



**Wakefield  
Cathedral**

**Learn, Love, Save**

**a greener future for Wakefield Cathedral**

## Foreword

In the first chapter of Genesis the writer describes God's acts of creation over six days. Many of these acts of creation are followed by the phrase *and God saw that it was good*, or something similar<sup>1</sup>. Finally, after the creation of human beings in God's image and likeness on the sixth day, the writer describes how God surveys God's handiwork: *God saw everything that he had made, and indeed it was very good*. We are to understand that the whole created order, human and non-human, is good and valuable in its own right. The second creation story, in Genesis chapter two, offers a complementary perspective. There is the same emphasis on human beings being part of the created order, but the writer describes how God specifically creates humans to *till and keep*<sup>2</sup> all that is in the Garden of Eden. Cultivating and protecting the natural world is part of God's call on the life of humanity, part of our God-given responsibility. In Genesis chapter three we read how the self-interest of the man and the woman, focussed on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, damaged their relationship with God and the rest of creation. The chapter ends with God expelling them from Eden.

The great narrative sweep of scripture that follows this act of human disobedience is the story of God's reconciliation of himself with human beings along with the whole created order. As we read in the Letter to the Colossians: *(Through Christ) God was pleased to reconcile himself to all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross*<sup>3</sup>. In the Revelation to John, the final book of the Bible, the consummation of this reconciliation, the final fruit of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, is beautifully described: *On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations*<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Genesis 1:4, 1:10, 1:12, 1:18, 1:21, 1:25

<sup>2</sup> Genesis 2:15

<sup>3</sup> Colossians 1:20

<sup>4</sup> Revelation 22:2

Although the ultimate fulfilment of this reconciliation lies beyond human time, God's call on humanity to tend and to cherish creation, described in the opening chapters of the Bible, remains central to our responsibility as Christians. Wakefield Cathedral's Green Policy, *Learn, Love, Save*, is part of our response to that calling. May God bless us, collectively and as individuals, as we seek to live out that call faithfully, responsibly and joyfully.

## Introduction

*'We won't save places we don't love; we can't love places we don't know, and we don't know places we haven't learned'* – Baba Dioum

The idea of saving the planet can be an overwhelming and abstract idea. However, by engaging in learning about, loving, and caring deeply for the habitat where Wakefield Cathedral has been geographically placed (discovering the local ecosystem - wildlife, local produce, local flowers and so on), and by encouraging one another to do likewise in our own communities, the idea of caring for the planet becomes more familiar and manageable. This in turn will help us to develop a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by those communities across our world that are most affected by the climate crisis.

Baba Dioum's quotation above puts it succinctly: a focus on learning more deeply about the gift of God's creation that is all around us will help open up a deeper love for it and will motivate us to nurture and preserve it.

As members of the worshipping community at Wakefield Cathedral, we recognize our spiritual and ethical responsibility to limit the cathedral's impact on the environment by using our resources in an effective and efficient way. This policy aims to challenge us in our practice and to hold us to account as we seek to become carbon neutral by 2030. The policy will evolve to take into account the changing nature of our communities, and of technology, habitats and aspirations.

We also recognize our duty to be an example of best practice and mission in the field of environmental care and will seek to demonstrate this through work that tackles the climate emergency and the global injustice caused by climate change.

The Chapter of Wakefield Cathedral  
August 2021

# Our Policy

## We will:

- continue to reflect theologically on our responsibilities as stewards of God's creation in partnership with the cathedral's worshipping community and the many other communities we serve and with which we work;
- reduce the cathedral's carbon measurement annually in keeping with our commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030;
- establish an environmental officer and Eco team who will monitor and report annually to Chapter on progress;
- avoid wasting resources, food and water and conserve energy as far as possible;
- take environmental concerns fully into account in repair and future construction work;
- recycle as much as possible;
- consider locally sourcing supplies and fair trade;
- empower employees, stakeholders and congregations to contribute to improving our carbon footprint and environmental care by providing training in keeping with aims;
- increase our understanding and knowledge of our local environment, promote care for biodiversity and wildlife in the community and encourage this throughout Wakefield and the diocese;
- show an active concern and solidarity with communities across the world most affected by the climate crisis;
- take into account environmental concerns in our worship, study, training, events, administrative and other programmes and projects;
- partner with third sector organisations to support the work of
  - local and national environmental causes.

