



Lent 2021 Study Group Materials

Releasing the whole people of God for the whole mission of
God for the transformation of Cumbria in Jesus's name.

Introduction to the refreshed vision.

Everyone has a faith. Everyone believes in something.

The Christian writer GK Chesterton said *"When a person stops believing in God, they don't then believe in nothing, they believe anything."*

So we see in our world an unregulated proliferation of beliefs and faith in all sorts of things.

As Christians we have a compelling vision, and that is our faith in the living Lord Jesus Christ. It is Christian faith - faith in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and his ongoing work in the world through the gift of the Holy Spirit in and through his church.

So let's think first about what it means to have a vision.

We need a shared vision to know what direction God is calling us to walk in together. The verse often translated *"without a vision the people perish"* (Proverbs 29.18) is probably better translated *"without a vision the people cast off restraint."* As a church, therefore, we need a vision, a sense of the direction God is calling us to walk in together, a sense of vision for what's possible when we work together to grow God's Kingdom here today. One of my favourite quotes, that has informed the thinking around the whole Vision Refresh process is from the author of the children's book *The Little Prince*, Antoine de Saint-Exupery: *"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people to collect wood, and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the vast immensity of the sea."* The vision refresh process has been a journey of looking together to the far

horizon and longing 'for the vast immensity of the sea'.

Two years ago, when I arrived in the diocese I was tasked with leading the process of refreshing the God for All vision. So we started with '100 days of prayer', and then we had '100 days of listening'. And I hope you were able to take part in that by responding to the questionnaire.

What emerged from that process were **4 key themes** to focus what God has been saying to us: discipleship, evangelism, social action and concern for the environment.

God for All



Those 4 themes were summarised using 8 very simple words:



Follow Daily

We will help each other to follow Jesus more closely, seeking to grow as his disciples in all aspects of life, both corporately and as individuals.



Speak Boldly

We will share our faith in Jesus Christ in everyday ways, seeking to connect with everyone, especially those currently unrepresented in our churches. We'll do this in both time-honoured & pioneering ways.



Care Deeply

We will listen to our local communities, and respond in loving service, seeking to transform injustice, challenge oppression and pursue peace & reconciliation.



Tread Gently

We will strive to safeguard the integrity of God's creation, seeking to sustain and renew the life of the earth.

These 4 themes are represented in the logo interlocking around a circle (rather than a list). That is because no one is more important than the other and they all relate to each other e.g. you can't speak boldly without also following daily; in order to tread gently, you must care deeply, and so on. It has also been suggested that the words could be interchanged e.g. care daily, speak deeply, tread boldly, follow gently etc.

In order to summarise the ‘*why*’ behind the **4 themes**, a brief vision summary has been agreed...

You can watch video clip of an introduction to the vision from the Cumbria Ministry Development Day held in October 2020, here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XMC0dSM9e58&feature=emb_lo
[go](#)

Watch from 47 mins.

“Releasing the whole people of God for the whole mission of God for the transformation of Cumbria in Jesus’s name.”

Releasing...

this is about releasing what God has already given us, often small, often tentative, often local, rather than coming up with more grand schemes and programmes.

... the whole people of God ...

this vision is about all Christians, all who love and follow Jesus (and would like to learn to love and follow him more). It’s not about what clergy do, or what the central roles in the diocese do (although it includes them as well). It’s about what we all do - together.

... for the whole mission of God ...

the Growing Disciples vision had a focus on discipleship. The previous God for All vision had a focus on evangelism. This refreshed vision puts all of that together, drawing on the 5 Marks of Mission which express the whole of God’s call to mission - in discipleship, word & deed, in society’s structures and for the flourishing of creation. All of it

... for the transformation of Cumbria ...

no less! This is not just about growing our churches (although we hope and pray that might happen) but it is also the transformation of structures and communities, homes, families and schools - everything - more in line with God’s good plan for the world.

... in the name of Jesus.

we don’t do all this because we’re just another social care enterprise, or because we’re one pressure group amongst many, or because we’re a load of do-gooders. We do it because we believe it is our privilege and calling as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Over the next 5 sessions we shall be exploring each of the 4 vision themes in turn.

In the coming weeks and months there will be a need to put the flesh on the bones of those 4 vision areas, or to re-visit the earlier metaphor, to 'gather sticks and build the boat', and that will come with the work to develop a strategy to support the vision. Much of that thinking and praying and 'building' will be done locally in Mission Communities and churches and communities of worship. But it is also important that the vision is high level enough to resonate in different ways and in different contexts, and for it to be a challenge to live 'Christianly' in whatever context find ourselves in. The refreshed vision is about mission, but rather than mission being 'something that happens over there', or 'something that other people do', or 'something that the diocese employs specialists to do', mission is what every church member, every Christian in Cumbria is equipped for, and lives out on a daily basis. Mission starts with discipleship. In fact mission and discipleship are 2 sides of the same coin.

The Church (as an institution) can only reach so many people, but there are loads of Christians in Cumbria, and we know a lot of people between us. If we all become confident in our call to follow daily, speak boldly, care deeply and tread gently, the impact on our churches, homes, schools, places of worship, hospitals, business places ... [fill in other area I've probably missed here ...] will be immense. The impact will spread 'exponentially' (to coin a phrase we hear a lot at present).

So as we engage in these study materials together and as we listen to Lenten sermons (whether online or in buildings) over the next 5 weeks, please join me in praying that God will fill us with his Holy Spirit, help us to become more like his Son Jesus, and to inspire us to live more intentionally for him in our daily lives: *'to release the whole people of God for the whole mission of God for the transformation of Cumbria in Jesus's name'*.

*Bishop Emma
Lent 2021*

Living Lord,
as we offer to you our common
life,
refresh our vision
that we may know your will
and seek to follow in all your ways.
May we follow daily as your disciples,
care deeply for one another in community,
speak boldly your gospel words of love,
and tread gently as faithful stewards of your
goodness.
We ask this in the power of your holy
name,
as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer
of our lives,
today and for ever.
Amen

The plan for the next 5 weeks.

	Date	Week	Gospel reading	Vision refresh theme
1	21st Feb 2021	1st Sunday of Lent	Mark 1.9-15	Introduction
2	28th Feb 2021	2nd Sunday of Lent	Mark 8.31-38	Follow Daily
3	7th March 2021	3rd Sunday of Lent	John 2.13-22	Speak Boldly
4	14th March 2021	4th Sunday of Lent	John 19.25b-27 <i>Mothering Sunday</i>	Care Deeply
5	21st March 2021	5th Sunday of Lent	John 12.20-33 <i>Passion Sunday</i>	Tread Gently

Week 1 INTRODUCTION

Releasing the whole people of God for the whole mission of God for the transformation of Cumbria in Jesus's name.

- Spend some time at the start of this first meeting introducing yourselves to each other. You might each like to tell each other a little but about yourselves, including 'one thing you might not know about me'.
- As you think about the 4 vision themes: follow daily, speak boldly, care deeply, tread gently - which one draws you most instinctively? And why?
- If appropriate, read the sermon notes for Lent 1 (or, if possible and if it was recorded, listen again to your minister/ vicar's sermon from last Sunday).
- Re-read the passage for last Sunday, **Mark 1.9-15**. Consider reading it a couple of times, using different voices, with a time of silence for reflection in between.

'In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.' And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

Week 1 Introduction to the Vision

- Which word or phrase immediately strikes you about that passage? Why?
- What questions does the passage immediately raise for you?
- 'Being in the wilderness' is common in the experience of the Christian life. What does the phrase mean for you and how might Jesus's experience resonate with yours, or differ from yours?
- "he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him". What do you think this phrase tells us about Jesus's relationship with the earth and all its inhabitants, and about his relationship with the 'heavenly realms'?
- After Jesus's testing in the wilderness, he went out to proclaim the good news of God. Try to summarise what, for you, is 'the good news of God'. You could each try expressing the Gospel (good news) in 6 words. It's a challenge, but try it!
- Spend some time reflecting on Jesus's words: *'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'* What do you think this means - for you? For your church family at this time? For your local town, village or community? For Cumbria? For the UK? For the world? Share your thoughts and ideas together.
- The summary of the refreshed vision is *"to release the whole people of God for the whole mission of God for the transformation of Cumbria in the name of Jesus"*. What does that mean to you? What do you see as the opportunities a) for you b) for our churches c) for our communities? What are the challenges it holds out?
- Share with each other one area of your church, your wider community or your own life that you would love to see transformed. Perhaps commit together to pray for these situations/suggestions during Lent.
- Pray for each other (either with words or in silence), then close by praying the Vision Refresh Prayer together:

The Vision refresh prayer

Living Lord,
as we offer to you our common life,
refresh our vision
that we may know your will
and seek to follow in all your ways.
May we follow daily as your disciples,
care deeply for one another in community,
speak boldly your gospel words of love,
and tread gently as faithful stewards of your
goodness.
We ask this in the power of your holy name,
as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer of our
lives,
today and for ever.
Amen



Week 2 FOLLOW DAILY

We will help each other to follow Jesus more closely, seeking to grow as his disciples in all aspects of life, both corporately and as individuals.

Last week was an introduction to the 4 themes of the refreshed vision - 'follow daily, speak boldly, tread gently, care deeply' - with a reading about Jesus and his temptation in the wilderness.

Today we focus in on the first of the themes - follow daily - with a reflection on Jesus foretelling his death and resurrection.

Now, I have to say that if I were choosing Bible passages to illustrate the 4 refreshed vision themes, I would not automatically choose these ones which are set in the lectionary for Lent. They are quite difficult, and they focus on the Lenten theme of Jesus preparing for his death on the cross. Left up to me, I would probably choose something a bit more encouraging!

But I was very keen that we use this time during Lent to start to focus in on our refreshed vision, and I am a great believer in preaching the passages set for the church's year. I have also been quite amazed at how well these Lenten lectionary passages show us something of the heart of the Christian journey which the refreshed vision aims to reflect. There is so much to learn from and to be challenged with here!

So what does this glimpse into the life of Jesus from Mark 8 show us about our theme to 'follow daily'?

- Begin the session by sharing anything that has happened this last week, or that you have reflected on following last week's session introducing the refreshed vision. Did anything change for you during this past week?
- If appropriate, read the sermon notes for Lent 2 (or, if possible and if it was recorded, listen again to your minister/vicar's sermon from last Sunday).
- Re-read the passage for last Sunday, **Mark 8.31-38**. Perhaps consider reading it a couple of times, using different voices, with a time of silence for reflection in between.
- Which word or phrase immediately strikes you about that passage? Why?
- What questions does the passage immediately raise for you?

Week 2 Follow Daily

- What does this passage make you think about in relation to the vision refresh theme 'follow daily'?
- 'Follow daily' is about encouraging everyone to grow in confidence in their daily walk with Jesus. The Methodist preacher John Wesley used to say the first task of mission is to 'convert' the people already in our pews, which is possibly a little rude, but basically means we all need to be growing in living relationship with God through prayer, through reading his Word, through service.
- Each group member might tell the group where they spend most of their time (in more normal times, not during Lockdown when we are all spending more time at home!). What does it mean to follow Jesus daily in your context? What are the challenges?
- What role do the following play for you as you follow Jesus daily? - Bible reading; prayer; worship together with others; acts of service; silence [add your own thoughts and ideas].

- How might you help and encourage each other in this? What support might you need in your call to follow Jesus day by day? What resources would help you to follow more closely?

Close with this prayer by Thomas Merton:

My Lord God,
I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.
nor do I really know myself,
and the fact that I think I am following your will
does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please you
does in fact please you.
And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that
desire.
And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the
right road,
though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore will I trust you always though
I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.
I will not fear, for you are ever with me,
and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.
from Thoughts in Solitude.

Follow up

Find links to more everyday discipleship ('follow daily') resources:

- from the Church of England 'Everyday Faith' here: <https://www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/everyday-faith>
- and from LICC (The London Institute of Contemporary Christianity): <https://licc.org.uk>

Bible resources

A key aspect in learning to follow daily is reading the Bible. Here are some resources to help with that:

Videos summarising the books of the Bible, plus some other key themes: <https://bibleproject.com>.

The Bible Society exists to encourage and support people in accessing, reading and understanding and living the Bible:

<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk>

Week 3 SPEAK BOLDLY

We will share our faith in Jesus Christ in everyday ways, seeking to connect with everyone, especially those currently unrepresented in our churches. We'll do this in both time-honoured & pioneering ways.

Someone once said to me "I don't like evangelism. I just like talking about Jesus!". 'Evangelism' can be a bit of a problematic word (and concept) for some. So *what do we mean by speaking boldly?* The inspiration for this theme of the vision comes from verses like Acts 4.31 "*And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly*" So how do we do that today? A few months ago, at the start of the Covid pandemic, I was listening to an interview with a public health official in Leicester, an area that at the time was really struggling with rising rates of coronavirus. They had identified that part of the problem was that amongst some communities where English was not a first language for some, it was proving difficult to communicate public health messaging around social distancing. They needed a way of getting the message across quickly, into the heart

of the community, in ways that the people there could understand.

Do you know how they did it?

Ice cream vans. They enlisted the help of ice cream sellers who spoke the local language, and said to them: "While you are selling ice cream on the streets of the community, it would be very helpful if you could talk about Covid safety messages at the same time". Then they trained them in public health messaging and set them off. And do you know what? The rates of infection began to fall.

I wonder if all Christians are like those ice cream van sellers, each of us at the heart of our own community, or group of friends, or workplaces, or streets, speaking the 'local language', and therefore best placed to share with them the good news of Jesus.

- There has been some kick back about the word 'speak'. Do we need to speak? Could we just say 'share'? People tend to mis-quote St Francis (he never said it): "*Preach the Gospel; use words if necessary*". On the contrary, I believe we *do* need to use words as one of the ways we preach the Gospel, alongside other means. Often, though, we are embarrassed to speak. Does it have to be 'boldly'? We're British after all! Perhaps we should say that there are all sorts of ways in which we share our faith in Jesus, sometimes with acts of love and service, sometimes through quiet prayer and worship, but speaking should also come into the picture, each in our own way (like the ice cream sellers of Leicester). As Romans 10.14 says; '*... how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how*

Week 3 Speak Boldly

are they to hear without someone to proclaim him?'

Justin Welby, The Archbishop of Canterbury said recently: *"I was told the Good News by a friend in my late teens and was led to faith in 1975. My life changed forever. It really matters that we tell people about the love of Christ"*. That is what is behind this encouragement to speak boldly. We need to help each other find natural and everyday ways of speaking with those we come across about what our relationship with Jesus means to us.

- Begin the session by sharing anything that has happened this last week, or that you have reflected on following last week's session on 'follow daily'. Did anything change for you during this week?
- If appropriate, read the sermon notes for Lent 3 (or, if possible and if it was recorded, listen again to your minister/vicar's sermon from last Sunday).
- Re-read the passage for last Sunday, **John 2.13-22**. Perhaps consider reading it a couple of times, using different voices, with a time of silence for reflection in between.

- Which word or phrase immediately strikes you about that passage? Why?
- What questions does the passage immediately raise for you?
- What does the theme of 'speak boldly' mean to you? What draws you to this phrase? What concerns you about it?
- Jesus 'spoke boldly' about the Temple where corruption had entered this holy place. Jesus overturns the tables to show that he will be the one who will bring liberation and justice to all people. What does this image of Jesus make you think about? Are there causes that you feel equally passionate about? And how do you link them to your Christian faith in the One who has turned the tables?
- The description for this theme, 'speak boldly' says: "We will share our faith in Jesus Christ in everyday ways, ...". Can you share any times you have seen positive results from speaking about your faith with others?
- How do we encourage each other to speak boldly? What barriers might stand in the way of people sharing their faith with words, and how might we work towards overcoming them?

- Who do you think is '*currently unrepresented in our churches*', and do you have any thoughts about how we might connect with these people or groups?
- Consider sharing briefly with each other one thing about what your faith in Jesus means to you. You could begin with the phrase: 'I have discovered that ...'.
- End the session by praying for boldness for each other, and praying the vision refresh prayer..

Follow up

The Church of England's Lent resources this year focus on telling our story:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/livent-2021-church-resources-gods-story-our-story>.

'Talking Jesus' helps Christians to speak about their faith: <https://talkingjesus.org>.

Week 4 Care Deeply

We will listen to our local communities, and respond in loving service, seeking to transform injustice, challenge oppression and pursue peace & reconciliation.

Jeremiah 29.7: *"But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare".*

This verse is God speaking through the prophet Isaiah to his people who are in exile in Babylon, far from their home. Some had been saying that they didn't need to engage with the people and needs of the foreign land in which they were being forced to live. But Isaiah says that on the contrary, wherever God's people find themselves, they should consider themselves part of that community, seeking the flourishing of all who are their neighbours.

The primary message of Jeremiah 29 to us is to live in the light of our future hope—to live now in this world as citizens of the next world, neither ceasing to do good to all those around us now (Gal 6:10), nor becoming so friendly with our world that we find ourselves enemies of God (James 4:4).

We are called to care in and for the communities where we live, and to seek their flourishing. This is about caring for each other in the body of Christ, the church, but it is also about caring deeply for the local communities, and the global communities of which we are a part, for in their welfare we will find also our own welfare.

The word 'care' has become highly meaningful during the Covid pandemic - we have come to value caring in many different ways, not least in the sacrificial care shown by all our frontline workers.

The Bible calls us to care deeply for the society in which we live, to long to see the flourishing of everyone.

In that sense, all Christians are carers.

- Begin the session by sharing anything that has happened this last week, or that you have reflected on following last week's session on 'speak boldly'. Did anything change for you during this week?
- If appropriate, read the sermon notes for Lent 4 (or, if possible and if it was recorded, listen again to your minister/vicar's sermon from last Sunday).
- Re-read the passage for last Sunday, **John 19.25b-27**. Perhaps consider reading it a couple of times, using different voices, with a time of silence for reflection in between.

Week 4 Care Deeply

- Which word or phrase immediately strikes you about that passage? Why?
- What questions does the passage immediately raise for you?
- What does the theme of 'care deeply' mean to you?
- Think together about that verse from Jeremiah 29.7: *"But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare"*. Bringing to mind your local community (however you want to define that), what are the issues that you can see exist that lead to a lack of 'welfare' for people?
- Spend some time listing all the various 'caring' organisations that exist in your local, or regional community. What do they each bring to the caring task? What does/might your church uniquely bring to that work? We do this in an attitude of humility - not thinking we have all the answers, but listening and responding. We may not always be the ones who take the initiative but we might join in with what others in our community are trying to do.
- The call to care deeply involves what we might call 'social action', but it is not to be separated from our Christian faith. We care deeply because God has cared deeply for us. What do you see as the link between social action and faith? How might we make that link more explicit in all we say and do?
- *"Prayer in action is love, and love in action is service"* (Mother Theresa). Spend some time reflecting on this simple saying, either with words or in silence, before closing in prayer.

Follow up

The Christian think-tank *Theos* has produced an excellent report examining the relationship between social action and church growth. You can read a copy of it here:

<https://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/research/2000/01/31/the-grace-project>

These organisations offer inspiration and told to churches and individuals considering how to care deeply in their local contexts:

Mothers' Union: <https://www.mothersunion.org>

Tearfund: <https://www.tearfund.org>

Christian Aid: <https://www.christianaid.org.uk>

Cinnamon network: <https://www.cinnamonnetwork.co.uk>

Week 5 Tread Gently

We will strive to safeguard the integrity of God's creation, seeking to sustain and renew the life of the earth.

Isaiah 11:9: "*They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.*"

It's not difficult to think about the beauty of creation in this part of the world, is it? Many of us 'tread gently' on the hills and mountains of beautiful Cumbria whenever we get a chance. And when we can't walk on them, we enjoy looking at them! The title for this theme also draws on the lines of the poem 'He wishes for the Cloths of Heaven' by William Butler Yeats; *'I have spread my dreams under your feet; Tread softly because you tread on my dreams'*. Our commission to live sustainably on the earth and not to contribute to the destruction of our environment is influenced by the thought that the way we live today directly impacts the hopes and future (the 'dreams') of those who come after us.

When we conducted the vision refresh survey, this priority actually came highest in the feedback (apart from amongst the children in our church schools, who put 'discipleship' higher up in their priorities).

But why is care for the environment important for Christians? Why not just leave it to activists like Greta Thunberg? 3 reasons:

1. The Bible clearly tells us that God who created the world, 'saw all that he had made, and it was very good' (Gen 1:31) and loves the world (John 3:16) he has made. And at the end of time when Jesus returns it is the whole natural world that will be made new, not just human beings. Therefore it is the duty of every Christian to care for the created order and to work against its destruction.

2. If we profess Christian faith, the way we live the whole of our lives is part of our faith. Our planet is being impacted in a major way by climate change. The way we respond to this challenge will be the task of all humankind. Therefore it is part of our life, and therefore it is a part of our faith.

3. It is of concern to people around us and they are watching to see how we as the church and we as individual Christians are responding to this issue. Especially amongst young people, this is a really important matter. Unless they see us taking this seriously they may not take seriously the other things we say about life and faith.

- Begin the session by sharing anything that has happened this last week, or that you have reflected on following last week's session on 'care deeply'. Did anything change for you this week?

Week 5 Tread Gently

- If appropriate, read the sermon notes for Lent 5 (or, if possible and if it was recorded, listen again to your minister/vicar's sermon from last Sunday).
- Re-read the passage for last Sunday, **John 12.20-33**. Perhaps consider reading it a couple of times, using different voices, with a time of silence for reflection in between.
- Which word or phrase immediately strikes you about that passage? Why? What questions does the passage immediately raise for you?
- What does the theme 'tread gently' mean to you?
- When you think about faith, are there images from the natural world that help to describe what faith is like for you (as Jesus did with talk of a seed falling to earth)? Share any images with each other. You could even share some pictures or photographs.
- As we think about how to 'tread gently', as individuals, households, communities churches, etc., what are the challenges, and how might we overcome them together? Share some ideas.

- Take a moment to think about all that God has provided. **Misuse**: Are there things that we are frivolous with? **Disuse**: Consider how can you cut down on using things that are environmentally destructive?; **Wise use**: What ways could we be more considerate about our purchases/lifestyle?; **Reuse**: In what ways can you repurpose things you might otherwise discard? Discuss together.
- This is an area where it is easy to feel overwhelmed. Climate anxiety has been identified as a real condition. But small steps taken together can add up to make a big difference. Remember the story of the starfish:

Once upon a time, there was an old man who had a habit of walking on the beach every morning before he began his work. Early one morning, he was walking along the shore after a big storm had passed and found the vast beach littered with starfish as far as the eye could see, stretching in both directions. Off in the distance, the old man noticed a small boy approaching. As the boy walked, he paused every so often and as he grew closer, the man could see that he was occasionally bending down to pick up an object and throw it into the sea. The boy came closer still and the man called out, "Good morning! May I ask what it is that you are doing?" The young boy paused, looked up, and replied "Throwing starfish into the ocean. The tide has washed them up onto the beach and they can't return to the sea by themselves," the youth replied.

"When the sun gets high, they will die, unless I throw them back into the water." The old man replied, "But there must be tens of thousands of starfish on this beach. I'm afraid you won't really be able to make much of a difference." The boy bent down, picked up yet another starfish and threw it as far as he could into the ocean. Then he turned, smiled and said, "It made a difference to that one!" (adapted from 'The Star Thrower', by Loren Eiseley).

- Close with this prayer from the Church of England's Creation-tide resources;

Holy God, earth and air and water are your creation, and every living thing belongs to you: have mercy on us as climate change confronts us. Give us the will and the courage to simplify the way we live, to reduce the energy we use, to share the resources you provide, and to bear the cost of change. Forgive our past mistakes and send us your Spirit, with wisdom in present controversies and vision for the future to which you call us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Follow up

A Rocha UK <https://www.arocha.org/en/>

Green Christian <https://greenchristian.org.uk>

Church of England creation tide resources <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/policy-and-thinking/our-views/environment-and-climate-change/creationtide/creationtide-0>