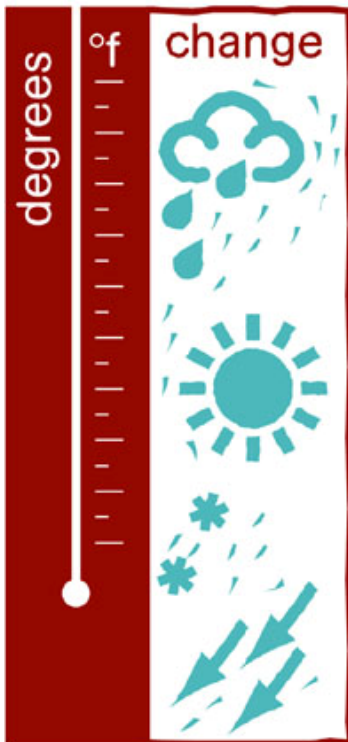


# eco-congregation newsletter



## “Degrees of Change” - new play on climate change



Produced by CAFOD, and coming out of their *livesimply* campaign, and the many *liveit* events that have taken place up and down the country, “Degrees of change” explores the issues of climate change from the perspective of young people.

The 40-minute play is fast-paced and thought-provoking and follows the lives of a group of sixth formers as they struggle to cope with their death of one of their number, Claire during a flood in Kenya. It charts the story of a group of Sixth Formers who face this personal tragedy which sets them off on a quest to think more deeply about the issue of climate change in their own lives and the world around them.

Alongside the drama, CAFOD have produced additional resources which can be used to delve into the issues at a deeper level. The play and the extra resources are downloadable from the CAFOD website [www.cafod.org.uk](http://www.cafod.org.uk)—put Degrees of change into the search box.

Other useful resources from the Catholic Church on climate change include “Between the Flood and the Rainbow” put together by Ellen Teague for Operation Noah ([www.operationnoah.org](http://www.operationnoah.org)), and “Paint the Church Green” also by Ellen Teague which provides resources for 6 study groups (published by Kevin Mayhew).

## Eco-congregation England & Wales website wins award!



Jo Rathbone & Award!

Joe Baker from Eleutheria worked many long hours creating the website for Eco-congregation England & Wales, and his hard work was given recognition in September, when the site won the Most Green (Environmental) Christian Website Award at the Premier Christian Web and Blog Awards ceremony.

Held in St Stephen Walbrook Church in the heart of the City of London, the ceremony was a boost for those of us who slog away at our screens in the hope that someone is reading the information, and taking it all in! The judges (including Pam Rhodes from Songs of Praise) obviously thought that Joe’s hours of commitment to producing a great site should receive due recognition.

The Award was sponsored by the Diocese of London, which has produced a comprehensive green strategy across all departments. It had a high proportion of churches completing the Shrinking the Footprint survey of energy usage.

The website is a high priority in terms of the proportion of my time that I spend on it, so do log on to read the latest.

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### Fairtrade clergy shirts!



I was delighted that someone sent me the link to this small company trying to fill the gap: fair-trade cotton used to make clerical shirts. Great!

All the shirts available from Butler and Butler are made from 100% fair-trade cotton in black, dark blue, light blue, grey and white. The company is inviting orders from their website: [www.fairtradeclergyshirts.co.uk](http://www.fairtradeclergyshirts.co.uk)

The company is a joint venture between Simon Butler, a curate in Nottinghamshire and his father, Richard.

So if you don't know what to buy for your minister for Christmas...

Shirts are also available to purchase

from other retailers:

FA Dumont – [www.fadumont.co.uk](http://www.fadumont.co.uk)

Taylor's of Oxford –

[www.taylorsoxford.com](http://www.taylorsoxford.com)

Juliet Hemingray – [www.church-textiles.co.uk](http://www.church-textiles.co.uk)

Mary Collings –

[www.clergycollar.co.uk](http://www.clergycollar.co.uk)

Watts and Co –

[www.wattsandco.com](http://www.wattsandco.com)

J & M Sewing –

[www.jandmsewing.com](http://www.jandmsewing.com)

Vanpoules – [www.vanpoules.co.uk](http://www.vanpoules.co.uk)

Contact Simon Butler 0115 981 5802

or Rachel Farmer 01636 817218

(mobile 077 121 96381).

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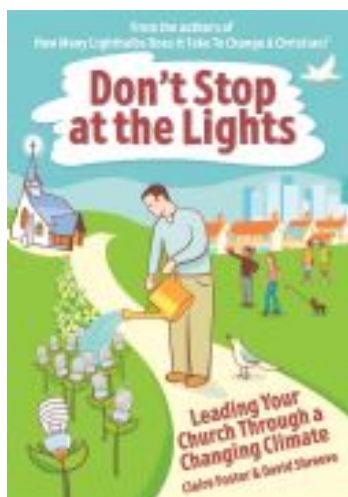
### Don't stop at the lights—new book from the CofE

*Don't Stop at the Lights* is a new guide from the Church of England offering a template for a year-long programme of practical action to reduce congregations' carbon footprints.

It includes sermon ideas and bible study notes which aim to reconnect the church to the natural world and the roots of its faith. It inspires churches to become beacons in their community, offering case studies linked to the Church's year including:

- using Lent as an opportunity to carry out a complete internal environmental audit beginning on Ash Wednesday
- re-establishing beating the bounds at Rogationtide to help refocus congregations on God's gifts and preserving justice.

The book was written by David Shreeve and Claire Foster, and is available through Church House Publishing: [www.chpublishing.co.uk](http://www.chpublishing.co.uk) price £14.99.



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### Creation Time

There were lots of churches getting involved in Creation Time this year—the first year really that UK churches have got on board. It is the period from 1 September—4 October, and the idea is that you use this time in the church year to focus on matters environmental.

There was a big service at St Paul's Cathedral, with the Ballet Rambert.

What did you do? It would be great to collect stories of events, special ser-

vices, themes that were used, whatever you managed to do to address the issue of creation care during that time.

One story from a minister who is involved with her local horse riding stables: she was asked by them if she would hold an animal blessing service at the stables! Fantastic.

Do let me know if you did anything special: [ecocongregation@arocha.org](mailto:ecocongregation@arocha.org)

## European Christians call for green 'road map'

I attended the meeting of the European Christian Environment Network in Milan in September on behalf of Eco-congregation England & Wales, along with other colleagues in the UK.

The report of the meeting, which included a presentation from the Deputy Chair of the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), was unequivocal in the call to Christians to **act now**, and to take seriously the call for radical change.

Church leaders were asked to put together their own 'road maps' for energy reduction, with timescales and clear goals. Some denominations in the UK are doing this at national level—the question for us is, are churches actually fulfilling these at the local level?

Other recommendations from the conference were:

- work with other churches, and other faiths on these issues
- become role models for low energy use in transport
- make lifestyle changes to reduce



water use

- reuse and recycle water
- raise awareness about the importance of protecting biodiversity
- Make sure you know what is happening at local, national, European and global governmental levels, and lobby for action on climate change.

In the middle of much talk and debate, there was an opportunity to have an hour of silence just outside Milan Cathedral, wearing slogans such as:

- Slim down your ecological footprint
- Change for the environment: my prince charming rides a bike
- love yourself – defend your environment
- I want more! more spiritual energy, more games of co-operation, more brilliant friends, more travels of the mind.

Others were giving out leaflets explaining what we were doing.



*Our Hour of Silence outside Milan Cathedral*



*ECEN members at Villa Sacro Cuore, Triuggio near Milan*

## Amberlinks—a new web resource on environmental issues

Amber Links is a website designed to help people respond effectively to climate change:

- Information for sustainable living
- Links to many useful websites
- Opportunities to share experience and tips

No adverts, no registration, no membership; just a site for shared information.

Carter, who worked for many years for Tearfund. She would really like folk to contribute to the content of the site, so please have a look, and see if there are things that you know about that aren't there, and add them in.

[www.amberlinks.org](http://www.amberlinks.org)

It has been developed by Isabel

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### Schumacher Briefing: “Rekindling Community—connecting people, environment & spirituality”



Alastair McIntosh

Alastair McIntosh and colleagues have written this 15th Schumacher Briefing published by Green Books. It is based on research that has been carried out over the last 3 years at the Centre for Human Ecology and in collaboration with WWF International. It is about how to rebuild community, but not just the external ‘physics’ but by addressing the internal ‘metaphysics’.

“It is imperative that we stand apart from the wallowing in despair that is afflicting so many people, and especially environmentalists, at the moment. We have a bright message that another world is possible. Bringing it alive requires outer technological, economic and political change, but it also requires that we examine the inner condition of us all that, manipulated by marketing, has driven the whole consumer shebang. People are ready now to hear insights from us all that they previously denied or scorned.” says Alastair McIntosh.

The Briefing is a sequel to Alastair’s “Hell and High Water—Climate Change, Hope and the Human Condition” published in summer 2008. The synopsis reads: “Climate change may be the greatest challenge that the world has ever faced. In this groundbreaking new book, Alastair McIntosh summarises the science of what is happening to the planet – both globally and using Scotland as a local case study. He moves on, controversially, to suggest that politics alone is not enough to tackle the scale and depth of the problem. At root is our addictive consumer mentality. Wants have replaced needs and consumption drives our very identity. In a fascinating journey through early texts that speak to climate change – including the ancient Sumerian *Epic of Gilgamesh*, Plato’s myth of Atlantis, and Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* - McIntosh reveals the psychohistory of modern consumerism. He shows how we have fallen prey to a numbing culture of violence and the motivational manipulation of marketing. To start to resolve what has become of the human condition we must get more real in facing up to despair and death. Only then will we discover the spiritual meaning of these our troubled times. Only then can magic, new meaning, and all that gives life, bring hope to a broken world.” I think it is a significant book.

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### Stories from the churches

At St Paul’s Chichester, they have been active in going deeper in terms of their environmental mission since receiving their Eco-congregation Award. For example:

- The Mission Group Parish BBQ used locally sourced meat, with LOAF principled dishes, and guests were asked to bring their own crockery and cutlery
- Church members are involved in a local zero carbon development
- They have switched to a 100% renewable electricity supplier
- 70 church members joined Advent groups using ‘home grown’ studies which challenged people to look at God and God’s creation
- A planned extension is being designed taking environmental aspects into account, including use of materials, and energy conservation
- The church and community have collected enough plastic milk bottle tops to fill a double decker bus!



St Paul’s, Chichester

Thanks to Kathryn Manouch for telling me the story.

## How to encourage recycling!

Sue Hancock at Wesley Place Methodist Church Alsager had the thought that people forget to bring things to church for recycling or put items for recycling and forget them.

So she bought 100 small paper carrier bags and had labels printed for them. Her children handed them to members of the congregation as they entered church. The response was very favourable. Most agreed that it would be more convenient and act as a reminder. Some asked for bags for their neighbours!

Thanks to Gordon Degg for the story.



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## Eco-congregation Co-ordinator to move on

Come April 2009, I will have been running the Eco-congregation programme in England & Wales for 5 years, and I think it is about time that someone else came along to inject some different skills into the project. So, if anyone knows of a fired-up person who would be interested in running the programme, please ask them to get in touch!

There is funding for 2 days per week paid employment. Although I have been doing rather more than that in the past, I am now restricting my hours to 2 days, in order to try and trim the job to the hours that are

available. The location of the job will be dependent on the right person coming forward—it doesn't have to be in Warwickshire.

This restriction in hours does mean that I have been having to say 'no' to speaking invitations, so my apologies for that (although I will fulfill all engagements currently in the diary). Also, I have been asking churches which apply for the Award to help me to find local people to do the assessment. This has proved extremely helpful, and saved me a lot of time. Thank you for all those who have helped me out.

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## Prayer opportunities

A couple of sites which offer information for prayers:

### **Climate Stewardsprayer blog**

<http://climatestewards.wordpress.com> provides information specifically from partners involved in the Climate Stewards project, and stories about climate change impacts around the world.

**Christian Ecology Link prayer guide** is put together by Phillip Clarkson-Webb and consists of snippets of environmental information for each day of the year. A fantastic resource to stimulate prayer. Go to [www.christian-ecology.org.uk](http://www.christian-ecology.org.uk) and follow the links for prayer guide.

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### Events coming up: 22nd November and 17th January

Christian Ecology Link and the Milton Keynes Christian Environment Group are putting on a conference with a transport theme:

#### 'Journey to a Fairer Future'

Saturday 22nd November  
10.30am—4.30pm

Church of Christ the Cornerstone,  
Milton Keynes MK9 2ES

Speakers are:

- **Stephen Potter** from the Open University: "Let's stop fuelling ourselves" and "Are roads evil?"
- **Michael Northcott** from Edinburgh University: "The desire for speed" and "The rhythms of the earth"

Cost is £10 if booked before October 22nd.

Contact David Miller on 01908 377376 or look on the events page of the Eco-congregation website:  
[ew.ecocongregation.org/events](http://ew.ecocongregation.org/events)

The next conference from the partnership between the John Ray Initiative and Redcliffe College in Gloucester is:

#### 'Just living: The quest for fairness in a finite world'

Saturday 17th January 2009  
9.30am - 4.30pm

Redcliffe College, Gloucester

Speakers include:

- **Peter Price-Thomas**, founder of EcoChurch and formerly of The Natural Step
- **Dewi Hughes** of Tearfund
- **Andrew Steer**, Director General for Policy and Research at the Department for International Development.

Cost is £38 including a two course hot lunch.

More details are available on the Redcliffe website at [www.redcliffe.org/environment09](http://www.redcliffe.org/environment09).



Workshop at Christian Ecology Link conference in Lancaster in 2007

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### Climate Change Service before the Climate Change March: Dec 6th

**CLIMATE CHANGE SERVICE 2008  
SATURDAY 6 DECEMBER, 11.30am  
HINDE STREET METHODIST  
CHURCH, LONDON W1U 2QJ**

Christian Ecology Link is organising a Service of Worship at Hinde Street Methodist Church, 19 Thayer Street, London W1U 2QJ, at 11.30am on Saturday 6th December 2008.

The doors of the church will be open from 10am and coffee served from 10.30am.

Mark Dowd, campaigns strategist for Operation Noah, will speak. The Service, led by Rev Paul Trathen, will be a time of reflection and prayer for

the world before going out in mission.

After the Service those who wish can join the Climate Change March due to leave Grosvenor Square at 1 pm.

If anyone in your organisation would like to be more closely involved in organising and supporting the Service please email Ruth Jarman at [ruth@sjarman11.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:ruth@sjarman11.wanadoo.co.uk)



**ChristianEcologyLink**

## Water, water... not quite everywhere

A friend told me that she had been in a pub where she had requested tap water. The pub were collecting for WaterAid, and the suggestion was that a donation be made when customers requested tap water.

The scheme is called **Tap into WaterAid** and is an easy and manageable way for restaurants, cafes and bars to support WaterAid.

- 1 in 6 people in the developing world do not have access to safe water
- 5,000 children die every day from water-related diseases
- Just £15 could enable one person in the developing world to gain access to

a lasting supply of safe water, sanitation and hygiene education  
Tap into WaterAid is bringing restaurants, cafes, bars and customers closer together to help some of the world's poorest people take their first steps out of poverty.

Could you start tapping into WaterAid today and start raising funds that will help us make a real difference to the lives of the world's poorest people? Maybe you could ask your local pubs and restaurants to join the scheme.

For more information go to: [www.wateraid.org/tapintowateraid](http://www.wateraid.org/tapintowateraid)



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## Supporting Eco-congregation England & Wales

**Could you support Eco-congregation England & Wales financially?**

**Could you or your church give either a one off donation, or regularly, to help support the work of greening the churches?**



Please complete the form with your details and return to the address on the right. Thank you. For setting up regular giving, please contact the office.

Name

Address

email

Please make any cheques payable to **"Eco-congregation"**. This is held in a separate budget head overseen by A Rocha UK who manage the programme.

**Gift Aid declaration:**

I would like A Rocha UK (Registered Charity No 1089276 to treat all donations since 6 April 2000 and future donations as Gift Aid donations until I notify you otherwise. I understand I must pay an amount of Income Tax of Capital Gains Tax at least equivalent to the tax that A Rocha UK claims on my donations in the tax year.

Please tick:

Eco-congregation  
(England & Wales)  
Arthur Rank Centre  
Stoneleigh Park  
Warwickshire  
CV8 2LZ

024 7669 2491  
ecocongregation  
@arocha.org

[ew.ecocongregation.org](http://ew.ecocongregation.org)



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024 7669 2491  
ecocongregation

## The Churches' Environmental Programme

Eco-congregation provides a framework to get churches involved with environmental issues. Start with the church check-up (module 1), draw up an action plan, download the modules, get on with the work, and then apply for the Award!

Set up initially in partnership with Encams, it is now a project of:  
A Rocha UK  
13 Avenue Road  
Southall  
Middlesex UB1 3BL  
Registered Charity 1089276

The Eco-congregation England & Wales office is at Arthur Rank Centre, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire. Jo Rathbone is the part time co-ordinator of the programme, and editor of this newsletter.

All material is freely available from the website: [ew.ecocongregation.org](http://ew.ecocongregation.org)

It is helpful if you register your church after working through the church check-up (so that we can build up a national picture), and receiving the Award is a way to publicise your activities, and encourage other churches to get involved!

**Find more resources on the web:**

**[www.ew.ecocongregation.org](http://www.ew.ecocongregation.org)**

So many Awards this year, that I've run out of plaques!

So far (October) in 2008 there have been 29 Awards given—I only ordered 25 plaques! I am currently awaiting the next order from Scotland (made from fallen oak). So many stories to tell!

How about **Avenue St Andrew's URC in Southampton** who created a family (the 'Di Lemmas') to grapple with tricky issues in sketches in their services?

Or what about **Journey Metropolitan Community Church in Birmingham** who host all the Transition Birmingham events in their building?

Or **Mansfield Woodhouse churches near Nottingham** who set up a monthly local market (only local and fair-trade produce allowed)?

Or **Trinity Methodist in Leek** who showed An Inconvenient Truth and then hosted a talk by Hilary Benn, MP?

Or **Menston Methodist, near Ilkley** whose new café was built to high environmental standards?

Such a lot of really great things happening around the country. Do consider putting in your application. The assessment process takes into account the situation of the church—membership, location, support from the leadership, and so on.

Applying for the Award does enable others in the community to know what you have been doing as it gives you an excuse to tell them through a press release. You can also then begin to help other churches get going.

