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## Don't ditch the Christmass tree...

### From Christmass tree to Cross

When you take your Christmass tree down strip off the branches and make a simple cross out of the remaining trunk.

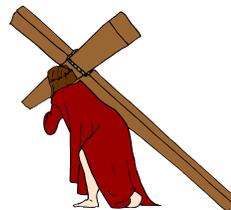
This is then placed to one side in the Church, not totally out of sight but not obvious. Then during Lent it is brought out and given a prominent place. Then on the ensuing Sunday's an artefact symbolising Christ's passion is placed on or around the Cross. This works well both done in a very simply way or with a full liturgical significance. And both can also involve children, maybe even making and discussing the 'things' of Jesus' passion, i.e. whip, sponge, bag of silver, etc.

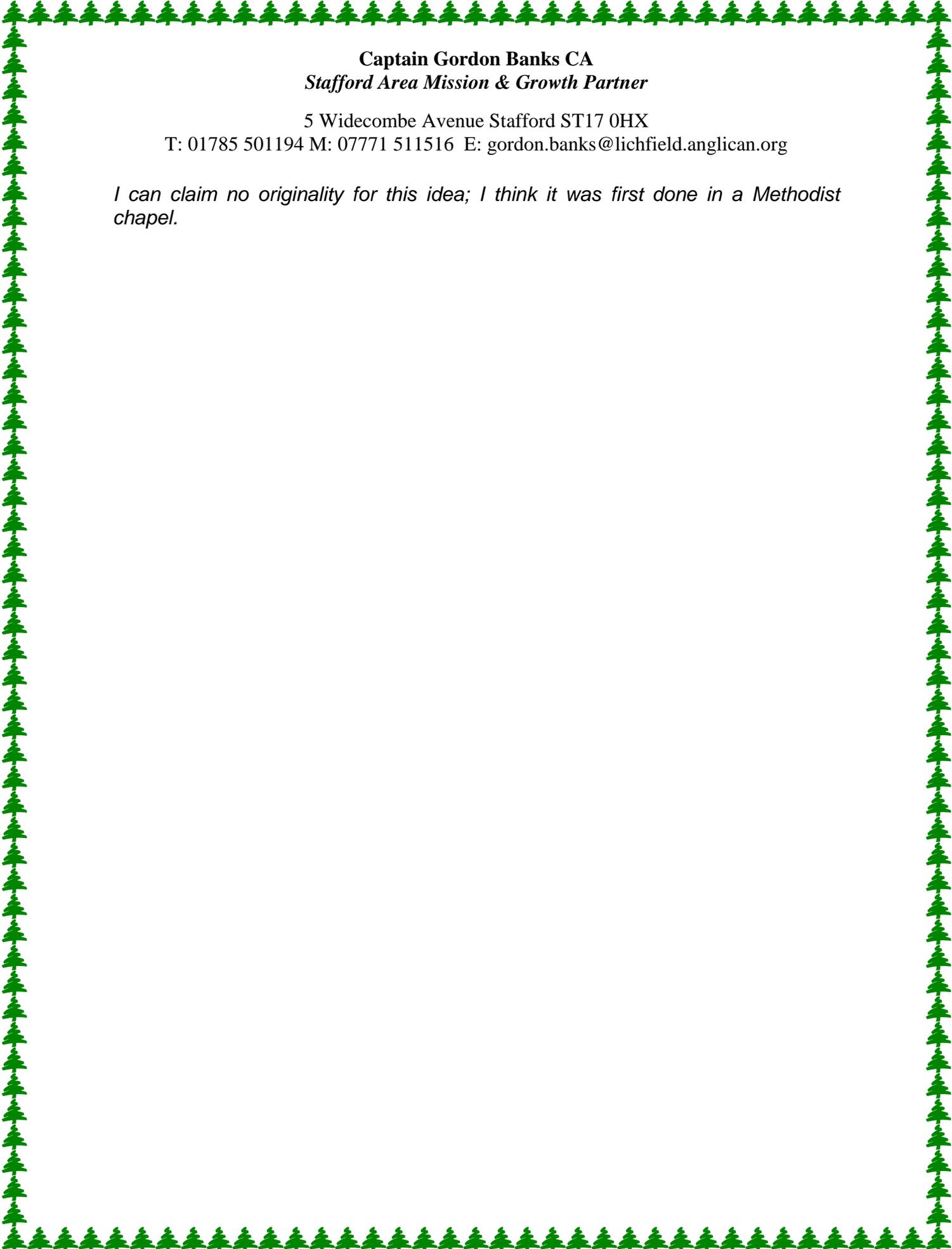
The Cross is then used as the focus for Good Friday devotions.

On Holy Saturday the artefacts are removed and the Cross covered with oasis. Then for Easter Sunday the Cross is festooned with flowers – this can be done beforehand or invite people to place a flower in the Cross, perhaps as they come to receive Communion. Wire mesh (chicken wire) works okay to hold the oasis but remember the oasis will be wet and heavy and drip so be prepared! It can also take a two or three people a couple of hours to decorate a tree in this way. Small headed flowers work best, usually white with a few yellow or gold ones. You might also need to insert florist wire into the stems to enable the flowers to be placed in the oasis. The flowers can of course be sprayed afterwards to help keep them fresh. Usually it is only the 'front' of the cross that is decorated in this way.

Thus you have moved from Christmass (tree) to Cross.

### From crib to cross - it is only a matter time...





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*I can claim no originality for this idea; I think it was first done in a Methodist chapel.*