



## Prayer and liturgical resources on Climate Change

The churches' calendar offers a rich variety of opportunities to bring our concern for climate change into worship. Covenant services, Rogation Sundays, Lent, Environment Day (around 5<sup>th</sup> June), Harvest Festival, One World Week are all appropriate occasions. More recently the European Christian Environmental Network has promoted "Creation Time" (Sept-Oct) - as a special season to focus on creation.

The following organisations offer a variety of liturgical resources on climate change.

**Eco Congregation's** Module 2 "**Celebrating Creation**" - has a delightful range of prayers and imaginative worship ideas round the theme of creation, including a plan for all-age worship, a list of hymns with a creation theme from various traditions, and reflections on familiar Biblical stories. Module 3 - "**Creation and Christianity**" - looks at some theological underpinning for environmental concern, while Module 6 - "Exploring God's Green Word" offers material for House Groups and two sets of five multi-part Bible studies. All modules can be downloaded. : [www.ecocongregation.org](http://www.ecocongregation.org)

Christian Conservation organisation **A Rocha** has done a great deal to promote Environment Sunday in the first week in June. For the 2006 Environment Sunday, A Rocha produced a comprehensive set of resources on CD which includes: Materials for all-age worship, songs and music of a more evangelical kind, teaching and preaching guides, small group bible studies and PowerPoint and video presentations. A new resource for 2007 Environment Sunday is prepared (but not yet reviewed).

**Christian Ecology Link** has a rich variety of resources for liturgy, prayer, sermon notes and daily prayer guide. [www.christian-ecology.org.uk/resources.htm](http://www.christian-ecology.org.uk/resources.htm). CEL's **Community of Prayer** is an email community of hope and purpose, helping people feel the spiritual energy for ecological justice. **Operation Noah**, a programme of CEL, also has prayer resources, sermon notes, ideas for all-age worship.

**European Christian Environmental Network** - has liturgical material on its website as part of its invitation to all the churches in Europe to celebrate a "Time for Creation" in the Church calendar each year, from 1 September to the second Sunday in October. In some years, prayers and liturgical material are the focus, while in other years biblical meditations accompanied by short prayers was produced. This is a valuable resource for anyone organising worship, celebration and prayer round the theme of Creation. [www.ecen.org/cms/](http://www.ecen.org/cms/)

The **Season of Creation** [www.seasonofcreation.com](http://www.seasonofcreation.com) promotes the season as an opportunity to celebrate God the Creator and provides liturgies and other resources from around the world. With growing concern amongst Christian communities about the ecological crisis and the way human beings are treating God's Earth, the Season is an effective way to focus these concerns in worship, exploring our relationship with creation, that we might seek ways to heal rather than exploit creation.

**All Saints Wokingham** set aside 8 weeks for 'Creationtide' to focus on different aspects of their work in caring for creation. Creation, home energy and lifestyle, stewardship, harvest with a focus on water, animals and biodiversity, human responsibility and recycling, God's values and consumer values compared, including a focus on fairtrade.





## Christian organisations with environmental/climate change focus



**Eco-Congregation** - aims to encourage churches of all denominations to consider environmental issues as a Christian and make positive changes to different areas of church life, mission and witness. Overseen by the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, it offers a free environmental toolkit with 12 modules to enable churches to appraise how green they are in their worship, theology, property, children's work, and ideas on how these areas might be developed. These modules present a programme to change the life and witness of your church in response to the crisis of the environment. All modules can be downloaded from their website.

Awards are given for churches which have undertaken projects in three areas: spiritual - linking environment issues and the Christian faith, practical such as a recycling project, energy review or church yard activity, and community focused work that has a positive impact on the local community. Those who have completed the course and achieved an Eco Congregation certificate feel rightly proud of their achievement and have much to teach others embarking on changing the environmental practice in their church. Eco-Congregation offers an email newsletter to keep abreast of news, events and much more. Contact: Jo Rathbone: [ecocongregation@rase.org.uk](mailto:ecocongregation@rase.org.uk) Web: [www.ecocongregation.org](http://www.ecocongregation.org)

All Saints Wokingham worked through the Eco-Congregation modules, lodged firmly in the worship life of the church, and also in house groups. The church undertook a complete environment makeover in the church yard, involving the children, to create a haven for wildlife. Personal lifestyle and global concerns were tackled in different ways over the years. The dossier of their work shows the variety of initiatives taken and their witness continues.

Joan Watts, who coordinated the work for Eco Congregation along with the Rector, David Hodgson, said: "We got the award in 2005 but the work still goes on. We encourage our members to offset their air-miles. Having been asked what I might do differently, I began considering all sorts of aspects of my life,"



### Operation Noah

This ecumenical programme of Christian Ecology Link, supported by CTBI, focuses specifically on campaigning on Climate Change. Its aim is to raise awareness in the churches but also to demonstrate demand among the mainstream British public for UK leadership on climate change. Ann Pettifor (formerly of Jubilee 2000) has been appointed Director (January 2007).

Noah's prophetic actions to protect life on earth is a guide for our times. After the flood, God signed a covenant with Noah and with all creatures. That idea forms the basis of Op Noah's Climate Covenant which pledges action to cut our carbon emissions, switch to renewable supplies of electricity and spread the word. The website includes the 'Ark in a Box' - a package of resources, DVDs, resource sheets (resources which complement those of Eco-congregations) to help create the culture of justice for the poor. [www.operationnoah.org/](http://www.operationnoah.org/) email: [info@operationnoah.org](mailto:info@operationnoah.org) Tel 0845 233 5399





**Christian Ecology Link (CEL)** campaigns for a greener church and a greener world. It is a multi-denominational UK organisation, to support Christians from all traditions demonstrate their care for the environment. CEL believes that we are responsible for our impact on God's creation as a whole and helps members to understand and relate these responsibilities to their faith.

It offers a range of publications, '*Green Christian*' magazine where spirituality and the environment are key topics; several topic leaflets eg 'Climate change: What Christians can do?' 'An environmental audit for churches'; 'Energy Use in Church Buildings'; 'Water - why water is important for Christians'; 'Green' shopping; 'LOAF - local, organic, animal friendly, and fairly traded' and 'Eight Ways to live gently on the earth'. CEL has an email newsletter which is good way of keeping abreast of news, events and critical issues where your action can make a difference. [www.christian-ecology.org.uk](http://www.christian-ecology.org.uk)

**A Rocha** - an international conservation organisation working to care for God's world. A Rocha is now a family of projects working across the world, its work identified by five core commitments and to a practical outworking of each: Christian, Conservation, Community, Cross-cultural and Cooperation in partnership with a wide variety of organisations who share a concern for a sustainable world. A Rocha promotes Environment Day on 5th June and produces good materials for use on that day. [www.en.arocha.org](http://www.en.arocha.org) Tel 01387 710286 email: [international@arocha.org](mailto:international@arocha.org). [www.climatestewards.org.uk](http://www.climatestewards.org.uk) - a branch of A Rocha, runs projects managed by their partners to help off-set carbon emissions.

**The John Ray Initiative (JRI)** is an educational charity with a vision to bring together scientific and Christian understandings of the environment in a way that can be widely communicated and lead to effective action as responsible stewards. [www.jri.org.uk](http://www.jri.org.uk)

#### ***Denominational Programmes***

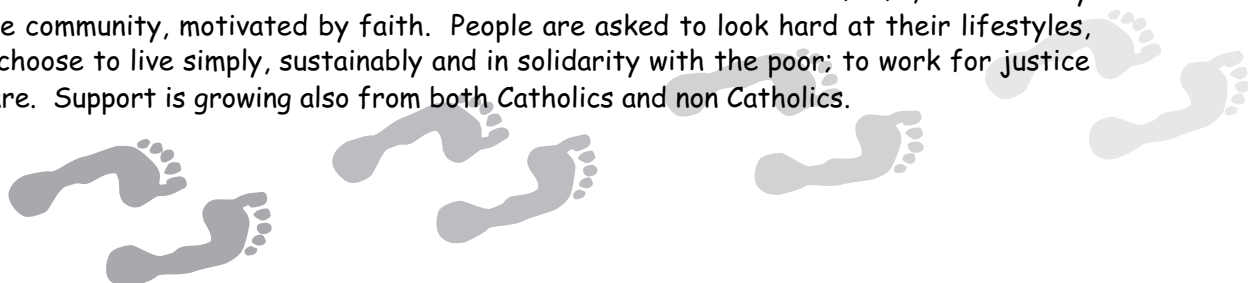
The **Methodist/United Reformed Church Creation Challenge Environmental Network**. Relatively newly-established, the two churches together seek to inspire churches and individuals to take direct action against climate change and make a commitment to caring for the environment, building on the environment statements of the churches. The Creation Challenge Coordinator sends out monthly newsletters to subscribers. [www.methodist.org.uk/static/econetwork](http://www.methodist.org.uk/static/econetwork). [www.urc.org.uk](http://www.urc.org.uk) or Commitment for Life [www.cforl.co.uk](http://www.cforl.co.uk)

#### ***Shrinking the Footprint*** [www.shrinkingthefootprint.cofe.anglican.org/](http://www.shrinkingthefootprint.cofe.anglican.org/)

Shrinking the Footprint, the Church of England's national environment campaign, was launched in June 2006, the first of a series of strategic initiatives aimed at creating "The 40% Church". Churches are encouraged to carry out a simple environmental audit to help plan how to reduce their emissions. Shrinking the Footprint offers information, links resources for churches, including "Sharing God's Planet: a Christian vision for a sustainable future" a report from the Church of England.

#### **Live Simply** ([www.livesimply.org.uk](http://www.livesimply.org.uk))

Launched in November 2006, Live Simply is an initiative of the Catholic Church in England. It is based on the radical idea: that God calls us to live a new kind of life, in solidarity with the community, motivated by faith. People are asked to look hard at their lifestyles, and to choose to live simply, sustainably and in solidarity with the poor; to work for justice and share. Support is growing also from both Catholics and non Catholics.





**Living Witness** . ([www.livingwitness.org.uk](http://www.livingwitness.org.uk))

The Living Witness Project is a growing network of Quaker meetings and groups in Britain, exploring their corporate witness to sustainable living and practice equality, simplicity, justice and peace which are at the heart of Quaker spiritual practice.

**Tearfund** ([www.tearfund.org](http://www.tearfund.org)) have focused on climate as a key priority for some years, and offers major reports, stories and other resources as the effects of climate change bite into the lives of vulnerable communities across the globe. Tearfund's "For Tomorrow Too" is provided in the pack, along with its pledge card. In February 2007 it launched its Climate Change Challenge "Don't be a Derek".

**Christian Aid** ([www.christian-aid.org](http://www.christian-aid.org)) is now making climate change a key campaign priority, its partners increasingly telling of the impact on the lives of the poor communities they serve. Following its "Climate of poverty" report 2006 came '*It's time to change the climate*' highlighting key facts, reflections, prayers, a carbon calculator, news from their partners, and practical actions and a statement of belief. In February 2007 it launched its new campaign, backed by commercial advertising and strong political campaign on its pressureworks website.

**World Development Movement**, ([www.wdm.org](http://www.wdm.org)) created originally by the churches, WDM has launched its **°C Change Campaign** to emphasise the responsibility of rich countries like the UK for climate change, while poor countries bear the brunt of the impact. WDM's campaign is calling on the UK government to act now and transform our economy to reduce our carbon emissions.

**Stop Climate Chaos** - [www.stopclimatechaos.org](http://www.stopclimatechaos.org) is a new and growing coalition of UK environmental and international development organisations, women's organisations, activist groups and faith-based campaigns. It aims to build irresistible popular pressure on politicians to act to halt climate change. Combining with like-minded bodies in other countries it will work to ensure that other Governments do the same. [www.icount.org.uk](http://www.icount.org.uk)



### **Further reading on the environment and Christian faith:**

*Global Warming: The challenge to all of us* Sean McDonagh (Columba Press, 2006) - a good description of climate change and its predicted impacts, together with a call for leadership from the Catholic church in response to this impending crisis.

*Caring for Creation: Biblical and theological perspectives.* Edited by Sarah Tillett, forward by John Stott. Contributors include Eugene Peterson, John Houghton, Sam Berry, Chris Wright. Valuable contributions that links theology and practical work.

*Jesus and the Earth*, James Jones, SPCK 2003. James Jones scans the New Testament for new insights on the links between Jesus and Creation.

*Eggs and Ashes*, Practical and liturgical resources for Lent and Holy Week, by Ruth Burgess and Chris Polhill, Wild Goose Publications 2004. Focuses on the environment over the weeks of Lent, with beautiful prayers, hymns and ideas. Excellent resource.

