

Outlook

News & Information in the Life of Eastleigh Parish Church



"We are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells."

2Peter 3:13

Since the school term began, we've been thinking about our role as stewards of God's earth. Only God can save his world, but we have been asked to steward it. Last weekend, we suggested the following 3 key principles as a helpful summary of how disciples should think about all of creation, and how we should care for it:

- ❖ 1) The whole of **creation exists for the Glory of God**. Our love of him and desire to glorify him is the key issue for us. Acting as good stewards is one way to glorify him.
- ❖ 2) Jesus taught that loving the Lord our God with all our heart needs to go hand-in-hand with **loving our neighbours as ourselves**. As disciples, we are called to steward the world in a way that blesses our neighbours.
- ❖ 3) Serving the Lord & our neighbours is crucial. But acts of service for Him and for others must come from a place of love - and not from any other motive. **God looks to our heart**.

This weekend is the final sermon in this series on creation. In it, we'll be taking a look at what the Bible teaches about the future of this earth when this age comes to an end and Jesus makes all things new. Our DGs will take the same theme too. Beginning on Sunday 24th, we'll start a new series looking at the letter of James - which will take us up to the start of Advent on 28th Nov.

Bible Readings (NIVUK) for Sunday 17th October

2Peter 3:1-13

1 Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. **2** I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Saviour through your apostles.

3 Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. **4** They will say, 'Where is this "coming" he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.' **5** But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. **6** By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. **7** By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

8 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: with the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. **9** The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.

11 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives **12** as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. **13** But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

Luke 24:36-44

36 While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you.'

37 They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. **38** He said to them, 'Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? **39** Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.'

40 When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. **41** And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, 'Do you have anything here to eat?' **42** They gave him a piece of broiled fish, **43** and he took it and ate it in their presence.

44 He said to them, 'This is what I told you while I was still with you: everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.'

Little Ones at the 11o'clock Service

It's good to be back in All Saints' for the 11o'clock service. With the building comes more opportunity for our young children - but at the same time means we need more help from you! We would really love to re-start some provision for our youngest children, do you think you can help? If you are interested, please get in contact with Sue at sue@eastleighparish.com.



The Light Party



The 31st of October is fast approaching, and this year we'll be hosting a Light Party for children & their families at the ~~Vicarage Garden~~ at All Saints' (please note venue change) between 5 and 7pm, whilst our YTH leaders will be taking our teens to the beach for a BBQ later in the evening. More details to follow later, but get excited make yourselves free on the 31st.

Some Helpful Contacts

Ian (Vicar): 07809 668 118 & Sue: 07502 427 693

Phil Watson (Church Warden): 07966 159 684

Adrian Nance (Licensed Lay Minister): 07973 232 872

Keith Pickering (Church Warden - All Saints'): 07905 249 860

Michael Weatherall (Youth/Children's Min): 07311 820 975

Darryl Yeates (Church Warden - St Francis'): 07810 400 896

Quiz Night with Jayne Martin



Jane will be hosting another of her legendary quiz nights at **7pm on Saturday 20th November in All Saints'**. Teams are to be no larger than 6 persons, and there'll be an £8pp charge which will not only cover the costs of a light supper but will also raise some much-appreciated funds for ARK Eastleigh. Call Jayne on 07557 273 554 for queries or to book.

All Souls' Service: 2pm Oct 31st



Our annual All Souls' service will take place at 2pm on Sunday 31st October. This reflective service provides us with an opportunity to thank God for those whom we have loved but who have died, both in recent times and many years ago. During the service, we will be reading out a list of names of those we wish to remember. Please add and/or check names that are to be read out on the list printed on the PCC noticeboard (at the rear of All Saints', near the main doors).

DG Materials

"Rooted: Our Connection with Creation"

Week #7

Week #7 Starts Here!

[Leaders: Please take a moment to pray for your DG and our growing community of DGs at EPC. Ask God to renew our minds as we study his Scriptures together.]

- [Read aloud] **Welcome to the final session of our 7-week series, "Rooted: Our Connection with Creation" during which we have tried to answer this question: "How should our devotion to Jesus' way of life affect the way in which we interact with the environment around us?"**

A Few Discussion Questions

- Have you enjoyed these studies?
 - Why / why not?
 - Have you been surprised by any of the ideas we've looked at?
 - If so, what was that?
 - Have you learned anything that will be helpful to you in your discipleship in the years ahead?
 - If so, what might that be?
- **Ian has offered the following 'cross-shaped summary' for how to relate to the environment:**

1) The whole of creation exists for the Glory of God. Our love of him and desire to glorify him is the key issue for us. Acting as good stewards is one way to glorify him.

2a) Jesus taught that loving the Lord our God with all our heart needs to go hand-in-hand with loving our neighbours as ourselves.

2b) As disciples, we are called to steward the world in a way that blesses our neighbours.

3) Serving the Lord & our neighbours is crucial. But acts of service for Him and for others must come from a place of love - and not for any other motive. God looks to our heart.

4) Although we're looking forward to a new heaven & earth, God has rooted us in this world and calls us to steward it for his glory.

[Leaders: Please take a few minutes to work through the above diagram/summary with your group.]

- Do you find this a helpful summary to the question we've tried to answer?
 - Why, why not?
 - Do you have an alternative answer to the question that you could offer the group?

The Future of the Earth

▶ **On Sunday, we looked at some of what the Bible says about the future of this planet; his long term plans for earth after the restoration/renewal of all things.**

▶ **Let's re-read Sunday's passage from 2Peter 3:1-13.**

- What immediately strikes you about this passage?
- What words or phrases leap off the page and into your heart or mind?
- Did you notice that this passage talks about the heavens and the earth being 'destroyed'?
 - Can you make a note of each occasion where this is mentioned? [Verses: 6, 10, 11]
 - On Sunday, Ian said that he thought that verse 6 was referring to Noah's flood. Would you agree with that?
 - Why/why not?
 - If we assume that verse 6's description of the whole earth as being 'destroyed' by water is referring back to the story of Noah's flood, how might that affect how we then interpret the promised 'destruction' of the earth by fire in verses 10 & 11?

[Leaders, here are some notes on this question:

- ❖ You may find it helpful to refer back to Genesis 6
- ❖ On Sunday, Ian mentioned the idea behind the words used for 'destruction' in this passage are used elsewhere in the Bible to describe:
 - ❖ Something that is dissolved; broken-up; done away with; to untie; to loose a person or a thing – e.g. to discharge a person from prison.
- ❖ The concept of 'destroy' in this passage is not so much 'throw-away' as it is 'bring to an end so that the new can come'.
- ❖ The idea therefore is this:
 - ❖ At Noah's flood, the earth went through a major 'destruction';
 - ❖ The flood changed the world, but what it was made of did not change;
 - ❖ Jesus is going to take this world through another process **like** the one at Noah's flood;
 - ❖ The same 'elements' (1Peter 3:11) that make up today's world will be used by God to re-create his new heaven & earth;
 - ❖ In the days of Noah, God used water to 'destroy' the earth;
 - ❖ In the future, he will use fire to 'destroy' this earth, from which he will reform the new earth & heavens.]
- If then God is going to use these heavens (the sky and all that is in space) & this earth as the source material from which he will make a new heaven and a new earth (as it says in v13), how **might** that affect:
 - **A. Our relationship with the created world today?**

[Leaders: 1) One idea is this, "Matter matters to God." (This is a quote from a chap named Dave Bookless.) It helps us see how valuable every cell, every leaf, & every stone is in God's view. We would never want to worship creation, but this Bible passage helps us see just valuable creation is. It is never going to be thrown away - although it is going to be made new. 2) Another idea is this, just as Noah lived righteously and did all God commanded, so too must we live

today in a way that reflects God's plans for the future rather than the selfishness in our hearts. See 1Peter 3:11.]

● B. Our hope of an eternal home?

[Leaders: One idea is that just as we see continuity AND discontinuity (the same, but difference) between the body of Jesus before and after his resurrection, so can we expect a similar pattern for our existence on the new earth (some things the same, some things completely changed and altered forever). This means that any false ideas of 'angels playing harps on clouds' can be put aside in favour of 'solid' hopes of bodies 'like' Jesus' resurrected body. **See Philippians 3:21.**]

- Verse 11 calls us to 'live holy and godly lives'. How might this apply to issues surrounding the care/stewardship of creation?
 - What might godly stewardship include for a disciple living in Eastleigh in 2021?

Final Thoughts

- ▶ **Over the past 7 weeks we have considered a lot of biblical ideas regarding the world that God has made. These have included:**
 - ▶ The Good Shepherd principle;
 - ▶ The importance of resting the land, and;
 - ▶ God's call for his people to act with justice and loving mercy to all, and especially the poor and disadvantaged.

- ▶ The world around us is full of ideas and opinions, many of which are based on good science or sound advice.
- ▶ Sadly, there are also many ideas and opinions that you and I are constantly subjected to that fly in the face of the biblical principles we have discussed these past 7 weeks.
- ▶ Several weeks ago we read James 1:22 together, *"Do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves; do what it says."*
- ▶ And at the beginning of every week in this course we've prayed Romans 12:2, that we would, *"be transformed by the renewing of our minds."*
- ▶ As we finish this course, let's use these 2 Bible verses as a spring board for action:
 - ▶ 1) Can you think of one biblical principle regarding being a steward of God's earth that you plan to pay particular attention to?
 - ▶ If you can, please tell the group what that biblical principle is and how you hope to put it into action.

[Leaders: Please take a few minutes to go round the group to hear from your members.]
 - ▶ 2) Let's pause to pray for a few minutes on the theme of *'being transformed by the renewing of our minds'*.

[Leaders: Please lead a time of prayer in a manner that best suits your group. Items to pray for might include:

 - ❖ **For those who had perhaps seen themselves more as 'saviours' than 'stewards';** to have a new, godly, vision for their role in caring for creation, and to have a real 'softening' in their heart towards those who have not cared as much as they have about these things. For God's glory to become their chief goal when thinking about the world, rather than any other motivation.
 - ❖ **For those who have been confused about what to do or have not been particularly concerned about caring for the environment;** to discover a

God-given desire to lovingly serve our neighbours in the way in which we manage his creation. For God-given clarity on 'what to do' in our day to day lives so that we would be faithful stewards of his world.

❖ **For those who had perhaps seen the world and its resources simply as something to 'consume';** to come to appreciate the value of all that God has made and how it speaks of his glory. To begin to lovingly steward all that God has made so that our neighbours would be blessed and God would be glorified.

▶ **Thank you for joining in with this course. As it says in Psalm 24, "The earth is the Lord's and everything in it!"**

▶ **All things were made for his glory.**

▶ **So, let's go in peace to love and serve the Lord!**

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[Note to Leaders: Starting next Sunday, we'll be looking at the book of James. We'll be taking 1 chapter per week for a total of 5 weeks. This series in James will conclude in time for the 1st Sunday of Advent, which is at the end of November.

❖ *If you'd like to study James together as a DG, [this is a helpful resource.](#)*