

CRES: The Church in Action

For some years now we have held the CRES residential in Ripon College Cuddesdon nr. Oxford in September. We have decided to open up the Friday (1st September) of the residential to day visitors as we have an excellent and very interesting programme. In the afternoon we will visit two churches, one with a new churchyard extension project and wild meadow, and the other a recent recipient of a Bronze Eco Church Award. In the evening Rev. Alex Mabbs will lead a session on "Money to Burn: climate change and Church investments". So we will see a whole variety of ways that the Church can engage with environmental issues!

Timetable for 1st September 2017

11.00am Arrive Cuddesdon for coffee in the Common Room.

11.45 to 1.00 Introduction to the weekend and CRES news. Introduction to the afternoon field trip (Graham Room).

1-2 Lunch

2.00 Leave promptly for field trip (bring suitable walking shoes)

2.30 to 3.20approx. Visit St. Dunstan's, Monks Risborough, led by Rev. James Tomkins and his team. St. Dunstan's is the oldest recorded ecclesiastical parish in the country with a charter dating back to 903 AD. We will visit their innovative churchyard extension project. After the creation of a path in to the churchyard extension, work was begun to create a wild meadow. This involved planting a wide variety of species which occur locally such as Field Scabius, Oxeye Daisy and Red Campion. The idea was to create an environment where bugs and insects can flourish as the land is gradually brought into use for burials over the coming years.

3.20 Leave for Chinnor

3.30 Arrive St Andrew's, Chinnor for a visit led by Rev. Maggie Thorne and her team. The churches in this area have been involved in environmental issues for many years and were part of the "Chiltern Gateway Project", an A Rocha UK associated project in the past. CRES visited the project on a number of

occasions. Things have moved on, and St Andrew's is now engaged in the Eco Church scheme, and recently gained a Bronze Award. What are they doing now?

5.00 approx return to Cuddesdon

6.00 to 7.00 Dinner in Cuddesdon

7.00 to 7.30 1st year CRES student presentations (Graham Room)

7.30 to 9.00 Rev. Alex Mabbs* will lead a session on "Money to Burn: climate change and Church investments" (Graham Room)

There is more to tackling climate change than LED lightbulbs. Changing individual behaviour is important, but the behaviour of the oil, gas and coal industries is also important. How can we bring about change and a transition to an economy that's no longer reliant on burning fossil fuels? We will consider divestment as a tool for change, as well as the alternative approach of influencing through share-holder engagement. The Churches have power to influence change through their investment policies. Money talks, and Church money talks with a moral accent, but what is the best way to make its voice heard in the cause of the Kingdom of God, being faithful to Jesus?

9.15 to 9.45 Short service and reflection (Chapel)



* Rev. Alex Mabbs is the minister of Brighthelm Church and Community Centre in Brighton, Sussex, and co-facilitator of Open Sky Forest Church. Brighthelm is exploring how a church can engage with its local community for the flourishing of life on earth, bringing together three dimensions of faith, community and care for the environment. Alex is also a trustee of Operation Noah, a Christian charity equipping the Church to respond to climate change, including campaigning for divestment from fossil fuels. In 2014 Brighthelm became the first UK local church to divest.

Alex studied theology in Manchester, graduating in 1995. Since then he has been a United Reformed Church minister in south-west London and in Hove, before moving to Brighthelm in 2014. Alex writes an occasional, wide-ranging blog at alexmabbs.com Off-duty, Alex enjoys jive dancing, playing the guitar and any excuse to be outdoors. He is married to Louise, who is a textile artist, and they have three young adult offspring.

Booking for “The Church in Action”

Please note that **ALL** who intend to come to Cuddesdon must book **by 21st August**, but the external examiner, speakers, current students and tutors and members of the steering group do not have to pay, as costs relating to the weekend are written into the fees for the CRES course. Spouses of all categories are expected to pay. If you are coming for the whole of Friday (including lunch and dinner) the charge is £45; for the Friday field trip (not including dinner and evening) the charge is £30. Many on the CRES course will be staying on to the next day. Other charges available on request! Bookings will be dealt with by the CRES administrator, Lynda McKeown. For those who do not have to pay please send an email indicating how long you will be staying to cres@jri.org.uk

If you do need to pay then please email (or write) to Lynda indicating how long you will be staying and then pay in one of these ways:

1) By bank transfer into the JRI account using the following account details:

Sort code: 40-52-40

Account: 00098437

Bank details: CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ

Reference: CRES and your surname.

2) By enclosing an appropriate cheque made out to THE JOHN RAY INITIATIVE and sending it to: The CRES Administrator, THE JOHN RAY INITIATIVE (JRI), City Works, Alfred Street, Gloucester GL1 4DF, UK Telephone (mobile): 07583 481759.

Please book early. Travel directions etc. will be forwarded to you with confirmation of your booking.