

## NEWS & CHAT Thursday 8 July 2021

Welcome to the joint weekly newsletter of Christ Church and the Bridgwater Drive Church.

**The online service will remain 'joint' while each church has its own service as pre-pandemic. For the foreseeable future, the online service will be live-streamed from the church where the minister is leading, but always on the Christ Church Facebook page.**

The same rules as last time the church was open apply:

- Social distancing, which means a capacity of around 30 people (CC) and 12 (BDC). Please 'book' a place with Pat Botfield (01245 320212, pat.botfield@btinternet.com) or Margaret.
- Face coverings need to be worn inside
- No congregational singing
- No socialising in groups of more than 6 inside the building or in the area outside the door

**It is looking hopeful that from 19 July the government will remove the social distancing restrictions and we can go back to less restricted worship and other activities. The Elders will review our church risk assessment policy – more information once detailed guidance has been issued.**

**Sunday 11 July** Robert will lead All-Age worship at Christ Church and the Facebook service will be live from there at **10a.m. Priority for spaces at the church will be given to families with children. Please 'book' with Pat.** (Sandy is currently on annual leave).

Rev Celia Whitman will lead worship at Bridgwater Drive at 10.30 a.m.

**Sunday Worship from the URC General Assembly**, at 11am on the 11<sup>th</sup>, is available to be watched live or later in the day via the URC website, YouTube or Facebook Page. More information and a link here:

<https://urc.org.uk/latest-news/3838-join-in-with-general-assembly-sunday-worship-service>

Business sessions can also be watched, live, via the URC website from 11am on Friday, once General Assembly has started.

### NEWS:

**Taize - Thursday 15th July at 10.30am** for about 1 hour in the church (led by Penny)

Do you feel the need for some calm and peace?

Taize may help.

If you are not sure, just come and try it, you might be surprised.

If anyone has unwanted garden tools, please contact Penny Gendall 01268 750324 to discuss

### OTHER DIARY DATES:

**Sat. 17 July 2-4pm at Christ Church**, Revd Nigel Uden (former Moderator of General Assembly) will lead a session on prayer, incl. how to lead prayers of intercession.

**Please let Jean know if you plan to attend – there are still places available.**

**Monday 19 July, 7.30pm Indian Meal at the Mango Lounge**, £17 per person (raises money for church funds as before).

**Please let Janine know if you'd like to go – 07719 892728, or 01702 511861**

**Come and join the fun, so Claudia and I won't be on our own!!**

**Wednesday 21 July, 7.30pm – Christ Church, Church Meeting – in person at the church. More details to follow next week. Please let Jean know if you plan to attend.**

This week the second item from the **9 things you can do about climate change** – (next page)

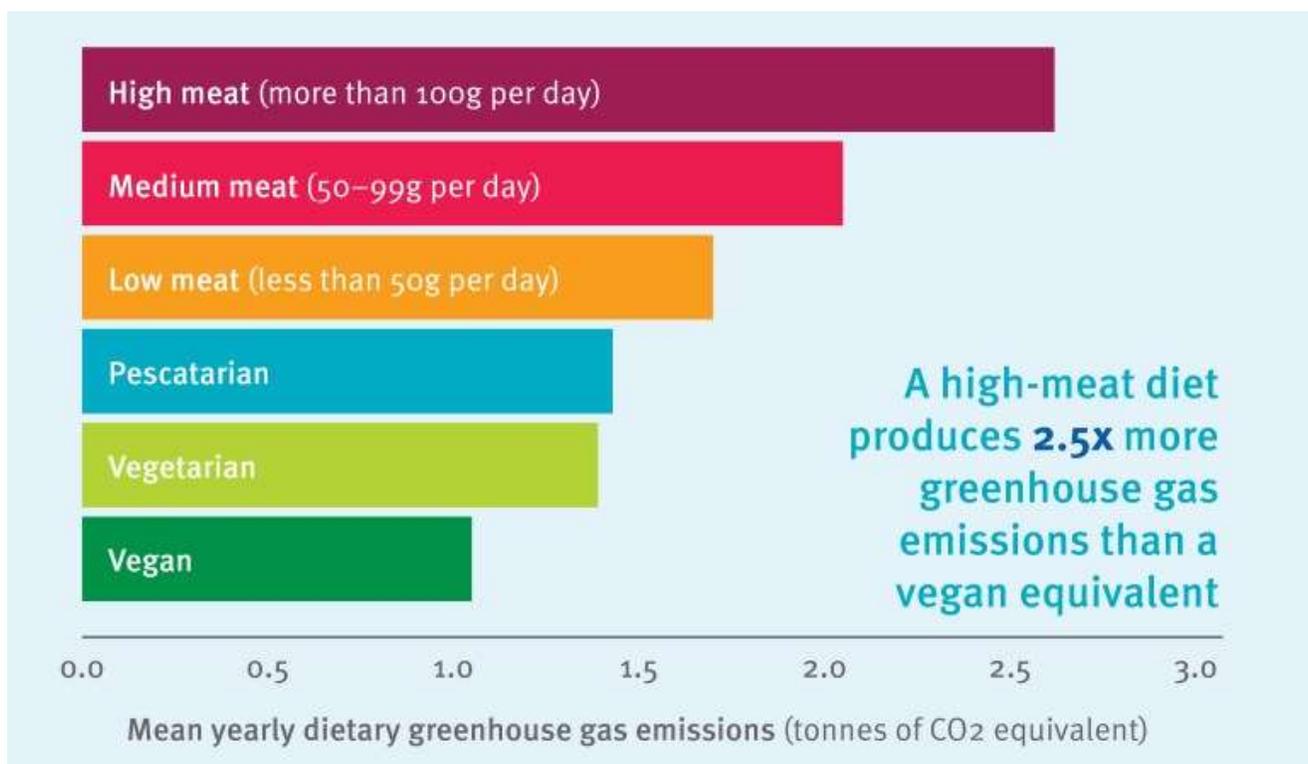
## 2. Eat less meat and dairy

**Avoiding meat and dairy products is one of the biggest ways to reduce your environmental impact on the planet.** Eat fewer or smaller portions of meat, especially red meat, which has the largest environmental impact, and reduce dairy products or switch them for non-dairy alternatives. Try to choose fresh, seasonal produce that is grown locally to help reduce the carbon emissions from transportation, preservation and prolonged refrigeration.

Studies suggest that a high-fibre, plant-based diet is also better for your health - so it can be a win-win!

Someone older and wiser than me recently said, we shouldn't ask people to do things we don't do or are not willing to do ourselves, so as an example: I have not eaten red meat for many years, only chicken and fish, and several days a week we eat vegetarian. I have done less well with giving up dairy, but have recently switched to oat milk for coffee and cereal (not in tea, sorry!)

How diet affects greenhouse gas emissions:



### TIPS & IDEAS

This week the 64 Million Artists is invite us to - **Capture what 'Home' means.**

Is it a place - somewhere you are now or somewhere attached to a memory? Maybe it's not a place, but a person, sound, smell or taste - that no matter where you are, brings a sense of comfort.

How will you visualise the feeling of home? You could take a photograph, do a drawing, write a story or a poem.

### PRAYER CORNER

I invite all of you to set aside time daily to pray for our churches and members but also for the whole nation and world. This week we pray especially for wisdom in the coming relaxation of coronavirus restrictions and that people will take responsibility and think of others.

Christ Church, Rayleigh (CC) and the Bridgwater Drive Church (BDC)

This week's prayer theme (prepared by Gwyneth). **Assembly.** We pray for those attending General Assembly this week, virtually once again but no less 'together'. We pray for a freshness in discussions and decisions, a depth of unity of Spirit, and a shared desire above all else to worship God and lift His name high.

**Particular prayer requests this week:**

Rachel S & family  
Brian, Jenny C's brother  
Tim, Bob W's nephew  
Bill & Beth  
Grace & Phil  
Di's nephew, Bobby  
Frank  
Michelle, Sophie and Baby Remy

Audrey  
Peter C  
Doreen  
Sheila S  
Della  
Joan W



**Another in our series of 'eco' reflections: FORESTS and TREES**

*When through the woods and forest glades I wander, and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees.....*



Forests and trees provide us with oxygen, and water, remove pollutants and capture vast amounts of carbon. They also help prevent flooding and stabilise soil against erosion.

Tree cover reduces the temperature of the planet and provide homes for hundreds of insects, animals and birdlife, plant life and fungi. Timber will provide shelter and warmth for humans, and yet more homes for other varieties of insects, plants and animals.

When a tree dies it continues providing habitats for insects and other creatures and plant life. Eventually it provides soil for new seedlings to grow. Leaves also rot down, with the help of insects and worms, to form leaf litter – a very good growing medium for plants.

Rainforests are under constant attack from loggers and big businesses to clear the land for timber or to grow soya for animal feed, palm oil production for the food industry and cosmetic products. Forests are also being cleared for cattle rearing, to meet the demand for beef in the western world.

As a result of all this clearing, indigenous tribes that live in these forests are being brutally murdered for trying to protect their homes that they have cared for and managed over the centuries. Animals such as the orangutans are being driven out of their homes and just being left to die. Not only does the removal of the forests create climate change but it causes unfairness and injustice to people who have cared for the planet and cause no damage.

On a more local scale our own woodlands and forests which give us joy and relaxation just being able to wander through them and enjoy the sounds and smells that woodland produces. A lot of us will have our favourite tree that we like to visit, climb and perhaps even hug, but these are also being constantly nibbled away at to make way for infrastructure and housing for an increasing population.

With the increasing population and smaller areas for people to enjoy the countryside, and animals to live in, wildlife is creeping further into our gardens to forage for food e.g. squirrels and pigeons, foxes and badgers. We are all being herded into the same spots and this can also lead to stress levels rising.

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So, with forest and tree degradation we have reduced oxygen levels, less water vapour to form rain clouds and more flooding when it does rain as there are less trees to soak up the water. A bigger build-up of carbon dioxide and other harmful gases and pollutants creating breathing problems and a rise in temperature levels gives us Climate Change.

### **WHAT CAN WE DO ?**

Tree-planting schemes are run by several organisations such as Wildlife Trusts, Woodland Trust, BBC's Countryfile, local schools, the Queen. For individual tree planting, advice can be obtained from local nurseries, the RHS or Woodland Trust. On a global scale there are schemes with Christian Aid, Practical Action, or UN's Justdiggit Campaign, to name but a few.

When buying wood or paper products check they are FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) approved for being ethically sourced.

Reduce the amount of carbon we put into the atmosphere by reducing our car and plane travel. Stop using fossil fuels and boycott firms, businesses and banks which still do.

Eat less meat and meat products.

Check for ethically sourced palm oil products

Look for products with Fair Trade or Soil Association (organic if possible) labels. These products will have been ethically produced and sourced with the farmers and animals' welfare in mind as well as the environment.

Coffee and cocoa plantations are suffering from climate change and the heat of the sun on these plantations is too intense so the Fairtrade coffee and cocoa growers are starting to use agroforestry methods where growing the beans amongst mixed woodland is seen to be working well. Farming amongst trees is working well in other areas like Woodland Trust egg production.



Forests and trees are vital for the stability of the planet and of our very existence. They are known as the 'Lungs of the Earth'.

I looked to see if forests were mentioned in the Bible and was astounded at the amount of references there were throughout the whole of the Bible from Genesis right through to Revelations.

"When God saw what he had created he saw it was good". (Genesis 1 v. 12)

If we love God, to show him our love we should care for his world.

When people are murdered for trying to protect their forest home and all life within it, and local councils want to build yet more homes on flood plains and green spaces, we need to start protesting.

We really need to let the Government and Local Councils know that we need to save our planet.

Let's hope there will be some 'trees of the field to clap their hands, and we go out with joy'!

Elizabeth Pryor