

CULTIVATE

A Newsletter for rural parishes
across East Sussex

SUMMER 2022



Welcome to this SUMMER edition of CULTIVATE!

As I read over the contents of this Newsletter 'Food' seems to feature quite significantly, though this wasn't intentional! The items on Lammastide and the RSPCA Assured video remind us of the blessings of physical food, God's generous provision, and the importance of ensuring as much as possible we source our food responsibly. While there is 'food for thought' following the Plumpton College Farm Visit, the Sanctuary at the South of England Show, and in the recently published 'How Village Churches Thrive'. It is hoped 'Cultivate' will inform and inspire those living and serving in rural communities, offering encouragement and exchanging ideas, as we seek 'to know, love and follow Jesus' in our different contexts. Therefore, please feel able to submit any ideas, requests or comments regarding future editions.

Wishing you a blessed summer! Gary Cregeen
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SOUTH OF ENGLAND SHOW

The South of England Show was established to celebrate, and educate the public about, all things agricultural. It remains true to its roots and attracts thousands of visitors to the Ardingly Showground where livestock and equine competition made a welcome return after a break of three years due to the pandemic.

And, in the midst of the 'throng' is 'The Sanctuary', staffed by representatives from the diocese & wider faith communities. The Rev. Sue Wilkinson coordinates the Sanctuary and explains: "The Sanctuary is a relaxed area staffed by a small team with hot drinks available from our friends at The Salvation Army catering van and a place to rest weary feet. We operate as a safe space for any lost people with the support of the showground personnel. The Sanctuary in its current set-up has been going for six years now but the church has always had a presence at the show from the very beginning. The Show has always been an excellent opportunity for outreach, to both visitors and stall holders. Visiting clergy and Christian leaders come along to help take the Church out into the wider community."

If you would like to find out more about The Sanctuary, or how you could volunteer in the future, please call Sue on 07713 097661



RURAL RESOURCE EVENT: FARM VISIT TO PLUMPTON COLLEGE



Plumpton College, near Lewes, is one of only 13 remaining agricultural colleges in the country, and offers the broadest curriculum of any college in the south; of the 19 subjects offered, 90% are land-based. Recently a group of clergy and laity experienced at first hand this incredible asset, right on our doorstep!

Since the original 400-acre College farm was bought back in 1919, Plumpton College has certainly seen a lot of changes. Now farming around 2,500 acres in conjunction with several landlords, the outstanding College estate has grown to become one of the leading centres for land-based education in the UK. With a dairy herd of 260 cows, 1,000 sheep, 130 sows, 65 horses and a wide range of other animals and livestock, the College endeavours to provide hands-on practical and vocational education, alongside high academic development, in agriculture, viticulture and horticulture. During the visit the Principal, Jeremy Kerswell, gave a brief history of the College, described 'Plumpton At Present' and outlined the vision for the future. At



the heart of the College's vision is: **PEOPLE - PLACE - PURPOSE**; headings which are also pertinent to rural communities in particular! Being a 'FARM VISIT' a tour followed, viewing some of the livestock, teaching and training spaces, and observing the latest in agricultural technology, including a robotic milking facility - an example of Plumpton's desire to build on its rich agricultural heritage while equipping the 4000+ students for a different and ever more technically advanced skills set in the future. In September 2022 Plumpton will welcome an incredible intake of 1,300 16 & 17 year olds, mainly from across East & West Sussex. The Farm Visit concluded with a short act of worship in St Michael's



Church, which is located at the heart of the campus, and a light lunch. All in all, this was an informative and inspiring occasion! Please pray for this great asset, for the students, staff and trustees; also, for the possibility of stronger partnership between the Diocese, Parish and College - watch this space!



Lammastide is an ancient Christian festival which many villages and farming communities have rediscovered in recent years. It is a festival of thanksgiving to God for the start of the harvest, where corn and bread are offered as symbols of gratitude. The name comes from the Old English word for 'loaf', hlāf, which is followed by 'mass', to indicate a Christian festival. Celebrated on (or around) the 1st August Lammastide is an opportunity to celebrate the first fruits of the harvest. Traditionally, a newly baked loaf from the wheat harvest was presented before God within the mass of that day. While the ceremony ceased at the Reformation, reference to Lammas Day continued in the Prayer Book calendar.

During the upheaval of the past two years, both with the impact of covid-19 and the on-going invasion of Ukraine, there has been a renewed appreciation of food and where it comes from. Use of the term 'food security' has become more commonplace, as reflected in the recent 'Government Food Strategy'. Furthermore, increased environmental awareness, and changes in eating habits, is causing many of us to think about how we are fed and, as with other festivals, Lammastide provides a great opportunity for local churches to engage with the wider community, not least to acknowledge God's generous provision and to give thanks.

Therefore, why not bring your local community together, perhaps to enjoy a stint of bread-making, while picking up on some of the 'bread-related' themes we find in the Bible, such as the feeding of the 5,000, the provision of manna in the wilderness or Jesus' claim of Himself as 'the Bread of Life'.



For Lammastide Ideas and Worship Resources visit:

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk (Search: 'Lammas')
www.churchofengland.org.uk (Search: times-and-seasons - 'Lammastide')

If you celebrate Lammastide do please send any photos to the Rural Officer for East Sussex - these could feature in future editions of Cultivate and encourage others!

If you wish to be added to our mailing list for future editions of Cultivate and Rural Events, please email:

Gary.Cregeen@chichester.anglican.org



Rural Resource Event - 18 October 2022

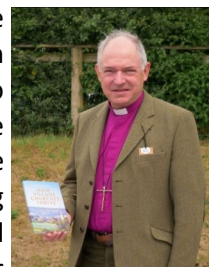
'HOW VILLAGE CHURCHES THRIVE'

It's been said, 'The rural church is the unsung success story of the Church of England, but is often mistakenly perceived as dying by its urban cousins'. However, it is heartening that the national church has recognised the potential for growth by including rural communities in the £3.6 billion investment, announced recently, to support mission. Indeed, in a *Times* article relating to this, Archbishop Justin referred to his time meeting rural clergy & lay leaders here in Chichester Diocese!

Among its many strengths is the fact that the Church remains present in so many of our rural villages and hamlets where other services and facilities have vanished. This means we are well-placed to play an active part in supporting & strengthening rural community life, and in sharing the hope that has been revealed and entrusted to us, in the Lord Jesus Christ.

'How Village Churches Thrive' is a recently launched inspiring and practical handbook which draws on the wisdom of a wide variety of practitioners in ten key areas that enable village churches to flourish. Copies of this useful resource have been acquired by Chichester Diocese and are being offered to clergy and lay leaders serving rural communities at a significantly reduced cost. To confirm eligibility and to obtain your copy please call 01243 782790. or email:

mail@stolavchristianbookshop.uk



Furthermore, Bishop Robert Atwell, a co-author of the book, has kindly agreed to give a keynote address at the next **Rural Resource Event: 'How Village Churches Thrive'** - a day-time event on **Tuesday 18 October. PLEASE SAVE THE DATE** - more details to follow!

RSPCA ASSURED



Confused by food labels on packaging and what they mean? Fear not as RSPCA Assured have teamed up with the Diocese of Chichester to produce a video to discuss the most common food labels which ensure animal welfare, from birth to slaughter. The video, to be launched on 9 August, features Joe Bailey, a Christian and Head of Farming at the Horsham-based RSPCA Assured and Revd Gary Cregeen, Rural Officer for East Sussex. Check out the video to know what labels to look out for to ensure high animal welfare, along with the following website: www.rspcaassured.org.uk