

Eco-congregations



THERE is an apocryphal story that when a certain member of the higher echelons of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland was singing "Think of a world without any flowers" he did just that, with the result that this body established in 1999 an organisation called Eco-



congregations. It is based at the Rank Trust in Stoneleigh Park and its part-time administrator is paid for by our own Relief and Development Fund.

The object is to encourage church congregations to give greater emphasis to environmental considerations in all aspects of church life. Two hundred and fifty congregations have already committed themselves to greening their activities. Now our Church Council has voted to sign up as a potential eco-congregation and to make its implementation one of the Mission Statement "Focus Points" for the forthcoming church year.

Groups will be set up to work through the twelve modules in the course of the year. Three modules, entitled "Celebration Creation", "Creation and Christianity" and "Exploring God's Green Word" direct their thinking to the spiritual life of the church, whilst two modules, "Acorns to Oaks" and "Tread Gently - Go Green", provide ideas and activities for children's work and youth groups.

Next come modules which give advice on practical aspects of church administration. "Greening the Cornerstone" provides guidelines on caring for church premises whilst "Greening the Purse Strings" covers the management of financial and catering matters. "Planting and Conserving Eden", on the other hand, has greater relevance to churches with churchyards and more land than we have.

Finally, there are three modules which focus on the lives and activities of all members of the congregation. "Community Matters" provides ideas to help churches work with, through and for the local community. "Global Neighbours" offers sources and resources to help churches think globally and act locally, and the third, "Green Choices", emphasises how all of us may "green" our personal lifestyles.

Watch this space in forthcoming *Newsletters* on how you may grow greener!

MARTYN ALLIES

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