



Welcome Centre, Coventry, 11 Oct 2014

Background

Rural communities need vibrant churches more than ever: isolation, hidden poverty, poor transport, lack of jobs and opportunities for young people and lack of affordable housing are all challenging issues for rural people. Underlying all this is the need for love, forgiveness and fulfilment that comes from a relationship with Jesus Christ.

However, rural mission is at a tipping point. In order to be vibrant in a multi-church situation there is an urgent need to move away from traditional approaches to leadership and to equip all members of congregations for mission and ministry.

Around the country there are examples of collaborative ministry where lay leaders have been released and equipped, enabling the local church to engage with their communities with purpose and creativity.

This conference will bring together organisations involved in supporting rural mission and ministry across the UK in order to encourage, inspire, inform and equip rural lay leaders and clergy as we explore the way forward.

Aims

- To encourage, inspire, inform rural lay leaders and clergy for effective mission and ministry.
- To bring together rural ministry support organisations to encourage creative collaboration.

Who is it for?

This is an ecumenical event for rural church leaders and clergy; also for rural church members, regional church leaders, missionaries, directors of ministry / church development, etc.

Who is behind it?

Currently the following organisations are supporting the event:

- Church of England
- Methodist Church
- Baptist Union GB
- United Reformed Church
- Churches Rural Group (part of CTE)
- Fresh Expressions
- Rural Ministries
- Church Growth Trust
- Village Hope
- Rural Theology Association
- Messy Church

Launch of Germinate Groups

Opportunity for small groups (parish churches, chapels, fresh expressions groups, benefices, districts, etc.) to meet every 6-12 months as 'learning Communities' with some input but mainly to have space as a team to reflect on progress, refine the vision and plan next steps.

Other

- Cost: early booking £40+VAT rising to £60+VAT for late bookings.
- Exhibition area for resource providers hosting event (FOC) and sponsors (charged)
- Regional networking over lunch (designated areas)
- Resource noticeboard and free resources table
- Administration is being led by the Arthur Rank Centre.

Programme

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| 9.30 | Registration and coffee | |
| 10.00 | Welcome and opening worship | The Revd Ruth Gee <i>President of the Methodist Conference 2013/14</i> |
| 10.10 | Video address | The Most Revd Justin Welby <i>Archbishop of Canterbury</i> |
| 10.15 | Key note: Seeding a flourishing rural church | The Rt Revd Mark Rylands <i>Bishop of Shrewsbury</i> |
| 10.45 | Case studies: 1. Rural pioneering 2. Enabling rural mission 3. Mission across the boundaries in Glendale | 1. Revd Capt Richard Priestley, <i>Priest in charge, Ashwick, Oakhill & Binegar and Associate Vicar / Mission Enabler for the Shepton Mallet Local Ministry Group</i> 2. Revd Elizabeth Clark, <i>Rural Officer, York and Hull Methodist District</i> 3. Revd Roy Searle, <i>Director, Northumbria Community Trust</i> |
| 11.15 | Coffee | |
| 11.45 | Growth media: Resources for the rural church | Chair: Jerry Marshall, <i>CEO Arthur Rank Centre</i> |
| 12.00 | Case study 4: Network Youth Church, Cumbria | Carolyn Dykes, <i>Projects Development Officer, Diocese of Carlisle</i> |
| 12.10 | Seed bed: Sharing ideas from delegates | Facilitator: Canon Dr Jill Hopkinson, <i>National Rural Officer, Church of England</i> |
| 12.40 | Case study 5: Creative use of a church building | Revd Helen Roberts, <i>Clee Hill Methodist Cluster</i> |
| 12.50 | Launch of Germinate Groups | Jerry Marshall, <i>CEO Arthur Rank Centre</i> |
| 13.00 | Lunch and networking | |
| 14.00 | Workshops 1 1. Approaches to rural evangelism 2. Discipleship and lay mobilisation 3. Running a successful Messy Church 4. Growing in shared leadership 5. Ideas for welcoming children and families 6. Sources of funds and income | 1. Capt Gordon Banks, <i>C.A. Diocesan Evangelist, Chichester</i> 2. Revd Dr Neil Hudson, <i>Imagine director, London Institute for Contemporary Christianity</i> 3. Cerys Hughes, <i>Messy Church Advisor</i> 4. Revd Canon Anne Tomlinson, <i>Ministry Development Officer, Glasgow and Galloway; and Revd Canon Amiel Osmaston, Ministry Development Officer, Diocese of Carlisle</i> 5. Rona Orme, <i>Children's Missioner, Diocese of Peterborough</i> 6. Wendy Coombey, <i>Community Partnership and Funding Officer, Diocese of Hereford</i> |
| 14.45 | Workshops 2 Repeated as above (subject to demand) | |
| 15.30 | Tea | |
| 15.45 | Key points from workshops | The Rt Revd James Bell <i>Bishop of Knaresborough</i> |
| 15.55 | Closing prayer | |
| 16.00 | Close | |

Workshops

1. Approaches to rural evangelism: Captain Gordon Banks C.A., Diocesan Evangelist Chichester Diocese

We will explore our own faith story and journey to faith. The Jesus story and our contextual Church story and how these link in with God's big story. Plus faith sharing as a heartbeat taking cognisance of seasons and cycles both liturgical and in the wider community.

2. Discipleship and lay mobilisation: Revd Dr Neil Hudson, Imagine director, London Institute for Contemporary Christianity

People grow as disciples when they understand how God might be able to use them as agents of good news in the places where they already spend much of their time. We will explore how churches can make the first practical steps in helping people understand that their everyday lives matter to God and his mission in the world.

3. Running a successful Messy Church: Cerys Hughes, Diocesan Messy Church Adviser, Diocese of Lichfield

Messy Church is growing rapidly across the world, but what makes a successful Messy Church? This workshop will explore the core values of Messy Church and discover why they are important as well as challenging some of the common misconceptions. Packed with practical examples, ideas and top tips, this workshop will help those thinking of starting a Messy Church as well as those looking to grow and develop their existing Messy Church.

4. Growing in shared leadership: Revd Canon Anne Tomlinson, Ministry Development Officer, Glasgow and Galloway; and Revd Canon Amiel Osmaston, Ministry Development Officer, Diocese of Carlisle

Rural ministers are being given responsibility for an increasing number of churches, changing the role of lay and clergy. How can we lead in ways that are truly collaborative, beyond delegation? How can we grow disciples, help them discern their gifts and calling; liberate them with clear responsibilities; support and encourage them as we share leadership together?

5. Ideas for welcoming children and families: Rona Orme, Children's Missioner, Diocese of Peterborough

How do we encourage families on the fringe of church to attend more regularly than Christmas and Harvest? This workshop will explore practical ideas for building relationships with families so we can share the good news of Jesus.

6. Sources of funds and income: Wendy Coombey, Community Partnership and Funding Officer Diocese of Hereford

Where are the sources of funding available to Church projects? And is it just about getting the money in or can we make it about something more than that? In this workshop we will look at the community development approach to fundraising and project development, exploring a variety of approaches and case studies.

Jerry Marshall
January 2014