

## RESOURCES: Training. Learning. Discipleship. Etc.....

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### CHRISTIAN RESEARCH (Taken from the Christian Research website)

<http://www.christian-research.org/religious-trends.html>

#### Welcome to Religious Trends

Christian Research has published *Religious Trends* online and hope you find it an interesting and useful resource. Our vision is to bring together facts and figures from many sources, and to paint an accurate picture of the state of religion, especially Christianity, both in the United Kingdom and throughout the world. We offer interpretation, analysis and comment in the articles on this website. If you need more detailed research or access to our source material, some of the articles in *Religious Trends* offer a gateway to spreadsheets or links to follow for more information.

#### Religious Trends, past and future

Religious Trends was originally the statistical section of the *UK Christian Handbook*, first published in 1972. In 1997 Christian Research first published *Religious Trends 1* as a separate book; the latest being *Religious Trends 7* in 2007. Today, internet and IT have increasingly become the main tools of researchers and analysts, so we have decided to publish *Religious Trends* online and make it available as a member or subscriber service.

All articles have been formatted for printing, and most datasets are available as downloads for further analysis. If you wish to use the information in this website, please respect our conditions to reference *Religious Trends* and, where appropriate, the sources we have used.

#### Keeping Religious Trends up to date

One major benefit of publishing Religious Trends online is that we can and will update figures as they arise, and this will include revisions as needed. We will undertake a major refreshment of the key data annually, for example when denominations publish their annual reports. We are planning to add more features and articles during 2011, so do check the website regularly. Important additions and updates will be announced in our website news, through our member newsletter In Touch and via emails.

Example research information includes UK Church overview, The Bible, Faith Journeys and marriages.

**SATURDAY APRIL 9th 10am- 4.30pm Mount Zion Community Church Birmingham B6 4TN**

**Faith, Hope & Love - Christian Witness in a Multi Faith Society** is an exciting conference organised by an alliance of Christian Churches in Birmingham and Churches Together in England that hopes to tackle the often difficult but also exciting question of what it means to be a Christian disciple in a multi faith world. The Conference through a variety of inputs, dialogues and workshops will seek

- to help Christians become more confident to engage positively in dialogue and mission in a multi faith society - to share stories that empower others
- to gather both Church Leaders and Church members especially those who are new to inter faith engagement
- to act as a catalyst for further developments - to create a safe environment where people can share their stories and ask the difficult questions.
- to help people to explore the different dimensions of inter faith engagement.

For more information and to book for the conference contact Birmingham Churches Together at [office@birminghamchurches.org.uk](mailto:office@birminghamchurches.org.uk)

## How we can truly love others?

Friends and Heroes have chosen this theme for our new Lent Course — *Why does Easter Matter?* — which is available now and is one of our contributions to the Biblefresh initiative. This is a unique Lent Course designed for families and groups of families to use together as well as being suitable for the more usual adult church groups. *“The Easter Story is a vivid, life-changing demonstration of how much God loves human beings and what he was ready to sacrifice so that they may come back to him,”* said David Dorricott, Executive Producer. *“Every one of us, including families with children, need to hear that message and Friends and Heroes introduces the Easter story in a fresh, new and exciting way — through animated adventure stories which tell the events of Easter week directly from the Bible.”*

### The Family-friendly Lent Course!

This five-session Lent course was created with everyone in mind but in particular it was created for ‘groups’ of people who are meeting together to meditate in some way on the Easter story. What is unique about this course is that it includes children — which makes it ideal for a family or even a group of families to use together. With the main session content written by **Revd Stephen Gaukroger**, former President of the Baptist Union and Theological Advisor to Friends and Heroes, this is an exceptional and unique resource.

The five sessions include an in-depth look at these Bible stories:

- Session 1: Jesus rides into Jerusalem
- Session 2: Jesus and the Widow's Offering
- Session 3: The Last Supper and Jesus's Arrest
- Session 4: Jesus carries his cross and The Crucifixion
- Session 5: Jesus seen on the road (to Emmaus)

Plus each session also features: Prayer time; Biblical background; showing a Friends and Heroes episode; Bible reading; Question time and a selection of All-age optional extras: games; puzzles and quizzes. For each session, simply print out as many of the resource pages as you need for your group!

The *Why does Easter Matter?* pack comprises: two Friends and Heroes DVDs containing Episodes 35-39 — part of Series 3; the group/family study material provided on a special CD-ROM, and a Public Display Licence — which covers those groups studying the course in public buildings. The CD-ROM also includes a specially-written song: **Remember Me** sung by Samuel Cox! Costing just £40, including the DVDs, this pack is exceptional value for both families and groups.

[http://ukstore.friendsandheroes.com/acatalog/Friends\\_and\\_Heroes\\_Resource\\_Packs.html](http://ukstore.friendsandheroes.com/acatalog/Friends_and_Heroes_Resource_Packs.html)

## DEEPENING DISCIPLESHIP

The Methodist Church has produced this website full of news, blogs and useful resources to help churches and individuals to deepen discipleship. <http://www.deepeningdiscipleship.org.uk/>

There are a number of drama resources being produced that can be used at church events about the bible. Titles include According to Luke, Choosing your Bible, Campaign against the bible, The Holy Shopping Channel and The Bible in seven minutes. For more information visit:

<http://www.deepeningdiscipleship.org.uk/?p=200>

Another resource available through the Deepening Discipleship website is a resource called Reading the Bible in New and Creative Ways Together. Methods include African Method, Swedish Method, Colouring the Word, Bibliodrama, Biblical Modelling and Using Art as a focus for Bible study.

<http://www.deepeningdiscipleship.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/fresh-way-to-read-scripture.doc>

## GODVENTURE

In the year of Bible Fresh, GodVenture brings you a brand new exciting product designed to help families explore the Bible together. **Bible GodVenture52** is a pack of children's playing cards, with a different idea on each card for families with primary age children to have fun as they get into the Bible in new ways. There are ideas for reading, re-telling, remembering and responding to the Bible, and the packs are backed up with more info and ideas on this site.

<http://www.godventure.co.uk/resources/products/bible-godventure52/>

### GodVenture.co.uk

GodVenture resources are fun, creative ways for families to pray and explore the Bible together. There are activity sticker books for families to do together at home, plus a giant Flame Prayer Poster. Plus we have loads of activity ideas here on the website for Bible and prayer activities.

<http://www.godventure.co.uk/> - blank

## MANGA BIBLE

The creators of the Manga Bible have adapted a selection of pages from the Manga Bible to AV text to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible. The aim is to encourage younger readers to experience the 1611 Text in a culturally appealing format, as Manga style books are a fast growing publishing style. They have kindly donated this as a free download from the Biblefresh website

[http://www.biblefresh.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/THE\\_MANGA\\_BIBLE\\_AV\\_01-10.pdf](http://www.biblefresh.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/THE_MANGA_BIBLE_AV_01-10.pdf)

## BIBLEFRESH

Have you ever wondered how to introduce the Bible to someone who feels it has little to offer? Sometimes it takes a fresh experience of the Bible for us to gain an appetite for it again. In this [download](#) there are a host of ideas and resources to help you experience the Bible in new and creative ways. Some are particularly for Lent and Easter but they can be altered to suit any time of year. Dive in and find some jewels to help your church or small group live the Bible again.

<http://www.biblefresh.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/Experience-Resource.pdf>

## CHURCH PUBLISHING HOUSE: SALE

There are quite a number of All Age, Youth and Children's titles at significantly reduced prices (up to 80% off) in CHP's online sale which runs to the end of March. These include quite recent resources such as *Together for a Season*, the *Mixing It Up Series*, *Get a Life* and Baptism & Confirmation stationery.

Please do feel free to push the link below through any networks you think may be interested as appropriate [file://localhost/](http://localhost/). <http://www.chpublishing.co.uk/listing.asp%3Fid=2396994>

## Repair Grants to Church Buildings

The National Churches Trust awards grant funding to places of worship in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man for essential structural repair projects and the installation of new facilities. Repair Grants of £10,000 and above and Community Grants of between £5,000 and £25,000 are available. Applications are accepted from listed and unlisted churches, chapels and meeting houses of any age, as long as they are open (or planning to reopen) for public worship and where the congregation is a member or associated member of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

The closing date for receipt of applications for grants in 2011 is 1 September for more details go to

<http://www.nationalchurchestrust.org>

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

### **Lincoln & Grimsby District: District Development Enabler (0.5 FTE, 2 years)**

We encourage applications from people who are passionate about the mission of the church and who have experience in one or more of the following: change management, consultancy, development of organisational policy and strategy, facilitation and implementation of initiatives. Salary £16,695 pa for a lay person. For a ministerial appointment standard terms and conditions will apply. Closing date: 15/03/2011 Interview Date: 28/03/2011 Contact: chairspa@lgmethodistdistrict.org.uk or 01522 504070

## Changing the Landscape: making the mixed economy work

A national day conference exploring how the mixed economy can thrive in deaneries, circuits and synods. Working towards a church in which tradition and dynamism, established ministry and fresh expressions of church inform, energise and complement each other.

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> May 10am – 4pm, The Kings Centre, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES

<http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/changingthelandscape>

## THE REAL EASTER EGG

A church backed campaign has succeeded in convincing retailers to stock The Real Easter Egg, the UK's first and only Fairtrade charity egg to mention Jesus on the box.

Morrison's, Waitrose, Co-op and Booths are to stock a limited 'trial listing' of the Real Easter Egg and sell it in their biggest stores. A number of independent shops and a selection of cathedrals are also stocking The Real Easter Egg. And hundreds of Traidcraft supporters have ordered thousands of eggs on behalf of their communities. <http://www.realeasteregg.co.uk/>

## JUSTMAP

**JustMap** exists to put your Christian social project on the map! JustMap aims to map all social action being provided by Christian groups throughout the UK.

The website is a resource for Christians to serve the marginalised in their area. JustMap also demonstrates what Christian groups are doing to serve the poor of our nation.

**Do you have a project and want to be included?**

<http://www.justmap.org.uk/>

## WITNESS: EASTER VOICE

Witness: Easter voices – available now Witness: Easter Voices is a new Easter resource from SGM Lifeworlds. It's a simple fold-out leaflet with a series of quotes from the Easter story. Each one is a statement from someone who was an eye-witness to the events of Jesus' death and resurrection, a broad range of characters that includes the apostle John, Pontius Pilate, Judas Iscariot, to the soldier overseeing Jesus' execution. Reading through the range of perspectives, the reader is prompted to think for themselves about the Easter story and what it means for them.

"I wanted to write something that you could read in one minute" says UK programme developer Jeremy Williams, "but that you would have to think about for a whole lot longer. I find it fascinating that the gospel writers include the words of the cynics as well as the believers, the people who mocked Jesus as well as those who recognised who he was. They don't shy away from the controversy, and from those dissenting voices we see just how timeless a story it is – the same questions that we ask today were being asked on day one. Did Jesus really die, and does it matter? Did he really rise from the dead? Was the cross a victory or a defeat? Witness prompts those same questions, and invites readers to think it through for themselves."

Witness: Easter Voices is a perfect giveaway for Easter outreach events, and can be ordered online here, or by calling 020 7730 2155. <http://blog.sgmlifeworlds.com/uk/2011/01/18/witness>

## Setting up shop in church

A five-way partnership has today published guidance for churches interested in hosting community shops on their premises - The ***Guidelines and Best Practice for the Provision of Community Shops in Churches and Chapels***.

Building on the knowledge and experience gained by pioneering examples of shops in churches, the Cathedral and Church Buildings Division of the Church of England and the National Rural Officers for the Church of England, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church (based at the Arthur Rank Centre) have been working in partnership with the Plunkett Foundation to produce guidance specifically for churches and chapels who are interested in hosting shops.

Hosting shops in church buildings provides a very important community service, particularly for small or isolated rural communities.

The Rt Revd James Bell, Bishop of Knaresborough and Chair of the C of E's Rural Affairs Group, said: "Church buildings may often be the only community space in a village or a deprived urban area and can provide the perfect location for a community-owned shop. The building can provide not only the space but also the volunteer support and enthusiasm needed for serving the community in this way."

There are currently more than 250 community shops in England, Scotland and Wales and each year 20 or more open for business. Some of these are finding premises within churches and chapels although not all the suggested facilities may be suitable for church buildings.

<http://www.churchcare.co.uk/develop.php?FF>

## RESOURCES

Easter seems quite a long way off this year as it falls on 24th April (the latest possible date is 25th!). However, even though there is plenty of time, I'm sure your plans are already being formulated, so we have compiled a great list of resources which can be used individually, in groups or as a church throughout Lent and Easter. Enjoy!

[Christian Education](#) Words for Lent: Perspectives from Luke

[Bible Reading Fellowship](#) A selection of reading notes, books and topical resources

[CWR](#) have produced some new resources for 2011: a study guide and DVD resource

[SGM Lifewords](#): a variety of video audio and liturgy downloads

[Scripture Union](#): resources for youth groups, and links to other websites and articles

[BigBible](#): Studying Lent for Everyone: Matthew by Tom Wright in groups.

[Hope Together](#): Hope for Easter: a brand new mission based resource

[Damaris](#): Lots of great audio, video and study guides

[Friends and Heroes](#): Why Does Easter Matter? A new DVD based family and group Bible study for Lent.

[Biblefresh.tv](#): An interesting video about Easter by St Helens Bishopsgate

[Our Family GodVenture](#): New resources for children and families

[Grow with the Bible](#): The free Easter reading plan and notes is available to download now.

[Re:fresh Books and Christian Resources](#): a selection of materials ideal for Lent

[Christian Marketplace](#): An article reviewing some Lent materials

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