



Let's make creation glad!



Olivia Warburton, head of content creation and Living Faith lead, encourages us to bring love into the equation when we think of caring for the environment.

Over the summer, as we spend time outside, I wonder

if we find it easier to reflect on our environment – both our immediate surroundings and the wider context of God's creation, the world in which we live. In the current issue of *New Daylight*, editor Sally Welch says this season is 'a good time to explore some of the more challenging aspects of life and faith; surrounded by signs of God's care for us, we have a reassuring context in which to reflect and pray.'

A dearly loved friend

Isaiah 35:1–2 (see bottom right) is just one of many passages in the Bible where creation is personified. Creation rejoices when God's kingdom purposes are fulfilled. It also groans in pain (Romans 8:22–24). As we look around us and make everyday decisions that impact creation, can we channel that biblical perspective? Can we care for creation as for a dearly loved family member or friend?

I've been on an eco-journey over recent months as I've attempted to eliminate plastics from my bathroom (bamboo toothbrush, anyone?) and made various other eco-swaps. The diocese of Oxford's Care for Creation e-news and online guidance on performing a 'household audit' have provided useful pointers. These and many other initiatives can help us to make a difference.

Here at BRF we've been on a journey too, working on a number of books with a focus on the environment. Martin and Margot Hodson's update of *A Christian Guide to Environmental Issues* tells you all you need to know to get started or take things further, while their *Green Reflections* gift book facilitates a devotional approach (see back page).

Changing the Climate, a practical workbook for families, churches and individuals by Debbie, David and Jamie Hawker, completes the trio.

Do it anyway!

It's easy for eco-paralysis to set in. No change that we make will be perfect, and there are so many different options to compare and weigh up that it can feel overwhelming and the switch somehow doesn't happen. My advice would be: do it anyway. Refine and improve along the way. It won't be perfect, but it will be better. Even the smallest step is worth taking. And creation will rejoice greatly.

Enjoy more articles on the environment and creation by BRF authors at brf.org.uk/category/articles

'Our school was already called an "eco-school", but I believed we could do more. I wrote to my head teacher and asked him to make sure that school trips to Europe would use train, bus and ferry and not planes.'

Jamie Hawker,
Changing the Climate



IN THIS ISSUE:

New findings on Messy Church and discipleship

Beautiful new greetings cards

The church whose leadership team is on a Parenting for Faith journey

Anna Chaplaincy survey reveals what's at the heart of this ministry for older people

Faith and the environment – an integrated approach

and more...

Here I am Lord

A time to review and renew our calling

9 October, 10.00 am–3.00 pm

Speakers: Mark Bradford, Joanne Cox-Darling, Tony Horsfall, Lucy Moore and Andrew Roberts

As we emerge from this disruptive season, how do we discern the way forward in our personal calling? We may have experienced extreme pressure and burn-out, sudden loss – of work, purpose and community or a loved one – or enjoyed extra time for creativity and growth. What might God be calling us to in the coming days? What do we need to pick up – or let go? What does God want of us as we step into the future?

Check out brfonline.org.uk/hereiamlord for more details

'The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.'

ISAIAH 35:1–2a

Hello from Julie and the fundraising team



Our sincere thanks to everyone who responded to our annual appeal, launched in May. We are very grateful for your generosity and prayer, which supports and sustains our work.

If you would still like to give you can find details at brf.org.uk/donate or contact the fundraising team on **01235 462305**.

The team are now hard at work preparing for our centenary in 2022 and we look forward to telling you more about this in future issues of *BRF News*.

New team members

I am delighted to welcome Alice Willington as our new senior fundraiser. Alice brings with her a wealth of experience and will be working primarily on funding bids, trust applications and developing key donor relationships. Meanwhile, Judith Moore has joined us from the ministry support team and is now working as fundraising support officer.

Cost-free giving

We are grateful to all those who are supporting us by using Give as you Live and Amazon Smile when you shop online. This is now developing into a good income stream for us – and we are thankful to all those who help support BRF by using these initiatives.

Our fundraising target for this financial year is £1.3 million, and we are heavily reliant upon individuals, trusts and gifts in wills to enable us to continue our vital work. On behalf of all of us at BRF, we send our grateful thanks to everyone who helps to support our work. Please continue to keep us in your prayers as we work to secure these funds.

Find easy ways to raise funds for BRF at no cost to you at brf.org.uk/other-ways-give

Welcome, Alice!



New team member **Alice** has over 13 years' fundraising experience, including with the University of Oxford and Southwark Cathedral. She enjoys poetry, white wine and 'still hopes that she will read every book on her book pile'.



Volunteer with us!

We're excited to let you know we're developing a new role of **local church champion** – volunteers who will promote the work of BRF and its ministries in their church. This could be done in a variety of ways, as best works for the individual. Training and ongoing support will be offered, along with a warm welcome and genuine appreciation.

For more details, please contact jane.butcher@brf.org.uk

New greetings cards and gift-wrap

In response to your feedback, we have expanded our range of everyday greetings cards with several new designs, and we're delighted to also offer a choice of beautiful gift-wrap paper designs suitable for all occasions.

We'll be showing you our stunning new range of Christmas cards in the September issue of *BRF News*, but those who would like to order early can find the new everyday cards and gift-wrap at brfonline.org.uk. If you could share the information about our cards with your friends, family and church, we would be very appreciative, as this is a great way to help raise funds for BRF.

Browse our complete range of cards and gift wrap at brfonline.org.uk/collections/gifts-and-cards



Love shines through Anna Chaplaincy

Julia Burton-Jones, church lead for Anna Chaplaincy, sums up the recently published findings of independent face-to-face research on Anna Chaplaincy.

In 2020 Anna Chaplaincy celebrated its tenth birthday. Interest in this BRF ministry offering spiritual care to older people has grown rapidly, particularly during the pandemic, so it seemed a good point at which to explore the role of Anna Chaplains and what they value about the support BRF offers them.

Alongside a survey of the Anna Chaplaincy network, an independent study was commissioned from consultant Jenny Kartupelis, who has researched the care of older people for over five years, publishing two books on relational care.* She conducted 15 interviews with Anna Chaplains, Anna Friends, people in caring roles and older people. Anna Chaplains interviewed in this sample, drawn from across the UK, spent on average 14.6 hours a week in the role, ministering in private homes, care homes, churches, community projects and hospices; much of their ministry during Covid-19 was through phone contact.

Caring for Anna Chaplains

Some Anna Chaplains were well supported by their churches; others wished the congregation were more interested. Some said their minister supported them well; others wanted more supervision. They appreciated the BRF resources, especially the *Anna Chaplaincy Handbook*, and valued opportunities to meet other Anna Chaplains – whether in person or online.



Jenny asked about conversations and relationships Anna Chaplains have with older people.

What Anna Chaplains said:

‘My aim is to make them feel loved by God and another person.’

‘We are here to challenge their sense of having no value.’

‘The offer and power of prayers means a tremendous amount.’

What older people said:

‘She interprets the moment.’

‘She provides a link between past and present.’

‘I feel very close to her as a friend.’

What care home managers said:

‘They [older people] feel more at peace, more hopeful.’

‘She [the chaplain] brings peace at the end of life.’

‘We can talk with the chaplains about people we may be worried about.’

Caring for carers

Chaplaincy was valued not only by older people, but also by family and professional carers. One care home manager said, ‘Some residents come in just for end-of-life care; I may be with them when they die. The Anna Chaplain helps me stay strong.’

An Anna Chaplain said, ‘We befriend staff in the home, and sit and talk.’ Anna Chaplains said they gained as much from older people as they were able to give. They were highly motivated in their ministry but acknowledged it could be draining – they sometimes felt like ‘having a good cry’.

The study also gathered impressions of the impact of Covid-19. Anna Chaplains

Anna Chaplain Pam Cram distributed bouquets to staff in south Wales care homes who had lost residents to Covid-19.

said older people had been ‘pulled down’ and lost confidence, some becoming more aware of their mortality. Chaplains and older people worried about the stress care staff were facing and family carers were seen as being under great pressure, with opportunities for breaks removed.



Members of the Anna Chaplaincy network.

Love is all

Jenny reflected that ‘without love, few people can thrive, even when their physical needs are met. Love is the basis of Anna Chaplaincy, and shines through all their interactions. An integral part of this approach is to give time, because time honours and values the recipient and restores their worth.’

‘Love is the basis of Anna Chaplaincy, and shines through all their interactions.’

Find out more and read the report at brf.org.uk/anna-chaplaincy-impact-2021

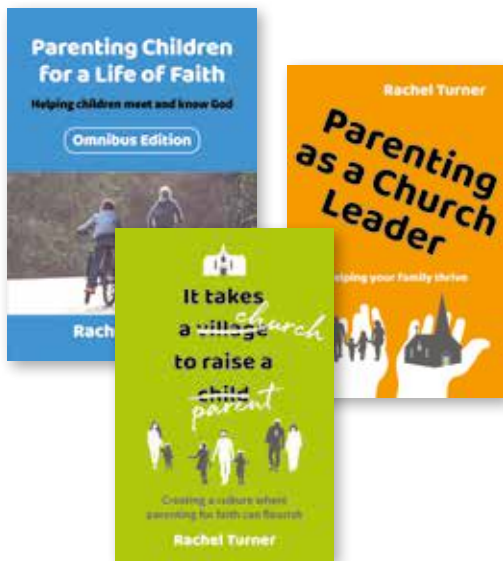
*J. Woodward and J. Kartupelis, *Developing a Model of Relational Care for Older People* (Jessica Kingsley, 2018); J. Kartupelis, *Making Relational Care Work for Older People* (Routledge, 2021).

‘I’ve got this tool and I really want to help others’

Gardening, baking, cycling, art... many of us have lockdown to thank for new, life-enhancing interests. For the leadership team at a church in Winchester, it’s been discovering Parenting for Faith that’s opened up new opportunities.

Kirsty Read is a children’s worker at Hope Church in Winchester, with its main city-centre congregation running five children’s groups and a second congregation meeting in a primary school on the edge of town. She was introduced to Parenting for Faith by a colleague who had known about the ministry for a while, and Kirsty used lockdown to take a closer look. It didn’t take her long to ‘catch the bug’ too.

Reading the ‘blue’ book (*Parenting Children for a Life of Faith*) prompted Kirsty and her colleague to try out the Parenting for Faith video-based course on Zoom with a few other parents, and then to go on to read the ‘orange’ and ‘green’ books.



‘It’s changed my attitude.’

A new way of life

‘It’s changed my attitude towards how I teach my children faith,’ explains Kirsty, ‘from feeling it had to be a very intentional, forced thing to just everyday little moments – things you just do without thinking about it. It becomes a way of life.’

In it together

But as other church-leader parents will know, balancing the two roles isn’t always easy. ‘It can be tricky on Sunday mornings trying to be two things at once,’ says Kirsty. ‘It’s the busiest time work-wise, but you want to be present with your own children too. I feel I’m wearing lots of hats, and to be told “It’s okay, here are some tools to help you do this” is amazing!’

‘What makes the biggest difference is hearing everyone’s in the same boat, she says, ‘hearing other people saying, “I struggle too. Here’s how we can work together,” talking to others in leadership and realising we don’t have to have perfect children with perfect faith.’

‘We don’t have to have perfect children with perfect faith.’

‘As a church, we’ve been on a journey for the last year,’ Kirsty adds, ‘looking at what church is and how we do it. Parenting for Faith really fits in: it’s a very pastoral approach.’ She felt this spring was the right moment to suggest the church leadership and elders go through Rachel Turner’s *Parenting as a Church Leader* together: ‘I needed to push the



Kirsty Read and her family

door and didn’t know what to expect.’ To her delight, within 48 hours all four couples with children had said yes! Now the group has spent four evenings together talking through the issues raised.

Asked how easy it’s been to get others involved, Kirsty says, ‘Parenting for Faith has become a heart-thing for me, because I see the outworking of it in my own children. I feel I’ve got this tool and I really want to help others. I want to be able to give them something that will really take the pressure off. It’s not asking people for something; it’s offering them a gift.’

Check out Parenting for Faith courses and events at parentingforfaith.org/course and parentingforfaith.org/upcoming-events

Online Parenting as a Church Leader course



Being a church leader affects every part of our lives, including our families. Parenting as a church leader can feel like a lonely journey. Join other church leaders for four online sessions on Thursday evenings in November. Hear the results of research, share your experience with others, talk honestly about your journey, hear from those who’ve walked this path before and pick up new strategies to help your family thrive.

Book your place at brfonline.org.uk/PACL-online

A Voyage of Discovery – and not just for Messy Church

New research reveals the fertile ground for discipleship within Messy Church – with treasures for the wider church. Lucy Moore, Messy Church founder and team leader, explains.

Imagine a traveller returning from a long voyage with heavily guarded chests. Curious bystanders notice the odd glint of gold and precious metals through the cracks. The traveller makes their way into a great hall full of merchants and flings open the chests. What do the merchants do? Oddly, some dismiss the treasure as not worth a glance. Others, however, are intrigued enough to examine what's inside. What a find!

Deepening discipleship

The results of a two-year research project to discover how Messy Churches can best make disciples are like the contents of those treasure chests. The project – Deepening Discipleship in Messy Church – was made possible by the Church of England's Evangelism and Discipleship team, funded by the Archbishops' Council. The final report, *A Voyage of Discovery*, summarises the collaborative work of Messy Churches in three dioceses (Bristol, Durham and Hereford) with Church Army's Research Unit and BRF.



Six options for a reflective approach

Acting as both researchers and participants, Messy Church leaders were supported to pursue a reflective approach with their team or their Messy Church families, focusing on one of six strategies for discipleship: social action; maturing the teams; Messy Extras (organising an additional monthly gathering); Messy Basics (an all-age resource for exploring Christianity

together); working with young leaders; and peer mentoring.

Despite a global pandemic putting paid to face-to-face meetings, the collaborators enthusiastically decided to continue as best they could.

Treasures for the wider church

Dismissing the findings as only relevant to Messy Church would be to ignore a number of very valuable approaches that could have a great impact on the wider kingdom of God in this country. The report highlights multiple calls to action for Messy Church leaders, local church leaders and those in a strategic role.

‘Very valuable approaches that could have a great impact on the wider kingdom of God.’

And there are headline findings for everyone. Take just one: ‘Decide to become a community of reflective practice.’ We can see how impactful this could be for any church. Messy Churches who set out to plan and deliver the Messy Church session reflectively found it had a profound effect on their growth as a team and their practice – costing only time and commitment. Imagine applying the same approach to teams planning a Sunday service, a home group, an



Alison Thurlow's Messy Church team from the diocese of Bristol chose to focus on discipleship through developing young leaders.

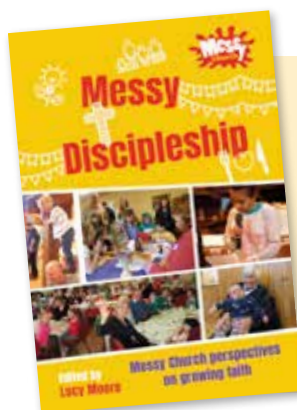
outreach event or a pastoral ministry? Simply asking ‘Where did we see God at work?’ is transformative.

‘Asking “Where did we see God at work?” is transformative.’

The resources these groups used could form the basis of a reflective approach to noticing how God is transforming church members or leadership teams, not adding on anything extra, simply by becoming more intentional about what we already do.

This is only one headline, one example. Do some plundering yourself in the treasure chests of *A Voyage of Discovery*!

Find out more at brf.org.uk/voyage-of-discovery



‘The longer I spend marvelling at... Messy Church, the more I'm convinced that discipleship has... much more to do with obedience, attitude, under-the-surface “heart” stuff, perseverance, resilience, dogged determination, single-mindedness in a journey towards, with and from Jesus.’

Lucy Moore, in her introduction to the new book *Messy Discipleship*

Faith and environment: an integrated approach

BRF authors **Martin and Margot Hodson** offer two complementary, hopeful books offering food for thought and ideas for reflection.



Since their student days – long before concerns about the environment became mainstream – Martin and Margot Hodson have championed the health of the earth and care for creation. Both Martin, a plant scientist, and Margot, a vicar in Oxfordshire with a background in geography, work with The John Ray Initiative to further links

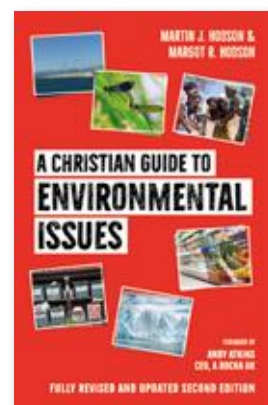
between environmental education and activism and Christian faith. They speak widely on environmental issues and have just published two related titles: an extensively updated edition of *A Christian Guide to Environmental Issues* and the stunningly illustrated (by Martin Beek) *Green Reflections*. The latter brings together scientific and theological wisdom in 62 reflections, inspired by Bible passages on such themes as ‘The wisdom of trees’ and ‘Landscapes of promise’.

Reasons to be hopeful

Acutely aware of the scale and seriousness of the global environmental emergency, the Hodsons know that people can feel overwhelmed by the barrage of grim news and cope by disengaging. In these books, they equip readers with information, strategies and reasons for hope to help them engage more deeply and actively in caring for creation.

The latest facts

The new edition of *A Christian Guide to Environmental Issues* covers the eight key issues of biodiversity, climate change, water, human population and consumption, energy, soil, food, and environment and sustainable development, updated in light of the major changes that have taken place since the book first appeared in 2015.



Pause for thought

Green Reflections uses a different but complementary approach, providing a thoughtful exploration to encourage reflection and response for both individuals and study groups.



‘We have seen how the Bible is full of teaching about nature and how that relates to the rest of life. We hope that you will be inspired to reflect this integration in your life and faith.’

Martin and Margot Hodson, in *Green Reflections*

Read sample chapters at brfonline.org.uk

Encouragement for friends far and wide

Based in Portugal, Christopher Hemborough and his wife Cámica are involved in translation work and mission to Mozambique. ‘I first read *Deep Calls to Deep* by Tony Horsfall in 2015,’ says Chris. ‘I was so glad I did! I found it a great encouragement, with its focus on the psalms of lament, plus the testimonies bringing out the practical outworking of the writing.’

With Cámica’s assistance, Chris set about translating the book into Portuguese – a language spoken by a quarter of a million people worldwide. Thanks to the ‘fantastic support’ of Scripture Union in Portugal, the translation was published in December 2020, with heart-warming results.

‘It is greatly helping people going through very challenging times,’ Chris reports.

‘Just last week a young Christian, whose mother has Alzheimer’s, told us how the book is encouraging her family. People also find the testimonies in the book very moving.’ The plan has been to send copies to Mozambique and the rest of Portuguese-speaking world. ‘We are so very grateful,’ Chris emphasises, ‘for all the superb help and encouragement from Tony and BRF. And finally, if you have not yet read



Deep Calls to Deep in English, then we strongly recommend that you do!

Find *Deep Calls to Deep* at brfonline.org.uk

Images: p. 1 photo by Patricio Hurtado on Pixabay; p. 2 hands on tree by Shane Rounce on Unsplash; p. 4 photo © Kirsty Read; p. 6 photo © Chris Hemborough; other photos © BRF.



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