

The cost of consumerism



EVANGELICAL CONSUMERS

Results of our recent survey into consumerism



THEOLOGY



60 SECONDS



GOOD QUESTION



BIG INTERVIEW



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The 9-5

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Amaris Cole: While there's always more we can do to ensure we're protecting our planet and all those who live on it, we hope this magazine will serve as a good starting place for considering how we can all make changes.

idea-torial



As our bank balances recover from the Christmas hit and Easter approaches, signalled by the egg-lined supermarket shelves, it seems like an appropriate time to examine the way we consume as evangelicals.

We live in an age of fast fashion and now have the ability to get almost whatever we want, when we want it. Looking for a Thai green curry to eat in the next 30 minutes? There's an app for that. After the dress you saw Kate Middleton wearing in the paper this morning? Of course, Madame, it will be with tonight if you order by 3pm. But it all has a price – and that goes far beyond the cost to our wallets.

Do you try to cut your emissions by riding your bike for short journeys? Have you ever boycotted an organisation because you have ethical concerns about their practices – whether that's their tax record or the way they treat their workforce? Does your faith play a role in the way you spend your money?

We polled more than 1,000 of you about how you shop and travel, along with your views on caring for the planet. We were encouraged by many of the results, but challenged by others.

While nearly all the evangelicals we asked were concerned about slavery and trafficking, less than half were taking action to stop the trade. So turn to page 20 to learn simple ways we can all do our bit.

Our survey also showed that 76 per cent thought that consumerism is eroding family life. Our director of advocacy explores what consumerism really is on page 12 and the chief executive of Christians Against Poverty shares his views on how to have a healthy relationship with money on page 16.

On page 36 we look at how new media can inspire us to live ethically. Check out the best tweeters, facebookers and Instagram-users to follow.

While there's always more we can do to ensure we're protecting our planet and all those who live on it, we hope this magazine will serve as a good starting place for considering how we can all make changes. Some of you will already be doing much of this, and we'd love to hear the steps you take to make your life ethical. Write to us by emailing idea@eauk.org, or send a Tweet to [@idea_mag](https://twitter.com/idea_mag), with the hashtag [#ethicaledition](https://twitter.com/ethicaledition).

Amaris Cole
Editor

FIVE THINGS I DIDN'T KNOW UNTIL THIS ISSUE

Food travels more than 1,500 miles on average to reach our plates

There's £31 billion worth of unworn clothes in British women's wardrobes

35.8 million people are currently enslaved worldwide

Average spent on food, drink and snacks by office workers daily is £10.59

76 per cent of evangelicals think consumerism is eroding family life

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The Alliance's director of advocacy Dave Landrum explores.

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The results of our recent survey into the consumer habits of evangelicals are in.

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Editor Amaris Cole visits a fishing village in Kenya using sex as currency.

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The *idea* team challenge themselves to a week-long test. How will the fare?

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The chief executive of CAP speaks on poverty and how to spend responsibly.

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Chance to quiz mayoral candidates



The Evangelical Alliance is running a London Mayoral Church Hustings ahead of the next election in the capital.

On 19 April, from 6 to 8pm at Kensington Temple, mayoral candidates will be quizzed by Christians on the issues that matter, such as environmental concerns, welfare and housing.

Come and hear from the main candidates standing to be the next mayor.

For more information, visit votelondon.org.uk/ or email london@eauk.org for more information.



Are you a Christian professional who works with looked after children, foster carers or adoptive families?

Home for Good, the fostering and adoption charity launched by the Evangelical Alliance, is hosting a series of professional forums across the UK throughout 2016, to provide an opportunity for Christian professionals to connect together and help shape the charity's work.

Professionals from the whole spectrum of those who work with looked after children, foster carers or adoptive families, including, but not limited to, social workers, therapists, educational advisors, academic researchers, and medical experts, are invited. If you work in Edinburgh, London, Manchester or Bristol please register to attend your local forum, further dates will be announced for Belfast, Birmingham and north east England later in the year.

Please register now by visiting the Home for Good website, homeforgood.org.uk/get-involved/professional-forums.

Five prayer points for the Alliance

This edition of *idea* is packed full of things we can bring before God in prayer, so why not join us in prayer for these 5 things this month:

1. As **Easter** approaches, let's join in praise and thankfulness to Jesus for giving himself on the cross so that we might be made righteous before God.
2. From 6 February to 15 May – covering Lent, Easter and Pentecost – the Evangelical Alliance Northern Ireland is inviting Christians to unite and take part in **100 days of prayer** for the nation. Join us in prayerful engagement in the nation's history.
3. Please pray for two upcoming **Public Leadership training conferences** in March and April for young public leaders in their 20s. Pray that participants will be equipped and encouraged to step out in faith to lead in their areas of influence.
4. Pray for Christians and churches as they think through the findings of the **ethical consumerism** research, and how they too can make changes to their consumerism habits to be more ethical.
5. As Helen Calder moves on in September, please pray for the recruitment process in appointing her successor. Ask God to guide those appointing the Alliance's next **director of finance and services**. For more information, visit eauk.org/jobs.

New Christian forum to protect children in Wales

The Welsh Christian Safeguarding Forum has recently been launched, an inter-denominational body that represents all Christian organisations active in the lives of children, young people and vulnerable adults and their families. Greater devolution of powers to the Welsh government will have an impact on safeguarding in Wales and the new forum's objectives reflect this concern to provide the best advocacy, advice and practice to Christian organisations working with the vulnerable in Wales. The new body aims to:

- Ensure safeguarding is a core value in all Welsh Christian organisations
- Develop and share best practice in safeguarding including supporting survivors of abuse
- Develop and maintain effective relationships between people responsible for safeguarding within Welsh Christian organisations
- Promote the provision of high quality safeguarding training
- Provide a unified voice on safeguarding matters to the Welsh government, safeguarding boards and all other relevant agencies in Wales.

There will be further information and updates regarding the work of the forum published in the future.



Good news travels fast

Stories are the narrative of our culture, from exciting tales of bravery to the plucky underdog coming out on top, we love to hear good stories. At the Alliance, we're developing an exciting new initiative to strengthen the muscles of the Church for its mission. Central to this project is the desire to inspire people that the ultimate story, the gospel of Jesus Christ, is still changing lives today.

That's where you come in. We would love you to get in touch with stories about how you came to faith, who was the most significant person in you coming to faith, how your life has changed since meeting Jesus, or times when you or your church have stepped out and shared your faith. We've set up a dedicated email address to hear your stories – faithstories@eauk.org. So please do send in your stories – maximum 300 words – along with your contact details. We might share your good news stories with others, so please only get in touch if you are happy for them to be used in the public domain. We all have a story to share, let's change the narrative around us and remind each other that still Jesus transforms lives in the UK today.

A hundred years of Apostolic mission from Wales to the world

This year marks the centenary of the Apostolic Church, a Pentecostal Christian denomination which established its first headquarters in the Carmarthenshire village of Penygroes in 1916.

Commemorating this centenary, the first minister of Wales, Carwyn Jones AM, said: "I'm pleased to send my congratulations to mark the centenary of the Apostolic Church in Wales.

"Penygroes has been at the forefront of the Apostolic Church from its beginning when it was established as its headquarters in 1916 and Daniel Williams, a former miner, was appointed as its first president.

"The Apostolic Church can trace its origins back to the 1904-1905 Welsh Revival and there remains a strong link between the Pentecostal movement and Wales today. I know Evangelical Alliance Wales is planning to celebrate those links with events to mark the centenary this year. I wish you all success with the forthcoming commemoration events."

Along with Elim Pentecostal Church and the Assemblies of God, the Apostolic Church is one of the three main Pentecostal denominations that were founded in the UK 100 years ago, each with strong roots and connections in Wales. The Pentecostal movement has currently 15 million members worldwide.

A centenary baton, designed to celebrate the founding of the Apostolic Church in 1916, will be passed between the Pentecostal churches across the UK and will travel about 3,000 miles during the year.

Tani Omideyi to become first ethnic minority chair of Alliance board



Tani Omideyi

Dr Tani Omideyi is to become the first ethnic minority chair of the Evangelical Alliance board when he succeeds Rev Mike Talbot in March.

Tani and his wife Modupe started a house group in Liverpool in 1980, having moved there from Nigeria the year before. The house group was the foundation on which they formed Love & Joy Ministries Association of Charities, which includes Temple of Praise congregations.

He is also a director of Together for Harvest – an Evangelical Alliance local evangelical fellowship (LEF) made up of evangelical churches in the Merseyside region.

Tani has become more involved with the work of the Evangelical Alliance over the years, having been a member of the Council since 2008 and then joined the board in November 2014 and being part of the Alliance's One People Commission – a body of key national church leaders from across ethnic minorities.

"There are so many things I love about the Alliance," Tani said. "Its strong drive for unity among evangelicals; and the extent of the Alliance's advocacy work is impressive. It's remarkable that the Alliance has been able to retain its relevance and value for 170 years."

Tani will bring to the role more than 30 years of overseeing congregations that include Africans, Europeans and Asians not only in the UK, but in other nations.

"I see this very much as a God appointment. As the first non-white person to take on the role, there will be perspectives I hope to bring to carrying out this awesome task. I'm also looking forward to working more closely with general director Steve Clifford, for whom I have the greatest respect. His leadership of the Alliance has been inspirational and mould-breaking."

Speaking about the OPC, Tani added: "It's been my dream for many years to be part of a national Church that is not reference by the skin colour of those that worship in it, but rather by their love for Jesus Christ, our saviour. Thanks to the Alliance, it is fast becoming a reality.

In the OPC, you see just that. I see it as a vision of what churches all over the UK will look like in the next 10-20 years."

Steve Clifford said of Tani's appointment: "Mike Talbot has been an amazing gift to the Evangelical Alliance: a strong and committed chair of board, as well as a personal friend and wise counsellor. After eight years in the role, we will be sad to see him go, but we are convinced God has put Tani in position for such a time as this.

"The face of the UK Church is changing, as we become an increasingly multicultural society and at the Alliance, we are passionate about reflecting that diversity in all its vibrancy. As well as Tani bringing a different cultural perspective, he also brings with him 30 years of experience in church and charity leadership. He symbolises a commitment to unity for mission and a passion for seeing local areas flourish. He's absolutely the right person for the job and I'm looking forward to working with him more closely."

GOD IS THE ULTIMATE GAME CHANGER

Our friends at Spring Harvest are re-introducing their early booking discount until 1 March 2016. Book today to get your ticket at the lowest price.

This year's theme is game changers: creating space to encounter God and taking Him back to transform communities in the name of Jesus.

The Alliance's director of mission, Gavin Calver, will be speaking, along with Ruth Valerio from A Rocha, author and broadcaster Jeff Lucas, and Krish Kandiah from Home for Good, among many others.

For more information, and to find out how to book your place, visit springharvest.org/book/

CONSUMERISM, CREATION-CARE AND THE CHURCH IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The Evangelical Alliance Northern Ireland is producing a short booklet for local churches to prompt conversations on creation care and ethical consuming.

In the booklet, which will be released later this spring, the Alliance will encourage and challenge the Northern Irish Church to think theologically and practically around these issues with a view to discipleship, stewardship and public witness.

Are evangelicals in Northern Ireland Kingdom-cultural in their approach to consumption and to God's gift of creation? How can the Church be faithful to God and our neighbour in these matters?

Keep up to date with the booklet's progress by following the Alliance's Twitter @EANInews or by visiting the website eauk.org/northern-ireland/



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News from the evangelical Church across the world



PARIS2015
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EVANGELICAL LEADERS WELCOME PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT AS HISTORIC ACCOMPLISHMENT

The World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) welcomes the agreement signed in Paris in December to pursue efforts to keep global average temperature rises to below 1.5 degrees celsius.

Christians and people of other faiths were a central part of the movement to push for a strong agreement. At the Paris talks, senior church leaders from around the globe and across Christian traditions joined other faith leaders to call for action and for recognition of the moral dimension of climate change.

The global evangelical Christian community was represented by Bishop Efraim Tendero, secretary general of the WEA, who said: "There is a moral component to the whole discussion of climate change. The decision to reduce our carbon footprint is rooted in the ethical foundation that human life needs to be protected and nurtured. Shifting to renewable sources of energy over and against the harmful fossil-based energy is not only a scientific endeavour, but an ethical action that seeks the long-term survival and well-being of humanity."

The WEA also welcomed the reaffirmation by the world's richest countries to provide US\$100 billion in climate finance per year from 2020 to help the world's poorest communities.

MUSLIMS ASK FOR A SYRIAN CHURCH

The Christian community of Syrian border town Kobane is flourishing after the Muslim mayor asked the Christian aid organisation AVC (Action for persecuted Christians) to build a new church building, a school and a bakery. The last church in Kobane was destroyed about 100 years ago and later rebuilt as a mosque. According to the mayor, the destruction of the church "has banned the blessing from the city". The Christian congregation of Kobane is comprised of several hundred people who meet together in private houses. During the construction, AVC placed five needy elderly couples in the property who in turn now take care for 40-60 orphans. Kobane now not only enjoys a young and growing church, but will also benefit from a Christian school and a bakery in the near future.



CHRISTIANS CALL ON MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT TO PROTECT RELIGIOUS LIBERTIES

The Christian Federation of Malaysia has protested against the portrayal of Christians and the exercise of their freedom of religion as a "threat" during a seminar at the University Technology Mara campus in Rendu, Malacca recently. They are especially concerned with involvement of the Royal Malaysian Police, saying that it's inappropriate for a publicly funded university to demonise a religious minority. They called for an open debate on the role of Christianity in Malaysia to be held publicly with participation from Christian communities, and for the government to put an end to derogatory activities, reminding the government of its obligation to protect, promote and uphold the religious freedom of all Malaysians.

CELEBRATIONS IN KENYA

With the Association of Evangelicals in Africa (AEA) celebrating its jubilee year in 2016, evangelicals from across Africa and the world will be meeting at a conference in Nairobi, Kenya. The meeting, planned for 15 – 21 November, will bring together theologians, leaders, young people and lay persons to reflect on how far God has brought His Church and pray He would envision the Church for the next season.

The AEA was formed on 26 February 1966 at Limuru, Kenya, during a meeting of 102 evangelical Christian leaders from 23 African nations and missionaries from other countries, in response to the need by the evangelicals for a permanent association to build a united movement of the body of Christ in Africa that would promote evangelical unity, fellowship and Christian witness. Since then the AEA has grown into a continental family of more than 100 million evangelicals.

CANADIAN EVANGELICALS RESPOND TO ASSISTED DYING DEBATE

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) has welcomed an extension granted by the Supreme Court of Canada to allow parliament more time to respond to a national debate on assisted dying.

The EFC is opposed to euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide, and are concerned about the broad social, moral, legal and philosophical implications of decriminalising such acts, saying: "This issue drives to the heart of the nature of our society and the duty of care we owe one another."

The Supreme Court ruled that parliament can legislate on matters of health, but the EFC is concerned that the four-month extension will not be sufficient for parliament to comprehensively consider the issues, or undertake a public consultation.

The deadline is now 6 June 2016.



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The Original milk chocolate egg includes images of spring and three crosses on the box with Mark's resurrection text under the lid. It also includes a Fairtrade milk chocolate Yummy Bar.

The Special Edition egg comes with an olive wood holding cross keyring from Bethlehem and an orange milk chocolate bar.

Where to Buy Online or In-Store

The Dark egg and Special Edition are not being sold in supermarkets but can be bought from independent stores or ordered online. You can buy now from www.realeasteregg.co.uk, Tesco, Waitrose, Morrisons or from independent stores, bookshops and Cathedral shops.



Celebrating the Queen's 90th birthday

Bring together your neighbours this summer and share your faith while celebrating the Queen's special day.

The Queen has written the foreword to *The Servant Queen - and the King She Serves*, being published by HOPE, Bible Society and the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC) this year.

The 64-page book will focus on the Queen's Christian faith and will be a tribute to her life of service, using her own words to draw out the role her faith in Jesus has played.

HOPE, a charity chaired by Alliance general director, Steve Clifford, is asking Christians to organise street parties to celebrate this special birthday, where they can give neighbours a copy of the book and discuss their own faith.

The Queen's Christmas message for 2015 focused on the importance of the Christian faith, both for her personally and for the nation.

Advance orders for *The Servant Queen* have already reached more than 60,000 as churches order copies to give away during the celebrations.

The Queen has served the country and Commonwealth for more than 60 years, and the weekend of 10-12 June 2016 will see celebrations for her 90th birthday.

Yemi Adedeji, director of the Alliance's One People Commission and HOPE's associate director, says: "Let's bring our communities together to give thanks to God for Her Majesty's life of service to the Commonwealth."

"And let's pray for her, as she has asked us to do since before her coronation."

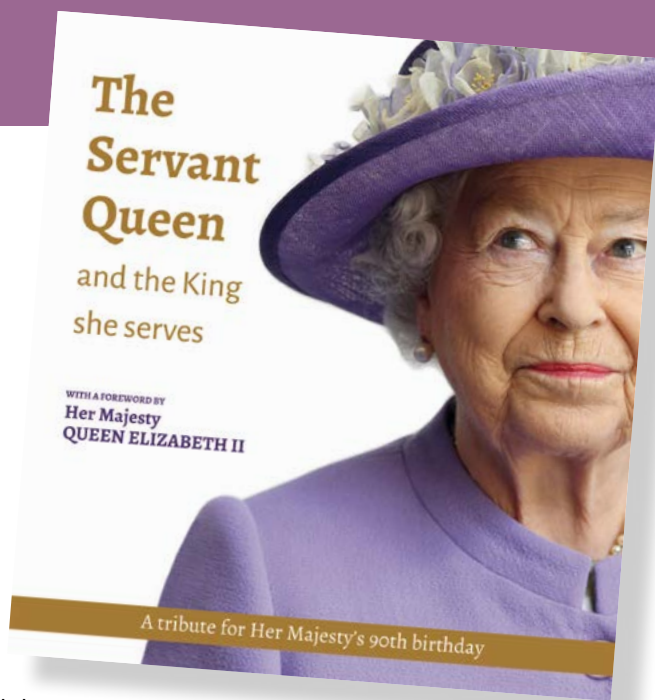
The Queen's birthday celebrations in 2016 will be marked throughout the Commonwealth, with events taking place during May and June.

After the success of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in 2012, HOPE will be supporting churches with resources and

ideas to bring communities together for this national celebration.

There will be posters, invitations and bunting from HOPE's partner CPO, a booklet to give away to children and school assembly ideas and lesson plans in conjunction with Scripture Union, church service ideas and a commemorative, customisable order of service from the Leaders of Worship and Preachers Trust, and a street-party planning guide from Fusion Youth & Community.

All the resources will be available to buy from February from the HOPE website, hopetogether.org.uk.



Have your say...

Have you got some brilliant ideas for *idea* magazine?

- Have you got any thoughts about the emails we send you?
- Do you wish we would make changes to the website?
- Do you love our appeal letters? ***We want to hear from you.***

The Evangelical Alliance is asking all members to help us by completing our **communications survey**.

Tell us your thoughts about the various ways we communicate with you by visiting eauk.org/yourthoughts. It should only take you 20 minutes to complete, but it will enable us to improve the way we serve you and equip you with our news.

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Consuming passions



Once upon a time, our society was primarily defined by what we believed. Then we defined ourselves by what we produced. Today, it seems that we are mostly defined by what we consume.

Whether we are shopping, eating, watching football, receiving healthcare, or dealing with the government, we increasingly see ourselves as consumers. The term is everywhere. We seem comfortable with it. But have we ever stopped to think what it actually means?

In a literal sense, to consume something actually means to destroy it, to use it up or expend it. Nowadays consumerism is taken to be the idea that the acquisition of goods and services in ever-increasing amounts should be encouraged. It's basically a celebration of getting and experiencing, and the instinct is for the instant. In words of the pop group Queen: "I want it all and I want it now."

Clearly, this has implications for our relationships – how we regard each other; our environment and the material world. Yet, consumerism seems part and parcel of human life. People have always had 'wants' as well as 'needs'. Our freedom of choice as individuals is important, and we all benefit from the variety of choice that consumerism brings. After all, there's nothing wrong with owning things.

That is unless things begin to own us. Then, with the logic that 'I shop therefore I am', we end up buying things we don't really need with money we don't really have. The outcome of this kind of self-indulgence is a society that knows the price of everything

and the value of nothing. Things like the 'credit crunch' in 2008 show what happens when a preoccupation with possessing becomes a form of worship, giving people identity and meaning – taking the place of God.

So, how can we avoid or resist this idolatry? Well, the Bible tells us that we are all made in the image of God, and therefore entitled to equal dignity. This means that it's not ok for our consuming to involve exploiting people. The Bible also tells us that this world is God's world, and that we have a responsibility to care for it. So it's not ok for our consuming to degrade our natural resources.

"With the logic that 'I shop therefore I am', we end up buying things we don't really need with money we don't really have."

It's these biblical principles that first drew evangelicals to campaign for fair trade and better working conditions, and to fight against slavery. Alongside humility and compassion, the principles give followers of Christ a framework for 'ethical consumerism': respect – for people; responsibility – for stewarding; and restraint – from conspicuous consumption. These three R's are certainly helpful in guiding our own thoughts and actions. In a fallen world, Christians should always witness to the counter-cultural kingdom of Jesus. But what can be done about the effect that consumerism is having on the thinking and values in broader society? How do we deal

with the way in which it's fast colonising many aspects of life that hitherto were considered to be off limits?

There's marriage. Once seen as the building block of society, but now effectively privatised, consigned to be redefined evermore by the free-market of relationships. There's sexuality. Despite biological identity being fixed in nature, it's now being subjected to consumer choice by 'gender fluidity'. And then there's life itself. With abortion, the consumer fixation with 'pro-choice' has created an entire industry, and alongside sex-selective abortions, another bio-engineering industry is developing to supply 'designer babies' to suit our lifestyle choices.

As we survey this ecology of sin and self, it's worth considering the fact that what we call 'consumer choice' overwhelmingly benefits those with the power, the money and the education to make such choices. In a society in which salvation comes by shopping, then it's rather obvious that those with the most to spend are in poll position. The poor on the other hand, being unable to even contribute to a 'consumer-led recovery', are increasingly seen as social and economic burdens. This is a justice issue, and it demands a strong Christian critique.

We should also ask ourselves whether we might be applying consumerism to our faith. Do we approach Christianity for what we can get out of it? Are we seeking and following the will of God or pursuing our own lifestyle choices? Do we shop around the Bible for words that fit what we want hear? Is our church life packaged like a therapeutic formula – entertaining us and massaging our egos? To what degree have we 'bought into' this consumer thinking?

In Matthew 6, Jesus calls us to store up treasures in heaven, and not to worry or strive after earthly things. "Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire." (Hebrews 12: 28-29)



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What does it take to

On 24 April 1916, Easter Monday, 1,200 volunteers seized strategic positions in Dublin, including what would become the headquarters garrison at the General Post Office. A provisional government proclaimed Ireland to be a Republic.

Public reaction in Dublin was initially mixed, and at times very hostile to those who participated in the Rising. Many families had loved ones fighting in the First World War at the time, and were not sympathetic to the Republican slogan: "England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity." For six days the Citizen Army and Irish Volunteers fought the Royal Irish Constabulary, the Dublin Metropolitan police, and the British Army. The fighting killed 508 people and wounded 2,520. When Patrick Pearse and his comrades surrendered on 29 April, they were jeered and even spat on as they were taken off to jail.

After 20 months of slaughter on the western front, with hundreds of thousands of lives lost, the British wanted vengeance on those seen as traitors for attacking a country at war. They executed the leaders of the Easter Rising, which sparked a shift in attitudes, creating resentment against perceived British brutality. The Irish State wasn't founded until 1922, but as WB Yeats noted in his Easter 1916 poem, "All changed, changed utterly: a terrible beauty is born."

On 1 July 1916 as the British bombardment ceased, the 36th Ulster Division advanced quickly towards the German line because they had built shallow trenches into no-mans land to cut the barbed wire in advance. So successful was the advance that by 10am some had reached the German second line, only to come under their own artillery fire. Unfortunately their progress was unmatched and so they were exposed on three sides. Running out of ammunition and supplies, a full German counter-attack at 10pm forced them to withdraw, giving up virtually all they gained.

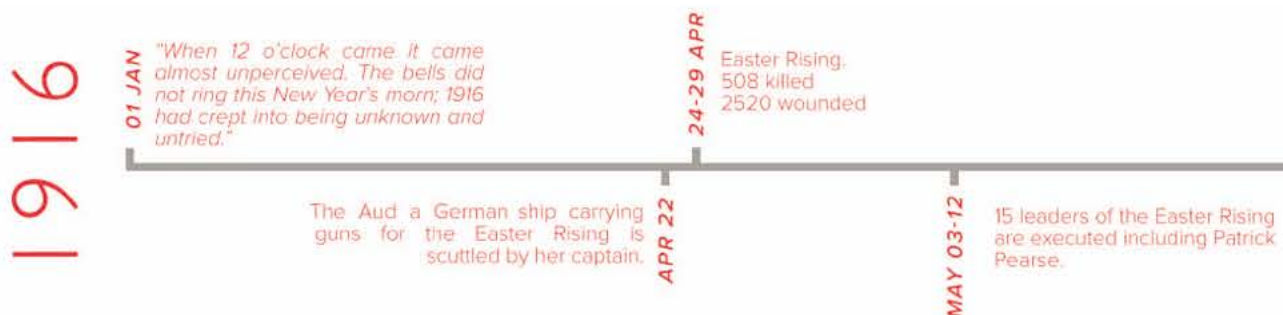
In the first two days of fighting, the Ulster Division saw 5,500 officers and enlisted men killed, wounded or missing. The battle memorial at Thiepval to the Ulster Division is the biggest British war memorial to the missing of The Western Front, both in physical size and the numbers it commemorates – more than 73,000. On 1 July, the British



army suffered 57,470 casualties with almost 20,000 killed. The Battle of the Somme lasted from 1 July to 13 November 1916 and saw more than a million dead and wounded on all sides.

Northern Ireland is in the midst of a decade of centenaries - from the signing of the Ulster Covenant in 1912 to the founding of the Irish State in 1922. In 2016, we remember the Easter Rising and the Battle of the Somme. While these anniversaries have the potential to divide our community, this is a significant moment for the Church to unite and lead society in the response to the historic events that have shaped the story of our land.

Evangelical Alliance Northern Ireland, 24/7 Prayer Ireland and Summer Madness are partnering with others in a movement of prophetic prayer for **healing** of the past, **honour** in the present and **hope** for the future.



change a nation?

When war broke out on 4 August 1914, every member of the British Armed Forces received a New Testament as a standard part of his kit. Many soldiers saw their own sacrifice through their reading of Christ's sacrifice - there was an idea of purposeful suffering. Pearse, who led the Easter Rising, picked the Easter date on purpose: "One man can free a people as one man redeemed the world. I will take no pike, I will go into the battle with bare hands. I will stand up before the Gall as Christ hung naked before men on a tree."

The history of Ireland is messy and contested. An act can be seen as the fight for freedom, a moment of treachery or both. As the Church, we're not always bystanders in these moments, but participants, giving their blessing to various causes.

Alain Emerson from 24/7 Prayer Ireland said: "This is a moment for the Church to unite and lead society in response to the historic events that have shaped the story of this land. Beginning just before Lent, we are encouraging Christians to prayerfully reflect on the centenaries, journeying through Easter to a hope-filled conclusion on Pentecost Sunday. During this time, we're inviting churches to sign up to host a prayer room and hope to have 100 churches covering every minute of the 100 days in prayer."

John Kee of Summer Madness said: "We want to challenge a whole new generation to pray for our land. We believe it's possible to remember without reliving the past."

From the 6 February to 15 May, a network of individuals, organisations and churches will come together over 100 days of continuous prayer for Northern Ireland. An app with 100 devotions from 100 contributors to lead the 100 days is being released, and the Alliance in Northern Ireland is producing a special commemorative magazine explaining how history has shaped the country, but also looking to how to rewrite the story of this land. This prayer driven movement will also include a series of events throughout the 100 days.

The events of 1916 didn't only shape Northern Ireland. Our friends at EA Ireland are releasing a book about the importance of Easter for Ireland - the centrality of Easter in St Patrick's story, the Easter Rising and the Good Friday Agreement. The Battle of the Somme and Irish independence have significance for Great Britain and further afield. And of course the huge Irish diaspora in Britain and beyond makes this relevant far beyond Irish shores.

“Beginning just before Lent, we are encouraging Christians to prayerfully reflect on the centenaries journeying through Easter to a hope-filled conclusion on Pentecost Sunday. During this time, we are inviting churches to sign up to host a prayer room and hope to have 100 churches covering every minute of the 100 days in prayer.”

As Christians we live in the alternative narrative of the kingdom of God and we resolve to pursue unity and a true vision for our future. In all the talk of suffering and sacrifice, we pray that the **healing** that's found in the cross will sweep across our land this Easter. As different groups contest parts of the story of this land, we pray there will be **honour** and grace-filled conversations in the present. Finally, we pray for heavenly solutions and stories of **hope** that will change a nation; for true reconciliation is found in Jesus in whom all the broken and dislocated pieces get properly fixed and fit together in vibrant harmonies (Colossians 1).

"It's the task of prophetic imagination and ministry to bring people to engage the promise of newness that is at work in our history with God." Walter Brueggemann

Check out 100days100years.com for more information and to download the prayer app.

01 JULY The Battle of the Somme begins. Heaviest loss of life in one day: 20,000 killed 57,450 injured

01 OCT Time (Ireland) Act abolishes Dublin Mean Time which Ireland had operated since 1880. Dublin Mean Time was 25 minutes behind GMT.

AUG 03 Roger Casement hanged for treason due to seeking German support for the Easter Rising.

NOV 13 Battle of Somme ends. 1,265,000 British, French and German dead or wounded.

Evangelicals: ethical consumers and environmentalists

The results are in.

The Evangelical Alliance recently surveyed 1,461 evangelical Christians about the decisions we all make as consumers. The results are encouraging, but there's more we all can do.



It was encouraging to find evangelical Christians seem to be aware that they have a responsibility to look after the earth and its resources. A high percentage of those surveyed, 96 per cent, agreed that human beings have a God-given responsibility to take better care of creation and the environment. In terms of transport, 73 per cent had often or sometimes avoided using their car over the last 12 months. The motivation for many respondents was specifically because it was environmentally friendly – 77 per cent are somewhat concerned or taking action against carbon emissions and global warming.

Of the evangelicals surveyed, 91 per cent agreed the Bible teaches us to pray and struggle for economic and social justice. Social and economic justice features at many different points in the Bible. Deuteronomy sets out the order given by God, the letter of James describes God as one who defends the rights of those under social and economic pressures, and Jesus' teachings speak of our responsibility to protect the widow and the orphan. In that same vein, 99 per cent of those surveyed are concerned or campaigning against slavery

and trafficking. A further 89 per cent are concerned or campaigning against UK trade with oppressive regimes.

Moving onto material possessions and advertising, a high percentage – 81 per cent – agreed that greed for material possessions is one of the greatest sins of our time. However, somewhat conversely, 84 per cent agreed that there is nothing wrong with enjoying material things God has provided for us.

Advertising can affect our identity and make us feel inadequate when we don't have the latest TV, car or clothes, for example. There was an awareness in respondents that consumerism can require the truth to be bent in order to sell things, and while only seven per cent of those surveyed agreed that they were deeply influenced by TV advertising, 44 per cent did agree that the volume of advertising in our culture is making us unhappy. It seems from the survey that evangelicals recognise the effect advertising is having on them, but what are we doing to avoid it?

An article from *Psychology Today*¹ says: "The fact that we can make judgments about

other people's identities based on what they consume shows products have meaning... those meanings are learned from marketing and advertising, and since we all see the same marketing and advertising messages we can often accurately infer someone's identity from that person's possessions."

Emarket.com claims that \$600 billion will be spent worldwide on advertising in a year. As Christians, can we make a stand against that way of thinking? Our identity in God is worth so much more than that. Thankfully, the results show that Christians recognised the negative effect advertising has on us, with 82 per cent of those surveyed agreeing that they tried to resist the advertising messages they encounter.

We hope that the results from this survey will encourage Christians to continue in their efforts to preserve the world that God has given us and also make a stand against the consumerism that seems so rife in our world today. We hope that these results will encourage conversations in your churches, families and friendship groups.

psychologytoday.com/blog/sold/201309/we-are-what-we-consume

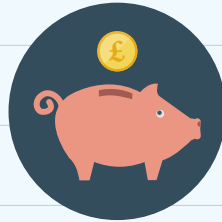
21ST CENTURY EVANGELICALS



96% agreed that human beings have a God-given responsibility to take better care of creation and the environment



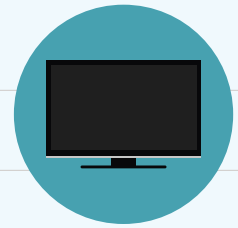
91% agree that the Bible teaches us to pray and struggle for economic and social justice



81% agreed that greed for material possessions is one of the greatest sins of our time



84% agreed that there is nothing wrong with enjoying material things God has provided for us



92% agree the Bible teaches us to be content with what we have and not to desire more material possessions



82% of those surveyed agreed they tried to resist most of the advertising messages they encounter



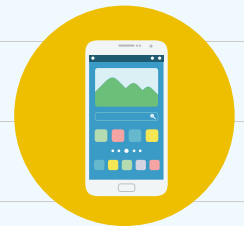
44% think advertising is generally an unethical industry



28% boycotted a particular company because of their practices in the last year



67% agree the advertising industry should be more tightly regulated



76% agree that consumerism is eroding family and community life

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Christians Against Poverty: an opportunity for the Church



Matt Barlow

Our survey shows 20 per cent of evangelicals polled felt under pressure to consume. With advertising becoming increasingly sophisticated, turmoil in the global economy and weaker UK growth, many of us are feeling the pinch. But what about when that pinch turns in to a punch, and all the money runs out? Evangelical Alliance member Christians Against Poverty are working on the frontline, providing support and advice for anyone weighed down by debt. The charity has helped thousands of people since 1996, and now runs 209 debt centres across the UK. Amaris Cole met CAP's UK chief executive Matt Barlow to learn more.

"For me, it feels like a tragedy that Christians can be in a situation where they're helping people with their practical needs, yet the most powerful thing they have to change that person's life is held back."

CAP's chief executive thinks the Church is missing an opportunity when it does good without explaining that the good news is the motivation behind it. "The gospel, the good news, the fact that God has come to earth to save us – in the midst of struggling and feeling suicidal about debt – if people can find the hope of Jesus, then you give them something beyond measure. Not just for eternity – but hey, eternity is a pretty big deal – but something for the here and now."

It's a unique gift to be able to step inside the lives of those who are struggling and see them saved, Matt believes – the reality

is everybody needs to hear the message of Jesus. "Some people are doing ok with life. I know we like to paint the picture that everyone who is rich is actually really poor, but the truth is some people have a family they love, a job they really enjoy and a bunch of hobbies that they get to do, whereas step into the life of someone in poverty and life just sucks. It really does. Jesus calls us to do something about the practical elements of that – to feed those who are hungry, clothe those who have no clothes and release the captives from the burden of debt or addiction, but the greatest thing you'll ever give that person is the good news."

Anyone can help someone build a CV, Matt says, but only the Christians can help people experience the tangible love of God.

And CAP's work is based on these biblical

principles: "I think if you do manage to read the Bible and come to the conclusion that economic justice is not part of God's kingdom plan, then perhaps you're reading it from a place of self-interest."

He added: "Every Christian is called to care for the poor."

Matt sees evangelism as a key role for the charity, alongside the practical help it offers. "We give the Church professional tools to serve the poor and save the lost in this country," he explains. There are many different pathways into poverty, but key factors include over-indebtedness, unemployment, lack of money education and addiction – not the niche addiction of heroin users, but the day-to-day addiction for the binge eater, the smoker, the occasional gambler."

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This day is hosted by the Central Readers' Council of the Church of England and is open to all. Block-booking advised as £3 fee per booking

So how is CAP responding? In debt centres across the country, churches are running CAP's debt help, job clubs, money course and release groups.

Sitting in our comfortable, often middle class churches, some of us may be detached from the reality of poverty today, and have a stereotypical view of the kind of person that might seek the help of CAP. But Matt says there is not a typical client.

"Within our debt service we will cross all ages – we cross all nationalities. When it's single people or even single parents, it tends to be women more than men, because they tend to have less pride and believe that someone can help them.

"In our job clubs, again it's quite often single people, but often more men. In the job club I run we have a lot of single men who are very lonely and struggling to get back into work."

The common factor of the majority of the clients CAP helps is that they're struggling on a low income – "lower than most of the UK".

The Evangelical Alliance's survey on ethical consuming showed that 20 per cent of evangelicals feel under pressure to consume. What's Matt's advice for us? "A phrase that is really important to remember as Christians is: we need to make money serve us, not us serve money." Jesus told us we have to choose to either worship him or worship him, Matt said. You've got to choose.

The chief executive says he "shops with an ear to heaven".

"The fallacy that 10 per cent of our income belongs to God is rubbish. It all belongs to God. We start with 10 per cent as a helpful guideline."

He admits it's not always easy, though. "Advertising is the modern day theme tune to all that we are. What advertising does is it really plays on the need that we all have to be accepted and secure. As Christians we should find that in Jesus, but adverts sell us a whole set of lies and convince us to part

with money. It's the constant barrage – the lies of the enemy – that what we are is not enough."

Through the charity's release groups, people are being set free from these lies. "It's been amazing to see people with gambling addictions come along and be properly freed. Some people who have racked up debts and spent tens of thousands of pounds."



Services offered by Christians Against Poverty

CAP job club

Practical help as employment is looked for; a chance to meet other jobseekers, get support and gain the tools needed to find work.

Release groups

Smoking, binge drinking, gambling or internet addiction – some habits are hard to break alone, so these groups provide a safe and confidential place to tackle the issue at the core to break free and stay free.

CAP money course

A free course that teaches budgeting skills and a simple, cash-based system that works.

CAP debt help

For those who feel their situation is impossible, hope is offered by the team, who listen in the privacy of the client's home and provide a real solution to debt.

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How can I end slavery?

by Gemma Brown, manager of No More Traffik

Modern-day slavery is becoming the most lucrative form of organised crime across the globe, but there's nothing we can do to stop it, is there? While our recent survey shows 99 per cent of those polled were concerned about slavery and trafficking, less than half of evangelicals are doing anything about it. Gemma Brown, manager of the anti-trafficking NGO No More Traffik, explains how all of us can play our part in ending this dark practice.



It was our first night in southern India. Akil, our instant and forever friend, picked us up at the busy airport and navigated through four hours of bumpy roads, stray dogs, and impossible turns. The smell of condensed milk mixed with spices filled with air, unfamiliar music - no, musics - played all at the same time, and I knew this was going to be an adventure. When we got to the orphanage, it was pitch black and another staff member greeted us in his night clothes. We found our confusingly hot, concrete room and prayed no exotic bugs would make us their meal. Through the night, new sounds caught my attention as I tried to imagine what was happening. Scooters, crickets, cow bells. And last, a medley of metal machinery and rhythmic tapping. I fell asleep.

On our last day in the compound, we finally got to meet them. The families, some with tiny children, who worked on the brick quarry. We had waved over the wall to them through the week, just as curious about them as they were about the strange visitors. We gave the kids red, yellow and blue toys, and everyone got an ice lolly, too. I assume that was a relief from the demanding work they did all day. And all night. The nighttime tapping turned out to be them, often beginning work at 5am and not clocking off until 10pm. Whole families, bent over rusty tools. Sweating in the impossible heat. Carrying heavy loads. Trapped in the quarry because of debt that seemed to grow at rates they couldn't keep up with, taken on by their children and then their children. No way out. No choice. No freedom.

There are 35.8 million people currently enslaved worldwide. Men, women and children are affected in their own countries, and some are brought across borders. Forced to work in rice mills, brothels, brick

quarries, cannabis factories, apple orchards, hotels, fishing boats, busy streets, rural areas, houses, apartments, and almost everywhere in between. For little - or no - pay. In harsher conditions than you and I can imagine. Victims of violence, of abuse, of exploitation.

There are more slaves today than at any other time in human history. The problem is huge, and complex, and dark.

But it's not unstoppable. It's not beyond reason to think we have the tools to stop it. The real question is whether or not we have the guts to use them.

I'm a big believer in asking why things happen as a starting point for finding solutions. You are, too, I presume: if your mouth is sore, you head to the dentist; if your oven isn't working, you read the manual.

When it comes to modern-day slavery - or 'human trafficking', when referring to someone who has been moved in order to be exploited - we have to ask why it happens. Why are people vulnerable, and why are others exploiting that vulnerability?

Perhaps it's poverty. Maybe it's social isolation or family breakdown. Could it be racism, or sexism? Lack of awareness, weak legislation, under-resourced or corrupt law enforcement. Money and complex criminal structures.

All these things drive what is fast becoming the most lucrative form of organised crime across the globe.

But there's something else: us.

The choices that we make every day impact the lives of others. There is a price to pay for our hunger for crowded wardrobes and cheap food and the to-be-replaced-next-year stuff.





Banksy's work on the wall of a bargain store with a child making Jubilee street party bunting in a sweatshop. It was revealed that some of the shop's products were made by seven-year-old boys who worked more than 100 hours a week in an Indian sweatshop.

We're not the ones who are paying it, but we are the ones who can stop it. Here are four ways.

BUY LESS

We live in a world where more is best, and where enough is never really enough. Where we used to have four fashion 'seasons' a year, it's not uncommon now for new collections to appear on the high street weekly. Each year in the UK, we throw away seven million tonnes of food and drink from our homes. This attitude towards things means that we demand more for less, creating increasing pressure on retailers to source cheap labour and cut corners with their ethics policies. So whether it's through a capsule wardrobe or set meal plans for the family, deciding to forego those jeans we don't actually need or keeping that iPhone alive for just a little longer; by buying less, we can help cut demand.

BUY LOCAL

I love this one. In fact, I love it so much that a couple of years ago my housemates and I decided to only buy things grown in Northern Ireland, where we live. The issue was we chose to do this in March - and if you've been to Northern Ireland, you know it's not all that tropical at any time of the year, but especially in early Spring. Still, it was an eye-opening experience that drove home the fact that we expect everything to be available

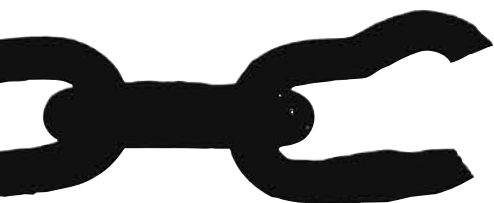
year-round. This can contribute to the drive for cheap labour, practices that endanger workers and constant transport that harms the planet. So, where you can, support local retailers. Craft-makers, green grocers and butchers, coffee shops. They'll often stock a lot of great local produce, and are also often more transparent about their ethical codes. (This is not to say that products from your local area haven't been produced by people who are enslaved - so let's get to the next point.)

BUY CURIOUSLY

Do you know who made your clothes? Or who cultivated the beans for your chocolate bar? How many steps of production did it take to get that gadget into your hands? Find out. Ask questions. Talk to shop owners, write letters, send tweets. If we can generate a culture of

consumer curiosity, we'll make it harder for retailers and companies - local and global - to get away with harmful practices. Let's ask for transparency until we get it. And let's be loud about it. Let your favourite clothing brand know that you're concerned. Tell your friend about that brand you found that pays above living wage. Buy products that are already certified. Ask your green-grocer to chain check.

In 1786, Thomas McCabe stood up to a slave-shipping venture that others wanted to bring to Belfast. My parents' generation collected all of their grocery shop receipts to campaign for more fair trade products. Last year, a group of young people I know went into their local corner shop and asked for more certified chocolate bars. What will we do?





Thomas Horton: the student from Immingham taking on fair trade, human trafficking and ethical consuming

Thomas sent 300 chocolate wrappers to Nestlé to persuade them to use fair trade cocoa beans. And that was just the start.

I'm a student. I study history and French at the University of Chester, but I also volunteer for projects on fair trade, human trafficking and ethical consumerism. My auntie was responsible for the Traidcraft stall at church – we've always used fair trade tea and coffee within my church. I became interested in fair trade projects at a conference about trafficking within the chocolate industry, when I realised that fair trade was one of the best guarantees to make sure that people hadn't been trafficked to make our little bars of chocolate.

My days are always extremely varied, no one day is ever the same. Every day, regardless of where I am, as soon as I wake up I go through my emails, and then have a flick through to see what I have to do that day. I normally do that when I'm still in bed and before I've had breakfast.

I work with schools, so I'll go in and deliver some workshops or assemblies, or some lessons on fair trade, or to get them to work towards the Fairtrade Schools Award. I'll help teachers find funding if they've got a project they want to do and I'll meet with companies trying to launch new fair trade products to see if we can be innovative and help them get off the ground. At the moment I'm working with a company that has launched a fair trade school blazer and so we're looking to see if that's something we could incorporate into schools in our town or borough.

I'm often asked by different groups to give talks in the evening and I sometimes speak to local community groups; the Women's Institute might ask me to go along to speak, and often at religious festivals they're keen to have somebody there talking about fair trade, human trafficking, and ethical consumerism.

When I'm talking with adults I have to debunk some common misconceptions about fair trade or human trafficking. It's quite easy to think that there is a wicked man who comes along, steals a child, and forces them to work for the harvest, but in reality it's much more complicated. Often parents have agreed to the child going with



Thomas Horton



someone else because they are deceived by the traffickers who sell a dream of a better education for the child – that they will work, but they will never go without, they'll have clean clothes and running water. It must be a heart-wrenching decision, but it's understandable to see why that decision might be made; so I'm sure it's important to put it in context.

We're always trying to get people to use fair trade tea and coffee, but in the middle of all that we want to show people the variety of fair trade products available. Often at community events we'll set up a mock hotel room with fair trade bedding, roses, toilet roll, and snacks – everything you could possibly imagine. I think people are usually surprised that fair trade isn't just about a bar of chocolate and some tea bags.

One of my main goals is just to show that variety, but also to show people that they don't have to spend more money to buy fair trade. There was the perception that fair trade was going to be more expensive, but I've found that many of the products that were available and had certification from the Fairtrade Foundation were of a much higher quality and people were paying more for the quality, rather than that it was certified by the FTF. People assumed that that meant that fair trade was much more expensive and my work is to show that that's not the case.

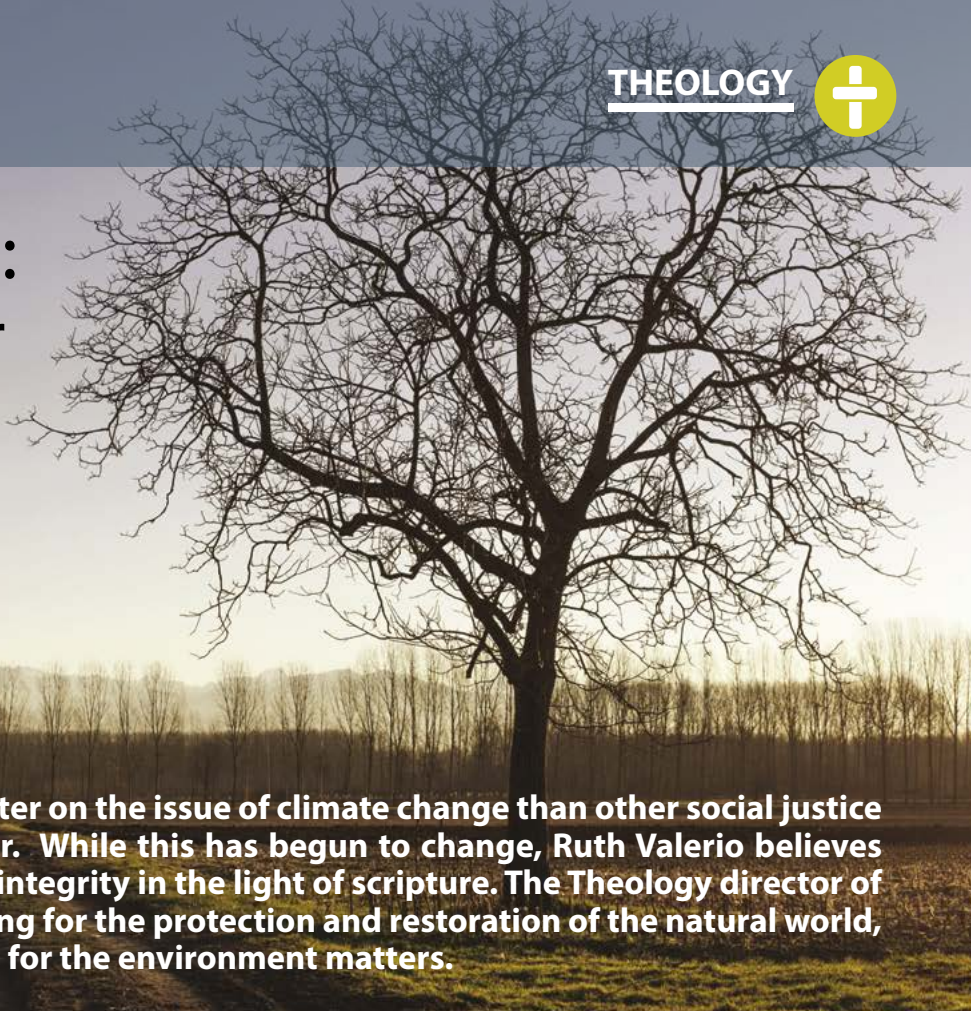
I'm fortunate in that both my school and the people who have mentored me have always tried to ingrain in me a sense of what is right, to stand up and do the right thing, making sure that you're heard, regardless of how many people are listening or telling you that you're wrong. But it wasn't really until I later that I understood what fair trade really meant and how it could be a solution to human trafficking that I put everything I'd learnt from the pulpit and the more practical ways of helping into action.



by Ruth Valerio



Climate change: why it's time for the Church to speak up



Historically, the Church been quieter on the issue of climate change than other social justice issues that disadvantage the poor. While this has begun to change, Ruth Valerio believes that living ethically is to live with integrity in the light of scripture. The Theology director of A Rocha, a Christian charity working for the protection and restoration of the natural world, gives *idea* five reasons why caring for the environment matters.

1. God made the world and He loves it

God is the creator of the world and He thinks it is "very good" (Genesis 1:31). God is involved with His creation, sustaining it and caring for it (Psalm 65:9-13; Matthew 10:29; Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 1:16-17). This is not anti-evolution – the Genesis creation stories teach us theology not science – but an affirmation that this world has a greater being behind it and has a purpose.

2. God created us to look after the world

We are created beings, part of the whole community of creation, one part of an intricately connected ecosystem. But we have also been given a special task: to look after the rest of what God has made (Genesis 1: 26-28; Genesis. 2:15). This is not an optional extra for a few keen

environmentalists, but a fundamental part of what it means to be human. We become less than human when we lose that connection.

3. It has gone wrong because of us

It's a sad truth that the many problems our world and its inhabitants face are caused by human activity. Our wrongdoing doesn't only separate us from God and have human consequences – it also has ecological consequences (Hosea 4: 1-3; Amos 8: 1-8). We bear the guilt for the state our world is in (Isaiah 24: 4-6) and each one of us has a responsibility to act.

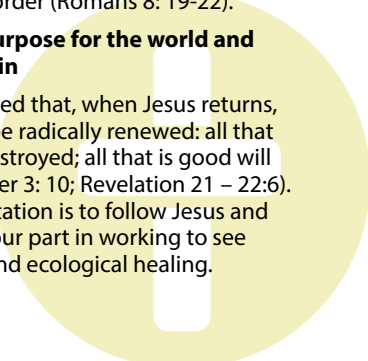
4. Jesus came to this earth for the whole world

The good news is that God is working to put back to rights what has gone wrong.

This is why Jesus died, to restore to himself all things (Colossians 1: 19-20). Jesus' life, death and resurrection were not only for the benefit of people, but for the benefit of the whole created order (Romans 8: 19-22).

5. God has a purpose for the world and asks us to join in

God has promised that, when Jesus returns, this world will be radically renewed: all that is evil will be destroyed; all that is good will shine out (2 Peter 3: 10; Revelation 21 – 22:6). The gospel invitation is to follow Jesus and join in: to play our part in working to see justice, peace and ecological healing.



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A community dealing in a dangerous currency

Lake Victoria is vast. It's the world's largest tropical lake, spanning 26,600 square miles. It reaches Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya, connecting the countries through a transient fishing community who move with the fish. Watching the sunrise from a boat fishing on the lake is like something out of a film, but the reality of life back on shore is not so picturesque.

Siaya, a county on the shores of the lake, has some of the highest number of adults living with HIV in Kenya and the lowest proportion of people who sleep under a mosquito net to prevent them from contracting malaria.

As mosquitos lay their eggs in water, the lake is a breeding ground for the disease-carrying insects, yet just 37.5 per cent of people sleep under a treated net. George Onyango Ondero, chairman of the Luanda Kotieno beach management unit, made up of fisherman, boat owners, traders and boat makers, shared his views on some factors behind this: "I know the government has given nets, but you find some people using the nets – because of poverty – to fish with. They prefer to have food than keep themselves from malaria," he said. Some fishing is done overnight, leaving them even more vulnerable to mosquitos, but even at home some aren't safe, George said. "These fishermen live in makeshift houses and sleep on the curtains. There's nowhere to hang the nets."

Most people have been affected by malaria, the chairman went on. "You feel it in your

body, but you just have to go down to the lake to work." They simply can't afford to be ill.

Sitting in the small room the fishermen call their office, they tell me about the most recent case of malaria in their community.

"There's a mother lying in the mortuary now from malaria. She refused to go to the hospital. Many people die from malaria, but we need not now." The closest facility is five kilometres away. For a sick person, it take three hours to walk there, the fishermen tell me. Some people just can't get help in time.

Those particularly susceptible to malaria include people living with HIV, of whom there are many in Siaya.

In some communities around the lake, sex is currency. Those fishing tend to be men, but those buying and selling the fish are often women. The overfishing of Lake Victoria means the catch is sparse and there are more women to sell the fish than there is fish to sell. In order to be considered as a potential customer for a boat's small haul, "one or two things need to occur", George explains.



Mandundu fishing community in Siaya county, on the shores of Lake Victoria.

I spoke to Rose Odundo, a member of the beach management unit. She was open about the way things were – it seems to be all this community knows: "If a boat offers fish but asks for 'friendship', you have to comply very quickly. Some of us are widows, and so we don't have anyone to look after us.

"It breaks my heart and I cry when I think about it. If we had more opportunities I wouldn't have to do it. I'm not doing it because I want to."

Rose told me some days she has to go through this, only to find there's no one to buy her fish anyway. "You've already given your body, but then you have to give away the fish."

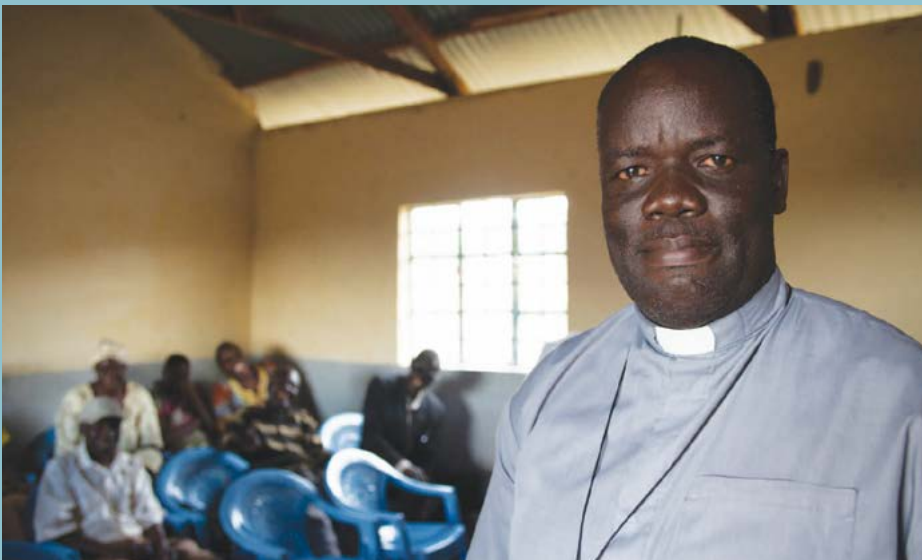
Another beach management unit member, Nera Aguko, who is 62, says she feels "disempowered" and "shameful", as everyone in the community knows what these women have to do. The fisherman estimated that 60 per cent of the women have to trade fish for sex.

"We feel embarrassed and ashamed. The Bible says if I have a husband I should stick with them, but we have to go against that," says Nera.

Another fishing village we visited believe bringing electricity to the village would help.

"Fish is a perishable commodity. It takes just 45 minutes for the fish to go bad. We don't have electricity, so no freezer. We have to sell to the big lorries that have ice or it will go bad." These lorries come to the villages from the city, buying the fish far below market value, and selling on in shops and restaurants at incredibly marked up prices.

The beach management unit is saving for a transformer to get electricity to the village. It will cost around 60,000KSH – about £400. Once they've raised this, which could take some time, they believe the desperation for fish will decrease and prices increase – the fishmongers won't be forced to sell to the first agent that arrives, as they can freeze the



Reverend Vincent Yoga, Anglican Church of Kenya, in Kisumu county.



fish until the price they are offered is fair. Until then, the community is worried nothing will change.

One fisherman called Mordecai said that while this practise of fish for sex is traditional, it has increased recently due to poverty in the area. "You have to eat. It's like the hard way is the only way," the fisherman told me. Many women believe they don't have an alternative. "We need to be creating awareness of the dangers and the consequences."

This is what Anglican Development Services Nyanza (ADS Nyanza), a partner of Christian Aid, is trying to do.

The inter-denominational charity is working in the area to educate the community. A

community health volunteer visits families here, teaching them about the risks and how to stay safe. Trained by the ADS Nyanza, these volunteers act like community nurses, giving basic medical advice and teaching to people how to live healthier lives. They're also working hard to encourage people visit the facility when the first symptoms of malaria appear.

With support from Christian Aid, ADS Nyanza has provided motorbikes for some of the volunteers, which they are able to transport patients on – slashing the six-hour round journey.

There is still a stigma surrounding those with HIV, which stops some people getting tested. But the community health volunteers are trying hard to break through the silence.

The fishermen I met were pleased to tell me the signs and symptoms for the common illnesses in the area, and the measures they can take to prevent them. The information these community health volunteers are offering is being taken on board, and the unit members know their community needs to change.

One person trying to change the mind set of communities like this is the Rev Vincent Yoga, a vicar of the Anglican Church of Kenya. "We know the Church is an agent of transformation. The Lord in Matthew said we are the salt of the world. When we put our heads together the transformation takes place."

The vicar is using the pulpit to bring about this transformation. He teaches parishioners to sleep under mosquito nets and clear



Women of the Lwankda Kotieno Fishing community in Siaya.

the bushes around their compound during the rainy season, as mosquitos hide in plants during the day, as well as stressing the importance of visiting the clinic and listening to the advice given by officials.

"I'm a spiritual leader and I know the God that called us to serve is the God of relationship." He believes God is using the community health volunteers as His hands and feet, and the health of the Church is key.

"When the Church is growing unhealthy – when we are sick – we can't spread the gospel. The Church is like a vehicle that takes people to where they are going, but if we don't maintain that vehicle, it can't move.

"The Church will only be content when the community is healthy."

In recent months, Christian Aid has been raising funds to improve access to healthcare for vulnerable communities in developing countries such as Kenya, and where the need is greatest. To find out more about the charity's work on malaria, visit: www.christianaid.org.uk/malaria

Fishermen on Lake Victoria.





Clothe yourself in love – and Louis Vuitton?

Simon Ward is the chief operating officer for the British Fashion Council, but admits he has a “schizophrenic relationship with fashion”. After 30 years in the industry, he’s retiring to work with the Diocese of London, exploring 20 industries and asking the question: if God was in charge, how would He run things? Unsurprisingly, he’s taking on fashion first. Before he clocked out of the BFC for good, he chatted to Amaris Cole about the challenges he’s faced, classical music, and, of course, clothes.

Did you always want to work in the fashion industry?

No, not at all – fashion found me. I was going to join the army, but that didn’t work out. I trained as an officer, and it remains a disappointment. My old man was in the navy, and I was brought up in Portsmouth – we used to play soldiers at school. [Joining the military] seemed like the thing to do, but from the beginning I felt completely inadequate and they didn’t want me.

Back at school, I was really taken by Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony. In our music lesson at school they played a new record by Andre Previn and the London Symphony Orchestra of Beethoven, which I borrowed. But I scratched it, so my father said there’s no way I could give it back. I had to buy a new one. I kept the old one, and thought it was really good. A year or so later I came up to London, to Goldsmith’s College – which was nowhere near as cool as it is now – and I started going to the opera. I went 90 times in the first year. I used to pay £1 and sit on a deckchair up near the roof.

I had an Italian girlfriend whose family were opera mad. She took me her house once and we all started singing. Her dad told me I had an amazing voice, but I’d only sung once or twice in the choir at school before that. They said I should train. I went to an audition in London with one of the teachers from the Royal College and they said the same thing, so I started training as an opera singer with the dream to do it professionally. I ended up singing in 26 major roles, including a workshop in the Royal Opera House. I was pretty good, but I never quite nailed it. I still do a bit of signing – I’ve written a book called *Riding the Tide*, which is about 50 Psalms – there’s a song for each one.

So how did you get into fashion, then?

Fashion was to pay the bills. I got a job working in Selfridges in the menswear department. One Saturday afternoon Bruce Springsteen came in and I measured his inside leg! I suppose I got a bit of a love for the clothes. I then worked for an organisation that looks after the manufacturing industry. It was interesting – but my hope was



Simon Ward.

the singing would come through. I left there to pursue it after a year or two, during which time I met the person who would become my wife. Her father said he didn’t want his daughter marrying someone who didn’t have a real job, so I wrote to the people I worked for previously and asked for a reference. They didn’t give me a reference – they gave me my job back. They’d just taken over something called the British Fashion Council... I was still pursuing the singing – which I then dropped after a few years because I realised with kids and a wife it wasn’t going to work.

Looking back, if there was someone there planning out what I would do, you can kind of see what He was up to – but I didn’t have a Scooby at the time. Looking back, I can see how it came together, and that there was someone quite clever pulling the strings.

For you to stay in the industry for 30 years, there must be some love for fashion, though?

I’ve got a really, really strange relationship with fashion. I don’t live and breathe it. I shall go to catwalk shows later today, and sitting in the front row people can almost feel the excitement. I really don’t feel that. Music does that for me. I’ve been a worship leader at my church for the last 15 years – I come closest to God when I’m using my voice.

Having said that, I love clothes. I have far, far too many clothes for my wardrobe – mostly high street, not designer – or I wouldn’t be able to retire at this age. I can see the craftsmanship, the fabrics and the inspiration behind it. There’s a funny disconnect. I’ve never understood it.



As a Christian in the fashion industry in a position of leadership, do you feel you have a responsibility?

The Church is very good at drawing in – drawing talents and running its programmes and all that sort of stuff – but actually it's not very good at all at equipping people. It's a pit stop, not in the race. It's about getting people to see the importance of being in their everyday lives. It's not as cheap as: preach the gospel and if necessary use words, but it is the way you do stuff, understanding the issues, that's important, because if you've got something to say that underlines what you do on the back of that, people say: why are you so passionate about that? It includes the gay issue in fashion.

Over the last year or so I've had some really interesting discussions. If you just say: I'm a Christian, others say you've got nothing to do with them. You've got to find a language, a vocabulary, love that goes beyond how things have looked. That doesn't mean we turn away from what the Bible says, because I'm pretty clear on that, but Jesus would probably be far more interested in speaking to people about their gifts, what they're doing, the fact their tax return wasn't done properly last year, these were probably things that came much higher up his list. We'll talk about salvation in a while, but let's get to know each other first.

What relationship should Christians have with fashion? Some might say we shouldn't concern ourselves with the superficial.

It's absolute nonsense. In the beginning God created. Creativity is there from day one. When Adam and Eve decided to go their own way, God as a designer created the first clothes for them. If you look at when the priests were first introduced, in Exodus, there's a whole chapter set aside for the clothing of the priests. Every piece had a purpose to it. Imagery in the Old Testament uses clothes and fashion all over the place. The first Christian in Europe was Lydia, a dealer in purple clothe, and even someone like Paul, who was the archetypal, tweed-jacketed academic, uses lots of images of clothing – “full armour of God” and “dress yourselves in compassion”. Clothing is scattered throughout the Bible, and I think any suggestion that clothing/fashion/creativity and God doesn't mix is folly. Simple as that.

The contention then is about the global fashion industry. One of the best ways to sum things up came from one of the senior designer managers of a high street retailer. She described it as this: “My real longing is that everybody involved with the production of clothing

would be blessed by the role they play in it. From the farmer at one end who's farming the land – the cotton crop or the wool from the sheep, to the people involved in the production cycle, the preparation of the fabrics, the people who design, manufacturer, stitch. Everyone involved in that should be blessed by their part.”

In reality, the vast majority of the benefit is at the top end – the consumer, the owners, the retailers. Whereas further down you have people working in sweat shops in Bangladesh, or people farming the land where people's livelihoods have been ruined because so much water has been used to grow the cotton. Wearing beautiful clothes enhances life, but the fact we're wrecking the planet by the amount of water, the amount of landfill, the amount of unwanted clothes we have, that needs to be addressed.

If God was in charge, those would be some of His key concerns. Look after the planet, He'd say. We're an extraordinarily selfish generation in terms of the amount of consumption we go through: it takes three years bath water to make one t-shirt. There are £31 billion of unworn clothing in British woman's wardrobes. The average woman has 19 pairs of unworn shoes.

So is fashion doing enough to make the industry fairer?

It comes down to consumers being educated as to what actually goes on, and to be given options and choices that they can buy into. I was at a conference last year where Marks & Spencer spoke about their *Plan A* project, and [they] said we can't tell our consumers what to do, we can only give them choices. That's the reality of living in a modern, Western, capitalist consumer society.

Although one would like to be a little more robust, all you can do is give options.

There are a growing number of initiatives, though, including Fashion Revolution, which is essentially trying to work with governments and producers to address the sweat shop problem, to make sure people are paid properly, to make sure work conditions are safe and to explore how you can check the provenances of the garments you're wearing: was the land exploited? Were the people exploited? I think we're at a point where there's a different view these days. I met a student who's working on a barcoding process with clothes, where you scan it on your phone and it tells you the story of your clothes. Things are changing.



***In the beginning
God created.
Creativity is there
from day one.
When Adam and
Eve decided to go
their own way,
God as a designer
created the first
clothes for them.***



Chine's food diary...

The ethical experiment

Never let it be said that the *idea* team doesn't practise what it preaches. While we put this edition together, we decided it wasn't enough to just write about consuming ethically – we needed to put our money where our mouths are and challenge ourselves. The four experiments we chose are extreme – at least, they felt it to us – but were chosen to highlight the wider issues involved. We aren't expecting you all to adopt all four into your everyday lives, but if it gets you thinking about your own lifestyle, your relationship with money and how you can make your spending more ethical, then our week of experimentation was worthwhile.

Are you going to give any a go? We'd love to hear from you. Let us know by tweeting @idea_mag with the hashtag #ethicaledition.

THERE'S £31 BILLION WORTH OF UNWORN CLOTHES IN BRITISH WOMEN'S WARDROBES.

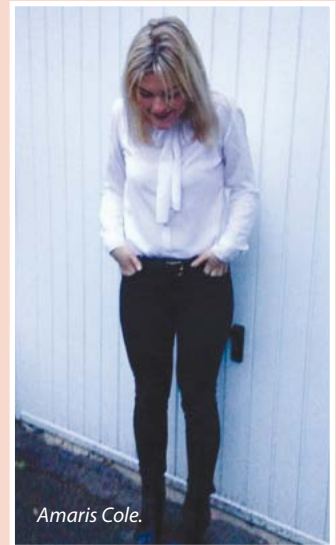
CHALLENGE ONE: One outfit for one week



Amaris Cole

Today around 30 million people are trapped in a life of slavery. Many of the clothes we buy on the high street were made in sweatshops, including those in my wardrobe. Something needs to change.

I love fashion and buying new clothes, but nothing can be worth the forced labour of people working in awful conditions to make me a new top. In a bid to train myself into buying less and wearing what I already own more, I wore the same outfit for seven days in a row.



Amaris Cole.

The night before the challenge began, I looked deep into the abyss of my wardrobe for something that would work for days in the office, lunch meetings, coffee with friends and a birthday party. I settled on black trousers and a white shirt with a bow, topped off with a grey jumper.

Laugh if you must, but I was worried this challenge would stretch me emotionally as well as logistically – how can you keep one outfit clean for a week? Answer: lots of late nights waiting for the washing machine to finish and early mornings with the ironing board.

Despite colleagues' doubts, I made it. I actually gave my appearance less thought than usual as the week went on. Anna Wintour, Mark Zuckerberg and Kate Moss swear by a 'uniform', with some claiming it boosts productivity. Perhaps they're on to something.

While my experiment may be an extreme, I learnt about the #30wears campaign on social media. It encourages people to think before they buy; first, ask yourself if you need it. If the answer is yes, go and buy it. If it's no, ask yourself if you will wear this item 30 times or more. If the answer is no, put it down – however much you want it. But, if this is going to be something that you cherish and wear a reasonable number of times, then you can buy it. I'm sure to many of you this will seem common sense, but in an age of fast fashion and getting whatever we want, this could be a really useful way for some shoppers to change their behaviour.

I'm in no rush to repeat this challenge, but I learnt a lot and will be changing the way I shop. In an ideal world, I would only buy clothes produced ethically. I'm planning to try to do this where possible, but to also implement the #30wears idea. My eyes really have been opened to huge injustices of the fashion industry, and I'm going to try to do more to right these wrongs through my consumer choices.

Will you join me?

Hours saved choosing outfits: 2
Times I missed my wardrobe: 5

CHALLENGE TWO: Seven days of shopping locally



My challenge was to avoid retail chains and not to shop online, which provoked giggles from my colleagues at the Alliance. I've got a bit of a reputation for online shopping, with various packages being delivered to our office and landing on my desk several times a week. Would I be able to resist?

On Monday, I must admit it was difficult to bypass my usual daily visit to either Marks & Spencer's or Waitrose for my breakfast of a green juice and some sort of muesli or yoghurt – and sometimes a sneaky pastry. I realised just how much of a habit had formed. I could easily, with a little forward planning, purchase these things at the weekend and prepare for the week ahead, such as the protein bar I'd packed. That evening we had leftovers so I didn't have to worry about buying dinner.

Tuesday morning was fine, but then I realised I hadn't brought lunch with me. The sandwich man at our office did his usual round, so I thought, that has to be buying locally, surely?

My husband and I went straight to our local food market after work and stocked up on things to cook for the rest of the week. There was an array of fresh fruit and vegetables, a bakery and a butcher. Basically everything you could want and very reasonably priced. I could see us ditching Asda and doing our regular shop here.

By Wednesday, the marketing emails were calling out to me! I was having to resist the 'we're having a sale!' emails that were flooding my inbox. (Yes, I know, I could unsubscribe). It got to the point where I had to email the retailer of jewellery I loved, checking when the sale will end. Thankfully I had until the end of the month...

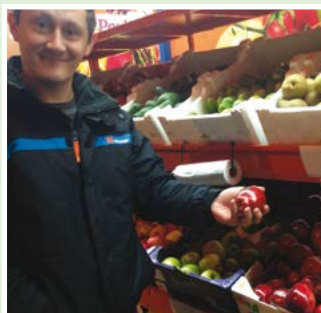
Thursday and the protein bars started giving me jaw ache. I also had a toothpaste emergency and had to succumb to Superdrug. First fail.

I did ok again until Saturday. We had a guest staying with us and wanted to make a delicious ground nut chicken stew. We had just been for a long walk in the forest and our route back took us past Asda... It called our name! Thankfully friends invited us for lunch on Sunday and we had leftovers for dinner.

I think what was highlighted to me the most was that forward planning can save money. Preparing lunch and breakfast and buying the ingredients from the local independent food market was surprisingly easy. It felt good to support a local business and also get to see some of my friends from church that shop there too.

Buying online is a different story. It's a temptation that I don't think will stop, but this week taught me that slowing down and thinking about whether I really need it helps me to think about my choices more. I can stop myself, and that's good to know.

Bargains I missed out on online: 5
Times I missed online shopping: 15



Joanna Wright

DID YOU KNOW THAT THE FOOD YOU EAT TRAVELS AN AVERAGE OF MORE THAN 1,500 MILES TO REACH YOUR PLATE?

CHALLENGE THREE: A week without a wallet



The challenge set me to examine just how far consumerism was engrained into my lifestyle. For seven days nothing would leave my wallet.

Danny Webster

I did my shopping before the week began, and I had a travel card that would get me around London – and I realised part way through the week my electricity bill had been debited from my account, but that was it.

Some parts of the challenge were straightforward, I couldn't pick up my lunch from a nearby shop, or a coffee on the way into work. Other aspects were annoying, but doable – the couple of days when I wasn't going home before going on to something after work meant I had to prepare food for the evening and bring that with me, as well as my lunch.

During the week there was plenty I went without. From the coffees and snacks I would normally pick up, to foregoing the haircut I had planned to get. There were tickets to a concert I wanted to buy, which I delayed getting until the following week – so I only delayed that piece of spending.

And then there were the technicalities that by the slimmest of margins meant I managed to keep to the challenge. There was a friend's birthday party, where someone – unprompted – bought me a drink (and I explained I wouldn't be able to reciprocate). Where the judges – if this challenge had judges – might deem me to have crossed the line was in the train ticket paid for by a friend on Saturday, which I paid him back for the following Tuesday. Technically I didn't spend any money within the week – but I benefited from money spent on my behalf.

Four things I learnt during the week:

1. Life consistently bombards you with opportunities to spend money, and not spending money can sometimes leave you feeling like the odd one out.
2. Planning and organisation can remove the need for most casual expenditure, and there are plenty of ways I can do that for much longer than a week.
3. The choice not to spend money was the most significant part of the challenge, not spending it was relatively straightforward.
4. In limiting my spending, I also limited my generosity; I couldn't buy my friend a drink on his birthday.

Beers, coffee and chocolate I couldn't buy: 14

Times I missed money: 21



Danny - reunited with his wallet.

THE AVERAGE OFFICE WORKER SPENDS £10.59 EVERY DAY ON FOOD, DRINK AND SNACKS.

Continues. Challenge four overleaf...

CHALLENGE FOUR: The meat-free menu



Chine McDonald

For most of my life, I've thought that vegetarianism was just for animal lovers who squirm at the idea of tucking into one of our four-legged friends. And for many, this is exactly the driving force behind their decision not to be carnivorous.

Some Christian vegetarians live by the words in Proverbs 12:10: "The righteous man has regard for the life of his beast." And the Christian Vegetarian Association even exists to "show the world that plant-based diets represent good, responsible Christian stewardship for all God's creation".

It's not until my husband Mark and I took up the ethical challenge of going completely meat-free for a week that I realised that while caring for animals is a great reason to be vegetarian, vegetarianism is also great for humans too.

When we think about global warming, climate change and carbon emissions, our first thought might be to point to the significant damage done by the transport system. But, shockingly, the global livestock industry is responsible for more greenhouse gas emissions than all cars, planes, trains and ships put together.

I come from a Nigerian family, where a meal just isn't complete without meat. Everything else is just a side dish. So I embarked on the challenge thinking it might be more difficult than I would have anticipated. But in fact, it was much more



manageable than I thought. As a keen home chef, I was forced to be creative, to think about possible meat substitutes to go into some of our favourite dishes. I uncovered some gems, including Jamie Oliver's "proper veg lasagna" – despite it taking nearly three hours to make – and Nigella's butternut squash and halloumi burgers. Post-challenge and we're willing to cut down drastically on our meat consumption. Because we realised that being vegetarian doesn't have to be hard.

Hours spent cooking: 10
Times I missed meat: 3

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Greg Valerio: jeweller, activist, advocate and “pain in the neck”?

Greg Valerio was the first jeweller in the world to call for Fairtrade gold. In 1996 he launched a jewellery company called CRED, which he intended to be Fairtrade. At that time Fairtrade jewellery didn't exist at all and it became Greg's task to work out what that meant in practice. Today he is at the cutting edge of Fairtrade Gold and this year has been awarded a MBE award for his work in this area. Amanda Pilz spent 60 seconds with Greg to find out more.

What prompted you to found Fairtrade Gold?

I recognised that globally up to 150 million people in the jewellery supply chain are small scale artisanal miners. Many of them are the exploited poor and some of the jewellery we see in shop windows has come directly from their hands. How do you know that the gold you have in your engagement ring hasn't come from a human rights child-labour infested hole in the ground? You don't know. When you ask the jeweller they will stare at you blankly. Either they want to cover it up or more likely they themselves don't know.

What is Fairtrade Gold?

Fairtrade Gold is a piece of gold that is fully traceable. Every component from mine to retail has a known provenance; it's transparent, you know who has touched it in the supply chain and it's a process that can be third-party verified. This verification says to the consumer that when I, as a jeweller, sell you this Fairtrade Gold, you needn't take my word for it, but can see the third-party verification. That is the foundation of Fairtrade: transparent, traceable and socially, environmentally and economically accountable. For the gold industry before 2004, that was heresy. I was told in no uncertain terms by everybody I spoke to about it that it was impossible, whether it was gold, diamonds, gemstones or platinum.

How did Fairtrade Gold begin?

In 2004 I visited a group of artisanal gold miners at Oro Verde mine in Colombia. Oro Verde means 'green gold' because they were mining gold in an environmentally responsible way. They were looking for



Greg Valerio

a customer and I was looking for a source, so when we found each other a fully traceable gold supply chain was created. I was the first international jeweller to visit them and the first to buy 50g of gold and turn it into four 18 carat gold wedding rings. As a jeweller I made the first fully traceable, fully transparent purchase of gold from a verified supply chain. We proved the concept that traceability in gold can be achieved.

We then opened it for others to join and through that relationship Fairtrade Gold was born.

Why do we need Fairtrade Gold?

The reasons why we need Fairtrade Gold are overwhelming.

There are huge social, environmental and economic injustices in the gold supply chain. Up to 150 million artisanal gold miners earn less than two dollars a day and because mines are full of child labour they are riddled with health and safety problems. Small scale miners use mercury to process and amalgamate their gold. Large scale miners use cyanide. Our pension funds invest in transnational mining companies who buy the right to mine other people's lands. So if you have a pension and it's not an ethical one you are directly contributing to the exploitation of thousands of people around the world through large scale mining companies.

What challenges do you face?

The biggest obstacles to change are the big European luxury heritage brands that are doing nothing to make a difference.

We need consumers to demand Fairtrade Gold and to flip the market. This is where the Church comes in. The Church is the best community-based organisation in the country to do that because most people within the Church still think marriage is a good idea, hence the need for gold wedding rings. The Church is positioned to go out and promote and facilitate Fairtrade Gold wedding rings. If the Church promotes Fairtrade Gold we could flip the UK fair trade jewellery market on its head and bring about justice for the poor. The Church has an incredible amount of leverage to make change if only it would wake up to its own potential.

My message is very simple: buy Fairtrade Gold wedding rings. If we do just that one little thing it will catalyse a profound change in the UK jewellery market and bring help to thousands.

For more information about Greg's involvement in Fairtrade Gold, read *Making Trouble*, published by Lion Hudson 2013, or visit his website valeriojewellery.com.

Sunday trading

Society's attitudes towards how we keep the Sabbath have changed dramatically over the last 100 years. Here is a look at how the Alliance has been involved in that changing story.

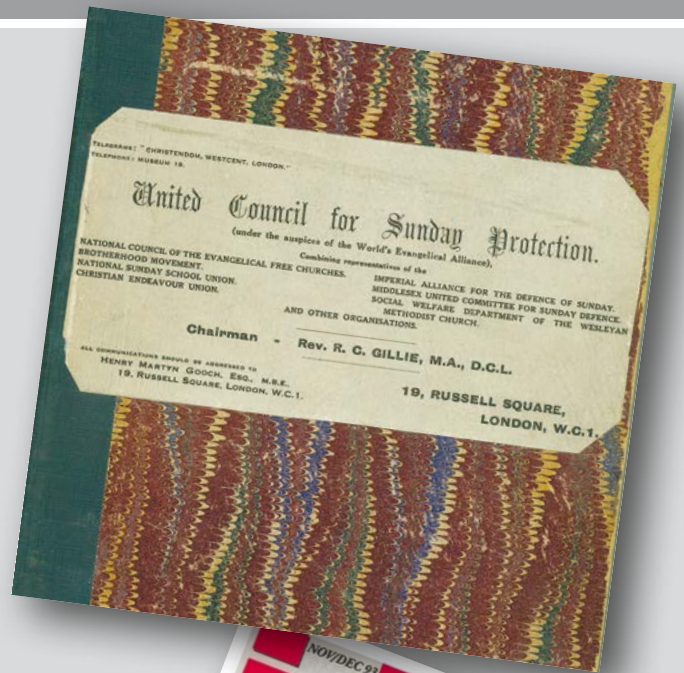
In 1922 the Alliance convened a United Council for Sunday Protection with other Christian agencies to campaign against "all demands on unnecessary labour and trading" and in particular to voice concern over a decision to allow public parks in London to be used for sports and games on a Sunday.

In July 1958 an article on Sunday observance in Britain featured photographs of people engaged activities that "pervert the right use of the Sabbath". The photographs included a woman washing the steps of cinema prior to the Sunday film show and a woman buying fruit and vegetables from a greengrocer's stall.

In the 1980s the Alliance was part of the Pro-Sunday Coalition that was campaigning to get signatures for a Keep Sunday Special petition against the relaxation of Sunday trading regulations. The 1990s saw a similar campaign with *idea* magazine encouraging readers to attend Keep Sunday Special meetings and to write to their MPs.

In our 2015 ethical consuming survey we found that:

- 59 per cent said they thought Christians should avoid doing their shopping on Sundays;
- 71 per cent disagreed or disagreed strongly with the statement: "There should be no special restrictions on Sunday trading", and only five per cent thought it would be a good idea to allow larger shops to open for longer hours on a Sunday;
- 92 per cent thought workers should have the right to take time off every fortnight to worship on a Sunday;
- 90 per cent thought nobody should be compelled to work on a Sunday unless they had freely chosen to do so.





Good deeds and good news: how the two must go together

My palms were sweating and I couldn't sit still. I didn't want to lose my cool, but explaining why the "Bible is relevant today" after a relatively well-known atheist had just argued the opposite, live on BBC One, was not likely to be a walk in the park.

The show began predictably with a dismissive volley of all the things that were apparently wrong with the Bible and I was immediately put on the defensive. But, despite knowing TV directors like a good heated debate, I chose a different tack, beginning by thanking the atheist for his impressive and challenging work with the homeless. The angry posture seemed to change and the debate turned more into a conversation, most probably to the chagrin of the producer. My aim was not to flatter my fellow debater, but to model the fact

that Christians shouldn't think they have the monopoly on moral principles or ethical behaviour. I believe that because every human being is made in the image of God, there will be a shared moral sense that we can connect with in conversation and action. These can be great opportunities for evangelism.

At university I became friends with atheists who were passionate about third world debt, climate change and freedom of speech, and so our Christian Union ran a week of joint events with Amnesty International and the Green Society. I remember trying to roll a 10-foot tall inflatable globe around campus that Tearfund had loaned us for the week, alongside the president of the Green Society. Our conversations that day led to an evangelistic Bible study together. It was in co-belligerence as we sought to fight together the injustices in our world that opportunities for the gospel came up.

Too many Christians seek to separate out the good news of the gospel and the good works of the gospel lifestyle. Some argue that seeking justice is a distraction from the gospel. In my reading of scripture and my experience, I have found the opposite is true. It's as we allow the good news of Jesus to transform not just our minds, but our lives as well, that we are brought into contact with those who are in need. But also, when we

allow the spirit of God to reshape our lives so we are in line with the heart of the gospel, we are brought into contact with people who have a passion for justice. Many of these people are driven, often unknowingly, by their God-given conscience and the fact that they are made in the image of God to help others. This gives us an amazing opportunity for the gospel. Many people live better than the tenets of their worldview should suggest. I don't believe atheism gives an adequate rationale for caring about justice or acting compassionately, yet many atheists do live this way. When we partner together in seeking justice, there will be opportunities for conversations that demonstrate that actually Christianity provides a better rationale for living an ethical lifestyle and seeking justice for all.

I'd love to tell you that my atheist protagonist became a Christian live on air - he didn't. But my prayer is that he may have experienced a little of the grace of God that will lead to more later. I'm hoping his work with the homeless will be an opportunity for collaboration with the work I do with foster children as sadly, many of whom age out of the care system and become destitute. In fact, I'm struggling to sit still right now as I get excited about the opportunities for doing good and speaking about the good news.



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KRISH KANDIAH, PRESIDENT OF LST

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What would Jesus drive?

“What does cycling have to do with my faith?” I hear you ask. Well, I’m going to boldly suggest that were Jesus to live in the 21st century, his mode of getting about would probably be the lowly bicycle. Stay with me on this one.

The bicycle; the modern Palm Sunday mule.

For years, urbanists across the globe have made a considerable effort to present the bicycle as a legitimate form of transport that governments should take seriously and invest in. There used to be a time when it was one of the main ways people traversed their cities, towns and neighbourhoods. As industrialisation kicked in and modernity became the defining form of place-making, cities began to develop around the car; street space became dominated by four wheels.

The people who are paid to stare into that hazy horizon we call the future tell us that by 2050, three quarters of the world’s entire population will live in cities – half of us are already in them. So there’s a case to make sure our cities are designed well. The biggest problem in the design and re-design of cities today is working out how to make better use of the limited space we have.

As roads and transport dictate how we get to places, it’s important to consider those things when thinking about the future. This is where the bike comes in. It might seem like a fairly primitive claim to stake, but the future isn’t the car, it’s the bicycle.

So allow me to make a case as to how the bike holds up against the car.

First up, health. On an individual scale, studies have shown how regular cycling contributes to greater physical and mental health. Looking at the bigger societal picture, some experts claim the total annual cost for treating obesity in the UK to be around £47 billion.

The economic argument is just as persuasive. An American study concluded that it costs roughly \$300 a year to maintain a bicycle versus the \$8,000 for operating a car, not to mention the monetary gains from living longer. And I’m not advocating living longer to just gain more money – the longer we live, the longer we can contribute to society.

Again, if we step back to look at the big picture we see that regular cyclists take fewer sick days, saving the economy £128 million a year. I read a Guardian article that said cities that invest in walking and cycling return an average of £13 in economic benefit for every £1 invested. Local trade can be boosted by up to 40 per cent in an area where more people walk.

The ecological argument might have been historically quieter in church conversations, but more and more we’re realising that the creational mandate given to us in Genesis wasn’t just to the green-fingered, Spring Watch fans among us. The command to cultivate the earth doesn’t mean that we dominate it for selfish gain. We are to consider how we join God in His renewal of His entire creation; something we’ve mostly not done too well at.

In seeking to live under the reign of God’s sovereignty on this side of eternity, we are to be part of the conversation that redresses the imbalances that exist in our world. I, for one, can’t imagine the new kingdom as one that places financial gain as the ranking value. Nor as one where there is injustice or abuse, of either people or the world we find ourselves in. So by choosing the bicycle

– or more accurately, rejecting convenient personal car use – to get about, you’re healthier, benefitting society significantly, ecologically active, perpetuating kingdom values and an all-round better person*.

And it seems as though the Church is aware of this, with around a third of respondents to our survey into ethical consuming indicating that they have chosen the bike to commute in the last year. Many also embraced walking, public transport and car-sharing because it’s better for the environment and bank balance.

And I’m not even talking about the Lycra-clad, Tour de France wannabes. Think of our Dutch and Danish counterparts who use their bikes in droves to get to their places of work, study and play. ‘Citizen cyclists’; that’s the best description I’ve heard of this form of everyday cycling and the kind that I’m advocating.

So maybe the bike wasn’t created on the sixth day with humanity. That doesn’t mean that it shouldn’t be recognised as really, very good. Don’t you imagine the kingdom of God to have the most delightful air quality you’ve ever breathed? What are you waiting for, Church? On your bike.

** There is no guarantee that cycling will make you a better person*

We need your help to ensure the “missing generation” is no longer missing. *threads* is reaching out to the missing generation, young adults in their 20s and 30s who are leaving the Church in droves as they see faith as irrelevant, out of touch and side-lined from the very real issues they are facing.

For as little as £3 a month, you could become a supporter of *threads* and play your part in ensuring this generation is no longer missing – visit eauk.org/supportthreads or call 0207 520 3848





JOY: POET, SEEKER AND THE WOMAN WHO CAPTIVATED C.S. LEWIS

by Abigail Santamaria

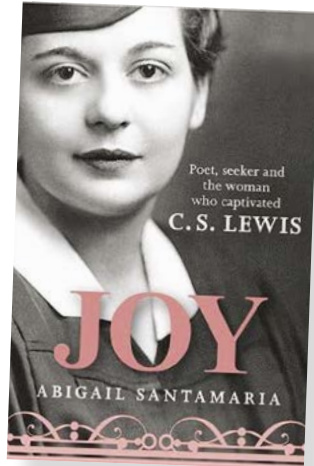
SPCK

Joy Davidman Gresham, who married C.S. Lewis, is well known from the various versions of *Shadowlands*. This fascinating biography draws on recently discovered papers and tells Joy's story in greater detail.

The 1930s depression caused Joy to embrace Communism, but her conversion arose from reading books by C.S. Lewis, and later a spiritual experience during a personal crisis.

Joy became infatuated with Lewis and she visited England with the intention of winning his affections, though she was still married to her first husband.

Reviewed by Graham Hedges



FOUND BY LOVE

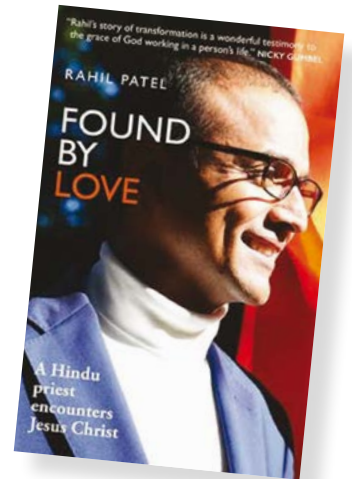
by Rahil Patel

Instant Apostle and is available from Lion Hudson c/o Marston.

Rahil Patel was a hugely successful Hindu priest. He rubbed shoulders with politicians, celebrities and industrialists who sought his spiritual counsel. Yet throughout, he had doubts about whether he was doing the right thing.

This well-written autobiography chronicles the thrilling story of how he secretly found himself being drawn to Jesus Christ, how this led him to lay down his role as a priest and eventually commit his life to following Christ and all that it meant for him.

Reviewed by Amanda Pilz



Want to receive *idea for leaders*, our regular e-mail for Christian leaders? Sign up to receive it straight to your inbox: eauk.org/signup

LEADERS' QUESTIONS

Have you ever felt under pressure to consume?

The Evangelical Alliance's survey on ethical consuming showed that 20 per cent of evangelicals feel under pressure to consume. It's a temptation that many of us battle with, but how do these two leaders resist? *idea* found out.



To understand the effect that advertising is having on us today, we need to consider the meaning of the word. Affect, in the noun refers to feeling or emotion, as in an expressed/observed emotional response; in the verb it refers to impressing the mind or moving the feelings of. In view of the above definition and the suggestion that people to some extent make decisions emotionally, the effect that advertising is having on us today is, in using messages and images to manipulate our feelings towards its own goals.

Rev. Samson Awak-Essien, Elim Central London Fellowship



There was certainly a time in my life when I sold out to all that advertising had to offer—from what I would wear to which holiday destination I would visit. On reflection, I was oblivious to the power that marketing was having on my bank balance. But in time I have come to realise that the 'dream' that advertising offers is not all that it is cut out to be. Having the latest gadget or trainers hasn't brought me any greater happiness. Yet, in having children, I have come to recognise the battle ensues, through in a different form, this time through a gentle and persistent: "Dad can you please buy me..."

Manoj Raithatha, national coordinator of the Evangelical Alliance's South Asian Forum

5 inspirationally ethical social media accounts to follow

Need a little inspiration on how to live ethically? Here are the *idea* team's favourite social media accounts to help us along the way. From Instagrammers who post beautiful images of their fair fashion outfits, to tweeters who suggest helpful ways to reduce waste, these are the ones to follow. Do you have your own top tweeters or inspirational Instagrammers, or consider yourself one? Let us know, by tweeting @idea_mag with the hashtag #ethicalinspo.

Rhythms

Tearfund's youth project, which posts articles daily on rhythms.org, teaches 18 to

30-year-olds how to "live differently". They write about their passion to live out justice through everyday actions, determined to make a difference in the world. Rhythms encourages readers to take small, everyday steps that change the way we all live and have conversations that help shape our understanding of what we can do to tackle the problems of poverty and injustice. 'Like' their Facebook page to be encouraged daily about the small things we can all do for a better world.



Rhythms take part in climate change demonstrates in 2015.



New for 2016, the #Imadeyourclothes campaign asks clothes producers to show the world who they are.

Fashion revolution

On 24 April 2013, 1,133 people were killed and more than 2,500 injured when the Rana Plaza factory complex collapsed in Dhaka, Bangladesh. It wasn't the first, nor was it the last, but it's symptomatic of how little respect is given to the people who make our clothes and the environment they work in. Fashion Revolution decided enough was enough. It asks consumers to be curious, to find out who made our clothes — from

who spun the threads, to who sewed them together and who grew the cotton in the first place. In more than 60 countries around the world, tens of thousands of people participate in Fashion Revolution Day on 24 April 2014. Find out more about the campaign by visiting the website, fashionrevolution.org. Then, follow on Instagram and Twitter to be inspired to speak out for those who are being treated unfairly for fashion.

@fash_rev

Beulah

Beulah London is a luxury fashion brand based on British design, heritage and the empowerment of women. Founded in 2010 by Natasha Rufus Isaacs and Lavinia Brennan, Beulah London was born out of a desire to design and produce beautiful clothes that empower and inspire the women who wear them, while being committed to raising awareness of the plight of women trapped by human slavery. The pair attend Alliance member church Holy Trinity Brompton, and revealed in *idea* magazine in 2012 their deep sense of God's calling them into this industry. Alongside the label sits the Beulah Trust, a charitable foundation with a clear goal of supporting projects and initiatives that create sustainable livelihoods for victims of trafficking. Follow the label on Instagram for a glimpse at their luxury clothes and the people who make them.

@beulahlondon



Image: Beulah tote bag, made by Freeset, a charity supporting trafficked and vulnerable women in Kolkata, India.

Beulah London founders Natasha and Lavinia with one of the women first involved with making Beulah tote bags in Kolkata, India.

Fairtrade

Fairtrade is an alternative approach to conventional trade and is based on a partnership between producers and consumers. When farmers can sell on Fairtrade terms, it provides them with a better deal and improved terms of trade. This allows them the opportunity to improve their lives and plan for their future. Fairtrade offers consumers a powerful way to reduce poverty through their everyday shopping. We're all familiar with the logo, but follow the organisation Twitter to see more about their work and the people their helping, along with retweeted articles to inspire you on the importance of ethical consuming.

@FAIRTRADE

Climate & Development Knowledge Network

The Climate & Development Knowledge Network supports decision-makers in designing and delivering climate compatible development, by combining research, advisory services and knowledge management in support of locally owned and managed policy processes. The Network, whose members include PricewaterhouseCoppers LLP, hold strongly to the ideals of human development and environmental sustainability. 'Like' their Facebook page for inspiring articles about their work and research, along with links to features on the future of the future of this development.

cdkn.org



Choosing to buy Fairtrade gives communities choices of their own.



CDKN say pro-poor, low carbon development is growth enhancing and can eradicate poverty.



In your words

We love hearing from you, so have your say on any of the issues raised in *idea* or make any comments about the Evangelical Alliance by emailing idea@eauk.org

CHRISTIAN LIBRARIANS CELEBRATE

Members of Christians in Library and Information Services - formerly the Librarians' Christian Fellowship - will be celebrating on Saturday, 23 April 2016 when we will be holding our 40th anniversary conference at the Regent Hall, in Oxford Street, London. The theme is "40 Years and Counting" and Nick Spencer, of Theos, and Rev. William Morris, of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, will be our guest speakers.

The booking fee is £30.00, with a reduced rate of £25.00 for unwaged delegates. Non-members are welcome and enquiries should be directed to me at the address above secretary@christianlis.org.uk.

Best wishes,

Graham Hedges, secretary

Via email

THANK YOU

Thank you for the Jan/Feb issue and the many commendable items – such as 10 steps to a healthier church, the young adult view of Church, and especially the check up for Church members article – although this was in connection with a look back at the archives.

They look so good you should reissue.

Humour is always a good way of approaching delicate problems, which need to be addressed please! If you don't think they are worth a general reissue, make them available upon request.

In Him,

Derek Redman

P.s 170 years Congratulations – we have been supporters for at least 20!

Via letter

I'M AN EVANGELICAL, TOO

Dave Kimber's letter in the Jan/Feb edition made me rather anxious. I pastor an independent evangelical church, but it seems Mr Kimber would like to strip me of my "evangelical" badge, one that I have happily worn since my conversion at the age of 16. But his scheme for drawing tighter boundaries round our evangelical family is fundamentally flawed, both theoretically and practically.

The real acid test of true faith, as John Stott succinctly pointed out, is submission to scripture (Luke 11:28), not subscription to a particular doctrine about scripture (inerrancy). It seems a supreme irony to me that in trying to defend scripture my more conservative colleagues have had to invent new words, doctrines and

HEARD IN TWEETS

Mike Tyler @MikeTylerSport Glad to see the latest edition of @idea_mag from @EAUknews is tackling the important issue of health. bit.ly/1UcmGrl

Chine McDonald @ChineMcDonald Actually enjoying our #meatfree week for @idea_mag: lunch - butternut squash & halloumi burgers from @Nigella_Lawson

Emma Fowle @emmajfowle My first @threadstweets article on the church & health in this month's @idea_mag bit. ly/1Zkf47n. Woop!

Andy Reed @AndyJReed_OBE @idea_mag @AmarisColeEA well done on looking at health & wellbeing - there is so much more the Church can do on this subject

Gavin Calver @GavCalver Just finished a last read through of mine & @AnneCalver's new book for @springharvest before it goes off to print!

definitions, which are not in scripture itself. Please can we accept that there are a great many bona fide evangelicals, like myself, who consider the doctrine of inerrancy to be a piece unnecessary theological gymnastics. However, we don't appreciate being asked to leave the family simple because we can't sign up to that view of scripture.

The practical flaw in Mr Kimber's argument is that he forgets that as soon as he has drawn his boundary and excluded me, someone else will come along with an even tighter set of boundaries and exclude him! We need an evangelicalism that is centred on the Bible as God's word, on the saving work of God in Christ's death and resurrection and on the need for personal salvation by faith. Let's centre our evangelicalism on those core issues and not boundary it on secondary ones.

Yours sincerely,

Rev Richard Bentley

Hull

Via email

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idea is published bi-monthly and sent free of charge to members of the Evangelical Alliance. Formed in 1846, the Alliance's mission is to unite evangelicals to present Christ credibly as good news for spiritual and social transformation. There are around two million evangelical Christians in the UK, according to a 2007 Tearfund survey.

idea is published in accordance with the Alliance's Basis of Faith, although it is impossible in every article to articulate each detail and nuance of belief held by Alliance members. Articles in *idea* may therefore express views on which there is a

divergence of opinion or understanding among evangelicals.

Letters and story ideas from members are welcome, and will be considered by the editorial board, which reserves the right to edit letters and stories for length and style. We regret that we are unable to engage in personal correspondence. Unsolicited material will only be returned if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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Open your eyes

Let me make a confession. I've read John 4, the amazing encounter of Jesus with the Samaritan woman at the well, many times, and indeed preached on it often. John devotes almost a whole chapter to this conversation and the events that follow. Most of us will know the significance of the situation: Jesus the Jewish Rabbi is in the wrong place at the wrong time, and speaking to the wrong type of person – according to the social norms of his time.



So, to the confession: it was only when I was reading the story again recently that I realised the significance of what happened next. The disciples returned from the village and there is a conversation about food. It seems they had acquired some and were determined that Jesus should eat. But Jesus had other things on his mind. It's almost as if he's too excited to eat. Something is happening and his disciples are missing it. In exasperation he says to them: "Open your eyes and look at the fields".

As a church leader or someone who has been around Church for a while, I know how easy it is to have my eyes focused in all kinds of directions - meetings to be planned, sermons to be written, small groups to be organised, rotas to be finalised – I could go on. A bit like the disciples who were so concerned about the food and why Jesus wasn't eating. It's so easy to miss out on what's happening before our very eyes. God is at work, and we fail to recognise it.

Then the disciples open their eyes and look. Suddenly they begin to see what Jesus is seeing, the people of a Samaritan

village making their way towards him. The Samaritan woman, having met and spoken with Jesus, has become the first evangelist by telling her story. And so, the rest of the village wants to find out more.

I'm so grateful that God's purposes on earth are not totally dependent on me, or indeed us as his followers. We have our part to play, but wonderfully God is already at work. And so it is, that I continue to ask God to open my eyes afresh to see where He's at work and how I can join in with Him.

One of the wonderful privileges I have in fulfilling my role at the Evangelical Alliance is that I get to travel to so many parts of the UK and meet some amazing people with wonderful stories to tell of God at work - and of His people joining in. Despite rumours to the contrary, God hasn't given up on our country, indeed His Church is very much alive and making a profoundly significant contribution into so many communities. It's also wonderful to hear accounts of people committing themselves to Christ. We'd love to see and hear more stories coming in week after week from all kinds of church

backgrounds, in all kinds of different ways. But perhaps the words of Jesus to his disciples in John 4 could speak to us in 21st century Britain: "Open your eyes and look at the fields. They are ripe for harvest."

The leadership team at the local church my family are part of recently spent an afternoon discussing a simple and yet profoundly significant question. What would it mean for us to be first and foremost a 'making Jesus known church', a bit like the Samaritan woman, introducing Jesus to our community? The discussion was fascinating and the outcome challenging. It caused me to ask myself, what would it be like if every church across the United Kingdom were to ask the same question and put their conclusions into practice? We know with certainty that God is committed to making His Son known and that the most loving act we, as His followers, can fulfill is to introduce people to Jesus. Like the Samaritan woman, we get the privilege of joining in the mission of God and watch in prayerful anticipation what harvest will result.

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The week we love every neighbour

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Ketchup optional.

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