

Rural Mission Solutions—Webinar Handout

Visit www.ruralmissionsolutions.org.uk

Email addresses: gordon.banks@lichfield.anglican.org or barry@ruralmissionsolutions.org.uk

Rural Resource Websites: In addition to resources listed on [our own website](#) at www.ruralmissionsolutions.org.uk, you will find various resources at the Rural Evangelism Network website, www.ruralevangelism.net, at the Arthur Rank Centre/Germinate [website](#) www.germinate.net and at www.hopetogether.org.uk

Lent & Easter Season. There is so much that you could do, and the presentation includes various suggestions. The Diocese of Gloucester has a series of events “Explained”. The “Easter Explained” section contains a list of different contexts for sharing the story. Well worth a visit to www.gloucester.anglican.org/2017/experience-easter-resources.

40 Acts of Generosity turns Lent on its head. Instead of thinking about what you could give up, it challenges Christians to think about doing something for others. While the “challenge” is aimed at individual Christians, small churches might find ways of acting together on some issues, or sharing stories when appropriate. Be ready to explain that any acts of generosity are a response to God’s generosity shown in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But be careful about linking an act of generosity directly to an invitation to come to church, as it might be seen as a bribe! Check out 40acts.org.uk

Other suggestions include creating a large picture depicting a scene from the Passion and/or Resurrection, adding a little more each day through Lent. Another idea is building a large display. A church in East Sussex made a green hill out of sculptured bales of straw covered with artificial grass, with a cave lined with black agricultural plastic, and a black plastic covered tractor wheel for a stone rolled to one side. Behind it was placed an empty cross.

Another good idea is to work with a local school, teaching the story, and then encouraging children to draw or paint their own scene illustrating any part of the story to make up a montage or collage that could be displayed in one of the local churches.

Flicks in the Sticks. Many churches now have digital projection and screens. If your church does not have its own equipment, ask around to see if you could borrow or hire equipment. Put on a film with an Easter theme. Ideas include “The Passion of the Christ”, “Ben Hur” (use the original version with Charlton Heston), or “The Robe”. You could even show a non-religious film such as “Unbroken”, or one of the “Ice Story” family films that has a sacrificial act of generosity. You can either use a DVD or one of the Download services provided specially for this kind of use. You will need a licence and you can get information about this from CCLI at <http://churches.uk.ccli.com/activities/films/>. An organisation specialising in identifying religious themes in secular films is Damaris (<http://damarimedia.com>).

Mothering Sunday—March 31st. A great opportunity to plan something special. Could you arrange a Spring Flower Show in your church, featuring mothers in the Bible? There are plenty to choose from. Make a list with a little narrative and see what kind of creative

art arrangement might be made. Do you have local flower arrangers? This is also an opportunity to plan something with the local school. Mother Union also has resources at www.mothersunion.org/search/node/Easter

Working with Men can be a challenge but does not have to be an obstacle. You can usually engage with men if there is a sport dimension or if you ask them to be involved by doing something practical. For example, cooking a barbecue. It can also help if you meet men on non-church premises such as the pub. Religion is often OK if it happens in the pub! Visit Christian Vision for Men at <http://cvm.org.uk>

Working with Children & Families. You will find special Messy Easter resources at www.brfonline.org.uk/find/all/lent+and+easter/1/. Scripture Union has an Easter Comic and a programme called Easter Cracked. <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/search?s=Easter>
Consider a short Holiday Club..

Maundy Thursday For an interesting alternative to washing feet, why not mobilise people to offer a hand car wash either free or raise funds for a charity (not yourselves). **Important:** You need to be sure to use the right materials to avoid accidental damage. Also see the Lent Challenge at www.40acts.org.uk

Friday—19th April. Why not set up Stations of the Cross in different locations around the village. Even if Stations of the Cross is not part of your tradition you could still tell the story from the Last Supper to the burial of Jesus with displays of each stage and use it in a village trail with laminated and illustrated posters at each point. Inform people where the trail starts. Each poster points to the next one.

Holy Saturday—20th April. Invite people from the wider community to help prepare the church for Easter Day, and build in a time for listening to a series of short Bible Readings (perhaps using a Contemporary English Version). These could cover the events from the Last Supper to the burial. Include a time of silent reflection after each reading. If you have a digital projector, you might be able to include some contemporary images of injustice, mercy, etc.

Easter Day—21st April. Loads of ideas shared including a Sunrise Celebration and breakfast. Why not get the school choir or a band involved. HOPE has excellent resources for the whole of the Easter period and beyond. Plan early to make the most of these.
www.hopetogether.org.uk. Also see the many resources at www.germinate.net

Rogation 26th May. Asking a blessing on the seeds sown. See the Seed Sowing suggestion. Why not have a focus on the Farming Community Network (www.fcn.org.uk), the Agricultural Christian Fellowship (agriculturalchristianfellowship.uk) or Farming Christian Link (www.farmingchristianlink.co.uk). Send an encouraging letter to local farmers.

Ascension Day—30th May marks the start of ten days of prayer for evangelism called Thy Kingdom Come (www.thykingdomcome.global). Use this time to pray for your own evangelistic work and for the members of the Rural Evangelism Network (www.ruralevangelism.net).

SEE the Spring Webinar section of www.ruralmissionsolutions for even more ideas!