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Items for >imprint< no. 119: **Mon. 27th November 2023**, please, by email at editor@ccstalbans.org.uk. [Peter Young \(Ed.\)](#)

DEAR GOD, PLEASE HELP ME. -- Rev. Canon Dele Agbelusi

I am always thrilled and uplifted by the faith of little children. Maybe that is why when anyone sends me a list of *children's letters to God*, I read them not only with a smile, but also with a sigh: Oh, to have faith like that. Here are a few that I have read recently:

“Dear God, instead of letting people die and having to make new ones, why don't You just keep the ones You have now?” -- *Jane*

“Dear God, who draws the lines around the countries?” -- *Nan*

“Dear God, I went to this wedding and they kissed right in church. Is that okay?” -- *Neil*

“Dear God, what does it mean, you are a Jealous God? I thought you had everything.” -- *Jane*

“Dear God, did you really mean ‘Do unto others as they do unto you?’ Because if you did, then I'm going to fix my brother!” -- *Darla*

“Dear God, thank you for the baby brother, but what I prayed for was a puppy.” -- *Joyce*. Well, that is a good one for God. If you prayed for a puppy, a puppy is what you ought to expect -- not a baby brother!

We can learn a lot about faith by observing our children. More inspiring than the faith of little children, however, is the faith of many adults.

We must realise that we live in a world that is full speed ahead all the time. It is so easy to get caught up in our daily lives doing what we do: going to work, shuttling kids, running errands, and all the other responsibilities that we have. We live in a society that promotes self-reliance and the idea that we should be “Wonder Woman” or “Superman” and not need anyone.

The constant pressures of life and society make it so easy to forget that we need God in our lives. We get caught up trying to juggle everything ourselves and don't rely on Him. It's no wonder we often feel exhausted and at our wits' end when life keeps piling it on. We need God. Every Christian needs Jesus every day. If you have been carrying life's burdens on your own and haven't been mindful of how much you need God lately, don't despair. It happens sometimes, and thankfully we serve an awesome, loving God who gives us a fresh slate every day. Here is a prayer to help you ask for God's help:

Dear Lord,

I pray over my circumstances (name them) right now. I pray you will give me peace about what I can't change and the wisdom to change the things I can. I'm asking you to reach into my life and do your will. Guide me and give me the discernment to hear your voice. Help me to overcome these adversities and have victory in you.. I thank you for the plans you have for me and give you the praise and glory, even in this current storm. In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.

This prayer is not a magic formula but it will quieten your mind to be still before our living God. As an old hymn puts it: *"Oh what peace we often forfeit. Oh what needless pain we bear. All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer."*

Satan has a way of discouraging God's people. We lose our joy of salvation, excitement of service, and our determination to live holy lives. But God is in the people business and he desires to take care of us. They tell me "the more you move around in quicksand, the faster you sink. If I fell in, I would be in panic mode and all I would be able to cry out is, 'God please help me!'

The saddest person on earth is the person who does not know God. Maybe that is your situation. Many people go through the motions of religious faith without really feeling its joy, its comfort, its hope. Maybe in your heart you are reaching out to God right now. And maybe, just maybe, in the reading of Scripture, in the hymns, in the familiar prayers, you will find God in Christ Jesus.

The unknowable has made himself known in Christ Jesus. The unseen God has revealed himself in Jesus Christ. He did more than reveal Himself, he took the guilt of shame and punishment for transgression which rightfully is yours and mine, upon himself. The Creator was struck by the hands of his creation. And He endured all this, so that you (and I) may know God and be his friend - Never to be haunted by sin again. The gift is yours, but you must appropriate it. Receive Jesus into your life now. Let the Son come into your life and dispel the darkness.

Autumn sermon series – reminder

Below is a table, largely repeated from the last issue of *>imprint<*, as a reminder of the current sermon series on Exodus, entitled "Slavery to freedom", which continues until the Sunday before Advent (19th November). It shows the topics that have been and will be covered in both the sermons in the main church service and activities in Christ Church Families, where separate. The purpose in restating topics already covered is to enable you to listen/watch them if you missed any, or revisit if you wish, although this applies only to the sermons/talks delivered in the main service. The YouTube versions (<https://www.youtube.com/@christchurchstalbans360/streams>) are still available and so are the audio versions posted to the Christ Church website (www.ccstalbans.org.uk/sermons, posted under the 'Media' menu). However, some minor tweaks to the website postings have been made recently, which now also contain links to the respective YouTube audio/visual recordings of entire services, in addition to (or in a few cases instead of) just the readings and sermons taken out from the services in audio-only format. This is because, especially for the intergenerational services, the audio-only recordings tend to lose a lot in terms of visual information and context. It also means that you can search for and access specific YouTube recordings from our website, according to teaching topic as well as date, in addition to the YouTube channel. I hope you will find these changes helpful.

Date	Text	Theme	Families
Sep 3		Zambia feedback	
Sep 10	Exodus 1:1-22	Slavery to freedom – <i>Friends with Jesus (Intergenerational)</i>	
Sep 17	Exodus 2:1-10	God starts a plan	Moses birth and upbringing
Sep 24	Exodus 3:1-17	The burning bush	God calls Moses

Oct 1	Exodus 5:1-21	Hardship increases -- <i>Israel/Moses tensions rise (Intergenerational) – Harvest – A Rocha 40th Anniversary focus (also including Michael Browne interview)</i>	
Oct 8	Exodus 11:1-10	Plagues/hardness of heart	God’s purposes appear thwarted
Oct 15	Exodus 12:1-36	The Passover	Escape from Egypt part 1
Oct 22	Ex 13:17-14:31	Crossing the Red Sea	Escape from Egypt part 2
Oct 29	Exodus 16:1-36	Manna in the wilderness – <i>God’s provision (Intergenerational)</i>	
Nov 5	Exodus 19:1-25	Mount Sinai	Slaves becoming a nation
Nov 12	Exodus 32:1-35	The golden Calf	Worshipping the wrong God
Nov 19	Exodus 33:12 -23	The glory of the Lord	Moses and God

From Advent Sunday, 26th November, there will be an Advent/Christmas themed programme.

Caring for Creation

Christ Church Caring for Creation (C4) activities

Christ Church
Caring for Creation



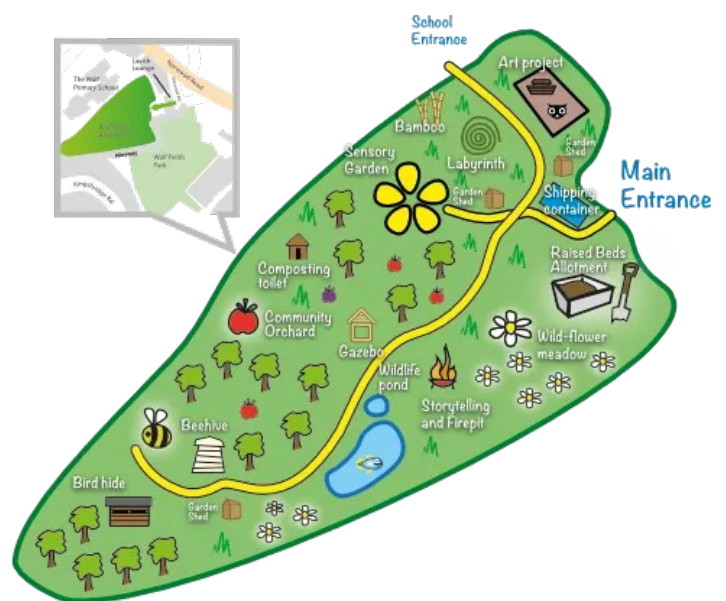
The most recent C4 meeting was on Monday 16th October when we watched the fourth of the [Lausanne Global Classroom Creation Care video series: The radical renewal of Creation and the New Earth](#). In it we learnt that of two Greek words used in Scripture for ‘new’ (*neos* – made completely new, and *kainos* – restored/renewed) it is *kainos* that is used in the context of the new heaven and earth in eschatological (end-times) discourses. In other words creation will not be completely burnt up/obliterated as some have

interpreted it. So we shouldn’t regard creation as something disposable or to be exploited for our benefit, as something temporary – we have no right to destroy our environment. But God will make radical changes and upgrades to liberate it at the end of days (Romans 8; 2 Peter 3). Contributors in this video include Dave Bookless, Ruth Padilla de Borst, Victor Mughonghi and Ed Brown. See [>imprint<115](#), p.7 for the full programme.

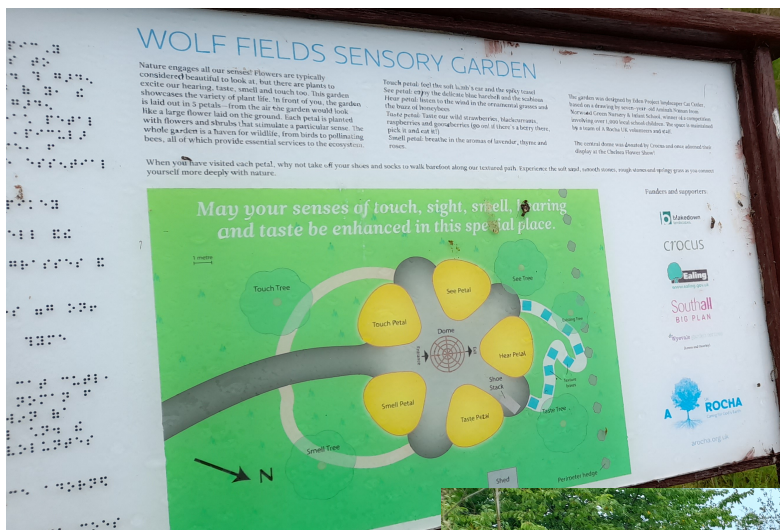
The meeting spent some time discussing additional recommended work in the church grounds, including the replacement of a cherry tree, hedge trimming and some replanting at the front of the church. A revisitation of the Eco Church questionnaires was also started, looking at the Land section on this occasion, in the hope of detecting some improvements in responses from when we received our Bronze award to enable the possibility of applying for Silver status in due course.

Two days later, some members of C4 and Jeremy visited A Rocha’s Wolf Fields urban community nature reserve in Southall, West London and were shown around by the reserve manager. The site was originally a brickworks and more recently a rubbish dump before A Rocha UK acquired it in 2012 and transformed it, as shown in the plan opposite, after clearing it of 54 tonnes of rubbish.

It has an orchard, community allotment, beehives, Braille and audio interpretation, sensory garden, meadow, art installation area, prayer labyrinth, ponds and a story-telling arena for children. Nest boxes and a bird feeding station were some of the first improvements to attract wildlife. These additions have had a noticeable impact on the site’s species diversity.



See more detailed information at <https://arocha.org.uk/what-we-do/wolf-fields/>. The Christ Church visitors returned with quite a lot of food for thought about what might, and what might not, be feasible for further consideration about future possible development and use of our own church grounds.



The Sensory Garden at Wolf Fields



A Rocha Blog

There has been one further blog so far posted since the last *>imprint<*, no.117. It was posted by Naomi Bosch on 4th October and entitled: “God’s Gardeners”. This is an excerpt translated into English from Naomi’s first book about creation care and living in close relationship with the land and in harmony with God’s heart for his creation (published in German in September 2023, available [here](#), entitled ‘And yet, I plant a garden: How we can sow seeds of hope in the environmental crisis’ (English title).

Go to <https://blog.arocha.org/> to read this and other A Rocha blogs.

Field Notes Podcasts

There has been one further podcast since the last *>imprint<*. The most recent is:

Episode 35: posted 4th October, featuring Ed Walker, MBE, A Rocha International’s new Executive Director since September 2023. In this podcast, entitled ‘Ed Walker – Meet A Rocha’s new Executive Director’, he is in conversation with Jo Swinney, and Rick Faw. No stranger to responding to world crises with a range of NGOs, Ed responded this year to Jesus asking him ‘What do you want?’, by embarking into quite different territory and challenge of A Rocha’s global Christian conservation mandate and mission*. However he recognises that many of the world’s crises he was involved in previously have had environmental roots, e.g. from pressures on the land.

Go to <https://arocha.org/en/field-notes-podcast/> or wherever you get podcasts.

***Also** do check out this video, which gives a good introduction to the history and aims of A Rocha:

https://vimeo.com/863646904/b414ee584emc_cid=17b70e6a6a&mc_eid=abcbb376da