

Rev Tim Perkins
May 4th 2021

“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; let all the trees of the forest sing for joy. Let all creation rejoice before the Lord...” Psalm 96: 11-13a.

Dear Friends,

Last week I reflected briefly upon climate change and the challenge for our churches to become eco-congregations. As I prepare to lead worship this weekend, I am aware that this coming Monday marks the beginning of Christian Aid week. The theme this year is “climate chaos” and I shall be focussing upon that in my services this weekend as a way into living Christian Aid Week this year.

The verses quoted above from Psalm 96 are part of one of the suggested readings in Christian Aid’s worship resources. They remind us that the whole of creation was created to sing God’s praise and recognise God as its Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. But when I read them, in the face of all that is going on in the world right now and all that humanity is doing to our environment, I find myself forced to ask, *“How can the heavens rejoice, how can the earth be glad, how can the sea resound, how can the fields be jubilant, how can the trees sing for joy?”*

The heavens are filled with greenhouse gasses and other pollutants that are not only making it difficult to breath but increasing the frequency and severity of tropical storms. Even space itself is now being littered with our junk! The earth is suffering the effects of climate change in ways that none of us have ever seen with increasingly extreme weather events and higher sea temperatures changing the landscape. The seas are filled with plastic, choking the life out of the creatures that live in them and polluting our food chain. Deforestation is robbing the trees of their joy and the precious eco-systems which are the basis for all life on earth. The rejoicing of the natural world that is meant to accompany the praise that we humans offer to our Creator is instead being replaced by lament.

It is fantastic that in some places the messages from the scientific community are beginning to break through and make a difference both to our own household, everyday lives, and to Governmental policy. But it is nowhere near enough, yet! The lobbying voices of companies and countries who are reliant on heavily-polluting technologies are still too loud and too powerful. They continue to drown out those voices of countries and communities who are suffering the worst effects of others’ excess.

We Christians, recognising our job description as stewards of God’s creation, must speak up for those who are not heard. We must act on behalf of a world which is being plundered of all the resources which enable us to live. We must encourage change, and protest where and when it is slow to come about. We must do what we can in our own lives to reduce, re-use, recycle. We have the power to make a difference. We can:

- Switch to green energy suppliers
- Reduce our use of plastic
- Turn our lights off when they don’t need to be on
- Care well for our gardens and their other inhabitants
- As and when we are able, turn away from petrol and diesel cars
- Use our cars less and walk more, or make more use of public transport

- Insulate our houses properly
- Shop local
- Don't waste water
- Encourage our supermarkets to reduce plastic packaging and food waste
- Buy Fairtrade
- Pester our elected representatives to take climate change seriously from protecting the Greenbelt to increasing International Aid
- Live more simply
- And much, much more besides!

I hope and pray that you too will reflect on some of these issues over the coming week. It may be that some of our churches will have Christian Aid envelopes available for people to give to support the amazing work that they do. If not, you can donate online by using this link:

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>

Another way of supporting the work of Christian Aid is through the project our Yorkshire West Methodist District has to encourage us to give thanks to God for our Covid vaccinations by making a thank-offering using this link:

[Giving Thanks For Our Vaccines in Yorkshire West Methodist District \(tapsimple.org\)](https://www.tapsimple.org/) So far our District has raised nearly £5700 through this project.

You will probably be aware that Christian Aid is also one of the major partners in the Disasters Emergency Committee, and as such is also seeking to raise funds specifically for the appeal to help tackle the coronavirus crisis in India. If you wish to donate specifically to that appeal you can do so using this link:

[Home | Disasters Emergency Committee \(dec.org.uk\)](https://www.dec.org.uk/)

May we each seek to work with and on behalf of the world which is our home and our gift.

Every blessing,

Rev Tim

Easter Offering Service

This year the Methodist Women in Britain Easter Offering Service is going to be held at a District, rather than Circuit level. The service will take place via Zoom on Wed 12th May at 7pm. The theme for this year is "Into all the world". To receive the link for the service please contact Sue Gray at susan.gray6@icloud.com

If you would like to make a donation to the Easter Offering and have not yet had a chance to do so please contact your local church treasurer.

"Climate Change Emergency: Resources for a Green Church Conference."

This will take place via zoom on Saturday 12th June from 9.30am – 3.00pm. As we approach the Global Climate Summit to be held in Glasgow in the autumn, this conference is a great opportunity for us to engage in some key issues for how we as Christians respond to our climate crisis. To register for the conference please contact Sue Cutting at sue.cutting1209@gmail.com

We are promised: "Inspiring keynote speakers to stimulate your imagination, develop your understanding of the Bible and reinvigorate your worship life. Engaging workshops with pioneers who are already bringing together faith and action for a better world. Topics covered include:

- Biblical Theology for a Green Church

- Climate change as an existential crisis
- Liturgy & Prayer for a Green Church
- COP26: what are we doing to campaign?
- Craftivism for COP26
- The Church as a Prophetic Community
- Green Church and Evangelism
- The God Plot – The city allotment and Green Church