

Salisbury & Bristol Diocese Supporters e-News with Gill Ford

Hello to you all!

This is my first Connect in 2021 and here we all are still in the middle of full lockdown. As we enter this new year, we're all HOPING that it will be easier than the last - but we know there are challenges ahead.

I do HOPE that you are all keeping well and prioritising your own well-being. I, like most of us, found January tough at times and I experienced Christmas on my own too this year unable to travel to be with family in Norfolk. I will admit that sometimes it has felt hard to feel HOPEFUL. However, with the rolling out of vaccinations and hearing from some of you that you have received yours this restores my own HOPE. HOPE really does matter to us all.

This pandemic has given me even greater empathy for all the children and young people who we support and who we know are living in extra ordinarily difficult circumstances. It strengthens my conviction in the work we do at The Children's Society restoring, protecting and strengthening young people's HOPE. HOPE really does matter, especially for those who have it toughest of all. Covid-19 has made vulnerable young people even more at risk and continues to put their futures in danger. At The Children's Society, we need to work together with you all to provide some HOPE for children in these very difficult circumstances.

As Christingle season draws to a close I reflect back on the innovative, flexible and diverse ways that you ensured that Christingle did happen in your parishes and communities.

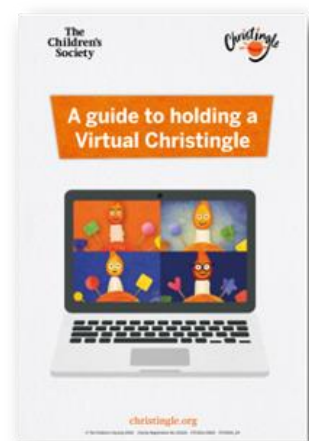


I think my own particular memory of Christingle 2021 was having mastered new technology enough to then film myself in my lounge doing a Blue Peter Style 'How to make your Christingle' video to send out to schools-accompanied by my elf dog Liberty!

Christingle review We are reviewing this Christingle season and looking for YOUR feedback.

- How did you celebrate Christingle this year?
- How did you adapt?
- How did you find our resources and how could we do things better?
- I'd love to hear your experience, so please do get in touch and let me know.

Here's what one lady said, "We would never have come up with such a different way of doing Christingle had it not been for the circumstances that we find ourselves in this year, but going forwards, after the success of this year's event, we will most definitely be re-thinking how we do things next year, because this year's Walk-through Christingle was such a success. Thank you for providing the resources to make this easier for us."





New 2021 Lent and Mothering Sunday resources

I attended a virtual meeting to hear about our brand-new Lent and Mothering Sunday resources which were launched yesterday.

Will you Join The Children's Society in fighting for young people's hope this Lent and Mothering Sunday?

The resources have been specifically designed to be flexible and can be used online. Download our resources here to use in your church or community group. www.childrenssociety.org.uk/lent-and-mothering-Sunday

- *Our Lent resource includes video talks, discussion questions, group activities, and prayer.*
- *Our Mothering Sunday worship resource includes all-age talks, activities, children's and youth group activities, designed to be used online or in person.*

*Your donations, Christingle services, prayers, volunteering and campaigning mean that we're able to stand together and #FightForHope. A very big **THANK YOU** for all that you've done and best wishes for a 2021 full of HOPE!*

Gill Ford

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Working Days – Monday–Wednesday 9-5

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- The Children's Society – Christingle review – can you help?
- New Mothering Sunday and Lent resources – will you join us?
- Christmas findings in the media
- New Church Youth Group resources - mental health and well-being
- New Covid safe Fundraising ideas
- Don't Miss it! Meet the Team - Fighting for Hope for Children and Young People with CEO Canon Mark Russell
- Meet the Team – Our work in the South West
- Date for your diary - OUR NEXT LIVE WEBINAR WILL BE Strengthening the Safety Net
- Campaigns – Strengthening the Safety Net
- Pray for The Children's Society – May we thrive
- My support to you

Two thirds of children have ranked visiting relatives as the thing they will miss the most this Christmas, new research by the Children's Society has found.



Children have said they will miss visiting relatives this Christmas. Picture: Adobe Stock

DAILY
Mirror

Christmas findings in the media

Kids miss family most at Xmas

ALMOST two thirds of children say the thing they will miss most this Christmas is visiting loved ones, a survey found.

Of 2,000 10 to 16-year-olds surveyed, 64% ranked missing family as the top loss in 2020's coronavirus-hit Christmas.

But only 33% agreed with the statement: 'I care more about being with the people I love than getting presents.'

Just over half, 51%, were fretting about their elderly relatives catching Covid-19.

Over a quarter feared this Christmas

would be harder financially for their family than any previous year.

The Children's Society, which carried out the research, is urging parents to talk to children about their worries.

Laura Reed, a key work practitioner at the society, said: 'It's difficult at the moment... but having fun, talking about your children's feelings and explaining things to them are all helpful. It's important to notice things that may be off - it can be the tip of the iceberg.'

Church youth group resources: Exploring mental health and well-being

Who is this resource for? This resource has been designed for church-based youth groups aged 11 to 16. The session themes are drawn from what children and young people have told us matters to them. Each year, The Children's Society talks to thousands of children and young people about their well-being and issues that concern them. This research is analysed and published each year in our Good Childhood Report. The sessions in this resource are based on issues highlighted in the Good Childhood Reports for 2019 and 2020. **The Good Childhood Report 2020.**

<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-11/Good-Childhood-Report-2020.pdf>

There is a summary of findings from the 2020 report on p.5.

<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-10/church-gcr-youth-group-resources.pdf>

There are 7 sessions and each session is designed to be between an hour and an hour and a half long, depending on which activities you choose, the size of your group and how talkative they are.

COVID SAFE FUNDRAISING IDEAS FOR THE NEW YEAR

Last year many of you produced an incredible response to help keep young people safe amid the growing crisis of the pandemic. We are so thankful for all you have done to help. I was only speaking to Rita in Dorchester yesterday who has now made 100 jars of marmalade to sell in aid of The Children's Society!

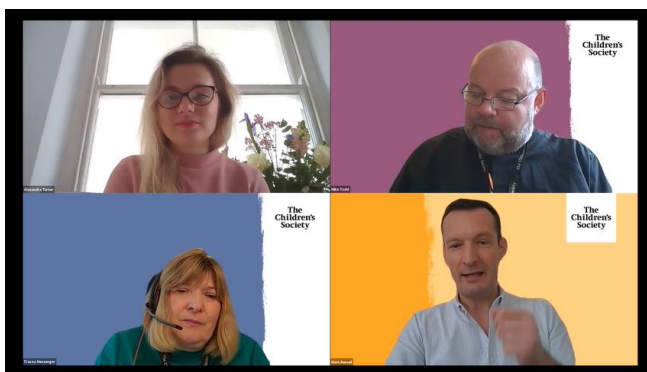
Thank you Rita!

Some have asked us for more COVID safe fundraising ideas, and we want to be able to provide you with as much support as possible to build on the success we've already had. So we've put together some new fundraising ideas that you can use to continue your kind support of our country's most vulnerable young people.

I have attached it to this email. If you would like to chat about more ideas then please get in touch.

Meet the Team

The Children's Society – Fighting for Hope for Children and Young People webinar



The Children's Society hosted a webinar this week launching our new goal and vision for the next decade.

It was a chance join us live and hear from **Chief Executive Canon Mark Russell** and others to hear about how we'll be **fighting for hope** and a society built for all children and young people over the next decade.

Also hearing about our new interactive Lent and Mothering Sunday resources to help your church

explore these themes.

Don't miss it! here is the link to the recorded webinar - please do share with your contacts. Vimeo link <https://vimeo.com/507523163>

Our vision and goal <https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/about-us>

Coffee Morning webinar - Our work in the South West



On 20 January my colleagues, Richard Kirkup, The Children's Society Checkpoint project manager and Jackie Thomas, Prevent Officer for the South West talked about the work they are doing in the South West with vulnerable children.

Checkpoint helps children with a range of issues, from drug and alcohol use to battles with depression. Missing children and abuse.

Jackie works to help keep children safe from abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and modern day slavery.

Jess recorded the session which can be viewed here on YouTube: [Coffee Morning - Direct Practice Work in the South West - YouTube](#)

Date for your diary OUR NEXT WEBINAR WILL BE Strengthening the Safety Net - supporting Children & Families in Crisis on March 3rd 2pm – 3pm. I will send out an invitation.

Campaigns- can you help?

Protect the hardest hit families - Strengthening the safety net

With the pandemic taking hold of the world, 2020 was a tough year for most. That didn't stop us campaigning alongside young people to help them overcome some of their toughest challenges yet. To read more about our campaign wins last year please click here [Our campaign wins in 2020 | The Children's Society](#) .

Last year with your help, we were able to secure £233 million in funding for local crisis support through our Strengthening the Safety Net Campaign. Millions of families have seen their lives upturned by Covid 19, with many parents struggling to pay the bills and feed their children. Council run emergency funds should be there to help parents in difficulty provide the essentials for their children. But years of underfunding has left many of these schemes depleted or at risk of closure right at the time when so many children are facing hunger and deprivation.

This funding runs out in April and we need to make sure the vital support councils are providing for families does not.



You could help by writing to your local council [Strengthen the Safety Net | Write to your councillor | The Children's Society](#) and call for them to take steps to ensure local crisis support carries on beyond March. If you haven't already, please sign the petition and keep the pressure on central government to preserve this vital lifeline. [Long-term Crisis Support Petition | The Children's Society](#)

Pray for The Children's Society

Prayer:

Loving God, you sent your son to give us life in abundance,
You want us to not just survive, but to thrive.

May we thrive, and help others find full lives.

Loving God, you call us to offer the best to others,
You want us to help those in need and in despair.

May we thrive, and help others find full lives.

Loving God, you work through The Children's Society.
You call them to improve the lives of the young.

May we thrive, and help others find full lives.

Loving God, we think of young people known to us,
(pause)

You call us to do all we can to make their lives secure.

May we thrive, and help others find full lives.

Loving God, you teach us to take your light into the darkness,
You call us to bring hope and happiness wherever we can.

May we thrive, and help others find full lives.

Amen.

We are so grateful for your prayers especially at this time and we offer [regular prayers](#) to help you pray for vulnerable children and young people.

Prayer e mail sign up Sign up to our monthly prayer email and join the 4,000 people praying with us to receive prayers every month that support our work. You can unsubscribe at any time.

[Support In Your Church | The Children's Society](#)

My Support to You

- Me or one of our speakers would love to come and speak live at your online church service
- I'm able to provide you with a bespoke video for you

to share in your church/community to thank and update supporters, do email me if you would like to request this.

- I'm available to join your meetings or pop in 'online' for a coffee and chat, just let me know.
- Join our webinars and hear from staff and young people live talk about their experiences
- Follow me on [Facebook](#) and [twitter](#).

“All that positivity gets rid of the negativity and you can sort of grow”
A young persons quote

Thank you all so very much for all that you do to help to make this a society that is built for all children.

If you would rather **not** receive these updates, please email me and I will remove you from the distribution list.

Feel free to forward to anyone who hasn't received this communication, and if they would like to in the future, please get them to email me stating that they would like to fully opt into email communications from The Children's Society.

Thank you