

# CVAUK NEWSLETTER, SPRING 2013



**Welcome back to the CVAUK newsletter, Spring 2013 edition.**

This newsletter is distributed by e-mail or post to all members of CVAUK. However our membership secretary is trying to bring membership records up-to-date, and **lots of membership forms are currently outstanding.**

So please respond to this plea from the heart from Brenda:

***If you have not done so already, PLEASE can you fill in an updated Membership Form? We are not requesting a membership fee from those who have already paid a pledge. We are simply trying to construct a workable record of current members, which requires your permission to keep your details on our database.***

We will not be able to continue to send the newsletter without this information, so please use the membership form that is being sent with this newsletter and let Brenda have your details **today!**

**In this issue we are featuring:**

- one more tribute to Don Gwillim;
- ideas for engaging with your local church;
- the IF campaign;
- focus on young people;
- farm animal welfare;
- more resources - a radio programme and more about shoes;
- events coming up;
- and a final thought for Easter.

**Please remember that we welcome contributions from members.**

Please send us:

- interesting (short) articles;
- news of any local activities you have been involved in to promote the values of CVAUK;
- information about events that might interest CVAUK members; and
- miscellaneous items such as book reviews, recipes and information about useful resources .

If you have anything that you would like to contribute to the next newsletter please e-mail it to us at [sampsons@dsl.pipex.com](mailto:sampsons@dsl.pipex.com) **before the end of June 2013.**

**Philip and Miriam Sampson**

**Tributes to our founder, Don Gwillim, keep coming in...**

*Don Gwillim was interviewed several times on Premier Christian Radio about "Veg for Lent" & Christian vegetarianism etc. It was courageous of him to speak on the radio, knowing that he would be heard by tens of thousands of listeners!*

*Several years ago when I thought I'd be away & wouldn't be able to put up posters & replenish the leaflet shelf at the 'Christian Resources Exhibition' in Sandown, Surrey, Don volunteered to take on the task. As it turned out, I was able to do this - but I've never forgotten Don's kindness in immediately offering to help.*

Ann Wills.

## Local initiatives - focusing on the local church.

In the last issue we raised the question "What can CVAUK members do?" and our secretary, **Brenda Ryder**, suggested some ideas, including using the idea of "Veg for Lent" to engage people.

Since then we have heard from one of our members in South London about what he has been doing, through his local vegan group, to engage with local churches:

*"I'm **Thomas Micklewright** from south east London. In my spare time I run the South London Vegan & Veggie Society. We have local groups in Dulwich, Brixton, Clapham, Crystal Palace, Lewisham and Canada Water, holding monthly meetings where we eat great vegan food and chat about vegan issues. One of our current campaigns has been to network with churches in South East London, encouraging their congregation to try a meat free day. I went about this by meeting the leaders of the churches, giving them leaflets from the Christian Vegetarian Association and the Vegan Society about how reducing our meat consumption is great for the environment, our health and animal welfare. All these positive changes are good, loving things, the exact actions that Jesus has called us to undertake.*



*Out of the 5 churches contacted, all of them displayed leaflets, 2 mentioned the group and meat free days in their sermon and newsletter, and I have follow up meetings coming soon. I have also cooked vegan food for my small group, and also take soya milk to each Sunday service to give to the cafe for people who would like to use it as the cafe currently only has cow's milk. I would encourage all veggie or vegan Christians to share their thoughts on meat reduction with their church, and see if they can get a meat free day running in their local area.*

If you would like to get involved with this group please contact Thomas on [thomasmicklewright@gmail.com](mailto:thomasmicklewright@gmail.com) or 07789 322 920 and he will add you to the e-newsletter, or check out the website [www.dvvs.vegangroup.co.uk](http://www.dvvs.vegangroup.co.uk)

Thomas' initiative inspired us (Philip and Miriam) to think about how we might do more to engage people in our own local church. This is our experience:

*In January this year we were asked to do some teaching on a Sunday night on the subject of Creation, followed by discussion groups. We took the perspective of "Joy in Creation", and you can find the text of our talk, and our PowerPoint presentation, in Philip's Academia pages here: <http://independent.academia.edu/PhilipSampson>*

*Following the talk we provided questions for the discussion groups, and one question floated the idea of a "meat free day" every week. This met with a mixed response, but a few weeks later we decided to approach the church leaders with the idea of a "Lent Challenge", to encourage members of the church to sign up to a meat-free day each week during Lent.*

*To our surprise, this met with a fair amount of support, and we were asked to provide recipes etc. to help people. The Lent Challenge was enthusiastically launched by our Youth Minister in the morning service before the beginning of Lent, supported by the Senior Minister in the evening. We have been really encouraged that over 40 people in the church have signed up, including the key leaders. We are sending an e-mail to them each week throughout Lent, containing a reflection on a Bible passage about creation, and the detrimental impact of intensive farming on animals, the environment and the poor, together with some recipe ideas and information about meat-free eating. So far we've had only positive feedback.*

*Through this initiative we have discovered another vegetarian couple in the congregation, and also a number of people who have told us they had already started to cut down on their meat-eating, so they are using the Lent Challenge to introduce an additional meat-free day into their week.*

We hope to put the resources we have produced on the CVAUK website in due course.

We would love to hear how other CVAUK members have tried to engage their local church with issues around ethical eating, and to find out what your experience has been. With all the recent news items about problems with meat products and the health risks attached to eating processed meat, people seem to be much more open now to talking about making changes in their diets, so we would continue to encourage you all to think and pray about ways in which we can make a difference, and to share them in this newsletter.

## Global initiatives - the IF campaign



You are probably already aware of **the IF campaign** focusing on world food issues. This has recently been launched by a coalition of international development organisations - including major Christian organisations such as Christian Aid, CAFOD and Tear Fund - in the run-up to the G8 summit which is being held in Northern Ireland in June. In the days before the G8, David Cameron will host a "Hunger Summit", gathering world leaders together to discuss how to tackle global hunger. The IF campaign is the largest campaign focusing on issues of world hunger and food provision since Make Poverty History in 2005.

The IF campaign sets out its aims as follows:

*The world produces enough food for everyone, but more than two million children die every year because they can't get enough to eat.*

*The food system is broken. In 2013, we need our leaders to do **four important things** to fix it. **IF** they take these steps, it will change the future for millions of children.*

The "**four important things**" that the campaign has identified are:

**Investment:** *By meeting existing government promises on international aid, and providing more and better finance for sustainable small-scale agriculture and child nutrition.*

**Land:** *Ensuring fair and sustainable use of land so it contributes to food security, and growth and development which benefits poor people. Cutting down on the use of agricultural land for biofuels.*

**Tax:** *Stopping big companies dodging tax in poor countries, so that millions of people can free themselves from hunger.*

**Transparency:** *Ensuring that governments and big corporations are honest and open about their actions that stop people getting enough food.*

These are laudable aims, which deserve support, but no doubt you have also noticed that one major contribution to world hunger, which all members of CVAUK are acutely aware of, is completely ignored in this campaign; it is, of course, the enormous resources which go into meat production! At the very least, intensive meat production takes grain that could be used to feed poor people in the developing world, and uses it to rear animals for people in the rich West to eat instead. Even in years of famine, many countries in the developing world are net exporters of grain to feed animals destined for Western tables, while they don't have enough food to nourish children in their own countries.

We will be supporting the IF campaign, but we will also be writing to the particular development charities that we support to ask why the impact of global meat production on world hunger, arguably much more significant than the use of land to grow biofuels, has been completely ignored in this campaign, and we will mention that we belong to CVAUK. Can we urge other CVAUK members to do the same?



The impact of meat production on climate change is gradually being recognised, and it's about time that major international development agencies started to take on board its impact on world hunger as well. Perhaps we can help that to happen.

If you would like more information about the impact of meat production on world hunger, to use in your letter, please e-mail us and we'll be happy to send some. Then let us know what response you get to any letters that you write, and share with us any other ideas you may have about how we can bring this issue to wider public attention.

## Focus on Young People

### **A - Young Vegetarians and Vegans**

There's lots of evidence available that vegetarian and vegan diets are being adopted by more young people. Here are some encouraging pieces of news from across the world about vegetarianism and young people:

- **BRAZIL** - Brazil's Vegetarian Society has organised successful Meatless Monday campaigns in schools and restaurants. In Sao Paulo, the largest city (population over 11 million), all 3,000 educational units have adopted Meatless Mondays.
- **USA** - The University of North Texas has five dining halls for students and has made one of them, Mean Greens, completely vegan. This is believed to be the first exclusively vegan eatery on any major campus.
- **USA** - The Vegetarian Resource Group analyses surveys.
  - VRG reports that, in 1995, approximately 2% of 8 to 18 years olds were vegetarian, with 4% of that number being vegan.
  - By 2005, approximately 3% were vegetarian, but between 33% and 50% of that number were vegan. The percentage of vegetarians varied across gender and age groups, for example the highest number of vegetarians (11%) was found in girls aged 13 to 15.
  - By 2010, a poll indicated that 7% of 8 to 18 year olds never eat meat and 3% never eat meat, poultry or fish/seafood. Of that 3% (the vegetarians), 33% were vegan, never eating dairy, eggs, and honey. A further 33% were vegan, except for honey. Therefore, about two-thirds of vegetarians in the US youth population are either vegan, or vegan except for honey.

This information has been provided by **Isle of Wight Vegetarians & Vegans**, who also comment: *Vegetarian and vegan campaigns can achieve the greatest reduction in animal suffering by targeting young people, who are more inclined to question and change their eating habits and lifestyles. With many years ahead of them, an early change to vegetarian or vegan living would mean less demand for animal products over a long term.*

### **B - Christian Ecology Link survey for 18-30s**

Christian Ecology Link want to engage with more people under 30, so if you are in touch with young adults in the 18- 30 age group, please ask them to complete the CEL survey.

CEL writes: *We have now designed "THE NEXT GREEN GENERATION SURVEY" to stimulate suggestions*

<http://www.greenchristian.org.uk/archives/4894>

*Please do visit it and jot down a few lines, filling in the comment box online at the bottom of the post (rather than sending a private email to the information officer) because then your good ideas will be there for all to see, and may generate more good ideas.*

## 4 Farm Animal Welfare

As vegetarians, we must all have to live alongside friends and relatives who are resolutely carnivorous. We may not be able to persuade them to change to a plant-based diet (although we keep that hope alive), but we can show them that there are ethical choices for non-vegetarians to make in purchasing their food - as the vegetarians amongst us must, in sourcing our eggs and dairy.



To this end the **RSPCA launched Freedom Food** ([http://WWM. freedomfood.co.uk](http://WWM.freedomfood.co.uk)), the only farm assurance scheme to be recognised at both UK and EU levels as a mark of higher animal welfare. This is measured against the 'Five Freedoms' defined by the Farm Animal Welfare Council.

- Freedom from hunger and thirst
- Freedom from discomfort
- Freedom from pain, injury or disease
- Freedom to express normal behaviour
- Freedom from fear and distress

The day-to-day role of this organization is to assess farms against the RSPCA's strict welfare standards. Every Freedom Food Member is subject to unannounced monitoring visits from the RSPCA's Farm Livestock Officers. They also assess hatcheries, transporters, animal handlers, abattoirs and processors because Freedom Food covers the whole of a farm animal's life from birth to slaughter.

The RSPCA and Freedom Food acknowledge 'there is an awfully long way to go' – but they are working with all sectors involved in food production to keep standards evolving and improving, which has already resulted in a better quality of life for many farm animals.

**Compassion in World Farming** ([ciwf. org.uk](http://ciwf.org.uk)) has brought out a **Compassionate Food Guide** for people who care where their food comes from. And in fact the Freedom Food website cites research showing more than 70% of people are concerned about farm animal welfare and elsewhere that 48% of Britons say that animal welfare is either 'extremely' or 'very' important to them when choosing what food to buy.



In the Compassionate Food Guide it is only the labels for RSPCA Freedom Food, the Soil Association and the Scottish Organic Producers Association (SOPA) that reach the higher animal welfare potential, with the latter two Associations scoring exceptionally well. Other certifications do not reach these higher animal welfare standards.

Comment from John Ryder: *So much for the humane approach to farm animals. But have you been challenged by Christians who quote 'God has given us dominion over all the beasts' ? (Gen. Ch. 1 v. 26 ) implying (in their minds) that other creatures*

*are here for us to dispose of as we will. This is to misunderstand the dynamic of the relationship, which is like the one God has with us: Authority, yes, but combined with love and care. The Book of Genesis gives a moving and beautiful account of God surveying all He has made and declaring it to be good (Ch. 1 v. 13).*

*In that time of innocence before the Fall, God's instruction was to follow a vegan diet - 'And God gave every seed-bearing plant and trees with seed-bearing fruit . . .' (Gen. Ch. 1 v. 29). We do live in a fallen world but even those Christians who have strayed from the original plan should try to show loving concern for all God's creatures by causing them the least possible suffering.*

*We can hope and pray that meat-eating Christians who come to appreciate that all God's creatures are sentient and can suffer, will in due course take further steps to embrace a vegetarian/vegan lifestyle.*

### **[A fascinating Christian vegetarian archive!](#)**

One of our members, **John Gilheany**, has compiled a fascinating Christian vegetarian archive, which you can find here: **[Christian Vegetarianism - an archive](#)**

John writes: *Our forerunners possessed an immense amount of theological wisdom which sadly became lost yet deserves to reach the present generation of campaigners or advocates.*

If you are interested in the history of Christian vegetarianism it is an invaluable resource, containing all sorts of informative documents. It's also great encouragement to see how many Christian people in the past thought seriously about issues concerning animal welfare and diet, as part of their worship and service to God. It's well worth having a trawl around it.

## Events :

We have recently received information about **Vegan Camp** which is an annual event run entirely by volunteers.



**Vegan Camp** is a friendly and enjoyable annual social gathering for singles, couples and families. Each year we choose a new location with people coming to stay from day visits to the full two weeks. Most stay at the site itself but some stay in luxury holiday dwellings on site or in nearby accommodation, and visit during the day.

**This year, the location is Kilkhampton, which is near Bude in Cornwall. It's from Sat 3rd to Sat 17th August. All welcome - any period of stay.**

We usually have between 60 and 130 people, over the 2 week period, and there is always a friendly, helpful and fun atmosphere. It's also a great opportunity for vegan children to meet others and see that they are not the odd one out. Many friendships are formed.

We often have communal meals (sometimes with a talent show), sing songs, camp fires (if allowed) and just general lounge-about. We enjoy going on outings, walks, having picnics, and visiting local places of interest. We can draw on the many talents and enthusiasm of some of those attending to put on events which in the past have included: circus skills workshops, first aid lessons, raw and wild food workshops, rock climbing, surfing, orienteering, meditation, yoga etc: We always welcome new skills, offers and suggestions.

For full details and to download booking forms please go to <http://www.vegancamp.co.uk/>

**To find information about more vegetarian/vegan events across the UK, try this website:** <http://www.vegetarianguides.co.uk/calendar/index.shtml>

One of our members, Felicity , who lives in Lewes, East Sussex says she would be pleased to arrange occasional suppers and talks for other CVAUK members in her local church hall. Please contact her through Brenda Ryder, our membership secretary.

If anyone else would like to organise local CVAUK get-togethers in their area, please also contact Brenda.

## Resources:

### **Animal Voices - A Radio Programme**

In the last edition we featured a new book: **A Faith Embracing All Creatures**. This book was recently discussed on an online radio show, and you can listen to the discussion here:

<http://animalvoices.ca/2013/02/26/so-was-jesus-a-vegetarian-a-faith-embracing-all-creatures-addresses-christian-vegans-most-frequently-asked-questions/>

The book itself is available here:

<https://wipfandstock.com/store/A-Faith-Embracing-All-Creatures-Addressing-Commonly-Asked-Questions-about-Christian-Care-for-Animals>

## Finding Vegan Shoes



Following the information in the last issue about vegan shoes, one member has suggested: "Freerangers" as a good source.

She writes: "*Although expensive initially they can be refurbished over and over again at a far lower price which makes them very economical in the long run. Added to which, they are very comfortable and flexible:* <http://www.freerangers.co.uk>

*However scruffy they become, Freerangers shoes can be beautifully polished up and refurbished by them and sent back to you in the post. Their refurbishments include completely replacing the soles when they have eventually been worn through, and replacing the stitching, as well as making the leather-like material look like new. They stretch them back into shape removing any creases."*

**Shoe Products:** Most shoe polishes are now made with synthetic beeswax and can be used by vegans (check ingredients on tin). Shoe protector sprays sold in non-Vegan shoe shops can be suitable for vegans.

Another shoe treatment can be purchased through a member website:

<http://yookaneekotoo.wikaniko.com> It is made from the wax of bees living naturally in the Andalucian countryside so is a more ethical vegetarian option but not suitable for vegans.

### A final thought, with Easter in mind:

This item was received from Tony Morrish, who says: "I hope you are all as blessed as I was by this story".

*There once was a man named George Thomas, preacher in a small Texas town. One Sunday morning he came to the Church building carrying a rusty, bent, old bird cage, and set it by the pulpit.*

*Eyebrows were raised and, as if in response, the Preacher began to speak. . . . "I was walking through town yesterday when I saw a young boy coming toward me swinging this bird cage. On the bottom of the cage were three little wild birds, shivering with cold and fright. I stopped the lad and asked, "What do you have there, son?"*

*"Just some old birds," came the reply.*

*"What are you going to do with them?", I asked.*

*"Take 'em home and have fun with 'em," he answered. "I'm gonna tease 'em and pull out their feathers to make 'em fight. I'm gonna have a real good time."*

*"But you'll get tired of those birds sooner or later. What will you do then?"*

*"Oh, I got some cats," said the little boy. "They like birds. I'll take 'em to them."*

*The preacher was silent for a moment. "How much do you want for those birds, son?"*

*"Huh?? !!! Why, you don't want them birds, mister. They're just plain old field birds. They don't sing. They ain't even pretty!"*

*"How much?". the preacher asked again.*

*The boy sized up the preacher as if he were crazy and said, "\$10?"*

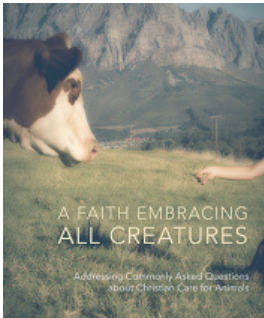
*The preacher reached in his pocket and took out a ten dollar bill. He placed it in the boy's hand. In a flash, the boy was gone.*

*The preacher picked up the cage and gently carried it to the end of the alley where there was a tree and a grassy spot. Setting the cage down, he opened the door, and by softly tapping the bars persuaded the birds out, setting them free.*

*Well, that explained the empty bird cage on the pulpit, and then the preacher began to tell this story:*

*One day Satan and Jesus were having a conversation.*

*Satan had just come from the Garden of Eden, and he was gloating and boasting. "Yes, sir, I just caught a world full of people down there. Set me a trap, used bait I knew they couldn't resist. Got 'em all!"*



*"What are you going to do with them?", Jesus asked.*

*Satan replied, "Oh, I'm gonna have fun! I'm gonna teach them how to marry and divorce each other, how to hate and abuse each other, how to drink and smoke and curse. I'm gonna teach them how to invent knives, clubs and spears and kill each other. I'm really gonna have fun!"*

*"And what will you do when you are done with them?", Jesus asked.*

*"Oh, I'll kill 'em," Satan glared proudly.*

*"How much do you want for them?", Jesus asked.*

*"Oh, you don't want those people. They ain't no good. Why, you'll take them and they'll just hate you. They'll spit on you, curse you and kill you. You don't want those people!!"*

*"How much? He asked again.*

*Satan looked at Jesus and sneered, "All your blood, tears and your life."*

*Jesus said, "DONE!" Then He paid the price.*

*The preacher picked up the cage and walked from the pulpit.*

**May you know God's blessing over the coming Easter period, when we remember the greatness of His sacrificial love for us and for all His creation, and Jesus' triumph over death and the grave bringing the "first-fruits" of the peaceable kingdom which is to come.**