

TOGETHER

The FREE magazine from the Diocese of Rochester | Issue 3 | Summer 2019

GROW | ENRICH | RESOURCE

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BUZZ ABOUT
THE CATHEDRAL

MODERN
SLAVERY

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Welcome to the latest edition of Together.

I think it's fair to say we've definitely got the summer vibe in this edition. In **Focus On**, we welcome some new additions to the orchard at Rochester Cathedral (p8) and meet the churches bringing a festival feel to their community during the holidays (p16).

While the summer brings fun for many, for some it brings the risk of exploitation, so we're asking whether you could you spot the signs of Modern Slavery (p12), while our **One to One** interview (p24) highlights work underway to ensure our churches are safe places for all.

You'll find great prayer resources to explore and download in our **Head Space** section (p20), as we get inspired by the global prayer event, Thy Kingdom Come, plus lots of events not to miss. Here's to a great summer!

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HEAD SPACE

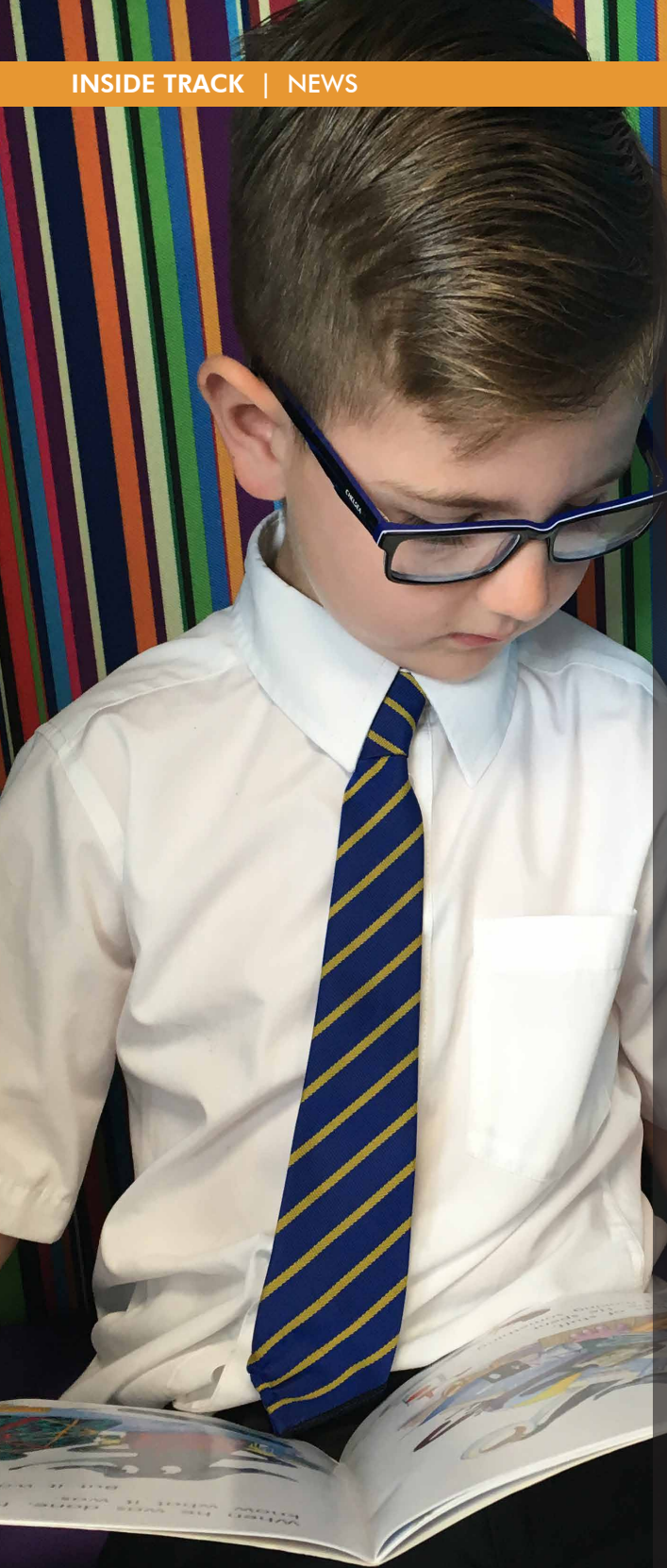
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NEW TERM, NEW SCHOOL

The first Church of England School in Tonbridge has moved into its new school building.

Pupils at Bishop Chavasse Church of England Primary School, part of the Tenax Schools Trust, were welcomed into their new building after the Easter break by headteacher Donna Weeks.

She says: "Watching the children enter the school in awe of their new environment was a delight."

The school first opened its doors in September 2017 whilst housed in temporary accommodation.

The new building provides outstanding facilities with specialist classrooms for food technology, nurture, themed group spaces, reflection areas and an inspiring library, in addition to spacious classrooms for every year group

It also means that the school can now come together every day for their act of worship in the school hall – something they were unable to do before

Donna says: "What has been created is a calm and spacious learning environment which provides great opportunities for learning both inside and outside the classrooms."

Sebastian, in Year 1, gave the library a big thumbs up:

"It has lots of hiding spaces to sit in and read a book. It is really, really colourful, I love it."

Bishop James will formally open the new building in June.



CHRISTIAN WORSHIP REVIVED AT ROMAN VILLA

The first Christian act of worship since the 5th century AD has taken place at historic Lullingstone Roman Villa. Around 100 people from Christian churches across Eynsford, Farningham and Lullingstone joined a service in the villa itself, to celebrate God's activity in the villages for over 1,600 years.



KEEPING THE FAITH

Gloria Simmonds of St Augustine's Church, Belvedere, is the proud recipient of a long service certificate marking her 41 years of dedication to the wider Church and to ethnic minority concerns. Gloria says "It's been the most humbling experience to receive recognition". She says her faith is kept strong by daily attendance at mass!



IF YOU GO DOWN TO THE WOODS TODAY...

Woodland walks, mud portraits and toasting marshmallows on whittled sticks are just some of the activities that have taken place at a new monthly "Forest Church" in the woodlands between Bidborough and Southborough. Organisers are looking forward to seeing how this way of worshipping outside will grow.



RUN, ARCHDEACON, RUN

"It was tough and slower than I hoped but I did it!" Archdeacon Andy successfully completed the London Marathon dressed as... an apple. Raising money for the children's oncology ward at Ashford Hospital, it's still possible to donate: www.justgiving.com/fundraising/pinkladyapples Over £4000 has been raised so far.

YOUNG PEOPLE GET CREATIVE

Young people have been getting creative with their faith over at Anerley thanks to funding from the Children and Young People's (CYP) fund.

Youth Minister, Roman Naumenko said, "I wanted our young people to feel free in their worship, and for the worship experience to be more culturally relevant to their age group".

Thanks to the fund, Roman was able to buy some sound-sensitive LED lights, speakers, and a sparkle wall to help create a lively and different atmosphere for worship.

"They feel much more comfortable about bringing someone along now because, when a young person comes in, they don't feel like the church is an entirely different world that doesn't understand their reality."

"I'm EXTREMELY grateful to the Diocese and the Colyer Fergusson Trust, who make the fund possible, for giving us this amazing opportunity



to help make young people feel more valued and loved and welcomed."

The 2019 deadlines for CYP Fund applications are: 14 June, 13 September and 29 November. Find out more at: www.rochester.anglican.org/under18s/children-and-young-people-cyp-fund/

MAUNDY MONEY SURPRISE

Sylvia McClean and Jim Lawrenson, were delighted to be among the 93 men and women invited by Her Majesty the Queen to receive the Royal Maundy Money at St George's Chapel, this year.

Recipients are chosen for their service to their community and are nominated from across the Church of England and Scotland.

Jim is a committed volunteer at Rochester Cathedral, and Sylvia is a dedicated member of Christ Church, Erith, serving on the Deanery Synod, singing in the choir, and a regular on the church's reader and coffee rotas. She is also a long-standing member of the Bexley African Caribbean Association.



SYLVIA (CENTRE) WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY IN THE CASTLE GROUNDS

"It was a real surprise! It was really awe-inspiring to meet the Queen and also to be among all those other retired men and woman from across the country, who have been successful during their lives in serving their communities."



BORE PLACE

DIOCESE'S POVERTY AND HOPE APPEAL LAUNCHED

Last year, through the generosity of churches, £32,000 was raised for the Diocese's Annual Poverty and Hope Appeal's chosen projects.

This year we will be supporting five projects across the world, in Syria, Burundi, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, and projects like Bore Place in west Kent. Home to the Commonwork Trust, this charity with Christian values at its core offers a variety of activities and experiences for people of all ages and abilities, including those who are most vulnerable and have fewer opportunities.

Could you support us again this year?

Find out more at: www.rochester.anglican.org/diocese/poverty-amp-hope/



GRAHAM HUCKSTEPP, THE HEAD GARDENER AT ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL

THERE'S A BUZZ ABOUT THE CATHEDRAL

A hive of activity is taking place within the Orchard at Rochester Cathedral, as 500 or so bees get settled into their new home. Their presence is just one of an exciting number of initiatives taking place this summer, helping the Cathedral rediscover its botanical roots.

Clad in a white protective suit and mesh head gear, Graham Huckstepp, the Head Gardener at Rochester Cathedral, is overseeing the introduction, or rather the reintroduction, of bees into the Cathedral's garden:

"Man has kept bees in one way or another for centuries", says Graham, "and certainly bees would have been kept within the grounds of the Cathedral at some point, so it seems fitting for them to return."

The orchard, which forms part of the Cathedral grounds, has not been open to the public for a while, but this is all about to change. The bees are an important part of that, as the Very Rev Dr Philip Hesketh, the Dean of Rochester Cathedral explains:

"Being a conservation site, even thinking about pruning some of trees in the orchard can be an involved process, but we're working hard to make our vision for Rochester to be known as 'The Garden Cathedral of England' a reality.

"We want visitors to be able to experience the beauty and glory of God in a variety of ways. Being able to wonder at God's creation, as well as celebrate the

human endeavour involved in caring and curating this bounty, is at the heart of what we are doing."

Rochester Cathedral is England's second oldest cathedral, having been founded in AD604 by Bishop Justus. The present building dates back to the work of the French monk, Gundulf, in 1080. His priory and gardens were built on the south side of the current Cathedral to maximise the light and warmth from the sun.

Although the monks are long gone the small square garden - or Garth - is still a place to inspire peace and reflection.

As part of the Cathedral's vision, Garden Tours are being planned, that will allow visitors to discover some of the hidden areas of the grounds, as well

"We're working hard to make our vision for Rochester to be known as 'The Garden Cathedral of England' a reality."



“...there is a good bird population here; I have listed 26 different species alone”

as learn more about the variety of trees and open spaces that provide a rich resource for the rare wildlife that find a safe haven there.

“At the moment we have grey wagtails nesting and bringing up young”, says Graham. “These are not an everyday bird for a town, but there is a good bird population here; I have listed 26 different species alone. The insect life is also very varied, with different bees including the white-faced bumble bee.”

Garden Tours are planned, allowing visitors to discover some of the hidden areas of the Cathedral grounds.

Vines will shortly be planted within the orchard too, to make Cathedral wine, which Graham says further shows how important and beneficial even small spaces of land can be for wildlife and for ourselves.

With the prospect of Cathedral honey as well, Graham could be forgiven for being a little daunted at the challenge ahead. But, having had some previous experience of beekeeping, he is excited as well as aware of the responsibility resting on his bee-keeping shoulders:

“Life inside a hive is tough! As a beekeeper you have to be quite vigilant as to what is happening within it – is it the right time to harvest some of the honey? Are the bees healthy? Might they swarm? Sometimes they can take you by surprise!”

And as for what Cathedral honey might taste like, does he have any clues?

“It will be interesting to find out, but the taste is often influenced by what the bees have been foraging on so, in our case, there should be a high percentage of tree pollen, apples and limes in there – so it could be quite citrusy!”

It’s set to be a fruitful time ahead!



THIS SUMMER CHECK OUT SOME OF THE MANY FUN FAMILY ACTIVITIES IN STORE AT THE CATHEDRAL:

- Cathedral Crazy Golf (August 2019) - Play a round of crazy golf inside the Cathedral. The ancient nave will be filled with our bridge-themed golf course.
- Dean Samuel Hole Bicentenary Activities (23-26 August) - Celebrate the 200th anniversary of the ‘Rose King’ of Rochester.
- Fragments of History (Open now until December 2019) - Discover the story of Rochester Cathedral in our exhibition of sculptural stone, fabric and glass from the Cathedral’s 1400-year history.

For more details, visit www.rochester-cathedral.org

MODERN SLAVERY – COULD YOU SPOT THE SIGNS?

Often associated with big cities, in reality modern slavery is just as likely to take place in towns, villages, and remote countryside areas: the types of areas to be found across the Diocese.

Seasonal workers are particularly at risk of being exploited into modern slavery during the summer and autumn months.

“It’s one of the reasons why, as a Diocese, we have committed to working with The Clewer Initiative – the Church of England’s Modern Slavery awareness initiative - to help people in our churches and communities spot the signs and report anything they see”. says Caroline Clarke, Community Engagement and Social Responsibility Advisor for the Diocese of Rochester.

“We now have a number of trained Anti-Slavery Champions

in the Diocese, who are available to talk to churches, organisations or groups about how to recognise and report the signs of Modern Slavery and get the right support for those affected.”

While estimates from the Global Slavery Index suggest that there are 136,000 victims of modern slavery in the UK, it is more than likely that modern slavery, particularly in rural areas, is being under-reported.

For one church member, Janet* the issue is so important that she has overcome her fear of public speaking in order to become an Anti-Slavery Champion.

“I feel able to do this work and read about and talk about this really upsetting material because I feel that I must do it. That it’s so important, and God’s given me the strength to do this and helps me with it.”

“We’re taught in Genesis that every human being on earth is created in the image of God. And when human beings are exploited and treated as commodities, that isn’t just a crime against those human beings. That’s a crime against God himself.”

Although most countries in the world have now made slavery illegal, it still continues but is now hidden and not so obvious.

Janet explains that here in Kent, people are often being found in car washes, in nail bars, in construction sites, on farms, and in domestic servitude.

“Recently in Tunbridge Wells, we came across a case where a lady had noticed that there were people coming and going at strange times in the night to her neighbour’s house and she thought it was suspicious. She

contacted the Modern Slavery Helpline. There was a police raid and they uncovered people living there who were trapped in slavery.”

Janet says that the hope of the Anti - Slavery Awareness Champions is that, as more people become aware, they will talk to their friends and family and that there will be more and more people spotting the signs and reporting incidents.

“We all need to open our eyes and if we were all ‘hungry and thirsty for righteousness’ then perhaps this crime that’s been going on for so long, will finally be eradicated.”

**due to the sensitivities around this area of work we are not using her real name.*

**So, could you spot the signs?
TURN OVER THE PAGE**



WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- **Notice change** - As you drive through the countryside and neighbouring market towns, make an effort to notice any changes, such as new temporary accommodation for migrant workers.
- **Question:** Do you spot large groups of workers waiting to be picked up by vans driving them to their place of work? Or do you see labourers wearing little to no protective equipment, even for dangerous jobs? Does something seem ‘not right’?
- **Think about your shopping habits.** Are you putting price before people? Consider items or services you could change to make sure you are paying a fair price.
- **Download the Safe Car Wash App** - Available free on Apple and Android phones. Use the app whenever you go to a hand car wash. It will take you through the signs of modern slavery and work out whether you should have concerns to report to the Modern Slavery Helpline.
- **Report suspicions and concerns:** We all need to report when we are concerned that modern slavery could be happening in our local area. You can call the Modern Slavery Helpline on 08000 121 700 and pass on any concerns or, in an emergency situation, you should call the police on 999.
- **Talk about it!** We need to spread the word about modern slavery and raise awareness in our churches, communities, and schools.

Visit www.theclerinitiative.org for more information or contact caroline.clarke@rochester.anglican.org to arrange a talk by one of the Diocese’s Anti-Slavery Awareness Champions.

MODERN SLAVERY: A GUIDE TO SPOTTING THE SIGNS

If you think you have spotted the signs of modern slavery call the modern slavery helpline on 08000 121 700, or for labour exploitation concerns call the Gangmasters' and Labour Abuse Authority on 0800 432 0804. In an emergency situation always call 999.



GROUPS OF TENTS

Victims of modern slavery may be housed in tents in fields or in makeshift shelters at all times of the year. Homeless or vulnerably housed people are at high risk of modern slavery.



CARAVANS ON SITES

Victims of modern slavery may be housed in caravans close to their place of work or on wastelands. The caravans are likely to host several people, be dirty, and in disrepair.



GROUPS OF PEOPLE WAITING

Victims may be picked up and dropped off at their workplace by their trafficker. They will wait by the side of the road and often be picked up by a minibus or in a van.



HAND CAR WASHES

Hand car washes are a risk area for modern slavery. Look for cash-only payments, an overbearing manager and fearful workers wearing no protective clothing.



DOMESTIC SERVITUDE

Victims of domestic servitude will work cleaning the home and looking after children. They will not be able to leave the house unsupervised and their ID will be confiscated by their exploiter.



POP-UP BROTHELS

Temporary brothels may take over holiday cottages in rural areas, particularly during off-season. Look for lots of men coming in and out of the property at odd hours.



LABOUR EXPLOITATION

Labour exploitation has been found in farms producing meat, eggs, flowers, and vegetables. Migrant labourers who do not speak English are at risk of being exploited.



COUNTY LINES

Young people from cities are groomed to sell drugs in county towns. Look for teenagers travelling alone by train during school hours.

File credit: Clewer initiative



SPARK IN THE PARK

What would summer be without festivals? The music, the activities, and just a chance to have fun and experience something new with others – even faith? SPARK in the Park offers just that. We spoke to Kate Foot from St John in Welling, and a member of the SPARK team, to find out more.

Running for one week each summer for the last 16 years, SPARK in the Park is a church-run event that brings churches and communities together in Danson Park, Bexley. Now regularly welcoming 2,000 people, like the legendary Glastonbury it initially started small:

“It all began when a small Evangelical Church in Welling approached a Pentecostal Church and an Anglican Church, and from that some children and youth activities began.”

“As a team we’re simply motivated by the welcome and care we know God shows us, and which we see in Jesus’ ministry. We just want to be good news to people.”

Over 100 volunteers from across the local churches provide five afternoons of free activities, with a

marquee full of imaginative craft, refreshments, face painting (180 faces a day!), an under 5’s play area, and a field full of sport, games and giant inflatables. There’s worship too and a prayer team willing to pray with anyone who asks.

But this simple idea has gone on to have big results, attracting people from outside Welling and Bexleyheath, reaching out to people from Greenwich, Gravesend to Essex, and further afield.

“We regularly hear of people travelling from across the country to spend a week with wider family and friends so they can attend SPARK.”

So, what makes SPARK so special?

For one thing, Kate says, once you’re in a yellow shirt, nobody knows or cares which church you belong to: “There have been people, both on team and off, whose faith journey has been majorly impacted by SPARK - we have a daily team meeting with worship, prayer and teaching before we open to the public, and at the end of each afternoon we have a team time with cool stories and thanks given to God for what He has done. So many new skills sets are learnt and confidence

gained through volunteering on the team”.

Michelle, one of the volunteers, would agree:

“God definitely inhabits the SPARK field for a week a year, and His presence is tangible.”

“The team is amazing. We all come with different personalities and church backgrounds, but it’s so enlightening to talk to other team members, finding out their testimonies and how faith works in their lives; we give each other motivational energy because we

have one agenda.”

And for eighteen-year old Jacob, one of the many young helpers, it’s the visitors – young and old - that make it special too:

“I find SPARK in the Park such a rewarding opportunity. It’s so exciting to spread the good news of Jesus to families in the borough and showing ultimately that a life in Christ is one of true fun and fulfilment.”

Kate explains that all involved have been amazed at how SPARK has grown: “What God blesses grows, just like Jesus blessing the fish and bread and growing it to feed 5000. We offer to God what we have.”

“God definitely inhabits the SPARK field for a week a year, and His presence is tangible. We keep praying, and we see God move. And there has been a steady trickle of people turning to and returning to Christ.”



SPARK returns this year from Monday 29 July to Friday 2 August 2019

www.sparkinthepark.org.uk



IS IT TIME TO HIT 'DELETE' ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

As scrutiny of the big social media companies increases and calls for regulation grow, the Rt Rev Simon Burton-Jones, Bishop of Tonbridge asks, is it time for us to stop believing the rewards of social media outweigh the costs?

Jaron Lanier, pioneer in the field of Virtual Reality, tech philosopher and scientist at Microsoft Research has undergone a conversion. His book, *Ten Arguments for Deleting Your Social Media Accounts Right Now* (Penguin, 2018) makes for surprising and uncomfortable reading.

While he is quick to say every person must decide for themselves how they engage with social media, if at all, he is clear that if it lay in his power, he would deconstruct the whole model to destroy the barely understood power of algorithms.

Most of us know that what we do on social media is being used and sold on by the platform to advertisers and others who wish to change our behaviour. But these adaptive algorithms are changing and hooking us too – and not always for the better.

A strong body of research shows that in a contest between positive and negative feedback, the latter wins out in its depth and endurance. Fear and anger rise quickly within us and take longer to dissipate. If someone says something nice to us, the feeling evaporates much quicker than when they criticise or attack us. We give bad emotion miles of air space in our brains.

As someone once said: an encouraging word is like Teflon; it just won't stick. A spiteful comment is like Velcro; we can't prise it off.

A spiteful comment is like Velcro; we can't prise it off.

In giving more attention to bad things online, we attract the algorithms which attach to us and accentuate the problem by stoking more stuff to depress us, make us insecure

and divide us more sharply from those who think differently to us.

And as we reflect on this, it still doesn't make much difference to our behaviour either because we think the rewards outweigh the costs or because we believe we are impervious to manipulation. But what if they don't and we aren't?

There are signs a backlash has begun against the tech companies which for two decades have somehow been seen as a different kind of business - hip, young, cool, value-driven – when they are ruthlessly governed by the profit motive too. Why we thought otherwise is a mystery.

We still have the chance to democratise the internet in a way that makes it better. It can, and should, be shaped in the character of God, but right now we have no idea how to enable this. How many of us for a start, pray for the work of software engineers in our world whose coding is so shaping human society?

In Philippians 4, St Paul says:

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

We should wish one another God-speed on this one. For at the moment we close our Bibles and unlock our smartphones, this calling faces a huge challenge.

...algorithms are changing and hooking us too – and not always for the better.

Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer initiative, when Christians are encouraged to pray for the nine days between Ascension – when Jesus returned to heaven after his resurrection - and Pentecost – when the Holy Spirit came to the disciples (30 May and 9 June). But whether you're new to prayer, or an old pro, these resources will help you with your prayer life, whatever the time of year.

PRAYER JOURNAL

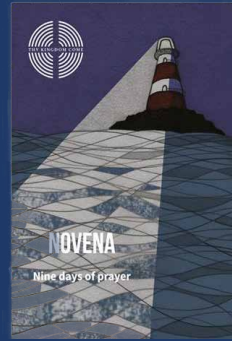
Price £1.00



Use this pocket-sized journal to sketch and scribble your thoughts, prayers and any answers you receive to them, as you go on a journey of prayer. Being undated, you can use it at any time. Each day has a different theme to help you pray for five friends to come to know Jesus.

TKC NOVENA

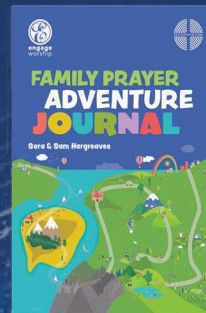
Price £1.00



A Novena is simply nine days of prayer. Particularly inspired by Jesus' Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew's Gospel, this little booklet is your invitation to explore for yourself, through art and prayer, the dual message of love and challenge found at the heart of this story.

THE FAMILY ADVENTURE PRAYER MAP

£ 5.00



Embark on the adventure of prayer together as a family. This interactive map with stickers is packed with activities, Bible stories and creative ways to pray. This colourful resource is sure to engage families together in prayer.

All the above resources can be ordered from the CPO website: www.cpo.org.uk/thykingdomcome

THY KINGDOM COME

Log in to your usual app store and type 'pray' and you'll find a sea of apps all petitioning to help you pray.

The Rev Lindsay Llewellyn-MacDuff, Bishop's Chaplain and self-confessed app obsessive, offers her suggestions of some of the best prayer apps around.



'LIFE REMINDERS'

Verdict: Great if you need to bring more structure to your prayer life.

Almost any 'to do' type app will set a repeating alarm to remind you to pray. 'Life Reminders' is my app of choice. Not only will it set reminders – relentless ones if necessary! – but it'll allow quite substantial amounts of text which – if you ask it to – will come up in your notifications. However if you want something purpose built, there's *Pray!* in which you can also connect with other people looking to pray through this app, *Echo* also allows you to share your prayers with others using the same app.



DAILY PRAYER

Verdict: If you like set content to inspire you, look no further.

If you're looking for some set content, I have not yet found an app to beat *Daily Prayer*. You're stuck with the liturgical choices of the Church of England tech team, but it does mean you have everything – the daily set prayers of the Church (known as the office), readings and collect – in one place. Other good options to try are *Sacred Space* (I find the soothing music irritating) and *Reimagining the Examen* - both provide a series of meditations to lead you through various phases of prayer.



PRAYMATE

Verdict: Easy to use and connects you to lots of different prayer intentions.

Offers the best of both worlds. With reminders and the ability to add and share your own lists of prayers, it also has a library of content provided by a huge range of Christian organisations and Churches, with prayer cycles, devotional material, and set prayers. It'll let you sort your prayers into categories, then you can choose how many prayer cards from each subject you want to pray at each session. It's usually free at the point of use and it's available offline. You can find the Diocese of Rochester's prayer feed on there too!

www.praynow4.org/rochester

TOP 10 EVENTS NOT TO BE MISSED



COME AND SEE
June 8, 12pm
Rochester Cathedral

Bring a friend, a rug/fold-up chair and join the mega-picnic in the Cathedral's nave as a part of a celebration for Thy Kingdom Come. Activities for all ages plus displays from all 17 deaneries of Rochester Diocese and many diocesan schools. www.rochester.anglican.org/diocese/thy-kingdom-come/



THY KINGDOM COME
June 9, 12pm - 6pm
Trafalgar Square

One of the most iconic public spaces in the UK, will be set apart for Christians to pray for and wait on the empowering of the Holy Spirit. A joyful family festival and service with live music and praise with Matt Redman. Free event. www.thykingdomcome.global/trafalgarsquare



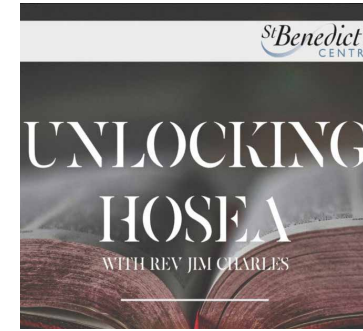
HIDDEN VOICES
June 13, 9:30am – 3:15pm
Christ Church, Erith

With our partners, The Clewer Initiative, this course will use Bible reflections and practical exercises to explore how you can respond to modern slavery in your area. The only Hidden Voices session this year, don't miss this opportunity. www.rochester.anglican.org/mission/modern-slavery/



CREATIVE CHRISTIANITY CONFERENCE
June 15, 9:30am to 4:30pm
St James Church, Clerkenwell Close, EC1R 0EA

A day to explore creativity and faith. With keynote sessions exploring creativity in the Bible, mini workshops for you to try new creative skills, breakout sessions looking at creativity and faith, a marketplace of Cheerfully Given sellers, delicious food and drinks, and colourful, inspiring décor. Price £55. www.cheerfullygiven.com



UNLOCKING HOSEA
June 17 & 24, 7pm-9pm
St Benedict's Centre, West Malling

A summer mini-series 'Unlocking Hosea' run over two evenings exploring this extraordinary Old Testament book. The life of the prophet Hosea is a remarkable story which depicts the faithfulness, love and mercy of God. What can we learn from it today? www.stbenedictscentre.org



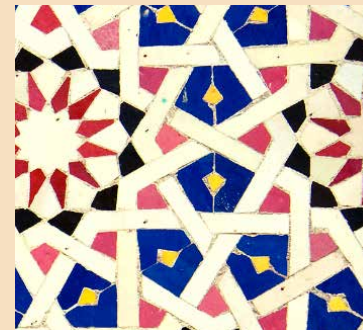
MIDNIGHT ICE SKATE
June 21, 11pm - 1am
Planet Ice Rink, Gillingham

Diocese 1WON Young People's Midnight Ice Skate. Open to young people from aged 11 -18. Cost £5 per person payable on the night. The Cafe will be open all night so bring some money! For more information sarah.cabella@rochester.anglican.org



HOME FOR GOOD
June 29, 11am
Rochester Cathedral

Fostering and adoption charity Home for Good invite you to join them at a special service to celebrate and honour foster carers and adopters in Kent who use their homes for good in caring for vulnerable children. www.homeforgood.org.uk/events/



ST FRANCIS AND THE SULTAN
20 July, 2019 10am to 3pm
Rochester Cathedral

Explore the value and history of interfaith dialogue. Marking the 800th anniversary of the cordial meeting between St Francis of Assisi and Sultan Al Kamil during the Crusades. Learn through drama, workshops, speakers and conversation. Tickets £10 www.rochester.anglican.org/mission/interfaith/



LARK IN THE PARK
July 24 - 4 August
Sidcup, Thanet and Woking

A community event run by local churches in Sidcup (as well as in Thanet and Woking) during the summer, providing kids' clubs, youth activities, fun days, creative zone, over 60s venue, community action projects, evening events and much more. More information at www.larkinthe park.com



OUTDOOR THEATRE
August 15, 20, 21
Rochester Cathedral

There's a play for everyone this summer at Rochester Cathedral. We have three amazing plays to watch in our beautiful gardens. Nell Gwynn (August 15); The Secret Garden (August 20); A Midsummer Night's Dream (August 21). www.rochestercathedral.org

BECOMING A SAFER CHURCH

John Cameron is the independent chair of the Bishop's Safeguarding Advisory Panel (BSAP). As the current Head of Childline, we caught up with him to reflect on BSAP's first year of activity and to find out what drives him personally in this work.



Why was BSAP created?

It's one of a number of developments that have been put in place to build-up and enable the continued improvement of the Diocese's work in this vital area of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. It includes members of diocesan staff who have safeguarding responsibilities, but also external people who come from positions of responsibility and experience in areas such as health, policing and children services.

What's your role?

I'm the independent chair of the panel and the 'independent' aspect is really important. Along with other members of the panel, my job is to oversee the safeguarding work of the Diocese, assist and advise safeguarding staff and challenge practice decisions and thinking where necessary.

So, what do you do?

I bring together the safeguarding panel quarterly each year. In this role I ensure that the Diocese safeguarding officers are able to confidently present the work they have been doing, openly discuss practice issues arising, and ensure that the Diocese's safeguarding objectives and plans are delivered to a high standard. We have full and frank discussions utilising the skills of all members to ensure activities we have recommended are enacted in a timely manner and new practices are implemented.

How do you feel the first year has gone?

I've been really encouraged. There is a huge amount of commitment from staff and the Bishop to ensure vulnerable people receive appropriate support and that action is taken to protect people from any risk to their welfare. There is still much to be done to ensure everyone across the Diocese is aware of their responsibilities. I would like to see us working closer with other agencies to utilise their support and assistance as necessary so that we can provide parishes with the help needed to support vulnerable people locally.

From your experience this year, what role do you think the Church has to play in safeguarding?

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and those in the Church have a particularly unique role because, by its very nature, the doors of churches are open to anyone. Being alert to abuse by people in the Church is very important but we also need to be alert to recognising the vulnerable people who might be attending a church activity too.

What do you mean?

Maybe a person is vulnerable because of something taking place at home, or maybe they are lonely, or at risk of financial or online abuse. So, churches are the eyes and ears of children and adults who might need support - you have a vital role.

What would your advice be to someone concerned about something they may have seen or experienced in a church or elsewhere?

Speak out. If someone is in immediate danger call 999. Don't wait till you're certain. Contact your Parish Safeguarding Officer or contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team, they are there to help.

How did you get involved in this work?

I was a microbiologist by training and went onto a career in teaching. As a teacher in central London I saw some challenging and disturbed behaviour from many vulnerable children. I saw that most of the struggles these young people were having was

because of problems they were facing at home. So, I quickly got drawn to wanting to do more to influence families than in what I could do as a teacher.

What did you do next?

I took the opportunity to train as a social worker and I went on to work in local authorities around child protection. Through the NSPCC I have been involved in some significant complex investigations and involved in working closely with other organisations in sport, media and education, to name a few, to develop their safeguarding activities.

What do you do to relax?

I'm an enthusiastic DIY-er. I like redesigning and putting new things in their place, although my wife often complains that my domestic plans can take for ever! I also like to travel. I think it is important that we widen our minds; recently I've been particularly struck by Vietnam and how safe it is for children.

Who have you been inspired by?

I've been lucky to have met a lot of inspirational people from many walks of life; those working in social work, teachers, health professionals and individuals many children aspire to, such as footballers. But overwhelmingly, the most inspiring people are the children I have met who have been able to come out of the dark places they have been in and have gone on to be solid adults in our society. They are inspiring.

- There is a national system of training in place for anyone who holds a role in the church – from volunteers right up to senior clergy.
- For many roles, the training is mandatory.
 - If you are a child or young person, an adult, or someone within a parish looking for advice on Safeguarding visit: www.rochester.anglican.org/safeguarding/



LISTENING TO GOD'S CALL

Funmi Mankanju from Christ Church, Erith, is keen to encourage others to hear God's 'still small voice' in their lives, as she reflects on her own experience of becoming a Licensed Lay Minister (LLM).

When I first started coming to church, I didn't necessarily want to be noticed. I just wanted to come in, worship God and go back home!

That was fine for a while, but I then started to notice certain things that I could do. I would arrive early and start arranging the books, and then start welcoming people into church.

If we were asked to do something, like clean the church, I was there; it was something I had been quite used to seeing my mum do, polishing the brass.

So, I gradually found myself getting more and more involved in getting to know people, engaging with them and helping out in the church.

I always found that this was my priority - God first.

If I'm honest, at first, I tried to ignore the fact that God seemed to be seeking me out. But then one day, the vicar asked to see me and I just knew what she was going to suggest. I was quite emotional, but it was almost a relief; she said that it would all be ok!

I've been an LLM for almost a year now and while I'm not ordained, it's a specific role that means I play an official part in supporting the church. I can preach, I can take responsibility for certain projects or forms

of outreach. Any member of the congregation can reach out to me and I can help them.

Like the training, I organise my LLM duties around my day job as a solicitor. Sometimes I see people in my lunchbreak or I do reading at night; it can be very flexible.

I have had some challenges along the way, but I'm more determined than ever now to encourage other people, irrespective of who you are or what colour you are, to say that, if God is calling you, God will create the support you need.

In each of us there's that gift that God has given you, so why don't you try and use that gift you have to do something worthwhile in the house of God?

If you want to explore how God might be calling you - whether to ordained or lay ministry, or in your day to day life, visit www.churchofengland.org/ and search 'vocations' Or speak to your local vicar to attend a diocesan It's Your Calling Day: www.rochester.anglican.org/ministry/vocations/its-your-calling/



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