

June 2025 Green Cross Code

As I write this, I can look out of my window onto the spiral of bluebells in the middle of our lawn. The glorious golden flush of dandelions, which lifts my spirits each spring, is just coming to an end, as is the blossom on the cherry tree, but the garden is clearly 'coming alive' in other ways. Butterflies, various insects, and small birds are fluttering over the meadow, and around the untidier corners of the garden, and I know the pond is full of newts and tadpoles.

Over the years, I have asked countless times in Christian groups I have run, 'Where do you most sense God?' The most common answer I have received – by a very long way – is, 'in nature.' Across our nation, activities to restore and protect natural habitats have been shown to draw together people of all faiths and none; people who recognise something precious, often something 'spiritual,' that restores our physical, mental and emotional well-being as we seek to engage in a loving and caring way with the ecosystems that we are part of.

When I first became a Christian, in my teens, the Church of England and concern for the environment seemed poles apart. Over the intervening decades, I have watched the Church of England gradually relearning what conservationists and environmentalists have always known; that our well-being is intimately connected with the well-being of the world around us. This ancient awareness is built into the foundations of the Christian faith, but got largely forgotten during the Enlightenment, the 'Age of Science,' which led to much of western thinking becoming very narrowly 'human-focused.'

Until the beginning of June, the Church of England is still in Easter season, the season when we especially focus on and celebrate Jesus' resurrection from the dead on Easter morning, and on what Jesus' resurrection means for us. John's gospel chapter 12 records how Jesus told his disciples, when he was preparing them for his death and his resurrection, that when he rose from the dead, he would draw 'all things to himself.' Countless Bible translations, influenced no doubt by the human-focused Enlightenment, translate this as 'draw everyone,' to himself, but the original Greek is very clear. The original Greek word John used is παντος which means 'everything,' 'all that is,' 'the whole.' In churches across our nation, Christians claim regularly to believe in a God who is 'God of all,' but we are very often less good at living as though we believe God is God of all. I ask myself regularly how well I am doing at truly loving all that God has made, truly loving all that his Son Jesus Christ died on the cross to redeem, to draw to himself.

So my prayer for all of us this month is that we would all take time to truly notice and to enjoy God's creation, and that we would all grow a little more in love for all that God has made and loves.

Yours in Christ,
Louise Petheram
rev.louise.p@gmail.com 01433 621918

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