

## Messages from church leaders

Pope Francis spoke of “care for our common home” in his recent encyclical on climate change, and our human response to it. Our Earth is indeed a finite home which we share with all other people and with all other living things. Allowing it to become so misused that it falls into ruin is an act of profound injustice to all who share our home, as well as to those who will come after us. Caring for our common home is central to Christian mission.

*(Ian James, Chair of the CTiC Environment Group)*



The earth is complex, its systems of life are finely balanced. Small changes can have major consequences. "Yet the earth" as one writer states "flows out of the heart of a loving Creator. Touched by God's hand, our world is holy". We have an obligation to care for, understand, sustain and tend God's gift to us

*(Revd Richard Teal, President, Churches Together in Cumbria; Chair, Cumbria Methodist District)*



Each and every person shares in the responsibility to care for our planet and to live sustainably. Just as maintaining our own health is a delicate and carefully balanced craft, so is care for the world.

*(Revd Sarah Moore, President, Cumbria Area of the North Western Synod of the United Reformed Church)*



The Psalm says that “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it”. We are surrounded and sustained by the generous goodness of God, and God has entrusted this world into our hands, to care for it, to

honour it, to share its bounty, and to enjoy it – because what God has made is ‘very good’.

I wholeheartedly commend this simple leaflet, which is packed with do-able and imaginative ideas about how we can make a difference in our care for God’s world.

*(Rt Revd Robert Freeman, Bishop of Penrith, Chair of ‘God for All’)*



## Churches Together in Cumbria Environment Group



## Care for our common home

*Let us strive together to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.*

[www.churchestogethercumbria.co.uk/living-lightly](http://www.churchestogethercumbria.co.uk/living-lightly)

# What can your church do?

## Worship and teaching

- Make caring for our common home a regular focus of intercessions.
- Stress that climate change and social justice around the world are inseparable.
- Use outdoor activities to open people’s eyes to the glories of the natural world.
- Help your local schools to make the link between faith and care for the earth.
- Create prayer stations about the natural world.
- Display children’s art/craft work about creation, the seasons and the natural world.
- Display information for visitors about nature in the church garden

## Community and global outreach

- “Green” contributions in church magazine/local press.
- Support actions to build more sustainable local communities.
- Encourage the re-homing of unwanted household items.
- Write to your MP / MEP to highlight environmental issues.
- Plan a “Green Christmas Fair” using home-made, locally sourced materials.
- Support Fairtrade / Christian Aid etc.

# Practical action in your church

- Carry out an energy audit.
- Switch to a “renewable” electricity.
- Plant pollinator-friendly flowers.
- Change to low energy lighting.
- Leave some unmown space for wild flowers and other wild life.
- Improve thermal insulation – draught excluders, curtain linings, secondary double glazing.
- Consider solar panels to generate electricity.
- Turn off appliances when not in use; avoid leaving equipment on stand-by.
- Enrol on the “Eco-church” scheme.



## Personal actions

- Include caring for our common home as a regular part of your prayers.
- Seek local, seasonal foods.
- Improve home insulation and ensure you are using low energy lighting.
- Car share where you can, walk or cycle if possible.
- Consider the impact of holidays on the environment.
- Estimate a carbon footprint of your home, and see how you could reduce it (*see resources section*).
- Care for wildlife in your garden.

# Resources

- [www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk](http://www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk)
- [www.greenchristian.org.uk](http://www.greenchristian.org.uk) Introducing the Earth to the Church, and the Church to the Earth.
- [www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx](http://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx) to calculate your carbon emissions.
- [www.operationnoah.org](http://www.operationnoah.org) Leadership, focus and inspiration in response to the threat of climate change – links to many resources

## Become our eco-contact in your local community

We would love to hear from people ready to be our “environmental champion” in their church or meeting. Please return this slip it to:

*Ian James, High Pasture, Crook Road, Kendal, Cumbria LA8 8LY*

Name .....

Address .....

..... Postcode .....

Phone .....

E-mail .....

Church or meeting .....

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