

Welcome to the Spring 2008 edition of FUN

Dear Children's workers,

'**Taking Action – stemming the tide of climate change**' is our big project at MethodistChildren this year following the call from Youth Conference for every Methodist Church to spend one month in 2008 studying the causes and effects of climate change and deciding what action to take.

By the end of April there will be a wonderful array of materials for you to use with your children's and youth groups, in worship, in study groups and in any committees that make decisions. If you've signed up for the MethodistChildren E-news at www.methodistchildren.org.uk you know everything there is to know, otherwise ask your children to log on the website and tell you all about it!

But there's plenty in the pages of Rainbow and FUN to get you started straight away, we hope you enjoy thinking together about God's world and **taking action** to care for it.

Steve, Penny, Mary and Doug
The MethodistChildren team



FOLLOW UP NOTES



Free Gift!

We are delighted to enclose in this mailing a free copy of our 'Whispers of China' CD ROM. This is an ideal resource for using with the children in your group as the world prepares for the Olympics in China! Pass it on to children and schools in your area. You can obtain more free copies from MPH.



www.methodistchildren.org.uk

Rainbow

10 tips to save energy

Climate Change

Wastewatchers

General Resources

Using Rainbow

Pages 6 & 7

Reclaiming the Land

The Akau'ota family come from the village of Kanokapolu at the northwest corner of the main island of the Kingdom of Tonga, Tongatapu. It's a small village of about 40 households, so the impact of losing fertile land to the sea is quite serious.

This family is the first to settle in the area affected by sea flooding and it has been made possible by the new wall which has been built to keep the sea out. The floods are the result of climate change; many Pacific islands have found the high tides are coming higher than anyone can remember and that storms are causing more flooding and more damage more often and more severely than they used to.

In the picture you can see Zineni and her children Losaline (who loves playing on the new swing), Taiana, Vai, Malia and Sione the baby who was only a few days old when I visited them.

The new wall is 2.2km long and was opened by the King of Tonga in 2006. Already it is changing life in this part of the island; the coconut trees actually have coconuts on them again and as you can see in the photo the garden has just produced a crop of yams.



Climate Change

Climate Change doesn't just mean things getting warmer. We seem to be experiencing more extremes of weather; you may be able to research this in your area or share your experiences.

The problems in the Pacific are complex but it is clear that the level of the ocean is rising and that the growing number of bad storms is making an impact too. As well as floods, the rise in levels is affecting:

- groundwater, by salt contamination,
- food production, as land is spoilt,
- fishing, as there is less predictability. Fish are moving to different locations and the fishing methods which depend on setting up nets between the high and low tide marks are not able to work properly.

Page 8



Use this map of the Pacific in prayer with your groups. Days 24 and 25 of *All things in Christ*, this year's Methodist Prayer Handbook, will help you; it includes the names of leaders and Mission Partners in each of our Partner Churches in the region as well as suitable prayers, including this one:

Send us your own prayers and drawings of the Pacific islands – both beautiful scenery and suffering people – and we'll post them on the website.

children@methodistchurch.org.uk
 MethodistChildren, Methodist Church House,
 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR

God, help us

to guard and shield the most
 vulnerable and the weak,
 to work for justice and freedom,
 that all may taste your love.

May we be
 risk-takers
 life-givers
 courageous
 in your mission. Amen.

I attended this Assembly and the moving debate which led to this statement. I was shaken by the contributors' realisation that it was too late to save their homes, and that what they wanted was a new home somewhere.



What are we doing?

I include highlights of the statement here. An interesting article based on this and explaining some of the concepts involved is on our website www.methodistchildren.org.uk – Steve Pearce

Statement from the Pacific Conference of Churches 9th General Assembly on Climate Change

We, the members of the Pacific Conference of Churches, meeting at Kanana Fou Theological College in American Samoa from the 3rd - 9th of September 2007, are acutely aware of the effects of climate change on our Moana, our Oceania.

We deplore the actions of industrialised countries that pollute and desecrate our Oceania, our Moana. Our Moana, our Oceania, is our gift from God and as a part of God's creation, it is our duty as dwellers of this ocean to be stewards of this gift. It is our theology and our covenant with God and with one another. We invite the worldwide community to work with us. We are a part of the whole body of Christ. When our low-lying atolls of Oceania are affected by the effects of climate change, we all suffer as a result.

We stand at the *Turangawaewae* (place of ownership/guardians of the gift) of the Pacific Ocean and as guardians of this Ocean, it is our duty to protect and safeguard this gift for our future generation.

We, the members of the Pacific Conference of Churches, believe we are called by God to:

- Affirm our commitment to care for the Oceania as our response to God's love for creation.
- Declare the urgency of the threat of human induced effects of climate

change to the lives, livelihoods, societies, cultures and eco-systems of the Pacific Islands.

- Dedicate ourselves to engaging our churches in education and action on climate change.
- Commit ourselves to ecumenical collaboration among our churches and with other religious and secular bodies in the Pacific and beyond that will increase the effectiveness of our national and regional efforts.

We call on our sisters and brothers in Christ throughout the world to act in solidarity with us to reduce the causes of human-induced climate change. We issue this call particularly to churches in the highly industrialized nations whose societies are historically responsible for the majority of polluting emissions. We further urge these countries to take responsibility for the ecological damage that they have caused by paying for the costs of adaptation to the anticipated impacts.

As Pacific Churches we encourage companies that are major producers or consumers of fossil fuels to support a transition toward less carbon-intensive economies, reduced energy usage and the development of cleaner, renewable energy sources.



10 tips to save energy

Here are some simple measures for taking action today

1 Turning your thermostat down by 1°C could cut your heating bills by up to 10% and save you around £30 per year.

5 Don't leave appliances on standby and remember not to leave appliances on charge unnecessarily.

9 Replace your light bulbs with energy-saving ones: just one can reduce your lighting costs by up to £78 over the lifetime of the bulb - and they last up to 12 times longer than ordinary light bulbs.

2 Is your water too hot? If you have a hot water cylinder, its thermostat shouldn't need to be set higher than 60°C/140°F.

6 If you're not filling up the washing machine, tumble dryer or dishwasher, use the half-load or economy programme.



3 Close your curtains at dusk to stop heat escaping through the windows.

7 Only boil as much water as you need (but remember to cover the element if you're using an electric kettle).

4 Always turn off the lights when you leave a room.

8 In just one day, a dripping hot water tap wastes enough water to fill a bath. Make sure all taps are turned off.

10 Do a home energy check. Several of the power companies offer this. You just answer some simple questions about your home and they'll give you a free, impartial report telling you how you can cut up to £250 a year on your household energy bills.

Urgent Action on Climate Change

The Methodist Church is calling for action against Climate Change! The Climate Change Bill is currently proceeding through Parliament. This bill calls for a reduction in the amount of emissions we send into the earth's atmosphere through our use of fossil fuels, but The Methodist Church doesn't believe that the Bill goes far enough. One major action everyone can take is to write to their MP and tell them how concerned they are. If you visit the Joint Public Issues website www.jointpublicissues.org.uk: you will get some tips on framing your letter. Remember, a handwritten letter is the most effective campaigning tool and will always receive a response. However if time is an issue please send an email. <http://findyourmp.parliament.uk//commons/>

Here are some suggestions on how to get your Children's or Youth groups involved:

- Use the Changing Actions chart – tips on how to use it are in Rainbow magazine. The chart encourages us to monitor our use of water and energy and makes suggestions on how we can reduce our emissions.
- Run a brief session on climate change with your group using some of the material on the 9-13s World Action pages of our website www.methodistchildren.org.uk as well as Fun and Rainbow.

- Why not take action in your group? Write letters to your local MPs, your Church Council and schools. The letter outlines below are asking them to take Climate Change seriously and to take action by reducing the use of water and energy consumption.
- Use the glossary below to explain some of the terms used about Climate Change.
- Use the Bible passages listed to include a biblical context.

Psalm 24 "The earth is the Lord's, and all that is in it; the world and its people belong to the Lord".

Genesis chapters 1 & 2 Two creation stories in Genesis.

Genesis 6:5-9:17 The Noah story.

Useful web links with background information and more resources:

www.creationchallenge.org.uk

www.methodistchurch.org.uk

www.jointpublicissues.org.uk

www.christianaid.org.uk

www.icount.org.uk

www.operationnoah.org/

<http://findyourmp.parliament.uk//commons/>

You can write to your MP at:
the House of Commons, Westminster, London SW1A 0AA

Letter to your MP

Dear.....

We take the issue of Climate Change seriously, we want you to as well.
Your vote in Parliament is important to us.

The Climate Change bill is only asking for us to aim for a 60% cut in UK carbon emissions by the year 2050. We feel this is not enough. We need drastic action if we're to avoid catastrophe for poor countries. Nothing less than 80% will do.

Yours

Individual's name and name of church group

Letter to your School

Dear

Re: Becoming environmentally friendly

I take the issue of Climate Change seriously, and would like my school to as well. Please can we take action at our school to reduce our carbon footprint. There are lots of things our School can take action on to reduce the amount of energy and water we use.

I would like to challenge the teachers and pupils to make a difference and take steps towards making a reduction in our school's carbon footprint during the next school year September 08 – July 09.

Yours

Individual's name

Letter to your Church Council

Dear (Church Council Secretary)

Our group takes the issue of climate change seriously, and we would like our church to as well. The Methodist Church at Conference in 2007 challenged each church to take this issue seriously and to take steps to make a change.

There are lots of things our church can take action on to reduce the amount of energy and water we use.

There are organisations who can guide us in this challenge and can help us to achieve this, Operation Noah and Creation Challenge are two of them.

We would like to challenge the Church leadership and members to make a difference and take steps towards making a reduction in our carbon footprint

Yours

Name of Group

Climate Change Glossary of Terms

Global Warming Global warming refers to an average increase in the earth's temperature, which in turn causes changes in climate. A warmer earth may lead to changes in rainfall patterns, a rise in sea level, and a wide range of impacts on plants, wildlife, and humans. When scientists talk about the issue of climate change, their concern is about global warming caused by human activities.

Carbon Emissions When we burn fossil fuels such as gas, oil, coal to create electricity or run cars, a gas called carbon dioxide is released into the earth's atmosphere. Carbon dioxide is one of the greenhouse gases believed to cause global warming.

Climate This describes the total of all weather occurring over a period of years in a given place. This includes average weather conditions, regular weather sequences (like winter, spring, summer, autumn), and special weather events (like floods). Climate tells us what it's usually like in the place where you live.

Atmosphere A thin layer of mixed gases which covers the earth and makes up the air we breathe. This thin layer also helps prevent the earth from becoming too hot or too cold, much like clothing does for us.

Fossil Fuels A general term for a fuel that is formed in the earth from plant or animal remains, including coal, oil, natural gas.

Climate Change A term used to refer to all forms of climatic inconsistency, but especially to significant change from one prevailing climatic condition to another. In some cases, "climate change" has been used synonymously with the term "global warming"; scientists, however, tend to use the term in a wider sense inclusive of natural changes in climate, including climatic cooling.



Holiday Club material with a Climate Change Theme

This is an exciting resource from Scripture Union created with help from A Rocha Christians in Conservation. (www.arocha.org) It is a five-day holiday club programme that focuses on the themes of transformation and the environment. It is for use with 5- to 11-year olds, providing everything you need to run a holiday club: drama, craft, games, Bible discovery, small-group discussion, creative prayer and more! The material lends itself to be adapted for use with a midweek group.

The Wastewatchers DVD contains five retold stories, accompanied with beautiful artwork, the Wastewatchers and 'Learn and remember' verse songs, an introduction to the work of A Rocha and a training feature on reaching the families of the children in your club.

Little Green Pages is a 48 page activity book which includes extracts from Genesis and John, puzzles, fun facts and group response. Use in the club and as a souvenir to take home.

Wastewatchers aims to explore:

- How God can help to transform lives
- How to hear God through the Bible
- The importance of Jesus' death and the invitation to follow him
- Ways to care for God's world
- How to campaign with others to bring change to God's world
- Building relationships between churches and children's family members.

The material provides resources to cover a different aspect of transformation each day:

Day 1: God brought change by transforming nothing into something at creation (Genesis 1,2).

Day 2: Jesus transformed the lives of people when there was a social disaster at a wedding. (John 2)

Day 3: A man who was blind from birth begins to see for the first time, both physically and spiritually (John 9).

Day 4: Through Jesus' death, God transformed the broken relationship between himself and human beings (John 19), making it possible for people to enter into a relationship with God.

Day 5: Jesus' resurrection means that individuals can receive new life (John 20), while communities and damaged creation can be transformed.

Take advantage of this deal before the 30th of April:

9781844272044 Resource Book £9.99

9781844272464 DVD £19.99

9781844272341 *The Little Green Pages*, Pack of 10, £10.00

Receive £5 off when you spend over £29 plus free postage

Receive £10 off when you spend over £45 plus free postage

To get these discounts please quote:

METHODIST CHURCH OFFER

Contact them on: Tel: 0845 07 06 006

Post: Scripture Union Mail Order

PO Box 5148

Milton Keynes MLO

MK2 2YX

General Resources

'The Whole Wide World' by Phil and Rachel Bowyer

Practical devotions to change a child's world

Suitable for use with 4 –11 year-olds.

The Whole Wide World contains 42 interactive devotions on issues that impact the world and its people. Each imaginative session describes simple and effective ways in which children and families can make a real difference. Suitable for use at home or at church, themes covered include water, weather, food, clothes and school. Ready to use resources such as games, photos, videos and worksheets on the CD-Rom and in the Poster Pack will provide you with everything you need. Full of real stories of real people, it will show your family or children's group how they can be part of changing God's world. Cost £6.99. To order your copy email resources@tearfund.org or call 0845 355 8355 (ROI 0044 845 355 8355).

Holiday Club material

The Three Parties

Curbs Resource

Using a party theme to help children explore issues around inclusion, exclusion and how God welcomes them.

Resources for a five-day holiday club based on a unique approach to the parable of the Prodigal Son. The material explores feeling, language and responses around 'being cool', race, bigotry, exclusion and inclusion through the 'Cool Party', the 'Pigs' Party' and the 'Welcome Party'.

Uses games, crafts, all-together activities and drama to help children engage with the themes. Finishes with an all-inclusive performance and a 'Welcome Party'.

Peacemakers

Curbs Resource

Using a circus theme to help children from different social and cultural backgrounds to discover what it means to live together peacefully.

A unique resource, ideal for use in multi-cultural settings.

Resources for a five-day holiday club for 3-11s exploring seeing the same things differently, friendship, feelings, saying sorry and respect.

Features Mr. Pepperoni, Beanie the Clown and other circus characters in a daily drama sketch.

Includes crafts, games and circus skills geared to individual age groups.

Comprehensive guide to setting up, organising and running the club plus a CD with themed circus and peacemaking songs.

Curbs resources available to purchase online at www.curbsproject.org.uk

New – Friends and Heroes Children's Activities

Friends and Heroes, the award-winning TV series shown last year on BBC2, has launched a new series of 'Sunday School Lessons' which use the Bible stories from their excellent and engaging DVDs!

Ideal for almost any children's group, there is one lesson for each Bible story in Friends and Heroes and the 26 sessions for the 13 episodes in Series 1 are ready now – and they are completely **FREE** to churches who buy the full set of Series 1 DVDs.

Friends and Heroes learning material includes:



- Preparation notes and lists of resources needed
- Craft activities and/or games related to the Bible story or theme
- Ideas to help explore the theme more deeply
- Creative prayer material

- Printable resources for the children to use during the session
- An original fun activity for children to take home too!

Created by experienced children's workers, each lesson uses approximately 13 minutes from a Friends and Heroes episode and provides about 30/45 minutes of additional material – all adding up to enough content for a session lasting an hour or so. Of course, this length can be varied for most situations depending on how long is spent on each activity.

Themes covered in Series 1 include:

- Courage
- Listening to God
- Caring for others
- Making a difference
- Doing the right thing
- Forgiveness

Churches can buy the Organisational Presenters' Packs – at just £90 per series, including all 13 Episodes on



All images © Friends & Heroes Ltd 2007

DVD, a Series Public Display Licence (usually £25 a year) and **FREE** access to the children's activity sessions. You can read more about this special offer here: http://ukstore.friendsandheroes.com/acatalog/presenters_pack.html

Or write to:

Friends and Heroes Productions Ltd, Lough House, Approach Road, Ramsey, ISLE OF MAN IM8 1RG

www.friendsandheroes.tv
www.friendsandheroes.com



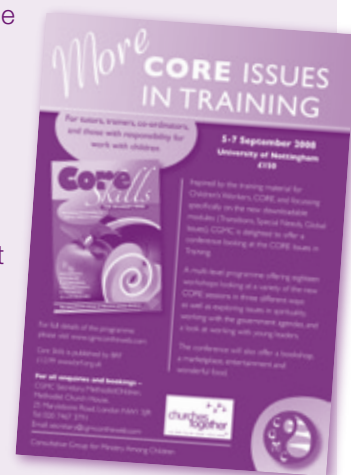
CORE

CORE Skills for Children's Work is the short, flexible training material recommended by the Methodist Conference as the most appropriate training for those working with children in the Church. The six basic modules are published in a book by brf £12.99.

Additional modules have been produced. Transitions, Young Leaders, Special Needs (May 2008) are available to download on to a computer for a mere £3 each!

And this year there is a special treat! **More CORE Conference at Nottingham University** (5-7 September 2008) where you can learn more about CORE, try out some of the sessions or explore some of the issues in greater depth, all in scenic comfort with good people and good food. The cost is £150 but we have some bursaries available of up to 50%.

More information at www.cgmcontheweb.com/core.htm or contact MethodistChildren.



Share your fundraising activities. What did your group do? E-mail digital photos of your events for inclusion in Rainbow.



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