

School Nature trail in the Churchyard**Contents:**

This month our Eco Newsletter includes some reflections on a passage in the book of Job and the implications for our mental health, some tips on seasonal foods and helping wildlife over the summer, reports on recent Eco Events at church and advance notice of an activity in September.

**The sea, the sea!
Should you manage
to get to the sea
this summer and
look out over the
waters, this prayer
might be helpful:**

Eternal Lord God,
you alone have spread
out the heavens and
rule over the seas;
bless and keep all who
go down to the sea in
ships, bringing food
across the oceans or
catching fish;
make us all good
stewards of your
oceans and always
thankful for your many
gifts to us in nature, to
the praise and glory of
your holy name;
through Jesus Christ
our Saviour. Amen

*Adapted from a prayer
of the Anglican Church
in New Zealand.*



In June volunteers from the Church Eco Team worked with teaching staff at Knowle Primary School to enable a class of six year olds to undertake a Nature Trail in the churchyard. We have some way to go in “rewilding” spaces in the churchyard but the impact of No Mow May and careful observation of wild flowers, trees and birdlife enabled us to have an enjoyable hour searching for all sorts of wildlife. We were struck by how aware the children were of the importance of insects and pollinators and how pleased they were to discover the diversity of nature in this environment that was, in their eyes, very much part of their territory. The result was a level of excitement and curiosity which will serve them well in future years and we hope this becomes a regular event. Thank you to the school for working with us on this.

A passage from the book of Job:

“But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.” (Job 12, 7-10)

This was the reading at our recent well-attended Pet Service and it was a joy to see the variety of animals that came along – with carers quite young and quite old! We were reminded of how much contact with pets can help with our mental health, mood and awareness of God’s presence in our lives. But, of course, we don’t have to own a cat or a dog (or even a rat or a lizard!) to know this. A walk in the park listening to the



birds, a stroll along the canal watching the coots and moorhens, or just observing the sheep and their lambs in nearby fields. And you can even get up close to nature in your garden and watch insects, bees or butterflies. Just stop, look and listen and God will remind you that “in his hand is the life of every creature” – including you and me! Recent scientific evidence confirms that getting close to nature is very good for our mental health – the book of Job knew that thousands of years ago. So, get out and about and stop, look and listen. It can be fun too!

Eco Tips for the Summer

From A Rocha UK the national organisers of Eco Church



In July: Taste the benefits of seasonal and local food. Plan to incorporate locally grown produce into your diet and shopping list throughout the seasons, as it is harvested at its peak ripeness, ensuring superior flavour compared to imported alternatives that have travelled thousands of miles. Try to find a local farm shop or a greengrocer who sells local produce and check the origin of fruit and veg in the supermarket. If saying

grace before a meal is a regular practice in your household, this month, include giving thanks for your local food producers.

In August: Assist local wildlife during very hot weather. Provide hedgehogs with hedgehog biscuits (available at many pet stores and online) or dog biscuits (small/ crumbed) as their prey of slugs, snails and worms diminishes, and ensure a safe exit for them and other small mammals if you have a garden pond. Help garden birds by maintaining a filled bird bath and supplying supplementary food including black sunflower seeds, pinhead oatmeal, soaked sultanas, raisins, currants, mealworms, waxworms, and a nutritious seed mixture, when natural supplies become scarce. More tips can be found [here](#).



Knowle Church Green Fair in the Great Big Green Week

Claire Carter writes: During Great Big Green Week we held our 5th annual Green Fair. This event brings together many different eco ideas and solutions to share with our local community. It's also an opportunity to join together with local groups and organizations, including Solihull Council, in promoting the eco message. Pupils from Arden School Eco Team joined us, as well as Knowle Society and Solihull Volunteers. We were greatly supported by the other wonderful local churches who not only helped out on stands, but also promoted the fair. Children from Knowle Primary Academy created some fantastic artwork showing what climate change means to them. Great Big Green Week is a nationwide call to action and we look forward to our next fair, next year!



Fairtrade Wine Tasting Friday 13th September 7pm.

September is Fairtrade's 30th anniversary and what better way to celebrate than with a special evening of Fairtrade wine tasting? As a Fairtrade church, we serve Fairtrade products at all church events.

Book this date in your diary and look out for details in the church notices later in August.