



Christmas 2012



*Inspire*

*The quarterly Magazine  
of St Mary-le-Tower  
The Civic Church  
of Ipswich*

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

## EDITORIAL



I spent last Friday at work making decorations for the Friends of the Record Office Christmas Tree for the Tree Festival. I was using copies of recently donated documents and photographs which illustrate Suffolk's Jubilee celebrations and local Olympic events this summer, including written memories from many Suffolk Games makers who helped at both the Olympic and Paralympic Games. That got me wondering how I would especially remember 2012: the year Richard was commissioned as an elder, our 25<sup>th</sup> Wedding anniversary or less high profile things - those special moments that stay with you. No doubt there will be reviews of the year in the press and on television and then we will be looking forward to 2013. I hope you all have a peaceful Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

*Bridget Hanley*

### Focusing on Masterpieces: *ten key works as a history of art*

ten illustrated talks by **Hugh Belsey**

at the Ipswich Institute

Monday 7 January to Monday 18 March 2013 at 2.30pm

*'An excellent lecturer with interesting and informative opinions.'*

for further information.

call 01284 703505 or email [h.g.belsey@gmail.com](mailto:h.g.belsey@gmail.com)



### **EPIPHANY Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> January**

Once again we will be collecting vouchers for the Ipswich Woman's Aid. They really appreciate these as they can use them for birthdays and other occasions. This is also the closing date for the return of the MERCY SHIPS bags.

**CHURCH TREASURER** Our current treasurer is retiring at the end of 2012. If you think you could help with this vital task please contact the vicar or churchwardens. The treasurer doesn't carry this load on their own but has the support of a team of finance officers.

# MESSAGE FROM THE VICAR

## The Peace of the Christ-child

Once again at Christmas we make our way in faith to that stable in Bethlehem to see the wonder that has taken place, to behold the God of all time and space, the eternal Word, visiting the human race as a helpless baby. It is the beginning of the Christian story of such profound revelation and truth.

This is the revealing of the true character and purposes of the Creator, a character which resonates with the underlying realities of life and the universe, a true nature that is only now in our time being revealed in its astonishing and elegant complexity. Far from undermining the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, modern science is revealing a universe that particularly resonates with the real meaning of the Cross, which is about the almighty God who would rather serve than dominate and control.

In the Christ-child we meet our Maker and hear him call each of us, individually in person, to learn to be his true child, beloved and empowered by his grace. With the Shepherds, the Magi, and the Holy Family, we can only kneel in wonder as the Creator himself so affirms and chooses the human race, and calls us to be his co-creators, renewing and remaking the world.

In Jesus, we encounter the real and ultimate meaning of our lives. So it is good, indeed vital, to stop and wait and wonder, and to see what rises in importance in our spirits as we gaze upon the Christ-child. After all the hectic preparations for Christmas festivities, after all the excesses, after all the frustrations, after all the love, it is indeed vital to take time let the babe in the manger speak to us.

What does he speak to you? About your life and journey? About what is of real and eternal importance? About what courage and love and strength and tears are needed for the way ahead in 2013 and beyond. There can be no more important thing to do at Christmas than take time to listen to the child who will grow to make the purposes of God known as never before or since. What does he speak to you?

And whatever he speaks to you, know that you are held in his love as you journey on, as blessed Mary held him in her love. Whatever he speaks to you, whatever he calls you to, however little or large or difficult or easy, know that you are held in his love and grace. Whatever troubles and joys you face, you are indeed held, always. Such is the peace of the Christ-child, the true gift of Christmas.

*Canon Charles*

# PARISH DIARY

## DECEMBER

- Wed 26<sup>th</sup> Church closed. No 10.30am service.  
Sun 30<sup>th</sup> Choir holiday. No 9.30am and 6.30pm services.

## JANUARY

- Tues 1<sup>st</sup> Church closed. Bank holiday.  
Wed 2<sup>nd</sup> 10.30am Holy Communion services resume.  
**Sun 6<sup>th</sup>** **Epiphany.** Services resume as usual. 6.30pm Sung Eucharist.  
Mon 7<sup>th</sup> 12.00n. Prayers for Wholeness and Healing.  
Thurs 10<sup>th</sup> 6.30pm Parish Prayer Supper at the Vicarage.  
Sun 20<sup>th</sup> 6.30pm Christian Unity Service at St Mary-le-Tower  
Mon 21<sup>st</sup> 12.00n. Prayers for Wholeness and Healing.

## FEBRUARY

- Sun 3<sup>rd</sup>** **Candlemas.** 10.30am Family Communion.  
6.30pm Joint Evensong at Ipswich School Chapel.  
Mon 4<sup>th</sup> 12.00n. Prayers for Wholeness and Healing.  
**Wed 13<sup>th</sup>** **Ash Wednesday.** 7.45pm Ash Wednesday Liturgy with HC.  
Thurs 14<sup>th</sup> 6.30pm Parish Prayer Supper at the Vicarage  
Sun 17<sup>th</sup> 6.30pm United Deanery Link Service at St Peter's Stoke Park.  
Mon 18<sup>th</sup> 12.00n. Prayers for Wholeness and Healing.  
Choir Tour to Paris until Sunday 24<sup>th</sup>.  
Tues 19<sup>th</sup> 1.00pm Lent lectures begin: "Salt and Light –  
the Christian dialogue with other philosophies."  
Sun 24<sup>th</sup> Choir Tour. No 9.30am and 6.30pm services at St Mary-le-Tower.  
6.30pm Evensong at St Margaret's.  
Tues 26<sup>th</sup> 1.00pm Lent Lecture.

## MARCH

- Sun 3<sup>rd</sup> 6.30pm Sung Eucharist.  
Mon 4<sup>th</sup> 12.00n. Prayers for Wholeness and Healing.  
Tues 5<sup>th</sup> 1.00pm Lent Lecture.  
**Sun 10<sup>th</sup>** **Mothering Sunday.** 10.30am Family Communion  
Tues 12<sup>th</sup> 1.00pm Lent Lecture.  
Thurs 14<sup>th</sup> 6.30pm Parish Prayer Supper at the Vicarage  
Mon 18<sup>th</sup> 12.00n. Prayers for Wholeness and Healing.  
Tues 19<sup>th</sup> 1.00pm Lent Lecture.  
Sat 23<sup>rd</sup> 5.00pm Chamber Choir Concert: Bach St Matthew Passion  
**Sun 24<sup>th</sup>** **Palm Sunday.** 10.30am Joint Service at Christ Church Tacket St.  
**Thurs 28<sup>th</sup>** **Maundy Thursday.** 7.45pm Celebration of The Last Supper  
**Fri 29<sup>th</sup>** **Good Friday.** 12.00n. The Three Hours Devotion.  
**Sun 31<sup>st</sup>** **Easter Day.** 6.00am Sunrise Eucharist with Easter ceremonies.

*The Tower's team of elders  
taken on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup>  
October when three new  
elders - Sarah Jenkins,  
Cathy Moss and Richard  
Hanley were commissioned  
by the Archdeacon of  
Ipswich*



## HIGH DAYS AND HOLY DAYS

### JANUARY

- 1<sup>st</sup> **Naming and Circumcision of Jesus**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus,  
bishops, teachers of the faith, 379 and 389
- 6<sup>th</sup> **Epiphany**
- 10<sup>th</sup> William Laud, Archbishop 1645

- 12<sup>th</sup> Aired, abbot , 1167.
- 13<sup>th</sup> **The Baptism of Christ**
- 7<sup>th</sup> Antony of Egypt, hermit, abbot, 356
- 18<sup>th</sup> **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity until 25<sup>th</sup>.**
- 19<sup>th</sup> Wulfstan, bishop, 1095
- 21<sup>st</sup> Agnes, child martyr, 304
- 24<sup>th</sup> Francis de Sales, bishop, teacher of the faith, 1622
- 25<sup>th</sup> **Conversion of Paul**
- 26<sup>th</sup> Timothy and Titus, companions of Paul
- 28<sup>th</sup> Thomas Aquinas, priest, philosopher, teacher of the faith, 1274
- 30<sup>th</sup> Charles, king and martyr, 1649

### FEBRUARY

- 2<sup>nd</sup> **Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)**
- 13<sup>th</sup> **Ash Wednesday**
- 14<sup>th</sup> Cyril and Methodius, missionaries, 869 and 885.
- 20<sup>th</sup> Ember Days, and 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Polycarp, bishop, martyr, c.155
- 27<sup>th</sup> George Herbert, priest, poet, 1633



## **MARCH**

- 1<sup>st</sup> David, bishop, patron of Wales, c.601
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Chad, bishop, missionary, 672
- 7<sup>th</sup> Perpetua, Felicity and companions, martyrs, 203
- 8<sup>th</sup> Edward King, bishop, 1910.  
Felix, bishop, 647
- 10<sup>th</sup> **Mothering Sunday**
- 19<sup>th</sup> **Joseph of Nazareth**
- 20<sup>th</sup> Cuthbert, bishop, missionary, 687
- 21<sup>st</sup> Thomas Cranmer, archbishop, Reformation martyr, 1556
- 24<sup>th</sup> **Palm Sunday**
- 28<sup>th</sup> **Maundy Thursday**
- 29<sup>th</sup> **Good Friday**
- 31<sup>st</sup> **Easter Day**

## **TOWN PASTORS BY CATHY MOSS AND SARAH JENKINS**

As some of you may know, Town Pastors have been operating in Ipswich, as in many other towns and cities, for about six years and I knew vaguely about them and how they worked. It wasn't until two years ago when I heard a talk from a Town Pastor that I found out that on each night that they are on duty - normally Fridays and Saturdays - a team is also on hand to support them with prayer and to provide them with hot drinks and toast, from a base at the CYM centre in Great Colman Street.

Therefore as well as, ideally, three teams of Pastors, at least one person is needed at the centre each night. As the centre is five minutes walk from where I live, I thought 'Why can't I do that?' and failing to find a good reason, I duly volunteered and turned up to do a shift shortly afterwards. Each volunteer is able to choose how many shifts they do. We meet at 9.30 ready to organise the Pastors to go out at 10pm and the night finishes at 4am or a bit earlier if it's a really quiet night.

It is hard staying awake all night, but there is a routine of people coming in for a rest, which breaks up the time. Sometimes police patrols drop in to use the toilets and have a chat and a drink. I'm sure everyone has their own ritual but I always start the night by cleaning the sink (it always needs a good scrub) and drinking a mug of strong coffee. It is rare to be on your own, so there is someone to talk to. Some people read or knit.

We are kept in touch with what is going on by the radio link to the CCTV operators and the door staff (otherwise known as bouncers) at the various venues. The town centre is quite a small area and we have a map, so we always know where there is any trouble and can pray effectively.

From talking to other volunteers it seems that we all say that we couldn't handle the other role, so we are in the right place for our talents. I find the last hour is the most difficult, but it is satisfying to play a small part in keeping people safe.

## **Becoming a Town Pastor**

I first heard of the Ipswich Town Pastors a few years ago and thought it would be something I'd be interested in doing. Earlier this year they were looking for new recruits, so I applied and was lucky in being offered one of 11 places on their next training course which started in March. A wide range of subjects were covered in the 6 week course including personal safety, first aid, drug and alcohol awareness and prayer.

I initially spent a night in the prayer room to get an idea of what the Town Pastors had to deal with before I went out on the streets myself for my first shift in June. I was looking forward to it and nervous at the same time but I really needn't have worried. One of the most enjoyable things about Town Pastors is that volunteers are drawn from all the Churches in Ipswich and beyond so you get to meet Christians from other denominations and swap stories with them.

Yes you meet a lot of drunk people, some of whom can be aggressive but the majority are either friendly and want to hug you or are just grateful for your help, whether its getting them a taxi home, giving them water and a blanket and waiting with them until someone can pick them up or just listening to them talk. Every single night I've been out people enjoying themselves have stopped and said how grateful they are for the service we provide. In addition over the years the Town Pastors have built up a great rapport with the doormen, Police and the CCTV operators to whom we're all connected by radio. We all help each other.

One of the things I was worried about was dealing with vomit but after the first night when I'd never seen so much of it and people being ill in the street, I realise its not a problem! To know that we have the support of the prayer team is vital; all Town Pastors say they would not go out without that backup. I do one shift a month, usually on a Saturday night, and make sure I always keep the Sunday clear to catch up with sleep. And next year I hope to be able to join other Town Pastors from all over Suffolk providing support at the Latitude Festival.

To know that we make a difference, are helping people in need and taking our faith out onto the streets is incredibly uplifting. It is good being at the coalface.

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## **CURSILLO** *by Jo Kidby*

At the beginning of November, I attended 'Cursillo' which was held in Ditchingham, Norfolk. 'Cursillo' is run by the diocese and is a three day experience

that has elements of both a course and a retreat. It offered opportunities to grow in faith, meet other Christians and worship together. Our own Mary Sokanovic was overseeing the spiritual direction of the weekend, assisted by two other vicars and helpers from different parts of the county.

I found the experience to be hugely beneficial in my spiritual life. It gave me a chance to assess my journey and direction in life so far, and ask God what His next step for me is. I am hugely enjoying my new role as Head teacher of a church primary school, but I realise now that I must not just be focussed on this, and remain open to the other new things that God wants to lead me in. It's not just about what I think is right for me, but about continuing to be open to God's will and continuing to invite the Spirit into my life.

Cursillo gave me the opportunity to discuss and reflect on my current personal ministry and think deeply about how I can serve others on a daily basis. I questioned how I can be an ambassador for God by demonstrating the love that encompasses all of us. It came as quite a shock to me, even after years of going to church, of the realisation of how much love God has for every single one of us.



## MUSIC NOTES

The Summer Series of Lunchtime Concerts came to an end in October and already the short Winter Series has begun. David Todd has once again put together some interesting figures regarding attendance and finance over the twenty-four concerts of the main series. These showed an average weekly attendance of 85 persons, the second highest figure in recent years (the highest was 97 in 2010 - was it all that Chopin and Schumann that proved so attractive?). Average weekly donations were however higher this year at £2.95 per person, a considerable proportion of which is gift-aided.

Such strong support for the concerts has meant that we have been able to sustain a very high artistic standard without external subsidy of any kind, apart from the very welcome sponsorship of Catherine Ennis's concert by the Suffolk Organists' Association and the association with the Ipswich School Festival of Music in the Gainsborough String Quartet's concert. These were both highlights in a consistently excellent season of concerts and we are grateful to our partners for both those occasions.

The sale of refreshments has also resulted in considerable financial benefit to the concerts in addition to providing a much-appreciated facility to members of our audiences. I am most grateful to Cathy Moss and her many helpers for maintaining this service. The team involved with the concerts is quite a large one, including David and Liz Todd who act as front-of-house, Keith Foulds and June Molloy. Steve

Harman is now on duty on Tuesdays, following Roger Whittell, and, like Roger, has helped greatly with the logistics of platforms and screens and other furniture-moving. Many thanks to all of these people and others who have also helped.

In the run-up to Christmas, we shall welcome the Passione Piano Trio (Jessie Ridley, violin, Oliver Ray, cello, and Ian Ray, piano) playing the Tchaikovsky Piano Trio Op 50 on December 4, Andrew Cantrill, formerly Organist of Croydon Minster, on December 11, and the final concert before Christmas, as is tradition, will be given by the Church Choir of Boys and Men. Plans are already advancing well for next year's concerts. 2013 will bring the one-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Benjamin Britten at Lowestoft in 1913 and the bicentenaries of Verdi and Wagner. There are as yet no intentions to bring the Ring Cycle to the Tower but it is hoped to include some reflection of the great contribution to music made by both these nineteenth-century operatic giants.

The Tower Chamber Choir had a successful year, with a Lunchtime Concert in June and a further concert of Music for the Evening of Remembrance Sunday. The programme began very appropriately with Alan Gray's settings of poems by Rupert Brooke under the title *1914*. It also included works by Parry, Howells and Rutter. The Choir is now looking forward to the start of rehearsals for our performance of Bach's *St Matthew Passion* on March 23. This great work, requiring at least six soloists and scored for two choirs and two orchestras, has not been done at St Mary-le-Tower for many years now. Full details will be available early in the New Year but please book the date now.

The Church Choir has also been busy. We were pleased to host a Local Gathering of the Friends of Cathedral Music on October 20. Our visitors were extremely interested in the history of music at the Tower, including the tales about my eighteenth-century predecessor Joseph Gibbs, and seemed also to be impressed by what is going on today. Certainly there were many nice appreciative comments afterwards. The choir sang Evensong and gave a short recital afterwards, presenting music of different periods from around 1600 to the present-day. I am very grateful to George Pipe and his colleagues who rang the bells at St Lawrence for our visitors and to George particularly who gave a most interesting and enthusiastic introduction to this historic peal. I am also grateful to Sue Adair, Bridget Hanley and Mary Wombwell who provided a scrumptious tea, much enjoyed by the visitors.

The choristers have been working hard individually (three boys are waiting to take their Grade 3 ABRSM Singing exam on the very day I write this, and three more very small boys will be receiving their surplices as full members of the choir this coming Sunday) and collectively with so much to prepare for during Advent and Christmas. The Tower Singers will be combining with the Boys and Men for the Advent Carol Service on Sunday December 9 at 6.30pm. If you have not yet attended one of these services, do consider trying to come this year. The liturgy, with its emphasis on the journey from darkness to light and on the establishment of the Kingdom, makes a very special start to the approach to Christmas.

Besides the special services at the Tower, we will be going to Rendlesham Church for their Carol Service on Sunday December 18 at 6.30pm. This has become a very much enjoyed tradition for the boys and their families and for the men of the choir - a lovely atmospheric occasion in a beautiful village church, followed by a reception afterwards at Naunton Hall by courtesy of Sir Michael and Lady Bunbury.

Next year will bring great challenges to the choir. One of our first concerns must be to recruit some more boys - if you have noticed the size of some of the present ones you will not need to ask why!

Our tour to France in February includes singing in two of the greatest churches in Paris, Notre Dame Cathedral and the Cathedral de S Louis des Invalides, where Napoleon is buried. Then after the busy Lent, Holy Week and Easter period at the Tower, the boys and men will be singing Evensong in Westminster Abbey on Friday April 5. Members of the congregation will be very welcome to join us for that visit to London. Details of times and transport will be available sometime after Christmas.

*MBN*

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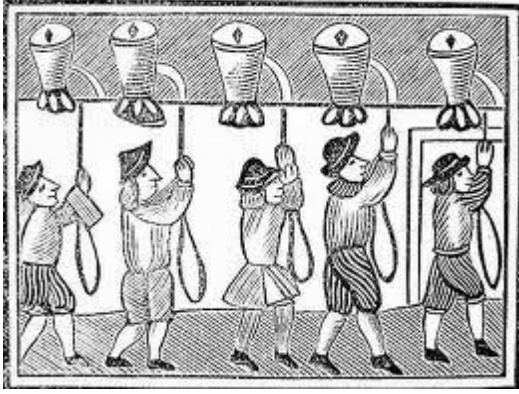
## THE SOUND OF BELLS BY GEORGE PIPE



Of all the services and events we ring for we look upon four as especially meaningful and evocative: half muffled bells for Good Friday and Remembrance Day, the joyous sound of Eastertide and, of course, Christmas morning. It is quite humbling to think Church bells have been sounding over Ipswich for well over a thousand years. That great Dean of St Paul's, Martin Sullivan, a New Zealander, once said that bells are the loudest voice the Church has. If Towers lift our eyes to heaven then bells surely lift our spirit. I am often asked how one muffles a bell (and why?). It is quite simple - on one side of the clapper 'ball' we fit a ¼ " thick leather cap so that when the bell strikes the backstroke it gives a muffled sound. This open and muffled ringing represents life on earth and our being with Christ in the heavenly belfry. Next April will mark my seventy years since learning to ring. Taught by my father, a member of the Bach Choir pre-war, and mother a Sunday School Teacher at St Matthews; they were both ringers at the Tower. It is a privilege as well as a service to ring here - one of the finest rings of twelve bells in the country.

*.....and we heard the glad bells  
When we opened the door on the snow  
All silent the scene with moonlight serene  
The shadows were holding the spell  
My thoughts sped on air to the tall steeple where  
Each ringer was ringing his bell*

*[Sir Alfred Munnings: Ballads and poems 1957]*



## BELFRY BANTER

The late summer / early autumn period is traditionally a quiet time for the ringers. This year, the period was even quieter than usual because of the continued restrictions on ringing whilst the damage to the east side of the tower was assessed meant we could only ring the front 8 bells. Happily though, these restrictions were eased at the

beginning of October, and since then, we have again been able to ring all 12 bells on both Sunday mornings and Monday evenings. One particularly noteworthy event was the ringing for morning service on Remembrance Sunday, which saw all 12 bells half muffled in keeping with tradition. It is the first time for a number of years that we have been able to ring all 12 bells on Remembrance Sunday, a feat made possible not only through having 12 ringers present, but also thanks to our wonderful new bell muffles which are a lot easier to fix in to place!

With the 11<sup>th</sup> month of the year rapidly coming to an end, Christmas will soon be upon us and the ringers will be doing their bit in the run up to, as well as over, the festive period. First up will be the ringers tree in the Christmas Tree festival, then we will also be ringing for the Christmas Tree Festival service on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> November. Our intention is to ring a quarter peal for this event, a non-stop piece of ringing which lasts approximately 50 minutes. On the final Saturday before Christmas we will be joining all the other towers which have ringable bells in Ipswich in ringing for 30 minutes simultaneously from 1145 – 1215. We will also be ringing for a number of the special services over the festive period.

If you are stuck for something to do on a Monday evening now that darkness sets in much earlier, have you thought about coming up to the belfry to see what we do? We would be very pleased to welcome you and show you what we do. Perhaps some of you may even be tempted to have a go? Our ringing master, David Potts, has recently completed a course on teaching new ringers so is looking for some new recruits to practice what he has learned on!

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# Christmas Tree Festival 2012



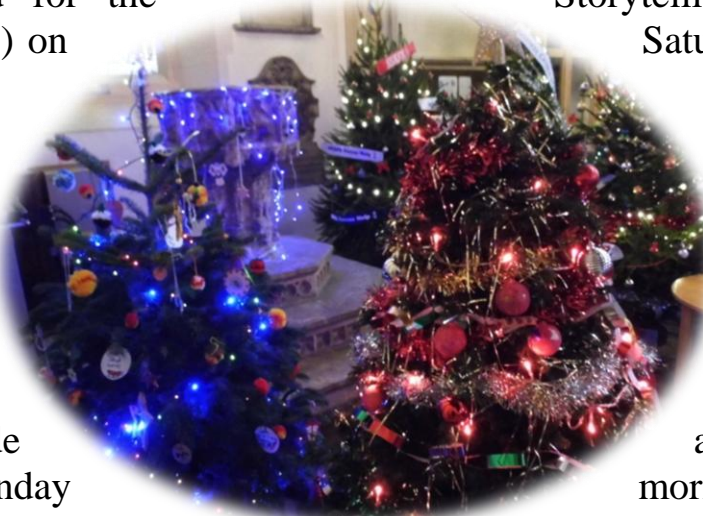
Thanks to Angela Harris for photos



**The Church looked fantastic for St Mary-le-Tower's third Christmas Tree Festival.** Once again there were about 80 real and artificial trees on display, decorated by a huge variety of community organisations and businesses.

The Festival Committee and a dedicated team of volunteers worked tirelessly to organise and stage the festival, with the Opening Evening, the Songs of Praise and the Tuesday concert all being well attended and thoroughly enjoyable occasions. Particular features this year were a higher profile for the Festival Café throughout the festival and for the Storytelling by Ed Max (for children, mostly!) on Saturday.

A new highlight style spiritual Saturday night his band. success and dancing in Revd Keith to Ipswich, made pulpit at the Sunday preaching movingly on Tree, with the tree itself representing the goodness and wisdom of Creation and the lights representing the glory of God.



was a New Orleans jazz concert on the by John Petters and This was a real there was even aisles! The Very Jones, recently retired a welcome return to the morning Eucharist,

the symbolism of the Christmas

Tree, with the tree itself representing the goodness and wisdom of Creation and the

lights representing the glory of God.



At the time of going to press, final figures were not available, but it looks something like in terms of adults, 600 had paid to visit the festival, plus another 600 at the other special events, plus of course many children. And around £1100 has been raised for church funds and £560 for charities.

Many thanks to everyone who supported us, tree decorators and tree sponsors, visitors and volunteers. This event is still building year by year and we expect the festival to be even bigger next year. It is a true celebration of community in the run up to Christmas.

## **VOCATION AND DISCIPLESHIP**

*2 courses are coming up in the new year, for which leaflets are available in church. For more information please contact the clergy.*

### **EXPLORING VOCATION – Diocesan course**

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> Day event, and then fortnightly on Thursday evenings through to 28<sup>th</sup> March, in central Ipswich.

### **DEEPENING CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP – Deanery Morning**

Saturday Morning 23<sup>rd</sup> February at St Andrew's, Britannia Road.

Displays, resources and workshops.