

The Church of England takes its environmental responsibilities very seriously. With 16,400 churches, 10,000 churchyards and 5000 schools it has to - and its Environmental Programme is constantly monitoring and adapting to environmental issues of all kinds.

The Environment Programme began its plastic campaign at last September's College of Bishops when all those attending were given re-usable drinking mugs. These proved so successful that the following month all the Diocesan Environment Officers were given them and this month over 200 members of staff at Church House, Westminster also received their mugs. This marked the finale of a **Plastic Free Lent** the Environment Programme promoted which created considerable international media interest and encouraged a number of church activities.

St Bride's on Fleet Street is one of London's oldest churches with a history reaching back almost 2,000 years, but this Lent its choir broke new ground by setting weekly targets for its 12 professional members to reduce their plastic use which they reported at every Sunday morning service.

Meanwhile, an art and design student created a cope using discarded plastic found in the River Thames. The result of the project entitled *Profane to Sacred* was worn by a Canon of the Chapels Royal on Easter Day who plans to wear it again at a special choral evensong later in the year to raise awareness of plastic waste.

St Catherine's Church in South London is running a *Message in a Bottle* campaign encouraging its congregation to decorate plastic milk bottles and put a prayer pledge inside to hang inside the church. The project aims to show and encourage the whole community to take a stand and cut back and save our oceans from plastic toxicity.

These are just a few of the ways that members of the Church of England are supporting what the organisers of Earth Day will be encouraging people to be doing on Earth Day 2018.

How might you respond? Send us a photo on Twitter to respond.

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