

# Rural Evangelism Network

Spring 2014

[www.ruralevangelism.net](http://www.ruralevangelism.net)

The National Forum for Churches and Mission Agencies  
concerned for the evangelisation of rural Britain.  
Encouraging good practise through sharing knowledge and experience.

## REN supports the Germinate Conference

It was during our 2013 REN Conference that the idea of a one day event was first suggested to us and we readily gave our support to the idea. In past years we have occasionally shared with high profile joint rural church conferences but have found that evangelism has sometimes been marginalised within what has been a very comprehensive programme.

**Not so on this occasion where mission and evangelism are well featured!**

We are grateful for the care and attention given by the Arthur Rank Centre in planning this event, carefully consulting with various organisations along the way.

**We commend this event to you and would urge all our members to book in as soon as possible and to make the event known through your networks. Please make sure that you have booked the date: Saturday 11th October 2014.**

The event is being held at Coventry and runs from 10.00 to 4.00. There is an early booking price of £48 (£40+VAT) available until 30th June - thereafter it is £72 per person

For full details and access to the online booking form go to the Arthur Rank Centre website at [www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/mission-and-ministry/germinate](http://www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/mission-and-ministry/germinate)

## Mothering Sunday Ideas

Sunday 30th March is Mothering Sunday and you may have already been planning how to use this occasion as an opportunity for sharing the good news of Jesus.

Ever looking for good resources, Gordon Banks has signposted to the Mothers Union Website—see [www.makeamothersday.org/mothering-sunday-resources](http://www.makeamothersday.org/mothering-sunday-resources) where you will find resources. Gordon also recommends their “Hand in Hand” resources which you will find at [www.mothersunion.org/content/hand-hand-resources](http://www.mothersunion.org/content/hand-hand-resources)

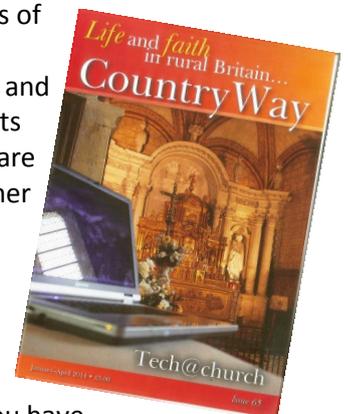
You will also find links on our own [website](#) and [Facebook page](#)

## Country Way Online

All representatives of members of the Rural Evangelism Network receive a copy of *Country Way* and we share in the editorial aspects of production. From 2014 we are able to make this available either as a printed version or online.

If you requested the online version you should already have been sent a link and had time to try it out. Please contact the REN Secretary if you have any problems.

**REN pays for your copy—printed or online.**



*Sharing Together in God's Mission*



## Is There a Plan?

As we approach Easter it once more focuses our attention on the amazing grace of God and the saving work of Jesus Christ upon the cross. Here we see the awful price paid for us and our salvation. Here is the sign of God's immense love. Here is the heart of the evangelist's message. Here is the motivation for the desire to share this story with the millions of men, women and children who live in rural Britain who have yet to hear it

presented in terms that are understandable and likely to elicit a positive response.

*'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'. (Romans 10:13-15)*

Britain's thousands of rural communities vary enormously. Each village is a complex mix of people with all kinds of aspirations and the vast majority has yet to be appropriately evangelised. As I grow older I find myself wondering just how seriously we take on this calling from God. With reductions in the numbers of clergy, the general reduction in financing mission, and the loss of dedicated human resources as so many have to take on multiple roles, it seems ever more difficult to find the energy and time that the task requires. I also sometimes wonder whether we are far too preoccupied with maintaining the structures of church life so that these swallow up the limited resources available while we neglect the one task our Saviour gave us. Is there any urgency these days?

It seemed to me that one important question to ask is whether the programmes of evangelisation on which we are engaged are based on a strategic plan. A simple questionnaire sent out in January 2014 brought few responses. Most that came back indicated a lack of strategic planning. If secular businesses ran like that they would soon fail. I dread to think that we are somehow drifting aimlessly responding as best we can to the 'latest thing' or reacting only to crises.

A strategic plan would be one that is based upon discerned needs and opportunities, that takes on board the constraints and challenges and that then seeks to develop appropriate programmes, and resources them so that the ends have some chance of being achieved. Whatever our role within a Church or organisation there ought to be some purpose to our appointment and we need a strategy or strategies for fulfilling that purpose.

My hope was that we would not only be able to see the extent of intelligent planning as we face the task of re-evangelising the rural population as it is today with the limited resources at our disposal, but also see how we might benefit by sharing—or even working together—on strategies. To this end I am running the survey again. Please take a few minutes to complete the form whether using a printed survey form (if provided) or [the online version](#). Thank you.

Barry Osborne  
REN Secretary

### Rural Evangelism Network

Administration:  
4 Clarence Street  
MARKET HARBOROUGH  
LE16 7NE  
Tel: 01858-414930  
Email: [ren@ruralmissions.org.uk](mailto:ren@ruralmissions.org.uk)  
[www.ruralevangelism.net](http://www.ruralevangelism.net)

### REN Committee

Capt. Gordon Banks (Diocese of Chichester)  
Capt. Norris Boyland (Church Army)  
Rev'd Peter Dakin (Diocese of Lichfield)  
Rev'd Barry Osborne (Rural Mission Solutions)  
Mr Ron Spillards (Baptist Union of Wales and Fellowship of Evangelists)

**You can download a copy of this newsletter at [www.ruralevangelism.net](http://www.ruralevangelism.net). Please forward copies to key people in your Church or Organisation. you represent. (e.g. General Secretary, Rural Officer, Secretary for Evangelism)**