

Churches Together in Westminster Newsletter Nov 2017

Eco Church and Creation Care

Last time.... we drew attention to Pope Francis' encyclical 'Laudato si' with its insistent call to 'the whole of humanity to understand and respond to the destruction that we are causing to the environment and to other people'. Climate change is the defining issue of our time and the UK has set statutory national obligations, to cut carbon emissions by 42% by 2020, and 80% by 2050. For churches to lead by example and still keep warm, open and welcoming is a huge challenge.

In response to this challenge...In October, the first national Eco Church conference took place in London at St James's Piccadilly. The Anglican Bishop of Kingston, Richard Cheetam, set the scene by reminding us of why the environment is a gospel issue, and critiqued much Christian theology as being too narrowly focussed on our individual souls, rather than the truth of the redemption of all things in Christ. Jointly organised by Arocha UK and Shrinking the Footprint, the conference was a shining example of ecumenical action. The message that we are all working towards a common end – care for God's earth and responding to climate change – came through loud and clear. Over 80 people gathered to hear from eco-active congregations, and take part in workshops organised around the five Eco Church themes. The day ended with people exchanging contact details and action pledges to be followed up with each other.

If your church would like to know more about Eco Church and how to sign up, please visit <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/>

For Church of England congregations also see <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/shrinking-the-footprint>

CTiW is supporting borough-wide eco-awareness by choosing Creation Care as the theme for its AGM in January. There will be a range of inspiring speakers and stalls with information and opportunity for conversation. To date we have confirmation of attendance from A Rocha UK, Shrinking the Footprint, the Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals, and The Big Church Switch with several more leading conservation and environmental organisations in the pipeline. So whether your church community has yet to launch its eco-journey, or is aware and willing but in need of a bit of extra support, or is already eco-active and carbon-reducing, there will be something for you at this event.

Details are:

6.30 – 9.00pm Monday 22 January

Salvation Army Regent Hall

275 Oxford Street, W1C 2DJ