



Eco-Congregation Scotland Newsletter

Issue 19

May 2011

Helping you to care for God's creation

Editorial

Eco-Congregation is now a charity, with its own Board of Directors elected at our first AGM in March.

It feels like we are growing up as a movement but as we do so we need to increase our capacity and we need people to take on new responsibilities. There are two things that you may be able to help with:

1. Fundraising

We have been fortunate to gain grants for various projects that will help us further grow and develop but there is always a need for core funding that will support the day to day work the charity, answering enquiries, promotion, supporting and growing new networks. Some eco-congregations have managed to hold a jumble or plant sales, others have dug deep and found resources in the church to show their commitment to creation care work. It is a difficult time and we know there are many different demands on church finances but can you do something to help? £100 per church is a suggested donation but every little helps. An online donation form is available at www.ecocongregationscotland.org/donate

2. Awards

The number of churches applying for awards continues to increase, which is great but we are in danger of being overwhelmed! We are looking

for volunteers to help administer the award process in their area. This would involve matching up congregations applying for awards with suitable assessors (we have a good database of assessors to choose from) and making arrangements for the assessment visit. Interested? Please get in touch. Full training will be given. It is a rewarding and interesting part of our work seeing the vast range of projects congregations have undertaken.

News

Our own Young Scottish Green Champion!

Stuart Bence from Cadzow Parish Church was named as number 2 in the Young Scottish Green List at their Awards Ceremony in Edinburgh on March 9th!

Organised by the Scottish Sustainable Development Forum, The Young Scottish Green List puts the spotlight on the passionate and visionary young people who dedicate their time to volunteering, campaigning, creating new eco friendly products and services and making positive change in Scotland.



Stuart at the Green List Awards Ceremony

Nineteen year old Stuart was nominated by Eco-Congregation Scotland and has a 'green CV' that is much longer than his age suggests. He leads the Green Team in his church and has promoted Eco-Congregation to other churches in the area. He established and promoted Eco groups in primary and secondary schools, organised a work in the grounds of the local nursery school, started



News continued

environmental groups in the scouts, at university and is a volunteer for the National Trust for Scotland. Stuart's work also involves international links. He helped his school link with an orphanage in Ghana and got the school and UK businesses to buy acres of mango forest in Ghana to offset their carbon footprint and generate income for the local community in Ghana. Congratulations Stuart!

Gathering 2011

The fourth annual gathering of eco-congregations in Scotland was held in Bridge of Allan on March 5th. Over 100 delegates from all over Scotland attended to hear speakers and workshops on a theme of "Our Daily Bread".

The day included the first AGM of Eco-Congregation Scotland and a celebration service for our 10th Anniversary with guest preacher, Kathy Galloway. We were also delighted to welcome three special visitors from the Reformed Church in Hungary who were visiting to find out more about eco-congregation with a view to setting up the programme in their own country. For more information about the day and details of the workshops see <http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/annual-gathering-2011/>

SCIAF project launched

Eco-Congregation Scotland has begun working in partnership with the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF) on a project to help Roman Catholic parishes become more aware of environmental issues, in particular how they are affected by and affect developing countries and the connections between our actions and their quality of life. For Eco Congregation Scotland this will help develop links with the Roman Catholic community and focus on the global consequences of Climate Change.

Five parishes have volunteered to pilot this project and will be working with Eco-Congregation Scotland over the next few months to find out how to get parishioners involved, make the resources more user friendly and draw up action plans to help them care better for creation.

Involve your local Guild!

The Church of Scotland's Guild has issued a booklet entitled, "Let's Talk about Thanking God for creation" to support their 2011-12 theme. The booklet has been distributed to all local Guilds and contains information encouraging

Guild members to become involved in measuring, monitoring and reducing their church's carbon footprint. If you are part of a Church of Scotland congregation this is a great opportunity to invite Guild members to support eco-congregation activities in your church or through your local eco-congregation network, where they can learn from other local churches.



The Moderator takes on the reduce, reuse, recycle message

The Moderator of the Church of Scotland has commissioned GROW, the social enterprise company that makes our award plaques, to create the new furniture for the Assembly Hall. The Greyfriars Recycling of Wood Project (GROW) goes all over Scotland collecting church pews for recycling. Churches may close, or they may reorganise their seating by removing pews so that they then have more adaptable seating arrangements. GROW uses the wood from these pews in their work.

GROW always have a range of gift items such as candle holders, chopping boards and wooden pens available. These items can be resold to anyone but especially to the church congregation, that provided the wood and who appreciate the fact that they are buying a piece of their own church history. Their biggest bread and butter produce is furniture and they make a lot of different things, often for churches.



Working with recycled wood at the GROW Project

business.

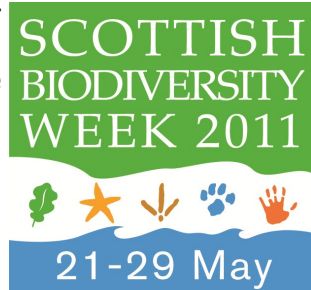
The project is run as a social enterprise, so the double bottom line is that they are working with people who face issues about deep social exclusion – the homeless, addicts. GROW works to enhance people's lives but they also run the enterprise as a business. They have 3 years funding from The Lankelly Chase Foundation and are working towards self sufficiency by year 4. Does your church have any old pews or timber you would like to find a home for: Contact GROW at Grassmarket Community Project, 84-86 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh EH1 2QA. Tel: 0131 225 3686, Mob: 07889 169 155

News continued

Scottish Biodiversity Week: 21 - 29 May

Scotland's precious wildlife and landscapes are dear to us and this week offers a huge range of events which give you the chance to get out and about and experience them! Here are just a few examples of the kinds of things that you can do:

- Countryside ranger led pond dipping events for little children
- Guided walks on Scottish Natural Heritage National Nature Reserves
- Story telling events
- Seashore safaris
- Expert talks on nature
- Nature photography workshop



For full list of events see <http://tinyurl.com/63tcdvc>

Award Winning Churches

If you are thinking of applying for an award, please ensure you are using an up to date application form (downloadable from <http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/award/>). The new version of the form has a spreadsheet to help you calculate the carbon footprint of the church buildings – which is now a requirement for all award applications.

First Awards

Peebles Old Parish Church shows an enthusiastic commitment to being an eco-friendly church. They work hard to involve both their Sunday School and the local community. Achieving a reduction in space heating in church has meant they have, in turn, been able to reduce energy consumption. Importantly, they also keep very good records of their work — which help them see where they have been and plan where they want to go next!

Daviot and Dunlichity linked with Dalarossie, Moy and Tomatin show their commitment through work in their surrounding farming community. They also support the wider global community through work with Christian Aid and Blythswood. In caring for their buildings, they show environmental awareness and they have been instrumental in creating a Presbytery website eco page: <http://tinyurl.com/44mltpp>

Award Winning Churches continued

Ardrishaig Parish Church, in Argyll has used innovative ideas in worship, such as sketches and eco slots, which very effectively communicate a wide range of creation care messages to the congregation. They have a well organised Beach Clean and other community links with the primary school and the Guides. They also use their magazine, "Pointers", effectively to encourage action in the congregation and wider community.



The award presentation at Ardrishaig

Second Award

Kemnay Parish Church have carried on their good work after achieving their first award, completing a refurbishment of the Sanctuary which included increasing the efficiency of the heating and lighting system. They continually review the efficiency of all their equipment in the Church Centre and have also replaced the central heating boiler units and installed double flush toilets. The work on FairTrade continues to grow and they are careful to involve their young people including in measuring and reducing their carbon footprint.

News from the Networks

Gordon Hudson, the new Eco-Congregation Scotland manager has been making his way around the networks to introduce himself and explain his new role. If he hasn't made it to your part of the world yet, he soon will!

Gordon has also been busy working with Christian Aid to set up an exciting new Roadshow, which is being offered to all networks. The Roadshow is an evening of presentations and workshops about climate change, its effects on the developing world and how churches can respond to this at a local level through campaigning and practical action. This is a great opportunity for networks to invite other local churches who may not have considered these issues or been involved with Eco-Congregation before. Roadshows are on offer to all networks over the next year and network co-ordinators

News from the Networks continued

will have full details of how to book one for your area.

Aberdeen / Aberdeenshire met in April to hear a talk on "**Renewable energy solutions for community buildings**". The key topics covered were microgeneration systems: renewable heat and power under 50kW capacity and the financial incentives currently available. These include:

- Reduced running costs and VAT,
- Carbon Emissions Reduction Target funding (CERT), which came into effect in April 2008, obliging electricity and gas suppliers in Great Britain to help reduce carbon dioxide emissions from homes.
- Renewable Heat Incentive which is due to be rolled out from July onwards and is designed to provide financial support that encourages individuals, communities and businesses to switch from using fossil fuel for heating, to renewables such as wood fuel.
- Feed-In Tariff – under this scheme energy suppliers have to (compulsory for the big six suppliers) make regular payments to householders and communities who generate their own electricity from renewable or low carbon sources such as solar electricity panels (PV) or wind turbines.

Further information on all of these is available at www.est.org.uk

The market is evolving rapidly and a wide range of equipment is now on the market to meet a wide range of applications. A key issue in all installation programmes is that the specification of the system output and operating range, both in terms of ambient conditions and of heat output requirements is established and that the equipment offered is capable of meeting the specification. Experience has shown that misunderstanding at this basic stage is the greatest reason for dissatisfaction with equipment performance.

When seeking advice, or selecting equipment, it should be established that the advisor, the installer and the equipment are all suitably qualified under the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS). In many cases incentive funding will not apply unless this accreditation can be verified. www.microgenerationcertification.org

Dumfries and Galloway are meeting again on 8th June, 7.30pm at St Andrew's RC Church in Dumfries and will focus on local wildlife with the help of Barbara Mearns from A Rocha (see www.arocha.org) and the Friends of the Nith.



St Andrew's RC Church, Dumfries

Edinburgh meets on 21st June, 7pm, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh with a topic of "Midsummer at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and Church Gardening".

Fife at a meeting on 21st March attended by 22 people, many of them from churches not yet involved, Mike Adam from St Ninian's Old Church in Stirling showed that saving both money and carbon in church buildings is possible and worthwhile but it does take a good deal of commitment and hard work!

Glasgow also heard the talk from Mike Adam about working towards a "Low Carbon Church". He described the steps that had been taken in the extensive renovation of their halls including planning (listed building) and finance issues and set out the environmental and energy saving benefits. The network meets again on 16th June, 7.30pm at Wellington Church with a discussion about "Biodiversity and climate change - can gardeners make a difference?"

Helensburgh and Lomond have their Eco Day planned for Saturday 11th June when they are inviting local churches and the community to come and find out how to care better for creation.

Highland and Moray an e-news letter was circulated earlier this year and it is hoped to hold a network meeting early in the autumn.

Orkney - work continues in the award winning churches with Papa Westray recently commissioning their own wind turbine to supply the church and surgery, whilst the manse on Westray now also has its own turbine.

News from the Networks continued

Kirkwall East have been trying to involve others and have upgraded their website to highlight their eco-congregation status see

<http://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/KIRKWALLEASTCHURCH/>

Perth met on 15th March and heard about carbon capture and storage. They meet again on 17th May at 7.30pm to talk about "Involving young people" at Dunbarney and Forgandenny Parish Church. This church will share their experience of successfully working with young people on creation care work.

South Lanarkshire met on 31st March at Douglas Valley Church to see their Community Heating Scheme which is believed to be the only such project in Scotland that is community owned. Douglas Valley Church have been key partners in this scheme, which provides heat from renewable energy (wood pellets) to the Church, Community Centre and Bowling Club.

The network is planning a big event in June - details below (flier downloadable from <http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/networks/south-lanarkshire/> . Everyone is welcome!

West Lothian and Falkirk met on 29th March at Bathgate United Reformed Church., a church not yet registered with us but keen to find out what being an eco-congregation is all about. Information was shared about the Annual Gathering and about the on-going activity in individual churches. Strathbrock Parish Church, Uphall reported back on their recent children's musical production, "Eddie the Penguin - Saves the World", aimed at 6-10 year olds (<http://www.outoftheark.co.uk/eddie-the-penguin-saves-the-world.html>). The young ones had practised the music with lyrics containing environmental messages while the older children were involved in drawing and painting the scenery. It was such a success in church that another performance was arranged for an elderly resident's home nearby.

Resources

New look website The Eco-Congregation Scotland web site has been redesigned and moved to a new address. The new address is www.ecocongregationscotland.org. We will be continuing to add new resources. The news section is updated weekly

Reducing Spending in Churches - a new interactive website

<http://church-cost-reduction.postrous.com/>

This is for anyone involved in a church to share their thoughts and experiences on reducing costs and saving money:

- Have you reduced your costs in your church - do you want to tell other churches what you did?
- Are you looking for ideas to reduce your spend?
- Do you want to ask if anyone has done what you're thinking of trying?

This new website been created for just this sort of conversation. With pages on reducing energy, barriers to effective energy management, sources of information, support and training and planning issues, it is a great source of practical advice and experience.

The website has been designed jointly by Eco-Congregation Scotland and the Church of Scotland.

Do let your treasurer and people responsible for your buildings know about it!



*Eco-Congregation Scotland
South Lanarkshire Network
Invites you to
A "Green" Day Out!
Saturday 4th June
11am - 4pm
at
The David Livingstone Centre
Blantyre
National Trust for Scotland*

Fun activities for all the family:

- Guided walks in the grounds
- Games and activities for the children
- Information about how to be an Eco-Congregation
- Eat in the café or bring your own Picnic

**Entry to the Event is free for the Day Out but a donation would help cover our costs
For further information contact: 0844 493 2207*

Stirling met on 27th April to look at the work carried out at North Church, including a new more energy / cost efficient heating system in the Church and the installation solar panels to heat water.

Resources continued

Creation Time is your church planning to observe a time for creation, between 1 September and 4 October, for the protection of God's creation and the promotion of sustainable lifestyles. Churches Together in Britain and Ireland put together resources to encourage and assist churches to observe a Time for Creation in 2011. The theme for 2011 is **Our daily bread – Food in God's creation**. The resources will be downloadable from

the website in June, see <http://www.ctbi.org.uk/CJBD/542>

The 2011 resources will include:

- Sermon notes based on the Lectionary Readings for the 5 Sundays
- Other sermon outlines
- Prayers of intercession / bidding
- prayers for a Sunday liturgy
- Service outline for a mid-week / ecumenical event, with accompanying PowerPoint
- Group study notes
- New harvest festival ideas
- Background information on food and agriculture
- A range of other liturgical material



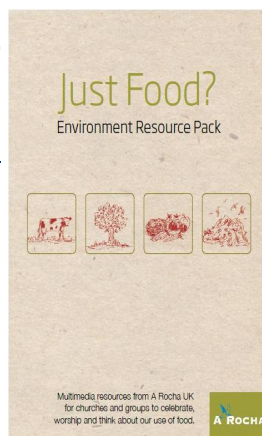
Resources are still available from past years:

2008 - Hope for Creation - a time for worship and action <http://www.ctbi.org.uk/CJBC/498>

2009 - Creation in Crisis - a time for prayer and action <http://www.ctbi.org.uk/CJBA/375>

2010 - Creation Flourishing - a time for celebration and care <http://www.ctbi.org.uk/CJBB/336>

Just Food is A Rocha's Environment Resource pack for 2011. It will be published in May and is available from <http://www.arocha.org/gb-en/resources.html>. The packs can be used throughout the year, but include material which is suitable for Environment Sunday. They include flexible worship material for liturgical, informal and all-age worship, as well as children's activities and practical suggestions. Environment Sunday (the closest Sunday to



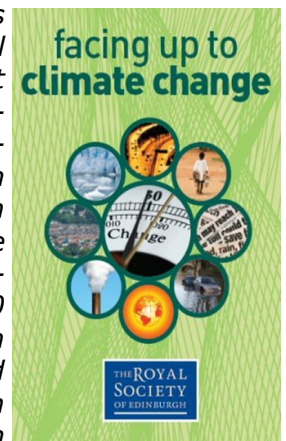
World Environment Day) this year is on 5th June.

Growzones: <http://www.growzones.com> is a resource kit to enable groups in the community to begin to grow food along permaculture principles. Included in the kit, which costs £25 are beautifully designed booklets and a DVD which can be used by the facilitator to show potential participants at an introductory meeting.

A Grow Zones team clubs together to share skills, tools and produce to eliminate food miles and turn your gardens over to permaculture at whatever level you want.

Facing up to Climate Change <http://tinyurl.com/6k5crc8> The Royal Society of Edinburgh has published this report which examines the many challenges involved in trying to meet Scotland's climate change targets. It mentions the role of Eco-Congregation Scotland in encouraging terms:

"There are other charities and professions with national reach whose practices impact on progress towards a low-carbon society. Thus Eco-Congregations Scotland (an ecumenical charity which promotes more sustainable living and the shift to low-carbon) now has over 240 congregations registered in its programme. Commended by both the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish



Government for its programme of community engagement, it is a telling example of how national churcheswith a locally-grounded membership can be effective agents of change at the individual and community level." (Page 165)

There are also substantial sections commenting favourably on the work on Westray Parish Church.

Creation, Re-Creation, and the Environment by Mark Bredin, Biblica 2010, ISBN1606570110, 9781606570111 asks is "green" just another liberal ideology?

This book shows God as the Creator of all who cares deeply for all that he has made. His vision for creation is seen through a world teeming with life where eternity is breathed into and through all creation. Jesus teaches that humans must live with a spirit of generosity and restraint; however, a spirit of meanness and greed

Resources continued

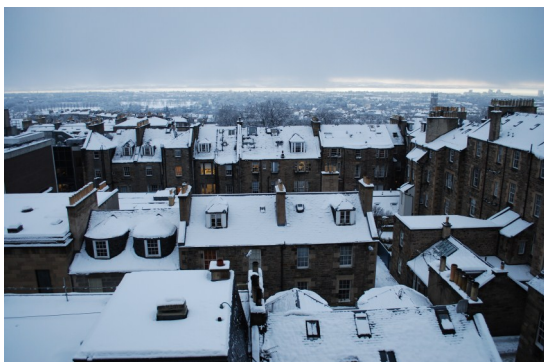
dominates human culture and leaves nearly 1.3 billion people living on less than \$1 a day.

The book also highlights how Jesus teaches that those who are generous are blessed, and such generosity brings justice to all creation. It asserts that there cannot be God's social justice without ecological sanity, and yet we tend to speak of social justice as though non-human creation doesn't matter. God cares even for the flowers of the field, yet we show contempt for God in our careless plunder of his creation. To love God is to love all that he has made, from our own families to the soil outside our homes.

Creation, Re-Creation, and the Environment Energy Heritage: A guide to improving energy efficiency in traditional and historic homes, Changeworks, Edinburgh, 2008.

The problem of making Scotland's historic buildings fit for the twenty first century is challenging. The Scottish Government target of an 80% reduction in the emission of greenhouse gases by 2050 sets big challenges for all property owners but for those responsible for historic buildings, the challenges are enormous. In cold winters such as those we have just been through the costs of heating historic buildings can also be quite scary.

Help and advice is at hand in this guide published by Changeworks, in conjunction with Historic Scotland and others. The guidance aims to help improve the energy efficiency of homes that may at first sight seem impossible to improve due to their traditional construction and protected status. There are useful messages here for property conveners in church buildings and many suggestions that will be of assistance. The guide acknowledges the challenges but does strongly suggest that it will be possible in almost all buildings to make some improvement to improve energy efficiency, reduce fuel bills and cut the



Snow on Edinburgh rooftops shows up effective insulation

property's carbon footprint. The guide and other material can be downloaded at: <http://www.changeworks.org.uk/projects/energy-heritage-conference-downloads/377/>

The Economics of Happiness <http://www.theeconomicsofhappiness.org/> is a film produced by The International Society for Ecology and Culture (ISEC) which describes a world moving simultaneously in two opposing directions. On the one hand, it claims government and big business continue to promote globalization and the consolidation of corporate power. At the same time the film puts forward the idea that, all around the world people are resisting those policies, demanding a re-regulation of trade and finance—and, far from the old institutions of power, they're starting to forge a very different future. Communities are coming together to re-build more human scale, ecological economies based on a new paradigm – an economics of *localisation*.

Keeping God's Earth – the global environment in Biblical perspective edited by Noah J Toly and Daniel I. Block (IVP Academic ISBN: 9781844744503) This book is a collection of essays from American and English academics (both scientists and evangelical theologians) that examines global environmental problems and then reflects on them from a biblical perspective. It starts with the premise that environmental problems are not scientific because they very quickly lead to questions such as "who suffers?" and "what is to be done?" which involve ethical and political choices. "These are not scientific questions to which we discover answers. They are ethical and risk management questions about which we negotiate answers."(p13) This book uses biblical insights to help these negotiations.

The main body of the book develops contemporary environmental themes, with alternating chapters opening them up scientifically by an expert and then a chapter reflecting on the biblical theology. The themes covered are cities, bio-diversity, water and climate change.

The book fills a space for those looking for a ethical foundation for creation care that takes seriously both the science and the bible. It aims to move care for God's creation into the centre of American evangelical life. It is a wake up call to action "...we need to do more than get our theology right. We need to get our lives right."(p265) *With thanks to John Butterfield*

Prayer

A prayer about recycling

Generous and loving God,
your Creation is filled to overflowing with bounty.
Keep us mindful that many live on less than we do;
keep us mindful that it is not enough to simply buy what we want and then put it out at the curb when we are finished with it; keep us open to making real changes in our lives for the good of Creation.
Keep us thankful and hopeful and active.

Charlie West Ink

Other sources of prayers and information:

Christian Ecology Link prayer guide: <http://www.christian-ecology.org.uk/resources.htm#pg>

Climate Stewards prayer blog: <http://climatestewards.wordpress.com>

Contributions welcome!

If you would like to send in a news item, review of a resource you have found useful, prayer, quote or any other item, we would welcome your contribution to the newsletter.

Keep in touch!

For environmental and financial reasons the main circulation of the newsletter is by email. Please ensure you keep us informed of any changes to your email address. We welcome new recipients of the newsletter. If it has been forwarded to you, email

scotland@ecocongregation.org.uk to receive future issues.

Register your church

Registering on the Eco-Congregation programme is easy and free. It gives your church access to free resources, the chance to be part of a local network, and to work towards an Eco-Congregation Award. It's easy to register. Contact us for a form or visit www.ecocongregationscotland.org.

To enquire about the programme and request an introduction pack contact:

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