



PLENTY OF FOOD FOR THOUGHT

By Alex Robertson

On October 23rd Old and Abbey Eco group hosted a network meeting in the small hall. We are part of the Angus and Dundee network of eco congregations, which includes churches seeking their first eco award.

The speaker for the evening was David Atkinson, Scottish Episcopal Church, on a series of documents he has produced for Eco Congregation Scotland on the theme: *Why Worry About Food?*

He was introduced by Margaret Warron of Eco Congregation Scotland.

Summary (from his document):

The huge scale of global food production means that it is our largest land based activity, a significant contributor to the release of greenhouse gases and thus to global climate change.

Using land for food production changes the environment, especially soil condition, soil life, water use, and also biodiversity.

These are all affected by the amount of food which is needed, and the methods used to produce it in different parts of the globe. Can we feed the world now and in the future? Is the solution increased production or is it more complex than that?

Who controls food? Production, processing, distribution and retailing is complex. The globalisation of most of

these elements means it is becoming more difficult to control, as 2013 scares about horsemeat in processed foods demonstrate.

We need to consider food production, focusing on its environmental impact so that we are more informed, with knowledge leading to action.

Included in the contents of the documents is a section headed The Church and Food:

Recourse to Scripture is an appropriate starting place for beginning action.

The Bible reminds us that how we live as individuals and societies will affect others. Scripture focuses us on compassion, humility and reverence and not on cost efficiency or cost benefit.

Food is one of the most frequently-mentioned topics in the Hebrew Scriptures and receives significant attention in the Gospels, as in the parables. In the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10, 30-37) Jesus emphasised the importance of sharing things and gave us a definition of neighbour, which was totally inclusive.

Food is at the heart of the Eucharist (Luke 22, 17-20) and as a consequence was at the centre of worship in the early church.

The subject of what might and might not be eaten was at the heart of many powerful debates (Acts 15, Acts 10, 1 Corinthians, 8, 4-13, 10, 25-32, Romans 14, 2).

After Mr Atkinson's talk a question and answer session took place and he distributed copies of the revised shortened version of the main document as well as copies of the fuller, longer version he first produced.

He asked us to peruse the papers and to pass on comments or suggestions for alterations or additions.

He is obviously an expert on food matters and his talk was of the highest quality and gave plenty of food for thought.

P.S. The turnout on the evening was disappointing. Our eco group plus others from our church attended, but nobody from our network turned up, even though all churches concerned were all well informed of the event. Their absence, however, did not spoil an excellent talk by a first class speaker.

"There are people in the world so hungry, that God cannot appear to them except in the form of bread." - Mahatma Gandhi



Snippets

WHEN AUTUMN LEAVES START TO FALL

By Jean Glass

- Global Emissions of Carbon Dioxide are set to rise again this year to reach a new record high, scientists have warned. Despite increasingly urgent warnings over the need to curb greenhouse gases to avoid dangerous climate change, emissions are estimated to be rising by 2.5% this year, to a record 40 billion tonnes, which puts current global annual emissions 65% above 1990 levels.
- Teething problems are being overcome on the way to making Angus a zero waste county, it has been claimed. The area is two-thirds of the way through major changes to its kerbside recycling scheme, following the introduction of food waste, recycling and non recycling bins this year. A target of 70% nationally has been set for all waste to be recycled by 2025 and a maximum 5% target for all waste to be sent to landfill by the same year.
- The US and China have unveiled ambitious targets to reduce greenhouse gases, aiming to inject fresh momentum into the global fight against climate change ahead of a make-or-break treaty to be finalised next year. The breakthrough by the world's two largest polluters reflected both nations' desire to display a united front on climate change, blunting arguments from developing countries which balked at demands they get serious about cutting emissions. The unexpected breakthrough was unveiled on the last day of a visit to China by US President Barack Obama.
- The recent introduction of a 5 pence charge for plastic bags has apparently led to a 90% reduction in their issue.

For many people autumn is a time of beauty when the natural world treats us to a last burst of colour before winter arrives.

The annual colour change and leaf shedding that occurs in broad-leaved trees comes about by the way they obtain food.

Trees like many plants produce their own food by a process called photosynthesis, they convert inorganic substances, which are carbon dioxide and water, into organic matter, which is sugars, using the energy in sunlight to power the reaction.

This energy is captured by chlorophyll, a green chemical pigment found in leaves.

Chlorophyll is produced in leaf cells throughout the growing season when the weather is warm and sunny and has an essential role in photosynthesis.

The density of chlorophyll is so green on leaves in summer it hides the yellow and orange colours of the chemical compounds that are also there.

With the oncoming colder weather chlorophyll begins to disappear and the yellow and orange colours are exposed; but if the temperatures stay above freezing anthocyanin production is enhanced and the leaves take on a red colour.

Dry sunny days of a hot summer and cool nights will create the best colours.



Beat the Bag Charge

As you will be aware the Scottish Government has introduced a 5p charge for plastic bags in shops. Stonehaven South Parish Church have designed their own reusable shopping bag which also promotes the work they are doing:



Alexandria Parish Church Allotments

Alexandria Parish Church have turned some of their church grounds into allotments:



Our grateful thanks to our sponsors:

Meadow Bank Inn

875755

Timmergreens Post Office & Hairdressing

873879

SG Cargill