

Eco Church Network

Newsletter March 2025



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Chester

• ISSUE 2



In this month's newsletter:

- Eco Church Survey spotlight
- What's going on around Chester Diocese
- April dates
- News from Tarporley and Grappenhall
- Highlighting a new podcast to try

Date of next meeting

The Eco Church Network will meet again via Zoom on 10th April at 7pm. You can access the meeting via this link: [Here](#)
Meeting ID: 885 9823 4280 Passcode: 051568

Welcome to our March edition of the Eco Church Newsletter.

For parishes on their Eco Church journey.

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.

Ecclesiastes 3:1

Thank you to everyone that has submitted articles for our newsletter. We would love to hear from you. If you have an article for our next newsletter please submit it to hannah.jones@chester.anglican.org

Eco Church Survey Spotlight

Land and Nature

Question 11 for Pathway 1 and Question 9 for Pathway 2.

Our church engages with A Rocha UK's Target 25 (T25) or similar projects to help declining species, taxonomic groups and habitats (on our own land or other land in the community, e.g. ARUK's Partners in Action)

Part of the T25 relates to native wildflowers. Spring is a great time to plant wildflower seeds. Why not get your whole congregation involved? Check out the advice on the [A Rocha website](#)

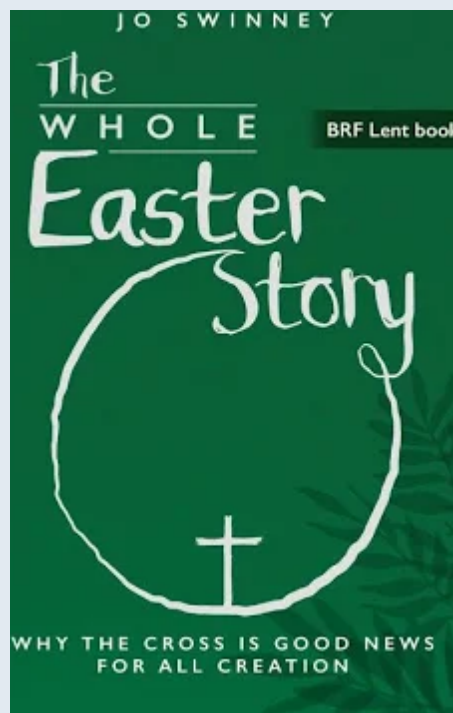


Hope for the Future

Online training opportunities from Hope for the Future focusing on engaging your MP and a reflective Bible study linking faith and environmental action.

Find out [more](#)

The Whole Easter Story



We have been gifted a review copy of the book *The Whole Easter Story: Why the cross is good news for all creation*. By Jo Swinney Exploring the profound meaning of Easter beyond personal spirituality.

Please let Hannah know if you'd like to volunteer to read and review the book for the next newsletter.

hannah.jones@chester.anglican.org

Energy Footprint Tool

Any Parish looking at grant funding for energy efficient lighting or changes to heating will be expected to have completed the EFT. For the highest emitters of carbon there is the potential for a free energy audit which normally costs around £500 and then a £3K grant towards any identified works. It is even more important each year as it is the first step on our carbon reduction journey.

Find it [here](#)

Big garden Birdwatch in Grappenhall

We did our third annual Birdwatch and were pleased to record another increase in the number of species identified in our watching hour.

It is an easy way of measuring our progress towards improving biodiversity in our churchyard.



For the past two years, we have been helped by a birding expert from one of our local nature reserves. He has helped us identify what species can be seen from the windows of St Wilfrid's annex. His presence has encouraged people to join the Birdwatch who wanted to improve their bird ID skills as well as enabling the more confident birdwatchers to recount what they have seen in their own gardens. A welcome increase in participants over the three years is another measure of the success of this activity.

Jenny Pearce
St Wilfrid's Grappenhall

Update from Macclesfield

St. Michael's Eco-church Group, Macclesfield have created a calendar to help you live more simply each day during Lent

See on our website [here](#)

Here are some examples:

- Solidarity - Look for a place to buy Fairtrade Easter eggs, e.g. Co-op, ALDI, Sainsbury's.
- Sustainably - Reduce food waste by planning your meals and buying just what you need.
- Solidarity - Pray for those affected by natural disasters and war. Consider whether you can donate to support any relief and humanitarian aid efforts.



Spotlight on Tarporley Parish

How do we engage our congregations and wider communities in the Eco Church Programme?

At the end of our first Zoom meeting in November 2024 we were asked if we could share some ideas about how we are trying to engage our congregations and wider community in the Eco Church program. Here are three ways we have tried to do this in the Parish of Tarporley.

Film Nights

On Friday 25th October at St Helen's Church we held our first Eco Church Film Evening. Welcomed with Fairtrade refreshments and snacks, 30 people watched the film "2040". Made by an Australian filmmaker Damon Gameau, the film presents an uplifting vision of what the world might look like for his daughter, (who at the time was four years old), when she is 20. He takes us on a journey around our precious planet investigating technologies that are available now, which, if adopted, could change our world for the better environmentally, socially and economically. Interspersed with comments from children who are asked about their visions for the future, we are reminded that we all have choices to make which could improve the world we leave behind for our children, grandchildren and generations to come. One young girl summed up her vision with the phrase "Reduce, Re-use, Recycle." All present agreed that the film was inspiring, hopeful, and packed with information, in fact so much so that people asked us to screen it again. Jeanette, Walter and I have all had comments saying how impressed people were with the film. We would thoroughly recommend this film as a comprehensive and engaging way of explaining to all ages why we all need to make the best decisions we can for our precious planet.



Spotlight on Tarporley continued

Promoting Wildlife in the churchyard

At St John's church both the congregation and the wider community have been supporting our efforts to promote wildlife in the churchyard. We've received grants from our local parish council to purchase wildflower seeds and bird-boxes, and extra gravel to suppress weeds in an eco-friendly way. Volunteers have grown and planted out wildflower plants. The Cheshire Wildlife Trust gave us advice at the outset and we recently joined their Wild network and wrote a blog about our work read it [here](#) They are connecting us to others with the skills and resources we need, and sharing our efforts with others who may be interested. Cheshire Wildlife Trust are keen to know how they can help us. We are also taking part in a reptile survey in the churchyard for the Trust, which will help us and them understand more about diversity and what churchyards can do to help promote it. More recently, with help of our local Councillor, Charles Hardy, we were able to secure a CWAC grant that will help us to buy display boards for all three Churches, which will be used to explain the objectives of Eco Church as it relates to land.

Involving Children from Eaton Primary School

At St Thomas' we've been making the churchyard more environmentally friendly and with the help of Mrs Skellon, (Head) and Mr Wright (Deputy), have involved the children in planting runner beans. Pupils were given seeds and recycled coffee cups as pots which they grew after Easter at school. In June, they visited the churchyard and all their seedlings were planted out in pre-prepared tubs. Each plant had a pole to support it with the child's name on so that in September they were able to harvest from the plant they had grown. The children could not believe just how big their little plants had become, they were also able to see what else we had done to increase biodiversity and attract pollinators. Reaching for Silver has encouraged us all to do more in our churchyards such as installing bird feeders, making composts, planting lavenders and thyme. The children's enthusiasm and ideas are inspiring us to think of more growing opportunities for 2025.



Meet and Greet Lunches for Farmers

Update from Helen Rutter Coordinator
Cheshire Agricultural Chaplaincy
talk@agchap.com

For farmers, agricultural workers, retired or still working, their families or ancillary Ag trades.

It is with many thanks to the Anne Duchess of Westminster Fund and Cheshire West Voluntary Action for the grant towards the meet and eat lunches.

Meet and Eat lunches 12.30 start times.
Many new faces are turning up at all the venues.

Booking required suggested donation towards lunches £10.00

The Parkgate Inn, Over Peover
Wednesday 19th March 12.30
Call or text to book Liz 07973681226

The Lakeside Café, Coddington
Friday 29th March 12.30
Call or text Julia 07763 461755

Eco Church Calendar April Dates

Community Garden Week 1st-7th April
2025

Walk to Work Day 4th April 2025

Earth Day April 22nd 2025



Listen and watch

Cheshire Wildlife trust
Communities and Conservation webinar.
Click [here](#) to watch

Low Carbon Higher power podcast
listen [here](#)

Contact us

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