

an invitation to Christians to . . .

Care for God's Earth, Care for Each Other



“we are called to be, and are enabled to be, the place where God’s love for the world comes through...”

Archbishop Rowan Williams



Christian Concern for One World

www.ccow.org.uk @ccowinfo

The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it. (Psalm 24:1)

Consider this marvellous world. Earth. Air. Water. Food. The astounding array of animals and plants that share our planet. Wonderfully diverse brothers and sisters, our neighbours near and far. All are gifts from God.

As Christians, how do we respond to this generosity? If we look to Scripture for guidance, we find a call to live in right relationship with God, the earth and others. The Old Testament teaches us to worship our Creator not only in thanksgiving and praise but also by caring for the land, using the wealth it provides responsibly and fairly, and acting justly towards our fellow humans. In the New Testament, Christ sums up our calling in the command to love God with our whole being, and to love our neighbour – with whom we share the world – as ourself.

But all too often we go our own way. We use God's gifts for our convenience and pleasure without a sense of reverence and without really considering our impact on others or the planet.

Christian conservationist Dave Bookless of A Rocha reflects:

“At present, the average Briton uses such a large amount of the earth's resources that we would need almost three planet Earths if everybody in the world wanted to live the same way.”

The result? Polluted air and water, growing landfills, loss of species, climate change. And the burden of these impacts is falling disproportionately on the poorest and most vulnerable, who generally have contributed least to the situation.

Love for God and neighbour compels us to respond. And yet the scale of the problem, our own sense of smallness, and conflicting opinions and advice can leave us overwhelmed and confused.. We wonder: can we really make a difference?

The good news is that we can.
Everyone's response will be
different, but we've all been
given gifts to play our part.

On the next page are five steps that
can help you discern what that part
may be. Take them in any order
– though it's always good to
begin (and middle and end)
with prayer. Prayers and a list
of resources on the back can
help you on the way.

And be encouraged! God loves
His world and loves us – and
will show us what we can do.
And what God calls us to do,
God also empowers us to do.



PAUSE AND PRAY

At every stage on your journey, take time to listen, look, read, ponder, pray. Contemplate and wonder at God's gifts -- give thanks. As you learn about the impacts of environmental crises and injustice, pray for those suffering and ask forgiveness for our overuse of resources. Seek God's guidance for your journey forward in prayer and action.

LOOK AROUND YOU

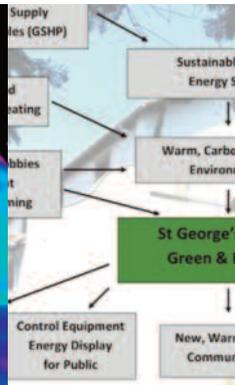
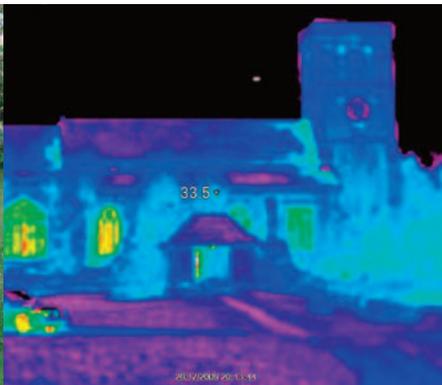
You and/or your church can look at

- Your everyday life.
- Your church life and church building
- What's happening in the wider world

What do you see that is good? What would you like to change? What areas are new to you? What further information would be helpful?

DREAM DREAMS

"Without a vision, the people perish." (Prov. 29:18) Right relationships are built on lots of small decisions and actions. But they also require a bigger vision, so we don't get lost in detail or become discouraged when the going gets tough. Build in time for sharing prayers and dreams, as well as planning practicalities. If you're doing this as a church, try to include people from every part of church life.



ACTION STATIONS!

Decide on your first steps. They don't have to be big - but take them!

Some people and groups choose a practical project as their first action. Bringing people together for a special event is another option. That could involve doing something special in a regular service or home group. Or you might want to organise a separate service, a talk or a social event -- perhaps a local and Fairtrade meal or carbon-cutting fair. Inviting someone such as an MP or councillor or someone from another church or country can provide a draw. And don't worry if your start feels small. Think of the mustard seed!

After you've taken action, take time to evaluate what you've done. Pray, look around you and look afresh at your vision. What will the next step on your journey be?

CONNECT AND SHARE

We can inspire and strengthen each other. Might you:

- form a group to encourage your church?
- join with people in other local churches or in the wider community?
- join an online community or email group?
- share your stories through a blog?
- sign up for a conference where you can share what you're doing and learn from others?



Rooted and Grounded in Prayer

Take Lord the loaves and fishes of my day

and use them as you will for the growth of your Kingdom.

Brian Noble/CAFOD

Worship as if creation matters:

W Wonder at God's creation

O Openness to God speaking through creation

R Rootedness in the place where God puts us

S Sabbath rest and recreation

H Hands-on involvement with creation

I Integration of all our relationships

P Prayer for God's kingdom

Dave Bookless/www.arochoa.org.uk

O God of heaven and earth,

you desire a reconciliation of the whole creation. We confess that we too often make choices that separate and destroy. Forgive us our selfish ways. Help us to seek justice, O God, and to walk humbly beside you as we seek a life that is more simple and more centered on You. Help us to join joyfully in your work of bringing new life to a broken world. Amen

NCC/It's God's World: Christians, Care for Creation and Global Warming

May God who established the dance of creation,

who marvelled at the lilies of the field,

who transforms chaos to order,

lead us to transform our lives and the Church

to reflect God's glory in creation.

CTBI



tearfund

CLIMATE
JUSTICE
NOW!

THE WAVE



CLIMATE
JUSTICE
NOW

OVER

Taking Things Further . . .

The [CCOW website](http://www.ccow.org.uk) (www.ccow.org.uk) has ideas for every step of the journey, with weblinks to further resources. These include:

- Prayers, reflections and books that explore why and how Christians care for the environment and each other
- Surveys to help you look at your church's activities and buildings
- Information about the impact of environmental issues in other countries and how we can respond
- Inspiring stories of action here and around the world
- Suggestions for special services, events, speakers and campaigns
- Links to community groups and guides to interacting with politicians
- How-to materials on reducing your energy use
- Blogs, websites and newsletters that help you keep in touch with what other churches are doing.

A [printed list of ideas](#) is also available.

CCOW also moderates an [Eco-Congregation E-Group](#), whose emails keep you in touch with new resources and what's happening locally. Email maranda@ccow.org.uk to sign up.

At CCOW, we're also delighted to [respond to your queries](#) and to [work with you to plan events](#). Contact us for further details.

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