

Renewing Creation

A newsletter for Christians
in Newcastle and Northumberland

July 2009

Kirkup at Dianekirkup@aol.com or on (0191) 2844617.

Countdown to Copenhagen

The United Nations will meet in Copenhagen in December 2009, when countries are due to agree an international climate deal. For more information visit www.christianaid.org.uk/ActNow/Countdown-to-Copenhagen-climate-change.

Welcome to *Renewing Creation*!

This newsletter is intended primarily for Christians in the area covered by the Church of England Diocese of Newcastle, and for anyone who wishes to receive it. It is produced on behalf of the Diocesan Environment Group.

From now on, *Renewing Creation* will be sent to everyone on the email list for the Diocesan Bulletin, in the hope that it might be a useful resource for the growing number of churches that are seeking to make the care of creation an integral part of their life and witness. If *Renewing Creation* has been passed on to you from someone else, and you'd like to receive your own copy by email, please contact Jill Elphick (details overleaf).

Good news from Burradon

The Revd Angela Maughan writes

"We have been doing an environmental project at the Church of the Good Shepherd, called the Eden Project. Young people from Seaton Burn have been redesigning our Church grounds. They are learning about the environment and how to access funding, and their work on the project contributes towards their GCSEs. They have been learning about wild flowers and plants, and we are going to place bird boxes, lay paths and install memorial seats, and we hope to try a bit of stone walling if we can get someone to show us how! Lots of exiting things are happening. The space will hopefully be used by wildlife, the church and the wider community. It is only a small churchyard but what a lot can be achieved even in such a small sacred space!"

More stories wanted!

If you or your church are doing something for the environment, the Diocesan Environment Group would like to hear about it! Please contact Diane

Find out more about Ground-source heat pumps (and Air-source heat pumps)

Beneath the surface, the ground stays at a constant temperature throughout the year. Ground-source heat pumps transfer this stored warmth from underground to the inside of buildings, with minimal running costs and carbon emissions.

Phil Todd,
Technical Manager with Viessmann Ltd,
will be available at Church House as follows:

**10am - 4pm
Wednesday 30th September**

He will be giving short presentations
at 10am, 12 noon and 2pm,
but feel free to drop in at any time.
A buffet will be available.

The seminar has been organised by Peter Mills, whose company has the heating maintenance contract for clergy houses in the Newcastle Diocese. For more information contact Peter on 07789 914522.

Shrinking the Footprint in the Church of England and beyond

A conference was held at Lambeth Palace on 11th June to mark the third anniversary of the Church of England's environment campaign. Rob Kelsey, the Diocesan Environment Officer, and Ian Beswick, the Diocesan Property Manager, gave a joint presentation on the work that's been done to measure and improve the energy efficiency of clergy houses in both Newcastle and Durham Dioceses. It was satisfying to know that, in this particular area of work, the two north east dioceses are setting a good

example for others to follow. It was challenging to hear about the good work going on in other dioceses, which we might wish to emulate.

The conference included presentations by the Bishop of London and Joan Ruddock MP, and the overall impression was that the Church of England is becoming increasingly business-like in its response to the threat of climate change.

The *Shrinking the Footprint* web-site has recently been re-launched, and has a great deal more to offer, including guidelines for action, case studies and information about grants. It's well worth exploring!

The Climate Justice Fund

In September 2009 the Church of England will launch the Climate Justice Fund under the umbrella of *Shrinking the Footprint*. The Fund is a web-based tool that enables individuals, parishes and dioceses in the UK to calculate their own carbon footprint and pay compensation for anything over their fair share. The money will be used to finance church-based adaptation projects from around the Anglican Communion. The rationale for the fund is that climate change affects us all, but it is the world's poor who are already suffering its devastating impacts. Responding to the climate challenge requires both changes in lifestyle and financial compensation for those most affected.

The fund is being managed by Tearfund, one of the UK's leading relief and development agencies. Once launched, the web-site will be found at www.climatejusticefund.org.uk.

'Encouraging Wildlife in Churchyards'

This was the title of a seminar held at St Nicholas's Church in Gosforth on 25th April. It was well-attended and well-presented, with interesting contributions on a variety of subjects, including biodiversity, yew trees, lichens, birds and bumble bees. Janis Irvine, who organised the event on behalf of the Diocesan Environment Group, has produced a help sheet that can be obtained from her at (01434) 673609.

Time for Creation, 1st September – 4th October

In 1989 the Ecumenical Patriarch suggested that 1st September, the first day of the Orthodox

Church's year, should be observed as a day 'of protection of the natural environment.' Ten years later the European Christian Environmental Network (ECEN) widened this proposal, urging churches to adopt a Time for Creation stretching from 1st September to the feast of St Francis on 4th October. This was endorsed by the 3rd European Ecumenical Assembly in Romania in 2007, which recommended that the period 'be dedicated to prayer for the protection of Creation and the promotion of sustainable lifestyles that reverse our contribution to climate change.'

Resources for Creation Time 2009 are entitled 'Creation in Crisis – a time for prayer and action' and include material to help focus on the crucial issues that will be on the agenda of the UN Climate Summit in Copenhagen in December 2009. The resources have been produced by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and are available from www.ctbi.org.uk/375.

A selection of future environmental dates

1st September – 4th October 2009: 'Time for God's Creation.' See above for more details.

4th October 2009: Animal Welfare Sunday. The theme this year is 'Not Forgotten by God - Animals as part of God's Community.' Animal Welfare Sunday guide booklets are downloadable from www.aswa.org.uk/animalwelfaresun.html.

And finally ...

Contributions to *Renewing Creation* are welcome. Please send them to Rob Kelsey. The copy deadline for the next issue is **30th August 2009**.

Contacts

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