



BISHOP STEPHEN'S LENT CHALLENGE 2020



GOD'S CREATION, A GIFT OR A LOAN?



Diocese of Ely Education Directorate in partnership with Christian Aid
www.elyeducation.org



Vision and overview

Lent Challenge 2020 is about the planet, creation and life, and how we act as stewards of God's World.

Viewed from space, the earth is seen as a beautiful blue planet, full of life and diversity. It is a great gift and as people, we are stewards of the planet for all life forms living and inhabiting the earth, on land, in sea and air.

It is undoubtedly under threat in 2020, and there are significant groups who are working tirelessly to make sure we take steps to save the planet from pollution and misuse. Many of these groups are children and young people, who have a voice in so many ways.

We are seeking to work with all children and staff in our schools to think and reflect about the concept of God's Creation – A gift or a loan?

How do we see the earth in the solar system and universe?

Is this something we can take and use or misuse? Or is it something for us be part of and look after?

Is it a well wrapped present which we can discard after use? Conversely, is it a present we can thankfully receive and look after enabling others to also receive and pass on in a good state to the next generation.

Many questions and we don't have all the answers!

But we want to hear from the children in our schools; their ideas, their views and especially suggestions on how we can make things better.

OUR PARTNERS AND TEAM

Christian Aid is our partner this year, with many links to activities and ideas. Regional Director for Cambridgeshire, Pam Richardson, is available to visit schools. She has a wealth of information about Christian Aid in Kenya and specific materials about her professional visit to Ethiopia..

The Diocesan Education Team are available to support.

CONTENTS

Included with this pack are;

- Ideas for Collective Worship and school activities over the five weeks in Lent. These are for initial support and ideas and we hope that each school will be able to develop their own creative ideas.
- Letters of Creation – working with Christian Aid on their Letters of Creation project.
- Resources and materials available to download.
- Contacts for further information.

CHILDREN'S WORK

We invite schools to send materials produced by the children to the diocese in electronic formats. Christian Aid have an excellent project in Letters of Creation, which can take many forms (as detailed below) and we would like as many schools as possible to respond to the diocese through this method in Letters of Creation.

Some Letters of Creation (with permissions) could be taken to the Lambeth Conference, held every ten years, called, 'God's Church for God's World'.

In 2020 we will be using the materials from your schools in a project at Ely Cathedral called Heaven and Earth, to be held in May and June.

We will also be able to display work through our website.

Please ensure that any materials have specific permission for diocesan use and, on the website, ie non recognition images and in line with your school policies.

MESSAGE ON BEHALF OF BISHOP STEPHEN

Here in Ely Diocese, our vision is about being fully alive in Jesus Christ. In John's Gospel Jesus tells us that he came that we might have life in all its fullness.

One of our imperatives is to engage fully and courageously with the needs of our communities locally and globally.

The environmental crisis, and the question of climate justice, is one of the most pressing challenges facing humanity today. For Christians, there are particular questions about how we think about the care of the world which we believe to be God's good creation, and how we are responsible and generous in our stewardship of it.

I am delighted that this year's Lent Challenge invites us to think about 'God's creation – gift or loan': I hope that through engaging with this material in imaginative and creative ways we will wonder afresh at the beauty and diversity of the world around us – locally and globally – and will think more deeply about how we care for it both now and into the future. I am delighted that we are working together with Christian Aid this year, who work across the world for fullness of life for people in so many countries and contexts.

I hope you enjoy the Challenge, and I look forward to seeing all responses to it, and to learning from you about 'God's creation – gift or loan'.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen" followed by a stylized flourish.

MESSAGE ON BEHALF OF CHRISTIAN AID

We have more than 70 years' experience of working in partnership to support communities to thrive. We tackle the root causes of poverty so that women, men and children the world over are strengthened against future knocks. And if disasters happen, we get people the help they want straight away.

Together with our supporters and partners, we aim:

to expose poverty throughout the world

to help in practical ways to end it

to highlight, challenge and change the structures and systems that favour the rich and powerful over the poor and marginalised.

We're part of a global movement for change

Together, we have great influence and impact. We want people to pray with us, to act, to give and to get involved with us in a variety of ways.

We work to educate and mobilise people from all kinds of backgrounds to build a movement that can change the course of history and bring social justice to all.

We campaign to ensure a more equal division of power in the world, promoting the rights and voices of women and girls – and anyone discriminated against because of who they are.

We push our political leaders to tackle climate change and tax dodging – which hit the poorest the hardest – and for our society to welcome those who have been forced to flee their homes overseas. Christian Aid is delighted to partner with the Diocese of Ely in Bishop Stephen's Lent Challenge 2020. Alongside our *Global Neighbours* accreditation scheme we would like to reach out to schools to help children claim their voice as global citizens and help church schools develop and showcase their work in helping their pupils to become courageous advocates.

Find out more at: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/>

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/caeastengland>

Pam Richardson

Legacies/Regional Coordinator for Cambridgeshire



Ideas for Collective Worship and Activities

In each of the five weeks we have 3 sections; Let's Find Out, Let the Bible inspire us and What Can we do? The weeks can be carried out in the reverse order if preferred. There is a suggested Act of Worship, plus ideas for classroom and whole school activities. These are intended as a guide; we are sure that you are the best people to work out ideas for your own school, the children also will no doubt have many ideas to use.

This is a framework and it can all be copied and pasted into teachers' own methods and IT systems. The document is a Diocese of Ely document and all we ask is that if it is used elsewhere that reference is made to the diocese.

It is also available to download on the website, you can use the link below.

<http://www.elyeducation.org/main/>

WEEK 1 PLANET EARTH

Let's find out... Ideas about the earth, its place in the solar system and universe. It is seen as a blue planet from space. It has generated life, and this is unique in the solar system as far as we know.

Let the Bible inspire us.... passages from the Bible that help us about earth and creation, passages from the Bible that help us appreciate the beauty and vastness of earth and creation.

Genesis Chapter 1 verses 1-9 and 14

What Can we do? ...Understand that our earth is part of a larger solar system. Start considering how we can be stewards of the earth and look after our planet.

Act of Worship Suggestion Focus – Journeys in Space!

How would it feel to travel into space? Who is in space now? Have you ever seen the International Space Station orbiting the world? Major Tim Peake from England was an astronaut who was the first British ESA astronaut and the second astronaut to bear a flag of the United Kingdom patch. Are there any links to Buzz Light Year from Toy Story?

We have 7 planets in our solar system and all the planets orbit the sun, which provides us with light and heat. As a result of orbiting the sun, we have the seasons and the differences in our planet on how close our part of the world is to the sun.

The earth has day and night because the earth rotates every 24 hours.

How can we look after this wonderful planet, our earth? What can we do to make sure it has a future?

Class or Whole School Activity

Watch the NASA video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NtrVwX1ncqk>

Songs He's Got the Whole World in His Hands, Colours of Day

Prayer

The Wide Everywhere

I don't feel afraid

To look up at the sky

And its miles and miles of blue;

For in the clear air

And the wide everywhere

Is the Love that surrounds me and you. Amen

The Lion Book of a 1000 prayers for Children

Classroom and Whole School Activities

So Much Beneath the Surface taken from NASA Space

<https://spaceplace.nasa.gov/earth-fan/en/>

Create a fan with earth's layers as described above.

We spend pretty much all our time on Earth's crust. It's where all the land and oceans are. But below the crust, there's a lot going on.

The crust is a lot like the skin on an apple. It doesn't go very deep. But it's still deeper than you could ever dig. It's about 19 miles (30 km) deep on average on land. At the bottom of the ocean, the crust is still about 3 miles (5 km) deep.

Below the crust is Earth's biggest layer, the mantle. It's a hot soup of molten rock. The mantle goes 1,800 miles (2,900 km) deep. Below the mantle is the outer core; it's made of liquid iron and nickel. At the centre of Earth is the inner core. It's a solid centre made of iron and nickel metals.

WEEK 2 OUR WORLD, OUR CLIMATE

Let's find out... What is climate? How do we know what the weather will be like? Are there patterns of weather that happen every year, how do the seasons work? How do people have an influence on the weather? Have there been any differences recently in the weather patterns?

Let the Bible inspire us... passages from the Bible about life on earth such as plants, seeds, animals, Luke 12 verses 27-28. Noah's Ark Genesis 6:9-9:17. Famous people now and in the past, who have looked after plant life and wild animals. St Francis of Assisi who is the patron saint for ecology, because of his love for animals and plant life.

What Can we do? ...Be aware that how we live can affect the weather patterns which will influence the climate across the planet. Find out about the world, the polar regions, the equatorial areas and where extreme weather situations have arisen.

Act of Worship Suggestion

Our four seasons. Which season are we in and what is the weather like? Look at the four seasons, how different they are and changes in clothes and lifestyles that we have to make. How do we know that it is winter, what are the trees like and how would they be different in spring, summer and autumn? How many places have you heard about where there are extreme weather conditions which have had a severe effect and caused major problems for people?

How can we make sure that we look after the climate? What can we do to make things better? How do we travel to school and on holiday?

St Francis lived in Italy in 1120 onwards and dedicated his life to caring for others and for animals and wild life. He founded an order of monks and people still follow his ways living a simple life with no need for cars, extra electricity and travel.

Songs Think of a world without any flowers. Have you heard the raindrops?

Prayer - Respect the earth

We think the earth is ours.

We dig it, plough it, mine it, pave it, bomb it.

Then from within the heart of things, the earth erupts, it shakes, it quakes, it shifts and drifts.

May we learn to respect the earth, for it is shaped by forces greater than our own, and we should live in awe of them. Amen

Taken from The Lion Book of 1000 Prayers for Children

Classroom and Whole School Activities

Create a play about a village which faces a change in climate. Could call it River Waterways and use the Fens water systems as the basis for the play. Village in the fens which has been flooded and the water level has risen so people have had to use boats to travel as all the roads have disappeared.

WEEK 3 OUR SCHOOL, OUR HOME ENVIRONMENTS

Let's find out... Ideas about our school, the buildings, the playgrounds, what happens to the waste we create, how do we travel to school, how are our homes heated and where does the electricity come from?

Let the Bible inspire us... passages from the Bible that help us about our lives and how we can look after each other, how looking after others can help us to do good in the world. Luke 2: 4-end, John 21: 15-20

What Can we do? ... How can we use sustainable resources? What can we do about plastics that we use? How can we encourage our families and schools as stewards of this world?

Act of Worship Suggestion Use some images of the school and the outside spaces. How does this reflect our vision of a sustainable environment? Look at buildings from around the world using examples of homes built from natural materials. Look at new buildings and the need for high levels of insulation etc in creating more efficient homes.

Songs Milk Bottle Tops and Paper Bags, If I had a Hammer

Prayer

The Very Nicest Place

The fish lives in the brook,

The bird lives in the tree,

But homes the very nicest place

For a little child like me. Amen

Anon

Classroom and Whole School Activities

Create collections of photos of the school buildings and outside spaces, including the non-teaching spaces. What are the good things about them? What are the areas which could be improved?

Make some lists of areas and grade them according to class thoughts about how well they work.

Create a vision collage with drawings, paintings, idea bubbles etc from children's discussions in groups and to teachers, Include the teachers thoughts and ideas as to how space and resources work well.

Complete as a large scrap book, wall display or IT concept design.

Could use Minecraft to show how children can create their own online environment

WEEK 4 OUR COUNTRY

Let's find out...Ideas about our country, where we travel to, our villages, our towns and cities, our coastline and our open spaces.

Let the Bible inspire us.... passages from the Bible that refer to different countries, open spaces, the wilderness, Jerusalem. Luke 3: 14 - 17, Matthew 1:13, Acts 15: 21-end

*What Can we do? ...*As young people we can make changes, we can write about using sustainable resources, changing the way we live. We can listen to other young people and those who are concerned about our planet.

Act of Worship Suggestion How big is our country? Do we live in a town or the country?

Use Google Earth to zoom into our school from the view of the whole world. Think about how we travel to school, how other children in different countries may travel to school Talk about the roads nearby, and how we travel looking at public transport including buses and trains. Think about the other types of travel we can do for journeys or for pleasure, ie cycling, walking, air travel.

Songs The Journey of Life, Go Tell it on the Mountain

Prayer

Lord, I climbed up a huge mountain

And from the top I could look down on the birds,

Look down on the trees

And look down on the villages far away.

I had never been so high up before.

Thank you for letting me see your world

In a new and lovely way. Amen

Anon (taken from Prayers for Children compiled by Christopher Herbert)

Classroom and Whole School Activities

This is a chance to look at the UK on maps and images, make a focus on the school in relation to the nearest town, roads, the county etc. What ideas do we have to improve use of our land? What balance is there between country and town/cities? Use contrast of fenland areas and mountainous and hill areas, e.g. Fens and Lake District.

Children could make models using different materials to create a local environment of UK images. Use a UK map and create a jigsaw of the map.

Let's find out...Ideas about other countries, different continents and how some countries help others. A world view of the planet and how climate covers all the earth

Let the Bible inspire us.... passages from the Bible that help us about different countries, and people. Looking at diversity and difference, richer and poorer, Matthew 5: 1-11, Acts 2:1-18

What Can we do? ...

Act of Worship Suggestion Use Google Earth to zoom in to a different country in a different continent. Use the Christian Aid materials for Global Neighbours. Suggest looking at Ethiopia in Africa and think about the different climate, different facilities etc. Look at family life and how similar that can be.

Songs All Over the World, There is Singing in the Desert

Prayers

God's World is good.

We like it.

He made the sun to give us light and to keep us warm. The trees give us fruit.

God's world is full of twinkly stars, beautiful flowers and furry animals.

God made us,

He made this world so we can be happy. God loves us. Amen

Yvette Leavy (age5) Taken from Prayers for a Fragile World

Classroom and Whole School Activities

Use a range of atlases, maps and books that show different countries. The focus could be on a country which is being affected by climate change already, ie Bangladesh, Australia, Ethiopia... or a country which has a large area of city development, new buildings and infrastructure.

Discuss differences and how people live, what affect it has on other life, eg plants and animals, what diversity is present and how that is managing with climate change.

Create a wall display or large scrapbook, or an online vlog or blog about issues that children feel are important.



Letters of Creation & Ideas, Resources, Notes and Contacts

LETTERS OF CREATION -CHRISTIAN AID PROJECT

Letters can take many forms; written letters, artwork, short films, poems or spoken word presentations, all are welcomed. The emphasis is on communicating a message effectively and teachers can incorporate into a range of curriculum areas.

Letters should ask about climate change and can challenge leaders to take action. Children can ask the question, “What would you say to world leaders about climate change/looking after our planet?”

The extent to which this question and response is framed within a Christian perspective is flexible. In a church school we would recognise the importance of acting as stewards of God’s world.

For any questions or further support please be in touch

CHRISTIAN AID PROJECT

Link to Global Neighbours: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/schools/global-neighbours-accreditation-scheme>

Link to Christian Aid: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/>

Activities/material for:

Our Climate: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-04/Fumes-or-Futures-assemblies.pdf> (assembly)
<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/fumes-or-futures-assembly-powerpoint> (power-point) <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/schools/fumes-or-futures> (all Fumes or Futures materials)

Our planet earth: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/2017-11/shared-planet-school-assembly.pdf> (assembly)
<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/shared-planet-school-assembly-presentation> (power-point)
<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/2017-11/world-in-our-hands->

[school-assembly.pdf](#) (about sustainability)
<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/world-our-hands-assembly-presentation> (power-point) <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/schools/disaster-strikes> (materials on disasters)
<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/schools/disaster-zone-game> (simulation game for older children) <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/schools/forest-foods-forever-game> (simulation game to look at threatened resources)

Our global neighbours: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/toilet-troubles-assembly-0> (assembly) <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/toilet-troubles-assembly> (presentation)
<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/no-school-today-assembly> (assembly and accompanying notes and power-point on the importance of education) <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/disaster-strikes-assembly> (work on disasters with presentation)
<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/schools/health-assemblies> (health focus with presentation) <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/far-home-assembly> (refugees) <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/songs-syria-presentation> (a look at conflict and peace based on Syria)
<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/schools/beliefs-and-actions-world> (how our faith impacts our actions) <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/schools/safe-place-ludo-game> (a game to explore the challenges facing people who must flee conflict)

Our schools: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/schools/become-transformer> (introduction to the work of Christian Aid)

Our country: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/2017-11/more-than-enough-school-assembly.pdf> (explores consumer culture)
<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/more-enough-assembly-presentation> (power-point) <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/schools/chocolate-trade-game> (looks at how we can treat workers in other countries more fairly)

RESOURCES

Bible References - these are added for suggestions and do not always have to be used, you may find other materials that are useful.

Bible versions - there are many different versions of the Bible. We suggest that you use NRSV (New Revised Standard Version) NIV (New International Version), Good News Bible or Lion's Children's Bible

Atlases as in school

Google Earth

Non fiction texts as in schools

Fiction and related stories as in schools

Cambridgeshire Libraries Books on the Environment

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/libraries-leisure-&-culture/libraries/library-online/>

50 things you should know about the environment Green, Jen , London : QED, 2016.

Deforestation Spilsbury, Richard, , 1963- Wayland, 2011. 48 p.

Energy Stringer, John, London : Evans, c2006. 48 p.

Environment Infographics Oxlade, Chris : London : Raintree, 2014.

I wonder why there's a hole in the sky and other questions about the environment

Callery, Sean, London : Kingfisher, 2012.

Natural Resources Richards, Jon, London : Wayland, 2014.

Natural Resources Jack & Meg Gillet with contributions by Richard & Louise Spilsbury

London : Wayland, 2014.

Our Environment Hoe, Susan: Ticktock, 2008

Planetwatch Dorling Kindersley 2009

Rainforest Destruction Littlewood, Peter Franklin Watts, 2011.

Wasted World Arnold, Nick, Scholastic, 2009.

What's Next for the Environment Jackson, Tom: London : Wayland, 2013.

Climate Change Solway, Andrew : London : Franklin Watts, 2009.

Energy revolution. : climate change and our post-carbon future: Young People of the World, Peace Child International, London : Evans, c2010

Saving the Earth Claybourne, Anna : Miles Kelly Publishing Ltd, 2010

What a Waste French, Jess : London : Dorling Kindersley Limited, 2019.

CONTACTS

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AND FINALLY...

We hope you enjoy working on Bishop Stephen's Lent Challenge 2020 God's Creation, A Gift or a Loan? We are looking forward to receiving materials from children and schools with some amazing creations. We are also excited to hear the voices of children in word, drawing or screen about this pressing issue of the future of our planet and the next generation.

Diocesan of Ely Education Team and Christian Aid

www.elyeducation.org

