

ST JOHN'S METHODIST CHURCH

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

OBJECTIVES AND CHURCH COMMITMENT

INTRODUCTION

This policy seeks to identify principles to assist St. John's Methodist Church in translating into action its affirmation that mission includes 'caring for the earth' in the life of the Church at local level. This policy urges individual members and the church as a whole to become aware of these objectives and to integrate them both into individual lifestyles and into the on-going life of the church especially in relation to the construction, maintenance and use of church buildings.

This policy has been prepared in the context of the national Environmental Policy of the Methodist Church.

This policy will:

- i. Spell out a commitment to act responsibly on matters of environmental concern
- ii. Identify ways in which this commitment can be translated into action for individual members and the church as a whole.
- iii. Identify the means by which progress can be measured.

CARING FOR THE EARTH

1. St. John's Methodist Church affirms that Christian mission includes caring for God's earth and will endeavour to develop both the theology and practical implications of this on a continuing basis.

2. The Biblical creation stories give human beings privilege and responsibility in relation to the earth and every living creature. We are called to be partners with the rest of creation and co-partners in the ongoing creative and renewing activity of God. Such partnership goes wrong when human beings act as if the whole earth were simply for their present benefit. God's way, revealed in the Bible and particularly in the life, death and resurrection of Christ, is a generous sharing of the divine love to serve the needs of God's creation until it reaches its fulfilment.

3. Christian mission includes sharing, putting right the relationships within God's creation that have gone wrong, and creating the right balance within us that promotes the good stewardship envisaged in the Biblical vision of the world as it is meant to be.

4. St. John's Methodist Church is challenged and encouraged to care for the earth by following sustainable practice and taking into account global and local environmental considerations for present and future generations, in the following ways:

- In the conservation and use of resources in the Church and at home.
- In helping to develop more sustainable lifestyles.
- In active involvement in community initiatives.
- In concerns for action on global environmental issues.

5. To help St. John's Methodist Church to fulfil this commitment, this policy identifies objectives relating to seven aspects of the environment. The objectives are considered relevant to individual lifestyles, the ongoing life of the Church and to the construction, maintenance and use of church buildings.

Action in working towards achievement of the objectives should have regard to:

- the challenge of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.
- the potential for harnessing the skills, expertise and enthusiasm of the Methodist people of St. John's Church.
- the opportunities for co-operation and joint initiatives with other Churches or environmental initiatives within the district and circuit.
- the effectiveness of the overall mission of the Church and the overall demands upon St. John's Church budgets.
- the valuable contribution of small steps by individuals as well as major initiatives.

6. For significant change to take place monitoring of plans and targets St. John's Church Council will keep this policy under review and progress towards achievement of the principles and objectives of this policy will also be kept under review by the environmental auditor.

7. This policy contains a commitment to co-operation and joint initiatives with other Churches. The following are examples of how this commitment may be fulfilled:

- i. The United Reformed Church's Roots and Branches pack.
- ii. Christian Ecology Link's Sustainability pack, as well as the Christian Ecology Link Millennium Certificate Award Scheme.
- iii. London and Southwark Diocese of the Church of England: Caring for God's World (Practical Steps to becoming an Environmentally Friendly Church for the new Millennium).
- iv. Church Of England, Shrinking the Footprint (Environmental Management tool for energy, water and gas).

POLICY OBJECTIVES AND COMMITMENT

OBJECTIVE 1: AWARENESS

- To promote awareness within Methodist people of these principles and objectives and of the values underlying them.
- To ensure that Methodist Church employees and office holders are familiar with and implement this environmental commitment and its objectives.
- To ensure that Methodist Church activities comply with all relevant environmental regulations.

COMMITMENT TO OBJECTIVE 1

- There are three special observances and events on the Environment held at St John's Methodist Church each year to promote and raise awareness of our commitment to caring for Gods earth. Fair trade Fortnight held in the last week of February and first week of March, Environmental Sunday in June, and Racial Justice Sunday in September, which focuses on global unfair trading terms. Each of these special environmental events promotes an awareness of environmental matters across the church.
- The church also works in partnership with Churches together in Potters Bar, promoting Fair trade within the wider church.
- The church also raises awareness through signing petitions to the UK and European government to improve global trading terms.
- The church notice board, newsletter, and website are used to promote and raise awareness of environmental matters and concerns, locally and internationally.
- The church encourages members to car share, walk or cycle to church by launching an annual campaign each year for alternative ways of travelling to church.
- A bi-annual Environmental legislation update report is produced which incorporates the relevant environmental legislation from the local council, environmental agency and business link.

OBJECTIVE 2: ENERGY AND WATER

- To ensure energy is used efficiently and wherever possible reduce its use.
- To encourage the increased use of renewable energy.
- To use water efficiently and with care.
- To avoid pollutants entering the drainage system.

COMMITMENT TO OBJECTIVE 2

- An Energy Performance Audit is conducted each year based on weekly meter readings that produces annual chart of cost, consumption and carbon of the church gas and electricity usage.
- An annual energy questionnaire on exterior lighting, heating and insulation is conducted in every room in the church.
- Promoting different water efficiency in the church via the notice board and newsletter.
- Annually keep up-to-date on our responsibility to avoid pollutants entering the drainage system by consulting the environmental agency on such matters and referring to the churches annual Environmental legislation update report.

OBJECTIVE 3: WASTE

- To reduce the production of material waste including unnecessary packaging.
- To encourage re-use, repair and recycling of materials including organic waste.
- To dispose of waste in a safe and responsible way.

COMMITMENT TO OBJECTIVE 3

- Active responsible recycling of cans, glass and plastic bottles in a clearly labelled bin in the church kitchen. Cardboard is recycled in a designated bin outside in the church compound. Bottle tops and bibles are also collected and recycled. Clothing and shoes are recycled by donating them to the Methodist Whitechapel Mission.
- An annual up-date on our responsibility to dispose of waste in a safe and responsible way by consulting the environmental agency on such matters and referring to the churches annual Environmental legislation update report.
- A designated team in the church is responsible for the re-use and repair of materials.

OBJECTIVE 4: MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

- To buy products which are made in accordance with the principle of using material in a sustainable way and when it is practical to use locally-made goods.
- To take into account the lifetime costs of materials when repairing, altering or rebuilding premises.
- To maximise the proportion of paper used from sustainable sources and recycled materials.
- To offer electronic communication as an alternative to paper for those who are suitably equipped.
- To show concern for the environmental quality of food production systems and the equitable global distribution of food.

COMMITMENT TO OBJECTIVE 4

- The church has a procedure in place that all material and resources are purchased from Hertfordshire Educational Supplies, however on occasion to adhere to the principle of value for money, materials may be sourced elsewhere.
- The church offers electronic communication as an alternative to paper for those who are suitably equipped.
- To show concern for environmental quality of food production and equitable global distribution of food, St. John's is a Fair Trade church using Fair Trade tea and coffee.
- The church Finance and Premises committee take into account the lifetime costs of materials when repairing, altering or rebuilding premises.

OBJECTIVE 5: NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- To take appropriate opportunities to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment.
- To be aware of local planning developments.
- To be sensitive to the impact of church activities on the local environment.

COMMITMENT TO OBJECTIVE 5

- The church takes appropriate opportunities to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment by planting flowers and plants.
- To church is aware of local planning developments by consulting with local government on an annual basis.
- The church is sensitive to the impact of church activities on the local environment and have guidelines for all activities held in the church, particularly youth activities.

OBJECTIVE 6: TRAVEL (CHURCH AND INDIVIDUAL MEMBER)

- To make every effort to reduce air pollution and energy consumption resulting from the use of the car by avoidance of unnecessary travel and the use of energy efficient vehicles.
- To explore undertaking the work of the Church in ways which reduce the need for travel particularly by car, promoting other forms of transport such as public transport, cycling and walking.
- To share car transport where possible.
- To support the expansion of good quality public transport, the provision of improved facilities for cyclists and pedestrians and local green travel programmes.

COMMITMENT TO OBJECTIVE 6

- The church encourages members to car share, walk or cycle to church by launching an annual campaign each year for alternative ways of travelling to church.
- The church has provision for locking bikes within the church car park.
- The church keeps up-to-date on local green travel programmes by consulting the local council from time to time.