



March 2020

So the pancakes have been eaten, the ashes have been given, and it's Lent now.

That means Mothering Sunday is on the horizon, and, after that, Holy Week and Easter. I have Pinterest boards of resources for both of those, so do take a look – and if you find a great resource or idea you'd like me to include, please pass it on:

[Lent and Easter](#)

[Mothering Sunday](#)

But you may also want to encourage parents to try things at home with their children to mark this time. The Church of England Christenings website has easy ideas for faith at home, organised by season – [here is their section for Spring](#).

THINGS TO DO WITH CHILDREN IN SPRING

Spring is full of opportunities to get together and celebrate lots of events at home and in church, including Mother's Day, Easter and Godparents' Sunday.



You could also send home "Holy Week in a Box" with your families. With a few pieces of paper, a peg doll, a Sharpie, a piece of white cloth, and a small cardboard box (Baker Ross has them the right size), families can journey together through the most sacred time of year. If you don't have time to assemble it all yourself, or a team of volunteers to help, you could lay out each item and have



families assemble their own as they leave church on Palm Sunday. Find out more at [GodVenture](#).

And, looking ahead a bit, we have our [overnight conference on children and worship](#) coming up in June – this year, we'll be joined on Wednesday morning by the young worship leaders from Christ Church Primary School in Ware, who will lead worship and talk with us about worship and faith.

DIOCESE OF ST ALBANS
Living God's Love

COME & WORSHIP
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY RESIDENTIAL

Tuesday 16 June, 12pm - Wednesday 17 June, 2pm
at High Leigh Conference Centre

We also have Revd Simon Rundell doing a Nursery Rhyme Mass, a Parenting for Faith workshop, and more. Day tickets are available if you're not able to stay over, and if you would like to come, but cost is a barrier, speak with me or Julie and we'll see what we can do.

Peace,

Margaret





POCKET MONEY PRAISE - TREE OF LIFE

We have this tree, which is used for our Christmas pageant. It's simply a few spray-painted branches stuck in some sand. It cost less than £20 to make, and we've used it for 7 years.

Our pageant is a dramatized Lessons and Carols service (People, Look East, from Gretchen Wolff Pritchard's book, Go Tell It On The Mountain, available from the-Sunday-paper.com and Amazon). So the tree starts out as the tree of knowledge, then becomes the family tree of Jesse and the tree of life, with a small subtle nod at being a Christmas tree on the way. We decided to expand this through Lent and Holy Week.

On Mothering Sunday, our congregation writes the names of anybody who has played a mother's role in their lives. These names are placed in the offertory plates, placed on the tree (out of sight, during the Eucharistic Prayer), and then the tree – and those whose names are on it – are blessed. (Those who can't write can draw.)



Recently, we added a prayer station on the way back from communion, for people to write or draw names of children we have mothered who have died, or mother figures who have died, on a piece of fabric. This now goes with the tree.



On Palm Sunday, our Easter Garden goes up. The tree is present, with palm crosses.

During our All-Age Service on Maundy Thursday,

we strip the altar, including the tree. On Good Friday, the tree symbolically connects with the cross, as the Easter Garden is transformed into Golgotha. On the white cloth are pictures of recent news – war, violence, etc.



During the Children's Stations of the Cross, flowers – and a Jesus doll bound in white cloth – are brought into the Easter Garden. The Jesus doll is placed in the tomb, and a stone is rolled across it. Before the Easter Vigil, the tree is transformed one more time. We had a Youth Group sleepover the night of the Vigil, so they did the work of changing the garden. The tree is now hung with items the Sunday School makes specifically for that during Holy Week events, as well as the palm crosses again.



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THE BRAVE TRUST ARE SEEKING A NEW CHAIR



The BRAVE Trust is an independent ecumenical Christian charity funding a schools worker within the middle and upper schools of Buntingford and Royston.

Our newly appointed schools worker is making a difference to the children and pupils through supporting Christian teaching with the support of the Headteachers.

But the management committee is praying for a new Chair!

- We need a chair who is able to source and apply for funding.
- We need a chair to provide a face to this amazing charity.
- We need a chair who will speak up for the work of The BRAVE Trust.

Please [see our website](#) and if you would like to be part of this exciting Christian charity, or know someone we could approach, please contact Simon Rice on simonrice@gmail.com

MESSY CHURCH

Messy Easter



Complete sessions for Holy Week and Easter, together with a wealth of activities to extend the range of excitingly messy activities for your Messy Church - creative prayers, games, food crafts, and ideas for organising an Easter trail. Craft templates and a session planning grid are included. Price £6.99

LEMON LIME ADVENTURES - BLOG POST ON BEHAVIOUR

Some of you may know the blog Lemon Lime Adventures. While the author writes from the perspective of a parent of children with additional needs, the thoughts and ideas are broader, and can easily spur conversation and thoughts about best practice at church, for neurotypical kids and for those with additional needs.

This post about behaviour, exploring “how can I tell if this kid is just pushing my buttons, or genuinely struggling, and what do I do?” is extremely useful.

LEMON LIME
ADVENTURES

VACANCY - CHILDREN & FAMILIES LEADER, ST PETER'S CHURCH IN ST ALBANS

St Peter's is recruiting a qualified and experienced person to lead our work among children and families. The role can be fulfilled by a lay or ordained person.

This exciting post will enable us to build on our work among children and families within our church family, and to reach out to others within our community and networks. We are looking for a Christian who will share our vision that St Peter's enables all to fulfil their potential as we grow in faith together. This full time post will involve flexible working hours including Sundays.

[Visit the parish website](#) to download the full job description and application pack.

Deadline for applications: Friday 13 March.

Interviews: Thursday 26 March.



St Peter's, St Albans

THE EASTER JOURNEY 2020

(A Bridge Builders Christian Trust project)

The vision of Bridge Builders Christian Trust is that every child within our communities will have the opportunities to explore the values of the Christian faith, so that they may look forward with hope and confidence, as they experience Christian love in action. Bridge Builders Christian Trust works in partnership with primary school teachers, church leaders and many committed volunteers in Stevenage and the surrounding area to provide:

- 1) opportunities for children to EXPLORE the Christian faith through SCHOOLS' PROJECTS such as assemblies and class work
- 2) opportunities for class visits to local churches for themed events such as THE EASTER JOURNEY and THE CHRISTMAS JOURNEY

Once again this year, Bridge Builders Christian Trust, in partnership with local Stevenage and churches in the surrounding areas, have great pleasure in running The Easter Journey project to Year 5/6 primary school pupils. The Easter Journey (part of the ExploRE Project) is a 90 min. church based interactive event for Yr5 or 6 children to hear about the events of Easter and the life of Jesus and how they are relevant to the lives of people today. The event has direct

National Curriculum links to the new HERTS RE Syllabus for KS 2 – Understanding Christianity. It is a real ecumenical project. The volunteers who deliver and host the schools are so dedicated and passionate about being part of this, we couldn't offer The Easter Journey and its partner, The Christmas Journey, without them. Around 100 volunteers from local churches take part. At the time of writing this, 900+ children have been booked in to 5 Stevenage and area churches (St Mary's Shephall, St Martin's Knebworth, St Hugh & St John Chells, St Peter's Broadwater and Holy Trinity Old Town) and 1 Hertford church (All Saint's). We also welcome special schools for who we adapt the event to make it a much more sensory experience.



Extra volunteers always welcome, please contact our office on 01438 314314 or email admin@bridgebuilderstrust.org.uk



2020 is the year of the

BIG Conversation

in St Albans Diocese

A conversation in every parish
Explore ways of **Growing Younger**
Renew our *Living God's Love* vision
Build a church of all generations

Imagine a church worshipping together, learning good wtimes and bad

Imagine a church that is all parts of God's family

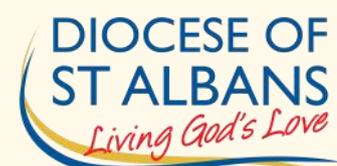
The church growing younger means its survival

Imagine a church that is full of people from 1-100

A BIG CONVERSATION IS COMING TO YOUR PARISH

The Big Conversation invites all of us to imagine a church that is 'Growing Younger'. This is part of the Diocesan strategy of Living God's Love, and the first parishes will soon be having their Big Conversation about becoming a church of all generations. This will be a conversation about how your parish can explore ways appropriate to your community and your church to do this.

Keep an ear out for when these conversations will be happening near you and ensure that children and young people's voices are central within these discussions.



MORE #LIVELENT RESOURCES

There are now Collective Worship and All Age Worship materials to accompany the #LiveLent resources.



[Collective worship and classroom activities for schools](#) based on the #LiveLent booklet for children.

[All-age worship resources](#) for schools (or churches) based on the weekly #LiveLent themes.

The [#LiveLent app](#) also contains both adult and children/family materials! (You can download the app for Android or Apple devices).

Gather

[Response Call to worship based on Psalm 65](#)
[Call to worship based on Psalm 121 written by Christine Dutton](#)

Use a magic towel/flannel to show how something can be transformed when it gets wet

See if people have stories to share about water and the powerful impact it can have on our lives. They might have visited or lived in a country where water is scarce, or perhaps their house was flooded with devastating consequences, or maybe their granny got soaked by a rogue wave on the seafloor. Be sensitive but try to show that water can be a powerful force for good, but also cause problems.

Watch a video of water like:
[The Negev's Zin River Bed comes alive](#)

Engage

Psalm 65:9-13

Have you ever watched a nature programme that shows a dry river bed turn into a lush flowing stream surrounded by greenery when the rain comes? In this country we often moan about the rain, but there are many people who long for it and are so glad when it comes. We need rain to help the plants grow and provide us with water to drink, and this Psalm reminds us that God provides all of this for us.

In God's perfect world there was plenty of water and never too much but as humans have been greedy and put their own needs in front of God's and those of other people, it seems the amount of water available has reflected this, with drought, flooding, forest fires and rising sea levels. There is an imbalance. God's original plan, given to Abraham was that we would be blessed and be a blessing and another Psalm, 121, tells us that he will help us to do this, watching over and guiding us.

In one of today's lectionary readings, John 3:1-17, Jesus says that when we become his friends it is as if we are reborn, made right with God again by the work of his Spirit. Just as if we have been washed clean with fresh water.

Respond

There are lots of charities that work on providing clean drinking water for people in countries where this is or poor sanitation is a problem. Find out more and tell people that a proportion of this week's collection is going to one of those charities

Our baptism with water is an outward sign of what the Holy Spirit is doing in us—making us more like Jesus.

Ask everyone to think about a characteristic of Jesus that they would particularly like to demonstrate in the coming weeks, and talk to the Holy Spirit about making that happen.

Say together the Collect from the [Baptism Service](#).

As a symbol of this commitment and a reminder of baptism, you can lightly spray participants with water from a spritzer

Send

Verse 9 of Psalm 65 says 'you care for the land and water it'. It is referring to God, but it could also be an instruction for us.

Get into small groups and write a list of actions you can take to do this for each letter of the word 'water'

There is a great free downloadable poster and resource ideas at [teacherstarter.com](#)

FREE MAGAZINES

We are having an office clear-out and getting rid of any magazines over three years old (unless there's a special reason to keep them). This means we have a bunch of copies of magazines from 2011 – 2017 which are FREE to a good home. You can come and collect them, or ask if Christian (our new Diocesan Youth Missioner) or I are driving anywhere near you in the next few weeks.



The magazines include:

- Childrenswork Magazine
- Youthwork Magazine
- Youth and Childrenswork Magazine (after the merger)
- Get Messy!
- Kids Alive!

They'll go on a first come, first served basis. If we don't get any takers by the end of March, we will recycle them. Contact Julie if you'd like them. E: jcirillo@stalbans.anglican.org
 T: 01727 818160.

TODDLER GROUP LEADERS MEET UP

Our next Toddler Group Leaders Meet Up is taking place on Thursday 4 June, from 2pm - 4pm (venue to be confirmed).

The basic idea of the Toddler Group Leaders Meet Up is that we meet three or four times a year - the goal would be to make our toddler groups as good as they can be, for ministry and mission.

If you lead a Toddler Group and would like to be included in the mailing for this and future meetings please let Julie know.

E: jcirillo@stalbans.anglican.org

T: 01727 818160

If you're looking for resources for your Toddler Group then have a look at the [1277 resources page](#).

1277 is the national network of Church-based Toddler Groups.

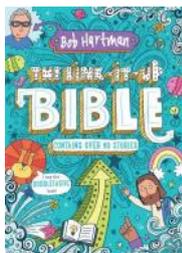


RESOURCES

[The Link-It-Up Bible](#)

by Bob Hartman

Highly visual and interactive, this is a Bob Hartman Bible like never before. Containing over 60 stories, this book highlights the links between stories and draws attention to the wider themes of the Bible. With arrows zipping across the page, pull-out text boxes asking the reader questions and illustration elements bringing each story to life, this book sees the whole Bible linked up and connected to show the bigger story at work - and the God behind it all. To be published 19 March. Price £9.99 ISBN: 9780281083022

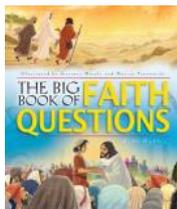


[The Big Book Of Faith Questions](#)

by Gill Hollis - Illustrated by Gustavo Mazali and Marcin Piwowarski

What do Christians believe? This book answers questions about the faith that is now more than 2000 years old but is followed and lived out today in the lives of people all over the world.

Price £8.99 ISBN: 9781838580742



[Meeting with Jesus](#)

A Daily Bible Reading Plan for Kids
by David Murray

Following up his popular book Exploring the Bible, David Murray has written a new reading plan for older children and tweens that focuses on Jesus Christ. This volume walks kids through the story of Jesus in the Gospels over the course of a year. Each of the 52 weekly "meetings with Jesus" teaches a new truth about Jesus through 6 days of Bible reading and includes interactive reflection questions, space for prayer and application, memory verses, and lines for sermon notes. In less than 5 minutes a day, tweens will get to know Jesus and his offer of abundant life.

Price £14.99 ISBN: 9781433565953

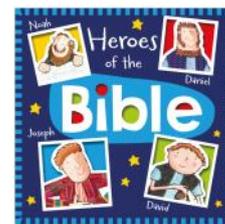


[Heroes Of The Bible Hardback](#)

[Noah, Daniel, Joseph, David](#)

by Make Believe Ideas

Bible characters come to life as they introduce themselves and their stories to young children. Meet Noah, Daniel, Joseph and David in this collection of four heroic Bible stories, told by the heroes themselves! For children aged 4-7. Price £7.99 ISBN: 9781788931175



[Sing With Me – Nursery Rhyme Bag](#)

The 'Sing with Me Nursery Rhyme Bag'

allows everyone to be involved in song time! Each object in the bag is relevant to a certain nursery rhyme, whether it is a bucket for "Jack & Jill" or a gorgeous spider finger puppet for "Incy Wincy Spider". Included is a printout of the lyrics for each song, which doubles as a cue sheet so you know exactly what song each prop links too. Price £23.95 (expansion set available at additional cost).



[It's Your Move](#) - early bird offer

This hugely successful book for children moving to secondary school is available at the reduced cost of £14 for a pack of ten books (the usual price is £22.50) if you order before 31 March. Use the discount code IYMEB at the checkout.



Save on It's Your Move with this early bird offer

[Diddy Disciples Good Friday Resource](#)

This is a Good Friday storytelling resource is suitable for home use, schools, churches, nurseries, toddler groups. Well worth a look!



EVENTS & TRAINING

Left To Their Own Devices? – Confident Parenting in a World of Screens

Tuesday 17 March 7.30pm - 10pm
Milton Keynes



This evening is for parents, carers or anyone who is passionate about helping children navigate the digital world confidently. Much of modern society is dominated by the digital world, and our children are growing up with countless online possibilities at their fingertips. It's an exciting world for them to explore, but there are potential dangers. As parents and carers, it's natural to want to protect our children from any pitfalls. So what strategies can we adopt to ensure our children gain the benefits of being online, whilst developing a responsible relationship with technology? Cost £7

Inspiring Faith in Under 5s

Saturday 28 March
9.30am - 1.15pm
Ely College

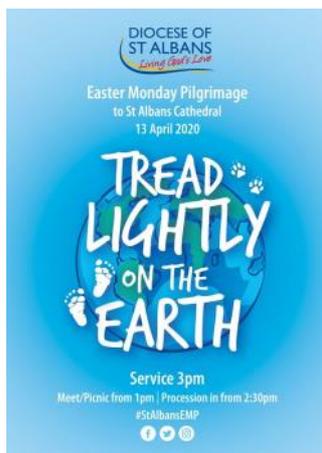


The Church of England
Diocese of Ely

A morning to celebrate and explore big faith in little children. This special event is open to anyone wanting to be inspired in their ministry and outreach to U5's and working with families of U5's. The morning will consist of a plenary session on 'Inspiring faith in Under 5's' delivered by Mary Hawes the National Children and Youth Adviser for the Church of England followed by a choice of workshops.

Easter Monday Pilgrimage

Monday 13 April
St Albans Cathedral
Join pilgrims from across the Diocese to celebrate the risen Christ. Now in its eighth decade, the annual Pilgrimage and service is a family event which includes grandparents, parents, young people, children



and babies. All are welcome... even with muddy boots and dogs! It's the perfect end to 40 days of #LiveLent, reflecting on 'Caring for God's Earth.' Meet on the Abbey Orchard from 1pm, with the procession into the Cathedral for the Easter Monday Service from 2.30pm. #StAlbansEMP

Exploring Holy Communion using Godly Play

Monday 11 May, 10am - 4pm

Yorkshire



This is a day designed to look at the ways in which Godly Play can help us to explore Holy Communion together, whether we are working with children who are to be admitted to Communion for the first time, or adults who may wish to explore Eucharistic faith anew. The day is aimed both at those new to Godly Play, and at those experienced in Godly Play who are interested in exploring how to use it within the particular context. Cost £30, to include refreshments and lunch.

Come and Worship

Tuesday 16 June (12pm) -
Wednesday 17 June (2pm)
High Leigh



Join us as we 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. Cost is £95 which includes en-suite accommodation. There are also a limited number of day passes.

Parenting for Faith seminars **parenting for faith**

Wednesday 17 June
Bedford, Christ Church
On the evening of 17 June Parenting for Faith are running two workshops which you might be interested in:

- Parenting for Faith with children.
- Parenting for Faith for teens.

More details to follow, but save the date!

EVENTS & TRAINING contd...

The Alban Pilgrimage

Saturday 20 June St Albans

Giant carnival puppets re-enact the story of Alban, Britain's first saint, the man after whom St Albans is named. Roman chariots, centurions, lions and roses all take their place alongside Alban and Amphibalus in a dramatic procession. After the Pilgrimage has taken place, a series of special services are held at the Cathedral.

**ST. ALBANS
CATHEDRAL**

Leading Creative Conversations in Children's & Youth Ministry using Lego® Serious Play®

Saturday 10 October, 9.30am - 2.30pm

Holywell Lodge, St Albans

LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® is an innovative way to develop your children's ministry team, as well as your work with children and young people. You will enter a 'hands-on' world where everyone participates and contributes to discussions and key conversations. Using the LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® method and materials, this day will empower you to bring a powerful and practical dimension to your work. The cost of the day is £15 (£25 for those outside the Diocese) and a sandwich lunch will be provided.

**DIOCESE OF
ST ALBANS**
Living God's Love

Makaton Training Day with Christian faith signs

Saturday 17 October 9.30am - 4pm

Hemel Hempstead

At last! A Makaton course covering Christian faith signs, songs and activities for using in churches and activity groups. The day will cover:

- What is Makaton
- Why do we use Makaton
- Learn stages 1
- Importance of interpretation
- Signs we use for faith
- Practical singing & signing activities.

Cost is £35 (Clergy & Readers may use their training allowance). Bring a packed lunch. Booking essential as numbers are limited.



Puppet & Creative Ministry Festival

Friday 30 October—Saturday 31 October

Rugby College

The Puppet and Creative Ministry Festival is for everyone, adults and children, who wants to learn how to share the Gospel of Christ using their creative skills. Be equipped to kick start or develop your ministries through an extensive range of hands-on workshops including a wide variety of basic and advanced puppetry techniques along with many more covering: Gospel illusions, drama, comedy, amazing science object lessons, storytelling, ventriloquism, script writing, working with children and adults with learning difficulties and SEN, leadership skills, toddler groups, schools work, outreach, worship, all-age services, props, staging, sound, lighting and more!



All for both the absolute beginner and plenty of classes for those who are more experienced and keen to develop their skills further.

Return home inspired and equipped with skills and resources to use in your services, Messy Church, Open the Book sessions, outreach and work in the schools and community!

Weekend pass costs £49 (you will need to book your own accommodation).

Come Follow Me

Saturday 21 November

The Rufus Centre, Flitwick

A day led by the Diocesan Mission department

looking at discipleship and how we can make

disciples in new ways. Workshops will be run by the Youth & Children's Missioners, Flourishing Churches and the Reaching New People team, as well as Messy Church so there will be something for everyone. More details to follow!



**DIOCESE OF
ST ALBANS**
Living God's Love

PRAYERS

This month we pray for:

- all children and teachers who are nervous about exams this year.
- children in poverty – and for your church’s anti-poverty work or fundraising.
- all who are planning and leading Mothering Sunday and Holy Week/Easter services with children and families.



KEY CONTACTS

Margaret Pritchard Houston

Diocesan Children’s Mission Enabler

E: cme@stalbans.anglican.org

T: 01727 818176

Julie Cirillo

Administrator - Youth & Children

E: yac@stalbans.anglican.org

T: 01727 818160

Jez Hirst, Martyn Hedley & Mandy Davies

Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers (DSA)

E: safeguarding@stalbans.anglican.org

T: 01727 818107 (Jez - DSA)

T: 01727 818106 (Martyn - Assistant DSA)

T: 01727 818103 (Mandy - Assistant DSA)

Ruth Garman

Administrator - Resources Centre & Schools

E: rgarman@stalbans.anglican.org

T: 01727 818168

DIOCESAN WEBSITE PAGES

Youth & Children’s pages: <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/yac>

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

Privacy policy: <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/privacy-policy>

For the Children’s Ministry Social Media accounts click on the links below:.

