**To           :              Headteachers; Chairs of Governors; Foundation Governors; Ex-officio clergy; Deputy Headteachers; RE CoOrdinators :  and please forward to teachers / Youth & Children’s workers.**

**From     :               Jeff Williams**

**Date      :               28th April 2021**

**Re           :              Fortnightly email and resources from the Diocesan Education Team**

Dear colleagues

I wonder how you might feel if someone described you as a **‘Wild Christian’**? Potentially - offended; upset; amused; grateful? May I ask you to consider accepting the title and embracing it - more on this later, but meantime I wonder what sort of picture is currently being conjured up in your imagination of a ‘Wild Christian’?!

Last week we celebrated international annual Earth Day, amazingly for the 51st time, with 22nd April marking the birth of the modern environmentalist movement in 1970. Recognised as the largest civic event in the world, Earth Day seeks to inspire us to act towards the protection of the environment and focus on the need for conservation. Trying to work out individually how to engage with the climate and ecological crisis in a sustainable way can sometimes lead to anxiety about the future, and with a resulting sense of being overwhelmed by the enormity of the challenge. For some, in turn, this can lead to can diversion, apathy or indifference.

Recently I’ve been reading about **Ecological Compassion**, and it seems that this is a helpful alternative to anxiety or indifference. A useful understanding of the word **Compassion** : ‘temporarily suspending judgment so that you can appreciate others' perspectives or situations when they are different from your own. To be compassionate you need to be genuinely concerned about the issue, person or people's needs’.

Horrified anxiety is one of the near enemies of compassion. You fix a doom-laden vision of the future, and become completely engulfed and entangled in it. It’s not compassion because it is self-referential: you get caught up with your own responses. So you are not really open to the experience of the issue, to ‘being’ with it. With compassion there’s emotional engagement – an openness to experience the particular crisis, a willingness to look it in the face. This is combined with a desire to alleviate the impact or suffering from that crisis, and an objectivity about what needs doing.

For a good many years I’ve been a member of **A Rocha**, an international Christian charity working for the protection and restoration of the natural world and committed to equipping Christians and churches in the UK to care for the environment. It’s an organisation that helps Christians respond to the biblical mandate to care for the earth, and demonstrating the Christian hope for God’s world. Recently many more churches have been partnering with A Rocha to become an officially designated **Eco Church**, but I commend the organisation to our schools, as their resources, values and messages support our own values and responsibilities as stewards of creation. Many of you have heard us talk about next academic year’s Diocesan Schools’ Project **Ten Ten *#flourishing*** at the Area Briefings – which has a significant aspect of Compassionate Environmentalism in its rationale and with practical ideas to embrace. Our booklet will be widely circulated soon.

So, back to **Wild Christians**!  A Rocha’s Wild Christian scheme is a community of families and individuals exploring the connections between  Christian faith, the natural environment, and how we live. Reflecting biblically and acting boldly, it’s an interesting network for sharing stories,  ideas and learning so that collectively we can live more joyfully and sustainably with the rest of God’s Creation. Sign up and each month you’ll something to think about and some practical actions that you can take to help you enjoy, nurture and protect nature <https://arocha.org.uk/wildchristian/>

I think many reading this are already Wild Christians, or close to embracing that title! Have a look at the Eco Bingo card attached – you might well-qualify as being a Wild Christian, because putting it simply, it just needs us to participate in a sustainably, impactful way in doing our little bit, which of course collectively, has a massive impact. The Eco Bingo card can be adapted for individuals, a class, a school or a church – with daily or weekly challenges.

But for now, remember if you will the **3 R’s : Reduce; Re-Use; Recycle and…………..Go Wild!**

With best wishes and thanks for all you do and are.

***Jeff***

**From Lament to Action :** The Panorama programme last week and the statement from the Archbishop of Canterbury regarding **Institutionalised Racism** in the Church of England, has generated a lot of discussion. Importantly, with the publication of the Archbishops’ Anti-Racism Taskforce report last week, discussion will be accompanied by action. The report is attached as you will see that one of the key priorities is Education, with specific actions and timescales. I’ll be in touch later with more detail and specifics, but wanted you to have sight of the report now.

**Area Briefings – Zoom :** The remaining Area Briefings are being held on the dates below. If you wish to attend and have not already contacted Sam,  please email [sam.powell@portsmouth.anglican.org](mailto:sam.powell@portsmouth.anglican.org) and she will provide you with the log in details. If you signed up for one of the Briefings that has already taken place, but didn’t attend, you are welcome to any of the dates, but please note the zoom password is different for each one, so please contact Sam. A zoom waiting room operates beforehand, so please don’t phone or email saying we’ve forgotten you!

Wednesday 28th April 1.30-3pm **(today)**Thursday 29th April 1.30-3pm          Thursday 6th May 1.30-3pm             Friday 7th May 9.30-11am

Same agenda for each Briefing :

1. 2021-2022 Diocesan Project : **Ten Ten *#flourishing***
2. SIAMS update
3. Education Team ways of working post-pandemic
4. Website & resources for schools and parishes
5. Sharing of good practice :How have schools effectively managed collective worship through lockdown? What has governor monitoring looked like during lockdown?

**Understanding Christianity Training** (online) -  Practical and creative ideas for teaching the  **Kingdom of God and People of God units**. Tuesday 25th May 3:30 - 5:30pm. Please contact [Jane.kelly@portsmouth.anglican.org](mailto:Jane.kelly@portsmouth.anglican.org) for details

**RE network meetings** (online) 13th, 17th, 18th and 19th May from 4:00 – 5:00pm – a great way to link up with other RE coordinators and share **ideas and resources**. Please contact [Jane.Kelly@portsmouth.anglican.org](mailto:Jane.Kelly@portsmouth.anglican.org) for details

**Foundation Governor Training** (online):Tuesday 11th May 6pm-7.30pm    Wednesday 26th May 6pm-7.30pm Additional dates fortraining on **‘The Role of Foundation Governors in a Church of England school’**. If you would like to attend please email [sam.powell@portsmouth.anglican.org](mailto:sam.powell@portsmouth.anglican.org)

**Global Neighbours :** now has 100 schools with the award and about 10 of those are from our Dioceses.  Well done!  If you’re interested, please contact Jane Kelly our RE & Children’s Spirituality Lead [Jane.kelly@portsmouth.anglican.org](mailto:Jane.kelly@portsmouth.anglican.org) Jane will be hosting an online information session on 22nd June for schools who’d like to find out more. We also offer one-to-one support or staff meetings on **Global Citizenship.**

**Whole School Worship and Class Worship / reflections :** as shared at the Area Briefings we are developing a year-long programme for 2021-2022 and the Year Overview will be with you shortly. We’ll be producing Whole School and Class Worship outlines, and class Reflections/Creative Prayers and other resources. These will be based on a different Christian Value for each half-term.

We’ll continue sending various Reflections this half term, as many of you are finding them particularly helpful in Bubble situations. Attached are four.

**Thy Kingdom Come 13th – 23rd May : free resources.** 15 minute videos, prayer sheets, activity booklets and more at : <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/resources/cheeky-pandas-resources>

**Picture News – free resource for 4 weeks.** A free 4-week pilot for schools. Each Friday morning, schools will receive a full Picture News pack which includes a poster with a Big Question, a pack of teaching resources and a short pre-recorded virtual ‘assembly’ to watch with children. Please sign-up here: [https://bit.ly/3grojGa](https://url6.mailanyone.net/v1/?m=1lZX59-000Abk-5h&i=57e1b682&c=raMXJXTjqwxSRhlKH-cssv_KrB44TAuIMtdgN_dbSJ6qoXK5nylMibF-Yw0iZCiQvPPBXb4I5KFy3cBOQ34p5IE7EjbQKsi_JeDHLrXqQRW1w67lkoWEuseyG3SN8C_FCXe2HakQgy3JRExDeeBKiMxzjjRXSeLMDVrpPcxgAPttb1KtGl0EEBvBQhlTm6Jpk4Lx4tZtO8onDQ-QGmgLgiPzdRFL0rPtkFrbW2rubgM)

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[Partnership Officer HCC62673 (newjob.org.uk)](https://url6.mailanyone.net/v1/?m=1lbJL6-0002cj-5W&i=57e1b682&c=qwsgdpeCsH8u0TrdyJ7CyAjnWG0Uk-kZYu3xdPoRUejQpwmmVC4xny4Oli17sYURvklTmetKXp6YmIa_pK2C6Mj7OhxpibJNDt-EqXIGffx6NgUC--UhB89d3fyVvhFjeU93l7f4lJr3mqBGk87Wm9O54OMAN6-Pp0b1wn7WOATz1QQv1Dwqtjy7Sc0SBQV64lDimdhj4wuMXNKQmGGtD5v9n97tFtnfnFB2QUfvGltyUdb1CQsT7jEmUIv1ijAaE-6wxK5uJkqsu0XYKqW5LLOXgGBeI0OmBGDniPQjgpkyc_7WN2Q_mTVolNGKruqL3o_B2lTTBMP0gWdlgdZ_1Q)        [Senior Partnership Officer HCC62690 (newjob.org.uk)](https://url6.mailanyone.net/v1/?m=1lbJL6-0002cj-5W&i=57e1b682&c=H9JpO2qM3AAIB4ocPt2cRkcRTohB8ONZ_2mi1dgzsr5fVuIP4IpB-Mn761gV-PSHEzt3C2CbTNEx0pOaYdhL6t_rRSQnHUNDvwFbrGjggeQdDuwpdGP7HoHZ94TQizdp4fAn6hj0v5-9-1en-ltqfDFS1DBYbWBnPDjEMIfmy09yD1M8D5cPqA1dQhE5V1Nn1Dqa47ALulMAX9CH9wUFrItiw2VJUYxXmU1Y1bbcS0cZxEbLjxiF4Nq4rRVd3vtlxC1DtWXl_dXZ0kWXCxC9YRn2NjaC6il5N3pTt8XiTm9jBJHEmYZIam7VISCq-j-v)

Jeff Williams

Director of Education

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