

December 2018 / January 2019

DIOCESE OF
ST ALBANS
Living God's Love



Welcome to Children's Ministry News; the newsletter for all involved in children's work in our parishes and communities. It is available online or by post - to sign up for it and download the current issue go to the Diocesan - Children's Ministry welcome page: <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/yac> or tel: 01727 818160.

It's well and truly dark now, and all the songs about the "bleak midwinter" and the darkness feel very apt. I hope whatever you are planning and publicising for Advent and Christmas is going well, and that you're finding time amongst it all for prayer and contemplation on the light that is coming into the world at Christmas.

I'm going to begin with a plea – on occasion, resources are lent out and I forget to make a note of who borrowed them. A few items seem to have gone missing from the office; if you have them, can you please let me know? They are: The Jesus Storytelling Bible DVD number 1, and three plastic envelopes of Beulah Land figures: the Trinity pack, the Exodus story pack, and the People pack. We don't need them back immediately, but I'm desperately trying to find out where they've gone – if it's you, please email me or Julie just to let us know the items are safe!

Also, if you follow the blog <https://stalbanscme.com> you will have seen recently pictures of the new Pray and Play area at St Alban's Church in Warner's End, Hemel Hempstead Deanery. This area was developed by a group at the church, and paid for with a small grant from my Diocesan budget. We have room in the budget for two more this year – so if you have something you'd love to do, and £300 or so would make it possible, please contact me and we can have a chat. Generally, these grants are for things where a little bit of capital investment will make a long-term difference – we've paid for several pray and play areas, as well as training for new children's workers, publicity for a job advert, storytelling materials, and more.

And finally, looking way ahead to next year – one of the best ways we can learn and get new ideas is from each other. So from Mothering Sunday to Easter Day next year I'm encouraging churches to visit each other for children's ministry events and see what we're all doing. If you have something you'd love to welcome visitors to, please let me know – and if you'd like to get some new ideas, let me know and I can keep you updated on churches who have said they'd be happy to have you visit.

May December and January be full of fruitful ministry and restorative time out. And may you, and all the children you meet during this time, know the wonder and love of the God who came into our world as a child, to journey with us through our human lives, and to save us from death.

Peace,

Margaret



In this edition of Children's Ministry News:

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- Diocese of St Albans 2018 Christmas Film
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- Vacancy – Resource Centre Manager
- Epiphany Resources
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Pocket Money Praise

If you're looking for an easy – and not too expensive – take-home for children who come to your crib service, or children in your Junior Church, why not print out (on card) a copy of this Paper Nativity for each one?

Children can colour and assemble the Nativity themselves, add extra figures, and act out the story with their families at home throughout the Christmas season:

<http://madebyjoel.com/2013/12/paper-city-nativity-scene-joyfully-expanded.html>



Diocese of St Albans 2018 Christmas Film



The Diocese of St Albans 2018 Christmas Film is available for parishes to share and post on social media. Whilst we hope that those who are already regular worshippers will enjoy and share the film, it is mainly aimed at those who currently have little or no contact with the church. Our aim is for more than 200,000 people across the diocese to view this film online to be encouraged to attend a Carol or Christmas service near them.

It would be helpful if you could feature the film on your church website and please encourage your friends, family and fellow church members to share it too via their social media accounts, with the following text (although feel free to personalise):

Let the greatest story ever told brighten your Christmas.

Find the Christmas story at a church near you.

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com>

Please share...

You can download the film at: <https://we.tl/t-DtyLIP1itC>

Vacancy – Children & Families Worker, St Paul's Letchworth

This is an advance notice of a vacancy which will be published from 18 December – it's been included here to meet our Children's Ministry News issuing deadline. The parish website should have the job information uploaded by 18 December.

Full time post (job share considered)
Salary range £19,834 to £24,767



St Paul's is lively, growing and passionate about ministry to children and their families. Come and join us to build on the very strong foundations already in place to grow God's kingdom amongst the very young. For details and application form, please see our website:

www.stpaulslethworth.co.uk

For a conversation, please phone our vicar, Rev'd Jeni McQuaid on 07882 108497.

Closing date: Friday 18 January 2019. Interviews: 30 January 2019.

An occupational requirement exists for the post holder to be a practising Christian in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. An enhanced criminal record check with barring information is required.

Vacancy for Resource Centre Manager



Bridge Builders Christian Trust is a local charity working throughout Stevenage and surrounding areas in partnership with parents, teachers, church leaders and many committed volunteers to provide real and relevant opportunities for children to explore the Christian faith. We are looking to appoint a Resource Centre Manager.

The work of the Resource Centre Manager includes: supervising and organising the office base of Bridge Builders, the 'Resource Centre'; overseeing the production of resources for the Christmas and Easter Journeys; the HR function; health and safety; purchasing; supporting and assisting the oversight of the projects of Bridge Builders (Assemblies, Lessons and the Easter and Christmas Journey); arranging training events; keeping policies up to date, and preparing the Annual Report each year. The role is based at the Resource Centre in Stevenage, project work is undertaken in Stevenage and the surrounding areas.

Salary: £5016 p.a

Hours per week: 11 hrs per week 9am to 3pm Tuesdays and Thursdays during term time of 38 weeks per year

Closing date: Tuesday 18 December 2018 at noon. Interviews will take place during the week commencing Monday 14 January 2019.

For further details and to download an application form & job specification go to:

<http://www.bridgebuilderstrust.org.uk/vacancies>

Here's some news from Bridge Builders on their Christmas Journey:

An amazing 800+ year 2 primary school children from 17 schools in Stevenage and surrounding areas will attend the Bridge Builders Christian Trust 'Christmas Journey' event this year.

Part of local charity Bridge Builders 'ExploRE' project, the Christmas Journey's aim is that every child not only hears about Advent and the Christmas story but also begins to understand some of the significance it has for Christians today. This popular ecumenical project is being hosted by 3 Stevenage churches; St Peter's, St Andrew & St George, and St Nicholas and runs during the last week in November and the first week in December, with two separate sessions daily.



The Christmas Journey event supports the National Curriculum links to the Herts RE Syllabus, in the following ways:

Key Stage 1 - Understanding Christianity

Beliefs and Practices: Why does Christmas matter to Christians? What events are Christians remembering and believing when they celebrate Christmas?

Sources of Wisdom: Exploring the Gospel, Accounts of characters in the Bible

Ultimate questions: Why is Jesus so important to Christians?

The hosting churches will be welcoming local dignitaries who are interested in the project.

More details and info at www.bridgebuilderstrust.org.uk or ring Inga Voss on 01438 314314.

Epiphany Resources

The Christian feast of Epiphany commemorates the mysterious visitors who came to the Christ child. Their gifts revealed Jesus as Lord and King for the whole world, not just the Jewish nation. We traditionally celebrate Epiphany on 6 January, 12 days after Christmas.



Check out the Going 4 Growth website for various resources and web links.

http://www.going4growth.com/growth_through_the_year/epiphany



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18 – 25 January

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is traditionally observed from the 18 to 25 January. Each year the international resources are adapted by the Britain and Ireland writers group and extra material is often written, such as meditations for each of the 8 days.

ROOTS for Churches have produced some All-Age materials to support the 2019 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (with the theme 'Only Justice'). Available to download are:

- All-age resources
- Repentance template
- All-age Drama – Jesus manifesto

Links to all these, and other resources, can be found at:

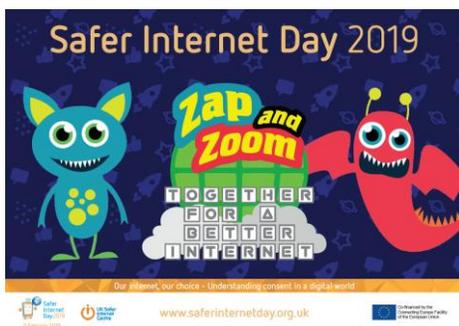
<https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-resources>



Safer Internet Day 5 February 2019

Safer Internet Day 2019 will be celebrated globally on Tuesday 5 February with the theme: Together for a better internet.

Coordinated in the UK by the UK Safer Internet Centre, the celebration sees hundreds of organisations get involved to help promote the safe, responsible and positive use of digital technology for children and young people.



To help schools run activities for Safer Internet Day, they have created Education Packs, with complementary SID TV films coming soon. These are tailored for 3-7s, 7-11s, 11-14s, 14-18s and parents and carers, along with some guidance for educators. These free packs include lesson plans, posters, presentations, activities and more!

Download your pack at:

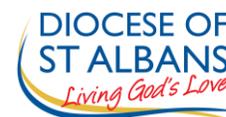
<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2019/education-packs>

Events, Conferences and Training

January 2019

19 January: Children's Ministry Basics

Norton Parish Centre, Letchworth 9.30am – 3pm



A training day suitable for those who serve in Junior Church, All-Age Worship, schools ministry, Messy Church, Toddler Praise, or others. It will help you build your confidence and get inspiration for ministering with children and families. While the day is primarily aimed at volunteers, clergy and paid children's workers are also welcome - especially if you're accompanying volunteers. The event is free, but you will need to bring your own packed lunch. Booking essential.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/childrens-ministry-basics-yac-19012019-tickets-52307884290>

February 2019

1 – 3 February: Hand in Hand conference

Eastbourne



Children's & Family Ministry conference. Refurbishment and new building works mean that the whole of the Eastbourne conference centre will again be closed in 2019, but responding to the majority of delegate's feedback this year's event will be back in Eastbourne. We will be hosting the Conference at the Kings Centre between 1 -3 February 2019. More information to follow soon; save the date! <http://www.handinhandconference.com/conferences-training>

March 2019

2 March: Godly Play Introductory Day

St Albans 9.30am – 3.30pm



Participants can experience key elements of the Godly Play approach, see a carefully laid out children's sacred space and explore many of the resources. The group size is small, so ideal for asking all of your questions and having a go yourself! Cost is £10, which includes refreshments and lunch. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/godly-play-introductory-day-yac-tickets-49475336062>

15 - 17 March: Let Us Play Spirituality

Cliff College



A weekend that explores issues of spirituality and play amongst children, this short course will be especially helpful for all those who work with or alongside children, especially focussing on 5-11 year olds. It is an ideal introduction to issues of child spirituality, and for those exploring the healing and therapeutic aspects of play with children. What is the value of play and what place does it have in development? What part do adults have in supporting and developing good play practice? From the initial session on Friday evening through to lunchtime on Sunday, participants will be exploring issues of play, through both theory and practice, and reflecting on how we can recognise the innate spirituality of children during playtime. All sessions will be interactive and may involve the use of story and creative materials. Cost £170.

<https://www.cliffcollege.ac.uk/students/shortcourses/weekend/lupsw>



15 - 17 March: Walsingham Children's Pilgrimage

The Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham

The Walsingham Children's Pilgrimage is open to children between the ages of 7-11 in Sunday Clubs, after-school clubs, uniformed organisations etc. in parishes all over the country. You will stay in the Shrine accommodation (single, double, twin and triple rooms). All meals included. Lively worship, teaching, disco and fun activities. £78 per head, Adult Helpers £98 - full board.

<https://www.walsinghamanglican.org.uk/event/childrens-pilgrimage-2019>

May 2019

11 May: Godly Play Childhood Spirituality Conference - Free to Play

Sheffield Cathedral

Godly Play^{UK}

The next Childhood Spirituality Conference hosted by Godly Play UK will take place on Saturday 11 May 2019. The main speaker at the conference is Professor Elizabeth Wood, Head of the School of Education in the University of Sheffield, who researches early childhood and primary education, with specific interests in play and pedagogy. Her title is Free to Play: How do we understand children's play? What is the implication for our practice? The afternoon will offer a series of workshops exploring a wide variety of subjects related to the spirituality of childhood.

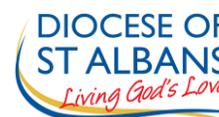
On the day preceding the conference a series of Enrichment Days will be offered. These can be booked at the same time as the conference itself.

<https://www.godlyplay.uk/conference-and-enrichment-days-2019>

June 2019

11 – 12 June: Come and Worship – 24hour residential

High Leigh



Jesus said, "become like little children ..." and that's what we're going to do. Join us for a 24-hour residential where we will explore, through demonstrations and experiences, a variety of creative ways to worship with children – not just on Sunday mornings, but at other times and in other formats. There will also be time for formal and informal discussion and space for us all to develop our own ideas and try new things. The time will finish with a celebration we develop together throughout the 24 hours.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/come-and-worship-residential-tickets-52487973943>

This month we pray for:

- ◇ all children who, like Jesus when he had to flee to Egypt to escape Herod, are fleeing violence and seeking safety.
- ◇ all parents who, like Mary, give birth in dangerous conditions.
- ◇ all adults – that, like the shepherd and the wise men, they may discover God’s presence in the children amongst us.



Wishing you a happy & blessed Christmas and New Year



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<https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/safeguarding/>

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