

St Catherine's Church

Festival Sunday -18th March 2018 10am



Message in a bottle



During the Telegraph Hill Festival, St Catherine's Church is once again hosting a special 'Festival Sunday' which this year, we're calling PLASTIC SUNDAY, on Sunday 18th March. This is a special service where many of those who have been involved in planning, performing or attending the local Telegraph Hill Festival join us to celebrate.

During the Festival there will be several events focusing on what we can do to protect our precious planet. At a time when the whole nation has been challenged about reducing plastic we too want to respond and re-commit ourselves to doing more to reduce our use of plastics, some of which ends up in our oceans, killing sea life and endangering our precious eco-system.

To help us make a public act of commitment we are asking everyone in our community who is coming on to the Festival Sunday to do 4 simple things:

- 1 Find a disused plastic milk bottle (it can be a 1,2 or even 4 pint) and decorate the outside with a felt pen, stickers or pattern.
- 2 Think about how you have used this bottle and what will happen to it once you have thrown it away.¹
- 3 On a small piece of paper, or 'Post-It Note' write either a:
 - **Simple Pledge** stating what one thing you will do to reduce your use of plastic, or
 - **Short Prayer** asking God to help us care more about our oceans
- 4 Put this pledge or prayer in the bottle and once you have fastened the cap bring the bottle to Church with you on the 18th March.



During the service we will take up an offering of bottles and display them as a public act of solidarity, commitment and care for our world.² Who knows we may get up to 200 unique messages, pledges, or prayers in a bottle!

¹ Different plastics can degrade at different times, but the average time for a plastic bottle to completely degrade is 450 years.

A PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

God of the oceans, mysterious, measureless and deep;

We stand in the shallows of what there is to know about your creation.

Forgive us when unknowingly we have contributed to the vandalism of our world.

Forgive us when knowingly we have colluded with our convenience and dishonoured our obligations to be good stewards of our planet.

God of the Oceans

Response: *May the waves of your mercy wash over us as we acknowledge our mistakes.*

God of the sea creatures, spectacular, varied and sleek

We know so little of the way these lives evolve

Forgive our arrogance that just because we can't see them, they somehow do not matter

Forgive our thoughtlessness and our laziness which has contributed to the toxicity of their environment

God of the little creatures

Response: *May we have the courage to make big changes so that all creatures can live.*

God of our landmass where billions of us now live and breathe

We marvel at the way the sun comes up each day and bathes our world in light

Forgive us that when our rampant materialism has choked your creation.

Forgive us when we have thought only of ourselves and defaulted on our debt to others

God of all humankind

Response: *May the light of your love reveal the darkness in our behaviour.*

God of sacrificial love who showed us through your Son

how to live, and forgive, in authentic ways

We ache for justice in our world and an end to the violence and despair.

Help us to act humbly, do mercy and work for the common good.

Help us to renew our commitment to our world and give us the courage to live out the pledges and prayers we have made for our environment.

God who is pure purge us of our pollution and greed

Response: Give us ways to find solutions to our mistakes and the will to do what is right.

For the sake of your creation. Amen

2 During the festival we will also be hosting a unique art installation called 'Tragic Harvest' where nets will be hung high in the branches of the trees outside the church on which sea creatures (made by children from recycled plastic), will be suspended.