

# PRESS RELEASE

## ‘Radical Presence’ summons Christians to build a better society after lockdown

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Green Christian launches a platform for Christians to develop mission and advocacy for a world at the ‘tipping point’

- ‘*Radical Presence*’ is a new course of seven online group conversations on the pandemic and its aftermath
- The programme equips church groups to harness the national mood for social change.

### Commendations

**Professor Sir Ghillean Prance FRS, VMH (Founding Director of The Eden Project):**

*"Radical Presence is a truly needed programme at this time of uncertainty. .... we are at a decisive time where we have the opportunity to take a new and better pathway. I hope that many people will take up the opportunity to use this helpful material and that it will lead us towards the radical change that is needed."*

**Bishop David Atkinson, a Bishop in the Diocese of Southwark:**

*"In ‘Radical Presence’, the mixture of biblical reflection, prayer and social and political engagement help us to see this ‘kairos’ moment as one of opportunity and choice."*

As Britain debates how it will emerge from lockdown, the charity Green Christian today launches *Radical Presence* ([www.radicalpresence.org.uk](http://www.radicalpresence.org.uk)), an initiative to help churches build a more sustainable, just and compassionate world after the pandemic. The online initiative will foster ambition to tackle the crises of environmental breakdown, inequality and polarisation, and help to build support for a ‘just recovery’.

The pandemic has come at a critical time in the climate and ecological emergency, with the postponement of COP26, the United Nations climate summit which was due to take place in Glasgow this November. But it has also provoked unprecedented readiness for change: a recent YouGov poll found [only 9% of the population](#) want life to return to ‘normal’. *Radical Presence* enables these longings to find their voice among Christians in the UK.

Over seven sessions, *Radical Presence* stimulates conversations which draw on the Bible, Christian faith, experience, science and analysis. Churches groups can

participate free of charge, and share their conclusions with each other. In this way *Radical Presence* will build a consensus to guide the nation's emergence from lockdown, and will equip Christians for mission and advocacy in a changed world. Paul Bodenham, who led the development of *Radical Presence*, said: "It's becoming clear that there is no longer a 'normal' to go back to. In fact 'normal' was the cause of many of our problems. People are expressing a 'hunger and thirst for righteousness' with an intensity I've never witnessed before. With *Radical Presence* they will discover that they are not alone, and that together we can mobilise change. If there is any way to honour those whose lives have been lost, it must surely be in our efforts to build a better society. But we need to be quick – if we leave it until church doors are unlocked we may miss our chance."

#### Notes:

1. For press enquiries please contact Paul Bodenham, trustee of Green Christian, on 07470 907656 or 01949 861516, or email [paulbodenham@greenchristian.org.uk](mailto:paulbodenham@greenchristian.org.uk)
2. Green Christian is encouraging Churches and Christian groups to host online conversations for their members using session outlines and reading and visual material at [www.radicalpresence.org.uk](http://www.radicalpresence.org.uk). The organisation is doing so for its own members. Already about 70 people have embarked on the course.
3. Direct links to pages which are likely to be of interest:
  - [Objectives of Radical Presence](#)
  - [Outline of sessions](#)
  - [Resource library of articles](#)
4. Green Christian was formed in 1981 to share green insights with Christians, and Christian insights with the green movement. The charity produces resources, campaigns and events to help people relate environmental issues with their faith, and integrate environmental action into their mission. [www.greenchristian.org.uk](http://www.greenchristian.org.uk)