

St John's Lent Eco-challenge 2021 17th February – 3rd April

The Eco-church team have devised a set of challenges for Lent. These are all connected with our theme of 'Caring for God's World'. There is a different topic each week, and you are encouraged to do **two or three** challenges each week, at the level that suits you. Several challenges have two levels.

We include opportunities to appreciate the natural world, simple things you can do to save energy and water, ideas about recycling, and suggestions on how to reduce your 'carbon footprint'. We have included stars for you to tick/colour when you complete a challenge!



Ash Wednesday (Feb 17th – 21st) Getting started

- ★ Appreciate nature: go for a walk locally or look in your garden and see what is coming into flower or leaf / enjoy a nature programme on TV
- ★ Have a meat-free day / vegan day
- ★ Walk or cycle instead of driving one day / if you have to use your car, remember to turn off the engine when stationary

Week 1: Biodiversity (Feb 22nd – 28th)

- ★ Keep a list of birds/insects/animals that you see or hear this week
- ★ Apply something from the 'how green is your garden' article in the Parish Magazine, e.g. leave an area in your garden for wildlife, start a compost bin, buy peat-free compost, make a pond...
- ★ Feed the birds / put up a bird nest box or bee hotel
- ★ Reduce your use of single-use plastic by half this week

Week 2: Water (Mar 1st – 7th)

- ★ Appreciate rivers: walk by a river / watch a TV programme, read a book or go online to find out about rivers, especially our local rivers (Rivers Ver and Lea)
- ★ This week, make sure you turn off the tap when cleaning your teeth to save water / find out about toilet twinning
- ★ Drink tap water rather than buying bottled mineral water - keep a bottle or jug in the fridge / use a refillable water bottle when out and about
- ★ Find a way to save water in your daily life – e.g. recycle water in the garden, take a shower instead of a bath, only boil the water you need when making a hot drink / de-scale your kettle, shower head and iron

Week 3: Trees (Mar 8th – 14th)

- ☆ Appreciate woodland: walk in local woodland / read about trees and learn a new tree species
- ☆ This week recycle ALL the paper and cardboard you throw away in your house
- ☆ Choose recycled paper products, e.g. tissues, toilet paper, kitchen roll, cards when shopping
- ☆ Plant a native tree or bush in your garden / donate to a charity that plants trees, e.g. The Woodland Trust

Week 4: Food (Mar 15th – 21st)

- ☆ This week choose LOAF food where possible - local, organic (or reduced pesticide, e.g. LEAF), animal friendly, Fairtrade
- ☆ This week, use all the food you purchase, and check all the best-before dates on the food in your fridge and cupboards, so that none is wasted / make sure any unavoidable food waste is properly recycled, and doesn't go in the landfill bin
- ☆ Buy a Fairtrade chocolate Easter egg / find out about other Fairtrade products
- ☆ Donate an item to the food bank / make a cash donation

Week 5: Energy (Mar 22nd – 28th)

- ☆ Go out at night and enjoy the night sky / learn to identify a new star or constellation
- ☆ This week make sure all lights are turned off when there is no-one in the room
- ☆ Change to a renewable electricity supply ('Green Energy') / find out about solar panels or thermal imaging cameras (Sustainable St Albans have a camera to borrow, to show heat energy loss from your home)
- ☆ Draw the curtains when it gets dark, to reduce energy loss through the windows / Find out how to calculate your personal carbon footprint audit e.g. with 360Carbon.org

Week 6: Holy Week (Mar 29th – April 3rd)

- ☆ Go for a walk and see what has changed since Ash Wednesday. Find a place to sit outdoors for 5-10 minutes of silence, and listen to the sounds
- ☆ Collect used postage stamps, greetings cards and / or candles to recycle at Church
- ☆ Make / buy an Easter card or present from recycled materials
- ☆ Investigate ethical banking/investment that has a positive impact on the environment

