



From Jackie Waters-Dewhurst, Diocesan Director of Education

There's always Strictly – and God

We, like some of you, have had a weekend full of school closures and partial closures and deep cleans and bubbles. These are certainly on the increase and we can but hope that the 4-week lockdown will eventually bring the numbers of cases under control again.

Each positive test, show of symptoms and self-isolation brings with it hours of anxiety, of ringing around and organising and re-organising, of laying responsibilities on to others, of guilt and frustration both for individuals and for organisations. This time is not easy.

Psalm 63

63 *A psalm of David when he was hiding in the wilderness of Judea.*

O God, my God! How I search for you! How I thirst for you in this parched and weary land where there is no water. How I long to find you! ² How I wish I could go into your sanctuary to see your strength and glory,

How we long to see life back to 'normal', where it seemed as if someone was in charge.

But of course, there is, as ever, a host of ways in which we can see how wonderful life still is, even amongst the lockdown headaches.

While we still have children in schools there will be times of joy and laughter. While autumn continues there is still the ability to go outside and scrunch leaves. As November disappears we can still throw caution and tinsel to the wind and decorate our houses and our schools – perhaps even more important this year to get those lights shining brightly!

Psalm 63 continues:

³ for your love and kindness are better to me than life itself. How I praise you! ⁴ I will bless you as long as I live, lifting up my hands to you in prayer.

We can still find the kindness of God all around us; in the work of people across our communities; in the newly organised food banks, in the willingness of staff to go above and beyond, in the attitude of

our children and parents to keep carrying on, in the virtual prayer groups and worship opportunities, in myriad of small things that surround us.

So, consider putting those lights up early, let them be a symbol that we have a God who still surrounds us with love and kindness. Let them show our communities that we are hopeful communities – beacons in a dark place.

And, like Strictly, let us keep on in the face of adversity bringing joy (and sparkle!) to those around us.

Keep hoping

Keep praying

and, if you fancy it, keep dancing!

God bless,

Jackie

Resources and Information

Prayer & Reflection – Videos

Our prayer videos continue this week, with Sarah Spencer, the Diocesan Discipleship in the World Officer and Environmental Officer. Please click [here](#).

Reflection

Our EDO Lynsey Norris continues her series of reflections – these can be found [here](#), and attached to this email.

OfSTED

Attached to this email, an OfSTED tool, being shared by LCC, that might be of interest to those in North and North East Lincolnshire also.

Also attached, some notes on a timetable and notes on a recent OfSTED visit at Caistor – Samantha Stewart, our Senior SEA, says -

As we are aware the inspection of schools by Ofsted has presently been put on hold. Ofsted are currently undertaking visits to schools. Ofsted state that visits will be to approximately 1200 schools across all categories. Caistor Church of England and Methodist Primary school has recently undergone one such

visit. The Executive Head teacher Zoe Hyams has kindly shared the timetable and notes of discussions. This will no doubt be helpful to all heads and will shed light on the process.- Thank you Zoe!

Being a Neighbour – Survey

Mehmet Akif Senturk is a doctoral researcher at Brunel University London. His research focuses on how different people interpret what it means to be a neighbour and he is very keen to get responses from lots of different regions of the UK.

Please find below a message from Mehmet about his research:

“The research aims to investigate the extent to which strong ties and good relationships among family members and neighbours contribute to social cohesion. The research will investigate family relationships, neighbour recognition and opinions about living in a multicultural society. These results will help me to build an approach to moral education for multicultural societies. People who live in the UK aged between 18 years old to 65 years old can participate in the survey. Thank you for your time.”

<https://brunel.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/family-and-neighbour-relationship-survey>

Christingle – the Children’s Society

Hello, I hope this finds you all safe and well.

After the year we’ve had, spreading hope has never felt more important. That’s why we’d love it if you would consider holding a Christingle service to shine the light on the most vulnerable children and young people across the country. Christingle will be different this year but what better way to bring children together and embrace hope than with a Christingle service?

This year, we’ve created lots of new resources to help you hold a safe and memorable celebration, however you and your school feel comfortable. Whether you set up a socially distanced event in your assembly hall, or light up computer screens with an online service – or do a bit of both, our FREE resources will help you every step of the way, and include helpful items just for schools like yours.

Muddy Church have also come on board to produce some fantastic resources that can be used at home at school or outside in the community with their fantastic Muddy Christingle QR Code Trail

<https://www.muddychurch.co.uk/copy-of-chringle>

We have resources for bringing the whole school or bubble class together in collective worship, including prayers, reflections and a presentation, as well as separate lesson plans with lots of fun and varied ideas for the classroom. It supports children's learning about Christianity and Chringle celebrations, as well as the work of The Children's Society. We also have videos, posters, balloons, candles, Chringle bags and so much more.....

Please take a look at the huge range of resources available for free.

[ORDER RESOURCES](#)

At The Children's Society we feel it is important for Chringle to not be forgotten this year, and in a time of darkness for so many families, please take this great opportunity to share the light of Christ in new ways.

Chringle services usually take place between Advent and Candlemas so why not consider holding your Chringle celebration in January, lighting up the dark days?

If you aren't able to fundraise at this time, then please consider us later on in the year, or even next year.

Your support will make a huge difference to the children and young people in our care, and they need us now more than ever.

We know fundraising is difficult during these challenging times, but we have ways in which you can donate to us safely, by registering your event using the link below, you will be sent more details.

<https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/what-you-can-do/fundraising-and-events/chringle/plan-your-event>

I'm also here to help, so if you have any questions about Chringle, then please get in touch

Thank you!

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Hearts for Homes – Picture News

Please find attached a PDF from Picture New - their aim is to spread joy to others and raise awareness of those who have become isolated due to the pandemic. It's a simple idea for children to share messages of happiness and joy on a heart for a resident in a care home. The campaign is open to **all** schools and full guidance is outlined in the PDF attached.

The Lily Jo Project

The Lily Jo Project provides bespoke mental health resources, designed to equip children and adults with the tools they need in order to maintain good mental health. You can find more information at www.thelilyjoproject.com.

They are passionate that every child and young person in the country knows how to maintain good mental health, and that they have the right tools to know what to do if they are struggling.

They have a fantastic new online platform for primary schools and high schools, providing ready to use online lessons, worksheets, quizzes, discussion questions etc.

To experience our fantastic resources for yourself and our free bronze package, click here: www.thelilyjoproject.com/bronze