

Nurture, protection and celebration

Being gardeners, says Norman Wirzba, is fundamental to who we are. We are made in God's image, the *imago Dei*, and God is a passionate gardener! Losing sight of this calling, he claims, lies at the root of our destructive abuse of the Earth, in the complacency with which we collectively are refusing to respect and nurture our home.

Emmanuel Katongole echoes this, quoting Pope Francis: "we have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth...". He notes how a true ecological approach goes beyond our individual actions and involves the social, spiritual, economic and political. Care for creation goes hand in hand with self-esteem, gratitude and care for the common good.

This is gardening in its widest sense: being attuned and alive to the careful tending of the earth, revelling in its

beauty and abundance. Our lives and our health, and the wellbeing of our societies depends on the health of land, air and water, and as is increasingly evident, the interconnected systems that regulate our climate.

So, gardening in God's image can take many forms. It might be managing a piece of land to enable trees, wildlife, and visiting children, to thrive and flourish. It might mean peering into the murky depths of obfuscation and lies told by regulators of toxic waste, being persistent in calling out half-truths and complacency.

It might mean cultivating different ways of living – sharing lifts, thinking about where our food comes from, causing a few ripples as we reach out to others, sharing the seeds of our ideas to create change. It might mean plunging into chilly water, experiencing nature in the

raw, stepping out of the fantasies and fakery that can't satisfy or truly heal.

As Green Christian continues to develop and grow, we are seeking more help from our members to actively participate in our work, in growing the community and its influence. Please prayerfully consider whether you have skills and enthusiasm to share, and take a look at the various adverts in this issue. Could helping us be, for you, a means of connection, of formation and growth, even a new way of revealing more brightly the image of God? ■



Clare Redfern, Editor

Seaswimming with friends

Photo credit: Clare Redfern

