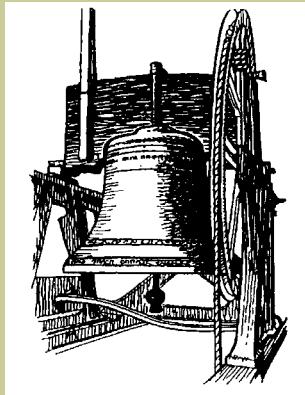


GREENING THE CHURCH

Issued by the Church of Ireland's Ecological and Environmental Panel

RING YOUR CHURCH BELL TO SOUND THE ALARM ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

See lead article



STOP CLIMATE CHAOS NOW!

December 8th marks the Global Day of Action on Climate Change. As the Bali talks on climate change proceed, ordinary people around the world will be finding different ways of sounding the alarm on climate change so that their politicians can wake up and do much more about it.

At 2pm the bells of churches around Ireland will ring out to signal that the world must warm by no more than two degrees centigrade if

mankind is to continue to live here with any level of comfort and safety.

DUBLIN. In Dublin there will be an event, starting at 1pm, at the amphitheatre at the Civic Offices. A procession will move from here to the Custom House.

BELFAST. In Belfast there will be a gathering at St Anne's Cathedral in Donegall Street at 1.30pm. Please note that St Anne's has no bells, so you are asked to

bring an alarm clock, mobile phone, drum or whistle to sound the alarm.

The event in Belfast is being organized by Christian Aid, Trocaire and Friends of the Earth.

In Dublin, a petition will be handed to a government representative, demanding strong political action to stop the planet burning and give us a future worth having.

Play your part. Spread the word about these events.

ECO-WORKSHOP GETS ALL-IRELAND SUPPORT

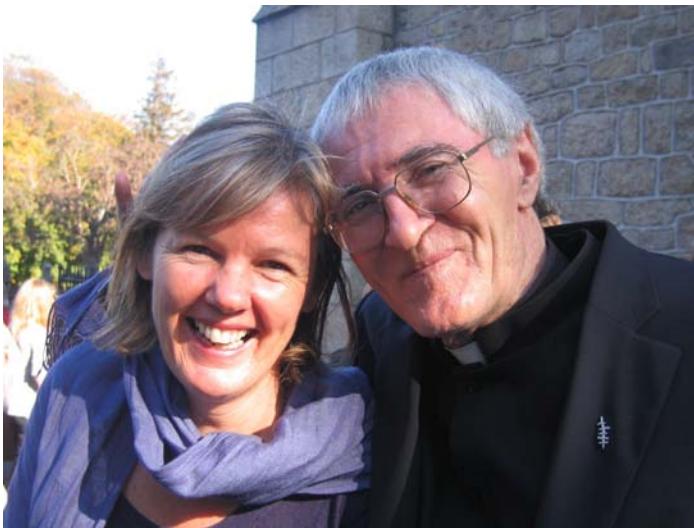
The Eco-Workshop held recently at the Emmaus Centre, Swords, was attended by delegates from many parts of the Church of Ireland.

The day was well-planned, the facilities superb, and reports from delegates suggest that they found the experience informative and worthwhile, causing them to return to their parishes refreshed and enthused for another year of work.

Several of the delegates were fairly new to the Church's environmental work, and a report from Pamela Sheil, a Whitechurch parishioner, is included in this edition, and outlines the parish's first steps on the road.



The Revd Alison Seymour-Whiteley from Newtownbutler, Alyn Jones from Rostrevor, and Caleb Clarke from Nenagh Union involved in serious group discussion at the Eco-Workshop.



Pamela Sheil with her Rector, Canon Horace McKinley

"I found the Workshop at the Emmaus Centre very helpful indeed" Pamela tells us how Whitechurch got started.

"We have just been designated a small piece of garden to plant some flowers in"
- Good idea!

"John Marchant spoke to us on respecting the environment"
- Excellent way to generate interest—bring in a speaker!

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNSCOME TO DUBLIN PARISH

Trailblazer Pamela Sheil leads the way for Whitechurch Parishioners

I first learnt of Eco-Congregation Ireland through a friend who had been at an environmental meeting in a nearby parish. She was so enthused about the package I asked her for some details.

I did further searching on the web and then brought this information to our April Vestry meeting in Whitechurch. Horace McKinley, our Rector, and the rest of the vestry members were interested and asked me to find out a little more.

I contacted Rev David Humphries and he welcomed us onboard. Firstly I downloaded and completed the registration form, then sent it off along with a letter setting out our interest in starting with Modules 3 & 4 (Creation & Christianity and Acorns to Oaks).

I formed a sub committee of four to oversee the working of the modules, one being our Sunday School organiser, as she can be directly responsi-

ble for introducing Module 4 to the children. Already we have decided to get a tower bird feeder to hang outside the church hall, also to get a bat box and bug woodpile.

We have just been designated a small piece of garden to plant some flowers – this may have to wait until next spring as we are a little late now for bulb planting.

On Sunday October 1st John Marchant spoke to us on respecting the environment, a good start to introducing Module 3. We have looked at our library and will advertise books on Creation & Christianity in our next parish magazine. We have had a wonderful Harvest Festival and thanked God for the miracle of life, soil, seed, buds, blossoms and fruit in our prayers.

Our small committee has decided to look at a further Module, Module 7, church property. I still have to make contact with a few people to see what

already is in place and what direction we can take, but I feel the sky is the limit – well the roof anyway, with solar panels!

I found the workshop at the Emmaus Centre, Swords on 6th October very helpful indeed. Des Loughridge had some very interesting facts and figures and it was great to meet people from other parishes and discuss what they have put in place to date. I was relieved to hear that only three Modules have to be completed before an award is received (I thought all 12 Modules had to be attempted).

Looking at the various Modules it would appear that most parishes have done part of each one. This, in itself, is reassuring, as the mountain does not seem quite so high.

Pamela Sheil

At the foot of Slieve Bane in the Mourne Mountains, in the famous Fairy Glen of the Kilbroney Valley, Rostrevor, sits the Kilbroney Centre, a Residential and Environmental Education Centre- the best kept secret in the Church of Ireland. Most folk don't know of its existence and yet it is never without a group of people to enjoy its peace, beauty, and hospitality. A green and tranquil space, the centre boasts a twelve acre forested site with streams and ponds, ancient Oaks and new sapling Hazels, bouncing Squirrels and cocky Jays, Painted Lady butterflies and trundling Badgers, it is the stuff of magical legends; indeed it was around the mountains above Rostrevor that CS Lewis took



his inspiration for the world of Narnia. Set up in the 1970's the Kilbroney Centre has had many incarnations under each of the incumbent Vicars and now with Rev. Sam Jones in charge it enjoys another renaissance. Recently refurbished, the centre is booked out eight months in advance and hosts an average of 60 school children a day, during term time. It is the ideal spot for Church youth groups of all shades and varieties: youth fellowships, youth clubs, uniformed organisations,



confirmation groups but also regularly plays host to conferences and meetings, school groups, community organisations, and governmental agencies. Visitors can stay for the morning or up to a week. There are 65 beds in two beautiful buildings and groups can enjoy the amazing food cooked fresh on the premises or use the excellent new kitchen and dining room facilities to cater for themselves. The Centre is managed by a group of Trustees from the Rostrevor Parish of Kilbroney, CMSI, the Diocese of Down and Dromore and Chaired by Bishop Miller.

The Environmental Education Centre too has recently had a new lease of life when Alliance Youth Works were contracted to restart the conservation and education work there. The Kilbroney Centre aims that children and young people would come to the site and discover a wild place brim full of

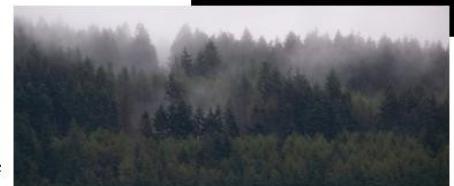
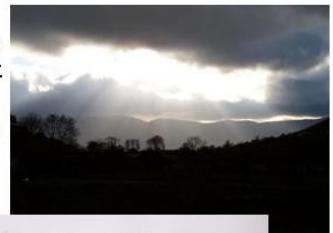
nature in all its variety and learn of their connectedness to it. There is a range of interactive, hands-on programmes that explore the

biodiversity of the Mourne area and empowers visitors to conserve the environment in which they live, sharing their experiences with others. There is always time to explore God's Creation and to reconnect with it at Kilbroney, for as the great pioneer and environmentalist John Muir said "Most people are on the world- not in it- have no conscious sympathy or relationship to anything about them- undiffused, separate, and

rigidly alone like marbles of polished stone, touching but separate". Children from five to eleven arrive daily by the bus load for

a journey into a land full of

wonder, to emerge again three hours later hopefully ready and more willing to fulfil their role as stewards of the planet they've been put in charge of. But AYW and Kilbroney haven't stopped there- the work isn't just an academic exercise, it isn't



just about teaching children and young people about the environment. They have sought to create partnerships and alliances with other organisations and agencies to develop the lands around the centre. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, British Trust for Ornithology, Environmental Education Forum,

Environment and Heritage Service, Conservation Volunteers, Newry and Mourne District Council have all played



their part in supporting the work so far. And as with the

main residential centre the Vicar has more big plans- marsh areas, a wild flower meadow, Heather bank, trails and set aside areas will all enhance the habitat of the wildlife of the valley.





But that's still not all the services at the Kilbroney Centre- for the site reuses and recycles most of it's own waste, and AYW have complimented the environmental work on site by placing another of their RE:Source centres there. RE:Source is a



warehouse of scrap and waste materials reusable in arts and crafts and is regularly used by church groups, Schools, uniformed organisations, community groups, hospitals, artists and individuals who simply like to dabble in crafts. There is also a shop with a wide variety of arts and crafts



materials, games equipment, hire equipment, ideas packs and the staff are always able to help if customers are stuck, not sure how to present a Sunday School lesson or GB display. They have birthday party packs, and leader training workshops, wild bird feeders and seed, sample crafts and giant games. Whatever a childrens or youth leader, teacher or officer may require to support their programme RE:Source can usually find it.

Have you visited the Kilbroney Centre recently? Have you stayed there? Are you connected with the work that's going on? Many Parishes and individuals are, giving time and money each year to keep the centre

growing and improving, supporting the environmental projects and education programmes. We would love for you to discover it too. So, if you'd like to get involved in our volunteer days, financially support the centres' growth or would like to



visit with your school class or stay there then contact the Rev. Sam Jones or his wife Kate at 028 417 38293 or jonesatkil-broney@hotmail.co.uk or simply check out the Alliance Youth Works website at www.alliancenyouthworks.org.uk for more information.



THE GREAT GM DEBATE IS BACK

Where do YOU stand on GM foods?

You may have thought that the debate over genetically modified foods ended five years ago—but the whole matter is now back in the news.

GM foods are foods that have been artificially changed by scientists in a laboratory. In the past, plants have been improved by breeding them with other, better plants - a natural process which takes years. But with GM foods, it's done quickly and artificially.

However, many people are concerned about the possible effect on the environment, which means that Christian people ought to have an opinion.

We'll take a look at this in our next bulletin, but there are countless websites dealing with this issue—and from every point of view. Just type "GM foods" into a search engine and spend the rest of the day trying to take it all in!

Does the Bible really call us to a role as stewards of God's world?

Absolutely! The list of appropriate biblical references is endless—but just take a look at a few pointers:



God Created the Earth and all of Nature

Psalms 104:25,30. In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number - living things both large and small... When you send your Spirit, they are created and you renew the earth.

John 1:3. Through him all things were made: without him nothing was made that has been made.

God has a Relationship with All of His Creation

Psalm 96:10-13. The Lord reigns... Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad, let the sea resound and all that is in it; let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them. Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy, they will sing

before the Lord for he comes, he comes to judge the earth.

Matt 6:26. Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns and yet your heavenly father feeds them. And are you not worth much more than they?

God Calls All of His Creation to Worship

Psalm 19:1. The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.

Isaiah 55:12-13. The mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. All this will be a memorial for the Lord, a sign that for all time will not be cut off.

Nehemiah 9:6. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You gave life to everything and the multitudes of heaven worship you.

Rev 5:13. Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing "To him who sits on the throne and to the

Lamb, be praise and honour and glory and power for ever and ever."

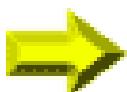
God Expects Humans to be His Stewards with Nature

Genesis 1:26. Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

Luke 16:2,10,13. And he called him and said to him, "What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward. He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous in much. You cannot serve both God and mammon.

James 5:5. You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.

Revelation 11:18. The nations were angry and your wrath has come. The time has come for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great - and for destroying those who destroy the earth.



GOOD IDEA: Why not have a debate in your parish, about GM foods? Bring in a couple of speakers, and let your fellow-parishioners make up their own minds.

A BOOK WORTH BUYING



How Many Lightbulbs Does it Take to Change a Christian?

A Pocket Guide to Changing your Ecological Footprint.

By Claire Foster & David Shreeve.

Church House Publishing 2007.

Did you know that changing just one high energy lightbulb to a low energy one saves 7.5 kg of carbon dioxide a year?

This little book provides literally hundreds of practical ideas like this one for making small changes to your lifestyle that can make a big difference to the environment.

The book is inspiring, and is so easy to read! It fits easily into the pocket and is a MUST for every environmentalist. Priced at a mere £4.99, it will make a great Christmas present. Order a few from your local bookshop!

DON'T FORGET TO HELP STOP CLIMATE CHAOS THIS COMING SATURDAY (8TH).

RING THOSE BELLS!



Another group at the recent Eco Workshop: The Revd Sam Jones (Kilbroney), Pamela Sheil (Whitechurch), David McCartney (Knocknagoney), Canon Patrick Harvey (Abbeyleix).

A GREEN CHRISTMAS?

In the UK alone, (we haven't got any figures for the Republic of Ireland), three million tonnes of waste is dumped during Christmas. There's got to be something we can do about this, and by our example, encourage others to do the same.

For example, do you really have to send all those Christmas cards printed on glossy board or heavy, expensive paper? What about going on line and sending an E-card instead? Okay, okay, it's not the same—but this is a serious business!

Then there's the Christmas wrapping paper—and of course we're attracted to the lovely foil wrap—again the heavy stuff which won't tear easily as we wrap the presents. Well, just type "recycled wrapping paper" into a search engine and scroll down the many results you get. Recycled paper is easy to find, and nowadays it really looks the part too.

And if you have to buy a real tree, make sure you take it to your local recycling centre when the twelve days are over.

Another good Christmas tip is to avoid using disposable plates and cups—use real ones and be prepared to do that extra bit of washing up after the party for the kids.

And then there are all those lovely meals over the Christmas period. If you've got guests who only drink water, for goodness sake don't provide them with bottled water—those plastic bottles are a real 'no-no' if you're serious about saving the planet. Give them tap water instead, and if you tell them why, they'll hardly complain!

So let's try really hard this year, and see if we can make our Christmas a really green one!