

# TOGETHER

The FREE magazine from the Diocese of Rochester | Issue 4 | Autumn 2019

**GROW | ENRICH | RESOURCE**

COVER STORY: CREATING PLACES OF GROWTH AND FLOURISHING | PAGE 8-11



ALL ARE  
WELCOME

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KNIFE  
ANGEL

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OF BELONGING

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## CONTENTS

Churches listening to the needs of those they serve and showing welcome to all, is the thread tying together many of the stories you will find in this latest packed edition.

The attention of the world's media has, quite literally, been on some of the activities taking place across the area of the Diocese. From new services catering for the realities of life today (p5), to the sporting use of the Cathedral (p4), it's all in our **Inside Track** section.

Creative outreach is also at the heart of our **Focus On** features, as we shine a spotlight on the pioneering work helping welcome those with dementia (p12), and the exciting plans receiving a financial boost, as we seek to grow faith and belonging across our churches (p8).

We're also celebrating, as we mark 25-years of women's ordained ministry (p16) and welcome the new Lead Chaplain at Bluewater shopping centre (**One to One** p24).

With great books to support your 'environmental' reflection this Creationtide (**Head Space** p21), plus an invitation to sign up to a new digital charter (p14), I did say it was packed!

Jennifer Ross  
Communications Officer

**Editor:** Jennifer Ross  
jennifer.ross@rochester.anglican.org

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Katerina Gerhardt

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# HOLY IN ONE

Things went golf crazy this summer, when a bridge-themed adventure golf course came to the Nave of Rochester Cathedral.

Continuing the Cathedral's 1,400-year role as a centre of welcome and learning for the community, the Rev Canon Rachel Phillips, Canon for Mission and Growth said:

"The adventure golf course helped us give people the opportunity to learn while they took part in a fun activity, in what for many might have been a previously un-visited building."

Despite some criticism, the impact has been over-whelmingly positive, with the Dean of Rochester Cathedral, the Very Rev Dr Philip Hesketh saying people spent time in the Cathedral before and after playing:

"We've had 200 to 300 people - mostly young people - in each day, engaging in the prayer stations, lighting candles, asking for prayer and thanking us for providing a safe space for their children to come and have fun free of charge.

"One woman was very emotional as she told me how she could not afford to take the children away on holiday and this has been a 'godsend'."



## ST PAUL'S SLADE GREEN SCHOOL

Bishop James Langstaff officially opened and blessed St Paul's (Slade Green) Church of England Primary School. Previously a community school, it joined the Trinitas Academy Trust in 2018, and was welcomed into the Rochester Diocese. At last they could add 'Church of England' to their school name!



## A WARM WELCOME WITH YOUR CUPPA

Tea, cake and community were the focus of the latest Places of Welcome cafe launch in the Diocese at St Augustine, Gillingham. A Red Cross survey states, one fifth of the UK population is always, or often, lonely. Project lead, Andrew Gray says: "This cafe offers a non-judgemental environment to help address real issues of social isolation."



## WALK YOUR WAY TO HEALTH

A church in Sevenoaks has launched a health walk as part of an NHS social prescribing scheme. The Rev Lorraine Turner, says working with the OneYou project is easy, as they provide the trained walking guide: "Churches are really well placed to support this kind of initiative as part of a ministry of care and hospitality. I'd encourage others to look into it."



**The Rev MARK MONTGOMERY**  
St Gabriel's Church, Kings Hill

## AFTERNOON SERVICE GOES VIRAL

News of a new 4pm Sunday service at St Gabriel's Church, Kings Hill, went viral thanks to The Rev Mark Montgomery's honesty that '...children's sport, visiting and the night out the day before' can get in the way. Mark says, "The media interest was a brilliant chance to tell everyone that churches all over are offering a diverse range of services, not just us."

# MAKE THE PLEDGE – SPEAK OUT AGAINST DOMESTIC ABUSE



The Diocese has taken another step against domestic abuse by launching its support for the White Ribbon UK Campaign.

White Ribbon UK is part of the global movement to end male violence against women.

It invites men to make a pledge – which can be done online - never to commit, excuse or remain silent about male violence against women.

An average of two women a week are murdered by a current or former partner in England and Wales.

“This is completely unacceptable,” says Bishop Simon Burton-Jones, Bishop of Tonbridge, “any violence against women in real life, or online.”

Churches are encouraged to register their support to take part in White Ribbon day on 25 November 2019.

For more information and to watch a message from Bishop Simon, visit: [www.rochester.anglican.org/mission/domestic-abuse/](http://www.rochester.anglican.org/mission/domestic-abuse/) or email: [caroline.clarke@rochester.anglican.org](mailto:caroline.clarke@rochester.anglican.org)

# FESTIVAL FUN THANKS TO FUND



Young people from St Justus Church in Rochester enjoyed a fantastic weekend away at the SOLID Festival, thanks to the Diocese of Rochester’s Children and Young People Fund, supported by the Colyer-Ferguson Charitable Trust.

The annual weekend brings together hundreds of children and young people from across the South East of England to discover and worship Jesus, while taking part in all kinds of adventure, creative and sporting activities.

For 16-year old Shola, this was her first experience of a Christian event run from outside of her church: “...I got to try new things such as kayaking and

banana boats, which led to us getting soaked, but it was great! I thank God for the wonderful time I had and the connection He made with me, making me more aware of His power and presence in my life.”

“For our youth this was transformational,” says Adam Pyrke, curate at St Justus, “We have noticed a growth both in their relationship with Jesus Christ and in their own personal characters. We are extremely thankful for the grant that made this experience possible.”

Visit [www.rochester.anglican.org/under18s/children-and-young-people-cyp-fund/](http://www.rochester.anglican.org/under18s/children-and-young-people-cyp-fund/) for more information.



ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL AND BROMLEY SCHOOLS FESTIVALS

# SCHOOL FESTIVALS

The Rochester Diocesan Board of Education’s annual Schools Festival Celebrations have taken place, offering another fantastic day out for students. Over a thousand Year 6 students were welcomed to Rochester Cathedral for a week of activities, during which they had time to reflect and gather ahead of starting secondary school.

At Bromley Parish Church, Year 5 students from the area also enjoyed a day of worship, workshops and fun. “These festivals are always a great occasion and we love being able to bring students together from across our schools for this time of joy and thanksgiving.”, Virginia Corbyn, Diocesan Deputy Director of Education.

## CREATING PLACES OF GROWTH AND FLOURISHING



**A** recently announced £1.39million grant from the national church is set to give creative Christian outreach across the area of the Diocese a boost.

Sports ministry to prevent knife crime, outreach to housing estates and a gospel-music inspired congregation, are just some of the parish projects it is hoped will help bring growth across the churches.

“Doing the boxing every week...it gives them discipline, it helps us to build relationships, it also gets people off the street. It’s an openly Christian response to the London knife crime epidemic.”

So says Rev Matthew Fitter, vicar of Christ Church, Anerley, who is leading the work at the Kings Boxing club, just one of the parish projects set to receive the new funding from the national church.

Run by a professional England boxing coach, Kings Boxing works with 13 to 19-year olds, to give them an alternative to being on the streets. At the same time, ex-offender volunteers share with them how their Christian faith has saved them from knife crime.

Matthew says that he was convinced to set up the boxing club after conducting the funerals of two local victims of knife crime:

“Due to the high incidents of knife crimes in the area and the prevalence of a number of teenage gangs within the parish, Christ Church Anerley, along with members of the Freedom Forum, pioneered the setting up of a boxing club in order to try and address the knife crime issue.”

Alongside Anerley, church projects in Slade Green and Erith, Gillingham and Strood are set to receive particular support, while a Learning Community will be established so that best practice from these projects can be shared across the parishes of the Diocese.

The four parish projects were part of a bid made to the Church of England’s Strategic Development Fund, part of the Church’s Renewal and Reform programme; this national fund supports work to

ensure the Church of England becomes a growing church for all people and in all places.

The Rt Rev Simon Burton Jones, the Bishop of Tonbridge, will be leading the delivery of the successful bid:

“We are eager to fulfil the commission to go and make disciples in the places God has entrusted to us; to bring people into a living faith with the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It calls for ingenuity to do this well and there are real signs of creativity at work across the Diocese.

“Some of our biggest challenges are in the most materially deprived areas where austerity has cut deep, social mobility has ceased and life expectancy reversed.

He added: “We aim to grow the church in these and other places, by making disciples and enriching the common good through Christ-like service in the wider community. This is the essence of our Called Together vision.”

The Church of England’s Strategic Development Fund supports work to ensure the Church of England becomes a growing church for all people and in all places.

In Erith and Slade Green the grant will help build their work with children and families, including a Toddler Church, holiday clubs and music-based activities.

Over in Strood, the funding will support those at St. Francis Church, to go out into the three local housing estates to 'reach people where they are' and remove barriers to entering church for local people.

The church has already built up a positive reputation in the local area by offering a regular café, toddler group and service for those with learning difficulties.

They also plan to work with a local school to begin a Messy Church-style worshipping community, which involves crafts, Christian storytelling and food.

"We are so thrilled to be able to receive this funding which will help the local community live life in all its fullness." says the Rev Sharon Copestake, vicar of St Francis.

"We will be continuing to share the good news we believe in and open up new possibilities for local people to explore some of life's big questions, providing opportunities for sharing together."

She continued: "New initiatives for young and old and all in between will be made possible because of this additional resource."

In Gillingham the funding is set to pioneer a Gospel-worship inspired congregation; they've already had a number of successful events in which the Gospel-style of worship has been used, including an outreach event on Gillingham high street.



FUNKY FRIDAYS AT ST FRANCIS, STROOD

"I believe these innovative projects will revitalise mission and ministry not just in these locations, but elsewhere too" ...

Bishop Simon Burton-Jones

For Rev Saju Muthalaly, it's a unique expression of church within the Church of England:

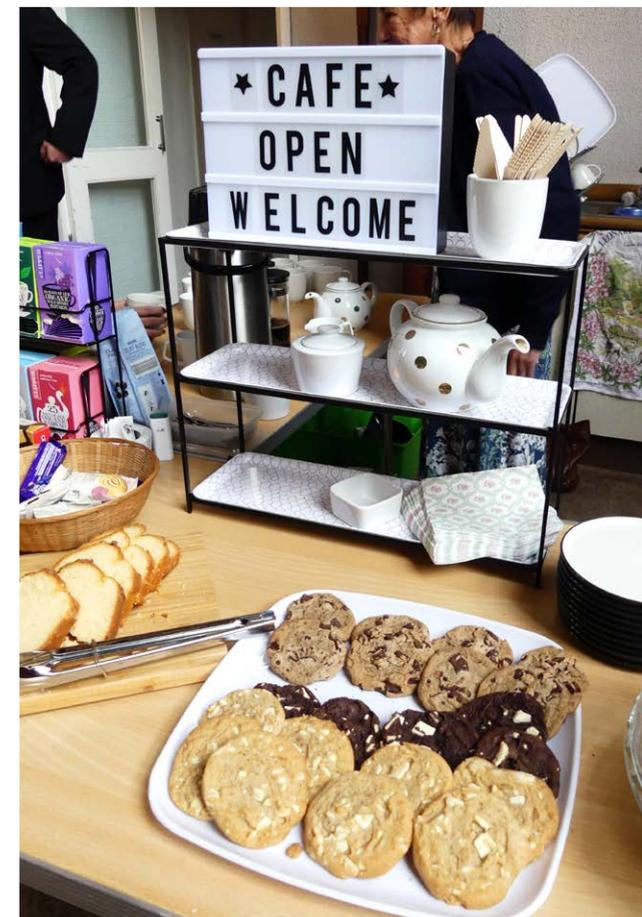
"We will be recruiting a brand-new Gospel-focused church leader and two other community based missionaries, all of whom will reach beyond the parameters of our congregation's demographics.

"Gospel music will be a crucial vehicle for how this congregation will express itself and we can't wait to reach new followers of Jesus Christ."

With plans already underway in the Diocese around helping churches create Called to Grow plans, and with the recruitment of three Growth Enablers to work in each archdeaconry due to be announced soon, Bishop Simon is confident that the benefits of this funding will reach far and wide:

"This funding goes to the heart of the work we are already undertaking to grow disciples, enrich communities and resource our mission and ministry across the area of the Diocese.

"I believe these innovative projects will revitalise mission and ministry not just in these locations, but elsewhere too, as we share their learning in order to help us turn all our churches into places of growth and flourishing."





## ALL ARE WELCOME

How the the needs of those with dementia are being supported in our churches.

CHRIST CHURCH, CHISLEHURST, DEMENTIA CAFÉ

**'I have never heard of Anna Chaplaincy' is a statement that Julia Burton-Jones, Anna Chaplaincy lead for Rochester Diocese, says she often hears.**

But that could all be about to change, as the media spotlight, and the attention of the National Church, has increasingly begun

to fall on this relatively new ministry.

Its aim? To work alongside older people and support those with dementia and other later life issues.

It takes its name from the faithful older Bible character in the second chapter of Luke's gospel, Anna. Anna is recorded as being 84, and to have been widowed for many decades. She speaks of redemption to all who will listen.

For Julia Burton-Jones, it is an inspirational story to help churches become better at meeting spiritual needs in later life and dementia.

"Anna Chaplaincy varies according to local need and can include: one-to-one support and prayer ministry; leading care home services; supporting dementia activities; advocating for people with dementia; and supporting carers.

"We really want to convey the message that people with

dementia and their carers are welcome in our churches. That these are places where they are free to be who they are and that we really welcome and appreciate all that they bring."

Those involved say that, while ministry alongside older people is not new, it can be invisible and lack recognition and resourcing. Anna Chaplaincy gives definition and identity to ministry with those in the third and fourth ages of their lives, at a time of unprecedented longevity in British society.

Working with The Bible Reading Fellowship, Julia has been able to establish a network of Anna Chaplains and Anna Friends. A growing number of parishes have established regular activities aimed at those with dementia and their families, from cafes to groups knitting twiddlemuffs, that help calm those with dementia.

The Dementia Café at Christ Church, Chislehurst, is one of 13 such cafes currently running in churches across the Diocese.

**ANNA CHAPLAIN** – An appointed and authorised lay or ordained person, sent out under the authority of their church to give spiritual support to older people who are living in care homes and sheltered housing complexes, their relatives and staff who look after them.

**ANNA FRIEND** – A trained volunteer giving a few hours to offer support and friendship to older people and their carers to help meet their spiritual needs.

"When we first started the café, we didn't know who would come." says Anna Chaplain, Angela Scott. "We had notices in the doctors and on the High Street and the library, and most people who came had nothing to do with the Church.

"Sometimes when people arrive, they are in a bad mood, but they always go home really

happy. We just hope that, by people coming and seeing the friendship we can offer and the love and concern that we can show them, maybe something of the love of Christ can come through in that way."

And for family and loved ones, where Anna Chaplaincy is in place, it is clearly making an impact, as a daughter of one person living with dementia explains:

"Carers can sometimes be reticent to acknowledge that anything is wrong and struggle on before asking for help. This is where Anna Chaplains are vital, as they can perhaps take the first tentative steps to help people acknowledge what is going on so they start to get the help they need."

A recent motion and discussion about this pioneering ministry

took place at the General Synod – the national assembly of the Church of England – requesting that all dioceses across England raise the profile of work with those diagnosed with dementia and their carers.

And with another 12 new Anna Chaplains and Anna Friends commissioned this summer, Julia says that their goal to have Anna Chaplaincy in every parish is looking hopeful:

"We want to be available to as many older people, and those with dementia as possible, so that their spiritual needs can be met. Being a companion on this journey of discovery alongside the very old is both a privilege and an opportunity to prepare for our own later years."

Head over to page 20 for helpful resources around dementia. ➡



TWIDDLEMUFFS

For more information about Anna Chaplaincy and how to get involved please visit: [www.rochester.anglican.org/mission/dementia/](http://www.rochester.anglican.org/mission/dementia/) or email [Julia.Burton-Jones@rochester.anglican.org](mailto:Julia.Burton-Jones@rochester.anglican.org)

# BEING A <sup>good</sup> CHRISTIAN ONLINE



What does it look like to be a Christian online? Everyone's engagement is different.

Like getting behind the wheel of a car when we're in a rush, tired or ratty, social media can put us in a rage. A highway code for our communications has much to recommend it.

The Church of England has created a set of social media guidelines and a pledge which Christians, people of other faiths and people of no faith are welcome to use and adopt.

"We are called to loving kindness. As Jesus might have said: message others as you would be messaged." (Rt Rev Simon Burton-Jones, Bishop of Tonbridge)

## Will you adopt the code?

### BE SAFE

### BE RESPECTFUL

### BE KIND

### BE HONEST

### TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

### BE A GOOD AMBASSADOR

### DISAGREE WELL

### CREDIT OTHERS

### FOLLOW THE RULES

The safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults must be maintained. If you have any concerns, ask a diocesan safeguarding adviser.

Do not post or share content that is sexually explicit, inflammatory, hateful, abusive, threatening or otherwise disrespectful.

Treat others how you would wish to be treated and assume the best in people. If you have a criticism or critique to make, consider not just whether you would say it in person, but the tone you would use.

Don't mislead people about who you are.

You are accountable for the things you do, say and write. Text and images shared can be public and permanent, even with privacy settings in place. If you're not sure, don't post it.

Personal and professional life can easily become blurred online so think before you post.

Some conversations can be places of robust disagreement and it's important we apply our values in the way we express them.

Acknowledge the work of others. Respect copyright and always credit where it is due. Be careful not to release sensitive or confidential information and always question the source of any content you are considering amplifying.

Abide by the terms and conditions of the various social media platforms themselves. If you see a comment that you believe breaks their policies, then please report it to the respective company.

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# CELEBRATING WOMEN'S MINISTRY

**This year, it is 25 years since the first women were ordained as priests in the Church of England. To celebrate the ministry of women in all its forms, a series of blogs and authored pieces will be shared this autumn on the Diocese of Rochester website.**

Here, some of those connected with those first ordinations in 1994 share their recollections. Full unabridged versions are available at [www.rochester.anglican.org/ministry/womensministry](http://www.rochester.anglican.org/ministry/womensministry)

**The Rev Dr Anne Townsend - Ministry Team Member, St Peter's and St Paul's church, Bromley.** *Anne grew up in a household divided on the issue of women's ordination. Her mother campaigned for women's ministry her whole life, while her father, a vicar, disagreed and did not attend Anne's own ordination. She is also a successful author of popular religious books.*

"Aged 81, I'm delighted to have lived long enough to see women bishops becoming the norm. You don't celebrate 'normal' – or do you?"

It wasn't always this way. The topic was our family's blue touch-paper. Mention the words 'ordination of women' and off they'd go.

I worked as a missionary doctor in Thailand for 16 years, unquestioningly performing priestly roles when necessary. Sixteen years later, on return to England, I realised that this ministry must be curtailed.

Having a 'breakdown' in my late 40's, and wrestling with God during a year 'off-sick', to my total

amazement, I found myself being gently nudged to knock at the door labelled 'ordination'. I was even more amazed when it opened.

Training completed, on the Southwark Ordination Course, the crunch came when, a year after being deaconed – the role held before being ordained a priest - my male peers were to be ordained as priests, but we women were excluded.

The men were up in arms, sought an interview with the bishop, offered to refuse to be priested if that would bring about change – to no avail. In the event, we women swallowed our tears, read the Bible passages, prayed the intercessions and administered the bread and wine at their ordinations.

I was there, two years later, outside Church House, Westminster, at the General Synod when the vote swung in favour of the ordination of women to the priesthood. We laughed, sang, danced and wept together on the pavement when the news was relayed out to us.

A good friend came to my ordination service at the Cathedral, 'I'm still not convinced!' she commented afterwards. The following day I presided at Communion. It was the first time that a female voice had sung the priestly responses

"...and the sky didn't fall in, the end of the world did not happen and I found myself crying to God."

and prayers. Her heart melted. Tears in her eyes, she offered, 'You'll need stoles to match all our different altar coverings – I'll make them for you.'

**The Rev Jean Kerr - Jean was among the first group of women to be ordained in the Diocese of Rochester.** *Formerly Head of the Diocese's Mission and Community Engagement Team and Canon for Mission at Rochester Cathedral. She is now retired but still very active in ministry.*

"I had been waiting for almost seven years between being deaconed and then being priested, but in reality I had waited many, many years for the fulfilling of God's call on my life into full ordained ministry.

Waiting had become the norm, frustrations had long been left behind in a gentle ripple of injustice that somehow sat patiently alongside the waiting.

I can remember at the priest's retreat being shown how to hold my hands at the altar as if in all those years of waiting I might not have noticed such things.

On the day itself, the stole which I had worn as a deacon fastened by a press stud, was simply opened up and again I waited and heard amazing cheering and celebration from behind me.

Later I was to preside at Holy Communion at St Marks Gillingham with Bishop Colin Buchanan alongside (no pressure). I took the loaf - yes, a whole loaf - and held it up to God, broke it and waited and waited ...and the sky didn't fall in, the end of the world did not happen and I found myself crying to God. "For this, it was just for this moment O Lord all that waiting".

Ever since, more than any other priestly act, it is this moment of bread broken that always restores my soul."

**Bishop James Langstaff - Bishop of Rochester.** *Bishop James chaired the Steering Committee which put forward proposals for women bishops in 2012.*

"My memory of the day of the women's ordination vote is that I was at home looking after a 9-year old and a 6-year old because it was my wife, Bridget,



who was then a member of General Synod and she was in London for the debate and vote.

I remember feeling somewhat distant from what was going on – and a bit distracted by my parental duties - yet aware that this was a moment of huge significance for our church.

And so it has turned out.

I now find it almost impossible to imagine being part of a church without the richness and diversity women in priestly ministry bring. At the same time, we have learned, not always easily, how to be a church which continues to welcome in its midst those who have a different theological conviction.

At its best, that can be a witness to a world where too often people are unable to live with differences of conviction

Twenty-five years on, it is encouraging that here in the Diocese, the number of young women under 30 offering for ordained ministry has increased but the numbers are still some of the lowest across the national church. It would be good to encourage more younger women (and men) to come forward to explore ordained ministry."

*Explore your calling, visit: [www.rochester.anglican.org/ministry/vocations/its-your-calling/](http://www.rochester.anglican.org/ministry/vocations/its-your-calling/) or email [vocations@rochester.anglican.org](mailto:vocations@rochester.anglican.org)*

# KNIFE CRIME

## - are 'the youth' really to blame?

By the Rev Nathan Ward\*

**Many churches and Christians have been taking a lead in efforts to tackle knife crime across the country, whether through action, prayer, or standing in solidarity with those affected, but are we looking at the issue in the right way?**

One could hardly have failed to notice the prevalence of knife crime related stories in the news in recent years. It follows a steady flow of crime figures indicating that the number of knife related offences in the UK has increased.

Most recently, police figures show that some 1,509 knife offences relating to women and girls were recorded in 2018 - an increase of 73% over the last five years.

Members of the Church of England's national assembly recently voted overwhelmingly, by 315 to zero, in support of a motion calling on the Church's national bodies - dioceses and education boards - to take practical steps both to help prevent violence, such as gun and knife crime, and to support those affected.

The debate called for Diocesan Boards of Education to encourage alternatives to excluding children from school; for

dioceses to provide more training for Church leaders and for the Church to work more with other organisations to provide support and pastoral care for those affected.

Such moves are to be welcomed and applauded.

However, as part of a church engaged with a youth prevention project on knife crime, I wonder whether the general narrative has become twisted and tied up with 'youth violence', yet when we look at the evidence, although some young people are involved, the large majority are in fact adults.

Making it a 'youth' issue fuels the myth that it is our young people who have made our communities dangerous places, widening the generational gap that already exists.

Contrary to popular belief, 99% of young people aged between 10 and 21 yrs do not carry a knife.

Research shows, however, that this misrepresentation also increases the likelihood of young people carrying a knife for protection.

The young people I have spoken to, who do carry a knife, say that they do so because they feel unsafe even though we live historically in one of the safest times humans have ever known.

How can this be? It would seem, however, that children in this country do have some right to be concerned.

The NSPCC in 2018, published the report 'How safe are our children?'. It showed an increase in police-recorded child sexual offences across the UK, increases in child cruelty, and neglect offences in all UK nations except Scotland. There was also an increased number of children on child protection plans and registers over the last decade.

To be clear, I am not suggesting that there is a correlation between child sexual abuse and knife crime, however, I do believe that, as a Church, we need to reflect on why the children and young people we serve are feeling this way.

It would seem as though our children and young people are finding it increasingly hard to find emotional and physical safety.

As part of our response to violent crime, it is perhaps time for us as Christians and as a Church, to have a prophetic vision for how children and young people can feel safe in our community, on our streets and in our churches.

At St Margaret's Church, as part of our continuing work around knife crime, we have organised 'The Point Conference' ([www.thepointconference.org](http://www.thepointconference.org)) this September, as well as bringing the Knife Angel to Rochester Cathedral.

The hope is that they will provide a focus for churches across the Diocese as to the part they can play, and the wider complex issues that make up this problem beyond perceived youth violence

You may not feel your community has been touched by this violence yet, but whether it's challenging the conversations about 'violent youth' during the refreshments after the weekly service, or thinking about issues such as domestic abuse which have led to a significant number of knife-related murders, you do have a part to play.

Moving the debate on from a focus on 'violent youth' is a good start.

**The Knife Angel is at Rochester Cathedral from 2 - 29 September. For more information visit [www.rochester cathedral.org](http://www.rochester cathedral.org)**

\* The Rev Nathan Ward, Vicar at St Margaret's Church, Rainham is leading a government-funded project to prevent knife crime in Medway.

"Our children and young people are finding it increasingly hard to find emotional and physical safety."



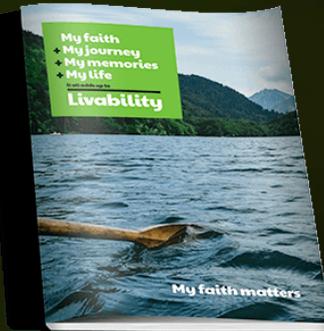
**N**urturing and encouraging faith and spirituality in older people, who may be struggling with physical and mental frailty, is both a privilege and an opportunity. These resources offer something for those, either in a church context, or personally, who are experiencing the impact of dementia or other later life issues.

**MY FAITH MATTERS**

Whether it is reading the Psalms aloud, sitting in the sunshine watching the world go by, meeting with friends or celebrating with family – there are many things that together add up to a person’s spiritual wellbeing.

My Faith Matters is about recording and celebrating what’s unique to each person, so that others can understand that too.

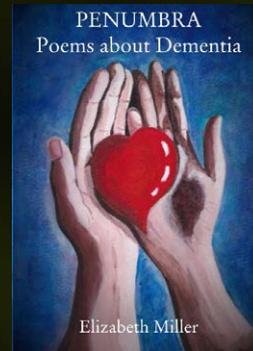
Free from [www.livability.org.uk/resources/my-faith-matters/](http://www.livability.org.uk/resources/my-faith-matters/)



**‘PENUMBRA’, ELIZABETH MILLER**

This beautiful collection of poetry charts one family’s journey through their experience of this challenging disease. Inspired by their mother who was diagnosed with dementia, there are light-hearted and whimsical poems, while others are more challenging and provoke deep reflection.

Instagram: [elizabethmillerpoetry](https://www.instagram.com/elizabethmillerpoetry)  
Facebook: Elizabeth Miller Poetry



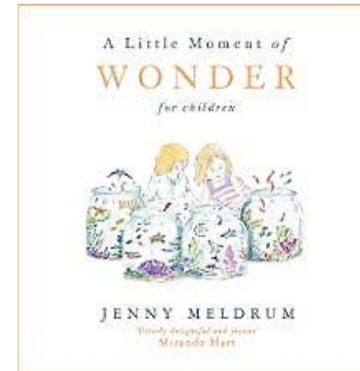
**TABLE TALK (for fourth agers)**

This conversational game is a dementia-sensitive conversational resource, but ideal for all those aged 70+. Available as either a set of cards or an app (Android/IOS) it is great for generating conversations, memories and lots of laughter.

[www.table-talk.org](http://www.table-talk.org)



**W**ith Creationtide in September and Harvest just around the corner, Andrew Carr, a Reader at St Alban and St Edmund Dartford, reviews three books helping Christians of all ages, reflect on their relationship with the environment.



**A LITTLE MOMENT OF WONDER FOR CHILDREN**  
By Jenny Meldrum

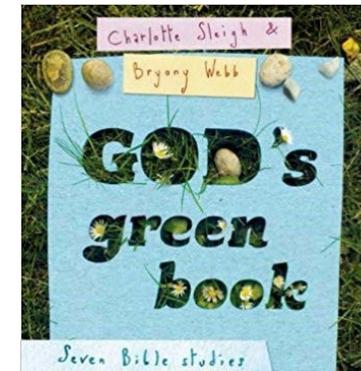
**Verdict:** Gentle and quietly profound – ideal ‘read me a bedtime story!’ material.

For 3-6 yrs

The cover quote by comedienne Miranda Hart (‘Utterly delightful and joyous’) could have doubled as the verdict summary. Compiled and illustrated by the author, and one of a series of books for young children enabling them to begin to explore a loving relationship with God, this is a collection of 28 brief reflections on thoughtfully chosen verses (many from Psalms).

Had I young children, I would be delighted to read and share this book with them, knowing that the passion the author has for God’s Word and World would positively impact them (and their parents...).

£8.99  
ISBN: 978-1-473-69173-5



**GOD’S GREEN BOOK**  
By Charlotte Sleight & Bryony Webb

**Verdict:** Inspirational youth study group resource on the environment.

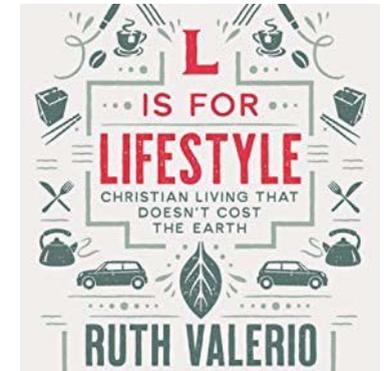
For 12 yrs +

A series of seven studies exploring a range of questions touching on ethics, discipleship, consumer choice and the challenge of living in an eco-friendly manner. Each includes Bible study, practical activities and reflective meditations as well as inspirational stories and quizzes.

I particularly enjoyed the ‘Divine Game of Pinzatski’, was startled and challenged by the data on carbon footprints and was encouraged to undertake both ‘leftover parties’ and ‘litter picks’.

Full of common sense, practical advice, spiritual insight and much content for prayer. I would be very happy to lead any group through this, with the prayerful expectation that all of us would be changed by it.

£8.99  
ISBN: 978-0-281-06206-5



**L IS FOR LIFESTYLE**  
By Ruth Valerio

**Verdict:** Compelling Christian manifesto for changing our lifestyle.

For 16 yrs +

Subtitled ‘Christian Living that doesn’t cost the Earth’, this third edition reminded me of an earlier book by Dave Bookless (‘Planetwise’) in its call to change our daily consumer choices as part of our discipleship.

The author’s passion, experience and insight infuse this shared journey as she accompanies us through an alphabet of issues (D is for Driving, O is for Organic, R is for Recycling etc.), but with no desire nor intent to guilt or condemn, but rather to encourage step-by-step-change within the context of Christian discipleship.

Always compelling, always readable, provoking both prayer and action.

£8.99  
ISBN: 978-1-783-59996-7

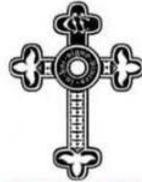
# TOP 10 EVENTS NOT TO BE MISSED



**THE POINT, KNIFE CRIME CONFERENCE**  
September 13, 10am - 3:30pm  
Historic Dockyard Chatham

Knife crime is fast becoming a national priority in Britain. The Point Conference will bring together specialists, academics, and practitioners to explore this problem, working towards an achievable solution that saves lives. Tickets £37.90. To book visit: [www.thepointconference.org](http://www.thepointconference.org)

**“Lift High the Cross”**



**The Richborough Family Festival**

**RICHBOROUGH FAMILY FESTIVAL**  
September 14, 12pm - 4:15pm  
Rochester Cathedral

With kind permission of the Dean and Chapter, the annual See of Richborough Family Festival will take place to mark Holy Cross Day. Goody bags for children available. Find out more at: [www.richborough.org.uk](http://www.richborough.org.uk)



**SING! ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL**  
September 14, 4:15pm  
Rochester Cathedral

Fancy singing an Evensong at Rochester Cathedral? The travelling Evensong choir, SING! are looking for people to join their scratch choir. Musical delights will include Brewer in D and Locus Iste. Sign up via their Facebook page @singeve



**SEEING OUR ECONOMY DIFFERENTLY**  
September 21, 10am - 4pm  
Bluewater Shopping Centre

The annual Kent Workplace Mission Conference. A day to help chaplains and local Church leaders look at the economy in a way that isn't available elsewhere and link these issues to the practicalities of their own ministries. Free to attend – book online via [kentworkplacemission.org](http://kentworkplacemission.org).



**COMPANION DIOCESE CELEBRATION SERVICE**  
September 22, 6pm  
St Peter & Paul's Church, Bromley, BR2 OEG

Join a service to celebrate our overseas links. This year the focus is on our connection with Zimbabwe. Led by Bishop James with Bishop Farai Mutamiri from Harare Diocese, followed by refreshments. Contact: [coordinator.cdsg@gmail.com](mailto:coordinator.cdsg@gmail.com)



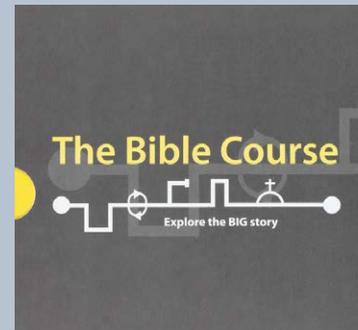
**TASTE AND SEE**  
September 26, 10am - 7pm  
St Benedict's Centre, West Malling

A day offering taster sessions and access to a wide range of discipleship resources to suit different church traditions, settings, and groups. Ideal for church and house group leaders working within the Diocese of Rochester. Book your free place at: [www.tasteandseerochester.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.tasteandseerochester.eventbrite.co.uk)



**PASSING OUR PLANET ON**  
September 29, 6:30pm  
St Justus Church, The Fairway, Rochester, ME1 2LT

Creationtide is a time dedicated to God as Creator in the Church calendar. Join a 'Vigil for Creation', part of a month of activity around the environment. All are welcome. Find out more at: [www.stjustus.org](http://www.stjustus.org)



**THE BIBLE COURSE**  
October 1 to November 26, 7pm  
St Benedict's Centre, West Malling

An 8-session course helping you explore the world's best seller. Accessible and interactive, it will enhance and inform your ongoing Bible study, whether you are new to the Bible or want to go deeper. To book visit [www.stbenedictscentre.org](http://www.stbenedictscentre.org)



**MODERN SLAVERY AWARENESS EVENT**  
October 19, 10:30am - 3:30pm  
Chatham High Street

As part of Freedom Week, which runs from 13 to 20 October, an event to raise awareness about modern slavery using street theatre. With information and refreshments also available. Email [caroline.clarke@rochester.anglican.org](mailto:caroline.clarke@rochester.anglican.org) for more details.



**THE KING IS COMING**  
Saturday 26 October, 7pm  
Rochester Cathedral

A multi-media musical featuring music, narration, high quality visuals and dance dealing with prophetic subjects. It features a 30+ strong inter-denominational choir. Not suitable for young children. Tickets £12. More at [www.absolutegospel.org](http://www.absolutegospel.org)

## BLUEWATER CHAPLAINCY

Some of us love it, some of us hate it. Shopping. The Bluewater shopping centre in the north of Kent is the premier shopping destination for many in the county. But did you know that, as well as having numerous stores and cafes, it also has a chaplaincy team? Mark Ball, the new Anglican Lead chaplain told us about this little-known aspect of the shopping experience.



### Shopping centres have chaplains. Who knew?!

Yes, there are a variety of chaplaincies at some of the larger UK malls – as well as in the High Streets of many of our towns and cities. At the heart of them all, is the local church's desire to be present where people are. Bluewater celebrates its 20th birthday this year and there has been chaplaincy there since the earliest days of site construction. Bluewater now pays for a fulltime post, which also covers aspects of wider community engagement, both on behalf of Bluewater and of Kent Workplace Mission.

### How many chaplains are there?

Our team is made up of ten volunteers who work alongside me in delivering the chaplaincy service at Bluewater. They are drawn from local Anglican, Baptist, United Reformed Church, Roman Catholic and independent congregations. My primary responsibility is to the Bluewater-managed staff and to the guests. The volunteers come in for a couple of hours a week to visit their allocated retailers, building

up pastoral relationships with their management and staff. We also work with a local Imam who leads Friday prayers in our 'Place of Quiet'.

### What if someone needs just a bit of peace and quiet?

There is a dedicated quiet space for anyone to use at any time. There is a larger, round room and a smaller lounge. People of all faiths and of no faith use both spaces, for prayer, reading, reflection... and sleeping! The lounge space is available for booking too. We provide a collection of religious texts and prayer resources, as well as two washrooms. And we have a small office space there too. It's all off the Lower Rose Gallery entrance hall.

### So, is that where we would find you most days in Bluewater?

No! I am in and out of there quite a bit, but most of the time I am on the mall, up in the management suite, 'round the back' in the service areas, prayer-walking around the site, or out in the community.

### How do you find people react to you?

It depends on the people! Most chaplains get accustomed to the occasional 'look busy' response as they approach. To be fair, that's really pretty rare at Bluewater. Because the chaplaincy is so long-established and so well-integrated in the life of the place, a lot of people have a good sense of what we are there for. I'm relatively new in post and it does, of course, take time to establish effective pastoral relationships with 7,000 people.

### What did you do before you became Lead Chaplain at Bluewater?

I came back to the UK in January, after two years' of teaching English and volunteering with the Episcopal Church in Bogota, Colombia. Before that I had been parish priest of three churches in Canterbury city centre for eight years.

### When you are not at the shops, what's your favourite thing to do to relax?

Getting to be a big kid again with my nephews and niece.

### Do you have a pet?

My angsty teenage years were shared with a wonderfully understanding wild rabbit called 'Bunny'. I found him as a baby in the gutter of a busy main road, all lost and helpless. I smuggled him into the garden shed where I hid him until I plucked up the courage to ask if I could keep him. We already had four cats, two dogs, a couple of guinea-pigs and a budgerigar, so I had to choose the right moment!

### Is there anyone who has particularly inspired you?

I'm quite easily inspired. Here's a few: Jesus, St Benedict, John Main, Rowan Williams, James Alison, the children of Colombia, the UN workers facilitating peace and reconciliation in Colombia following 50 years of devastating civil war, the Venezuelan migrants I met there ... and Bunny.

### What's the best thing about being a chaplain?

Being interviewed for glossy magazines! The privilege of being invited into the life of an organisation and into the lives of those connected with it, witnessing through simple pastoral care to the reality of God's presence and the truth of God's love.

## What is a chaplain?

A chaplain brings the love of God into a work place or other environment. Some are clergy, some are not ordained. They work, often with those of other faiths, in a variety of settings, from schools and hospitals, to prisons, care-homes and within industry.

### Find more details and stories at:

[www.rochester.anglican.org/diocese/chaplains/](http://www.rochester.anglican.org/diocese/chaplains/)

[www.kentworkplacemission.org/](http://www.kentworkplacemission.org/)



## A NEW SENSE OF BELONGING

For those who have been baptised as a child or a baby, Confirmation is the moment when you affirm the promises made at the time on your behalf and become a full member of the church. It's an important part of a Christian's journey of faith and, for Andrew Kamara, it marked a new spiritual life as a Christian.

"Preparing for Baptism and Confirmation together is always going to be a significant moment for anyone, but especially for someone like me who was born into another faith; in my case, Islam.

Since joining the Church two years ago, every Sunday during Holy Communion I felt unfulfilled at not being able to receive Communion. The thought of not having to endure that again was something I was looking forward to as the day of my Confirmation approached.

I was filled with anticipation and speculation; would I feel different? What would it be like?

This would be the moment when I would officially establish my belief as a born-again Christian.

In such situations, the support network around you is so important in preparing you for what is to come, and I couldn't have asked for more; the outpouring of love from our vicar and our church family has been second to none.

As a family we have been blessed to belong to the congregation in Foots Cray who, along with the clergy, have supported and prepared us for this moment.

We have never been made to feel as outsiders and the church has played a huge role in helping shape our Christian faith as we positioned ourselves to be closer to God and be more Christ-like in our spiritual encounters.

My son was also ready to be confirmed and knowing he would be by my side as we confirmed our faith in Jesus was so reassuring.

The day arrived. The church was full. The service was unique and a surreal experience because it was for me, the start of a new spiritual life.

I felt a new sense of belonging and a new sense of identity as I have been welcomed into the Church as a fully 'certified' member in the body of Christ.

I thank the Lord for the inspirational journey that has brought myself and my family closer to him in every way."

Being confirmed means being a full member of the Church who can receive the bread and wine which represents Jesus' body and blood during Holy Communion.

## FIVE LIVES, ONE FLIGHT

**What began as an impossible day for flying became a blessing in disguise when a delayed MAF flight meant more lives were saved**

In Papua New Guinea, MAF receives a call requesting an emergency medical flight for Ester — a young woman fighting for her life after a difficult labour earlier that day.

A frustrated crew returns to its base unable to complete the flight due to bad weather. Pilots Mathias Glass and Ryan Cole pray that she will survive the night.

In the morning, as Mathias and Ryan prepare to depart, MAF is radioed again. Osa is struggling to deliver a breeched baby; both mother and child are in serious trouble. Kolina, another young patient, is experiencing chronic intestinal issues and needs to be referred to the main hospital in Tabubil.

Around 7.30am, one patient becomes five when another request comes in for TB patient Lucy, who needs life-saving medical care.

Thanks to our pilots' expertise, MAF's ability to respond and the Lord's perfect timing through bad weather, all five patients reach Tabubil hospital. Each woman receives the treatment she so desperately needs.

Could you help us be the difference between life and death?

Help MAF, the world's largest humanitarian airline, by funding more life-saving flights.



### SAVE A LIFE — FUND A MEDEVAC

It costs just £60 to fuel a life-saving flight like the one Ester, Osa, Kolina and Lucy were on. Please consider giving a gift today.

Here is my gift of:  £120  £60  £30  other £ Please use where most needed

TITLE PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS

FULL NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

I enclose my cheque made payable to MAF UK

Please debit my card account CharityCard, MasterCard, Visa (please circle card type)

Card number

Valid from date Expiry date CSV code (3 digits on the back of your card)

SIGNATURE DATE DD / MM / YY

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# TASTE & SEE

EXPLORE. DISCOVER. RESOURCE.

Thursday 26 September 2019. Drop in from 10am to 7pm  
St Benedict's Centre, West Malling, Kent, ME19 6JX

A day offering taster sessions and access to a wide range of discipleship resources to suit different church traditions, settings, and groups.

Twilight session from 7pm:  
The Bible Course –  
introductory session led by The Bible Society and St. Benedict's Centre

Ideal for church and house group leaders working within the Diocese of Rochester looking to grow disciples.

Including:

- The Bible Course
- Jesus Shaped People
- The GOLD project
- Life on the Frontline
- Jesus Shaped Life ....plus more

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