

Your monthly update from the Diocese of Rochester

**GROW ENRICH RESOURCE**



## NEWS IN BRIEF

### FOREST CHURCH GROWING



A new monthly 'Forest Church' service is proving popular in Bidborough and Southborough.

Activities have included, a fire bowl set up in the churchyard to cook breadsticks on whittled sticks; and a woodland walk imagining the journey to Bethlehem, stopping en route to create mud portraits of Mary and Joseph on tree trunks.

Lay Reader, Clare Masters, says it seems to be proving popular: "Forest Church is simply an opportunity to worship God, to enjoy fellowship in his beautiful created world, and to build relationships amongst the church family.

### Joining the revo-loo-tion

St Mark's Biggin Hill is feeling flush after campaigning to help their town become a Toilet Twinned Town. Raising money to twin "a toilet at your church, funds a toilet in another part of the world. 23 toilets in the town have been twinned so far.



Following our consultation on Indicative Offers, we have listened to your feedback and would welcome your thoughts on amendments we have made.

## HAVE YOUR SAY - ADDITIONAL CONSULTATION

Last year parishioners, clergy, lay ministers and PCCs were invited to contribute their views to a consultation on Indicative Offers.

Called 'One mission, many places', people were asked to consider a development to the way the shared mission and ministry of the local Church is funded.

"We were delighted with the response," says Rev Richard Williams, Finance Director. "The level of engagement with the proposal was really encouraging and we're very grateful to everyone who took the time to discuss the issue in their parishes and contributed their views through the process."

Overall, there was a positive response to a formula-based system, with 61% of those responding online agreeing that: 'An Indicative Offers based system would better support a common fund into which every parish contributes fairly to the mission and ministry of the Church locally.'

Thanks to the consultation, some amendments have been made and comments are now invited on the revised proposal. The consultation closes on **8 March**. More detail at: [www.rochester.anglican.org/diocese/consultation/](http://www.rochester.anglican.org/diocese/consultation/)



## BISHOP SPEAKS OUT ON SOCIAL MEDIA COMPANIES

"The mantra of social media companies that they only provide a platform and are not responsible for content must be challenged, again and again" writes Bishop Simon Burton-Jones, marking Safer Internet Day this month.

This year the focus was on the importance of young people giving free and informed consent to their engagements online.

Bishop Simon continued that it was particularly striking that this year, it coincided with the distressing story of Molly Russell, the fourteen year old girl who took her life after viewing shocking images of self-harm online.

Suggesting that political intervention is called for, he also suggested that neither is the current crisis in young people's mental health purely the fault or responsibility of Silicon Valley:

"Mental health services have been cut back severely, leaving many young people waiting months for treatment when getting to the end of the day is a mountain in itself. Voluntary bodies, including churches, have thinking to do around the contribution they can make to well-being."

Read his thoughts in full at:  
[www.rochester.anglican.org/communications/news/safer-internet-day.php](http://www.rochester.anglican.org/communications/news/safer-internet-day.php)

 **Called together** **GROW - DISCIPLESHIP**  
grow enrich resource

**BE A #LENTPIILGRIM:** With Lent just around the corner the Church of England has now officially launched it's Lent and Easter resources. Focused on the Beatitudes, material includes a daily reflections book, a downloadable app, plus, you can sign-up to receive daily prayers via email. Find out more at:  
[www.churchofengland.org/lent](http://www.churchofengland.org/lent)

## TRAINING & EVENTS

### IT'S YOUR CALLING DAYS

#### Throughout the year

These sessions from the Diocesan Vocations team, are aimed at helping those exploring where God may be leading them. If you, or someone you know would like to attend, speak to your local clergy first before booking. Everyone has a vocation. Find yours. Visit:  
[www.rochester.anglican.org/ministry/vocations/its-your-calling/](http://www.rochester.anglican.org/ministry/vocations/its-your-calling/)

### FOSTERING AND ADOPTION EVENING

**Sunday 17 Feb, 6pm, Christ Church Beckenham.**

An opportunity to hear first hand how support in the church can change the outcomes of those who have a looked after background, that has lead them into difficult situations. Billy-Jo O'Leary, a Rochester Diocese Lay Minister, shares her life story and the work of Home for Good. Visit:  
[www.facebook.com/homeforgoodkent/](http://www.facebook.com/homeforgoodkent/)

### MESSY FIESTA

**Saturday 16 March, 10am to 4pm, Christ Church Orpington** A

day for anyone involved in, or looking to start, a Messy Church. Lots of opportunity for learning from other local groups. Led by Director and Founder of Messy Church, Lucy Moore. Cost £15. For more information email:  
[Carol.Kitchener@messychurch.org.uk](mailto:Carol.Kitchener@messychurch.org.uk)

## Get in touch



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