

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

INTRODUCTION

As a Christian community, we recognise the importance of being stewards of creation, and our responsibility to take care of the earth. This means we should be pro-active, taking both positive and negative actions as necessary.

PURPOSE

The aim of this Policy is to lessen our negative impact on the planet, by:

- Minimising our energy consumption
- eliminating single-use plastics
- Using Fairly Traded products wherever possible
- Using eco-friendly products wherever possible
- Sourcing products as locally as possible, to minimise the carbon footprint of transportation
- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rejoice!

SCOPE

Energy consumption

- Ensure the boiler is working as efficiently as possible, eg through regular servicing
- Using the timed thermostat efficiently – adjusting it weekly according to church usage and weather
- Use energy efficient lighting.

Single-use plastics

- Find alternatives
- Re-use if possible
- Re-cycle correctly

Refreshments and food

- Whenever possible, local produce should be used. This is both good for the local economy and cuts our 'carbon footprint'.
- Where possible, any imported products should be either Fairly traded (economically friendly) or support the rain forests (ecologically friendly). While these products may be more expensive, cheaper products may be purchased at the expense of people living on the margins of poverty, at the expense of communities, and at the expense of the planet.
- Offer alternative menus when food is being consumed – gluten free, vegetarian for example

Eco-friendly products

- **Cleaning materials:** Eco-friendly cleaning materials should be available for the cleaners, and members of the congregation to use.
- **Toiletries:** Toiletries for use in church should be from an Eco-friendly source.
- **The office:** Where presentation is not important, recycled copy paper, etc. should be used; for other purposes, seek to source paper from sustainable forests.

Eco church

We aim to be a Gold Eco church and have a focus on the fifth mark of mission as we live out calling to follow Jesus.

We will commission an Eco Church champion and team and budget for changes that need to be made / continued

Church Bookings

Hirers of the church should be directed to follow this policy, which will be included with the booking form.

POLICY GUIDELINES

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE, REJOICE!

As a church our concern for the environment should not be limited to the just task of recycling and then considering we are 'doing our bit'. It is an 'all of life activity': pro-active, a deliberate lifestyle in which we encourage one another to care for all creation, a fundamental doctrine that underpins all else and makes sense of God's redeeming work.

It is not just the church who is responsible we will encourage others to be environmentally friendly in their homes and workplace as well.

REDUCE

Worship:

- Consider what we use in our worship services.
- Provide e-copy of newsletter and service order through email and on our website.
- Pray for and teach about our stewardship of our planet regularly, both in the main services and in our youth and children's groups
- Have the world mentioned in our mission statement
- Invite outside speakers to speak about the planet and environmental issues
- Take part in fairtrade fortnight and other environmental actions such as church nature count

Energy consumption:

- Reduce our electricity and gas consumption where possible and use green energy providers
- Light bulbs may be energy saving, but we still need to switch lights off when leaving a room, and there may now be more efficient alternatives.
- Our gas boiler is new and significantly more efficient than the previous one and underfloor heating is an effective way to heat the church. However, we must ensure that it is used correctly, via the thermostat. Using a time switch/smart controller to turn the heating on to an acceptable level **before** a service will prevent it being switched to maximum at the start of a service and then forgotten.
- Install LED lighting when the existing lighting gives up eg the flood lights on church
- Have a reduced hours for the winter external lighting at church and the cross on the church roof (to come on an hour after dusk and go off at 11pm – on a Wi-Fi timer)

Single Use Plastics

- Reduce or eliminate the use of all such materials.

Confetti

Only Biodegradable confetti to be used for weddings.

Carbon footprint

- Buy local produce wherever possible. It is recognised that some items are not produced locally, in which case fairly traded items should be used where possible.
- Aim to be carbon neutral by 2030 – through offsetting our energy consumption annually.

RE-USE

Disposable crockery and cutlery

- This should not be used. Existing can be used up.

RECYCLE

Green bin

Yes: Paper, cardboard, directories, envelopes (including widows), newspaper, washed food and drink cans, aerosol canisters, washed milk/drinks/beauty product bottles, yoghurt pots, margarine tubs

No: Coated paper (waxed, plastic, laminated), padded envelopes, tissues, cartons, shredded paper, food residue, foil, metal screws/bolts/pipes/sweet tins, chemical/cleaning containers, plastic bags, bin liners, clingfilm, food trays/punnets, polystyrene, plastic lids.

Glass bin

Yes: Washed glass bottles/jars/metal lids & caps

No: Broken glass, cooking dishes, corks, sheets of glass, light bulbs, mirrors, pottery, lampshades

Plastics bin

Yes: soft plastics and plastic containers not able to go into the green bin such as biscuit containers, fruit containers, bread bags

Anything not referred to above must be considered as non-recyclable and its continued use questioned.

REJOICE

In worship and activities, we should continue to rejoice in God's creation and our stewardship of it.

- Yearly cycle of preaching and teaching around creation and using songs about creation in our regular worship
- Joining in with Caring for God's acre church year count
- Enjoying services and activities outside
- Taking part in community events outside
- Celebrating harvest festival
- Ensuring 'caring for our world' is given as high a place in our community and one another
- Enabling the children and youth groups to think about our responsibilities

REJOICE!

"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." (Psalm 96:11-13)

"You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands" (Isaiah 55: 12)

"You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for You created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being" (Revelation 4: 11)

Heaven above is softer blue,
Earth around is sweeter green;
Something lives in every hue
Christ-less eyes have never seen:
Birds with gladder songs o'erflow,
Flow'rs with deeper beauties shine,
Since I know, as now I know,
I am His, and He is mine.
(George Wade Robinson, 1838-1877)