



# THE BANSFIELD BENEFICE

Vicar : Rev. Ian M. Finn

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## CHURCH NEWS



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MAY 2007

**D**ear friends,

The sun shone, the church was full, candidates were nervous and excited, the Vicar confident that all was organised, prepared and ready, and the Bishop regaled in all his robes and leading the service, rose to the occasion.

Yes, it was **Confirmation Day!**

The second Sunday of Easter was the eagerly awaited Confirmation in the Benefice. Seven candidates from different Benefice parishes had been preparing for the day since the previous summer, meeting with the Vicar regularly on a Sunday afternoon for confirmation classes. They had talked together about matters of faith: God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, prayer, sacraments, the church, personal faith and discipleship.

Back to the service....The Bishop asks the candidates questions about their faith: do they believe in God, do they reject sin, do they turn to follow Jesus? The candidates answer that they do. The Bishop takes them in procession to the font at the back of church to remind them of their Baptism and membership of the church, as the congregation enthusiastically sing an Easter hymn. The candidates remember their baptism by making the sign of the cross on their foreheads with the water in the font. The procession returns to the front of the church as everyone sings the ancient hymn of the Holy Spirit – 'Come Holy Ghost our souls inspire'. Then comes the

confirmation, as the candidates stand in front of the bishop, he lays hands on the head of each in turn, calling them by name, signing them with the cross in holy oils, and asking that the Holy Spirit come down upon them. Tears are in the eyes of family and friends. The Vicar relieved that all is going well and that he remembered the names of the candidates (under pressure of the big day!) in front of the Bishop.

Then its time for the Holy Communion and the first time the candidates have come to the altar rail to receive the sacrament. Each does as they have been taught (the Vicar is pleased!) and all goes smoothly. The end of the service with a great song of 'Praise my soul the King of Heaven' during which the candidates and Bishop process out of the church and into the sunshine. Photographs with the Bishop (the Vicar managed to slip into one or two!) see above. Refreshments served in the fresh air. What a wonderful day! The Bishop and his wife had enjoyed themselves in the Benefice and so had the candidates. The planning and preparation had paid off – one group of confirmed candidates, lots of happy memories for them and their families, one pleased bishop with a job well done, and one very relieved Vicar!

But Confirmation Day is just another milestone on the Christian journey of the seven. It began when they were Baptised into the family of God, and it will end when they finally reach their destination – the Kingdom of Heaven.

Along way to go for them all still – and for

each one of us too.

I too have a way to go. I must move on at the end of this month of May. Not far away, but a very different post in many respects. I am nervous and apprehensive about what lies ahead on my journey; very sad to be moving on from a place I have loved and a people who have been so supportive. We have had some great times in the last eight years – lots of happy memories. But I know that God wants me to journey onward towards the kingdom, the next step being in Haverhill and Withersfield, and He will be there on the journey with me.

At my confirmation (*November 1968! – I was very young at the time!*) the Bishop gave a text from the Bible (Revelation 2:10) for us to keep with us on our journey – I share it with you as I have done with the candidates – "*Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.*" Whatever happens to us in life, wherever God leads us, whatever He calls us to do; He asks only that we are faithful to Him. That faith will be rewarded.

I have tried to be so this last eight years in Bansfield Benefice. I ask you to carry on with the same.

Pray for the candidates who were recently confirmed as they continue on their life's journey, pray for me as I move on along my journey, and be assured that you are in my prayers too.

Haverhill is not far away. I hope you will visit.

**Rev. Ian Finn**

### CHURCH & VILLAGE EVENTS : MAY 2007

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Traidcraft coffee morning in the Benefice Hall

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> 7.00pm Wickhambrook School Governors meeting

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> Stansfield Farm walk (see over for details)

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> 3.00pm at Haverhill St. Mary's, **Archdeacon's Visitation** and admission of new Church wardens to Office.

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> 7.00pm Christian Aid service – Methodist Church Wickhambrook.

**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Benefice service at Wickhambrook All Saints' church.  
Vicar's final service in the Bansfield Benefice**



# SERVICE ROTA MAY 2007

May 2007	St. Nicholas DENSTON	All Saints STANSFIELD	St. Margaret STRADISHALL	All Saints WICKHAMBROOK	St. Margaret COWLINGE	St. Mary LIDGATE	St. Peter OUSDEN
Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup>						10.00am HC	
Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup>		10.00am HC					
Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> EASTER 5	10.30am Matins BCP Fiona Evans	9.30am Matins BCP John Dennis		9.30am HC CW Jam Club IMF		9.30am HC CW Rev. Bob Torrens	11.00am HC BCP IMF
Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am HC						
Thursday 10 <sup>th</sup>					10.00am HC		
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> EASTER 6	10.00am Benefice HC BCP IMF						
Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup>			10.00am HC				
Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup>							10.00am HC
Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup> EASTER 7	9.30am HC BCP IMF	8.00am HC CW IMF	6.00pm Evensong BCP IMF	9.30pm Family Paul Bevan	11.00am HC CW IMF	9.30am Morning Prayer CW Ann Jones	11.00am HC ext CW Philip Draycott
Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup>						10.00am HC	
Thursday 24 <sup>th</sup>		10.00am HC					
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> PENTECOST				10.00am Benefice HC CW IMF			
Tuesday 29 <sup>th</sup>							
Thursday 31 <sup>st</sup>							

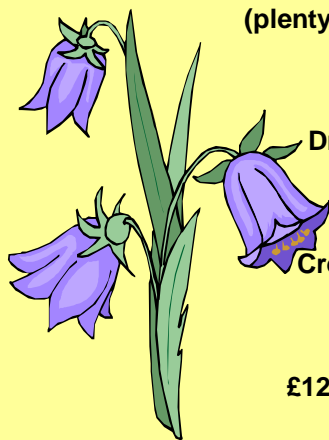
HC = Holy Communion CW = Common Worship service BCP = Book of Common Prayer Service IMF = the Vicar

## Rogation Farm Walk Stansfield

In aid of All Saints Church, Stansfield

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2007**

10.30am Coffee at Stansfield Hall Barn  
To end of farm road past village hall  
(plenty of parking)



Morning Walk 1½– 2 hours

Drinks & Lunch at Laurel Bank

Afternoon walk 1 hour

Cream tea at Stansfield Hall barn

Dogs on leads please  
£12 (includes drinks, lunch & tea)

Bookings for lunch/walk  
please telephone: Louise 01284 789279

BENEFICE

## CONFIRMATION

Sunday 15th April Wickhambrook Church  
Bishop Jeremy Walsh  
Candidates



Sarah Dowsett, Tasmin Smith, Holly Chapman,  
Hugh McKendrick, Douglas McKendrick,  
Kit Wilkins-Smith, Bramwell Durrant

*Please continue to remember them in your prayers*