

**ACTION BY PETERBOROUGH DIOCESE:
ENVIRONMENT SUNDAY 3 JUNE 2007**



Environment Sunday falls on 3rd June, two days before World Environment Day. Churches across Peterborough Diocese are urged to use this day to focus on the Environment in their worship and to take action to care for God's Creation.

There has never been greater public awareness of the Environment and climate change is being hailed by our political leaders as the greatest challenge that the World faces today. There is now overwhelming evidence that the planet is warming and that these changes are largely due to humankind's impact on the Earth as we over-consume her resources.

Leaders of Churches and other faiths are calling for action. The Archbishop of Canterbury urges us to act because we have a duty of stewardship for God's Creation and because the affects of climate change will hit the world's poorest people hardest. Christian Aid and Tear Fund have recently launched climate change campaigns, and the Church of England is running its own "Shrinking the Footprint" campaign (many churches in the diocese will have already taken part in the first phase of this campaign: "Measuring the Footprint").

Peterborough Diocese has an Environment Group which can offer support and advice to Churches interested in finding out more about how they can act to make a difference to the environment. Here are some ideas for what we can all do on Environment Sunday.

ACTION FOR ENVIRONMENT SUNDAY

Ideas for action in Churches

1. Pray for the Environment (some suggested prayers are below).
2. Distribute low-energy light bulbs during the service
3. Don't use floodlighting on Sunday (and hope people notice and ask why!).
4. Use less lighting during services (try turning off a third of the lights).
5. Encourage the congregation to cycle, walk, take public transport or share lifts to Church.
6. Serve fair trade coffee and tea (and how about using proper cups instead of plastic ones?).
7. Have a Church lunch using locally-sourced produce.
8. Show the Al Gore film 'An Inconvenient Truth'.

Ideas for Congregations

(Remind your congregation that Sunday lasts ALL DAY!)

1. Turn off all electrical devices properly – don't leave anything on standby.
2. Unplug mobile phone chargers (if it's warm it's using energy).
3. If using a washing machine or dish washer, ensure that it is a full load. When washing, do so at a lower temperature (say 30°C).
4. Make your meals from locally-sourced produce.
5. Fit an energy-saving light bulb.
6. When boiling a kettle, just use the amount of water you need.
7. Clean your teeth using a mug of water instead of a running tap.
8. Try not to use your car all day.

Ideas for Children

School children will be very up to speed on this topic, so rather than expecting to teach them, ask them to share some knowledge. Set them a challenge: can they spot how many light bulbs in the church are old-fashioned and how many are environment-friendly? Suggest they do the same when they go home afterwards. Have a simple survey for children to use with members of the congregation. Questions could include:

How worried are you about climate change? Just a bit Not Really Not At All

Have you changed anything in your home to reduce how much energy you use?

Do you ever walk or take the bus or train instead of driving your car? Y/N

What is your top tip for reducing energy?

Use ice-cubes during the confession prayers. Provide 1 cube per person and ask them to hold it and watch/feel it melt as they think about the ice caps melting; about encroaching desert; about so many people not having clean water to use

PRAYERS FOR ENVIRONMENT SUNDAY

The Operation Noah Prayer

Creator God, how deep are your designs!
You made a living earth, cloud, rain and wind,
and charged us with their care.

We confess that the way we live today
is changing the climate, the seas and the balance of life
dispossessing the poor and future generations.

Build our lives into an Ark for all creation,
and, as you promised Noah never to repeat the Flood,
so makes us heralds of a new rainbow covenant:
choosing life for all that is at risk -
for creation, neighbours near and far,
our children and ourselves. Amen

Guide us as we gather (from World Council of Churches)

Eternal God, we thank you for the glory of your creation,
a mystery that surpasses our knowledge.

Eternal God, we thank you for the earth and water, sun and wind,
creatures and people, nations and cultures;
guide us as we gather to confess
that we have violated the gift of life given to us.

Strengthen us as we seek to affirm that the Earth and all therein are yours.
Enable us as we seek to recall your covenant and make it our own. Amen

FREE LIGHT BULBS

The Peterborough Diocese Environment Group has energy-efficient light bulbs that can be given to challenge fuel poverty and raise awareness of the threat to the environment. If you would like to distribute these (no more than three or four per Church). Contact: Peter Brotherton (churches in Peterborough City, peter.brotherton@naturalengland.org.uk) or David Wiseman (churches in the rest of the diocese david.wiseman@peterborough-diocese.org.uk).

WEB SITES TO FIND OUT MORE

www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/social/environment.htm

www.shrinkingthefootprint.org The Church of England's campaign

www.ecocongregation.org How to become an eco-congregation

www.arocha.org The Arocha foundation organises Environment Sunday

www.christian-ecology.org.uk Christian Ecology link includes daily prayers