



Sunday 26th April, 2026

Fourth Sunday of Easter



Image: Rev Sarag

What does it mean to be 'Church'?

Contemporary poet, Godfrey Rust, writes this about church:

Church mice,
church music

and church history
all try to tell us it's an adjective.

Others have chiselled
or boxed it into a noun—
a building or a social club.

But don't be fooled:
church is a verb.

It's something that we do.
It won't work in the singular.
I can't church,
you can't church
he, she and it can't church.
It only takes the plural: even God
can't church alone.
We church
(and *they* can do it too,
whatever we may think of what they do).

It works best in the present tense
and not with a prefix like un- or re-.
Don't say *Let's church again,*
like we did last summer.
It happens now, not then.

It's not a complicated verb.
It comes in simple sentences
like *How are you?*
and *Can I help?*
and *Let us pray.*

It's often passive, and just sits and listens.

It's a highly irregular verb
and won't do what it's told.
It turns up anywhere
with the most unlikely subjects.

It can be said
in any language
or in none.

We can't easily go
to look at church.

We only find the evidence
that church has happened somewhere.
Something broken has been mended.
Someone is alive.
Two are at one.
More is here now
than there was before.

In one case only,
this verb is transitive:
God churches us
and also churches through us.
When we ask Christ
to be among us
or make him known to someone
it's then that we are churching.

There will come a time
for church to get dressed up
ready for its marriage,
ready to settle down and become a noun,

but until then
church is the living Word
spoken in verbs.

I wonder if you agree with him? All of it? Some of it? How are you church in this place? How is St Margaret's church in this place? What does that look like and what do we need to do about being God's Church in this place? We'll be exploring this in Church on Sunday as we gather at 10am for Sunday Worship and hear about the reality of the early church.

The children among us will be making sheep. Sheep, in the sheepfold of God's church.

See you there,
Rev Sarah

April Prayer Diary

Services this Week

Livestreamed services are marked (L). Please use the button below to view services at the times given or to catch up at anytime.

Sunday 26th April

8 am BCP Holy Communion

10am Sunday Worship (L) including Annual Parochial Church Meeting

6pm Choral evensong (L)

Tuesday 28th April

8 am Morning Prayer

Wednesday 29th April

9 am St. Margaret's School Service

12 pm Holy Communion

Friday 1st May

8 am Morning Prayer in Church

Saturday 2nd May

8.30 am Men's Breakfast

We look forward to welcoming you to St Margaret's Church. ***Parking is available in St Margaret's School car park for weekend services.*** During the week, the children are in school and we cannot use the playground as a car park. Please drive slowly and carefully through the gates. We are grateful for our partnership with the school. The church will be open daily for private prayer, reflection and visiting from 10am to 4pm.

[Click here for Livestreaming](#)

Lectionary

This Sunday

Acts 2.42-end ([KJV](#)) ([NRSVUE](#))

John 10.1-10 ([KJV](#)) ([NRSVUE](#))

Read in traditional language - King James Version - at the 8am service and from the New Revised Standard Version (Updated Edition) at other times.

Church News

Pencil sharpening!

We have a lot of coloured pencils that need sorting and sharpening! They will be at the back of church this Sunday, if you are able please take a handful or two to take home to sharpen and then return. It would be so useful if you can.

Confirmation

Have you thought about confirmation? Do you think it's for you, or something you might consider? There is likely to be an Ipswich deanery confirmation service taking place in the summer I'm going to be running some preparation sessions soon (no obligation to be confirmed if you aren't sure!) , so if you are thinking about confirmation, please do speak to me.

Thanks, Rev Helen

Period products for the church and the church centre

In 2025, 21% of women and people who menstruate in the UK are struggling to afford period products, affecting an estimated 2.8 million people.

Over the past 3 years we have had free period products in all the toilets in church and the church centre. We now need a top up, there will be a container at the back of church from this Sunday for a couple of weeks to collect new donations. So if you are able to when you go shopping, please do pick a pack of towels or tampons up and drop them off. For hygiene reasons these need to be separately wrapped so the packs can be spilt and those who need them can take what they need. Thanks so much.

3 - 4.30pm
Sunday 10th May
Let's Walk
A local walking tour with
The Very Revd Keith Jones

How well do you know the neighbourhood?
 How well do you know your neighbour?
 Come and find out more by hearing Keith share the history and stories of Ipswich.
 As we walk the paths together we'll get to know one another a little more too - and, if you can stay afterwards, we'll we share tea and cake together in the church.

Choral Communion follows at 6pm.
 No cost. All ages welcome.
 Tap donations for tea and cake if you like.

 

events.stmagsips@gmail.com
 www.stmargaretsipswich.org.uk
welcoming people of all faiths and none



St. Margaret's Church
 IPSWICH

Last Sunday's Time Out service

During last Sunday's Time Out service of meditation and contemplation, we practised meditative and contemplative walking as we remembered again the walk from Jerusalem to Emmaus. This reading is one of 'The Stations of the Resurrection': the various encounters with the Risen Christ that take place between Easter Day and Ascension Day. It is the journey that we are all currently making - and so to help us during Time Out, we walked Scott Erikson's Stations of the Resurrection. You will find his images and reflections on boards in the chapel in church, or you can explore them through his [website here](#).



A silent meditation retreat

Beth Hendley writes:

Sarah has asked me if I'd like to write something about this. I recently went on a weekend silent retreat at Launde Abbey. This was based on *The Cloud Of Unknowing*, a book thought to be written by an unknown medieval monk leading a contemplative life.

I used to meditate using the Buddhist practice of the mindfulness of breathing and wanted to understand how this works from a Christian standpoint.

We meditated 3 times a day, sitting, and also some walking meditation.

Chris Whittington who led it (wrote [The Missing Peace](#), an excellent book) founded [The School of Contemplative Life](#), which gives a twice weekly free Zoom meditation amongst other things. His two talks a day were focussed, well prepared and accessible.

I loved the silence, never broken except for asking questions after one talk, and one small discussion group. Watching the breath, trying not to let thoughts dominate (difficult), trying to lead life with calmness and awareness away from the busyness. Trying to work towards a "oneness with God". Deeply recommended. Deeply valuable. I now meditate daily.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting APCM - Sunday 26th April 2026 10am (This Sunday!)

Last year our annual parish church meeting was woven into our worship, meeting before God, giving thanks for all that has happened over the last year whilst prayerfully committing ourselves

to serve God and neighbour in the coming year. This time it will include:

- Vestry Meeting : the election of up to 2 church wardens for the year ahead to take care of aspects of Maintenance, Management and the Ministry of the church. Wardens (and helpers) will be commissioned by Archdeacon Sam at a special service at St Bartholomew's on Wednesday 10th June at 7pm.
- APCM :
 - the election of 3 Deanery Synod representatives to serve for 3 years. They will also be members of the PCC (Parochial Church Council). These three people will represent St Margaret's at the three Deanery Synod meetings each year and will be eligible to vote in the Diocesan elections to General Synod later in the year (note anyone on an electoral roll can stand for General Synod).
 - the election of 3 PCC members to serve for 3 years (one vacant role with John Grierson and Peta Lowin also both having served for a 3 year term).

To be eligible to vote and to stand for election, or to nominate others, you must be on the electoral roll. If you have come to St Margaret's over the last year or so, or have moved into the parish, you will need to complete an application form.

All the forms you need to stand for election are at the back of the church. If you would prefer an electronic copy, please email the church office.

Reports for the APCM

The agenda and papers for the APCM, including last year's church accounts are [now available on the website](#). There you will find an Agenda and the draft minutes of last year's APCM, as well as the independently examined and PCC-approved accounts for the year ending December 2025.

If you usually write a report for the APCM and have not yet done so, please ensure it is sent to revsarageileskey@gmail.com as soon as possible please. Many thanks!

Petals : Jason Websmall-Eghan

On Sunday 17th May 2026 I will be taking part in the Hackney Half Marathon to raise money for families and parents who have and continue to suffer from the life-changing loss of a pregnancy or death of a baby.

This is a cause quite close to me and my family, and I am doing this in memory of Angel Osakioya Webb-Small Iredia, who was born and fell asleep on 29th May 2025.

Petals are a baby loss counselling charity. The specialist counselling service that they provide is life-changing for parents who have suffered the devastating loss of a pregnancy or death of a baby. They know that these tragic experiences not only result in grief but also in trauma. Their wonderful counsellors are there to help our clients navigate their grief and trauma and to guide them to a place of hope and they have continued to support my family through this tough time.

Supporting this challenge will help them to deliver more vital counselling sessions to other bereaved parents when they need them.

Any support you can give, however small or big, is greatly appreciated.

<https://www.justgiving.com/page/angelhackneyhalf>

Local talk, 'The Abbey of St Edmund Reborn'

Date/ Time: 9th July 2026, 7pm

Venue: The Hold - Home of Suffolk Archives, Ipswich, IP4 1LR

Cost: Free, with online registration required for tickets

St Edmundsbury Cathedral, West Suffolk Council, and English Heritage have submitted a bid for £9.8million to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, for the 'Abbey of St Edmund Reborn' project.

Speakers from English Heritage will be presenting information about the planned project, which aims to reunite the 60-acre site, conserve fragile ruins, and create new visitor facilities, including an accessible route.

For more information and to book, visit <https://www.suffolkarchives.co.uk/whats-on/>

Growing Deeper



Thanksgiving

For Margaret Woodward, our outgoing church warden, and all of her work serving our church community. For everyone who has supported Margaret in this important role over the last four years.

For everyone who has worked hard ahead of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) this Sunday, preparing documents and reports. For everyone who contributes to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) throughout the year. This work 'behind the scenes' keeps our church running.

For the joy of our Messy Vintage communities - this week wonderful wellies are a blessing during April showers that water God's beautiful creation.

Prayer

Praying for our community: residents, visitors, businesses and passers-by this week, as we pray for Neale Street, Claude Street, and Charles Street.

If you are praying for the war in the Middle East and the continuing war against Ukraine, these words may be helpful:

God of mercy, look with compassion
on all who are affected by the conflict.
Grant insight to hardened hearts,

comfort to the fearful,
protection to those in danger,
and hope to those who are despairing,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Support

Remember our Pastoral Team are here to support members of the St Margaret's community whether ill or in need of a friendly listening ear, details can be found towards the bottom of this email.

Social Action

Please remember we have a box at the back of the church all year round to collect contributions of food and toiletries.

Growing Greener

Green Tip of the week



Fill a bowl with different size pebbles. Add water. Bees will land on the stones to drink.

With thanks to Maggie Conder, who spotted this tip whilst out and about at Flatford.

Revd Richard Stainer's weekly tips return soon.

Loving God · Care for Creation · Love Our Global Neighbours

Forthcoming Services and Events

Sunday 3rd May

8 am BCP Holy Communion
10am Family Communion (L)
6pm Parish Praise

Tuesday 5th May

8 am Morning Prayer
3.30pm Christchurch Court Communion

Wednesday 6th May

9 am St. Margaret's School Service
12 pm Holy Communion

Thursday 7th May

8pm Choral Compline (L)

Friday 8th May

8 am Morning Prayer in Church

Sunday 10th May

8 am BCP Holy Communion
10am Cafe church
6pm Choral Communion (L)

Tuesday 12th May

8 am Morning Prayer

Wednesday 13th May

12 pm Holy Communion
7pm Prayer meeting

Thursday 14th May (Ascension Day)

12pm Holy Communion

Friday 15th May

8 am Morning Prayer in Church

Saturday 16th May

8.30am Men's breakfast

Save the Dates

Saturday 6th June

10am - 4pm Creative Retreat Day in Church including a light lunch.

Saturday 18th July

Day Trip / Pilgrimage to Bury St Edmunds with friends from All Hallows Church to include a special service in the Cathedral led by the All Hallows and St Margaret's community, the opportunity to explore Bury St Edmunds for fun, picnics and/or reflective retreat time and the chance to finish the day attending Choral Evensong in the Cathedral.

Rev Helen will be on a curate placement with Lark Valley and North Bury Team in Thingoe Deanery (combining part of the town and surrounding villages of Bury St Edmunds) from the end of May until the beginning of July.

Offertory

The life and mission of St Margaret's is financially sustained through generous giving. If you have been giving regularly as part of your practice of gratefully living in God's service, thank you. If you're new to the community, or would like to think about celebrating life in this way, you may find the following helpful: we receive no income from 'The Church'... we are the church! So, thank you – for anything and everything that you are able to give in response to God's generosity.

In church you can give in a couple of ways on the day:

- **Collection plate** – during services a collection plate is sometimes passed among the congregation, but you will more often find it at the South door as you leave or arrive. Do use a yellow envelope if you're a tax payer so gift aid may be re-claimed.
- **Tap giving** – during services a tap giving machine is located on the pillar on the west wall, to the left of the bell tower – do consider tapping your card or device. As well as giving regularly, this is also a good way of offering an occasional additional gift.
- **Regular Giving** – St Margaret's is registered with the [Parish Giving Scheme](#), allowing you to be in control of your giving and to give securely and safely online by Direct Debit.
- **Online giving** – If you wish to make a one-off or extra gift online, you can do so securely via the [Parish Giving Scheme](#).
- **Gift Aid** – if you are a tax payer, St Margaret's can claim back the basic tax you have already paid to the government. To make the appropriate declarations, please speak with the treasurer, [John Grierson](#).
- Leaving a **gift in your will** or making a **donation in memory** of a loved one – no matter how large or small, every gift makes a difference. If you would like to talk about this with someone, in confidence, then please consider speaking with the treasurer, [John Grierson](#) or the Vicar, [Sarah](#).

Contact us:**Revd Sarah Geileskey - Vicar**Email: revsarahgeileskey@gmail.com

Address: The Vicarage, 32 Constable Road, IP4 2UW

Telephone: 07841 687879

Sarah's rest days are usually Thursday each week and the second Friday of each month**Revd Helen Prior-Townsend - Curate**Email: helenptstmags@gmail.com

Telephone: 07541 707543

Helen's rest days are usually Monday each week and every fourth Tuesday of each month.**George Woodward - Licensed Lay Minister (Reader)**Email: reader.stmagsips@gmail.com

Telephone: 07990 573258

George's quiet days tend to be Wednesdays and Fridays.**Churchwardens**

Margaret Woodward

Email: churchwardens.stmagsips@gmail.com**Office**Email: office.stmagsips@gmail.com

Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9.30am - 2.30pm

Number: 07733 609661 and leave a message.

Church Office and Contacts during the Church Administrator's period of Maternity Leave

We are taking the opportunity to rationalise email addresses. With immediate effect, please use office.stmagsips@gmail.com for all correspondence. The verger.stmagsips@gmail.com will be monitored until the end of August. There is a plan in place to maintain the current office opening hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Fridays 9.30am - 2.30pm. However, if you have a particular reason for visiting the office, do email or call ahead of time to confirm.

Pastoral Support: The Pastoral Care Team are a small group of volunteers who try and support people in a variety of situations by offering a listening ear, a helping hand or by providing useful information. Please click [here](#) for more information or contact Maggie Conder at pastoralteam.stmagsips@gmail.com.

Safeguarding: This parish recognises that the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is paramount and that we have a duty of care when they are in our charge. We will do everything that we can to provide a safe and caring environment whilst they attend our activities. When there is a disclosure of harm or there are concerns about the welfare of any children, young person or vulnerable adult, all adults in our church community are expected to share their concerns and allegations with one of the following:

Carol Klug - Parish Safeguarding Officer. Email safeguarding.stmagsips@gmail.com

Frederike Jacob is our assistant Parish Safeguarding Officer

More information on how you can report any safeguarding concerns is available from The Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich [here](#)

Newsletter Contents

Please send any items for next week's newsletter to the Church Office (office.stmagsips@gmail.com), ideally by email, by **Thursday lunchtime please**. If you would like to receive this mailing each week please complete this form <https://stmargaretsips.churchsuite.com/connect/mydetails/submit>