



# Benefice of Dersingham, Anmer, Ingoldisthorpe & Shernborne

7 November 2021

## Exciting Announcement!

Dear All,

Today I am pleased to be able to share some wonderful news. The journey began over five years ago with the revising of the benefice worship pattern in 2017, making decisions then for the here and now, but importantly looking to the future for growth. The good news is that this future is now emerging into a living reality.

The Diocese of Norwich are aware of the striving commitment to ministry and mission in this benefice and our heart for growth. The bishops and senior staff of the Diocese have decided to partner with us by choosing this benefice as a focus area for investment, through the awarding of a grant. The focus is one of encouraging and facilitating church growth.

This follows planning over preceding years, work behind the scenes by Rev Dave and myself, signs of the Holy Spirit at work and prophetic words. A member of the Ingoldisthorpe parish church shared some prophetic words 3 years ago about “a well of new life springing up in the village”. Through a constant process of prayerful discernment, the passage of Scripture from John 4, Jesus meeting the Samaritan woman at the well, has been influential. Let’s turn to it for context in this announcement.



Jesus asks the woman for water, but she asks Jesus why. <sup>10</sup> Jesus replied, “**If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water.**”

She says: **Where do I get this living water?** <sup>13</sup> Jesus replied, “Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. <sup>14</sup> But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life.” <sup>15</sup> **“Please, sir,” the woman said, “give me this water!”**”

**What:** Like the Samaritan woman, many are looking for meaning in life, searching for God and the source of living water, but don’t know where to go. The vision is to provide a new creative way to engage in a neutral safe place, where people can come to find the living water of Jesus, as their Lord and Saviour. The Church Hall in Ingoldisthorpe is down the hill, close to where people live, and has the necessary facilities (toilets, kitchen) and a recently improved and accessible grassed area outside.



**Who:** This venture is focused particularly on the fringe and new fringe. The new fringe are adults and children who have begun engaging with the Christian faith through online provisions in recent months or are enquiring, just as the Samaritan woman was. Others are looking for purpose in life and not sure where to find the living water they need. We are seeking to build upon strong clergy relationships and presence at Ingoldisthorpe Church of England Primary School, including the influential online collective worship for schools and families – ‘Bible Bites’.



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## Worship:

What does it look like?

In its regular worship the style will be of an informal café nature, relaxed, where accessibility is important in all its forms. We are looking at the accessible time of 4pm on Sundays, and additionally fellowship groups beginning.



## How:

The 'Well-come' will be very important for the church. It will have a heart for making people feel welcomed. Worship at The Well will be accessible, with language and practices that are engaging and deliberately distanced from church cultures, which are often unfamiliar to the unchurched and a barrier, even if we like them. The Well Ingoldisthorpe will be a church plant intentionally being individually distinct from St Michael & All Angel's parish church.

## Coffee shop:



The creation of a part-time coffee shop in the Hall will be a way for creating conversation, belonging and community whilst also offering a provision in the village. The use of a professional coffee expresso machine will be an integral aspect to this identity, offering different coffees and also many other drinks from teas to hot chocolates and more. It will be overseen though means of a salaried part-time role – Barista Evangelist. Through the coffee shop, we will open opportunities to welcome people to the Church at The Well and events, including Alpha.

## What are the next steps?

- + Finishing of the website
- + Creation of Social Media presence on different platforms
- + Fine tuning visual identity/imagery
- + Sourcing items required
- + Publicity and communication
- + Planning
- + Meeting as a church plant small team and praying together



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**How can you respond?**

- + Prayer support is vital
- + Recruitment of and employing a part-time paid role of Barista Evangelist
- + Seeking a small number of believers to be committed to this new church
- + More Prayer – as we step forward for the Gospel to those who don't yet know the source of the loving living water.



In Christ

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