

RURAL BRIEFING – SEPTEMBER 2009

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To register your interest in any of the items below, or further information please contact –
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RURAL PRACTITIONERS GROUP - Next Meeting will be held on Thursday 24th September

The next meeting of the Rural Practitioners Group will be meeting in the Tenterden, Smallhythe and St Michael's group. The day will start at 10am in Smallhythe with refreshments. Part of the day will be looking at Silcock's Farm and Farm shop who will providing us with lunch at a cost £5.00. The day will finish by 3.00pm. To book your place please contact Caroline.

If you are unable to join us on 24th September, the final Group meeting of the year is scheduled for Tuesday 3rd November when we will be discovering Oare, nr Faversham.

The Rural Practitioners Group is open to anyone interested in rural ministry.

The aims of the group are -

- A meeting place for those engaged in rural ministry.
- A place to exchange ideas.
- The sharing of good practice
- To identify the challenges of living in a rural community
- A place to discuss visions for the future.
- To feed stories, issues and experience through to local and national forums.

To register your interest, please contact Caroline Pinchbeck (Diocesan Rural Life Adviser)

CHERISHING OUR CHURCHYARDS – Workshop on Saturday 3rd October

A workshop is being organised for Saturday 3rd October at Wye Church. The workshop will begin at 9.30am and will finish by 1pm. Advice surgeries will be available until 2pm. This is in partnership with Kent Wildlife Trust.

There will be presentations on –

bats, lichens, grassland management, churchyard legislation , and advice on how to develop a management plan.

The cost for the workshop is £10 made payable to Church in Society.

God's Acre Project © - Pilot Project call for expressions of interest

Arising from the first Cherishing Churchyards workshop, and in consultation with the Lincs Wolds Countryside Project we are working with other partnership organisations to develop the God's Acre Project in Kent. The project is to encourage communities to develop the following aspects of churchyards wildlife management, geology, social history and heritage. In order to obtain funding for the project, a pilot project is being developed. More information about the project, and to obtain an expression of interest form please contact Caroline.

Harvest Thanksgiving Worship Resources

The Arthur Rank Centre has on its worship a library of worship resources for Harvest Thanksgiving including material for children and all-age worship. Also, you can find material for a Riders service and for the Feast of St Francis of Assisi (4th October). To obtain the material visit –
www.arthurrankcentre.org

County Harvest Service – Sunday 17th October at Ashford Cattle Market

This year the County Harvest service is being held at Ashford Cattle Market. The service will begin at 5pm. The service is a celebration of harvest, and also of Women's Food and Farming Union's 30th Anniversary. The WFFU was founded here in Kent, and so is especially significant to celebrate it at the service.

Multi-Parish Benefice Forum

The Forum will have a particular focus for those ministering in a multi-parish benefice, and for those who will be gaining additional parishes. A number of clergy have made enquiries as to whether they can meet to discuss the particularities, opportunities and difficulties of working in a multi-parish benefice. There will be a meeting in the coming months to discuss what resources and support could be made available, and there will be a course running in the South East in Spring 2010. To register your interest please contact Caroline.

Migrant Workers -

Working in partnership with Kent County Council and other organisations in Kent, a mapping process has been developed to locate where migrant workers are working or are resident. This call for information is to find out where churches have involvement with migrant workers, or have a significant number working in their communities whether on a seasonal or permanent basis.

I would be grateful if you could contact me information, numbers or work that you are undertaking to build relationships between migrant workers and your community/ies.

Environmental Information for Churches

There has been an increase in enquiries about how local church can be involved in environmental matters in their own communities. Information can be obtained from Arocha, TearFund, Shrinking the Footprint, and the Christian Environmental Network.

Churches can also work towards the Eco-Congregations Award which is a modular system that has been created for churches to involve their congregation and community in working

together. The Award is given to churches that have:

- undertaken an environmental check-up/audit
- undertaken activities/initiatives in each of the following three areas:
 1. Worship – linking environmental issues with the Christian faith e.g. through services, children's work or an adult home group
 2. Work – practising what is preached e.g. an energy, churchyard or recycling project
 3. Witness – worked with or through their local community on environmental issues e.g. a litter pick, project with a school or other community group, gaining positive publicity.

If your church would like to explore this further help and advice is available though the Rural Life Adviser and the members of the Environmental Advisory Group.

RURAL MINISTRY COURSE 3 – 5 November 2009

Aim of the course is to build and develop confidence in those who are ministering in rural contexts. The course is based at both The Arthur Rank Centre and Offa House, Offchurch, Leamington Spa. **The cost of each course is £195 (including VAT)**

This includes a free subscription for one year to Country Way magazine

The Arthur Rank Centre, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire CV8 2LZ

Tel: 024 7685 3060. E-mail: arcadmin@rase.org.uk

Further information about courses run by the Arthur Rank Centre can be found at www.arthurrankcentre.org

GRASSROOTS GRANTS – Change in annual income amount!

Grants are available of up to £5,000 for small groups working in local communities across Kent and Medway. If your annual income is less than £30,000 (used to be £20,000), and your group has been active for more than 12 months, you can apply for grants from £250 to £5,000.

Contact Kent Community Foundation at www.kentcf.org.uk/grassroots or telephone 01303-814500.