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**The Diocese of**

**Southwark**

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The South London Church Fund and Southwark Diocesan Board of Finance is a company limited by guarantee (No 236594)

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**The Environment and Covid-19**

This year, our world has been turned upside down by the Covid-19 crisis. The outbreak has caused and will continue to cause much suffering. However, we have also seen extraordinary acts of selfless kindness and compassion throughout our communities. We have seen governments take unprecedented decisive action, in ways that we could not have imagined mere months ago.

It has shown us that transformative change is possible.

The virus has also made it obvious just how globally connected we are as a species, and how intertwined human life is with that of nature. Our damage of the world is directly damaging ourselves.

If we choose, we can see this moment as a wake-up call, an opportunity to work towards the fulfilment of God’s creation. If society can respond to the Coronavirus with such imagination and commitment, surely we can address climate injustice with the same verve and energy.

Anne Frank famously wrote, *‘How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.’* So, then, here are some ideas for actions to begin today.

**Charity Campaigns**

Many charities are running environmental campaigns. To support some of these is as simple as signing a petition, others invite you to write letters or make donations. Here are some for starters:

* Christian Aid are campaigning for [climate justice](https://www.christianaid.org.uk/campaigns/climate-change/climate-justice-petition) with a petition:
* Greenpeace are campaigning for a new [Global Oceans Treaty](https://secure.greenpeace.org.uk/page/s/protect-the-oceans) with a petition and calling on BP to [switch to renewable energy](https://secure.greenpeace.org.uk/page/s/bp-climate-emergency-petition):
* The [Woodland Trust](https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/) are campaigning the UK government to combat climate change through an emergency tree plan.
* Tearfund are partnering with Toilet Twinning to run a new campaign fighting the spread of Coronavirus through an initiative called [Tap Twinning](https://www.toilettwinning.org/tap-twinning/).
* Tearfund have responded to Covid-19 with a [reboot campaign](https://www.tearfund.org/about_you/action/the_world_rebooted/).

**Pray**

There are a selection of prayers [focusing on the environment](https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/topical-prayers/prayers-world-environment-day) at the Church of England website. On the Southwark Environment webpage you can find ‘Prayers with Nature’ which offer meditations, reflections and prayers for Easter week and beyond.

**Ethical Switches**

Use the time at home to make some ethical switches in your own home:

* Switch your household to green energy
* Switch your banking to ethical banking
* Switch your phone and broadband to an ethical company
* Divest your pension
* Pledge to buying Fairtrade products at church when the building reopens, and affirm this commitment on the Fairtrade website [here](https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get%20involved/In-your-community/Faith-Groups/Fairtrade-Churches).

**Write letters**

* Write to your MP, pledging support for climate action and urging them to keep climate justice high on the agenda.
* Write to your local councillors, pledging support for local climate-friendly policies.
* Choose a company that interests you – a business that you shop at, use or invest with – and write to their CEO to ask what their ethical policies are and what steps they are taking to combat climate change.
* Many charities have created template letters and emails relating to specific campaigns which make it easy to get involved, for example:
	+ Hope for the Future offers [template letters](http://www.hftf.org.uk/template-letters) and will [support churches](http://www.hftf.org.uk/faith) in the process of contacting MPs;
	+ The Woodland Trust offers a [template letter](file:///%5C%5CDS-DCFP01%5CLDrive%5CPublicPolicy%5CEnvironment%5CEco%20Resources%20-%20Southwark%5Co%09https%3A%5Ccampaigns.woodlandtrust.org.uk%5Cpage%5C54227%5Caction%5C1) for their campaign;
	+ [Christian Aid](file:///%5C%5CDS-DCFP01%5CLDrive%5CPublicPolicy%5CEnvironment%5CEco%20Resources%20-%20Southwark%5Co%09https%3A%5Cwww.christianaid.org.uk%5Csite-search%3Fsearch_api_fulltext%3Dtemplate%2Bletter) offers template letters to banks and local councils;

**Inform yourself!**

Use the time to read up on climate change and/or ways of taking action:

* Read this excellent guide on [How to Have Conversations about Climate Change in Everyday Life](https://climateoutreach.org/resources/how-to-have-a-climate-change-conversation-talking-climate/).
* Explore [NASA’s website](https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/) full of information about climate change, or explore the [kids’ version](https://climatekids.nasa.gov/menu/teach/) with your children.
* Read your local council’s website and find out what they are doing to promote recycling, or tackle pollution or climate change. Submit a response to a policy consultation, write a letter of support, or suggest alternative action.
* Read the [Archbishop of Canterbury’s Lent Book](https://spckpublishing.co.uk/saying-yes-to-life) for 2020, *Say Yes to Life* by Ruth Valerio.
* Visit your favourite newspaper’s website and search ‘environment’ to read a roundup of recent environmental news stories.
* Watch a nature documentary like Blue Planet.
* Read *The Uninhabitable World* by David Wallace-Wells.