

IPCC Climate Report, August 2021

*Summarised by Henry Rawstone,
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The latest evaluation from the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) makes it clear that we are on the edge of a cliff of our own making concerning global warming if greenhouse-gas emissions continue and clarifies that the eventual fate of the planet depends, in no small part, on the decisions that mankind makes today. Modern society's dependence on fossil fuels is warming the world at a pace that is unparalleled in the past two millennia, and its effects are already apparent as record droughts, wildfires and floods devastate communities worldwide, according to this landmark report. Anyone turning on the news this summer cannot be unaware of these events occurring globally with increasing frequency and severity.

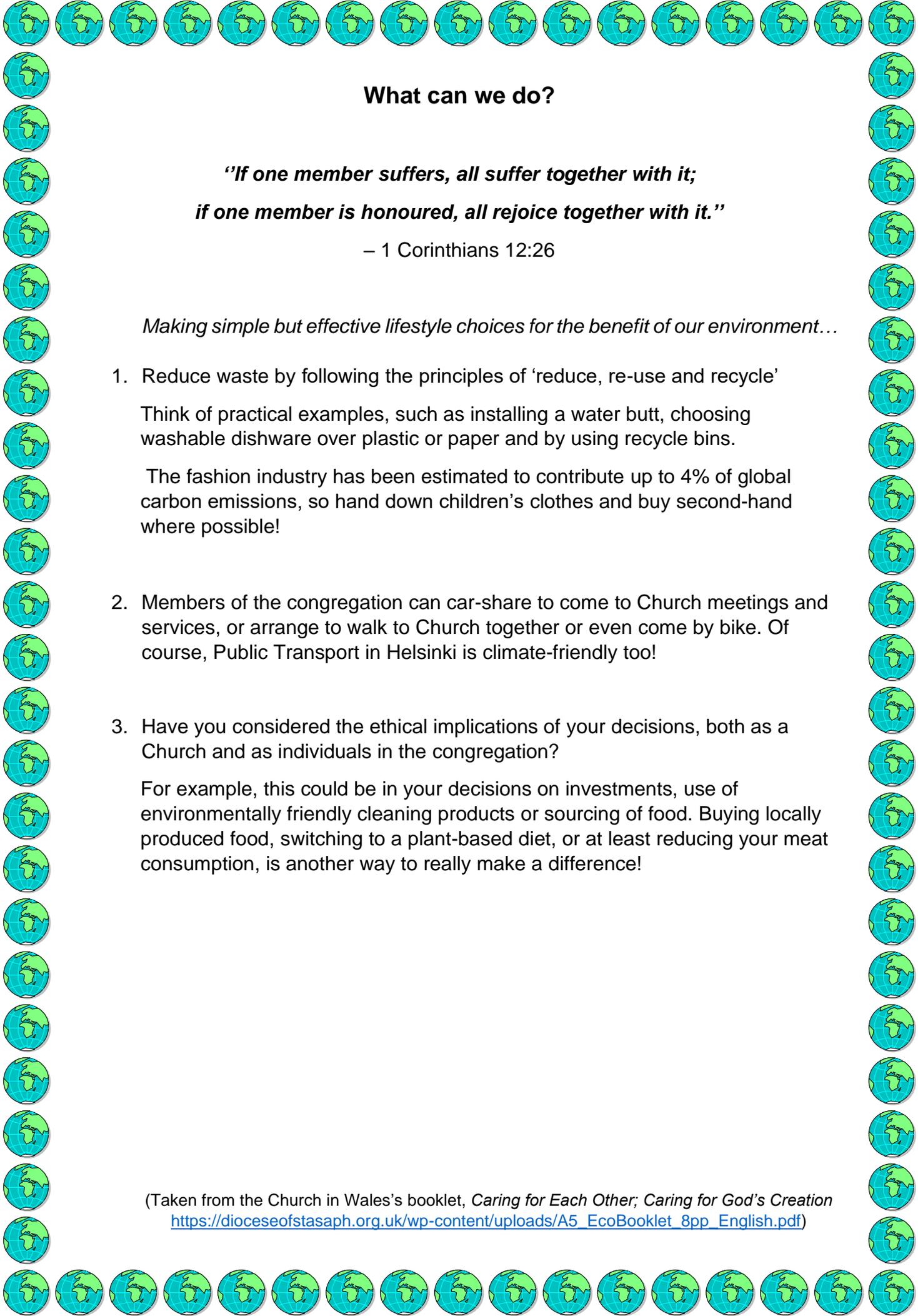
Put together by more than 200 scientists over a lengthy period and endorsed by 195 governments during a virtual online meeting last week, the report is the first of three evaluating the condition of environmental change and endeavours to moderate it and adjust to it. The report, part of the IPCC's 6th environment evaluation since 1990, is released less than 90 days before the following major worldwide environmental focal point in Glasgow, UK. There, governments will have the chance to make promises to switch their course of action and minimise their emissions.

One climatologist, Xuebin Zhang, states that 'the evidence is everywhere' and that 'if we don't act, the situation is going to get really bad'. Zhang is from Environment Canada in Toronto, Ontario, and is a coordinating lead author on the report, which was released on 9 August.

In the event that worldwide carbon emissions hit net zero by around 2050, an objective that numerous nations have focused on over the previous year, then, at that point the world can accomplish the objective from the 2015 Paris accord and reduce the unnatural temperature change to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels throughout the span of the twenty-first century, says Valérie Masson-Delmotte, a climatologist at the Laboratory of Climate and Environmental Sciences in Gif-sur-Yvette, France. She goes on to say that 'the environment we experience in the future relies upon our choices now'.

Earth's worldwide surface temperature has risen by around 1.1 °C contrasted to the normal level in 1850–1900. This is a level that has not been seen for 125,000 years prior, before the latest ice age. This is only one of the grim realities showing up in an outline delivered with the IPCC report that is planned for policymakers.

To the question of whether it is still possible to limit global warming to 1.5 °C, Maisa Roja gives an unequivocal 'yes'. Maisa is a coordinating lead author on the report and director of the University of Chile's Center for Climate and Resilience Research in Santiago. However, Maisa continues that 'unless there are immediate, rapid and large-scale reductions of all greenhouse gases, limiting global warming to 1.5 °C will be beyond reach.'



What can we do?

***“If one member suffers, all suffer together with it;
if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.”***

– 1 Corinthians 12:26

Making simple but effective lifestyle choices for the benefit of our environment...

1. Reduce waste by following the principles of ‘reduce, re-use and recycle’

Think of practical examples, such as installing a water butt, choosing washable dishware over plastic or paper and by using recycle bins.

The fashion industry has been estimated to contribute up to 4% of global carbon emissions, so hand down children’s clothes and buy second-hand where possible!

2. Members of the congregation can car-share to come to Church meetings and services, or arrange to walk to Church together or even come by bike. Of course, Public Transport in Helsinki is climate-friendly too!

3. Have you considered the ethical implications of your decisions, both as a Church and as individuals in the congregation?

For example, this could be in your decisions on investments, use of environmentally friendly cleaning products or sourcing of food. Buying locally produced food, switching to a plant-based diet, or at least reducing your meat consumption, is another way to really make a difference!

(Taken from the Church in Wales’s booklet, *Caring for Each Other; Caring for God’s Creation*
https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/A5_EcoBooklet_8pp_English.pdf)