

CREATION JUSTICE TOOLKIT FOR CORNISH CHURCHES



**TRANSFORMATION
CORNWALL⁺**



ASH

**CHURCHES
TOGETHER
CORNWALL**



”

*LET US BE
PROTECTORS OF
CREATION,
PROTECTORS OF
GOD'S PLAN
INSCRIBED IN
NATURE,
PROTECTORS OF ONE
ANOTHER AND OF
THE ENVIRONMENT.*

“

Pope Francis



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Introduction

A Creation Justice Toolkit, might sound a bit heavy handed!

But in the person of God and expressed through the persons of the Trinity we have clear evidence of a holy stance against all injustice. And with the publication of the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\) report in August 2021](#), we have clear scientific

observation and understanding of a history of injustice by humanity against creation. We might reflect that this is something of a weighty opening line for a toolkit aimed to encourage each of us into action! But there is good news, that a re-flourishing of God's very good creation is not only possible, but achievable.



During the challenges of the Covid pandemic, creation took an opportunity to flourish in the absence of such intense human intervention. Our uncut hedgerows and verges exploded forward with life and created havens for wildlife and increased biodiversity. The reduction in air freight and travel massively reduced CO2 emissions and allowed the earth to breathe for a while. If this is what can happen when we are forced to pause some areas of our full lives, then what might happen if we choose to purposefully and intentionally place the re-flourishing of God's very good creation at the top of our personal, corporate, and faith agendas?

With deep action and commitment the tide of creation destruction, habitat loss, carbon emissions and devastating impact on those who are most vulnerable in the world can be reduced, stopped, and in time the tide turned.

INTRODUCTION

As in all injustice, God calls us into partnership to be change agents of his divine justice – a justice that is overflowing with grace and mercy, hope and joy, peace and love. Through this Creation Justice Toolkit, you are invited to step into partnership with the Creator God and actively work towards the re-flourishing of God's very good creation.

Some of this will be worked out locally in your parish church and wider community, but the wider impact of this choice will be felt throughout the world – not least in those places, communities and peoples who are most at risk of the devastating impact of climate crisis.

May God bless you in your journey as Creation Care Champions and together we pray for a restoration and re-flourishing of God's very good creation – our home.

Rev Ben Lillie - Diocesan Environment Officer



WHY CREATION JUSTICE IN CORNWALL?

When considering the term 'creation justice' there is a temptation to think of it only in global terms. Some Christians might turn to the 'fifth mark of mission' of the Anglican Communion, which is 'to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth'(1). Others may quote Pope Francis's Laudato Si that 'A true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor' (2) .



With the climate and ecological crisis now so apparent to us all, 'creation justice' is very much synonymous with 'climate justice', which relates to the inequitable outcomes for different people and places associated with vulnerability to climate impacts and the fairness of policy and practice responses to address climate change and its consequences.

Yes, we probably all understand this in a global sense, but what does this mean for us here in Cornwall?

There are so many groups which are acting to combat the crisis. For example, Cornwall Council having ambitious plans like planting a 'Forest for Cornwall' and improving energy efficiency in homes across the county (3), Surfers Against Sewage tackling plastic pollution (4),

Transition Penwith promoting a resilient future (5) and the great work being done in schools on creation care.

And of course we have for our churches the Green Church Kernow (6) and Eco Church (7) programmes which provide a framework to engage our congregations in bringing creation care and climate justice into the fabric (both physical and spiritual) of church life.

We are blessed in living in such a beautiful place. And yet economic and social deprivation is also so visible – and this has been particularly highlighted during the pandemic. So while some of us are able to afford to install solar panels, many more local people are finding that access to foodbanks is their only means of survival.

So how can we work together to achieve a degree of creation /climate justice which is accessible in a variety of forms to everyone in Cornwall?

That is a question which must be central to Christian thinking and action – and for which this toolkit will provide resources to help in our journey together.

George Dow - Green Christian Co-Chair and member of Penlee Cluster

References:

- (1) <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/MTAG%20The%205%20Marks%20Of%20Mission.pdf>
- (2) 'Laudato Si – On Care for Our Common Home' – Pope Francis, CTS books (2015)
- (3) <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment/climate-emergency/>
- (4) <https://www.sas.org.uk/>
- (5) <https://www.transitionpenwith.org.uk/>
- (6) <https://trurodiocese.org.uk/green-church-kernow-awards/>
- (7) <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>

LISTENING TO YOUNG VOICES

Many young Christians care deeply and passionately about the climate crisis. They are, after all, the ones who will most disproportionately have to deal with the consequences of a warming climate. Despite this, many feel there has been a collective blindspot from the Church when talking about climate change in a way that takes their concerns seriously. Earlier this year, research by Tearfund found that 9 out of 10 Christian teenagers surveyed are concerned about climate change, but just one in 10 believe their Church is doing enough to respond. When it comes to climate change, young people are the voice of the future and speak with a directness and a moral clarity that cannot be ignored. What follows below is three interviews with young Cornish christians on how their faith motivates their care for the environment and what they would like the Church to do next.

GEORGIA ALLEN

Who are you and how does your faith fuel your care for the environment?

My name is Georgia Allen, I study a bachelor of science in ecology and conservation biology at the university of Exeter in Falmouth, and have always held a deep devotion towards the earth, nature and its many diverse inhabitants. My faith has helped fuel this devotion as God's abundant love is not only for us as humans but for the whole of his creation of earth, further enhancing this passion to fight against injustice experienced by all, including both humans and animals losing their homes and livelihoods due to climate change consequences.



What has been your experience of creation care in the Church? Are there any signs of hope?

I personally have never come across a creation care scheme within Church, whether this is due to disdain or whether it is happening behind the scenes and I unaware, I am unsure. However creation care is incredibly important, and a fantastic opportunity to allow people to become aware of their carbon footprints and to also seek advice on how to reduce these, whilst being inclusive of emphasising the importance of our care for the earth due to God's love for his creation and its inhabitants.

How might the church respond more fully to the climate crisis?

I believe the Church could respond more fully to the climate crisis by directly addressing it. This can include preaching in Church services about the ideas which helped to found creation care, such as making changes to help God's creation, rather than disregard it. It can also include becoming entirely transparent about its investment in fossil-fuel industries, and to encourage the switch to renewable energies and/or climate counteraction.

How can we get young people involved?

Young people can become involved, I believe, by exposing them to the beauty of Gods creation in the nature that surrounds us. If this is not a possibility locally, maybe include this in where the Church spends its money by allocating a small percentage to fund nature and outdoors trips for youth activities.

If there was one challenge that you could put to the Church community what would it be?

To practice what we preach as a church and to start taking real actions in helping halt climate change and by caring for our local and global communities.

OWAIN FITZSIMMONS

Who are you and how does your faith fuel your care for the environment?

Hello I am Owain. I am active within my community to strive for a better world. I want to see a future where we are all working towards the common good and a world that works for everyone. For me this is fuelled by faith, which has always fuelled my care for the environment. It has helped me to realise that God is not just in a specific place, like a Church, but around the whole of creation in

everything we see. Seeing God around me in everyday life has fuelled me to better myself and care for the environment so that we can keep as close as possible to God in creation. The more we realise he is around us, the more we realise how important it is not to destroy the world.

What has been your experience of creation care in the Church? Are there any signs of hope?

My personal experience has been mixed. There has been a bit of good and bad. There is good messaging from the overarching Church groups, saying that we must cut carbon, which is good. There is also solid grassroots general congregation support. But then, I also think there's a bit of disconnect in the middle from the people preaching. Sometimes we say these things from above, but then the actual people that preach on a Sunday, they aren't equipped on how to share these messages. There's definitely a lot of grassroots potential to either educate the preachers, or even preach themselves! I think this would make preaching more effective and help everyone understand it more, particularly how it relates to the Bible.



How might the church respond more fully to the climate crisis?

I think we need to engage more fully with members of parliament. These are the people that control our domestic and foreign policy, so they vote on everything. We need to think about how we approach them and lobby them to commit to more ambitious targets. As a Church, when we say we set ambitious targets and say we need to cut emissions, we also need to show that to the government and ask them to follow our lead. If we use our power as Christians to build on the relationships that already exist with the government, we could talk to them in a constructive way to build policy and legislation. It's about using our institutional influence to actually effect wide scale change.

How can we get young people involved?

That's a really big question, and it's been on my mind for a few years. I think we need to sit down and listen to young people and engage with them in a constructive way. Young people need to feel supported in order for them to feel engaged. After we've listened, it's important to think about messaging and sharing what they have to say. It needs to be a message that appeals to young people and is also factual. It should also be done publicly so any young person can come in and feel listened to.

If there was one challenge that you could put to the Church community what would it be?

That's a tough question! I think it would be to actually sit down and have an open and constructive dialogue with every group. Whether that is young, old, or middle aged. People that work in a pub and also those that work in a six story investment bank. It's about sitting down with everyone and being the people that enable a proper conversation. Finding a solution that everyone can agree on will require someone to facilitate engagement between lots of different people. That's the challenge I would put to the Church.

DAVINA BACON

Who are you and how does your faith fuel your care for the environment?

I'm Davina, I'm a student at the University of Exeter in Falmouth. I study English and environmental science. For me, everything about Christianity jumps out to me as applicable to caring for the environment. So at the beginning of creation, when God tells us to steward the earth, I see that as a responsibility to take care of the earth's resources. But also at the same time, I see a human

aspect to caring for the environment as caring for your neighbour. For example, climate injustices, where we degrade the environment, intersect with racial injustice, gender inequality, injustice against disabled people, and people who are imprisoned. All of these groups suffer the most from the negative impacts of climate change. In order to love these people and bring about the Kingdom of God, we need to care for the environment.

What has been your experience of creation care in the church? Are there any signs of hope?

So I've gone to Church my entire life and it is only really in the last couple of years that I have heard the beginnings of conversations about the environment. The beginnings of these conversations is a good thing and a lot more people now recognise that this is something we need to care about as Christians, which is positive. Also the Young Christian Climate Network are running a relay from Cornwall to Glasgow, and we've had lots of support from lots of different churches along the way, from all different denominations. But there's definitely more that could be done in terms of actual practical action from the Church.



How might the church respond more fully to the climate crisis?

Essentially we need urgent, drastic, and collective action in speaking truth to power and actually making a difference. I think there needs to be more taking responsibility for the ways in which Christianity has been misused historically to justify these systemic issues that drive the climate crisis. If we take responsibility for this and actually talk about it, that would be a huge step forward. I think there also needs to be more teaching on the theology of activism. The idea of activism sometimes freaks people out when actually it's more of a way of living than something you do. You don't need to become a hippie or start a riot to call for climate justice!

How can we get young people involved?

I think the climate crisis is something that lots of young people are super concerned about and I don't think they always have the language, or the space, or the resources to express that. A lot of young people who I have spoken to about the climate crisis feel quite isolated in their concerns because it's just not talked about very often. So you get branded the 'climate kid' and not taken seriously. I think we need to give young people the platforms to talk about it in Church and actually listen to them and take their opinions into account when making decisions.

If there was one challenge that you could put to the church community what would it be?

It's good that we're having these conversations, but we really don't have that much time! So we need urgent communal action centred on indigenous and marginalised voices such as refugees, women, and young people. We also need to think about what Jesus said about consumption and materialistic culture. He said so much about it and we often skim over it and don't practically live it. Here is where we need everyone to take part, because everyone has something unique to bring. It's going to be uncomfortable, but if Christianity tells us anything it's that love sometimes takes sacrifice.

YOUTH WORK

Time: 30 minutes.

Resources: Recycling items, tape, glue, pictures of creation, pictures of pollution, and pens.

Purpose of the session: To understand that all things - including humankind - have been created by God and that it is our responsibility and privilege to look after God's creation.

Bible verse: Genesis 1:26-31.

Intro activity/game: Give the children different items that you might recycle along with crafting supplies and ask them to try and create something beautiful in 5-10 minutes. This activity can either work individually or in teams.

Bible study: Print out some pictures of nature/creation and ask the children what words they would use to describe what they see. They might like to write on the pictures. Ask them how God might have felt when he made the world.

Print off some pictures that show us not taking care of creation very well. What words could be used to describe these pictures? How do these pictures make the children feel?

Ask the children what job God gave us to do once he had made the world? How well do they think we have done at looking after God's creation?

Application: Ask the children to think of one thing they can do individually and one thing they can do as a group to help look after God's creation. Try and make this a regular conversation to see how they are finding it and what they need in order to feel supported.

SERMON IDEAS

PSALM 19:1-4 - GOD IN ALL CREATION

Perhaps sometimes we understand our relationship to the world exclusively through our unique feature of being made in God's image. As God has dominion over the whole of creation, so we, as God's image, have dominion over the earth and all in it. Unfortunately, some Christians have interpreted this dominion as a licence to exploit nature selfishly and irresponsibly.

In 1966, the historian Lynn White Jr bluntly asserted that Christianity 'bears a huge burden of guilt for the devastation of nature in which the West has been engaged for centuries.'

Nonetheless, while only humans are created in God's image, this does not mean that God is not revealed in and through the natural world. According to Psalm 19:1-4, God speaks to humans through his creation, and the heavens reveal his wonder:

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tent for the sun."

If creation's rich beauty proclaims God's glory, then caring for God's creation allows us to be participants in this revelation. As a result of bearing God's image, humanity bears responsibility, not to exploit, but to govern in stewardship and celebrate the natural expressions of God's presence. After reading this Psalm, consider how we see God revealed in nature and pray that we may be faithful stewards of this revelation.

NEHEMIAH 9:6 - A CRY OF PRAISE

Nehemiah is a story of rebuilding of restoring and of working together with the people and resources around us. Throughout this book of the Old Testament, Nehemiah gives all credit and praise to God for any successes. In this, Nehemiah is a great model of leadership and getting things done, whilst keeping the focus on God.

In the midst of what appears an impossible task, spurred on by Nehemiah and Ezra, the Israelites repeatedly stop to give worship to God. In one of these moments the centrality of God as creator of all, from whom all things come is expressed:

"You are the Lord, you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and you preserve all of them; and the host of heaven worships you."

Within this cry of praise to creator God is a wonderful assurance; 'and you preserve all of them.' In the context of this pouring out of praise, humanity is not singled out as separate from the rest of creation but gathered up in 'all of them'.

So often we (human beings) prioritise ourselves before the whole of creation as the ones who must be saved from ecological disaster and yet from Nehemiah's perspective we are all united together in creation as one. This echoes God's created order from Genesis 1 & 2 where it is helpful to remember that all humanity is created from the same divine breath. We come from the same breath of the same creator God - breathed into all created things! We are not separate from, but sisters and brothers to all creation. If we set our hearts, minds, hands and feet into action like Nehemiah, the seemingly impossible restoration of all creation - becomes possible.

MATTHEW 25:31-40 - THE LEAST OF THESE

If we start with the view that God – Creator God, is the father of all creation as established by and understood from the creation account in Genesis 1&2, it is then a clearer pathway to ‘seeing’ the images of creation and ‘hearing’ the echos of creation in so much of the bible and especially Jesus’ teaching.

The creation account tells us of Creator God speaking and breathing into life - all things, not just humanity. This shared breath is a potentially helpful way of helping us (people) to relate to all creation as siblings – sister and brother. It is from here that we can choose to see the pictures and hear the echoes of all creation in this key.

To understand the earth and with it all creation, as the ‘I’ or ‘first person’ in this passage might for some be a stretch, but it’s a stretch worth making.

- The earth and the most vulnerable of its inhabitants are hungry and thirsty (v35).
- So often the earth and the vulnerable alien are treated as strangers and held at arms length (v35).
- The earth and the most vulnerable of its inhabitants are increasingly naked and in need of re-clothing (v36).
- The earth and all of creation is sick and in need of considerable creation care and restoration (v36).
- The earth and all of creation is effectively in-prisoned to the overwhelming effects of pollution, greed and injustice (v36).

Jesus’ challenge that ‘Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me’ is a challenge we urgently need to see, hear and respond to. The wonderful reward of living, breathing, behaving and actually being followers of Jesus, is to be welcomed into the inheritance of a kingdom prepared for us since the creation of the world (v34). Right now, in this life time we are

called to respond to the cry of creation and especially the cry of our brothers and sisters in all creation, who are most vulnerable to effects of climate injustice.

COLOSSIANS 1:15-23 FAITH IN ACTION

Colossians 1:15-23 is Paul opening up his letter to Collossae with an early Christian Hymn that finds its roots in the Hebrew wisdom tradition. Often we do not see hymns and worship in the same frame as action and Christian mission, but here we see that this ancient hymn framed much of Paul's understanding for how each Christian community would then live in action.

If we understand worship as knowing God fully and then responding from the heart to that knowledge, then in this opening hymn we see two ways that Paul wants to adjust the position of the church's heart. First they are challenged on what it means to know that Jesus is the first born of all creation. This is not simply about Jesus being the first that was born, but that within a first century culture the first born was the one that would inherit all that his father owned, and would become the one in charge. Second we see that the relationship that the first born has with what he is in charge of is to bring all things back into relationship with himself.

The disharmonies that we see between nature and the inhumanities of human-kind are to be resolved, and that image of the characteristic of God's creation and God's concern for the universe is encapsulated by the cross of Christ. Here in Paul's letter we are reminded that there is an aspect that nature cannot reveal, and that is the self-giving sacrifice that only Jesus can reveal. This passage in its beauty reminds us that the Christian faith is not simply about passive appreciation, but self-giving action for all that God has created, and dwelling in this story should, and will, transform our hearts.

PRAYERS

INTERCESSION FOR CREATION



Creator God

We come to you today to pray for the restoration and flourishing of all creation. We recognise the incredible intricacy and beauty of your creation and we thank you for this precious gift.

Help us to be wise care takers of all that you have given us. Help us to be creative and resourceful as we look for ways to live in balance with the earth. Help us work together to enable the restoration and flourishing of your very good creation.

Guide our world leaders and those in authority to addressing this climate crisis for the good of the earth and all the inhabitants and peoples of the earth.

We pray particularly for the ongoing actions and outcomes from the G7 leaders conference and the COP26 Climate conference and we ask for constructive, practical and fruitful ways forward that honour your creation and restore our fragile earth.

We ask this in the name of the one who set planets in orbit and flung stars in to space – the same one who breathed his breath into our lungs and gave us life.

We pray this in the name of our creator God.

PRAISE FOR CREATION



Creator God, We thank you for your very good creation, intricately designed to sustain us and all that inhabit the lands, skies and seas.

We praise you for flowing rivers, the rise and fall of mighty oceans, for rain that falls to quench and feed the land. Help us to draw from your wellspring with care and be wise care takers of these sacred waters.

**Lord of all creation,
Of water, earth and sky
The heavens are your tabernacle
Glory to the Lord on high.**

We praise you for the richness of the earth, for the diversity of landscape and for the fruitfulness of the soil. Help us to tread lightly and be wise care takers of this holy ground.

**Lord of all creation,
Of water, earth and sky
The heavens are your tabernacle
Glory to the Lord on high.**

We praise you for the skies, the winds, the air we breath. At night we look to the heavens and see your glory reflected in every shimmering star. Help us to breathe in your grace, breathe out your hope and be wise care takers of this vast expanse.

*Response from Third Day 2003.

CONFESSION FOR CREATION



Creator God,
we confess that we have taken your gifts for granted.
We have failed to care for seas and the forests.
We have broken our duty to steward the earth.

Pause

Forgiving God,
forgive us for the ways in which we contribute to this destruction.
Forgive us for being greedy and not sharing the earth's gifts.
Forgive us for our lack of courage to resist endless consumerist growth.

Pause

Gracious God,
Transform our hearts and minds, that we may place the welfare of your earth before profit.
Help us to live for the world's healing and our own.
Embolden us to challenge injustice and unsustainability.

Pause

We thank you for your forgiveness and ask that the holy spirit guides us to be more like your Son.
In your name, gracious and forgiving Father,

Amen.

HYMMNS & WORSHIP SONGS

CONTEMPORARY

"WONDERFUL MAKER"

You spread out the skies over empty space
Said "let there be light"
Into a dark and formless world Your light
was born

You spread out Your arms over empty hearts
Said "let there be light"
Into a dark and hopeless world Your Son
was born

You made the world and saw that it was good
You sent Your only son for You are good

What a wonderful Maker
What a wonderful Savior
How majestic Your whispers
And how humble Your love
With a strength like no other
And the heart of a Father
How majestic Your whispers
What a wonderful God

No eye has fully seen, how beautiful the cross
And we have only heard
The faintest whispers of how great You are

Authors: Chris Tomlin and Matt Redman
CCLI Song Number 3798627

"SO WILL I (100 BILLION X)"

God of creation
There at the start, before the beginning of time
With no point of reference
You spoke to the dark and fleshed out the wonder of light

And as You speak
A hundred billion galaxies are born
In the vapour of Your breath the planets form
If the stars were made to worship, so will I
I can see Your heart in everything You've made
Every burning star, a signal fire of grace
If creation sings Your praises, so will I

God of Your promise
You don't speak in vain, no syllable empty or void
For once You have spoken
All nature and science, follow the sound of Your voice

And as You speak
A hundred billion creatures catch Your breath
Evolving in pursuit of what You said
If it all reveals Your nature, so will I
I can see Your heart in everything You say
Every painted sky, a canvas of Your grace
If creation still obeys You, so will I
So will I, so will I

If the stars were made to worship, so will I
If the mountains bow in reverence, so will I
If the oceans roar Your greatness, so will I
For if everything exists to lift You high, so will I
And if the wind goes where You send it, so will I

If the rocks cry out in silence, so will I
If the sum of all our praises still falls shy
Then we'll sing again a hundred billion times!

God of salvation
You chased down my heart through all of my failure and pride
On a hill You created
The light of the world abandoned in darkness to die

And as You speak
A hundred billion failures disappear
Where You lost Your life so I could find it here
If You left the grave behind You, so will I
I can see Your heart in everything You've done
Every part designed in a work of art called love
If You gladly chose surrender, so will I
I can see Your heart, eight billion different ways
Every precious one, a child You died to save
If You gave Your life to love them, so will I

Like You would again a hundred billion times
But what measure could amount to Your desire?
You're the One who never leaves the one behind

Authors: Benjamin Hastings, Joel Houston, and Michael Fatkin
CCLI Song Number: 7084123

TRADITIONAL

"I, THE LORD OF SEA AND SKY"

I, The Lord Of Sea And Sky,
I Have Heard My People Cry.
All Who Dwell In Dark And Sin,
My Hand Will Save.
I Who Made The Stars Of Night,

I Will Make Their Darkness Bright.
Who Will Bear My Light To Them?
Whom Shall I Send?

Here I Am Lord, Is It I, Lord?
I Have Heard You Calling In The Night.
I Will Go Lord, If You Lead Me.
I Will Hold Your People In My Heart.

I, The Lord Of Snow And Rain,
I Have Borne My People's Pain.
I Have Wept For Love Of Them, They Turn Away.
I Will Break Their Hearts Of Stone,
Give Them Hearts For Love Alone.
I Will Speak My Word To Them
Whom Shall I Send?

Here I Am Lord, Is It I, Lord?
I Have Heard You Calling In The Night.
I Will Go Lord, If You Lead Me.
I Will Hold Your People In My Heart.

I, The Lord Of Wind And Flame
I Will Tend The Poor And Lame.
I Will Set A Feast For Them,
My Hand Will Save
Finest Bread I Will Provide,
Till Their Hearts Be Satisfied.
I Will Give My Life To Them,
Whom Shall I Send?

Here I Am Lord, Is It I, Lord?
I Have Heard You Calling In The Night.
I Will Go Lord, If You Lead Me.
I Will Hold Your People In My Heart.

Author: Daniel L Schutte

"ALL CREATURES OF OUR GOD AND KING"

All creatures of our God and King,
Lift up your voice and with us sing,
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou burning sun with golden beam,
Thou silver moon with softer gleam!

Refrain:

*O praise Him! O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

Thou rushing wind that art so strong,
Ye clouds that sail in heav'n along,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Thou rising moon, in praise rejoice,
Ye lights of evening, find a voice!

Thou flowing water, pure and clear,
Make music for thy Lord to hear,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Thou fire so masterful and bright,
That givest man both warmth and light.

And all ye men of tender heart,
Forgiving others, take your part,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Ye who long pain and sorrow bear,
Praise God and on Him cast your care!

Let all things their Creator bless,
And worship Him in humbleness,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
And praise the Spirit, Three in One!

Authors: St. Francis of Assisi and William Henry Draper
CCLI Song Number: 2846264

HOW CAN THE CHURCH RESPOND?

Climate justice is an issue that effects everyone and indeed has the potential to be a powerful uniting factor for the whole of the Church to work toward and lead in together. It is a tragic reality that those least responsible for climate crisis are often those most vulnerable to its devastating effects. We - the relatively wealthy western Church have also been historical contributors to what we now clearly see as climate crisis and injustice.

Therefore we have a pivotal role in leading the way to a re-flouring of God's very good creation. Truro Diocese have recently set out a strategic environmental policy and missional purpose as Cherish Creation, Cut Carbon, Speak Up. You can access this here:



<https://trurodiocese.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Environment-strategy.pdf>

So how will they actually achieve this?

Our call to Cherish Creation, Cut Carbon, Speak Up must start at a personal and local level, worked out in the families and communities in which we live, work and worship.

Cherish Creation might look like establishing a partnership with Cornwall Wildlife Trust for the environmental management of your church yard or grounds. This is a simple and hugely effective way to increase biodiversity.

Cut Carbon could be expressed though switching to a renewable

HOW CAN THE CHURCH RESPOND?

energy supplier for your church power and heat.

Speak Up could be heard by joining with the many petitions urging the government to take action and respond to climate crisis, not least as we approach COP26. COP26 will have a finite shelf life, but there will always be important environmental issues for people of faith and goodwill to urge the government to respond to.

Here is a couple of links to current COP26 Climate Crisis petitions:

<https://www.sas.org.uk/ocean-and-climate-petition/>

<https://actions.oxfam.org/great-britain/cop26/petition/>

It is also here that the freshly revised **Kernow Green Church Award** comes into play. This award is all about accessibility and encouraging first steps and lasting steps to engagement in Creation Care.

This newly revised award (Oct 2021), is designed to create a fruitful and sustainable avenue for the local church in Cornwall to engage in meaningful creation care and join with the nationally recognised A Rocha Eco Church scheme.

You can access the Kernow Green Church Award here:

<https://trurodiocese.org.uk/resources/creation-care/kernow-green-church-award/>

You can access the A Rocha Eco Church scheme here:

<https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk>

To achieve the Kernow Green Church Award, local churches are asked to complete and evidence the following four criteria:

- Pass a PCC resolution to adopt the 'Parish Creation Care Policy'.
The Diocesan Creation Care Group – CCG will develop this pro

HOW CAN THE CHURCH RESPOND?

forma resource for parishes to adopt and it will include:

- Creation Care as permanent PCC agenda item,
 - Annual carbon footprint return as part of annual parish returns,
 - Creation Sunday service or Creation Tide service /event etc.
- For each parish, appoint a Creation Care Champion/Officer (or team of champions) who are supported by and report to the PCC.
 - Register with the A Rocha Eco Church scheme.
 - Carry out the initial environmental audit via the Eco Church scheme.

The Kernow Green Church Award has been specifically designed to enable relatively easy engagement in working toward climate justice, whilst ensuring that practical steps are taken to help establish this essential work as part of the DNA of the local church.

Engaging in the Kernow Green Church Award and working with A Rocha Eco Church will enable your church and community to take steps to Cherish Creation, Cut Carbon & Speak up.

There will be other events and avenues where you can access training and development. Please do keep an eye on the Creation Care section of the Truro diocesan website for more details.

The Church is also blessed to have excellent relationships and partnerships with other organisations who have significant depth and knowledge in a faithful response to climate crisis. One such organisation is Green Christian.

Green Christian was formed in 1981, and formally constituted in 1982, with a vision to share green insights with Christians and Christian insights with the green movement. Since then, the ecological crisis has deepened so they seek more urgently to live gently on the earth,

HOW CAN THE CHURCH RESPOND?

encouraging one another in a discipleship which accepts our impact on God's creation as a whole.

They believe in a gospel for all creation which seeks to:

- Let loose hope in this damaged, exploited and unjust world.
- Pioneer practical discipleship in shared prayer, struggle and action.
- Equip prophetic witness through campaigns and resources, and
- Empower agents of change in churches and the green movement.

These actions are achieved through daily prayer, a simple lifestyle, public witness, encouragement of one another, and the provision of resources, including local groups, a daily prayer diary, an online discussion forum, retreats, campaigns, conferences and a huge bank of worship materials.

Green Christian is a community of volunteers, formed of ordinary Christians from all backgrounds and traditions who happen to be living in extraordinary times. They walk alongside those of faith and no faith. They try to be real, honest, truthful, on the radical edge of the environmental movement, speaking prophetically, pushing and praying for the protection of the natural world.

If you would like to reach out to others who are walking on a similar path to yourself, do consider exploring what Green Christian offers by visiting their website – <https://greenchristian.org.uk> - and browsing through a whole basket of services available to members for as little as £2 per month.

Or if you are short of time or need a break from reading, then perhaps just watch one of the films on their ever-growing YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/GreenChristian/videos>

HOW CAN THE INDIVIDUAL RESPOND?

SAVING THE PLANET FOR YOUR BANK ACCOUNT'S SAKE



Turn it off

Saving energy by turning off your electricals rather, than leaving them on standby, will help the planet and keep some extra cash in your pocket.

Don't waste food

7.3 million tonnes of food is wasted each year in the UK. This adds huge amounts of CO₂ to the environment and is also a waste of money.

Use LED light bulbs

LED light bulbs last longer and are far more efficient, meaning cheaper energy bills and buying less lightbulbs.

Insulate your home

If our homes are badly insulated then we need to use more energy to warm them in the winter, and more energy keeping them cool in the summer, meaning higher bills. Keep an eye out for grants to insulate your home.

Shop locally and coordinate shopping trips with friends

Where possible shop locally or consider car-pooling with friends to bigger supermarkets to reduce the number of cars making the same journey.

SAVING THE PLANET FOR YOUR BODY'S SAKE



Eat less meat

Cutting down red meat to two or three days a week can reduce your carbon footprint as well as benefiting your health by keeping your cholesterol down.

Compost

This reduces this waste going to landfill, as well as creating a natural fertiliser for growing healthy fruit and veg.

Try to cut out plastic

Stopping using single use plastic will cut out harmful toxins being leaked into our eco systems. Cut down on plastic bottles, bags and cheap clothing made from polyester.

Use eco-friendly cleaning products

A lot of cleaning products are full of harmful chemicals for both the planet and yourself. Look for eco products that are widely available or reuse bottles at the growing number of refill stores.

Reduce your personal car use

This is hard in Cornwall as our public transport is limited, but where you can try and walk, cycle, use public transport or car share with friends and neighbours.

Grow your own fruit, vegetables and/or herbs

This will cut down your carbon footprint, save you money, and benefit your mental health. If you don't have your own space, maybe try a local allotment society or share with a friend?

SAVING THE PLANET FOR THE PLANET'S SAKE



Buy second hand or share

If you do need to buy something new, try to ensure that it is as energy efficient as possible. Sometimes the longer term running costs can offset the initial spend.

Switch to renewables

It is easy to switch to a 100% renewable energy tariff. Talk to friends that may have already done this as their energy company might provide you both a referral incentive.

Recycle whenever you can

We may already be recycling our general waste with the council, but now you can easily recycle batteries, lightbulbs and clothes at your local recycling centre.

Limit your flights

Isn't it great that the UK has some beautiful spots like Pembrokeshire, the Yorkshire Dales, and Cornwall? Exploring our own country for holidays means that we will stop one of the most environmentally damaging thing you can do.

Plant some trees

Ecological sustainability is key for our future. Why not plant some trees in your garden or support the Woodland Trust?

Buy local

The closer to home something is made the less carbon is created through transportation.

WHAT'S NEXT?

CREATIONTIDE

The release of this toolkit has been timed to coincide with the beginning of Creationtide. Creationtide is an ecumenical initiative during which Christians around the world are encouraged to pray for, and care for, God's creation. It runs from the 1st of September to the 4th of October.

Creationtide is an opportunity for churches to include prayers, hymns, and sermons relating to the environment in their Sunday services. During this time, you might like to use the resources in this toolkit and those linked below to plan a service, a prayer evening, or a study group.



COP26 (UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE)

COP26 is the 26th meeting of world leaders at the UN climate change talks. It is scheduled to be held in the city of Glasgow, Scotland, from 31 October to 12 November 2021. As Christians in the UK, COP26 affords us a vital opportunity in influencing political leaders to be ambitious in taking steps to end the climate crisis. In the run up to the event, a broad coalition of Christian denominations and charities is calling on all churches to hold a 'Climate Sunday' and commit to effective action themselves. You can find more resources in the web links below. You might also like to use COP26 as an opportunity for prayer. *Pray and Fast for the Climate* have put together material for a prayer vigil for COP26 – for churches or small groups to use together – or as individuals. You can find the material at the link below:

<https://prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk/2021/07/31/prayer-vigil-for-cop26/>

FURTHER RESOURCES

Observing Creationtide or praying for COP26 is a fantastic opportunity to highlight the issue of climate change in our churches. As a springboard from these events, you might like to invite your congregations, friends, and families to continue learning about the climate crisis and the theology of creation care. Below you will find a range of websites and a reading list which will help on the way.

WEBLINKS

AROCHA: A Rocha UK (ARUK) is a Christian charity working for the protection and restoration of the natural world and committed to equipping Christians and churches in the UK to care for the environment.

<https://arocha.org.uk/>

Climate Sunday: The Climate Sunday initiative calls on all local churches across Great Britain & Ireland to hold climate-focused services. Their website provides service resources including hymns, sermon ideas, and prayers.

<https://www.climatesunday.org/>

YCCN: The Young Christian Climate Network are an action-focused community of young Christians in the UK aged 18-30, choosing to follow Jesus in the pursuit of climate justice.

<https://www.yccn.uk/>

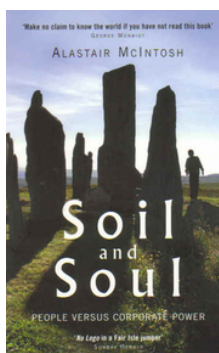
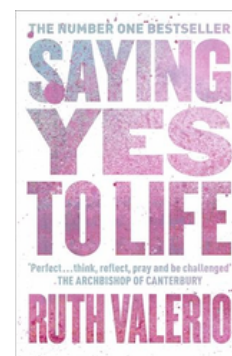
Green Christian: Green Christian exists to share Green insights with Christians and to offer Christian insights to the wider Green movement. Their website provides resources, including a magazine, worship materials, and much more.

<https://greenchristian.org.uk/>

READING LIST

Saying Yes to Life by Ruth Valerio

This book imaginatively draws on the themes of light, water, land, the seasons, other creatures, humankind, Sabbath rest, and resurrection hope. Expanding on matters of environmental, ethical and social concern, each chapter ends with discussion questions and a prayer to aid action and contemplation.

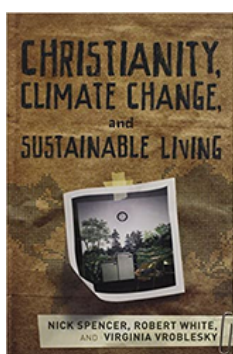
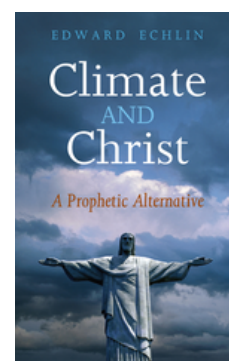


Soil and Soul by Alastair McIntosh

In this book, Alastair McIntosh shows how it is still possible for communities to take on the might of corporate power and emerge victorious. This book weaves together theology, mythology, economics, ecology, history, poetics and politics towards radical new philosophy of community, spirit, and place.

Climate and Christ by Edward P Echlin

Climate and Christ describes what climate change is and how it happens, and suggests ways in which ordinary people can help to mitigate it. A chapter discusses Jesus' own ecology, from birth to resurrection, and his own alternative itinerant lifestyle, preparing and preaching the kingdom.

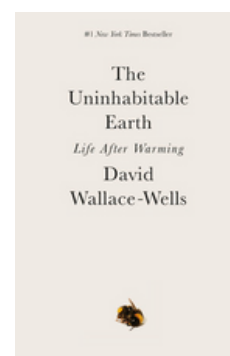


Christianity, Climate Change and Sustainable Living by Nick Spencer, Robert White, Virginia Vroblecky

This book analyses the scientific and theological thinking that makes a Christian response to climate change imperative before exploring what Christians, Church fellowships, and the Church generally, can do and campaign about.

The Uninhabitable Earth by David Wallace-Wells

In this book, Wallace-Wells provides a devastating overview of where we are in terms of climate crisis and ecological destruction, and what the future will hold if we keep on going down the same path. Offering the starkest possible warnings about our future The Uninhabitable Earth is an impassioned, imperative call to action.

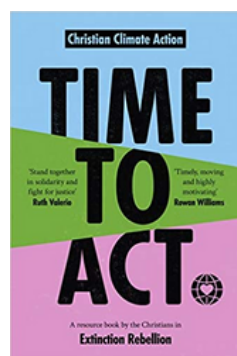
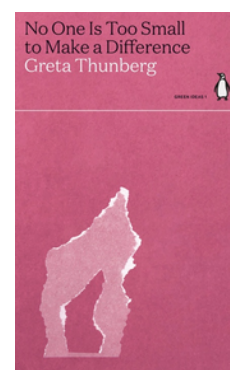


How to Save Our Planet by Mark Maslin

In this direct, handbook-style guide to our planet's future, Earth System Science Professor Mark Maslin outlines everything we know about our planet and, true to its title, how to save it. We have everything we need to preserve the planet, he argues, and reason to be optimistic about the future, too.

No One Is Too Small to Make a Difference by Greta Thunberg

Greta Thunberg was born in 2003. In August 2018, she started a school strike for the climate outside the Swedish Parliament that has since spread all over the world. This book collects Greta Thunberg's history-making speeches around the world.



Time to Act: A Resource Book by the Christians in Extinction Rebellion

Written by members and friends of Christian Climate Action, this stimulating resource book sets out the moral and religious case for joining the struggle against climate change. It reflects on the Christian tradition of non-violent direct action, and offers deeply moving testimonies by those engaged in such protests.

OUTRO

Thank you so much for reading this Creation Justice Toolkit. We really hope you have found the contents challenging, inspiring, and helpful. Although the climate crisis is incredibly serious, our Christian faith motivates us to remember the hope for creation presented in



scripture. Reading the Bible in the context of climate change reveals to us a vision of hope in God's faithfulness to creation, and a call to practise love and justice to our human and non-human neighbours. The promise of the Gospel is of hope and healing. This isn't a promise for the far future, the afterlife, but as Jesus' life and ministerial vision illustrates, it is a promise and hope revealed in the here and now.

In response to this hope, we are invited to participate in the healing of creation through prayer, preaching, and urgent action to reduce carbon emissions across our personal and Church lives. In other words, the hope of Christ lies in the action we take now to heal and restore his good creation and protect those most threatened by climate change.

This isn't an easy task, but neither is it one we should shy away from for fear that the challenge is too big. We can all take steps, no matter how small they may seem, to work for the world's healing. As Paul Tillich puts it, 'every victory, every particular progress from injustice to more justice, from suffering to more happiness, from hostility to more peace, from separation to more unity anywhere in humankind, is a manifestation of the eternal in time and space.'

Daniel Roberts & Joff Phipps

Transformation Cornwall Project Worker & Social Justice Missioner

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*AS CHRISTIANS, WE
ARE CALLED TO LOVE
WHAT GOD LOVES,
AND THAT MEANS IF
WE LOVE GOD, WE
MUST LOVE WHAT
GOD HAS MADE, AND
THAT MEANS OTHER
PEOPLE, BUT THAT
ALSO MEANS THIS
ENVIRONMENT IN
WHICH WE LIVE
RIGHT NOW.’*

“

Professor Alister McGrath

THANK YOU

This toolkit was put together as a collaboration between Churches Together in Cornwall, Transformation Cornwall, All Saints Highertown, the Diocese of Truro, and Green Christian.

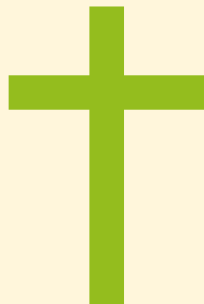
<https://www.ctcinfohub.org/>

<http://transformation-cornwall.org.uk/>

<https://www.asht.org.uk/>

<https://trurodiocese.org.uk/>

<https://greenchristian.org.uk/>



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