

---

---

## M-CENT News (June 2018)

**Welcome** to our third e-newsletter. We hope you find these a useful way of sharing news about environmental issues and related events in the Marches. Do spread the word and encourage others to sign up for this newsletter.



### **Joy in Enough**

[Joy in Enough](#) is a Green Christian initiative providing a challenge to Christians in Britain. It invites people of good will, to join in building a just economy within the ecological limits of the Earth. Our current economic model is failing both people and planet. The warning lights are flashing red as environmental damage increases, debt and inequality levels rise, and communities and well-being are eroded. When is the next financial crisis going to hit? How are we going to live well as the oil runs out? How do we head off a global temperature rise of more than 2 degrees? Joy in Enough poses questions like these and helps make links between them. Look at their website to find out more. Maybe visit the Joy in Enough café conversations resource at the Green Christian ['On the Road Together'](#) event in Bristol on October 6th.

*John Daniels*

### **Royal Three Counties Show**

The Marches Christian Environment Network was present, via the Church Tent, at this year's Royal Three Counties Show on 15th-17th June. Coincidentally we were located in close proximity to the RSPB and Herefordshire Wildlife Trust, so it seemed a fitting conjunction of mutual interests. M-CENT leaflets were left in strategic places and seemed to disappear effectively, hopefully to be taken and acted upon elsewhere. Through conversations with farmers and government agencies at the show, it is clear that the farming community is very uncertain about the future in a post Brexit Britain and this appears to be affecting applications to grant schemes such as the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. Environmental management, like almost everything else, benefits from political and economic stability!



### **Much Wenlock news**

In January four folk in Much Wenlock set up an environmental group. In May we made a presentation to members of Holy Trinity, Much Wenlock, outlining the results of our environmental review. The PCC has accepted that all future decisions will now include an environmental angle too. There are several key outcomes:

- \* The group has become formally established as a sub-committee of the PCC
- \* We are working on plans for LED lighting in the church
- \* We're developing a biodiversity plan for the churchyard with the help of Caring For God's Acre
- \* We aim to try and get PV systems fitted to the three clergy homes in Wenlock ahead of the feed-in tariff closure March 2019.

### **Pembridge Climate Change series**

This year's Lent course in Pembridge parish, looked at the theology of climate change. Led by the Rev'd Nick Read, an Associate Agricultural Chaplain with Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy and a member of the M-CENT, the course looked at the science and politics of climate change and how theology was responding to this environmental and social crisis. Climate change poses particular challenges for the Christian faith in the west since the focus on personal (human) salvation, which characterises much of our theology, has meant that care for the environment has fallen from prominence in the church's agenda. However, the course discovered that the richness of the Judeo-Christian tradition allows for much more holistic understandings of our relationship with God and creation. Orthodox Christianity, in particular, gives theological insights that are worth pondering. The course content can be found on the blog pages of Borderlands Rural Chaplaincy <https://borderchaplain.org/blog>.

### **Positive action on reducing plastic waste**

"What to do about Plastic" was the title of a presentation given in April, by Alison Thomas of Cwm Harry, and hosted by Stretton Climate Care. One week's worth of plastic waste, contributed by the audience, helped to illustrate the range of products supplied in single use plastics and how not all are currently suitable for recycling. At present black plastic and cling film pose problems for plastic sorting machinery. Most of our plastic waste has previously gone to China where loads rejected for recycling, were diverted to poorly controlled landfill resulting in plastic losses to rivers, meaning that our plastics could unwittingly end up polluting the ocean.

Alison shared some good news stories from around the world. For example, Rwanda has banned plastic bags and France is to ban single use cutlery and crockery. In the UK positive initiatives include 'the Rubbish Diet' which helps people reduce the waste going into their bins, and communities working towards a plastic free future such as Frome in Somerset. A local survey of retail outlets in Church Stretton showed good awareness of the plastic problem and a general willingness to consider alternative packaging as long as this did not compromise food safety. Indeed the fresh produce counter in the Coop in Stretton now uses paper wrapping and bags!

### **Action in Bishop's Castle**

As in many other communities, Blue Planet gave an opportunity for the Bishop's Castle environmental groups to take a few forward steps. At last we managed to get new enthusiasm from our local secondary school, Bishops Castle Community College. Having done some work on the 'plastic problem', they carried out a beach clean-up, analysed the results and reported them to a national network. They are now involved in a local programme, contacting businesses and shops in our area to record their plastic use. They are considering producing a notice that shops could display when they reach a standard. Members of the local group are planning to visit two Veolia sites: one in Wolverhampton and one at Battlefields, Shrewsbury. We are hoping the school may join us in two days of local action in July.

### **Future news**

Please let us know of any future events and useful information to share in our next newsletter (email [mary.oxley@hereford.anglican.org](mailto:mary.oxley@hereford.anglican.org)).

With best wishes from the communications group in M-Cent.



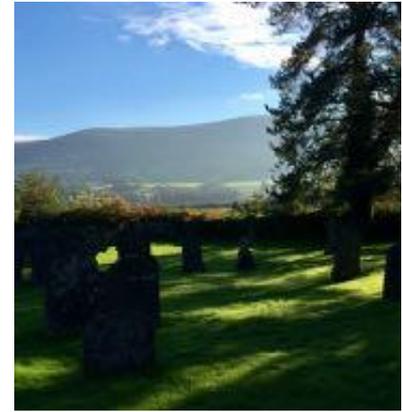
### **Farming and Birds**

In this new book, Ian Newton describes the changes that have taken place over the centuries in British agriculture. Since 1970 most farmland bird species have declined, some by more than 90% in the UK. Scientists are still researching these shocking declines but farming practices, pesticides use, widespread cultivation all impact the ability of birds to nest and feed. With pressure for change, some of these declines are slowing as farmers introduce practices such as field margins, beetle banks and uncultivated strips, sensitive to the needs of farmland birds.



### **Forest Church**

Forest church is a wonderful way of linking experiencing the natural world with worship of the creator. It usually has a particular focus on involving children. This summer's last session of Forest Church in the Marches area is on July 8th, meeting at the Scout Hut, Blackmarston Road, Hereford HR2 7AQ at 4pm. More information from David Bland on 07563 382872. The sessions are called: Church without walls, Church changing rules, Church outdoors, Church for everyone.



### **Caring for Churchyards**

A churchyard is much more than a garden around a church. It is a burial ground, but also a place of quiet reflection and recreation and a habitat for rare plant and animal species. The good management of a churchyard needs to take into account a range of issues, from the burial rights of parishioners to the wildlife management of the churchyard. The [CofE website](#) offers all kinds of useful advice and information.

## Prayer

God of justice, of peace, of love,  
help us to know that you do forgive us,  
setting us free from our past failings, making us new,  
and inviting us on a new stage in our journey with you.

Thank you, Lord.

Amen *(from CTBI)*

---

*Photo Credits: Isabel Carter*

*Copyright © 2018 Marches Christian Environmental Network, All rights reserved.*

### **Our mailing address is:**

Marches Christian Environmental Network  
Diocesan Office Ludlow (Units 8 and 9)  
Ludlow Eco Park, Sheet Road  
Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1FD  
United Kingdom