

**JENI BOWMAN**  
**TROWLEY HILL METHODIST CHURCH, FLAMSTEAD**

Our Rural Mission Sunday service included a quiz built around the word 'Germinate' using local photos of rural corners, hedgerows and buildings. People said how much they enjoyed the service and it was good to feel part of a rural activity.

**“**  
**DAVID WINTER,**  
**FORDINGBRIDGE**  
**UNITED REFORMED**  
**CHURCH, HAMPSHIRE**  
**”**

We do appreciate the work you do at Germinate.

**“**

**REVDS JOHN AND**  
**LESLEY RILEY, GOSFORTH,**  
**CUMBRIA**

Many thanks for all the useful resources you produce; they are greatly appreciated!

**”**

**REVDS JOHN AND LESLEY RILEY**  
**GOSFORTH, CUMBRIA**

In our ever-growing benefice we used Rural Mission Sunday as an encouragement to do more across our parishes. This is slow work as our people are slow to embrace change. We opened the Rectory and served tea and cake in the afternoon and wine and nibbles in the evening. It was a success and such an encouragement to see people relax and share from across the different parishes. Hospitality is the key to many fruitful encounters.

**DAVID WINTER**  
**FORDINGBRIDGE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH, HAMPSHIRE**

We celebrated Rural Mission Sunday on 22 July. I am always very pleased to find material for special events such as this. We used much of your material and got several members of the congregation to contribute to the discussion sections of our service. We were encouraged to remind ourselves that we are already engaged with our community through our involvement in the food bank and our participation in a community audit.

**“**  
**REVD DAVID**  
**PITKEATHLY**  
**BORDER KIRK**  
**”**

We held a joint Church of Scotland / Methodist service in Longtown and we're beginning to see some shared mission projects bubbling up.

**YOUR FEEDBACK...**

Did you take part in Rural Mission Sunday but haven't quite got round to sending us your feedback yet? There's still time! Go to the feedback form on our website where you can tell us about your event and even upload your photos – [germinate.net](http://germinate.net) and search 'RMS feedback'!

**YOUR DONATIONS...**

We're really grateful to all those churches who generously took up an offering for the work of Germinate at their Rural Mission Sunday service. This year's donations have far exceeded those we received in 2017 – thank you so much!

If you took a collection but haven't sent it to us yet you can do that either electronically via our website ([germinate.net/donate](http://germinate.net/donate)) or by sending a cheque made payable to 'The Arthur Rank Centre' to Germinate: The Arthur Rank Centre, The Rural Innovation Centre, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warks, CV8 2LG. Please write 'Rural Mission Sunday' on the back of the cheque.

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**SUNDAY 14**  
**JULY 2019**

Rural Mission Sunday 2019 will take place on Sunday 14 July and resources will be available by Easter. Get the date in your diary now and start preparing to celebrate your rural church and community in 2019!



# RURAL MISSION SUNDAY 2018 ROUNDUP

Growing together  
Sunday 15 July

The highlight of our summer is **Rural Mission Sunday**, an annual opportunity for rural churches to celebrate who they are. This year over 200 churches from across the denominations registered to take part on (or around) Sunday 15 July and stories are starting to trickle in. Here are a few that have made it into our inbox...

**“**  
**REVD PRISCILLA**  
**SMITH, ASTERBY,**  
**HEMINGBY AND**  
**HORNCASTLE,**  
**LINCOLNSHIRE:**  
**”**

Rural Mission Sunday enabled us to recognise how we might go further in our local mission and how much we have to celebrate already.

**“**

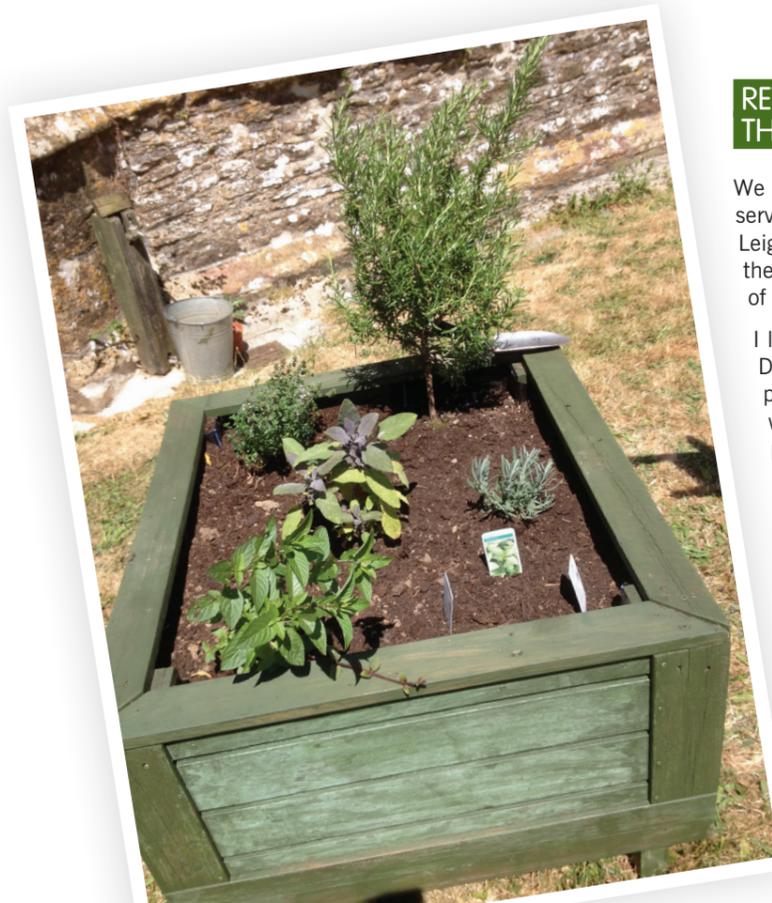
**REVD CAROL LANGFORD,**  
**THE CHURCH OF THE**  
**HOLY ROOD,**  
**COOMBE KEYNES, DEVON:**

It was very good to welcome members of the local community who do not worship with us in the parish church as a rule.

**”**

**JANET SMITH**  
**WALTON BAPTIST CHAPEL, LEICESTERSHIRE**

As a lay preacher I used the service resources to lead a service at Walton Baptist Chapel. We had five children and five adults at the service, a smaller congregation than usual as people were on holiday. I used the Rural Mission Sunday materials – particularly the readings and reflections – to form the basis of a service in which we reflected on the positive things this little chapel in rural Leicestershire has done over the last 130 years of its existence as well as looking at how they might grow together in the future.



**REVD RICHARD KIRLEW  
THE THREE VALLEYS BENEFICE, DORSET**

We decided to hold a joint Benefice Rural Mission Sunday service in the churchyard of the small country church of Leigh. The day was glorious! The service which followed the theme of 'Growing Together' was, coincidentally, part of a two-day event in the village based on rural issues.

I led the service in my capacity as Rural Officer for Dorset, assisted by Revd Andy Muckle, a curate on placement from Gillingham in Dorset. In the churchyard we had placed a planter built of recycled wood and part-filled with soil. The 50-strong congregation from all over the Benefice and beyond were asked to bring a small cup of soil with them, and after the talk the cups were emptied into the planter. Two of the congregation had brought some herb plants and these were placed in the planter. I blessed the planter and highlighted that these plants were growing together as we grow together as a community – both in the church and in the wider world. The plants were part of us and we part of them.

A band and choir led the singing and our celebration was rounded off with tea, coffee and scrummy cakes after the service!

**TRISH GENTRY  
CHEVIOT CHURCHES, SCOTTISH BORDER**

I am always inspired by the stories in Country Way and when I found the Rural Mission Sunday materials in the June 2018 issue I very much wanted to make use of them. As it happened it turned out that I was due to lead worship in our two main buildings on Sunday 15 July.

The service I put together was a large sandwich of hymns, scripture readings, comment and reflections, and prayers on each section – not our usual format. Although I was a little anxious about how some of the content might be received in areas where we are struggling, in the brief moments after each service I received only favourable comments. Maybe everyone else was being polite!

**REVD PRISCILLA SMITH  
ASTERBY, HEMINGBY AND HORNCastle, LINCOLNSHIRE**

We decided to have a Celtic Eucharist which was new to our congregation. Ours is a beautiful rural setting in Donington-on-Bain. In partnership with the local school the church has developed a God's Acre project in the churchyard. One of our parishioners, whose husband had championed ecological farming and consideration for the environment, has recently been bereaved and on Rural Mission Sunday we dedicated a beautiful seat in his memory. We talked about how much was being done in the area towards rural mission and how we could think about more activities to strengthen this in our beautiful Wolds area.

It is good to celebrate all the good aspects of our rural life and to encourage others to take part in activities that highlight what we can do to make a difference to our communities.

**REVD DAVID LOGAN  
CAERLAVEROCK PARISH CHURCH, DUMFRIES**

We held a Rural Mission Sunday service and free community barbecue which over 100 people attended. Representatives of our school and Caerlaverock Community Association came along too. We had face painting and a bouncy castle. The minister also allowed himself to be sponged for charity. Car parking was provided by the farm next to the church and the farmer harvested the field early just so that we could use it. Next year's event is already in the diary!

**GRAHAM FOWLER  
BENEFICE OF  
EGGARDON AND  
COLMERS, DORSET**

We celebrated Rural Mission Sunday at Evensong at St Peter's Eype. It enlivened the service and gave it a particular focus, and gave us a great opportunity to celebrate our mission to our local communities and our part in the wider church.

**REVD CAROL LANGFORD  
THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY ROOD, COOMBE  
KEYNES, DEVON**

We held a Songs of Praise service and tea at the Church of the Holy Rood, Coombe Keynes, a small hamlet within our group of villages. Originally the church there was the mother church for the area but it was closed in 1974 and is now managed by a village trust. Coombe Keynes is one of our most rural villages and there hasn't been a service in the church for many years. It was lovely to worship together in this ancient place of worship. We reflected on how we might grow together in community. Although several families in Coombe Keynes are members of the church family in Wool, they very much appreciated the opportunity to worship in their village.

**PAUL TRENBERTH  
MUCH WENLOCK ANGLICAN TEAM, SHROPSHIRE**

We celebrated Rural Mission Sunday by holding a service and bring-and-share lunch. As a result, the Team has decided to hold other services based on the format of Rural Mission Sunday and we even had two people offer to become chaplains in our Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy.

**JANET SMITH,  
WALTON BAPTIST  
CHAPEL, LEICESTERSHIRE**

Like so many small rural chapels and churches, Walton's small congregation carries on being a faithful witness to the Gospel in this tiny village.

**REVD DAVID LOGAN,  
CAERLAVEROCK PARISH  
CHURCH, DUMFRIES:**

Many bridges were built with the local community that day.

**TRISH GENTRY,  
CHEVIOT CHURCHES,  
SCOTTISH BORDERS**

Thank you for the material!

