



**Stirling Eco-Congregation Network
Note of Meeting held on 4th Nov 2013
at Dunblane Cathedral Halls**

PRESENT	Jon Cape	Stirling Methodist
	Nick Cooke	St Mary's Episcopal, Aberfoyle
	Phil Harris	Stirling North Church
	Sally Foster Fulton)Dunblane Cathedral
	Heather Escala)
	Tom Pollock)St Ninian's Old, Stirling
	Mike Adam)
Margaret Warnock	ECS	
APOLOGIES	Kate Nash	St Mary's SEC, Dunblane
	Kathrine Gardener	Bridge of Allan Parish Church
	Rev Trevor Jamison	ECS

The Rev Trevor Jamison was due to attend this meeting but, due to transport difficulties, he was prevented from doing so. The group decided to invite Trevor to come again on 17th March 2013

In lieu of Trevor being able to lead the planned bible study, there was a general time of networking during which members brought forward the following issues:

1. The Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum (SPRF): Nick Cooke

- This group was formed about 18 months ago to promote Pilgrimage Routes (see attached leaflet for further information).
- It has wide support from public agencies such as Scottish Natural Heritage and Historic Scotland
- They are looking at various routes and are currently seeking funding through Scotways from the Central Scotland Green Network for a feasibility study on a 3 day Fife Pilgrim Route from Culross – Dunfermline – St Andrew's.
- Other routes include: Iona – St Andrew's (14 days) and a route in the Borders being promoted by the Church of Scotland, a Glasgow - Whithorn route via the Ayrshire coast

Various local expressions of pilgrimage were also discussed, including St Ninian's Old Kirk O' Muir, open air service near Carron Reservoir, Stirling Methodists visits to Iona and Callander Kirk's Pilgrimage and Picnic from Callander to Trossachs Church (see <http://www.callanderkirk.org.uk/page21.html>) .

2. Visit to Bolivia: Sally Foster Fulton

Following her recent visit to Bolivia, Sally shared information about how climate change is having a devastating effect on the lives of people - NOW. The seasons have changed vastly and with glaciers melting and rainy seasons increasing in intensity there are problems with landslides, water supply and agriculture – see

http://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/blogs/church_and_society/2013/10/15/bolivia-mountains-floods-and-climate-change/

3. Social media campaign on Climate Change: Jon Cape

Hearing about Sally's experiences led into a discussion on what could be done to keep action on climate change high on the church's and society's agenda. It seems to have become less of an issue politically and there is a certain amount of "climate change fatigue" in our congregations.

Jon then told us about a social media campaign he is hoping to launch nationally and even internationally in the run up to COP 21 (UN conference on climate change). This will be in Paris in 2015 and is when countries have agreed that it is the time and place to finally sign an international treaty requiring all nations to begin reducing carbon emissions by 2020. This treaty will supplant the Kyoto Protocol, adopted in 1997 at the COP3 climate conference, which targeted only industrialized nations for mandatory cuts.

The proposed campaign Jon outlined is aimed at politicians and will ask supporters to spare "**A Minute a Month**" to contact their representatives (by email, text, Facebook, Twitter etc) and keep raising the issue over a sustained period from now until 2015 and so build up to a "**Million Minutes**". It is aimed at putting climate change back at the top of the political agenda and has a simple goal: an effective climate change deal in 2015, which means global increases in temperature restrained to 2 degrees Celsius above pre industrial levels.

All present felt they might be able to support such a campaign but it would need to be well resourced so that it was easy to take part in, with proforma type emails and statements provided, which people could adapt and personalise. The group also felt that in order for it to gain broad support, it would need to be adopted by organisations such as Stop Climate Chaos and Christian Aid. Jon had already received backing from Jonathon Porritt and was looking to make contact with a range of organisations.

Linked to this there was also discussion of the **need to disinvest in fossil fuels**. It is estimated that only one fifth of existing reserves of oil, gas and coal owned by fossil fuel companies can safely be burned, if the rise in average global temperature is to remain below 2°C. (Source: [Carbon Tracker Initiative](#).) Yet fossil fuel companies continue to invest in the exploration and development of new reserves of oil, gas and coal. Most of the large church denominations currently hold substantial investments in fossil fuel companies and campaigns within the Church of Scotland and the Bright Now campaign (run by Operation Noah see <http://brightnow.org.uk/>) have begun.

Following on from this the need for positive ethical screening of church investments was raised – do churches need to think about more than just financial gain when they invest? With the current seeming indifference to climate change issues, the title of "Sleep Walk No More" was suggested for such campaigns.

Next meeting (details to be confirmed early in the New Year):

Date: 26th February
Venue: MacRobert Arts Centre
Topic: Film screening (possibly Gaslands 2)

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