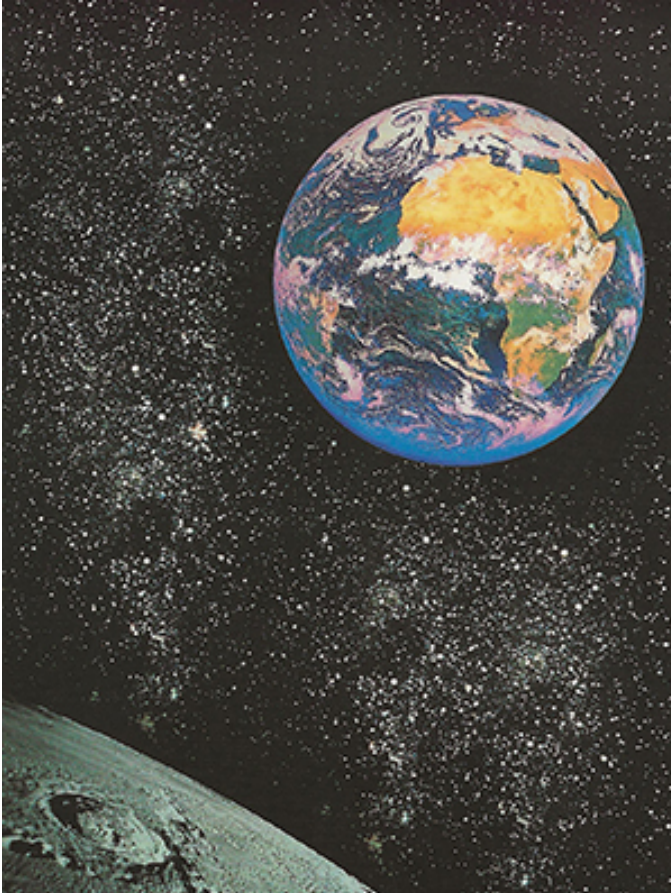


'CARING FOR GOD'S WORLD'



8th Edition March 2021

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WHY SHOULD CHRISTIANS CARE ABOUT THE PLANET?

[editorial]

Andy Ive has written up a summary of a book by Ruth Valerio, *L is For Lifestyle* about the changes we need to make, but why should Christians and other believers care that much?

First of all, Planet Earth is part of God's beautiful handiwork, he made it good and he delights in all that he has called into existence. Then humans have been created to look after this part of his creation. We are like stewards or managers of this wonderful estate. Next, we are part of Nature and dependent upon it. The health of the Planet is vital for our health and well-being. Caring for God's world is part of our love for our "neighbour". God has a future for his Universe and we have a share in bringing everything to praise God.

Can you think of any other reasons for looking after the world?

We also have a piece about coal-mining in Cumbria. Will it go ahead and

should it?

There is also an interview with Jessica Tyrie about her eco refills shop in Ingleton.

Drawing on RSPB's magazine, *Nature's Home* and the *Craven Herald* I have included a piece about sustainable farming. Farmers are being encouraged to manage their land both for a reasonable income and for wild life and healthy soil.

LIFESTYLE, COVID 19 & CARE OF CREATION

Should we be changing the way we live in response to the pandemic and the climate crisis?

God called this beautiful world – and us - into existence, he made everything good and he delights in his creation. He has created us humans to look after this part of his creation, Planet Earth. We are part of nature and the world has gone wrong because of us, but God has a future for his Universe and we have a share in putting the world to rights and bringing everything to praise our Creator.

The media are full of suggestions and good advice – some of it more helpful than others. Here is one with the slogan, 'Learn to live for the moment'. I like that as it is very like what many Christian pastors have said. Deal with the situation that is in front of you now and don't worry about the troubles that tomorrow will bring. Jesus said something like that once.

Yes, the times are difficult, but use this time, Terry Waite, author and humanitarian, has said, "to explore your creativity and live in the moment". When he was in prison for five years, he started writing a book in his head. Others may pick up a pencil and start drawing, copying pictures or photos. Try something new.

Give yourself small goals. Focus on one achievable goal you can reach today.

Be kind to yourself and look for hope. Think of all the things you can be glad about in your own life and in the world around. Say Thankyou as often as you can. Listen to music and sing in the bath or shower. Hum as you walk

Keep to patterns and routines that work for you, but consider small changes that fit in with what comes first in your life, with your beliefs and priorities? And then how does all this fit in with what is happening around you – other people's priorities?

And see Andy Ive's piece about *L is for Lifestyle*.

***L is for Lifestyle. A book by Ruth Valerio,
first published by IVP in 2004 and revised and reprinted in 2019***

Continuing with our theme of protecting the environment, I would like to introduce this book and highlight a few ideas therein. There are 26 chapters following the (English) Alphabet that hit the major issues in climate change, poverty, extinction, pollution, people issues etc. These articles will be published in a number of sections, so look out for future editions of *Caring for God's World*

A is for Activists. We should all be activists in one form or another. It could be joining Greenpeace or a local climate action group, going on marches or more simply subscribing to a weekly environmental email or paper. The World Bank website is a good place to start to look at poverty reduction and sustainability

B is for Bananas. In poorer countries, banana workers get between 4p and 9p for a half Kilo, which sells for an average of £1. Multinationals get 80-90% of the cost of a bunch of bananas, which is why Fair Trade is a much better option for helping poor people out of poverty.

C is for Creation. God created it and we need to look after it as stewards of the planet.

D is for Driving. 40% of car journeys are under 2 miles. In the UK cars account for a quarter of CO² emissions. So, walk more, get the bike out, drive more slowly (especially if your car is electric). Spend a week every now and then without the car to see how it feels.

E is for Energy. Change to a green supplier, think about the new battery systems if you have solar panels on the roof to store produced power. 80% of all world energy comes from fossil fuel sources, which is another very big contributor to climate change. So, decide on ways to reduce your energy, for example: switch stuff off; get involved with the climatecoalition.org or support Christian organisations around climate change.

F is for food. Like bananas, much food can be got from Fair Trade sources. Can you grow your own and do you mind buying the mis-shapen veg that tastes just the same as the mathematically precise ones in the supermarket? Eat food that is in season and is from nearby countries to reduce food miles. Buy organic to avoid pesticide use. Avoid buying too much that contributes to the one third of food that is thrown away by wealthy consumer countries.

More next time. Andy Ive.

JESS' ECO REFILL

Jess, you have a shop in Ingleton called *Everyday Essentials*. What do you sell? All kinds of liquid refills, laundry, washing up, fabric conditioner, bathroom cleaner, dog shampoo, birdseed.

How did you get into all this? I bought the business 4 years ago and sold bird feed, cleaning products and toiletries. But people kept coming in for the same products and I thought: Why not reduce the plastic and provide refills? Also, people seemed ready to try out new products and do what they can for the environment.

I did a review of the business in August 2017 and so making small changes at first I branched out on the eco products, then started to do refills on those products a few months later. I started selling dry food refills in early May 2020, something

I'd been planning and asked to do for 6 months!



It has gone well, yes? It took a while for people to get the idea, but yes! Until the pandemic lockdown the locals and visitors have been coming in regularly with their various bottles, jars and bags to refill.

But now the village has gone quiet and that has affected trade. I have some loyal customers that keep me going though, which I'm grateful for.

But I totted up the number of refills I have sold since Winter 2017 – over 820

ltrs, which meant we have saved over 800 bottles!

Do you have any help in Everyday Essentials? Yes, my husband Cory works in the Coop but also in the shop. Our daughter Gemma sometimes helps too. Also many of the small shops and businesses in the village centre tend to support and encourage each other which is great, especially in the current situation.

Thank you, Jess.

Timothy Fox, February 2021.

COAL MINING IN CUMBRIA

The UK Government has approved a coal-mining project on the Cumbrian coast near Whitehaven and work is due to begin this year. This, the first deep coalmine in more than 30 years, will produce coking coal for steel production from beneath the Irish Sea, and it is claimed will provide 500 new jobs, 80% of them for local people in an area of high unemployment and deprivation. Some local people including Cumbria County Council, the borough Mayor Mark Starkie and local Conservative MP Trudy Harrison support the project, but there are legal challenges to the Government decision. One is being brought on the grounds of climate change – flooding - and another because of the risk of triggering subsidence in the sea-bed near the deposit of radioactive waste from Sellafield. Liberal Democrat MP Tim Farron says the mine would be “a complete disaster for our children’s future”. A leading climate spokesman, James Hansen and Sir David King, a former government climate change adviser, have also challenged the Government’s decision.

We have heard recently (late February) that Cumbria County Council is having second thoughts about the project. But they and those who oppose coal-mining in this area need to come up with alternative employment proposals with jobs

that protect and enhance the environment on which we depend. How do we get from where we are now to where we want to be by a route that is healthy for people, communities and the planet?

Timothy Fox with input from Sheila Hunter



All Things Bright and Beautiful by Allan Hartley

NATURE-FRIENDLY FARMING

Malhamdale farmer and chairman of the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust (YDMT), Neil Heseltine appeared recently on BBC Country File talking about the climate crisis and how farming is adapting. It was partly because of the foot and mouth epidemic in 2001 that his farm got involved with the national park, and then with a limestone country conservation project. This led to the farm buying Belted Galloway cattle and rethinking how they worked the land while promoting nature and biodiversity.

Across the nation a growing number of farmers have been pioneering a new nature-friendly approach, working with nature rather than against it, to run a profitable business. In fact this is how many farmers work especially where they reduce the amount of chemical fertiliser. And it is how farmers worked until the 1940's or so. One Welsh hill farmer, Gethin Owen says – as reported in the RSPB's *Nature's Home, Winter 2020* – “We try to be as self-sufficient as possible, buying in little feed, straw and fertiliser. We also grow red and white clover – they produce free fertiliser, benefit the soil with their deep roots, the flowers are a great source of pollen and nectar, and the plant itself is a ‘rocket fuel’ feed for the animals.”

RSPB also say that it's not only landscapes but politics that vary across the UK when it comes to biodiversity protection. Following Brexit the Government have brought in an agricultural bill, coming into force in 2024, which “will pay farmers for environmental services, or ‘public goods’, such as clean water, healthy soil and protection of nature rather than simply the size of their farm.” There is a lot of work to do on the details but we have to move away from just “incentivising little ‘parcels of nature’.”

THE MAP – A story

Once, a father was looking after his children and trying to keep them entertained, but he wasn't having too much success. It was a wet Saturday and the children were getting bored. They were starting to get on his nerves with their restlessness and their constant chattering.

But the man was inventive and suddenly he had an idea. He took down a magazine from the shelf and found a map of the world printed on one page. He tore this page out and proceeded to cut it up into small pieces. Jumbling up all the pieces he placed them in a pile on the floor, like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle.

Then he set his two young sons the task of putting the map together again,

thinking this would keep them quiet for a good long time, long enough for him to enjoy a cup of coffee and read his newspaper.

Imagine his amazement when five minutes later he came back to find the map neatly and accurately put back together again. “How did you manage to put it back together again so quickly?” he asked them.

“Oh, it was easy”, the younger boy replied. “You told us it was a map of the world, and when we looked at the pieces, at first we didn’t know where to begin... Impossible! ... But then we realized on the other side there was a picture of a man, so we just put the man back together again. When we turned it over, the world had come back together again as well!”

“Yes, Dad”, chimed in the other brother. “It’s ever so easy. If you put the man right, the world is OK.”

Source unknown, adapted from a story by Margaret Silf in ‘One Hundred Wisdom Stories from around the world’.

COMING SHORTLY

EASTER AND PRE-GLASGOW CLIMATE EVENTS

Look out for announcements of outdoor events after Easter, subject to lockdown restrictions easing, and a special Climate Sunday in May or early June, following on from our bible study with Ruth Valerio’s book, *Saying Yes To Life* (based on the 7 days of creation in Genesis), and leading on to a national event in September preparing for the international conference in Glasgow on the climate crisis in November.

NEXT ISSUE, JUNE 2021 will include more from Ruth Valerio’s *L is For Lifestyle*, a piece with the heading, *Lifestyle, COVID19 and Care of Creation*; plus an explanation of technical terms, eco jargon. Plus more about how we move from where we are now to where we want to be.



All Things Bright and Beautiful by Allan Hartley



Daffodils Photograph - Timothy Fox