

The King’s Wood Benefice

Church Matters

Nov/Dec 2020

Dear brothers and sisters

This is the first edition of King’s Wood Benefice Newsletter “Church Matters”. I hope that over time we will be able to add news items from all the parishes and also have a section for those who need our prayers – so please do send your contributions to me. In this edition I would like to tell you about an Advent Bible Study Course that I will be running via zoom from Monday 30th November and also “Caring for Creation”, an initiative designed to enable and encourage all parishes to become carbon neutral by 2030 and what action we can begin to take now!

**Advent study course – Unexpected Jesus**

During the Advent season, we often sing, "Come thou long-expected Jesus…". We put up the same decorations, sing the same carols, lay out the same crib/creche; we imagine what it was like to welcome Jesus into the world on that silent night. So peaceful. So lovely. But what if everything was not as it seems?

What if Jesus actually challenged everyone's expectations of what a Messiah would be like, how he should arrive, what he would do? What if he was born in a house with a family, in a noisy bustling town and not a quiet stable? What if he was more interested in those who were outside the religious and social establishment than those who were in it?

What if looking closely at the scriptures overturns our expectations of Advent and Christmas in a way that changes us forever?

The study will starting on Monday 30th November, for four weeks finishing on 21st December. The time: 7.30pm.

The invitation link will be on the website or email / telephone me and I will send you a direct link.

**Caring For Creation**

God’s gift of creation - our natural world - provides everything to sustain our lives. As humans, we're appointed by God as stewards of life on earth, and yet our actions have contributed to the widespread extinction of species. Now, human-induced climate change (the biggest environmental challenge we face) is damaging the most vulnerable people on earth and could ultimately jeopardise our very existence.

In late 2019, the Church of England Environment Group [called for greater action on Climate Change across the Church](https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/news/church-englands-environment-group-calls-greater-action-climate-change-across). Our Diocese believes that care for creation is fundamental to our mission. At the Diocesan Synod in November 2019 a new resolution was passed unanimously. It says:

This Synod recognises the Environment and Climate Emergency, and commits to the following:

* Learning the facts about today’s environmental degradation and human-induced climate change
* Speaking the truth about the emergency and the changes that are needed to safeguard the environment and mitigate climate impact
* Taking the necessary action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2030, and to model ways in which our faith and congregations can enable all of God’s creation to flourish
* Fighting social injustices caused by the environmental crisis
* Implementing the Diocesan Environment Policy 2019 and Action Plan including our care for the Environment within our diocesan strategy which details the Diocese’s commitment to caring for creation.

The Diocese has committed to us all being carbon neutral by 2030, so what can we do:

### GET INVOLVED

[Sign up to All Things Bright & Beautiful](https://canterburydiocese.us13.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=1fa4ec4c9a4aecf8e8e596f12&id=7667df9bcf), a bi-monthly digest of news, campaigns, hints, tips and hope. You’ll hear about the Diocese latest activities and how you can get involved.

### ECO DIOCESE & ECO CHURCH

Canterbury Diocese is registered as an [Eco Diocese](https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/denominational-awards/eco-diocese/) and encourages churches to engage with the [Eco Church programme](https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/). Registration as an Eco Church is free and taking the Eco Survey tells us how well we are doing and provides ideas for more that can be done. I would like us to work together as a Benefice to work towards this award. If you would like to be an “eco warrior” for your parish please let me know.

### RESOURCES

### There are many resources on the Canterbury website. These are just a few:

* [Climate Change fact sheet](https://www.canterburydiocese.org/content/pages/documents/1595930840.pdf)
* [Energy footprint tool](https://parishreturns.churchofengland.org/)
* Webinars from The Church of England on getting to net zero carbon. They cover: [A vision of a zero carbon church building](https://www.canterburydiocese.org/content/pages/documents/1594200327.pdf), [Defining and measuring “net zero carbon”](https://www.canterburydiocese.org/content/pages/documents/1594200408.pdf), [Action planning](https://www.canterburydiocese.org/content/pages/documents/1594200475.pdf) and [Building your team](https://www.canterburydiocese.org/content/pages/documents/1594200507.pdf).
* [Joe Ware identifies ways in which parish churches can reduce their carbon footprint](https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2020/13-march/faith/faith-features/how-to-count-the-cost-of-carb-on-s)
* [Towards a sustainable Church](https://www.canterburydiocese.org/content/pages/documents/1582037926.pdf) - The Church of England's environment programme
* [Faith for the Climate Network](https://www.canterburydiocese.org/content/pages/documents/1582037983.pdf)
* [A practical path to “net zero carbon” for our churches](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/the-practical-path-to-net-zero-carbon-for-churches-FINAL-April-2020.pdf)

These are just some of the resources available. If you would like to receive any of the newsletters or would like to sign up for a webinar – just go to “Caring for Creation” on the Canterbury Website.

<https://www.canterburydiocese.org/missionanministry/caring-for-creation/>

Every blessing.

Yours in Christ

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