

Editorial



Commissioning Editor
Clare Redfern

Geese have flown into this issue of *Green Christian* – there are two that went wandering on a community farm, and in our short story, some Egyptian geese show us some creative climate communication. I am currently living on Iona, and I see wild geese almost daily. They race across the island slicing through the sky. Or grazing by the shore, quietly camouflaged, they suddenly rise up, raucous and startling, if I disturb them when out walking.

The wild goose, with its brooding presence, yet untamed energy, has become a symbol of the Holy Spirit in Celtic spirituality. They reflect both a nurturing grace that encourages and inspires us, maybe to persist with a difficult task or situation, but also the fierce Spirit of truth that can challenge us to change our path, and rise up to new adventures. How else, to use Aldo Leopold’s phrase (see p 9), can we respond to a “world of wounds”?

Honesty about the woundedness of our world, and about our complicity in that, characterises what we do in *Green Christian*. We are open about our flaws and failings in responding, yet are finding creative ways to move forward, as this issue of the magazine makes clear. It could be the everyday challenge of trying to change our shopping habits or deciding where, or even whether, to bother nesting (if you’re a goose that is).

After 15 years of visionary leadership, Paul Bodenham (our “Chair”), is standing down. He writes about the initiatives which have taken flight during these years, but focuses with typical transparency, on the challenges of the present. Because we are living in deeply troubling times: climate chaos, environmental degradation, political and cultural upheaval. Wounds can heal, yet the heart-sinking finality of the word “extinction” speaks of another level of destruction; this issue does not promise easy reading on every page.

It does however provide some profound reflections on the meaning that hope has for us as people of faith. As Hannah Malcolm in “Faith, Hope, Urgency” (p9) suggests: *“Feeling hopeful has very little to do with being hopeful. We identify ourselves as hopeful people by the choices we make, by the decision to live as though we are bringing in a new Creation.”*

First let’s introduce our new Co-Chairs, Deborah Tomkins and George Dow.

Deborah writes:



It’s an enormous privilege to be taking on Co-Chair of *Green Christian* as we enter challenging and turbulent times. Despite the challenges there are also many exciting opportunities for *Green Christian*, in speaking into the increasingly-urgent environmental and climate issues of our day.

I discovered *Green Christian* around 20 years ago, when I was given one of the newsletters by a friend. I joined immediately, delighted to find a community of Christians who understood the importance of caring for Creation. I first attended a retreat in 2006, and still remember my overwhelming feeling of relief, that I had somehow found “my people” – I didn’t have to explain myself, being so used to blank stares about the environment from Christians, and blank stares about Christianity from environmental activists. Here was a place I could truly be myself, and where I have found strength and fellowship.

I hope *Green Christian* will always be that place for all of us. Please keep in touch with us via the website and e-news, and come to our events, if you can, and bring friends. We are happy to provide speakers for your Church events too, where possible.

George writes:



Looking back, I can’t recall how I discovered in 2007 that Christian Ecology Link (as it was then called) was about to celebrate its first 25 years, but what I do remember is the impact attending the event had on me – and the grateful tears that I spilled over the following week as I realised that there were other Christians who

held equally deep feelings about Creation care.

And now, 12 years on from that celebratory event, the world is so much more aware of what has become a crisis emergency. And that places an ongoing challenge for us as Christians – to keep going and hold dear the four disciplines of the *Green Christian Way of Life* – daily prayer, living gently, getting actively involved in public campaigns and community events and, at all times, encouraging each other.

Please pray for Deborah and me as we jointly succeed Paul in the Chair’s role, a role to which he brought such prophetic creativity and leadership.

Looking forward to meeting you at future GC events. Your contributions, however seemingly large or small, will always be welcomed!