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Rural Ramblings

April 2009

Multi-Church Workshops

For most of us who live and minister in Rural areas, the reality is that we are leading (or relating to) a number of different Churches. This can confront us with a number of very different issues from the ministry to a single congregation, for which many of us trained. If that's you, and you are faced with an increasing number of churches to care for, or you are puzzled about how to make sense of the number you have already, then help is at hand!

Whether you have a loose cluster, a parish with several churches or a benefice with several parishes, the "Multi-church Ministry Workshop" run by the Arthur Rank Centre will be helpful to you. The workshops, which have been running successfully for several years, involve working in a group of about 15. The seven 90-minute sessions include the theory and practice of multi-church ministry, dynamics within a multi-church setting, the implications of collaborative ministry for the mission of the Church, managing pressures, and sharing and discovering solutions.

The Workshops take place at the Arthur Rank Centre, Stoneleigh, Warks, with accommodation at Offa House. The cost is £95, which may be claimable against the Clergy CME grant.

Dates for forthcoming Multi-church workshops are: 30 June – 1 July & 27 – 28 October 2009
8 – 9 June & 5 – 6 October 2010

The next **Rural Ministry Induction Course** at the Arthur Rank Centre is from **Tues 28th April - Thurs 30th April 2009**. This too is a hugely informative and stimulating course – highly recommended.

General information about these courses can be found on the ARC website at: www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk
Or contact me (Bill Stuart-White) for further details and booking forms.

Duchy day Conference with +Tim "The Changing Face of the Countryside"

Please book the date now! On **Friday October 23rd** at **Duchy College, Stoke Climsland**, there will be a major Day Conference. The day will feature the Bishop of Truro, the Bishop of Plymouth and the Chairs of the Cornwall and Devon Methodist Districts, as well as Andrew Counsell, the Principal of Duchy College.

The aim of the Conference is to outline issues relating to C21st Rural life (so different to the common stereotype) and to consider how the Church might begin to respond. The Conference will include a tour of parts of the College, refreshments and a lunch of locally-produced fare. And all for £10!

Please contact Bill Stuart-White with initial expressions of interest. Booking forms will be available nearer the time.



"OPEN FARM SUNDAY" this year falls on **Sunday June 7th**.

This is a wonderful opportunity to be welcomed onto a farm and to be shown around by those who work the land. Details of open farms may be found on the

website: www.farmsunday.org/ofs/home.eb. At the time of writing the following farms are planning to be open but more near you will sign up in the meantime:

Windrush Farm, Fosters Lane, Tintagel, Cornwall
Email: windrushfarmduck@hotmail.com
Telephone: 01840 770093 **Postcode:** PL34 0BU

Quarry Bank, Penhalurick, Redruth, Cornwall
Email: clethriomys@btinternet.com
Telephone: 01209 212635 **Postcode:** TR16 6TF

RURAL COMMUNITY SNIPPETS

1) A new **transport initiative** has been launched which has the potential to make a significant impact on transport in rural areas. Please visit: www.fellowtravellers.co.uk for further initial information

2) **National Village Hall Survey 2009** Acre is conducting this survey currently. The role of community owned assets is a strong feature of government-wide policy and particularly the community empowerment agendas in Communities and Local Government and the Office of the Third Sector. Rural communities are unusual in already owning and managing their most significant assets, community halls, and having support structures through the Rural Community Action Network dedicated to improving their management and sustainability. It would be helpful if those rural churches with church halls could also take part. To do so go to: www.acre.org.uk and follow the link from the homepage

3) **Recession and the Rural Economy**. Evidence as to how the current recession is affecting the rural economy is still sketchy and partially anecdotal. It does appear, though that employment in sparsely populated rural areas is suffering more than most. The rate of redundancies in rural industry and commerce has been significantly higher than that in urban areas over the past months. The number of casual, seasonal and other temporary workers reduced significantly between 2007 and 2008.

I would be very interested to hear of the experiences in your parish, so that we can begin to put together a picture of how the Recession is affecting Rural Cornwall.

Bill Stuart-White