCA began youth clubs for personal development

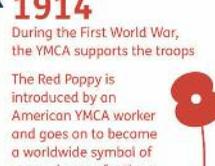


**1939**

During WW2 the organisation was turned over to accommodating and feeding troops, mobile canteens were provided in rural Norfolk

**1916**

A YMCA employment department is set up in England to deal with unemployment. It finds jobs for 38,000 ex-servicemen



**1914**

During the First World War, the YMCA supports the troops



**1962**

The first YMCA Summer camps were pioneered in Norwich



**1970**

YMCA George Williams College is Established in London, providing training programmes for professional youth workers



**1970**

Emphasis shifts towards supporting young homeless people in Norfolk

**1992**

Schools programmes help young people with personal and family problems affecting their education



**1994**

HRH The Prince of Wales visits Norwich following the launch of the pioneering Foyer Concept



**2006**

Norwich YMCA becomes YMCA Norfolk to reflect the growing work across the county

**2007**

Innovative Supported Lodgings programme extended across the county

**TODAY**

YMCA Norfolk provides support and advice for children, young people and their families, as well as accommodation, health and wellbeing activities and training and education opportunities.

Today the YMCA reaches 58 million people in 119 countries worldwide

**2016**

Expansion of accommodation and support for young people in Kings Lynn

**2015**

YMCA Norfolk starts new work supporting families to lead more fulfilling lives

**2014**

HRH The Princess Royal gives the royal seal of approval for YMCA Norfolk's MyPlace move on accommodation



**2013**

YMCA Norfolk starts providing accommodation for single parent families

**2012**

Launch of Stepping Stones Café, a training and skills social enterprise

**2009**

HRH The Duke of Edinburgh opens Norwich Central YMCA at Norwich Bus Station

# Christian presence at Royal Norfolk Show

Once again this year the Diocese of Norwich will have a significant presence at the Royal Norfolk Show highlighting the church in action across Norfolk.

Throughout the large marquee there will be opportunities for visitors to enjoy refreshments in the large café area; listen to school choirs and music groups; join in a range of children and youth activities; journey through a reflective garden; and explore interactive areas on poverty and homelessness, the Bible and prayer.

In partnership with Celebrate Norfolk, other local Christian charities and organisations will also be showcasing the work they do, including; YMCA Norfolk, Norwich Cathedral, Mothers Union, Scripture Union, Christian Aid, Foodbank, Christians Against Poverty, Norwich Youth for Christ, PlayVan, Imagine Norfolk Together, Norfolk Street Partnership, Cursillo, Traidcraft, CCT Conference Centres, Premier Christianity Magazine, Bright Map and the Norfolk Postal Bible School.

Speaking about the vision, Gordon Darley, Marketing & Communications Manager for the Diocese of Norwich, said: "We're really excited about this year's Show! The witness of so many

Christian organisations coming together to highlight the work they do across the county is great to see. We want to showcase the church in action through a vibrant, colourful and engaging presence which gives just a taste of the love God has for all."

The Diocese launched a Photography Competition in March to put the county's creative photography skills to the test. Open to all, the brief was to capture what entrants thought the church in action looked like. The 12 shortlisted photos will be on display at the Show on June 28 and 29, and visitors will be able to vote for their favourite photo before the photos go on tour of the county this summer.

Everyone is welcome. For more details contact Angela George at [angela.george@dioceseofnorwich.org](mailto:angela.george@dioceseofnorwich.org) or on 01603 881724.



School choirs and a charities showcase will be part of the church in action marquee at the Royal Norfolk Show again this year.



In partnership with:

**VISIT US AT THE ROYAL NORFOLK SHOW**  
28-29 JUNE 2017

Exhibitors

School Choirs

Prayer Garden

Children's Activities

Large Cafe

**EXHIBITORS** partnering with us in this year's marquee include:

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