



Changing Lives, Changing Churches for Changing Communities

"There are some who gainsay the evidence, but I am convinced that the atmosphere and oceans have warmed, the amount of snow and ice on the planet has diminished, sea level has risen and carbon dioxide concentrations have risen to unprecedented levels. This has had measurable and discernible effects upon the distribution and migration of insects, birds and other creatures. And we are not exempt from these effects.

Already climate change is affecting the life and livelihood of many people on this planet and it is those who have contributed least to this problem, especially the poor and vulnerable who are suffering the most.

Action clearly needs to be global, rapid and decisive and there are encouraging developments in technology, science and in the advancement of renewable energy sources.

This is not a matter just for politicians, sciences, environmentalists and technicians to address. This is something which affects us all and something we need all to respond to and take responsibility for. We are all called to respond personally which means reducing our own carbon footprint – the amount of greenhouse emissions that result directly and indirectly from our own lifestyle – and to lobby for change.

It is easy to be overwhelmed in the face of seemingly intractable problems, but our personal, collective responses are significant. A few years ago I took part in a march to Trafalgar Square which sought to raise awareness and influence government policy on climate change. We were given badges to wear which featured the statement "I count".

It was an important message I learnt that day; "I count" and "you count". We all have a role to play and a responsibility to steward and care for this beautiful and fragile world which I believe is God's wonderful gift to us."

Bishop Peter Hancock
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