[Money can be hard to talk about, and where we keep our money doubly so. However, where we keep our money, especially our investments, can have a major impact if we voice our ethical concerns with how that money is used. For more information on ethical investments, see A Rocha's booklet about it and all their booklets here.](https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Buildings-Ethical-Investment.pdf)

The easing of lockdown means more activities that require wearing a face covering. The UK is getting through an estimated 53 million single-use, plastic face masks a day. Washable, reusable fabric face coverings are more sustainable and recommended by government where possible. There are many local makers, or try searching for fairtrade options if you're shopping online.

It is probably a stretch to read Matthew 6:26 as compelling a wildlife survey, but throughout the Scriptures human beings are commended to look upon creation to see glimpses of God. But how often do we look around us and *see?* One of the things that you could do is conduct a small wildlife survey in your area – what species do you see, how do they live, how many can you see? In what ways is God revealed through what you see?

[As all of us eat and drink, we are connected to the land and farming. One of the ways that we can continue to thank God and ask for God's blessing is to use the material the Church of England has curated for the agricultural year, which is accessible here.](https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/churchs-year/times-and-seasons-4)

[Have you thought about twinning your toilet or taps? Many of the toilets in college are already twinned - it would be great if we could extend that to college accommodation too! Twinning your toilet or taps could be a great way to inspire you and your household to pray for the country in which your loo or taps are twinned. How about twinning as a birthday, Christmas or anniversary gift? To find out more see: https://www.toilettwinning.org/](https://www.toilettwinning.org/)

Did you know that peak time for generation of electricity needed in the UK is between 16:30 and 20:00? Many tariffs increase their prices during this time, including the provider of energy at Cuddesdon (during this time it is six times more expensive at Cuddesdon). What can you shift from this time for cheaper and greener electricity use? Consider running the laundry machine or the dishwasher off-peak, or if you have an electric car, charging it after 20:00.

As autumn is slowly slipping into winter, we've all turned on the heating. To be safe and comfortable, human beings do need to live in a certain temperature range. However, as churches have been advised to attempt to heat people rather than spaces as that dramatically decreases heat wastage. Why not attempt this in our own homes, or the places where we might control the thermostat? By knocking it down a few degrees and wearing a jumper, lots of energy can be saved and less waste carbon produced.

[The season of Christmas is almost upon us, and many people may have already thought about gift-giving and many may have not. There are many ways to shop ethically and sustainably, as well as locally or as part of a circular economy. Before buying perhaps the easier item, check out what may be out there or think about what you might make for loved ones, including biodegradable Christmas cards!](https://shopping.rspb.org.uk/christmas-shop/christmas-essentials/greener-christmas/)

[Have you ever considered doing a personal carbon footprint? Check out this site for a simple calculator. Having even a sketchy or basic understanding of our own carbon footprints can help us understand and work to reduce them. How can we live more simply so that others can simply live?](https://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx)

The great Feast of Christmas celebrates the radical arrival of God enfleshed as the person of Jesus Christ. This inbreaking of God into creation reminds of God's love, commitment, and hopes for creation – to be in relationship with God completely and eternally. How can we continue to pray for God's creation, work for its redemption, and participate in the resurrection of all things?

As the seasons continue to change, now is a great time for a creation prayer walk or time of stillness, wherever you happen to be. Slow down, breathe, be attentive, and look for beauty and wonder in your surroundings. Notice what inspires you to want to take care, nurture and protect the environment. Thank God for the beauty, and pray about what you can do.

As COP26 has drawn to a close and the practical work begins, our role in the care of God's creation continues, as individuals and institutions. Are the churches that you are involved with - sending churches, placements or contexts - participating in Eco Church? If so, congratulate them and encourage them to strive towards the next level of award. If not, consider this as something you could raise with them as a practical outworking of their ministry and mission.

There's a lot to do at the beginning of a new academic year. Do remember to check your local council waste and recycling facilities for any updates, keep an eye out for what's being added to recycling at supermarkets, and what's collected at local Terracycle points. Here at College we've extended our Terracycle collection to include toothbrushes and paste packing, and pens and markers, alongside batteries, crisp packets, sweet and biscuit wrappers, and pet food pouches.

Money continues to be a sensitive and personal subject, but did you know that where you choose to bank has one of the largest impacts on your personal carbon footprint? Check out your options on SwitchIt and consider a change. It's one of the easiest ways to make a difference to how we care for creation.

New Year, New You? You may have made (and maybe already broken!) a New Year's Resolution about your own health or finances, how about one for the wellbeing of others or creation? How about three small resolutions: a fairtrade switch of one item like coffee or chocolate, a plastic-free switch of something like toothpaste or laundry detergent, and a commitment to only buy second-hand for one theme, such as clothing, books or gadgets.

As the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity draws to a close, we think of how climate justice is recognised as an expression of social justice. What projects are your church, placement or context working towards? How is your church working with other local churches in projects, or supporting other local, national or global projects? Pray for unity towards the common goal.

With appropriately tepid excitement, the College's residential students are anticipating the arrival of the new College Car. We haven't yet been able to go electric this time, but we're planning and resourcing for the future. Thinking about our aspirations also prompts us to think about what we can achieve right now. Every little change in the right direction helps. Think about when, why and how you travel. What could be reduced or replaced by walking, cycling or public transport? And what longer-term goals could you begin planning and resourcing?

While moving electrons is much more efficient than moving objects, digital communications still have a carbon footprint. A simple email will produce 4 grams of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e). One with an attachment with images, up to 50g CO2e. And everything that sits in the cloud has an energy cost - to get it there, maintain it, and retrieve it. So, think before you send or reply to an email, and doubly so when you add images or attachments. And if you're looking for procrastination from your work, spring clean your cloud-based email, photos and documents: God's creation will thank you for it.

You may see Valentine's as a time to demonstrate your feelings for your loved ones, or soppy over-commercialised nonsense. Either way, how about a bit of demonstrative, non-commercial love for God's creation? Go for a walk or sit outside in the sun at some point this week, noticing the light and life of the lengthening days. Take a deep breath of the crisp air. Be brave, take your shoes off and wriggle your toes into the cold earth. If you're foolish, dip your (now) muddy feet into wild, running water. Thank God for providing all life needs in light, air, earth, and water. And take some time to thank God for creating and sustaining and loving all things, including yourself.

A Lent Challenge from Climate Stewards: "In the bible, caring for creation is God’s first instruction to humans. This Lent, a time when Christians traditionally fast and focus on God, we encourage you to take up the Lent Challenge – finding new ways to reduce our impact on the natural world and our global neighbours. On Shrove Tuesday (1st March), and subsequent Sundays, you will receive a weekly email suggesting easy, medium and harder challenges to try. We’ll include links to resources and a prayer to extend your knowledge and help you reflect on the weekly theme." More information and sign up at [www.climatestewards.org/resources/carbon-fast/](http://www.climatestewards.org/resources/carbon-fast/)

Many of us have just received confirmation that our energy prices are increasing substantially and are having to reassess how we cut down on waste and increase efficiency. Check out some simple ways to reduce the cost of running your home appliances at <https://www.comparethemarket.com/energy/content/which-appliances-use-the-most-energy/>

Another small change: turn the oven off 10 minutes before the end of the cooking time, and leave the door open afterwards to heat your home.

Fuel prices are going up once again, and what's good for your wallet is also good for the planet. We talk a lot about reducing how much you drive, but have you considered how you drive? Doing 60mph rather than 80 (ahem!) on the motorway will save 30% fuel and adds less than 15 minutes to a 50-mile journey - even just doing a couple of mph under the speed limit at 50 or 60 will make a difference that all adds up. Find eco-driving tips from the RAC here: [www.rac.co.uk/drive/advice/how-to/fuel-saving-tips](http://www.rac.co.uk/drive/advice/how-to/fuel-saving-tips)

An easy one for this last week of Hilary Term: a one-time switch that takes a couple of seconds with a long-lasting impact. Move from Google to Ecosia and plant a tree for every internet search you do. For everyday searches it's as good as Google, with a creation-loving bonus. Follow the instructions at <https://www.ecosia.org/> And if you're already an Ecosia user, do tell your friends, family and colleagues about it.

Vampire home appliances! They could be sucking dry your bank account and contributing to climate change - up to a month of your annual electricity bills could be this waste. Switch appliances off at the wall rather than leaving them on standby, unplug devices when they're charged, and turn the charger off at the wall too. If it's got a standby light or clock, or a transformer in the plug, it's impacting your bills and creation even when it's doing nothing. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-61235367>

As spring slowly blossoms into summer at the start of Trinity term, consider spending some time in nature praying. You could pray for creation, interceding; you could pray thanking God for creation. However you pray, let God bring to mind how we ourselves are part of God's creation and are commissed by God to its care, as God delights and plays in creation.

The College recently received an analysis of its carbon footprint, for which heating and electricity are the largest aspects by far. As we move into a time of more heat and light, remember to reduce your own heating and lighting. In the cool of spring nights, a jumper still works! Together, we can work towards reducing our footprints, and if you have any ideas about how to reduce the College's footprint, do get in touch with the EcoCollege Officer, jeremy.heuslein@rcc.ac.uk.

Local elections have just happened, and how we vote does matter. Whether your local politician is a member of the Green Party or any other one, you can use your voice to express the need to address the climate crisis. Could you organise an open letter signed by significant members of your community? Could you demonstrate or get people to sign up to a green initiative that would benefit your community? What ways would God want you to use your voice to help preserve creation and promote justice?

The College has designated more areas as non-mowing areas, making space for more of the abundance of creation to show up around the grounds. Where could you make space for the abundance of creation to show up? Are there habits that would help you embrace that abundance? You could consider making a bug hotel or a bird's nest. If you would like any ideas, contact the EcoCollege Officer, jeremy.heuslein@rcc.ac.uk.

Have you heard of LOAF? It is an easy way to remember ways to think about food more ethically and sustainably. Is it **L**ocally grown? Is it **O**rganic? Is it **A**nimal-friendly? And is it **F**airtrade? Thinking about these things and sourcing food that are these ways is a good way to reduce your food's carbon footprint, as well as eat within the seasons of the year.

[The weather is fully becoming summer! What ways could you enjoy this season? Perhaps, it is eating outside or taking an evening walk and listening to the birds. If you are able, you could consider cycling more instead of driving this season. Not only is it a great way to be out in the elements, but it is good exercise! Make sure to consult the UK's guidance on road safety: https://www.think.gov.uk/cycle-safety/](https://www.think.gov.uk/cycle-safety/)

As many of us scatter for the summer or for the next phase of public ministry, how could we share the ecological concerns and opportunities with the churches and communities we encounter? Does your TI know about EcoChurch and the support A Rocha is able to provide in becoming one? How could you preach on placements or in parish on the themes of creation in Scripture and in the world today?

Sustainability is not just a word for environmental issues, but it can be a principle brought into nearly all aspects of life. As we move into a period of rest over the summer, you may wish to examine what areas of your own life that you could live more sustainably, not just the environmental aspects. How might the rhythm of creation, which includes rest, more deeply inform your pattern of life?

It is forecast that tomorrow (15/11/2022) the human population will surpass eight billion. Perhaps this is an opportunity to stop and reflect on how God might be calling us to love our neighbours – near and far – and to tread lightly and justly on our shared home. This is about more than personal choices and lifestyles but also about advocating for what is truly the common good. One of the things we are encouraged to do by A Rocha is write to our local MPs and councils to let them know how important environmental and ecological care is important to us and to the future of this country and our world. This might be something you could do in the coming days and weeks.

Around this time of year, millions of Americans celebrate the tradition of 'Thanksgiving.' Laying aside the commercialisation that has become attached to the holiday (the origins of 'Black Friday'), the practice of expressing gratitude is one of the ancient spiritual practices throughout Christian traditions. Looking back on the calendar year, what of God's creation have you been grateful for? What has been the most surprising part of God's creation for you this year? What part of God's creation was *for you* this year?

As Advent begins and we prepare in our journey towards Christmas, we are invited not only to reflect on the story of the birth of Jesus but the return of Jesus. There is an eschatological hope treading itself through the Scriptures and the Church down to us today: not the destruction of the world, but its regeneration. How might we participate in that regeneration this Advent? How does the penitential season of Advent change the way we our lives? Do we eat less meat or drive less? What could we do *more* of, in order to prepare for Christmas as well as the regeneration of creation that is coming both eschatologically and in the spring?

As we near the end of term and the Christmas holidays are on the horizon, our thoughts might be turning to the celebrations that are ahead of us. We remember how the Word became *flesh*, not just a human body, but as Niels Gregersen writes, Jesus joined "the whole malleable matrix of materiality." How might that affect your Christmas celebrations, celebrating the one who became incarnate for the cosmos? Perhaps, you might find some ideas at <https://www.sustainablebabysteps.com/green-christmas>