

Key Resources for the Rural Church



The Arthur Rank Centre (ARC) website

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk

A brief description of what is available online

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The vast majority of the resources from the ARC are delivered through our website, and are dynamic, being regularly added to or adapted. Virtually all are freely downloadable, except items in the bookstall and subscriptions to our magazine, Country Way.

Amongst those currently available, the most significant include:

Worship Resources. We have built up a wide range of liturgical & worship material that can be downloaded, and most can be pasted into home-made resources as well as used as they stand. Most of these have rural relevance or relate to creation or elements of the liturgical calendar. Some of these are via links to other sources, but most are exclusive to the ARC, and some are specially commissioned for our rural networks.

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/worship-resources

Country Way. This is our three-times yearly magazine related to all aspects of faith & life in rural communities. It contains examples & case studies, theological reflections, reviews and discussion of contemporary rural issues. Back issues and individual past articles can all be accessed online.

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/country-way

Book Stall. We operate a small book stall online and at rural conferences and training gatherings. Most of the materials are rural-specific, alongside a number of more generic publications that prove valuable for rural churches. These can be ordered & purchased online. You can also gain access to our Amazon Marketplace account, where we sell a much wider range of 2nd-hand & old stock publications at very low prices.

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/book-stall

Making Connections. This is both a published workbook (obtainable at substantial discount for multiple purchases) and a wealth of additional online resources linked into the 7 key sections of the workbook. It contains practical suggestions, group study material and case studies to help rural churches make the most of their community connections.

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/making-connections

Online Document & Image Libraries. Many of the ARC's major publications are accessible in an online form that makes them much easier to read, bookmark and annotate online (including many back issues of Country Way). We are also developing a comprehensive library of rural-related images that can be downloaded and used by those in our networks.

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/online-document-library

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/online-image-library

There are also newer resources available that have been developed in response to the recommendations of our “Resourcing & Training for the Rural Church” research:

Signposts for Rural Mission & Ministry. This is a comprehensive signposting, description & evaluation resource that points rural church practitioners to the most useful materials for their mission or ministry. Split into 2 sections – Key (mostly specifically rural) and Other (mostly more generic) – it includes publications, training opportunities, organisations, websites and online information.

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/signposts

Library of Rural Good Practice. This is a growing collection of fairly detailed case studies & examples of rural-related good practice – including resources, training and activities undertaken by rural churches or communities. These are intended to serve as catalysts & encouragement for others, not as blue-prints simply to be copied. Where possible more comprehensive information & materials are provided to download, as well as contact information for those wishing to follow up.

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/library-of-good-rural-practice

How Best to Use. Our research showed that there were a small number of crucial resources or training materials of real benefit for rural churches which were poorly recognised or used – especially by training providers. This resource includes detailed guidance, substantial material and specific case studies that provide help in developing the use of these neglected materials more widely in the rural church.

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/how-best-to-use

Where to Turn for Help. In response to requests from rural ministers and training providers, this resource provides a template for any region or locality. It lists a wide range of organisations or bodies that can assist in all sorts of pastoral or community-related situations. National contacts are provided in the template, which can be downloaded and local representatives’ contacts added to create a key local resource for those with responsibility for helping others.

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/where-to-turn-for-help

Journey To Faith: a Local Rural Church Training Course in Evangelism. This is a low key, simple training programme that can be run by any local church – or group of churches - over 2 half-days. It requires no outside or expert help; all the material and resources that are required are freely available to download. Besides the material required to run the two course sessions, there are other resources, optional supplementary material, links to good material and ideas elsewhere, and a Resource Manual that every participant can take away with them to use in their own church to improve their ministry of witness & evangelism.

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/rural-evangelism

Resources for Rural Places of Worship. This is a comprehensive online information and advice hub covering every aspect of rural church buildings, with links to details elsewhere and numerous case studies. It includes: theological foundations; listed places of worship and statements of need & significance; ecclesiastical exemption & non-exemption; looking after the building; funding; miscellaneous other building issues (e.g. bats, metal theft, security); getting the most out of the building; opening up the building for visitors; energy efficiency & sustainability; church art works.

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/rural-church-buildings

Equipping for Rural Mission: a simple toolkit to help you understand your local congregation and the community your serve. This toolkit helps provide a firm foundation for longer-term planning for community-based mission by small, rural or dispersed churches. There are four significant elements to it: Gaining an accurate picture of the nature, state and population of the local communities served by the church(es) - which includes an understanding of what needs are most acute there, and what resources or facilities already exist to help meet those

needs; gaining an accurate picture of the resources, abilities, gifts and people present within the local church(es) - which enables an assessment of what may and may not be realistic for the local church; investigating what possibilities exist for partnership with other local bodies, agencies or organisations – whether church-related or otherwise; realistically assessing in what areas and in what ways the local church(es) can and should engage with and serve their communities.

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/profiling-tools

Developing Rural and Small Church Worship: training & resources for small & rural churches. This has been designed to meet the combined needs of lay people across various denominations for preparing and leading worship in small and, most frequently, rural settings. This is especially in situations where other resources and support are not immediately available. This includes: A set of answers and training materials in response to the sort of FAQs that often arise in these circumstances; a directory of web-based resources and links; access to our fully-searchable bank of worship resources, and further examples of good practice that have been developed; more detailed case studies of how contextual worship has been developed and employed in rural circumstances.

www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/publications-and-resources/rural-worship-training

Other resources and materials are currently being developed in response to the recommendations of our “Resourcing & Training for the Rural Church” research, and will be available later in 2012, including:

- **Creation of a peer-to-peer network for rural church practitioners.** Potentially for lay & ordained, this is for direct contact with others in similar circumstances, to share questions, answers, ideas & resources.
- **Tools to assist in delivering rural ministry & mission training sub-regionally.** Based on the ARC’s own central training courses and materials, this will include outlines, delivery guidelines, skill-set descriptions, and content from the ARC’s wider resources. In two parts:
 - Resources for training those directly involved in, or preparing for, formal rural ministry of some sort (i.e. ministers & church leaders).
 - Resources to help envision, enable & equip rural lay people – by means of more generic guidance and preparation for *local* trainers, facilitators & learning advocates.
- **A suite of simple resources assisting discipleship & faith development with specific rural content or relevance.** This will include collation of material developed & used by rural practitioners and adaptation of more generic materials.