

Christian Vegetarian Association UK

Working towards a violence-free world

Home of Veg4Lent

NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2008 - No.7

Ministry

Environment and Health

Animal Rights and Welfare

Discipleship

Mission

Support

and encourage Christian Vegetarians in the UK

Share

with non-vegetarian Christians how a vegetarian diet can add meaning to their faith

Show

all those with ears to hear that a plant-based way of life represents good, responsible Christian stewardship for all God's Creation.

**Wishing all our members an enjoyable, violence - free Christmas
And a happy new year**

Visit

www.christianvegetarian.co.uk

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Picture journey of CVAUK 2008

21st July, 2008 - Ecumenical Animal Retreat, Noddfa, North Wales

Left - Meeting Room Right - On the Cosmic walk

Noddfa was a beautiful venue with fine views overlooking the sea. The gardens were extensive and the weather very good considering the rain at the beginning of the week. It was a nostalgic journey for me, I was evacuated to, and grew up in Rhos-on-Sea during the war. Pastor James Thompson gave an overview of his lifelong struggle with the church and Marion Hussenbux - Quaker Concern for Animals gave a talk and showed a DVD. The worship services were great and we all had a wonderful time.

September 2008 - London Vegan Festival

Left - Standing in the isles Right - Fr John addressing the meeting.

Fr John caught the early I.O.W ferry at 7.30 am arriving in Liphook at 9 am where we loaded his car with CVAUK stand, booklets, videos, books & leaflets. This was a very big festival and CVAUK member Robin Lane was part of the organising team. There was a long queue to get in and at times you could not move due to the crowd. CVAUK had a very good day with many enquiries and sold £70 worth of books & videos. Chris Dhondee (CVAUK member) helped by taking turns to look after the stand; there was so much to see and eat. The most remarkable moment was the talk by Fr John, the room was so crowded that they were standing in the isles and sitting around his feet, the talk was also televised by 'Supreme Master Television (Sky channel 835).

(See Fr John's talk on page 11)

October 2008 - Leicester Vegan Fair

Left - Hall prior to opening Right - CVAUK Stand

Although a 300 mile round trip it was well worth while. I will always remember Verity Hunt-Shepard (CVAUK member & organiser) banging a saucepan to get attention for her announcements. There was a steady flow of people all day and interest in CVAUK came from; Christian Vegans who were glad to find out about us, Vegans who had Christian friends and wanted leaflets for them and finally Vegans who thought it was about time Christians had at last recognised the benefits of a vegetarian diet and were now actively spreading the vegetarian message within the church.

November 2008 - Animal Remembrance Service - London

Left - Cynthia O'Neil, James & Doreen Right - Some of the Congregation

In 2004 a war memorial was dedicated to all those animals who have suffered and died in our wars. Except for a few wreaths from dedicated animal lovers, the memorial remained silent on Remembrance Sunday, forgotten yet again. But not anymore, thanks to Cynthia O'Neil, Pastor James Thompson & his wife Doreen, they will now be remembered every year. The service was attended by approx. 80 people including actresses Jenny Seagrove & Miranda Richardson, veterinarian Mark Abraham and members of CCA, ASWA, Quakers and CVAUK. Come & join us next year.

(For full report please see Page 16)

All photographs taken by Don Gwillim

Counting our blessings

Sent by Robin Lane - Christians Against Leather and Fur

If you woke up this morning and you are not suffering from a life threatening disease you are more fortunate than over 1 million people who will die in the next few days.

If you have never experienced war, abandonment or hunger you are more fortunate than 500 million people in the world.

If you can worship your God without being threatened, arrested or killed you are more fortunate than 3 billion people in the world.

If you have food in your fridge, you have clothes, a roof over your head and a bed to sleep in you are more fortunate than 75% of the world's population.

If you have a bank account or a small amount of money in your wallet or purse you are one of the 8% of the world's wealthiest people.

If you have the opportunity and strength to use your wealth to help others who are less fortunate than yourselves you are the richest person in the world... #

Faith in a non-violent God

*Steve Kaufman's excellent new book **Guided by the Faith of Christ** inspired the following article.*

Please note however, that the views expressed belong to Don Gwillim.

Guided by the Faith of Christ give valuable insights into why humankind, including Christians, have been and still are indifferent to cruelty and violence towards God's creatures. Steve Kaufman demonstrates how the Judeo-Christian tradition has, throughout the ages, guided humankind away from violence and towards a kingdom of peace. How Jesus' entire ministry involved opposition to the scapegoating mechanism. This book will be welcomed by all Christians who support an interpretation of the Bible that is consistent with a loving, compassionate God. With open minds, we can now see how the nonviolent nature of God was gradually being revealed by the latter prophets, and finally confirmed by the life and teachings of Jesus. I have found that Kaufman's book has helped me articulate my own views about Jesus and God.

Jesus informs us that the law is based on two commandments:

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. And Love your neighbour as yourself. (Matthew 22 : 37-39).

You can only love God with all your heart, if you know him, so our first duty must be to discover who God is. The Bible states:

Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always. (1Chronicles 16:11)

if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. (2Chronicles 7:14)

So how do we seek God's face (God's character)? According to Jesus:

If you knew me, you would know my Father also. (John 8:19)

It therefore follows that to know God we must be guided by our faith in the life and the teachings of Jesus, a Jesus who teaches that God has love and compassion towards not only humankind but all God's creatures. Jesus came to demonstrate decisively that God is not a God of wrath but a God of love. A God of love will never use violence to teach us, he guides us by; blessing us when we obey Him, and by withholding his blessing when we are disobedient. Jesus likewise refused to use violence to avoid his suffering on the cross.

The past has shown that ignoring the teachings of Jesus can lead to the worship of a violent God, a God of wrath which I firmly believe is contrary to the teachings of Jesus. God is very concerned about his character, he said to Job:

Would you discredit my justice? Would you condemn me to justify yourself? (Job 40:8).

We are who we worship. If we support a violent God we will accept an interpretation of the Bible that supports violence and a God that loves only humankind, the basic cause of many of today's problems. If however, we worship a God of undivided love, we will arrive at an interpretation which honours God by having respect for both his creatures and his world. The Bible tells us that we were made in God's image but when we support a God of violence, are we making God in our own image?

Pope John Paul II is quoted as saying:

Any interpretation of the Bible that contradicts a rational understanding of God's goodness and mercy is incorrect.

To demonstrate God's compassion for other creatures, Jesus quoted Hosea, not just once but twice:

For I desire mercy, not sacrifice (Hosea 6:6 and Matthew 9:13, 12:6.)

The second part of Hosea's verse states:
and acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings.

Note that in the words of Hosea, God was asking Israel to honour God by acknowledging who God was, instead of sacrificing animals to gain his favour.

The second command of Jesus is to *Love your neighbour as yourself (Matthew 22:39)* but who is our neighbour? Earlier in Matthew, Jesus quotes the Golden Rule:

So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the law and the prophets (Matthew 7:12).

So our neighbour includes 'others'. Our neighbour is not just the person next door. Our neighbour is every creature (including human beings) who live in our neighbourhood, and from God's cosmic perspective that neighbourhood is the whole Earth. God has created us as a part of the whole, we are all one, when we damage 'others' we damage ourselves, and this truth is now being dramatically demonstrated in today's world.

So what can Christians do? Jesus was the first born of the new creation, the peaceable kingdom. So the only way we can image God the Father is to follow a nonviolent Jesus who was himself obedient to a loving and compassionate God. It therefore follows that removing violence from our lifestyle, particularly our diet, would be a good place to start, because that is where God started:

Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground--everything that has the breath of life in it--I give every green plant for food.(Genesis 1:29 -30)

Our choice is clear, either the unhealthy diet of a fallen world or the healthy diet of God's perfect world, Eden, and finally God's peaceable kingdom. We do have a choice, to follow either the violence in us, or Jesus in us. I could not love, and certainly would not trust, a God who condones violence and cruelty towards his own creation. Yet many in the church continually claim; that animals have no souls, that God only loves humans and that heaven is our only destination, that, in the end, what happens to the rest of the world does not matter, it is going to be destroyed by God anyway.

So what do I believe is our hope for the future and can we help today?

Jesus has given us the answer, he asked us to pray for:

*Your kingdom come, your will be done **on earth**, as it is in heaven.*

According to Nick Spencer - Director of studies at Theos and Prof. Robert White - FRS:
*Moreover, Christians should care for creation because it has an eternal destiny in Christ: it will be redeemed and transformed along with our own bodies in the new creation, **and the work we do now to shape and to care for the world is of eternal significance.***

This future vision is also confirmed by Rt Revd Tom Wright, Anglican Theologian, Bishop of Durham:

God's recreation of his wonderful world, which has begun with the resurrection of Jesus and continues mysteriously as God's people live in the risen Christ and in the power of his Spirit,

means that what we do in Christ and by the Spirit in the present is not wasted.

As God's stewards, Christians are expected to work towards God's redeemed creation. Helping God to sustain his creation is surely a Christian duty, and in today's world a very urgent one. We have a job to do which can only be achieved by following Jesus and aligning our lifestyle to his nonviolent teachings. The Bible is a living, inspirational book, not a workshop manual with exact instructions. Interpretation of the Bible must be through our faith in Jesus, the guidance of the Holy Spirit and enlightened knowledge of the world today. Jesus calls us to understand not only the literal interpretation of the law but also the spirit of the law.

Humans are very important to God because he gave them the ability to reflect his image. Surely, once we have been saved, it is our duty as Christians, to discover God's character and through that knowledge try to, as far as possible, reflect his image. To this end, it is important that Christians who believe in a nonviolent God remain within their church, that both their voices and witness raise awareness to the suffering of God's creation. To show how lifestyle changes, especially our diet, can avoid what could be a massive increase in violence, as the earth's ability to feed the world decreases. Jesus has the answer and it is our duty to proclaim his message.

Getting back to the book *Guided by the Faith of Christ*, Kaufman argues that adopting the faith of Christ offers a pathway out of the mire of human violence, the horrors of institutionalised animal abuse, and the prospect of humanity's self-destruction due to war or environmental collapse. I recommend it highly. **Don Gwillim**

***Guided by the Faith of Christ by Stephen R. Kaufman, M.D.- Chair CVA USA
ISBN 9-7809716-67648. We plan to stock this book shortly.***

Testimony - Pastor Stephen Potter - CVAUK Steering Committee.

By way of introduction , my name is Stephen Potter and I am 52 (born in 1956) and have been married to my wife Marie for 34 years! I have two children , Elisabeth and Adam who have 5 children between them , so am a grandfather 5 times over!

I became a Christian when I was almost 16 when I was drawn to the reality of a relationship with Jesus personally that I saw in other Christians that I , for all my church going and being religious , never had! Loving Jesus has been a passion for me ever since and I have had the privilege of nearly all of my family members becoming Christians over the years , baptising my own Mum and Dad some years ago!

I haven't always been a vegetarian but have always felt very squeamish about eating animals! Not eating meat wasn't an option in my family home growing up, so I ate meat like the rest of my family and even worked for a spell in a butcher's shop (this confirmed a lot of my squeamishness!) as a teenager.

I followed a call to be the pastor of a church and went to Bible College for 2 years and was appointed to a church in Essex where I stayed for 9 years before coming back home to Portsmouth to be the pastor of the church where I was converted. We have been leading Portsmouth Oasis Church for over 23 years now!

About 10 years ago , after thinking a lot about whether I should eat meat or not , I went to the fridge to take out a packet of bacon. It felt squidgy in my hand and I felt sick at the thought of eating it . That was the last time I ever touched meat!

Since making the decision to stop eating meat I learned so many things from reading books and from the online vegetarian groups that send me emails and articles ; these have confirmed me in my thinking. I started because of distaste but now am a vegetarian (vegan actually) out of conviction.

About 5 years ago I decided to see if I could be a vegan! I was still overweight and realised that many of the things that caused that were dairy and that if I could go without dairy that I would be much healthier and slimmer!

I am also obsessed with food! I think about what I will eat next most of the day! I decided to make my obsession with food work for me rather than against me and checking all the labels and contents of packages enabled me to continue with my obsession but with greater benefits!

Again , I started my vegan journey selfishly but now am a vegan out of conviction ; if I'm honest , I am still in transition regarding clothing and footwear etc! I still own silk ties and leather shoes but am trying to only buy new things that are not animal related! I am proud of my new vegan gloves (even though they cost me a small fortune!

I love cooking and becoming a vegan has given me so much more scope. My meaty meals were nowhere near as creative or as tasty as my vegan ones ; I take great delight in feeding people at dinner parties and then telling them afterwards that they ate 100% vegan food! I like to get them to guess where the tofu was! (not many guess that it was in the cheesecake or chocolate mousse!)

I don't believe that every Christian should be a vegetarian/vegan because I find that position difficult to justify from Scripture. Romans says that Christian carnivores and Christian vegans should be able to live with one another without judging one another for their different lifestyle choices and Jesus Himself ate fish with His disciples.

I do think it's an issue that Christians need to think carefully about though ; it must be significant for us that we have only eaten meat since the Fall and that we won't be eating meat in Eternity where there will be no more death! Its got to be better for us to return to our original diet and also get in practise for an eternity of vegan delights in Heaven!

We were called to take care of God's creation, not to dominate it and eat all other animate creatures just because we feel that we are superior to them. The effect of meat eating on the environment and the cruelty of modern methods that bring us meat , milk and eggs have to make Christians think whether eating these things is the right way forward for them.

My veganism sits so easily with my love for Jesus and I am delighted to be discovering so many more Christian vegetarians! It also excites me to think that my lifestyle encourages people to at least think about cutting down on their consumption of meat and animal products even if, at the moment , they haven't given them up completely!

#

The Return to Eden By Robin Lane

And God Said “ Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree that has fruit yielding seed; to you it shall be for food”. Creation was perfect in God’s own image. However, man and woman proved themselves unsuitable guardians of the Garden of Eden and had replaced innocence with corruption and peace with violence. God was so angry that a flood was sent to destroy all who dwelt upon the Earth. But God relented and allowed a man named Noah and his family to build an ark and upon the ark to create a sanctuary for all of the species of animals and birds to dwell side by side. However, man and woman had lost their innocence and so began the fall from Grace. When the waters had subsided, God declared “The fear of you and the terror of you will be on every animal of the earth and every bird of the sky, with everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish in the sea”. And so began the decline towards suffering and misery upon the Earth where the lifeblood of all species and all races was shed in the name of power and greed. Isaiah, the greatest of all the prophets declared “The Lord God takes no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs or goats – your hands are covered with blood”.

Remember the time when Daniel was captured by the Babylonian king and chose to eat only vegetables? He excelled in both strength and learning! Ecclesiastes speaks great wisdom in “The Futility of Pleasure and Possessions” when he states that

“The fate of the sons of men and the fate of animals is the same. Indeed, they all have the same breath and there is no advantage for man over animals, for all is vanity. All go to the same place”. The prophet Micah proclaimed “And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?” In the “Beatitudes” from the Gospel on the Mount, Jesus declares “Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the Earth, Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy and Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God”. When being questioned by the Pharisees regarding working on the Sabbath, Jesus stated “What man is there among you who has a sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will he not take hold of it and lift it out?” Jesus opposed the rite of ritual sacrifice when he proclaimed “I desire Compassion not Sacrifice”. Do you recall when the disciples asked “who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven and Jesus replied, unless you are converted and become like little children you will not enter the kingdom of heaven? Whoever becomes truly innocent shall enter into heaven, but one who corrupts the innocent shall fail”.

Remember the words from the book of James: “What use is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do no good deeds? If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of food, and you say ‘Go in peace, be warmed and be filled’ and yet you give them nothing, what use is that? Faith without good deeds is worthless”. We are justified by good deeds and not by faith only.

Quoting Isaiah: “He who kills an ox is like one who slays a man”. – It is our Sacred Duty to care for God’s creation! Only then shall we return to The Garden of Eden where God’s promise shall be fulfilled.

On Earth as it is in Heaven, there shall be a river of the water of life, clear as crystal. On either side of the river will be the tree of life bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

***Heed the voice of John the Baptist crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the Way’.
The Way in the Wilderness, BM 8889, London WC1N 3XX***

Spreading the Good News!

There are many ways in which you can spread the positive message of CVAUK. Below are some suggestions. A good starting point is to try to meet other like minded people in your area. CVAUK has a list of members and their locations, have a look and see if there is anyone near you.

If people aren’t close enough to meet on a regular basis then a group of you could meet quarterly or annually etc at a larger event that you are all interested in, such as Greenbelt, a vegetarian road show a vegan festival or at an environment or wildlife event.

Meeting others who are like minded is a rejuvenating experience to say the least. Getting together socially is doing something positive and is time well spent If you are able to group together to form a local committee so much the better, but there are many ways of spreading the Christian Vegetarian message that can be done on your own or with a friend.

Organise a prayer group or prayer evening for animals. There a lots of prayers based on animals. You can contact an existing group for ideas or see the

CVAUK website. Many non vegetarians love animals and may attend the group. This will give you an opportunity to introduce animal lovers to the Christian Vegetarian message and the literature available from CVAUK. If you have the resources serve vegan snacks to show others how tasty a compassionate, plant based diet can be.

Organise a shared meal. It takes a bit of work but is worth it. Advertise it in your church newsletter and on the church notice board. Encourage people to sign up and ask for a small donation to cover ingredients. In the last news letter (spring 2008) I gave an account of how I organized a veg4lent meal at my local church which was very successful. A shared meal can take place at any time of the year but Lent, Harvest, the feast of St Francis of Assisi, Animal Welfare Sunday and Christmas provide excellent opportunities for shared eating.

Carol Sing for Animals. Again many animal lovers, whether vegetarian or not, are likely to get involved, and this gives you opportunities to speak to others and to pray for animals together.

Letter writing. The pen really is mightier than the sword. A local newsletter can reach hundreds of people, and local newspaper can reach several 100,000. Never underestimate the power of a letter whatever the publication. Local newspapers are an excellent way to reach Christians and non Christians alike.

Write to church leaders too about plant based eating, the more letters they receive from individual Christians the better.

Stalls at a church function or show. They may seem terrifying, you may convince yourself you'll be asked questions that you can't answer, or that people will just want to argue with you but the reality is the overwhelming number of conversations on a stall are positive. In fact you can come away feeling quite uplifted.

If you don't have an answer all you need to do is explain that your unsure and that you are a volunteer. Then direct them to other resources for more information, such as the CVAUK website. If anyone is less than positive you just have to be polite and forgive them! (Though you may very well have planted a seed)

If you are able to secure a stall at a local spring/summer/autumn fair you could sell some lovely vegan cakes to raise much needed funds for CVAUK

Opportunities for your Calendar

Veg4lent 2009 25th February 2009

Harvest – late September/early October every year

Feast of St Francis of Assisi/animal Welfare Sunday – October 4th 2009

Compassionate Christmas Awareness – every December

All beings tremble before violence
All fear death
All love life.
See yourself in others,

Then whom can you hurt?
What harm can you do?
Buddha

CVAUK talk at the London Vegan Fair - 7th September 2008

A Christian attitude towards eating meat

By Fr John Ryder

The hymn for Evening Prayer on the first Thursday of the month:

"When God had filled the earth with life
And blessed it, to increase,
Then cattle dwelt with creeping things,
And lion with lamb, at peace.

He gave them vast, untrodden lands,
With plants to be their food;
Then God saw all that he had made
And found it very good.

Praise God the Father of all life,
His Son and Spirit blest,
By whom creation lives and moves,
In whom it comes to rest.

Idyllic, and very far from the present reality. So I think I need to start by saying there is a world of difference between what I believe the Christian attitude to animals should be, and what many, especially Western Christians, actually profess.

One of the problems here is that the average Western Christian has forgotten that Jesus was a good Jew. Yes, He often berated His fellow Jews for not being strict enough in their observance of the rules, values and attitudes taught in the law and the prophets, or of misinterpreting them to their own advantage. And yes, Christians believe Jesus went beyond, and fulfilled the law and the prophets. But He never went against them. He remained to his death a devout Jew.

The other main problem is the unjustified assumption made by many Christians that because God chose to become a man in Jesus, that mankind is more important than the rest of God's creation. I do not think it requires much humility, merely an honest look at mankind to see that out of all of God's creation it was mankind - originally created in God's image - who had gone the furthest astray, who was most in need of salvation.

However it is not only mankind who sins, who indulges in anti-social behaviour. I believe it is not an anthropomorphism to attribute social and moral consciousness to animals: scientific studies have shown both moral decision-making and community moral censure amongst certain of the great apes and amongst rooks. And the great theologian and palaeontologist Teilhard de Chardin, S.J., in reconciling both creation and evolution, evil and a God of love attributes free will and therefore moral responsibility to all of Creation, even to sub-atomic particles.

Looking at what the Christian attitude towards animals should be, I accept and confess that the attitude of the majority of my co-religionists towards animals has been as shameful as their past participation in the slave-trade.

But if we look at the great examples of the Christian Faith - the Great Saints as we call them - rather than the important people - the bishops, archbishops and academics - we get a very different picture.

The example most people will think of is St Francis of Assisi, a 12th century Italian, who regarded all creatures as his brothers and sisters; who preached to the birds and the beasts, exhorting them to praise God; who, when a wolf was troubling a village didn't harm it, but taught it to regard the villagers as his brothers and sisters too. And he is not unusual in this. There are too many examples to mention, but amongst my favourites are: St Sergius of Radonezh, who while living alone in the forest in 14th century Russia, befriended and regularly shared meals with a large bear; and St Martin de Porres, who like St Francis seemed able to talk to animals, helping them to live in harmony with their human neighbours. He started an animal hospital, re-homed strays, - and all this in 16th century Peru.

So let me start with what I believe should be obvious, at least to my co-religionists: that Jesus was a Jew, and as a Jew He would have believed the Jewish Scriptures.

I give you but two examples: the first from the Book of Genesis [1:29&30] where God, having created the world, describes what humans and animals should eat. Speaking to the first humans he says:

"I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground--everything that has the breath of life in it--I give every green plant for food."

And it was so.

The second reading is from the Prophet Isaiah [11:6-9], describing a vision of the end of time:

"The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea."

These two passages show that God had created man and all other sentient beings to be vegan, and that all of His creation He saw to be good - not just the humans - and all of his creation was loved by Him.

However, as a Jew Jesus would also have believed that, because of the sin of man, the eating of meat had become allowable - but only if done with the minimum of suffering: - witness the covenant with Noah in Genesis 9:1-11. But it was not right. Just as divorce was allowed to prevent the murder of the unwanted spouse, so the eating of animals was allowed to prevent cannibalism. But neither were ever considered right in themselves. In ancient times as today, the Jews had and still have higher animal welfare standards than any other nation under heaven.

It is notable too that the covenant God made with Noah was not just with the people who had survived the flood - but with all the animals too.

I am sure a Jewish speaker could speak about these issues far better than I. I mention them only to say that the starting point of a Christian attitude towards animals must be that of the strict Jew: that the ideal past and the ideal future are both places where no killing takes place - not of people, not of animals, I believe not even of plants: mankind's diet is to be fruit, grain, seeds and perhaps leaves, but nothing that kills the plant. In the in-between time in which we live - after the Fall of mankind and before the coming of the Messiah - God's anointed one - killing to eat may be acceptable, but this is only when every effort is made to minimise both the physical and the psychological suffering of the animals involved, and even then, it is something for which you need to ask for forgiveness.

Taking this attitude would of course rule out the majority of the food available on the supermarket shelves of the West. And although I have not always lived in the West, and have listened attentively to those of other cultures - both to Christians and to people of other faiths - and have learned a lot from them - it is only for the West and for Western Christianity that I feel confident to speak.

So what of the specific contribution made by this Jew Jesus, whom his followers call The Christ, The Anointed One, to our attitude towards animals, and our relationship with them? For unlike the Jews, as Christians we believe the Messiah has come, and things have changed.

Our starting point, as I have said, is the Jewish attitude, and if Dr Richard Schwartz is correct in what he believes the Jewish attitude towards animals should be, I do not think there is any need for improvement; which is probably why Jesus had so little to say on this subject: there was no need, as his audience was Jewish. And there are a few pointers in what we call the New Testament to his concurrence with the Jewish view.

We know He said that His Heavenly Father was concerned about the death even of a single sparrow. We know He pointed back to the ideals of Genesis 1 & 2 before sin entered the world - that falling short of these was falling short of the will of God. And we believe that by offering Himself in sacrifice on the cross, He ended the need for animal sacrifices: as we read in the letter to the Hebrews:

*Unlike the other high priests,
he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day,
first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people.
He sacrificed for their sins once for all
when he offered himself.*

And Jesus often spoke of love, the love His Father has for all His creation. He commanded us to have that same love. I do not think there is anything more fundamental to be said. For love can do no harm to any creature; rather it builds a creative relationship between them all.

With the Death and Resurrection of Jesus, Christians believe the end-time has begun. All Christians would agree that this means an end to the need for animal sacrifices, as

mentioned above. Many would believe it also means an end to the other allowances given for sin in the in-between time: the end of the allowance for divorce and remarriage is clearly stated; some of us would add to that an end to the allowance given in the Covenant with Noah to eat meat.

I know that many people, perhaps especially my fellow Christians, question the concern Christians like myself have towards animal welfare, saying 'but surely Jesus ate meat?' Perhaps He did. Perhaps He didn't. The jury is still out on that, and there are others who could argue the point better than I. Much rests on the accuracy of the texts we have, none of which are original, and on the variations possible in the translations. My aim today is not to give an academic dissertation. But I do know that there is no comparison between the life and death of an animal on a Galilean hillside 2000 years ago, and the life and death of an animal in a factory farm today. One could not necessarily say this of any livestock of that period, but certainly of those reared, cared for and slaughtered according to Jewish law.

One of the problems with meat-eating is that it is addictive - once a community starts to eat meat as a norm they want more of it and more often - to the detriment of their health, the environment, and above all to the detriment of the animals involved. The reason for the continued prohibition on the eating of pig-meat in Judaism and Islam is its similarity to human flesh, and the fear that eating it would spark a desire in those who had not left cannibalism that far behind.

And I also know that if human life is going to continue on this planet, with global warming brought under control, then factory farming - and meat-eating - must end. The only way to escape this conclusion is if you can justify a carnivorous diet for a small privileged minority and deny it to the rest of the populace - and such a justification could not be made by any religion I know. On a universal scale the dividing line between love and enlightened self-interest is very fine.

There is this understanding gained by learning; there is also an understanding gained by the heart. I have experienced animals who have had at least as great an understanding of my needs - and as great a concern to meet them, as I have had of theirs. I do not believe this is just an anthropomorphic fantasy of a pet lover. Nor am I talking of the number of testified instances of pet dogs - and on occasion a rat, another a parrot - waking and rescuing their human companions from fire or other disaster. Rather I wish to point to a far more subtle understanding on the part of the animal towards human need.

If you will allow me just one story. When I was at theological college we had a cat named Percy whom we had rescued from a soon-to-be-demolished brewery. We had a neighbour, named Abiather, who came from a family and a culture that did not understand pets, and who saw cats either as rat-catchers or as food. It was also a culture that saw being alone as one of the greatest deprivations possible: if they saw anyone sitting alone, they would go and rescue them - often to the annoyance of those of us from a western background, who enjoyed being alone at times.

Now Abiather, due to the poverty of his parents, did not have much schooling. So to pass his exams he would get up every morning at 4:00 a.m. to study. And what he hated most about this was having to sit there alone.

We arrived in Abiather's second year, and soon his ordeal of studying alone was over. For Percy, our cat, would be on his desk every morning at 4, and would keep him company until the rest of the family got up. Percy, like most cats, was content with his own company. But he knew Abiather was lonely, so went daily to keep him company. When Abiather told us about this, he said: "You know, Percy is just like a person!" Quite so.

It is not uncommon for animals to be a successful part of psychotherapy, for example, as done in the Pilsden Community somewhere south of here. Where a person is not able to relate to other humans through an autistic spectrum disorder, or through a breakdown - perhaps caused by the nastiness of their fellow humans - it is often an animal whose love can reach through to them, and restore their ability to relate.

Love has been described as the accurate estimate and supply of another person's needs, and as Christians we value love so highly that we say God is love. If an animal's love can cross species, and speak to us of God, how much more should ours, if we in any way consider ourselves to be spiritually - or in any other way - superior to them.

And there are signs of hope, that this attitude is becoming more and more 'mainstream' within Christianity. For those of you who have not read it, I do recommend to you the dream Pope John-Paul II had about cats shortly before being elected Bishop of Rome, as well as his and Pope Benedict's pronouncements on animals. As the previous and present leaders of more than half the world's Christians, their pronouncements make very encouraging reading. But we have a long way to go yet. In the interim the killing of plants, and the consumption of dairy and eggs - but only if freedom farmed - might be considered by some to be justifiable.

And in comparison to the way most food is produced, we should not condemn those who produce or eat meat, where every part of the process, from conception to death, is done according to the highest standards of animal welfare. But the rearing must be natural, the death without fear. The aim of a Christian - and equally any vegetarian or vegan - should be to convert, not to alienate. And we do not expect perfection to be achieved in this life.

Nevertheless I do believe that the clear witness of the Bible is this: that we should all be working towards a society where not even a plant, let alone an animal, is killed for food. It was like that in the beginning, it will be like that again when God's Kingdom comes.

I would however like to end my contribution today on a far more low-key note with a comment made by a past prime minister of this country, a Christian who, although carnivorous, had a very close relationship with the animals he farmed, and would leave the table, refusing to eat, if an animal he knew was being served. Stopping at the sty to scratch the pigs' backs with his walking stick - a daily treat they eagerly awaited - he said to his companion:

"I like pigs.
Dogs look up at you,
cats look down on you,
but pigs treat you as equals." *(Winston Churchill)*

Poem by Fr John Ryder

Speak, Lord,
that your servants may live.
All your servants
woods and trees
plants and flowers
insects and animals
birds and humans.
Speak, Lord,
that we may learn to recognize
- and to live -
The brotherhood of all creation.

(Thoughts from the London Vegan Festival)

Memorial Service for Animals

***A human war, yet they had no choice and because they were just animals
their suffering and death has been completely ignored, until now.***

In 2004 a war memorial was dedicated to all those animals who have suffered and died in our wars. Except for a few wreaths from dedicated animal lovers, the memorial remained silent on Remembrance Sunday, forgotten yet again. But not anymore, on last year's Remembrance Sunday a retired Queen's Nurse and Midwife - Cynthia O'Neil visited the Animal War Memorial, having waited one hour she was finally joined by a man and his dog, who brought a bunch of flowers. Cynthia was so incensed by our lack of gratitude towards these animals that she informed Pastor James Thompson the 'Animal Padre'. Pastor James promised to organise and be the Celebrant of a service at the 'Animal War Memorial' on Remembrance Sunday 2008. A service to remember all the animals maimed and killed as victims of human wars:

Animals used in human wars are not heroes; they are victims. They do not give their lives, they are taken from them. During human conflicts animals have been used as messengers, for detection, scouting and rescue, as beasts of burden and the front line. They have been used for companionship in the trenches and continue to be subjected to warfare experiments in laboratories.

(Extract from Animal Aid's booklet 'Animals: the hidden victims of war')

Last Sunday the 9th November will be day I will always remember. As promised, Pastor James officiated, supported by his wife Doreen, Cynthia O'Neil, and a congregation of approximately 80, including actresses Jenny Seagrove, Miranda Richardson, and veterinarian Mark Abraham, director of 'thepet.net'. Catholic Concern for Animals was represented by Montserret Thompson. 'The Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals' was represented by Sarah Dunning, Simon July and Chris Turner and probably others I did not know, and the Quakers by Vickie from London. CVAUK

was represented by John Gilheany, Chris Dhondee and myself. The 2008 service was very moving and I considered it an honour to be a small part, of what could be, a great new tradition.

The service started with a short address by Cynthia O'Neil and Doreen read a scripture reading. A hymn and prayer was written especially for the service by Linda Bodicoat, all other hymns and prayers were written or arranged by Pastor James. A 2 minutes silence was observed at 11 a.m. At the end of the service the congregation laid wreaths and flowers on the War Memorial. The service ended at 11.30 a.m. when photographs were taken and the congregation intermingled socially.

A few of us then went for a cup of coffee in Oxford Street and took the opportunity to discuss our various concerns, especially the difficulty of bringing a vegetarian consciousness within the church. John Gilheany remarked that despite the passing of 100 years and the overwhelming scientific research that supports our views, we are still having the same problems as our counterparts in the late 19th century.

In the beginning God gave us fruit and seeds, this was God's perfect, nonviolent diet for humans, and to this day science has confirmed that humans are still not carnivores. Meat kills animals by the billions and is both unhealthy to humans and devastating to the environment. It is incredible that in this enlightened age, humans continue to curse animals and destroy their environment by insisting on a meat based diet, rather than blessing animals by reflecting God's image of goodness and mercy. Unless we are prepared to actually do something about it, be it war or peace, animals will continue to suffer and die, as victims of our greed. Come and join us next year.
Don Gwillim

Promotion of CVAUK – Advertising Report

Unfortunately it's been a busy 6 months and I haven't got as much done as I would have liked.

*A further advert has been placed in the Vegan Society magazine and I am waiting to hear back from another magazine as well.

* I am also in the process of writing a couple of articles for magazines/newsletters.

Now that I have a bit more free time until Easter I am hoping my report in the next newsletter will be teeming with progress!

All ideas are welcome, also if you are able to help too then please get in touch, many hands make a stronger CVAUK!

Contact vhsheppard@hotmail.co.uk

“Whenever people say 'We mustn't be sentimental,' you can take it they are about to do something cruel. And if they add 'We must be realistic,' they mean they are going to make money out of it.” **Brigid Brophy**

“In fact, if one person is unkind to an animal it is considered to be cruelty, but where a lot of people are unkind to animals, especially in the name of commerce, the cruelty is condoned and, once large sums of money are at stake, will be defended to the last by otherwise intelligent people.” Ruth Harrison, author of *Animal Machines*

“None so blind as those who will not see.” **Matthew Henry**

Clergy animal rights advocacy (Part 1)

“Their life appears just as precious to them as is ours to us.”

...the gift of life carries with it the gift of the right of life, in the sense at least of an equal right to life with all other creatures of the divine power and grace.”

Rev. Francis Wood*

The Vegetarian Messenger and Health Review, July 1931

(Journal of the Vegetarian Society)

“I know that St. Paul asked contemptuously, “Doth God take care of oxen?” I am sorry that he said so. But a greater than St. Paul told us that no sparrow falls to the ground without God. We men, the tyrants and bullies of our planet, have yet much to learn about our duties to our poor relations, who have as good a right to life and happiness as we have.”

Dr. William Ralph Inge,

Dean of St. Paul’s Cathedral between 1911-34

Reprinted in the London Vegetarian Society journal *The Vegetarian News*, September 1935, from an article in the *Evening Standard*

“We must act, and act quickly, to see that the rights of animals to a happy life is recognised...”

A religion, in fact, which fails to recognise these rights cannot be thought of as true religion.”

Rev. R.C.R. Adkins, M.A.*

‘Religion and the Rights of Animals’

The British Vegetarian, November/December 1967 (Journal of the Vegetarian Society)

“(animals) ...have very positive rights because they are God’s creatures. If we have to speak with absolute accuracy we must say that God has the right to have all his creatures treated with proper respect.”

Cardinal Heenan

Foreword to *God’s Animals* by Ambrose Agius,

(Catholic Study Circle for Animal Welfare, 1970)

“We speak of human rights. I think we should also speak of animal rights and natural rights, but there must be some radical re-orientation in current attitudes and thinking before these rights are recognised and respected.”

Launcelot Fleming,

Bishop of Norwich*

The Living World, Vol.1, no.2 (Crusade Against All Cruelty to Animals, 1970)

“...the time has come when we must act responsibly towards the rights of animals and cease to accept the view that man has authority for exercising an absolute dominion”.

Canon Eric Turnbull*

Worcester Evening News, June 26th 1972

“We have to ask whether the ethical sphere, as we have become accustomed to understand it, is for man alone. We have to ask what *rational* ground we have for continuing to interpret the welfare of animals in terms of our own, or whether we can actually be imaginative enough to recognise certain rights of other species.”

Rev. Prof. Andrew Linzey*

Animal Rights – A Christian Assessment of Man’s Treatment of Animals
SCM Press Ltd., 1976

“Animals, as part of God’s creation, have rights which must be respected. It behoves us always to be sensitive to their needs and to the reality of their pain.”

Dr. Donald Coggan, Archbishop of Canterbury

Presidential message to the Annual General Meeting of the R.S.P.C.A.
RSPCA Today, July 1977

“...Rights, whether animal or human, have only one sure foundation: that God loves us all and rejoices in us all.”

John Austin Baker,

Bishop of Salisbury between 1982-93*

They Shall Not Hurt or Destroy, Vasu Murti, Vegetarian Advocates Press, 2003

“Through the altruism of dedicated animal rightists – most of whom give no thought to the possibility of any future reward – we see an authentic goodness which puts religious goodness to shame; and the animals have the gospel preached to them by deeds more strong than words.”

Pastor James Thompson the Animals’ Padre*

Cast Out of the Ark – The Churches’ Abuse & Rejection of God’s Animal Kingdom
Ty Coch Publishing, 1994

Compiled by John M. Gilheany

NB. A few of the excerpts are from articles which may be read in full at:

www.all-creatures.org/fo

*Anglican clergy

#

Lack of Ethics by Ann Wills

The economic crisis was mainly caused by financial institutions lending irresponsibly to people who they knew could probably not pay their loans back. This was allowed because banks could make more money by doing this than from trading wisely. In the past building societies & banks examined a person's earnings & calculated how much a potential borrower would be able to pay back a month. The excessive greed by financiers & the lack of government regulation may have serious future consequences, such as a lack of money in pension funds & unemployment, which will harm innocent hard-working families.

Unfortunately, we see this lack of ethics running through much of present day trading practice. For instance, manufactured food can have very unwholesome ingre-

dients added, to increase the profit margins. At its extreme, this was demonstrated recently by the contaminated milk in China which caused thousands of babies to develop kidney stones and kidney damage. The milk was watered down and melamine (a chemical added to plastic) was added to disguise the lack of protein in the milk.

For years harmful hydrogenated oil has been added to much manufactured food. Good vegetable oils were treated at high temperatures with hydrogen to give processed food a long shelf-life. Many manufacturers have now stopped adding this to foods after it was publicised by the Consumers' Association that hydrogenated oils block the arteries and significantly increase the risk of heart attack and strokes. Manufactured foods can be high in E numbers, preservatives, artificial colourings, salt & sweeteners, because they are cheap ingredients to add.

Factory farmed animals are routinely fed antibiotics to stop infection spreading in the cramped inhumane conditions in which they are kept, and antibiotics have been used as growth-promoters for farm animals. This over-use of the drugs is one reason why many antibiotics are failing to work in hospitals. A few years ago a cancer-causing industrial red dye called Sudan, was added to manufactured foods and found its way into foods throughout the world, including in the UK.

In the late 1990s the EU had a plan to add low level nuclear waste into consumer goods. This was to be a cheap way to get rid of radioactive waste from old decommissioned nuclear power stations, & would have found its way into saucepans, cookers & babies prams etc. Fortunately this was fought off by a voluntary group called "Low Level Radiation Campaign." But the principle behind such bad practices is that if harmful substances are thinly spread around then it would be difficult to trace the source of any resulting ill-health.

We can see how badly the global economy can go wrong when governments allow trading to be run just for profit. There is nothing wrong with making a fair profit - but when money is given priority over all other considerations then trouble ensues. The lead on good practice needs to come from the top down. We need more honest politicians who speak the truth & genuinely want to serve the public. Today many politicians have the image of doing their job mainly to 'feather their own nest'. But this doesn't have to be the case & history tells us of the wonderful philanthropic work done in Victorian times by MPs such as Lord Shaftesbury who worked to stop the exploitation of young children in factories.

We need to return to honest Christ-centred standards where companies and governments are ethically run on Christian principles. #

"The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it... Through violence you may murder the hater, but you do not murder hate. In fact, violence merely increases hate... Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

Martin Luther King, Jr.
(1929-1968) Reverend and US civil rights leader

Poems submitted by Debbie Sparkes

Talking Turkeys by Benjamin Zephaniah

*Be nice to yu turkeys dis Christmas
Cos' turkeys just wanna hay fun
Turkeys are cool, turkeys are wicked
An every turkey has a Mum.*

*Be nice to yu turkeys dis Christmas,
Don't eat it, keep it alive,
It could be yu mate, an not on your plate
Say, Yo! Turkey I'm on your side.*

*I got lots of friends who are turkeys
An all of dem fear Christmas time,
Dey wanna enjoy it, dey say humans
destroyed it*

*An humans are out of dere mind,
Yeah, I got lots of friends who are turkeys
Dey all hav a right to a life,
Not to be caged up an genetically made up
By any farmer an his wife.*

*Turkeys just wanna play reggae
Turkeys just wanna hip-hop
Can yu imagine a nice young turkey saying,
'I cannot wait for de chop',
Turkeys like getting presents,
dey wanna watch Christmas TV,
Turkeys hav brains an turkeys feel pain
In many ways like yu an me.*

*I once knew a turkey called...Turkey He said
'Benji explain to me please,
Who put de turkey in Christmas
An what happens to Christmas trees?',"
I said I am not too sure Turkey
But it's nothing to do wid Christ Mass
Humans get greedy an waste more dan need
be
An business men mek loadsa cash :*

*Be nice to yu turkey dis Christmas
Invite dem indoors fe sum greens
Let dem eat cake an let dem partake
In a plate of organic grown beans, Be nice
to yu turkey dis Christmas
An spare dem de cut of de knife,
Join Turkeys United an dey'll be delighted
An yu will mek new friends 'FOR LIFE:*

WHAT IS THAT I HEAR YOU SAY
THAT YOU DON'T CARE MUCH ANYWAY
I TELL YOU OF THE PAIN AND GRIEF
I WEEP INTO MY HANDKERCHIEF
WHAT SORT OF MAN PLEASE CAN YOU BE
INSENSITIVE TO HUMANITY
YOU DO NOT CARE WHO LIVES OR DIES-
A MAN LIKE YOU, I MUST DESPISE.

FOR BABIES NOW ARE DYING
THIS YOU MUST BELIEVE
AND THE REASON THEY ARE DYING
THIS TRUTH YOU MUST CONCEIVE
IS THAT YOU USE THEIR LAND FOR CATTLE
PLEASE STOP NOW YOUR FOOLISH PRATTLE
THEY SHOULD BE GROWING FOOD TO EAT
INSTEAD **WE** FARM THE LAND FOR MEAT.

WE SHOULD BE MOVING FORWARD NOW,
AND TEACHING THEM TO SOW AND PLOUGH
BUT GREED'S THE LEADER THAT IS TRUE
AND NO-ONE REALLY CARES FOR YOU.
SO STILL WE RAISE OUR SORRY CATTLE
AND STILL THE GOVERNMENT WILL PRATTLE
BUT BABIES STILL WILL LEAVE THIS EARTH
OUR PROFITS CAUSING ONLY MIRTH

STILL THEY HAVE NO HOPE YOU SEE
BABIES, CATTLE, MEN LIKE ME,
PEOPLE TORN APART WITH GRIEF
LAND ALL SPOILED FOR WANT OF MEAT.
WHO AM I TO TELL YOU NOW,
PLEASE DON'T EAT ANOTHER COW.
YOU WILL NOT HEAR THE WORDS I SPEAK,
YOU WILL NOT SUFFER FOR THE MEEK.

YOU SEE THE WRITING ON THE WALL,
YOU SEE THE BABIES AS THEY FALL
YOU SEE THE LAND ALL TURNED TO DUST
CHANGE WILL COME AS YOU KNOW CHANGE
MUST
LAND NOW NO GOOD FOR GROWING CROPS
NOT EVEN GOOD FOR GROWING HOPS.
WHAT HAVE WE DONE, WHAT WAS THE COST
WHAT HAVE WE WON, WHAT HAVE WE LOST

We have enslaved the rest of the animal creation, and treated our distant cousins in fur and feather so badly beyond doubt, if they were able to formulate a religion, they would depict the Devil in human form.

William Ralph Inge (Dean of St Paul's)

**Press cuttings submitted by Joyce Shiner
Chelmsford Weekly News**

Disgusted by balloons - 4th September 2008

REFERRING to your edition of July 3, I was disgusted to read that Cathedral School was so unenlightened as to release balloons into the environment for some function. I ignored it until I found out that the Harvester Restaurant chain was doing the same, up and down the country over the bank holiday.

This must amount to thousands of these things, polluting the hedgerows, rivers, forest land and seas. The practice of these balloon releases is a marine biologist's nightmare and I am amazed that Cathedral School does not know this. The red-herring is that they are biodegradable. What nonsense! What do these people think happens in 28 days while we wait for the toxins to disappear. Are they so stupid and uneducated to believe that a turtle will wait for 28 days before eating the damn things, thinking they are food?

If I released a load of Tesco carrier bags (they are bio-degradable) in a high wind, would I not be thought of as a mad litter lout and anti-social? Maybe I could get away with it if I donated to some charity or another and hang the turtles or any other poor animal poisoned by this garbage. I have written in the strongest terms to Simon Burns MP, the offending school and Essex County Council.

Christine Mitchel, Wheatfield Way, Chelmsford

Distaste is misguided - 11th September 2008

I WAS saddened to read of Christine Mitchell's distaste for the charity balloon race at the Cathedral School (Disgusted by balloons, September 4). In an age when children are denied simple pleasures because of real and imagined dangers, the look of wonder on their faces as they released their balloons was a joy to behold.

If we outlawed all charitable events that have potential environmental consequences, the London Marathon would not raise millions for worthy causes each year because of the amount of discarded plastic water bottles,

Closer to home there would have been no mention on last week's letters page of an event that raised £7,000 in aid of Little Havens Children's Hospice (Thanks for your support, September 4) as the emissions from classic cars and steam engines would have seen such an event banned. While one can empathise with Ms Mitchell's environmental zeal, might I suggest that her energies would be better concentrated on major corporate polluters as opposed to innocent schoolchild.

Paul Richardson, Cheviot Drive, Chelmsford

Plastic threat to wildlife - 18th September 2008

IN reply to Paul Richardson (September 11th edition). I'm sorry that you believe that "anything goes" for charity. Unfortunately, it's not a perfect world and very often, the end, no matter how noble does not justify the means. If you had taken in the whole of my letter you would surely have been able to see the point; that plastic is a menace and no reason on this earth can justify irresponsibly releasing it, or throwing it into the blue yonder.

You see happy smiling faces watching balloons. Fine! To reiterate my point! Would you view my allowing plastic carrier bags thrown into a high wind in the name of charity with the same approval? I can assure you, I would quite rightly be arrested for antisocial behaviour. What I would ask you to do, please, is to look at the website and contact the marine biologists, who have witnessed the tragic and painful deaths of some of our most valuable and endangered species, by ingesting these balloons.

Ask the cleaning departments of various rural and coastal councils what they think of this infernal and ridiculous Custom. Imagine if you will, freak winds that land them one by one onto your property tangled in bushes and phone wires. Then, say, you find your much-loved pets are dying horribly having eaten them. Sometimes we have to witness firsthand to be realistic about cause and effect!

Christine Michell Wheatfield Way, Chelmsford

Balloons - cause animals distress - 18th September 2008

WITH reference to the letter written by Paul Richardson, "Distaste is misguided", of September 11, In reply to a previous letter on the subject, may I point out the reasons why the release of balloons into the atmosphere is such a bad idea is because they are very dangerous to farm animals that can eat them and choke to death. They also pose a very real danger to wildlife — dolphins, whales, turtles, sea birds and other animals have all been killed by balloons. They block an animal's gut and cause it to starve.

Animals can also become entangled in balloon ribbons and string, restricting their movement and ability to feed. It was recently reported in the press that a lamb was almost strangled when a balloon string was found wrapped around its neck and foot. It was unable to stand and was left behind by its mother. Fortunately the farmer rescued it and it was reunited with her. It was from a M&S promotional event in Spalding and had travelled 40 miles. M&S have now banned the use of balloons in promotional events. I do not think denying children the pleasure of releasing balloons would make them unhappy if they could see what the end result could be. Most children have empathy with animals and would find it very distressing.

Joyce Shiner, Peppers Green, Good Easter (CVAUK member)

Lord, you are the King of Creation
Let us all love all of your creation,
The whole of it.

Our compassion must extend
- if it is to be real -
To the whole world of fellow creatures.

Remind us that we have a duty not only
to refrain from doing harm
But also to do positive good.

Enable us, by your Spirit,
To walk in newness of life,
Healing injury,
Avoiding wrong and making peace
with all your creatures.

Amen

Composed by
Marcelle Williams

**Article submitted by Joyce Percival to St Paul's Church Magazine
Diocese of Chester. (Article edited, see omissions below)**

Christian Vegetarian Association UK

CVAUK is the British arm of an international, non-denominational ministry of Christians who find that plant-based diets benefit human health, the environment, the worlds poor and hungry, and animals. It aims to encourage Christian vegetarians, help non-vegetarian Christians to see how vegetarianism can add meaning to their faith and promote Christian stewardship for all God's Creation.

Health

There are numerous health benefits from adopting a healthy diet which is plant-based e.g. according to the WCRF [World Cancer Research Fund UK, based at 19 Harley St. London W1G 9QJ] such a diet helps to substantially prevent cancer. 'Veggie' and vegan diets are also widely said to aid weight loss.

The Environment

The United Nations have stated that 'the farming of livestock causes more global warming than all the world's transport'. It is also the reason for vast amounts of deforestation.

World hunger

Meat laden diets take land and water from the poor, around the world, while grain is exported to feed livestock. It takes huge amounts of grain to feed animals to produce meat and far less to feed people directly.

It is much easier today being 'veggie' than when I started 35 years ago. It is not just a few lettuce leaves, but instead, can be a nutritious feast. Supermarkets now cater well for us, providing basic ingredients and new ranges all the time, including tasty mock meats. Restaurants also offer 'veggie' options. I find the diet no more expensive and often cheaper.

To receive CVAUK's quarterly newsletter write to-CVAUK, Foresta, Pines Road,
Liphook, GU30 7PL or phone 01428-723747 or Email: dongwil a uk2.net
The website is www.christianvegetarian.co.uk

The following paragraphs were omitted:

Animals

As Sir Paul Mc.Cartney said 'If slaughter houses had glass walls, we would all be vegetarians'. There are violent deaths and much cruelty in producing meat, especially in factory farming.

JESUS

An article in a CVAUK magazine refers to Jesus's Mediterranean diet and compares it with a typical diet here. Also, it is suggested that Christ, [if he were here today] would be fully vegetarian given the cruelty and lack of compassion involved otherwise. #

“The true message of a human is not where he stands in time of comfort and convenience, but where he stands in time of challenge and controversy”

Martin Luther King

Response to an article on saving the rain forests rather than stop flying.

As editor of a consumerist/environmentalist magazine, Martin Wright seems uniquely positioned to point out the ironies of the viewpoint that "we don't need to change our lifestyle." In this piece he does it with gusto, claiming that all that's really needed to stop global warming is to essentially privatise the commons of societies that have yet to destroy all of their intact forests, so that we in the industrialized countries can continue our unsustainable ways while perhaps avoiding catastrophic climate change. What he fails to point out is that the rapid deforestation in the tropics is the result of demand on the part of industrial countries for cheap paper and furniture, soy-fed meat, soy-fed farmed fish, and transportation fuels. People would stop cutting down the forests if it didn't pay. The real "elephant in the living room" on greenhouse gas emissions, the collapse of global fisheries, deforestation, and just about every other topic ever covered in the "Green Room" is the insatiable demand of industrial civilized lifestyles. It's about time we started talking about this elephant that has been responsible for all fossil fuel emissions in the history of the earth, and about what we plan to do to change it.

Steve Morgan, Eldora, Colorado, US

A Chicken in the Storm

... as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings. (Matthew 23:37)

Whoever invented the word, "chicken-hearted," didn't know his chickens. "Chicken-hearted," according to Webster, means to be timid, afraid, fearful or cowardly. In modern teenage jargon, anyone without courage is called 'chicken.' I spring to the defense of the grossly maligned fowl, for a chicken is just the opposite. I have never seen a greater demonstration of courage, fearlessness and loyalty than I saw displayed by a chicken in time of grave danger. Chickens are not 'chicken-hearted," and whoever made the statement owes the noble hen an apology. Take the case of my hen. I had placed 14 eggs under her and she faithfully hatched all 14. That took courage and stamina and patience for 21 long days. I made a coop for her with slats across the open end, so the chicks could pass in and out while the mother hen remained confined inside. The coop is outside my study window. One afternoon a storm arose, and before it broke I could hear the frantic "cluck cluck" of the mother hen as she called her brood to shelter. It was a terrible storm. Trees were blown down, and the air was filled with debris. Suddenly a gust of wind lifted the coop into the air and sent it tumbling across the lawn. I was expecting hen and chicks to be blown away all over the place. But there she sat on the open lawn, without shelter, exposed to a gale violent enough to blow a man down. As though cemented to the ground she squatted motionless till the storm was past. Don't ask me how she did it. Love made her immovable — love for her little chicks. Now we can understand better why Jesus compared His own love to that of a hen who "doth gather her brood under her wings" (Luke 13:34b). Remember today, child of God, that under His wings you are safe and secure. M.R.D.

*Under His wings, what a refuge in sorrow! How the heart yearningly turns to His rest!
Often when earth has no balm for my healing, There I find comfort, and there I am blest.*

— W. Cushing

"Be sure if God sends you on stony paths, He will provide you with strong shoes."

Submitted by Phyliss Flanders - Glastonbury.

Teach children how to deal with animals

By Eileen Girling

Beverley Guardian 03 October 2008

Regarding the recent spate of so called dog attacks in this area. Last week I saw a medium-sized brown mongrel dog tied up outside the Hall Road Tesco Store anxiously looking for his owner, a practice that is irresponsible as the dog being restrained is open to abuse. Many dogs have in fact been stolen in this way.

A couple of young mothers were gossiping and were not keeping a close enough eye on their four small children, all aged under six, as all four of them started to crowd around this dog whose tail went down between its legs, a sure sign of fear and nervousness. One of these children (obviously not brought up right) said: 'Pull its tail' and attempted to do so and the dog turned towards them, in as much as it could, and gave a few warning growls and only then, hearing the growling did the mothers call the children, one saying the f-word dog would have got a good kicking if it had bit their child. Yet this was a classic case of negligence by the dog owner and also by these parents. The dog, if left alone, was harmless, yet it would have got the full blame if this incidence had developed into an attack.

Please do not leave your dog tied up outside a shop. It does not enjoy it and is stressed by it. Also please parents teach your children not to pull a dog's tail as it hurts and you cannot expect a dog not to attack when abused in such ways especially when it cannot run away. All dog attacks happen because of human negligence in one way or another yet the dog always gets the blame.

As a leading veterinary surgeon states: 'There are no bad dogs only bad people'. The Tesco tail-pulling child will most likely bring up her own children to treat dogs in the same way as her own mother teaches her to Children should be taught kindness and consideration for all creatures. #

Vegetarian Recipes and Ethical Choices

By Sue Day (CVAUK member)

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28 pages of recipes and ethical advice, now a CVAUK booklet.

Beth Gourley - Belfast

Beth, has been an active member of CVAUK for many years but is very isolated in Belfast and needs our prayers, support and encouragement. Beth is not on the Internet but I am sure a letter or a chat on the phone would be appreciated.

Phone No. in 'Members List' or contact Don Gwillim.

CVAUK Patron awarded a PhD

CVAUK congratulates Debbie Jones, Editor of 'The Ark, Catholic Concern for Animals, for achieving a **PhD in Animal Theology**. Debbie's thesis:

'Can there be a Roman Catholic theology of Animals'

The thesis recounts the history of the Church's attitudes to animals, from biblical and classical times to the present day (especially in Great Britain), and then takes a critical 'in depth' analysis of the section in the Catechism of the Catholic Church that deals with animals. After that it surveys the opinions of Catholics today, and examines various ethical theories, concluding with a theology of the priesthood of creation, and how the human 'image of God' is at the service of **all life**.

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Directory of Vegetarian (Vegan) Pastors and Churches who are Animal Friendly and Christian Ministries for Animals.

Frank and Mary Hofman have established the above directories and would like our assistance. To help, CVAUK would like to create a UK directory for our members and for inclusion in the above directories on www.all-creatures.org.

Please send all proposals & contact details to Don Gwillim.



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This book has no claim other than that the recipes were all contributed by people who are devout both in their Vegetarianism and in their Christianity.

It has been put together as a humble offering to help their fellow Christians who are still carnivores to become:

more animal-friendly - more environmentally friendly - healthier

and above all to fulfil the vision contained in such passages as

Genesis 1:29 & 30 and Isaiah 11:1- 9



Send all contributions and enquiries to:

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