



Volume 1 | Issue  
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# Richmond Team Ministry GREENTIPS

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*'The gospel is Good  
News for God's earth'*

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Welcome to Issue One of our Quarterly GreenTips newsletter. As a church and congregation we should be expressing our care for God's world in both our worship and teaching. We should be caring for our buildings and our land and engaging with our local communities (and in global campaigns) to enhance our world. We should all be considering our personal lifestyles to determine if as individuals we are doing all that we can to care for our planet. Our new Newsletter - GreenTips – will update us on the steps the church is taking but also offering ideas for us all to try! Our first edition covers our initial success with EcoChurch and also focuses on promoting a Greener Christmas.

## Rocha EcoChurch

In order to help us express our care for God's World, our three churches have joined the [Rocha Ecochurch Scheme](#). The EcoChurch vision is for churches of all denominations to care for creation as an integral part of loving their neighbours and following God faithfully.

The Diocese of Southwark has set an aim to be an EcoChurch diocese.

The first step on signing up is to complete a local survey on five key areas of church life, to help us establish a baseline, determine our priorities and make plans for progress to Go Green. The five areas are

- Worship and teaching
- Management of church buildings
- Management of church land
- Community and global engagement
- Lifestyle



There are a series of awards depending on a church's performance in these key areas and all three churches in Richmond Team Ministry have already received the Bronze Award. The certificates are proudly displayed, however, we will continue our commitment to Caring for God's earth and we are already working towards the next

level. Some of our projects are simple such as signs to ensure all lights are switched off, some are more extensive such as a car share scheme, some involve our finances such as supporting environmental work and some will be large capital projects for when we renovate our churches and other buildings.

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*All Creation reveals  
the Glory of God*

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## Green Chat

We are hoping to engage with local Green leaders and Green advisors and invite them to coffee after our joint services to talk to as many as possible of us about what is going on in our area and what we can do as a church and individually to be Green.

Our first Green Chat with coffee will be after the Joint service on the **26<sup>th</sup> November** at St Marys. We are also planning the second chat for 2nd February 2024 at St Johns – watch this space! Please make a note of those dates in the diary and stay after the service for coffee, cake and a conflag!

26<sup>th</sup> November we will welcome Cllr Julia Neden Watts who will be with us for coffee. Julia is deputy leader of the council as well as Chair of the Environment, Sustainability, Culture and Sports Committee. This is the committee responsible for services that relate to the Borough's physical environment such as planning policy, parks and sports services. The Committee is also responsible for areas such as arts, culture, waste and recycling, registration services and consumer protection.

As part of our commitment to being an EcoChurch we are keen to engage with Julia as a representative of the borough so see what ideas she might have and how we might work together to look after God's planet.



## Car Share – can you help?

### What is Car Sharing?

Car sharing, also known as lift sharing, car-pooling or ride sharing is the coordinated matching up of lifts between drivers and passengers who share a common or similar route. It has the potential to significantly reduce emissions from travel, particularly if used by large numbers of people making repeat journeys with others to a common destination.

Many of us travel to church on foot, or bike or on the bus or tube but maybe there are options for sharing cars to reduce the number of Sunday trips we make as a congregation. We are looking for someone from each church to consider volunteering to set this up. It would be a very simple model – asking for those who drive to identify themselves and then to try and 'matchmake' to encourage sharing of lifts with those living in their neighbourhood. Please do get in touch with the Green Team [[johanna\\_kitson@hotmail.com](mailto:johanna_kitson@hotmail.com)] if this might be of interest to you. We will offer all the support you might need to set this up.



## Tips for a Green Christmas

Let's tackle the big one first – GIFTS, gifts and more gifts. What about sustainable giving? Giving services rather than gifts – offers of dog walking, babysitting, car cleaning, IT support (certainly on my Christmas list. Ed). Experiences to savour – theatre trip, afternoon tea or spa session. Edible treats especially home made treats or home grown flowers and veggies. Avoid anything with batteries as they result in toxic waste or at least use rechargeable ones – did you know 30% of battery sales occur at Christmas time. (Data from European Recycling Platform).

What about reducing the number we buy – simplify the 'Gift go round'. Limit the number of presents (and value) perhaps a challenge of one gift per person or go further and every member of the family just buy for one other – pick names out of a hat to make sure it is fair.

Gift wrapping is another area where we can go green. Avoid metallic wrapping paper as this cannot be recycled. Also, we can choose Christmas cards that don't have embellishments, meaning they are easier to recycle too. Recycle those gift bags, make fabric bags from old clothes and decorate with foraged finishing touches – holly springs, fir cones even dry some slices of orange. Avoid the sticky tape and use reusable ribbon or string instead.

Greener Christmas Trees – Forestry England has some great tips about making our trees even greener. <https://www.forestryengland.uk/news/top-tips-more-sustainable-christmas-starting-your-tree> and this site has some brilliant ideas for eco friendly decorations you can knit, sew, try origami, use lolly sticks and loo roll! <https://www.gathered.how/arts-crafts/eco-friendly-christmas-crafts/>.

### **We love this link – how about a competition for young and not so young!**

Making your own origami star <https://chaoticallyyours.com/origami-star/> - how about bringing your creations to church to share with others – we will have space on the notice boards to display your creations. Use newspaper, last year's wrapping, Christmas recipes – be creative! Any time from 1 December.

## Green Dates for the Diary 2024

January – Veganuary – can you go vegan or maybe even vegetarian for the month?

March 23 Earth Hour – turn off the lights for an hour at 8.30pm

April 22 World Earth Day - focus on reducing plastics – join us on a litter pick that weekend

May – No Mow May will be back in the church yard

June 10 – Bike week - cycle to church and to work or school all week.

September 22 – Car Free Day – walk or cycle to church today

October 21 – Recycle Week – keep an eye out for our plans for the week



## Green Team

We hope you have enjoyed the first Green Tips newsletter? Future editions will update you on our churches' Carbon footprints as well as how to measure our own. We will also investigate how the church is supporting Christian Communities struggling as a result of the changing environment. If you have any ideas do please get in touch via the Church Office. Or email Emma at [emeredit@ctpa.org.uk](mailto:emeredit@ctpa.org.uk)