**Climate Emergency**

This is a proposal for St Matthew’s publicly to recognise the climate emergency and begin a coordinated effort to respond, based on the fifth mark of Mission *‘to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth*’ and the calling on us to love our neighbours.

**Why recognise a climate emergency?**

* Global heating is already causing a rise in sea levels, increase in ocean acidity, and an increase in extreme weather events and droughts. Tearfund and other NGOs have identified climate change as a contributor to rising hunger globally and in making storms, floods and droughts more severe for people already living in poverty.
* These changes, predicted to become significantly more severe, are set to affect the lives, health, food and water supplies and economic security of many millions of people catastrophically, and the fundamental ecosystems on which humans and other life depend.
* There is broad agreement that the next 8 years offer an unrepeatable window of opportunity for action.
* The Covid-19 pandemic has shown us the importance of listening to scientific advice and the fragility of the systems we all depend on daily.

As Christians we have reason to speak and act in this area:

* We have a mandate to speak truth without fear. This includes the truth of the precious interdependence of God’s creation, of which we are only a part. It also includes warning of the need for radical action to mitigate future disaster, in the Biblical tradition of Noah, Jeremiah, Jesus and Agabus.
* We are called to show love to our neighbours around the world already suffering the effects of climate change, and to act now to reduce catastrophic harm in the future.
* We are called to act with hope, refusing the temptation to despair, moralism or self-preservation. Our witness of love is a witness to the power and freedom of the gospel.

The act of declaring an emergency is supported by: Tearfund, Christian Aid, Operation Noah, A Rocha UK and many other organisations. They recognise the importance of national political action and individual lifestyle change, but also the role every church and charity can play.

**What can we do?**

We can formally acknowledge the climate emergency and announce this on our website and through other channels and provide information about our progress in achieving eco-church status. This will demonstrate that we understand the imperative upon us all and are committed to practical action and living out the calls to love, justice and mission.

The Church of England is committed to being net zero by 2030, and we commit to exploring how we can achieve this at St Matthew’s.

We can use our influence for change, by:

* Seeking to influence our church school and other local churches to make their own declarations
* Reaching out to those in the community who are already campaigning on these issues locally, to work together and offer our support.
* Encouraging members to ask others to recognise the emergency, including their workplaces, other churches, charities, schools and businesses – as part of living out our mission in the world around us.

**Suggested wording for agreement from PCC:**

St Matthew’s PCC formally acknowledge the climate emergency. We understand the imperative upon us all and are committed to practical action and living out the calls to love, justice and mission. We maintain our coordinated efforts to respond to the climate emergency, through our continued efforts as an eco-Church and through individual actions, based on the fifth mark of Mission *‘to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth*’ and the calling on us to love our neighbours.



Passed at PCC 15 March 2022