

# REACHING OUT

## from the Cockfield Benefice

### **Parish Churches serving the villages of:**

Bradfield St Clare, Bradfield St George w Lt  
Whelnetham, Bradfield Combust, Cockfield,  
Felsham, Gedding,  
Gt Whelnetham & Stanningfield



**July 2025**  
**Issue 128**

From the Rector's desk:

We have a new Assistant Curate in the Benefice, a new Archdeacon of Ipswich and a new Diocesan Bishop! What a momentous time it has been recently. I write this on the eve of the ordinations at St Edmundsbury Cathedral, after a day with other clergy in the diocese meeting with Bishop Joanne Grenfell who has been appointed to be the 12th Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich. I'm brimming with excitement!

June has been a momentous month, as on Pentecost Sunday we hosted Bishop Tim at Felsham Church to confirm three members of our benefice - Phil Cockell, David Wilson and Jean Hayhoe. Then the following weekend six of us attended the LYCIG weekend, which stands for 'Leading your Church into Growth', where we discussed how we could move forward as a benefice and grow our churches both in spiritual depth and in number. We came away with a plan which we will share with our Benefice Council and PCCs, and the plan will inform our new 'Growing in God' plans. But more about that further on in this issue of 'Reaching Out'.

For those of you who haven't seen the news of Bishop Joanne, you can read all about her on the Diocesan Website at [www.cofesuffolk.org](http://www.cofesuffolk.org). I was very privileged to be a part of the interview panel that appointed her, and I am so very glad that she accepted the job! She will begin her ministry with us some time in the Autumn. You can also read about our new Assistant Curate further on in this issue of Reaching Out.

In my fourteenth year as Rector of Cockfield Benefice, there is one thing that I can say for certain, and that is change is always on the horizon. It never

ceases to amaze me how the Holy Spirit moves people and situations into a new phase. And I truly feel that this is what we are entering. I have felt inspired in these past few weeks, through the people I have met, the LYCIG course, and through my daily prayer to think more deeply about not only my own calling, but the calling of us all in the villages that we serve in this benefice.

The Christian faith is a journey. It is not a set of rules that can be learnt by rote. It is a journey in which we learn all the time, about the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, through Scripture, through worship and through our encounters with one another. It is also about relationships, with Jesus, with each other, and with creation. Through prayer, praise and service we model what it means to be a disciple of Jesus, in whatever way we can and with whatever gifts we have been given.

I hope that over the next three years of this next cycle of 'Growing in God' and with our new Assistant Curate, that we can be even more welcoming than we already are in our Churches, and that we can work together to do that which we pray so often in our everyday lives and in our churches, in the Lord's prayer, 'Thy kingdom come'.

I hope that you will join us in the next stage of our journey as a benefice, and may God bless you and your family throughout this next month as we enjoy the beautiful weather in our wonderful villages.

**Sharon**

Rev Canon Sharon Potter, Rector, Cockfield Benefice  
revsharon2@gmail.com, tel: 01284 828599, 07825 086063

### **Leading Our Churches into Growth**

Six of us from the benefice attended the LYCIG conference which took place on 13/14 June at Debenham Leisure Centre. LYCIG stands for 'Leading your Church into Growth' and is a multi-day residential conference for clergy and lay leaders from across Church traditions and denominations who are looking



for encouragement and equipping in leading their churches into growth.

We had teaching and practical exercises to help with self-reflection (about our churches and not about us as individuals!).

It was quite intense, as we had to fit 7 sessions into a day and a half, with time for food, fellowship and worship.

There were lots of practical suggestions that we have taken away which we can use in our churches to help them to grow, and some of the teaching has helped me to focus on what I need to do as Rector about encouraging growth in the benefice.

The most important lesson that I have learnt, is that we must as a benefice create a Prayerful Culture of Growth - which was session one. We have to understand our context, create a prayerful culture of Church Growth, make some decisions about a leadership team, see possibilities and ensure that the Biblical principles of growth that Jesus taught us are put into action.

I hope that everyone who worships in our benefice churches will be enthusiastic about growing our congregations. I know that many of us have the desire, but we have to take the first steps by reflecting, praying and then doing what we hope will bring about the growth!

So please pray for growth, using the LYCIG prayer as follows:

God of mission,  
who alone brings growth to your Church.  
Send your Holy Spirit to give  
Vision to our planning.  
Wisdom to our actions.  
Joy to our worship.  
And power to our witness.  
Help our church to grow in numbers,  
In spiritual commitment to you,  
And in service to our local community.  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

And watch this space to see how our plans are developing and how you can be involved!

Canon Sharon

## **Rev Fiona - our new Assistant Curate**



I am very much looking forward to meeting and getting to know you all as I begin serving my curacy in the Cockfield Benefice. I will be moving with my family over the border from Essex to Suffolk. As I write, my eldest is in the middle of GCSE exams, and I am completing my masters degree and a dissertation. We have really valued your prayers for us as a family in recent months, thank you. I am a qualified teacher, and have spent a number of years teaching in primary schools across Berkshire and London. I have travelled

widely, teaching English in the Czech Republic and the Philippines, and have served as a school governor in two different schools.

I have really valued both military and prison chaplaincy placements, as well as serving as a street pastor for several years. I have worked as a wedding and landscape photographer across London and Essex, and am also a writer, with two published novels and two short story collections. Training for ordained ministry at St. Augustine's College of Theology at Malling Abbey, in Kent, I have appreciated both the breadth of tradition and the depth of teaching. It has been wonderful to share chapel services, and sometimes classes, with the sisters at the abbey. They graciously share their space with students. It has been a particular joy to hear piano playing through the convent walls! I enjoy singing, and have sung in choral and gospel choirs. I love music, particularly jazz, as well as art and coastlines. I swim and go to the gym when time allows. As I begin my ministry as a deacon, my prayers are with you and each of the parishes in the benefice, and for Canon Sharon and the ministry team. Grace and peace, Fiona.



### **Big Green Challenge for July**

As I write this we are experiencing the second heatwave of this summer. Three consecutive days in which the temperature is above 28C in the south and east of the UK constitutes a heatwave according to the Met. Office. A heatwave is 30 times more likely to occur now than before the industrial revolution because of the higher concentration of

carbon dioxide (a greenhouse gas) in the atmosphere. As greenhouse gas concentrations increase heatwaves of similar intensity are projected to become even more frequent, perhaps occurring as regularly as every other year by the 2050s. This year we also have very dry conditions to contend with as well.

### **The top ways to stay safe during a heatwave:**

- Older people, those with underlying conditions and those who live alone are particularly at risk from the heat
- If you live alone, ask a relative or friend to phone to check that you are not having difficulties during periods of extreme heat.
- Stay cool indoors: Close curtains on rooms that face the sun to keep indoor spaces cooler and remember it may be cooler outdoors than indoors.
- Drink plenty of fluids – not alcohol which enhances dehydration.
- Never leave anyone in a closed, parked vehicle, especially infants, young children or animals.
- Try to keep out of the sun between 11am to 3pm, when the UV rays are strongest.
- Walk in the shade, apply sunscreen, wear loose clothing and a wide-brimmed hat, if you have to go out in the heat.
- Avoid physical exertion in the hottest parts of the day.
- Make sure you take water with you, if you are travelling.
- Do not plunge into cold water from a hot environment – however tempting it may seem.

It could be worse, Spain is experiencing temperatures above 40C and much of France is in the top 30s. The east coast of the USA and the Mid-West is experiencing temperatures in the high 30s.

Rev Richard

### **Village Friends** *(our over 65's friendship group)*

The July Village Friends meeting will take place on **Thursday 17 July** at Felsham Village Hall, from **12.30-3.30pm**. This month is 'Fish'n'Chip' month - booking is essential. Please let Canon Sharon know if you'd like to come and if you'd like transport. Contact her on 01284 828599 or 07825 086063.



## Christian Aid Collection May 2025

This year our collection for Christian Aid week was as follows:

Total for the 6 Villages who collected: £1665 38

Cockfield £543.95

Felsham and Gedding £375.03

Little Welnetham £ 61.50

Bradfield St Clare £153.50

Bradfield St George £531. 40

Thank you to all those who were involved in delivering the envelopes and to Beryl Meed, Brian Deards and Sue Jell for counting! Perhaps next year we can extend the collection to all 9 villages in the benefice.

A poster for a Quiz Night event. At the top, two stylized lightbulbs are shown, one on the left and one on the right, both with yellow light and grey bases. A string of small, glowing lightbulbs hangs across the top. The word "QUIZ" is written in large, white, outlined letters, and "NIGHT" is written below it in smaller, white, outlined letters. Below the title, the text "at Gt Whelnetham Community Centre" is centered. A horizontal line separates this from the date "SAT 5<sup>TH</sup> JULY", which is in large, bold, black letters. Below the date, the text "7pm for 7.30pm", "£5 per head", "up to 6 per team", and "BYO drink and food" are centered. Below this, the text "Tickets available from:" is centered, followed by "Margaret: 01284 386340", "Rosemary: 01284 386709", and "Luke: 07789 922395". A horizontal line separates this from the text "Fundraising for Gt Whelnetham Church" at the bottom.

**QUIZ  
NIGHT**

at Gt Whelnetham  
Community Centre

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**SAT 5<sup>TH</sup> JULY**

7pm for 7.30pm  
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up to 6 per team  
BYO drink and food

Tickets available from:  
Margaret: 01284 386340  
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Fundraising for Gt Whelnetham Church

## SEWING REPAIRS

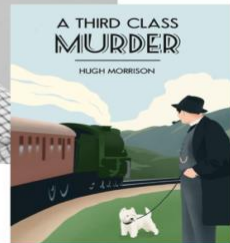
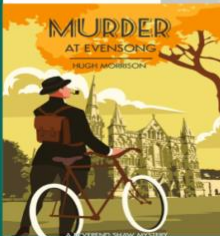
Continuing a family tradition of dressmaking I am willing to take on repair jobs. Estimates will not vary. All proceeds go to "Blue Cross", who are overwhelmed by pet owners unable to afford sky-rocketing vets bills, or simply paying for food. Contact: Jan McLaren, tel: 01284 377046.

**The Cockfield Benefice  
presents  
Hugh Morrison  
author of  
the 'Rev Shaw Mysteries'**

**At Cockfield Village Hall  
On Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September  
7pm for 7.30pm**

**Tickets £15 per person  
(inc. a glass of wine/soft drink)**

**contact [revsharon2@gmail.com](mailto:revsharon2@gmail.com) for more details  
or visit [www.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk) to book a ticket online**



**Join us for the Norman Gregory Memorial Bike Ride**

**Saturday 12th July starting at St Peter's Church, Church Lane, Cockfield**

Three routes:- 9 miles with Guide, 20 miles or 29 miles. All rides start at 10am. Register from 9.30am. Entry £5 Adults, Under 16s Free. Under 16s must be accompanied by an adult. Entry includes refreshments.

All monies raised will go to the RAF Association. All types of Bikes & E-Bikes welcome. Parking available at the Village Hall Car Park. For more information please contact: Tony Sheppard 07880 700501 or Norman Kelly 07817 242295

## Cockfield Benefice Services and **Events** - July 2025

Saturday 5 July	2-4pm Knit'n'natter at Bradfield St Clare Village Hall
Saturday 5 July	Quiz Night at Gt Whelnetham Community Centre. £5 per person. BYO food and drink. Up to six people on a team.
Sunday 6 July Trinity 3	9.30am Holy Communion at St Nicolas, Stanningfield 11am Holy Communion at Bradfield St George 6pm Celtic Communion at St Peter, Felsham
Saturday 12 July	 3-5pm at The Hive, Rougham Road, Bradfield St George, IP30 0AZ. All children welcome with their parents/carers for outdoor activities!
Sunday 13 July Trinity 4	9.30am Holy Baptism at St Nicolas, Stanningfield 10am Morning Prayer at St Peter, Cockfield 11am Holy Communion at Bradfield St Clare 6pm Praise and Worship at St Thomas, Gt Whelnetham
Tuesday 15 July	11am Holy Communion followed by soup and sandwiches at Felsham Village Hall
Thursday 17 July	12.30-3pm Village Friends at Felsham Village Hall. This month is fish'n'chips and entertainment so an earlier start time. Booking essential, contact Canon Sharon.
Sunday 20 July St Mary Magdalene	11am Patronal Morning Prayer at St Mary Magdalene, Lt Whelnetham 6pm Evening Prayer at Bradfield St Clare
Sunday 27 July Trinity 6	9.30am Holy Communion at St Thomas, Gt Whelnetham 10am Worshipping Together at Bradfield St George
Sunday 27 July	12.30pm for 1pm Cockfield Church Summer Lunch at 'Clovelly', Cockfield

A service of Celtic-style Morning Prayer is usually held every Tuesday at Cockfield at 9am and at Stanningfield every Thursday at 9am. *Please note these services may be subject to change – for up-to-date service times see the benefice website at [www.cockfieldbenefice.com](http://www.cockfieldbenefice.com) or contact Rev Canon Sharon Potter, 01284 828599 or 07825 086063 or revsharon2@gmail.com.*