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BATH & WELLS**

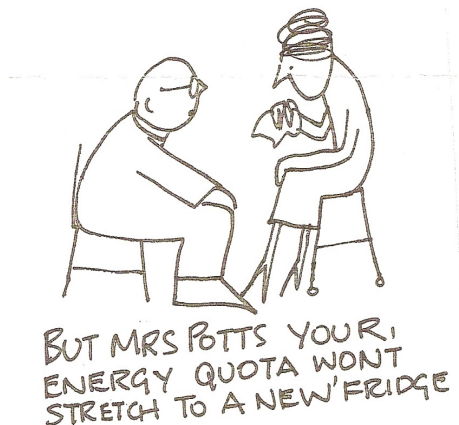
Changing Lives, Changing Churches for Changing Communities

Diocesan Environment Link

From the Bath & Wells Diocesan Environment Group (DEG)

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2010 Lent course: Love for the future

Love for the future is the title of the Bath & Wells diocesan Lent course for 2010. It is currently being written, scripted and filmed by a team put together by the Diocesan Environment Group.

The six-week course concentrates on issues of social justice and the environment and covers six main topics; respect, compassion, simplicity, active justice, repentance and hope. Each week's session includes a 15-minute DVD film suitable for house groups and services, also group discussion material, bible study notes and pointers to other resources.

The course, which will also be suitable for occasions other than Lent, explores the way that different kinds of spirituality can help generate the attitudes we need in order to face and influence the future. It argues that to develop family and community life, respond to the environmental crisis, and work towards the Millennium Development Goals we need the six qualities featured.

Drawing on the experience and insights of church members from across the diocese, of diocesan advisers and the bishops, the course suggests ways that we can allow God to develop these in us. Preliminary material for course planning will be available in Autumn 2009. Full materials will be available January 2010. Lent begins on 17th February.

Church leaders support climate change day of prayer

British church leaders have expressed support for a Climate Change Day of Prayer on 4 October in the run up to the next United Nations climate change summit due to take place at the end of the year.

Resources are now available on the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland website to help Christians organise local events on 4 October, or another nearby date that might be more suitable. The Climate Change Day of Prayer will be the culmination of a "Time for Creation" month of study by British and Irish churches on the theme of "Creation in Crisis - a time for prayer and action".

The Climate Change Day of Prayer is an initiative of the Environmental Issues Network of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI). The network brings together environmental representatives from all of Britain and Ireland's mainstream churches. Also involved are Christian development and environmental organisations, including Christian Aid, CAFOD, Tearfund, A Rocha, Christian Ecology Link, EcoCongregation, the John Ray Initiative, and Operation Noah.

The Day of Prayer is supported by the Environmental Issues Network (EIN) of Churches Together in Britain & Ireland (CTBI). A key aim is to pray for God's will to be done during the decisive Copenhagen COP 15 talks this December. Christians of all denominations are joining together to express their concerns over the seriousness and urgency of our global situation.

Sunday October 4th is suggested as the day of prayer (though individual churches will be free to make their own arrangements and dates). This date is St Francis Day and the final Sunday of the Time for Creation (September 1st – October 4th). It will also be harvest festival in many churches. The time of prayer could be from 12 noon to 6 pm and will encourage people to 'stop' in a busy world and take time out in prayer and meditation. People may want to combine this with a time of fasting. People will be welcome to come for as short or long a time as they wish.

All the necessary information and resources are provided free of charge to help you to prepare and run a day of prayer.

Click on the [Introductory letter](#) links for introductory information:

Somerset Churches Together – Annual Forum

Becoming an eco-congregation will be the topic of one of the afternoon workshops that form part of the Somerset Churches Together Autumn Forum to be held at Locking Castle Church on Saturday 17th October. In the morning there will also be brief presentations on the subject by three diocesan churches, two of which have already gained the Eco-congregation award (Holy Trinity Cleeve and Holy Trinity Nailsea). Holy Trinity with Trendlewood is the latest church to gain the Eco-congregation bringing the total number in England to 145.

And at Number 137 Chelmsford has become the first Eco Cathedral.

Following an assessment by the Groundwork Trust, Chelmsford Cathedral is the first cathedral in England and Wales to gain eco congregation status. Announcing the award, David Hughes says the assessors gave the thumbs up on April 29. He was very impressed " by the amount of work you are doing to take your entire estate of buildings so much greener. This is often a very valuable witness to the community that the church takes seriously our call to be stewards of God's creation."

The eco community status means that the regular congregation will be encouraged to improve the facilities and to progress in mission as an eco congregation green church. The administrator, David Fifield leads a team of enthusiasts in a community where the regular worshippers already enjoy Fair trade status. An eco-group monitors progress. (More information in the Press notice issued on March 9th'09. Copies still available).

Among the initiatives taken at Chelmsford are issuing green bins in offices for paper recycling, using a compost heap in the Guy Harlings gardens, declaring an office stationery amnesty and encouraging economy in the use of all resources.. The Chapter has also commissioned an environmental audit of the Chapter House and a number of ideas are being followed up - eg: changing fuel used for heating from electricity to gas; improving thermal insulation in the roof and walls; providing an energy upgrade to the lift and fitting low-flow water using appliances to taps etc. In addition, light fittings and some domestic electrical items will be replaced.

Renewing the Cathedral's five main boilers with energy efficient models and incorporating a dedicated low energy circuit into the Cathedral lighting system will be investigated. Mr Fifield asks for the support of worshippers and he will keep them advised. The Cathedral community has its own Environmental Group and has Fair trade church status. A cathedral jute shopping bag is available at the bookstall (£2.50).

Mendip Society expresses concern over impact of barrage on the Mendip Hills.

In its response to the government's call for comments on its choice of tidal schemes for further study, the Mendip Society reporting in its latest newsletter expresses the need for further detailed study of less damaging schemes. It also questions whether the Cardiff to Weston barrage scheme should still be in the programme of research. It also believes that additional quarrying ` on the scale needed, if permitted in the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty would constitute a disaster for its fragile environment, as it would for the Wye Valley AONB. Among its other concerns is the impact of overhead power lines and substations and the necessary strengthening to the national grid where these go through the Mendip Hills.

Ecotricity boss slams Bristol airport expansion

Ecotricity CEO Dale Vince, has made public his concerns about Bristol airport's expansion plans in a letter published in The Guardian today.

Also signed by the Avon Wildlife Trust, World Wildlife Fund, Christian Aid and the Climate Outreach and Information Network (COIN), the letter expresses concern that BIA's plans will increase CO₂ emissions by more than double at a time when the Climate Change Act commits us to cutting emissions to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

Mr Vince also commented: "We all need to be flying less not more. Bigger airports are just plain wrong."

Mr Vince and the letter's other authors go on to say that the £700 million annual tourism deficit to the UK economy, caused by six to ten times more tourists flying out of Bristol than visiting, far outweighs any jobs generated by the airport. They also say they believe the claimed economic benefits do not justify the damage that will be caused to the local environment by the physical impact of the expansion as well as to the global environment by the increased emissions.

Bishop blesses compost toilet

Rural churches with no running water are improving their facilities with the installation of cost-effective compost toilets. The latest environmentally friendly toilet, installed in an isolated church in Devon, has been blessed by the Bishop of Crediton, the Rt Revd Bob Evens.

The twin 'treebog' was constructed at Escot Church in East Devon (Exeter Diocese) after church members and vicar the Revd Cate Edmonds agreed it was the answer to the problem of hosting special events at a church that stands in the middle of a field. The previous alternatives had been importing costly porta-loos or 'inviting' people to take a chance behind a tree. The cost of connecting the church to the main water supply and building toilets is estimated to be around 10 times the price of installing a compost system.

John Michael Kennaway from Escot installed the eco-friendly timber and straw toilets (called treebogs); they require no running water and will also be available to passing walkers.

The principle of these toilets is simple, says Martyn Goss, Director of the Council for Church and Society (Exeter Diocese): "A pit about 8' x 4' x 6' deep is dug and that forms the soakaway. The pit is then surrounded by a 5' high wall of straw bales encompassed around by chicken wire – to stop damage from animals (or others). Sat atop the bales is a platform onto which two proper enclosed toilets have been built – they are approached up a flight of wooden steps.

The whole construction is made from timber and straw bales. There is no running water, plumbing or electricity. Everything is ecologically recognised and acceptable to such bodies as National Trust, Friends of the Earth and RSPB. Gravity takes away the liquids and the solids break down naturally. There is little or no odour, and no health hazards."

Going on staycation? - C of E website puts local churches on the itinerary

The Church of England has launched a new web service for people taking a Staycation - holidaying from home instead of going away - during the recession. Staycations offer the opportunity to discover everything a local area has to offer, with cathedrals and local churches often at its centre, says a new Church of England website section at www.cofe.anglican.org/staycations.

Experts expect 'staycations' to be the trend as families who cancel or cut back their holiday plans opt to stay at home during their summer break. In July, a [survey](#) reported that a third of the public said that they were switching their plans from a holiday abroad to a holiday in Britain.

Where better than local churches and cathedrals, the C of E website asks, to relax and 'switch off', given that so many of the Church of England's 16,000 parish churches are not just living, active sacred spaces but also museums, art galleries and events venues all rolled into one?

On the website pages, staycationers can plan their 'praycation' by browsing a wide selection of holiday-at-home suggestions, and 10 websites are recommended so visitors can find their local church and cathedral to make the most of their staycation. Janet Gough, Director of the Archbishops' Council's Cathedral and Church Buildings Division, says churches "matter to people even if they are not religious" in a podcast available at the new section.

She notes the number of times village churches appear on signs for villages, adding: "so many of them are beautiful and contain beautiful artefacts". Over the next month the pages at www.cofe.anglican.org/staycations will be developed with further ideas and suggestions.

For your diary

From the CEL newsletter.

1. 1ST SEPTEMBER TO 4TH OCTOBER - Creation Time – the focus this year is on climate change. Visit www.ctbi.org.uk/creationtime for material to use in services, including sample sermons written by CEL member Rev Keith Innes and a suggestion to arrange LOAF meals – www.ctbi.org.uk/375
2. 4TH OCTOBER – Day of Prayer. Organise a Day of Prayer at your church. For Information, publicity material, guidelines on running the day, and a sample of the content visit www.christian-ecology.org.uk/day-of-prayer.htm
3. 13TH OCTOBER – Operation Noah Lecture by Archbishop of Canterbury, 7pm to 9pm, Southwark Cathedral, London Bridge. The Archbishop will speak on 'The Climate Crisis: A Christian Response'. Visit www.operationnoah.org to find out more and to book your FREE place.
4. 17TH OCTOBER - STAND UP AND TAKE ACTION (THE GREAT PERSUASION) Last year over 116 million people joined in the world's largest anti-poverty mass action, in which people around the world stand in solidarity with each other and for the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. This year UK participants are being asked to stand up and take action – contacting their MPs in the hope of persuading them to take action on global poverty and climate change issues. For further information, contact Christian Concern for One World. Visit www.ccow.org/uk
5. 24TH OCTOBER – INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION based around the need to return to 350 PARTS PER MILLION CO2 which many climate scientists say is the safe upper limit for CO2 in our atmosphere. Church bells will ring out 350 times. Visit www.350.org
6. 5TH DECEMBER – THE WAVE: STOP CLIMATE CHAOS SERVICE AND MARCH. A time

to pray and a time to march. We hope to see thousands of Christians worshipping together in Central Hall, Westminster. The Archbishop of Canterbury is preaching at the Service, and the Archbishop of Westminster and other church leaders will lead everyone out of Central Hall to join tens of thousands on the joyful and peaceful March around the Thames. Book a coach for your church and bring blue banners to wave. Visit www.christian-ecology.org.uk/copenhagenservice.htm

7. 13TH DECEMBER – During the climate change talks and ecumenical service takes place in Copenhagen Cathedral. The Archbishop of Canterbury is preaching. As the service ends at 3pm church bells will ring 350 times in Copenhagen, and throughout Europe. Can you persuade local bell-ringers to join in?

Also - On the 5th October The Stop Climate Change Coalition is organizing a march in London to encourage the world leaders at the UN Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen to deliver on their promises on climate change. SCC is supported by over 100 organisations including the RSPB and the National Trust, Tearfund, CAFOD and Christian Aid. For more information about The Wave look at the SCC website at www.stopclimatechaos.org/the-wave..

Kirsten Auken of DanChurchAid writes.

I am in charge of coordinating the common efforts of churches and church related development agencies during COP15 at the Ecumenical Climate Secretariat hosted by DanChurchAid and financed by the World Council of Churches (WCC) and members of the Aprove Network - in UK it is Christian Aid. We are working closely together with the National Council of Churches in Denmark on the activities during COP15, e.g. the Church Service on December 13 at 2 pm and the bell ringing at 3pm.

We will soon launch a website about the bellringing on www.bellringing350.org (not working yet - but very soon, I promise). We call for churches all over the world to join in for the bell ringing with 350 strokes at 3pm local time. In Denmark this is when the ecumenical service in the cathedral ends. The 350 strokes is to show what is supposed to be the safe level of CO2 in the atmosphere (measured in points per million) if we want to keep the temperature rise well below two degrees.

The bell ringing is also seen as a sign of alarm, prayer and hope at the same time. If you don't have bells to ring, other kinds of sound can be used as well. And we invite representatives of other faith to join in as well. We ask everybody who participate to register on the website as soon as it is up and running so we can get a picture of how many churches are joining. A letter about the bell ringing is due to be sent out by the World Council of Churches very soon.' Kirsten Auken <kman@dca.dk>

Future CEL events.

CEL Conference 2009, 7 November, Ottery St Mary, Devon
Transition Towns and sustainable Ottery

CEL Gathering 2010, 12-14 February, Scarborough, Yorkshire
On the verge of chaos:transitional living in a time of collapse.

From LowCarbonEconomy.com newsletter.

Low carbon technology vital to future UK energy security The move to a low-carbon economy will be as crucial to securing the future energy security of the UK as it will be to tackling climate change, it has been suggested. According to an independent report by MP Malcolm Wicks, the prime minister's special representative on international energy, new sources of power generation will help the UK to break its dependence on imports.

The report urged the government to pursue energy-efficiency drives and the development of more, home-grown renewable energy projects as a matter of priority. Concluding that the UK should ensure energy-efficiency is at the heart of all its plans, Mr Wicks' report also called for the country to be kept at the forefront of carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology.

The MP commented: "We must be far smarter with the energy we use and invest in homegrown energy sources, such as new nuclear and renewables without delay. Complete energy independence is an unrealistic goal but there is much we can do to insulate ourselves from the risks, in large part by driving our climate policies even further, quicker."

The Department of Energy and Climate change has welcomed the report, which it intends to consider as it moves forward with energy policy. Ed Miliband, UK climate change secretary, added: "We'll continue to use fossil fuels in the near term as part of our transition to the low carbon economy and maximise our own North Sea reserves, as well as do all we can to secure the most diverse range of energy imports."

At Hilfield Friary

13-15 November Jesus, Climate and Earth Inclusive Discipleship.

Led by Edward Echlin

'We will look at the earth inclusive work being done at Hilfield both in the soil and in the built environment. We will take a moderate walk in the surrounding countryside. We will discuss organic fruit and vegetable growing; and the LOAF principles (food which is Locally produced, Organically grown, Animal friendly and Fairly traded) and food preserving. On Sunday, after morning Eucharist, we will share experiences and insights on what we can do in earth inclusive discipleship as we return to our home community.'

Dr Edward Echlin is an eco-theologian, an Honorary Research Fellow at Trinity & All Saints, Leeds, and at Sarum, Salisbury. He formerly lectured at John Carroll University, Ushaw College, and Lincoln Theological College. He grows fruit and vegetables organically in East Sussex.

Venue Friary of St Francis, Hilfield DT2 7BE. Recommended Donation £85.00
For more information and booking please contact Sarah Hargreaves Tel: 01300 341741 email hilfieldproject@franciscans.org.uk website www.hilfieldproject.co.uk

TENONS (The environment network of North Somerset) : forthcoming event.

To enable people to find out more and to express their concerns about the Severn Estuary tidal energy proposals at present being considered by Government, TENONS has organised a free public conference Saturday 24th October at The Blakehay Centre, Wadham Street, Weston-super-Mare.

Speakers include:

Rupert Armstrong-Evans who is the pioneer of the Tidal Reef, one of the new technologies chosen to benefit from the £500k fund created by Ministers to develop them further; Professor Roger Falconer who is Halcrow Professor at Cardiff University, an expert on the barrage options; Jim Galvin, General Manager of Fleming Energy,

who will speak about lagoons and; Peter Kydd, Director of Planning and Environment at Parsons Brinckerhoff to give us an overview on Tidal Options.

Marian Barber, Head of Economy and Regeneration at North Somerset Council will be introducing the event and also will be part of the panel for questions and comments. Entry is free and the event will run from 9.45 a.m. to 12.45 p.m. See www.tenons.org.uk for more details or to make any special mobility arrangement phone 01934 623000.

Faith Net Southwest Event.

6th October – Faithnetsouthwest AGM and Conference

10.00-15.30 - Taunton Catholic Centre, The Mount, Taunton, TA1 3NR

The Faithnetsouthwest AGM conference will address the themes of The Spirit of Interfaith Week & Resourcing Faith Groups in the Community. Guest speakers at the conference will include the Right Reverend Mike Hill, Bishop of Bristol, and Warwick Hawkins from the Communities and Local Government Department. Please watch for more details of this event over the summer.

Contact: info@faithnetsouthwest.org.uk, 0117 304 2298 or 162 Pennywell Road, Bristol, BS5 0TX

Friends of the Earth comment on Defra's vision for sustainable food

Commenting on a package of documents published by Defra on the 10 August outlining the latest stage of the Government's vision of a sustainable food system, Friends of the Earth's Senior Food Campaigner Clare Oxborrow said:

"The Government is finally waking up to the fact that food security is a UK issue, but it has failed to introduce decisive policies to tackle the food industry's global environmental impacts and to secure sustainable and fair food supplies.

"Ministers are still fixated on genetic modification but this isn't a solution - GM crops do not have higher yields and the mythical drought and salt resistant crops still exist only as expensive PR promises rather than commercial reality.'

The editor of DEL is always interested in hearing about environmental events and projects from around the diocese, in particular work in individual churches and deaneries. And we always welcome new subscribers (free). Send an e-mail to brianckellock@brianckellock.plus.com.

Or you can add your name to the subscriber list through our website www.bathandwellsevenvironmental.org.uk Back issues and other useful information can also be accessed through the site.

