

eco-congregation

England and Wales
Autumn 2005 newsletter



Hi there!

Have you noticed how there is so much more information coming out about environmental issues in the general press now? There really is no excuse for anyone, let alone the churches, to ignore the plight of the planet. What with the polar ice caps melting even faster than the pessimistic predictions, permafrost melting and events such as Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, people can't fail to notice the speed of change.

Now is the time to give people in the churches the foundations of teaching and theology which can undergird active engagement with the issues. Above all, there must be a foundation stone of *hope*. This is our distinctive position when surrounded by bleak future prospects. People can change, but they do need the information in the first place to know how to change their behaviour for the benefit of the planet. So! Take advantage of the upsurge of interest! Give people the tools they need to know how we should then live in the light of all that is happening around us!

With all good wishes

Jo

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www.ecocongregation.org

PS If you have an email address and could receive future newsletters via email, please email me and let me know! It saves paper and postage! If you have changed your email address please let me know the new one, as I get about 100 returned emails after every edition!

Update on Finances for Eco-congregation

Many thanks to the Award winning churches who, to date have contributed a total of £733 towards the project! There has been a variety of methods used to raise the contribution, from a cake stall (all cakes made according to the LOAF principles!) to a collection in Rogationtide service. Many churches are struggling financially, and so all these contributions are greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Larger grant applications have to date been unsuccessful, but this reflects the current trend to finance regional/local activity rather than national supporting bodies or networks. The Environmental Issues Network of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, under whose auspices Eco-congregation exists, is beginning to address this funding difficulty.

Latest Eco-congregation Award winners:

Lutterworth Methodist Church

- Eco Fair held
- timers and zones put in heating system
- eco cleaners now used
- church trips to local ecohouse and organic garden
- survey at local supermarket about recycling

St Chad's Far Headingley, Leeds

- celebrating creation with local schools
- innovative recycling!
- bat boxes for Pipistrelle bats

Congratulations ! Working towards an Award is a lot of work – receiving the Award encourages those involved and demonstrates to the wider community that the church is actively involved with caring for creation.

Understanding Lawn care!

I have a short, humorous sketch from Evelyn and Lim Ho in Stratford, a conversation between God and St Francis about what we do to our lawns...

"Now let me get this straight. They fertilize the grass so that it will grow. And when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away."

"Yes, Lord."

"They must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work."

"You are not going to believe this, Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it so they can continue to mow and pay to get rid of it."

For the full sketch, let me know and I'll send it to you.

The Heat Project

0800 093 4050

www.heatproject.co.uk

for installers of green insulation who can organise a grant.

DAVID BELLAMY SIGNS UP FOR CHURCHYARD CONFERENCE

Television naturalist and environmental campaigner David Bellamy will be the keynote speaker at a National Conference organised by local charity Caring for God's Acre, CfGA.

Dr Bellamy heads a list of experts travelling to Ludlow in May 2006 for the "Cherishing Churchyards" event, which will provide a forum for all those involved with the care of churchyards and burial grounds. Churchyards are increasingly seen as havens for wildlife and often contain a diversity of grassland plants and old trees as well as historic features such as churchyard crosses, lychgates and memorials.

"We feel that a national conference on conservation of churchyards and burial grounds is much needed and already we are getting enquiries from around the country," said Sue Cooper, co-ordinator for CfGA.

The conference will offer a series of interactive lectures covering aspects of churchyard interest such as flora and fauna, archaeology, family history, tourism, lifelong learning and churchyard management. There will also be site visits to conservation churchyards in South Shropshire and Herefordshire, a series of discussion workshops on issues around churchyard management and a chance for people to network and share experience.

Caring for God's Acre is a small independent secular Charity which supports and advises on conservation and uses the churchyard for learning by running courses and events in a variety of subjects. CfGA began operating some 10 years ago taking on charitable status in 2000. It is hoped that next year's conference will be an important step to the formation of a national network of organisations involved in churchyard conservation across England and Wales.

"We think that the conference will be of interest to experts and keen amateurs alike, attracting people from Natural History Trusts, Government Officers at every level, Church organisations, Learned Societies and University Biological Departments" said Sue.

The Conference "Cherishing Churchyards" will take place on the 23rd and 24th May 2006 with limited places. The cost will be £125 with a £50 discount for charitable and voluntary organisations. It will take place in The Assembly Rooms in Ludlow, an historic market town.

To register for a conference pack and booking form which will be sent out in October contact Caring for God's Acre, 6 West Street, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 8ES. Tel: 01568 611154. E mail

info@cfga.fsnet.co.uk

Website : www.caringforgodsacre.co.uk

FREecycle IT - DON'T BIN IT

There's an on-line website where people (or churches) can give things away which they no longer want, such as furniture, or look for something on the site which they may need.

www.Freecycle.org and click on United Kingdom for a list of the current groups. If your town isn't there, then you could start a local group!

The Community Renewables Initiative

The Community Renewables Initiative's aim is to help groups and individuals realise that renewable energy can form part of the regeneration of their locality. The initiative promotes and assists developments which: are environmentally sensitive; have support of all stakeholders; are appropriate to the circumstances of the locality; link to other diversification and regeneration schemes. It could mean environmentally sensitive developments of: solar roofs; biomass and wood heat schemes; farm waste schemes; small, medium, and in some instances, large wind turbines.

For information contact Enquiry Service, Community Renewables Initiative, Tel: 01242 533260 (Answerphone)

Email: cri@countryside.org.uk

Website: www.cri-england.org.uk

Ideas in brief...

Use water hippos in the loo cistern, or a 2 litre plastic bottle filled with water ensuring it doesn't interfere with the flush lever.

WI simple solutions leaflet for recipes for natural cleaners 020 7371 9300 www.womens-institute.org.uk

Boiler Efficiency database www.sedbuk.com to find the best boiler model to suit your needs.

Review the church policy on floodlighting: light pollution is serious problem for wildlife as insects and birds can not longer tell night from day. How about putting the floodlights on just for special occasions? OR what about a low watt porch lamp using sensors so that lights don't have to be on all night.

Choose natural paints (low volatile organic compounds) Auro Organic Paints www.auro.co.uk Nutshell Natural Paints www.nutshellpaints.com

Where is your timber coming from? Use FSC approved timber rather than MDF.

Choose A rated energy efficient appliances, regularly defrost freezers.

Creating uPVC is one of the most energy intensive and polluting processes in plastics, so wooden window frames are far more ecologically sound. uPVC doesn't necessarily last longer either. Easier and cheaper to repair wooden frames too.

Replaces worn tap washers – leaky taps can waste 4 litres of water a day.

About 85% of the electricity used by your video recorder is consumed while it's on standby, so remember to turn appliances off at the socket. A mobile phone charger continues to use electricity even after you've unplugged the phone. Its also a fire hazard.

Share your appliances!! drills, mowers, strimmers...

www.Encraft.co.uk provide bespoke advice on energy or heating project with all the latest info. They are very keen to advise churches. For free info click on Resources and then Briefings.

Green events coming up! Could your church organise a meeting?

1 Sep - 2nd Sunday in Oct All over Europe: Creation Time. The European Christian Environmental Network encourages churches to hold a special service in Sept or Oct about Care of God's Creation during this period. Materials available from www.ecen.org

Sat 1 Oct York: Ecumenical Service for Animal Welfare (ASWA and CCA) York Minster 2.30pm Speaker: Rt Revd James Jones - Bishop of Liverpool (ASWA: Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals) <http://www.aswa.org.uk> (CCA: Catholic Concern for Animals) <http://www.catholic-animals.org/>

Sat 1 Oct Andover, Hampshire: Christian Ecology Link's Annual Members Meeting, followed by CEL Conference with workshops especially for people who want to take action to 'green' their local church, and for local groups.
www.christian-ecology.org.uk/conf2005.htm

Sat 1 Oct Southwell: Parish Pump Workshop with the Conservation Foundation Should Christianity affect my shopping? 10.30am-4.30pm Southwell Minster. Talks and workshops on Fair Trade, environmental and ethical issues in producing food today For everyone who enjoys good food but also cares about people and the planet. Details: Social Responsibility Office, 01636 817246, social.responsibility@southwell.anglican.org Contact 020 7591 3111 shelagh@southwell.anglican.org

Sat 1 Oct Haydock, St Helens: Cut Costs - Make Savings. St Marks Church, West End Road, Haydock, WA11 0AX. 10 - 2pm Lunch Included. 0151 705 2162 Marjorie.griffin@liverpool.anglican.org Raising Awareness, Enabling Sustainability, Operation EDEN, www.operation-eden.org.uk

Sat 1 Oct London: Christians in Science, the Victoria Institute, and the John Ray Initiative are holding a day conference: A Christian Framework for Sustainability at St. Paul's Church, Robert Adam Street, London W1. Speakers include Sir Ghillean Prance, Brian Heap, Donald Hay, Dave Bookless, and Sir John Houghton. 01732 464253 secretary@cis.org.uk

1 Oct Dorking: Responding to Climate Change - Dorking Friends Meeting House A day with Quaker Green Action exploring what we as Quakers can do about climate change.
<http://www.quakergreenaction.org.uk>

2 Oct UK Animal Welfare Sunday
<http://www.aswa.org.uk/animalwelfaresun.html>

4 Oct World: St Francis Day; World Animal Day
www.worldanimalday.org.uk

Wed 5 Oct: Stockbridge Village: Raising Awareness, Enabling Sustainability St Alberts RC, Hollow Croft, Stockbridge Village. 7.30 - 9pm. 0151 705 2162 annie.merry@liverpool.anglican.org
www.operation-eden.org.uk

Thu 6 Oct London: LondonSCARE (London and Southwark Churches Care for the Environment) St Francis of Assisi Lecture for 2005 by The Bishop of London, The Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dr Richard Chartres at 6.30 p.m. (Light refreshments available from 6.00 pm) at St Mary Woolnoth Church, Lombard Street, London EC3 (Nearest tube: Bank - on the Central and Northern Lines). It is helpful if you can let us know you are coming 020 7932 1121. Download poster/booking form www.christian-ecology.org.uk/oct6.doc

Fri 7 Oct CAFOD Harvest Family Fast Day
www.cafod.org.uk/resources/worship/mass_talks/harvest_05_mass_talk

Sat 8 Oct Hereford: Hereford Christian Ecology Group 'Food to Go' cookery demonstration at St John's Methodist Church, St Owen Street, Hereford, 7.00 p.m. Light refreshments. Tickets £5.00. 01432 279740

Sat 8 Oct: Kendal Churches Together in Cumbria Social Responsibility Forum - Major Conference 2005 Going for Green: Sustainable Communities 9.30 am - 5 pm. Cost £5. Register from 9.30 am St Thomas' Church, Kendal Speakers - Sir Martin Holdgate, Bishop John Oliver, and members of the 4 pilot sustainable communities in Cumbria. Workshops include - Is Nuclear Green? A look at our local legacy. For details contact helen.boothroyd@ntlworld.com More details from www.christian-ecology.org.uk/cumbria-press-release.doc

8 Oct London Refugees and the Environment: A Forum Day to examine and share insights on the global environmental crisis and its role in forcing individuals to flee their homes 10am - 4.30pm Church of the Holy Apostles (Church Hall) 47 Cumberland Street, Pimlico, London SW1V 4LY ta@refugee-forum.org.uk Web: www.refugee-forum.org.uk Download a poster and booking form: www.christian-ecology.org.uk/

Sun 9 Oct: Gateacre Brow, Liverpool: Raising Awareness, Enabling Sustainability. Environmental Family Fun Day. Unitarian Chapel, Gateacre Brow, Liverpool L25 3PB. 1 - 5pm. Family Friendly Event. Lunch Included. 0151 705 2162
annie.merry@liverpool.anglican.org www.operation-eden.org.uk

9 Oct: UK: Seed gathering Sunday www.treecouncil.org.uk

11 Oct: London: The End of Oil - Conference on Peak Oil, Food and the Economy. A major conference examining the peak oil problem & its impact on climate change, the world's food supply & the world economy. <http://www.eafl.org.uk> Venue: The Insurance Hall, London EC2 from 09:30 to 4:00. Speakers include Michael Meacher MP, Tim Lang & Andrew Simms (of NEF), chaired by Dr Ian Gibson MP. The conference is organised by East Anglia Food Link, CRed, Sustain and PowerSwitch.

11 Oct Mary le Bow, London: "The Cheapside Debates" - debate on church and environment 1.05 - 1.55. St Mary le Bow holds a series of lunchtime debates on various themes, centering broadly on the territory of politics and ethics. Speaker: Dr Mary Midgley. Chair: Canon Claire Foster. Opportunity for a good amount of input from the floor. www.stmarylebow.co.uk

11 Oct Askham Bryan College of Agriculture and Hort, York. COUNTRYSIDE AT THE CROSSROADS An almost free day conference. Speakers: Howard Petch - Chair of Churches Regional Commission Rural Renaissance Taskgroup, Board Member of the Countryside Agency. Graham Brownlee - Chief Exec of the Churches Regional Commission for Yorkshire and the Humber. 10.00 am to 3.00 pm. Details, and to book: 01904 761340 www.rural-theology.org.uk/localgroups/northeast/reports/YorkshirenewsAug05.pdf

13 Oct Muswell Hill, London: An Introduction to Christian Philosophy - lecture by Gareth Owen Jones (former environment consultant, then researcher into applying Christian philosophy to sustainable policy development.). Venue: Muswell Hill Methodist Church 7pm for 7.30 and ending at about 9.30 www.christian-thinkers-toolkit.org.uk

14 Oct Bristol Clifton Cathedral (Catholic) 7.30 pm. Illustrated talk: The Pope and the Iceberg by Mary Colwell, Producer at the BBC Natural History Unit. Using footage from the Natural History Unit and it challenges the Church to put ecological thinking back into the heart of faith. Film from unit's archives will be projected onto the walls of the stunning Cathedral. It is open to all and entry is free.
<http://www.cliftondiocese.com/Diary/186/>

14 Oct Caversham 7.30 pm. Caversham One World Week are holding a Climate Change Seminar. Venue: Caversham Methodist Church, Gosbrook Road, Caversham. The speakers are Revd Professor Ian James on the causes and consequences of climate change; Professor Chris Garforth on the likely effects of climate change on Africa; and Dr Martin Hodson on our response to climate change: what can we do about it? owen.jewiss@ukgateway.net

14-16 Oct Scargill House, Skipton, N Yorks: GreenSpirit Annual Gathering <http://www.greenspirit.org.uk>

14-15 Oct Peterborough: 'Green and Pleasant? - Northamptonshire Faith Groups contribution to sustainable communities' Bookings: 01604 887000 Parish Pump Workshop. Event organised by Peterborough Diocese in conjunction with the Conservation Foundation email gillian.spokes@peterborough-diocese.org.uk

Sat 15 Oct Mirfield, W Yorks: Environment Day at the Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield. Keynote speaker Revd Prof John Rodwell (Plant Ecologist) and Stations in the Grounds with Fr Simon Holden CR £12.50 incl lunch sj@ukgateway.net

Sat 15 Oct Chilswell Valley, Oxford: Chilswell Valley Walk with the Creator Sage walk. A walk to a secluded grassy valley, just south-west of Oxford. To book please ring 01865 432600 a week before the walk takes place www.sageoxford.org.uk/calendar.htm

Sat 15 Oct Petersfield: Ecology Conference. 9.45am-12.30. St Peters Church Hall, St Peters Road, Petersfield. St Peters Church is hosting a presentation with Dr Canon Stephen Palmer (eco-advvisor to Bishop of Portsmouth), and Mr Chris Jenner of Thames Estuary Windfarms Project.

15 Oct Stockbridge Village: Wildflower Sowing, Tree Seed Collection & Cultivation. St Alberts RC, Hollow Croft, Stockbridge Village. 10 - 2pm. Family Friendly Event. Lunch Included. 0151 705 2162 annie.merry@liverpool.anglican.org www.operation-eden.org.uk

20 Oct Burley in Wharfedale: Discussion/preparatory/facilitating meeting for churches and individuals in churches who are thinking of taking part in EcoCongregation. It would be good if several churches in the Bradford/N Yorks area could support each other. St Mary's Parish Lounge, (next to the Church) Burley in Wharfedale. 8pm. Jo Rathbone of EcoCongregation will be there to give a short talk and answer questions 01943 863216

21 Oct UK Apple Day www.commonground.org.uk/appleday.html

21-23 Oct Oxford Living Witness Project Link Group Hill End, nr Oxford "The Living Witness Project is a network of Quaker meetings developing our corporate witness to sustainable living." Contact laurie@livingwitness.org for details. Find out more about Quaker Eco-Teams.

Sat 22 Oct Bentham, N Yorks (near Lancaster) Bentham Local Action for Justice and Peace. A challenge: Global Warming:- what we can do? Bentham Methodist Hall, Station Road 12 noon FREE LUNCH - Donations welcome 1pm: Dr. John Smith, Cumbrian Environment Group. 2pm: Jill Perry, Maryport Friends of the Earth Conference end: about 3pm - Tea.

22 Oct Bath Churches Together in Bath: 'How Green is Your Church?' Salvation Army Citadel, contact: nunn@greenway20.freeserve.co.uk

23-30 Oct UK and World: One World Week. 2005 theme: Promises, promises! 0118 939 4933. Send for leaflets to display at your church now. <http://www.oneworldweek.org>

28-30 Oct South London A gathering for young peacemakers (18 - 30ish), in South London. Cost £15. Travel bursaries available. www.for.org.uk the website of the Fellowship of Reconciliation Tel: 01832 720257. Speakers, in depth workshops, Bible study, discussions, worship and reflection.

29 Oct Eyam, N Derbyshire: Green Theology Day. Margaret Barker will be teaching at Eyam Church Hall. Fee £10-00. Bring Packed Lunch. Contact Christians Learning Together, Derby Church House 01332 388 650. Please book, to ensure sufficient handouts. All welcome.

29 Oct Leicester. Bishop of Leicester's Lay Congress: Environment Impact 9.30am - 3.30pm Leicester Cathedral. Details: 0116 2487417. Speakers: Claire Foster (Archbishop's Council Advisor on the Environment) and David Shreeve of the Conservation Foundation. Dialogue and Reflection Groups.

29 Oct Bristol: Bristol Schumacher Lectures 10.00am-5.00pm Theme: Shaping Our Future. Speakers Jakob von Uexkull of The World Future Council; Tim Smit of The Eden Project; Mary-Jane Rust, Practising Jungian Analyst Venue: St George's Bristol, Great George Street, off Park Street, Bristol, BS1 5RR. Tickets- Standard: £30, Restricted view: £25, Schumacher UK members standard: £20 Schumacher UK members restricted view: £15. Info and tickets: 0117 903 1081 E-mail: schumacher@gn.apc.org www.schumacher.org.uk/bsl05.htm

Sat 29 Oct Gloucester: Earthcare Day 10.00 to 16.00 with LOAF lunch at Gloucester Cathedral. Morning session: Keynote Speaker: Bishop John Oliver. Rt Revd. Perham, Bishop of Gloucester will preside. Afternoon workshops include: Don't waste Wildlife: no dig & composting; Eco-congregation; Living Churchyards; Eco-friendly Funerals; an "all-age" option; Congregations for a low-carbon future; Vision 21; Commercial success; Biodiversity. Download details: www.christian-ecology.org.uk/glouc-05.doc

Thursday 24th November London A Rocha conference: Hope for the Planet, This conference will bring together top theologians, scientists, and hands-on conservationists from five continents, to look at how the Christian message is one of liberating hope for the whole creation. The day aims to be biblical and practical, aimed particularly at church leaders, but essential to all thinking Christians. Confirmed speakers already include Peter & Miranda Harris, Sir Ghilleain Prance, Elaine Storkey and Prof Alister McGrath. Why not sponsor your minister to come? Book through A Rocha UK Office: A Rocha U.K. 13 Avenue Road Southall MIDDLESEX UB1 3BL Web: www.arocha.org.uk Phone: 020 8574 5935 Email: uk@arocha.org