



A church in Bryn a Môr Mission Area has been awarded the first silver Eco-Church award in the diocese. This is a significant step forward in the move to become an Eco-Diocese. The Revd Gregor Lachlann-Waddell, the recently appointed curate of Ss Cyndeyrn and Asaph in Llanasa, explains how they achieved it.

"...So I will build my altar in the fields.
And the blue sky my fretted dome shall be,
And sweet fragrance that the wild flowers yields
Shall be the incense I will yield to thee..."

(To Nature, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, c 1820)

When I arrived to start my curacy in Bryn a Môr, I was excited that I would be serving in an area of outstanding natural beauty. One of the previous incumbents of Llanasa was the Revd Stuart Elliot who had done a lot of conservation work during his time there and our church family has continued this work. I have always been interested in conservation and I am fortunate to have David Lewis as my training incumbent who is encouraging me in this.

Some of our church family have strong links with the Llanasa Conservation Society (I am an honorary member). Together we take care of the plants and wildlife around our village and in our churchyards. During Summer 2020, we spent time in the churchyard weeding and planting bee-friendly flowers. Under the stewardship of the Conservation Society, we are working with the Probation Service in the care and the upkeep of the cemetery. This involves a programme of encouraging natural wildlife, semi-wild fauna, and flora.

As a rural church, we had a conservation report drawn up by the Wildlife Trust which gave us recommendations on how to manage the land around the church. From this report and through the hard work of our wardens, the church family, and the Conservation Society, we have created an environment which is beautiful and tranquil for humans and wildlife alike.

I am hoping to establish a Forest Church soon from which I can take people into nature and teach us all (including myself) how to be better stewards of the Kingdom. I am currently working towards getting the other two churches in my area signed up as Eco-Churches and the intention is to get the whole Mission Area on board!

As part of our teaching for the Mission Area, we are running a Lent course from the organisation Operation Noah called *Tenants of the King*. This course is designed to help us have open and honest conversations about what purpose God has planned for us, his Church and his creation. During Harvest, on Creation Sunday and in Ordinary Time we plan to focus our prayers and teaching on the environment and care for creation.

Chapter 16 of St Mark's Gospel reminds us of Jesus' commission to his disciples: "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation." The beauty of this is that Stuart Elliot and members of the Church planted this seed for caring for God's creation in the past and it is flourishing to this day.

There are resources to help you sign up your church as an Eco-Church at <https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/faieth-in-action/eco-church/>