

Follow up sheet from Positively Rural webinar held on 11th February 2021

Thank you for joining us for the Positively Rural Webinar on Feb 11th. This sheet has some feedback from the chat as well as the resources that have been requested. We continue to learn as we run these events and your feedback is always helpful. Thank you for the constructive comments a number of you gave on the feedback form. We are aware that the timing for this webinar proved to be a challenge and hope to address this for future events. All the feedback will be considered at our next planning meeting and will help shape future events.

The webinar can be watched again here <https://youtu.be/ewvZjKMkSU8>

Summary of Feedback on 'hearing the rural voice'

- Inviting farmers to services to share life on the farm
- Some people fleeing Covid to the country - is it what they wanted or expected?
- Is there a group helping with the twinning of urban, or suburban and rural churches?
- Suggested sharing the two videos at synod (where non-rural people might see them); work with NFU and use their resources; be prepared to listen to urban voices, and create a two way conversation. Rural people don't understand the urban context in the same way urban folk don't understand rural. Both have shared common ground and very similar difficulties
- Takes time to learn how to live in rural communities
- Small rural churches struggle under the burden of complex denominational rules that were designed for much bigger churches. How can the burden be lifted?
- Bringing small rural chapels together can raise the profile of the rural voice.
- Digital poverty - very little mobile signal, broadband not great
- Realities of rural life can be far removed from people's impressions or the stereotypes
- The value of smallness can be a gift to the wider church.
- Need to be careful in speaking of 'misinformation' and make sure views expressed are balanced
- Probably easier to build relationships with people who agree with each other. Grace is needed where folk differ - not agreeing is different from disagreeing? The church benefits from engaging with the many other agencies that offer support to a Rural Voice....voluntary and statutory...listening to those that work on the ground with rural and agriculture. Not only working ecumenically.
- Good contact is Richard Battersby in Rural Ainsty
- In Howden, East Yorkshire the Roman Catholic Church seemed a little reluctant to join in churches together work - but their roof needed urgent repair - the Methodist Church raised over £500 towards it - relationship sealed! Never to look back. Kindness always helps
- Rural issues not always covered in ministerial training

Resources/ideas

Links to videos on farming which Richard used:-

- We're in it for net Zero - https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PLfQQD6ZJA60b-9a0_AczzxWr2UsMjFzm6&v=cTw2Bjp_GVc
- Truth about red meat - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ix-JePHVTKA&feature=emb_logo

(The organising group for Positively Rural would want to encourage balanced conversations with regards to issues around farming and rural life. These videos offer particular perspectives on UK farming and it may be useful to note this when using them.)

Words from Richard's poster about the small church

In a big world, the small church has remained intimate.
In a fast world, the small church has been steady.
In an expensive world, the small church has remained plain.
In a complex world, the small church has reminded simple.
In a rational world, the small church has kept feelings.
In a mobile world, the small church has been an anchor.
In an anonymous world, the small church calls us by name.

Cumbria churches website as mentioned by Sarah Moore - <https://www.godforall.org.uk/>

Book - English Pastoral by James Reebank - is currently on BBC Sounds

Book – 'Re-shaping Rural Ministry, a theological and practice' Edited by James Bell, Jill Hopkinson and Trevor Willmott.

Campaign for 'Real Love' distributing hearts, cream teas and 'Real Love Valentines cards' to key workers. See www.reallovestory.co.uk

Request for help

Looking for help. After Easter I begin a sabbatical. The idea is to produce liturgies and prayers for the year. Instead of being based on the Church Year, I want to base it on the farmer's year. The layout will be month by month. I recognise that farming can be very different. Here it is largely hillside sheep-farms of North Yorkshire.

If you or farmers you know could give me a short calendar month by month of tasks, highlights etc that would be a great help. I am at stephen.f.caddy@gmail.com

Future events

The next Positively Rural Webinars are:

Tuesday May 18th at 7.30-9pm - 'Festivals as outreach' with speaker Rev Elizabeth Clark.
We are trying a different time to accommodate those not available during the day.

Register here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwode6tpzssGtyZH0QZKfrdALCcRw-Cntyk>

Wednesday 7th July 1-2.30pm –'Countryside challenges' with Rachel Hallos the West Riding NFU chair and Claire Maxim the Chief Executive Officer of Germinate- the Arthur Rank Centre

Register here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZltdeqhgD0sGd0W-qlf-6BJpqktKl fuNo4>