



## September 2019

September - if you've had a Junior Church break over the summer, you may be starting up again soon. But has it been a while since you've reflected on why, when, and how you do Junior Church? And might it be time to do less of it?

I think Junior Church can be absolutely crucial – a child I interviewed recently told me how important it was for her that she had a chance to get to know other children, by hearing stories and doing activities together. She was able to make friendships that she couldn't have made if she was in church with her parents, without a natural and easy way to get to know the children in the other pews. Junior Church can also be important for hearing the Bible in a way we might not hear in a lectionary-based church – from start to finish. With the Bible all chopped up and told out of order in main church, Junior Church can give us the chance to tell the big story to our children, from “once upon a time” to “happily ever after,” giving them a foundation to understand that chopped-up, out-of-order lectionary a bit better.

But there's also a lot to be said for children and adults of all ages worshipping together. Most of my own memories of church from childhood aren't from Junior Church, but rather from the times I was in the main worship space with everyone else – midnight mass, the Easter Vigil, foot-washing on Maundy Thursday, singing “For All The Saints” on All Saints Sunday. And when we're all together, we learn from each other, we get to know each other, we learn to see each other as fellow disciples and

not as “those children who go off so they won't bother me.” And children have the chance to learn about worship through doing it, for it to become a habit and a part of them.

So if you haven't done this in a while, it might be worth taking this upcoming programme year to see how well your system of separate vs together is working, and whether you might want to change it around a bit.

Here are a few things to help your thinking. First of all, an interesting article looking at different theories of learning and development, and how worshipping with all ages together (at least some of the time) might be helpful for children: [Is Church Developmentally Appropriate for Kids](#).

Carolyn Carter Brown's article from 2011, on why she believes [children belong in the main church](#). And my Pinterest board, of ideas for [All-Age Worship and Intergenerational Church](#).

Speaking of Pinterest – I have a few new boards up. One is on [Harvest Festival ideas](#) and one is on [children's books that address the subject of death](#). I also regularly add to my other ones, so do keep coming back and seeing what's new, and let me know if you've found a great resource I should include. And if there's a topic I should cover that isn't there, let me know!



Peace,

*Margaret*

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## POCKET MONEY PRAISE

Here's a free crib service I wrote last year – all you need are a few helpers, and materials your church probably already has, or can borrow (candles, stuffed animals, etc):

[Crib Service Plan](#)

## SEGREGATION VS SENSITIVITY

An alternative approach to recognising and acknowledging age diversity in faith formation.

This is an interesting article on intergenerational church - well worth a look!

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY WEBINARS THIS AUTUMN

**Thursday 10 October, 2pm – 3pm on Baptism:** what are parents expecting from a baptism? What helps connect them with the church community during preparation, the service, and after the baptism? Margaret will take you through some of the findings from the Christenings Project and then open up to questions and discussion. Bring your questions and ideas, or just come and listen.

**Thursday 14 November, 2pm – 3pm on Getting Started:** what do you do with few or no children? What options are there for building ministry and mission with children and families when it feels like nothing has worked? And, most importantly, what can be done without tons of money and dozens of volunteers? Jesus promised that even when two or three are gathered together, he will be in the midst of them – so let's look at how we can bring that promise to life in our communities.

Both webinars will be online and accessed via the Zoom platform. If you're interested in joining either of these webinars get in touch with Julie Cirillo E: [yac@stalbans.anglican.org](mailto:yac@stalbans.anglican.org) T: 01727 818160



## SPEAKING VOLUMES

Speaking Volumes offers grants for libraries, schools, prisons, care homes and churches - actually, anywhere a book can be borrowed and enjoyed by a wide readership. The grants are for the purchase of Christian books from a local Christian bookshop and the list of available books can be seen on [www.speakingvolumes.org.uk](http://www.speakingvolumes.org.uk).

The next opportunity to apply is 1 September - 31 October via their website.



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## CREATIONTIDE & HARVEST

Creationtide or the Season of Creation is the period in the annual church calendar, from 1 September to 4 October, dedicated to God as Creator and Sustainer of all life.

Here's a creative idea from Mina Munns at Flame Creative Kids:



[Exploring Creation: Painting with Nature!](#)

You will need: Paint, paper, natural objects e.g. flowers, leaves, pine cones, sticks, stones, shells.

Get the children to feel the textures of the natural objects and talk about the patterns you can see. Discuss how intricate nature can be and how much thought must have gone into creation. Use the natural items to paint a picture with - look at the different shapes and patterns you can make with them. Give the children the freedom to explore and keep chatting as they create! It's amazing the kind of observations they make and what they choose to do with the objects.

When you have finished, display all the paintings and thank God for the things He has made and especially for each child's favourite painting object!



ROOTS have a free creation time service for all ages: [Paying attention to the sky.](#)



The BRF Ideas Hub has a simple harvest fundraising activity for families to do at home in the week leading up to a special Harvest Thanksgiving service at church: [Harvest at Home.](#)

The Resource has a "classic" [Harvest assembly](#), suitable for KS1 & KS2 available to download free.



And for Harvest Festival ideas and resources, check out [Margaret's Harvest Pinterest board](#) with lots of great links.

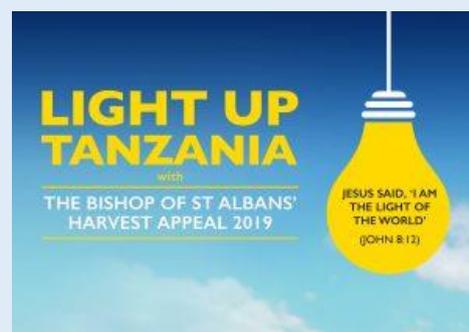
## LIGHT UP TANZANIA - BISHOP'S HARVEST APPEAL 2019

Imagine if, when you flicked on a light switch, nothing happened.

For many people in Tanzania, where access to electricity is scarce, households cannot function easily after dark; families struggle with everyday chores, their children suffer with poor performance in school, and, without electricity, all basic services – water, health, education – are hindered.

'Light Up Tanzania' seeks to bring electricity – in the form of solar panels – to around 350 households in the rural area of Singida, Tanzania. These will make a huge difference! Presently, people rely on paraffin-style (kerosene) lamps in the evenings – which have caused many serious burn injuries – and their cooking is done on firewood or charcoal, creating high levels of smoke indoors too.

Resources to help you and your church get involved include a downloadable Children's Activity Sheet, Assembly Plan and Presentation.



## WATERAID'S HARVEST APPEAL



WaterAid has launched its 2019 Harvest Appeal and is inviting churches to organise a harvest supper or collection this harvest time, to give other communities around the world harvests worth celebrating.

Churches can order a free harvest pack with stories from Zambia, explaining how vital clean water is for growing food and for a community to flourish. The pack includes a poster, an all-age talk outline and sermon notes, tips around how to organise a harvest supper and other fundraising ideas too.

You can order a free harvest pack on WaterAid's Harvest webpage where you'll find online resources too, including an appeal video and a WaterAid quiz.

## THINGS TO DO WITH CHILDREN IN AUTUMN

The Christenings Project has a wealth of ideas to use in your work with children and families this autumn.

From school blessings to recognising the blessing of 'our daily bread' at harvest, experiencing the awe and wonder of stars in the darker nights and sharing the light at Halloween. A great resource page to check out!



## FAITH AT HOME TAKE-HOME

Most church leaders would love for children and their carers to talk about church together – about worship, faith, and their experiences. Often, parents are uncertain how to do this, unsure of whether they "have the answers," hesitant about how to start a conversation with their children about these topics.

This is a simple sheet you can send home with children and their adults, to help them start conversations at home about worship and faith.



Children's Ministry in St Albans Diocese

## BIBLE SUNDAY - 27 OCTOBER

Did you know there's a day set aside in the Church calendar to celebrate the written word of God? Bible Sunday has long been celebrated by the Church and this year's celebrations take place on 27 October. The Bible Society have created some easy-to-use resources to help you celebrate with your whole church family.

Free downloadable resources include a fully written sermon on Psalm 119.129–136 and activities for Junior Church groups.

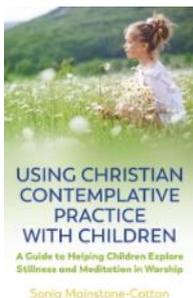


## RESOURCES

### [Using Christian Contemplative Practice with Children](#)

by *Sonia Mainstone-Cotton*

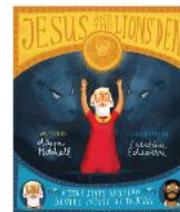
How stillness, mindfulness and other contemplative practices can be used with children in worship. Looking at the benefits this can offer for a child's wellbeing, and ability to reflect on their own beliefs, this guide is full of ideas and practical examples on how to introduce a more reflective approach to children's work in Christian settings. Price £14.99 ISBN: 9781785926624



### [Jesus and the Lions' Den](#)

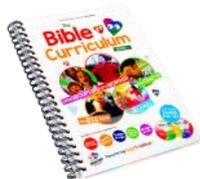
by *Alison Mitchell & Catalina Echeverri*

This illustrated retelling of Daniel and the lions' den helps children to see Jesus in the story of Daniel. It challenges children to spot the 'Jesus moments' by looking out for the hidden lion symbols. It goes on to explain the parallels between Jesus and Daniel, so that children can see the gospel heart of the whole Bible. For ages 3 - 6. To be published 1 September. Price £8.99 ISBN: 9781784984335



### [Little Worship Company Bible Curriculum Series 1](#)

A full curriculum aimed at 2 - 8 year olds which can be adapted for multiple internal and external settings: toddler groups, Sunday Schools, all-age family worship, Vacation Bible Clubs and Messy Church. Price £139.99



### [Bible Gems to Remember](#)

Illustrated Bible: 52 Stories with Easy Bible Memory in 5 Words or Less by *Robin Schmitt*

The Bible Gems to Remember Illustrated Bible gives readers 52 powerful verses from Scripture - one for each week of the year - to read, reflect upon, and put into practice. To be published 19 September. Price £12.99 ISBN: 9780310746881

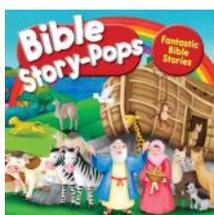


### [Fantastic Bible Stories](#)

by *Juliet David, Jo Parry*

Three favourite stories each with a BIG pop-up illustration, and soft, charming artwork.

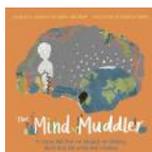
The stories are: Noah and his Amazing Ark, Moses and the Great Escape, Jesus the King. Price £12.99 ISBN: 9781781282892



### [The Mind Muddler](#)

by *Jo Boddam Whetham*

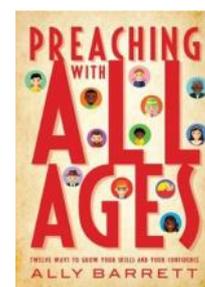
Based on the opening chapter of Romans, this book engages children with fun rhyme to show how sin muddles our thinking. The Mind Muddler whizzes through a big-picture tour of the whole Bible and reveals that the good news of the gospel is that God doesn't just show us the brokenness of our mess, he mends it! Price £3.50 ISBN: 9781912373833



### [Preaching with All Ages](#)

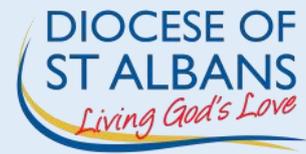
by *Ally Barrett*

The all-age talk is a task guaranteed to give preachers sleepless nights! Very few people feel they have a gift for it, and most lack confidence. This reflective and practical guide addresses these concerns, and aims to build a sure theological understanding, develop skills and grow confidence. Twelve chapters explore different kinds of engagement to enable preachers make real connections with their listeners, whatever the age. Each chapter is followed by a practical case study illustrating key principles and providing down-to-earth, tried and tested wisdom for all kinds of contexts and occasions. Price £14.99 ISBN: 9781786221711



## DIOCESAN YOUTH MISSIONER

### VACANCY



#### Youth Missioner - Lay or Ordained

- Are you passionate about young people experiencing the love of God at work in their lives?
- Do you have the vision and strategic skills to enable more churches to grow the faith of more young people?

At this exciting time in the Diocese of St Albans we are seeking to appoint a collaborative, imaginative and emotionally intelligent leader to strategically enable flourishing engagement with young people in the majority of parishes / benefices across the diocese leading to a significantly increased number of young people growing in faith in Christ and being fully embraced into the life of God's church.

This is a full-time post to work with parishes through mission action planning, fresh expressions of church, community engagement and schools.

Salary in the range £38,146 - £41,391, plus generous pension.

Closing Date: Wednesday 25 September 2019, 12 noon

Further details available from [www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/other-vacancies/](http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/other-vacancies/)

Applications to The Diocesan Secretary, Holywell Lodge, 41 Holywell Hill, St Albans AL1 1HE or by email to [diosecpa@stalbands.anglican.org](mailto:diosecpa@stalbands.anglican.org)

## MESSY NEWS



### [Research into Messy Churches on urban estates](#)

The latest update on the research project in Messy Churches on urban estates and their findings.

### [Messy Discipleship](#)

What happens in a Messy Church is often very different to what happens in traditional church services. But the goal is the same: to make disciples of Jesus. So just what might discipleship look like in the Messy Church context?

Messy Church discipleship isn't about numbers. It's about how we're moving towards Jesus and becoming like him - as individuals and as a community, no matter how slowly. It's about how

we're growing in our knowledge of God and in warmth towards him and his people. And it's for everyone - leaders included. There are different initiatives to try out.

### [Messy Church video from the Diocesan Reaching New People team](#)

Since May 2017 the parish of Broxbourne with Wormley has been running a large Messy Church in Wormley CE Primary School, regularly attracting 120 children and their carers to their monthly gatherings. Why not view their video where they share the impact Messy Church has had.



## EVENTS & TRAINING

### Messy Church Does Science

Saturday 14 September

9.30am - 12pm

The Rufus Centre, Flitwick

How might science within Messy Church express its “DNA” of Hospitality, Creativity and Celebration, enabling families to experience the joy of science, encounter the God of creation and counter the notion that science and faith do not mix? Event is FREE, but booking essential.



### Prayer Spaces in Schools day conference

Monday 16 September

Birmingham

The Church of England and Prayer Spaces in Schools are co-hosting an important one-day conference, focusing on the impact of prayer spaces on the spiritual development of children & young people. Tickets cost £35.



### Introduction to Schools Ministry

16 - 17 September

High Leigh Conference Centre

Scripture Union's new course for those looking to develop skills and good practice in the schools context. These two-day courses are suitable for those who work in Primary or Secondary schools and are running in several locations in the Autumn term. Residential tickets £120, day tickets £40.



### Playtime Conference

Saturday 28 September

9.20am - 4.45pm Wigan

A great opportunity for toddler group leaders and their teams to come together to be enthused, supported and resourced. An extensive choice of workshops and a packed exhibition zone. Tickets £31 - group discounts available.



### Homegrown

Tuesday 8 October

Homegrown is a new, live-streamed conference exploring how faith is grown at home. Hosted by the Methodist Church with guest presenters, it will address how we can encourage families and households to nurture faith together, and to spur each other on as they encounter Jesus and faith in every day life.



### Early Years Conference

Saturday 12 October

10am - 3.30pm York

Conference and training for all those involved in working with babies, toddlers, pre-schoolers and their families. Tickets £15.



### From Stranger to Friend: first encounters on faith journeys

5 - 6 November The Hayes, Swanwick

This 24 hour conference will explore how we can help people discover that they have a place with God and God's people as they take their first steps. Bookings made before 30 Sep cost £120 for the whole conference. Day delegate rates are also available.



### Come and Worship

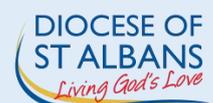
16 - 17 June 2020

Following the success of this year's Come and Worship residential, we've decided to run another event next year!

So save the date and look out for booking details in the next issue of Children's Ministry News - in the meantime you can register your interest with Julie in the office

E: [yac@stalbans.anglican.org](mailto:yac@stalbans.anglican.org)

T: 01727 818160



## PRAYERS

This month we pray for:

- all children and families coming back from holiday, and those who haven't been able to go away.
- all churches beginning new programmes.
- all children starting a new school, or going to school for the first time.



## KEY CONTACTS

### Margaret Pritchard Houston

Diocesan Children's Mission Enabler

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### Julie Cirillo

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### Jeremy (Jez) Hirst & Martyn Hedley

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### Ruth Garman

Administrator - Resources Centre & Schools

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## 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:*

