

THE COMMUNION FOREST

RENEWING THE LIFE OF THE EARTH ACROSS THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

The Communion Forest is an exciting initiative of the Anglican Communion to join together in tree growing and ecosystem conservation, protection and restoration throughout the world.

It could become one of the most ecologically diverse and geographically widespread environmental initiatives in the world.





The Anglican
Communion is
the world's
third largest
Christian
community
with 85 million
members
across 165
countries.







The Communion Forest is a *global* initiative comprising *local* activities of tree growing and ecosystem conservation, protection and restoration undertaken by parishes, dioceses and provinces across the Anglican Communion.

THE OF THE EARLY



The Communion Forest is a *worldwide* initiative made up of *local* activities of tree growing and ecosystem conservation, protection and restoration.

"The Communion Forest is a symbol and an act of hope, something we can do together as God's Church for God's World as we journey on from the Lambeth Conference."

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby





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The Communion Forest was launched during the Lambeth Conference in August 2022 as one of the legacies of the conference The Communion
Forest is a sign
of the Anglican
Communion's
commitment to
the Anglican
Fifth Mark of
Mission.





The Communion Forest is a practical, spiritual and symbolic response to the environmental crisis...



...and an act of Christian hope for the well-being of humanity and all God's creation.



The Communion Forest is facilitated by the Anglican Alliance and the Anglican Communion Environmental Network, with the support of an advisory group drawn from across the Communion.







WHY A COMMUNION FOREST?

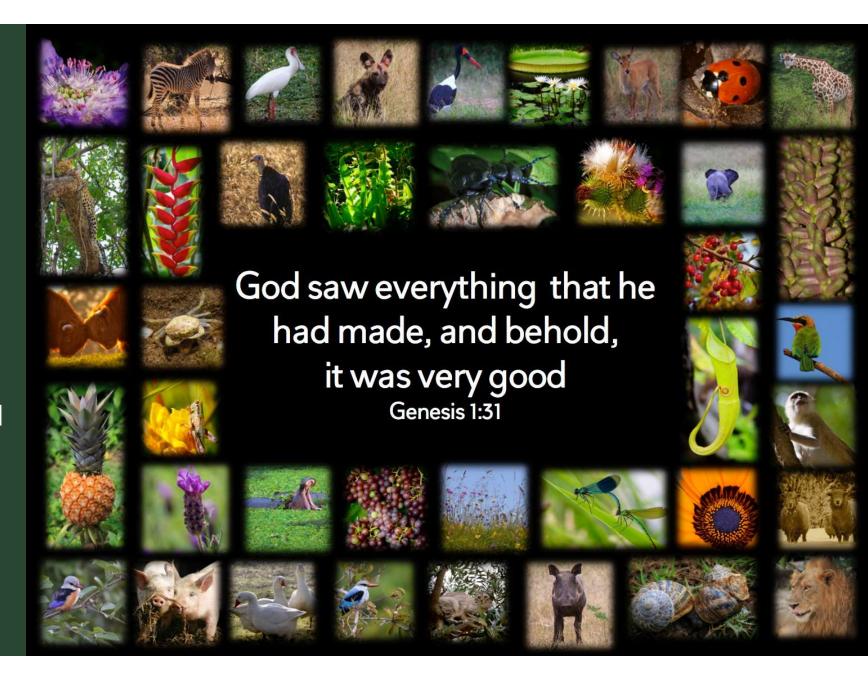


We have been gifted a world of breath-taking beauty, astounding abundance and intricate interconnection.

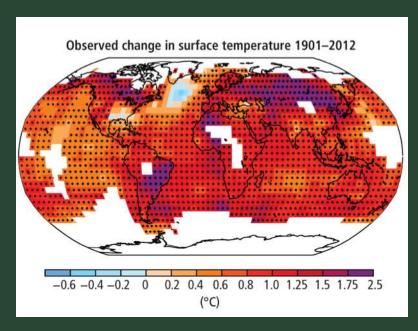
It is a world God declared good and loves.



BUT...



The integrity of creation is under threat and at risk of collapse.









The life systems of the earth are under severe strain from the triple environmental crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.

The world's forests and other plant communities are imperilled, along with the great diversity of species which rely on them, and humanity itself.

We are in a climate and ecological crisis.

We are at a crisis point for the future of humanity and our common home, the earth.





The environmental crisis is an existential threat to millions of people and species of plants and animals across the globe.

Its impacts take lives, destroy habitats and homes, devastate livelihoods, cause food shortages, force migration, disrupt communities and break up families.

The impacts of the crisis are costly, both financially and in terms of the **trauma** they create.





Standing amidst the wreckage caused by Cyclone Freddy, Mozambique.

Photo: Diocese of Zambesia.

- A survey in 2021 of 10,000 young people in ten countries found:
- 59% were very or extremely worried about climate change and 84% were at least moderately worried.
- ☐ More than 50% reported each of the following emotions: sad, anxious, angry, powerless, helpless, and guilty.
- ☐ More than 45% of respondents said their feelings about climate change negatively affected their daily life and functioning,
- ☐ 75% said that they think the future is frightening

THE LANCET Planetary Health



ARTICLES | VOLUME 5, ISSUE 12, E863-E873, DECEMBER 2021

Climate anxiety in children and young people and their beliefs about government responses to climate change: a global survey

Caroline Hickman, MSc $\stackrel{\wedge}{\sim}$ $\stackrel{\uparrow}{\simeq}$ • Elizabeth Marks, ClinPsyD $\stackrel{\uparrow}{\circ}$ • Panu Pihkala, PhD • Prof Susan Clayton, PhD • R Eric Lewandowski, PhD • Elouise E Mayall, BSc • et al. Show all authors • Show footnotes

"Humanity is waging war on nature. This is senseless and suicidal.

The consequences of our recklessness are already apparent in human suffering, towering economic losses and the accelerating erosion of life on Earth."

António Guterres UN General Secretary





Drought in Nicaragua. Image: ACT Alliance / Sean Hawkey

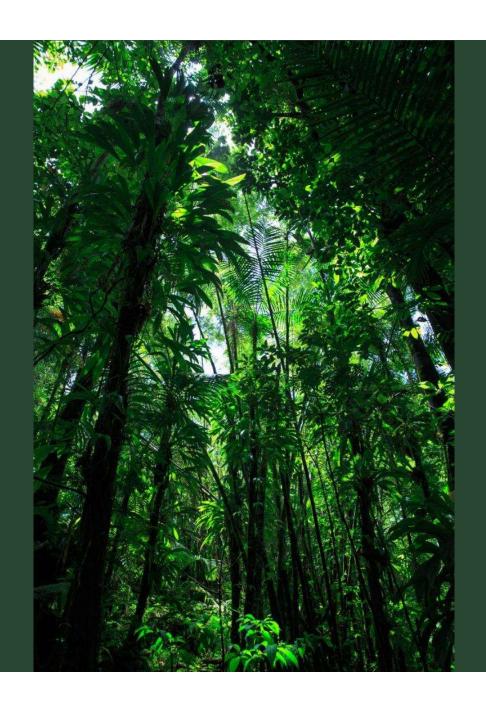
"The world is at a decision point; the planet is heating up, the vital biodiversity that protects and connects life on the planet is crashing, and the risk for economic instability for millions of people is increasing.

These challenges are interconnected, and forests can provide a vital nature-based solution to help address this triple challenge.

Forests are not the only solution, but we can't succeed without them."

Trillion Trees guide to investing in forest restoration.





THE COMMUNION FOREST AS A RESPONSE TO THE PROBLEM



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...and an act of Christian hope for the well-being of humanity and all God's creation.



Trees and forests:

- stabilise the climate
- protect from flooding
- sequester carbon (remove it from the atmosphere)
- sustain biodiversity
- generate food and livelihoods









"In addressing climate change, few actions are as critical, as urgent, or as simple as planting trees.

"This ancient carbon-absorbing technology needs no high technology, is completely safe and is very cheap.

"It literally reverses the process that has led to climate change, in that as trees (and all other biomass) grow, they absorb CO₂ from the air, release oxygen and return carbon to its rightful location: in the soil."

Christiana Figueres and Tom Rivett-Carnac in The Future We Choose

AIM



Overall aim
To significantly
increase Anglican tree
growing and
ecosystem
conservation,
protection and
restoration around the
world and deepen care
for creation within the
life of the Church.





The Communion Forest builds on the extensive creation care work that is already happening in the Communion.



The Church of South India - Green Schools



The Franciscan brothers of the Solomon Islands testified to the UN about human rights impacts of logging





Diocese of Kansas, prairie grass

The Communion Forest builds on the extensive creation care work that is already happening in the Communion.



Trees for confirmation candidates, Norwich UK



Installing a solar farm
Diocese of Central Zimbabwe





Indigenous tree nursery, Amazonia

PRACTICALITIES



Communion Forest activities are chosen locally, so that they are geographically and environmentally appropriate.



SSTAIN AND RENEW

Local expressions might be about planting a new forest, but could equally be about:

- planting trees along boundaries, roads, or on church land
- restoring a piece of waste land in a town
- creating a tiny city garden
- making your churchyard a wildlife corridor
- setting up a tree nursery
- getting involved in a local conservation project
- advocating to prevent the destruction of a habitat.

The possibilities are endless!

Actions churches can take

- Conservation get involved in looking after a local ecosystem.
- Protection advocate and take action to stop deforestation or prevent the destruction of other habitats.
- Restoration restore a piece of waste land or other degraded environment.
- Growing start a forest initiative on church land or support a project in the wider community. Right tree, right place, right purpose.
- Multiplying set up a tree or plant nursery to enable wider participation in afforestation.





Practical actions of conservation, protection and restoration might include...

Landscapes

- . Forests
- Urban green spaces
- Grasslands
- Deserts

Coastal & marine ecosystems

- . Coral reefs
- Mangrove forests
- . Estuaries
- Seagrass

Freshwater ecosystems

- Rivers
- Lakes
- . Wetlands
- Streams

Tree growing activities could include...

- Tree nurseries
- Offering land
- Offering networks, infrastructure, labour, skills
- Adopting public protected areas





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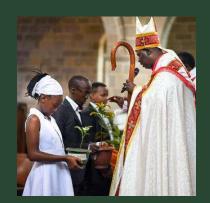


Advocacy: using your voice to deliver solutions for nature.





- Speaking against forest encroachments and illegal logging.
- Monitoring implementation of national conservation strategies/plans.
- Community awareness creation on environmental degradation.
- Challenging extractive and unsustainable economic activities







Actions bishops can take

- Promote the Communion Forest initiative in your diocese.
- Give confirmation candidates a seedling or sapling to plant or care for as a symbol of spiritual growth.
- Encourage tree growing in your diocese to celebrate occasions and services, for example birthdays, marriages, births and baptisms.
- Use your voice and influence to protect, conserve and restore ecosystems.
- Set aside a plot of land to grow appropriate indigenous seedlings so that the diocese and community have a source of inexpensive tree saplings.
- Engage with young people. They are often already involved in taking environmental action. Encourage them, amplify their voices, involve them in Communion Forest activities and help them to connect their environmental activism with their faith.
- . Use the Season of Creation as a special period for promoting this initiative and creation care.

Actions national churches can take

- **Church-owned land.** How are current land assets being managed? Identify and extend good practice. Could land be bought for sustainable solutions?
- The Church as a climate finance pioneer. Can national church funds be used to support Church ecosystem restoration, either locally or across the Communion?
- The Church's commitment to Net Zero. What Net Zero methodologies are your National Investing Bodies using? Is there a source of income (investment) for Communion Forest activities at home or abroad through their allocation to climate solutions?
- Partnerships. Can you forge intentional collaboration with current national restoration initiatives (eg WWF)?
- Mosaic planting for pollinator pathways. Select and target diocese(s) who are willing and able to sustain a project using church land.



ADVOCACY

What is the next thing God is calling you to do, where you are, with the unique assets you have?











Be ambitious but focus on quality as well as quantity!



THE COMMUNION FOREST

TO PLANT IS TO HOPE
TO RESTORE IS TO HEAL
TO PROTECT IS TO LOVE

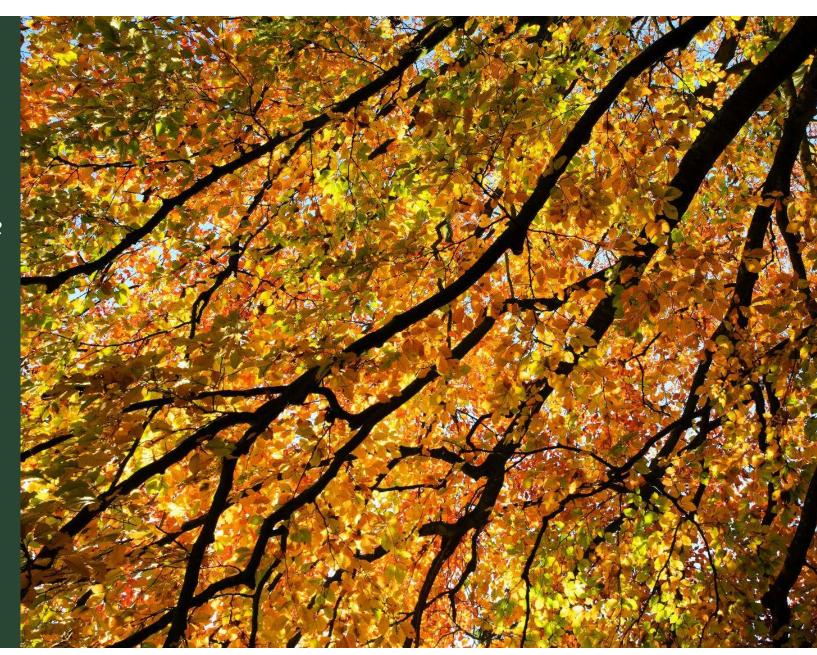
SPIRITUALITY



And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Revelation 22:2





WHY SPIRITUALITY TOO?

The environmental emergency is not just a physical crisis, it is also a spiritual one. Humanity needs a spiritual and cultural transformation.

We must see the world differently: repenting of and rejecting an extractive world view and embracing instead a relational one.





How?

- Encouraging tree growing to celebrate special occasions such as confirmations, marriages, baptisms, birthdays etc
- Holding outdoor services
- Seminaries and leadership development
- Sermons: Preaching for God's World
- Prayers
- Wider worship materials
- Celebrating the Season of Creation
- Bible studies
- Discipleship materials



THE COMMUNION FOREST TEAM AND APPROACH



The Communion Forest is facilitated by the Anglican Alliance and the Anglican Communion Environmental Network, with the support of an advisory group drawn from across the Communion.







There are two part time facilitators: Irene Sebastian-Waweru for Africa Nicholas Pande for the rest of the world.









The initial focus of the Communion Forest team is on **connecting**, **equipping and inspiring** churches across the Anglican Communion in four areas:

- . Practical action
- Spirituality
- . Advocacy
- . Community building

We are also building partnerships and working towards the Communion Forest being able to broker funding for local projects.



. the facilitators reaching out to provinces and making connections

. webinars



Recogida de datos en proyectos de conservación y por qué es importante

¿Cuáles son las herramientas, los métodos y las oportunidades de que dispone la Iglesia?

Jueves 25 de mayo

8H UTC (GMT) - con interpretación al francés y al árabe*
16H UTC (GMT) - con interpretación al español y al portugués*

*Si desea interpretación, inscribase antes del 18 de mayo.

Consulte a continuación los enlaces de inscripción





You are warmly invited to a webinar on:

Data collection in conservation projects and why it is important

What are the tools, methods and opportunities available to the Church?

Thursday 25th May

8AM UTC (GMT) - with French and Arabic interpretation*
4PM UTC (GMT) - with Spanish and Portuguese interpretation*

*please register by 18th May if you would like interpretation

Registration links below

- . the facilitators reaching out to provinces and making connections
- . webinars
- informal pray, share and connect sessions online



CONNECTEZ-VOUS, PARTAGEZ ET PRIEZ

avec la communauté de Forêt de la Communion (Communion Forest).

Jeudi 27 avril

8H UTC (GMT) - avec interprétation en français et en arabe*
16H UTC (GMT) - avec interprétation en espagnol et en portugais*

*Veuillez vous inscrire avant le 20 avril si vous souhaitez une interprétation.

Liens d'inscription ci-dessous

Sujet : Faire pousser des arbres pour célébrer des occasions spéciales. Un événement d'une heure pour se connecter, partager et prier. Venez apprendre et partager dans un dialogue ouvert sur ce sujet.



CONNECT, SHARE & PRAY

with the Communion Forest Community

Thursday 27th April

8AM UTC (GMT) - with French and Arabic interpretation*
4PM UTC (GMT) - with Spanish and Portuguese interpretation*

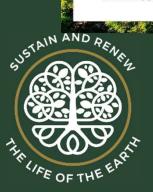
*please register by 20th April if you would like interpretation

Registration links below

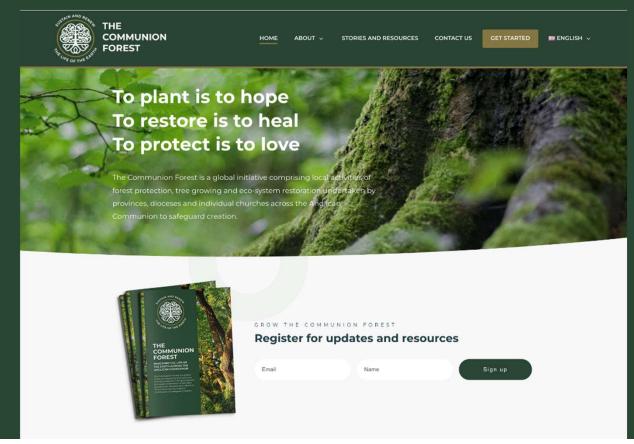
Topic: Growing trees to celebrate special occasions.

1 hour event of connecting, sharing and praying.

Come learn and share in an open dialogue on this topic.

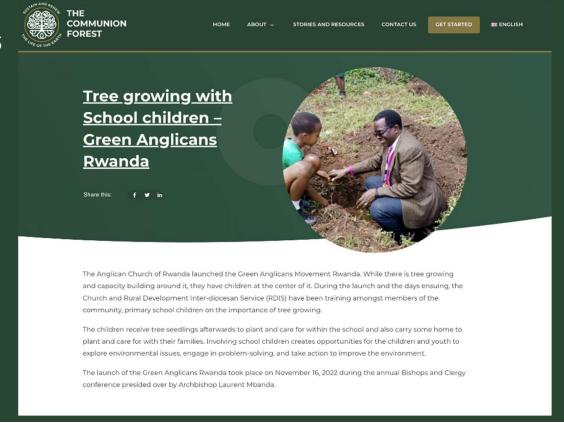


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- webinars
- informal pray, share and connect sessions online
- resources on the Communion Forest website





- . the facilitators reaching out to provinces and making connections
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- informal pray, share and connect sessions online
- resources on the Communion Forest website
- web stories
- newsletters





WELCOME!



Greetings of peace in this season of Lent

Thank you for being part of the growing Communion Forest community. In this newsletter are:

- . Dates for your diary: upcoming Communion Forest events
- · 202tree Lent resource
- · New initiatives in the Anglican Communion
- · Other great pre-existing initiatives we have heard about
- The Communion Forest at the Anglican Consultative Council
- . A link to the recording of the Communion Forest webinar

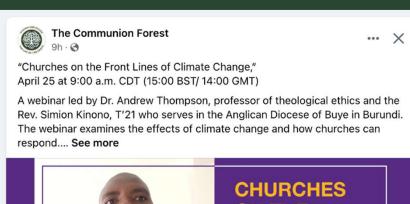
Please share your stories of tree growing and ecosystem conservation, protection and restoration with us, so we can continue to map and share what is happening across the Anglican Communion - and so we can learn from, encourage and inspire one another. Please get in touch:

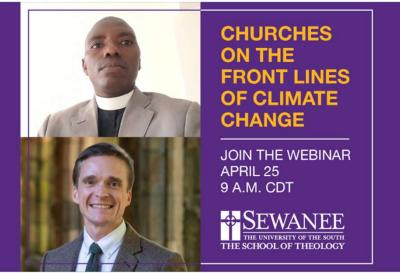
communionforest@anglicancommunion.org.



- . the facilitators reaching out to provinces and making connections
- webinars
- informal pray, share and connect sessions online
- resources on the Communion Forest website
- web stories
- newsletters
- social media posts
- presentations and talks

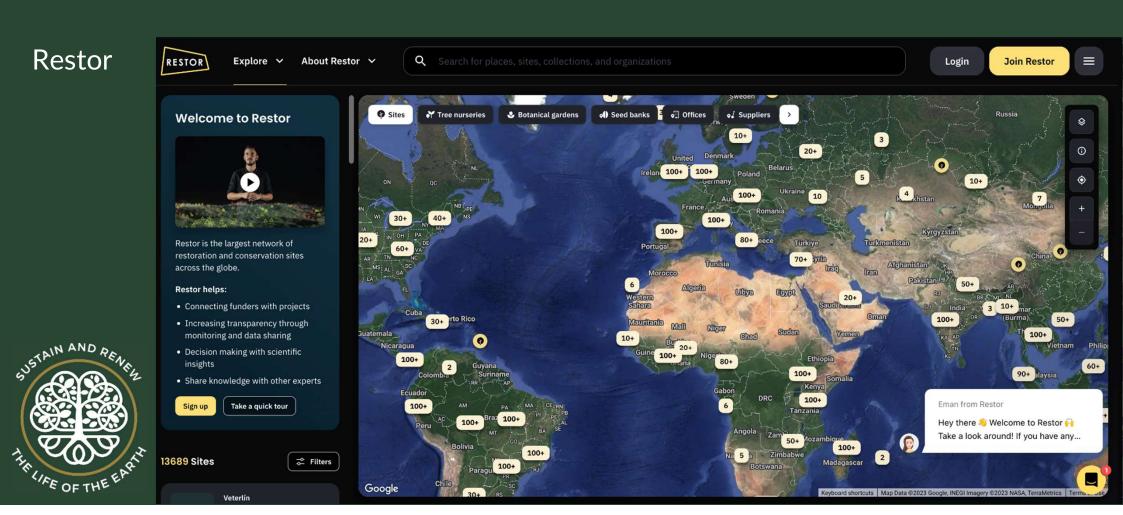






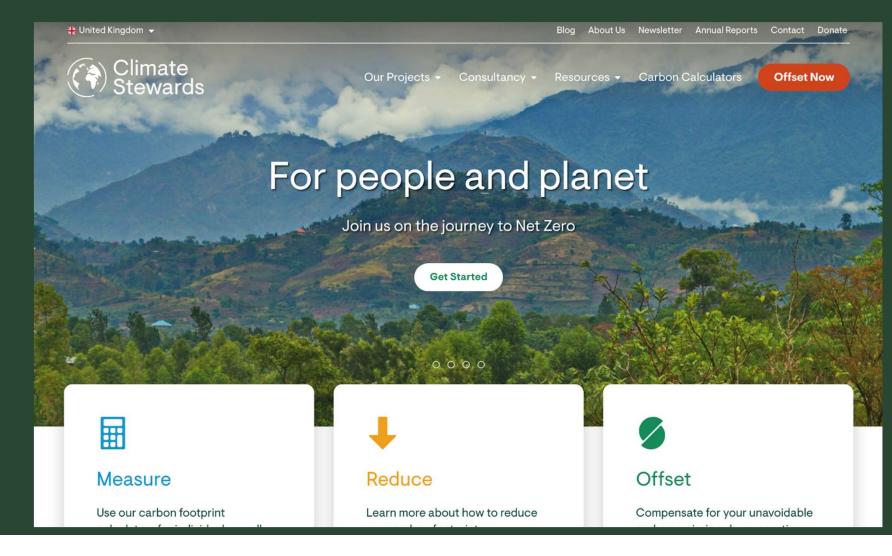


We are also building partnerships and working towards the Communion Forest being able to broker funding for local projects.



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Climate Stewards

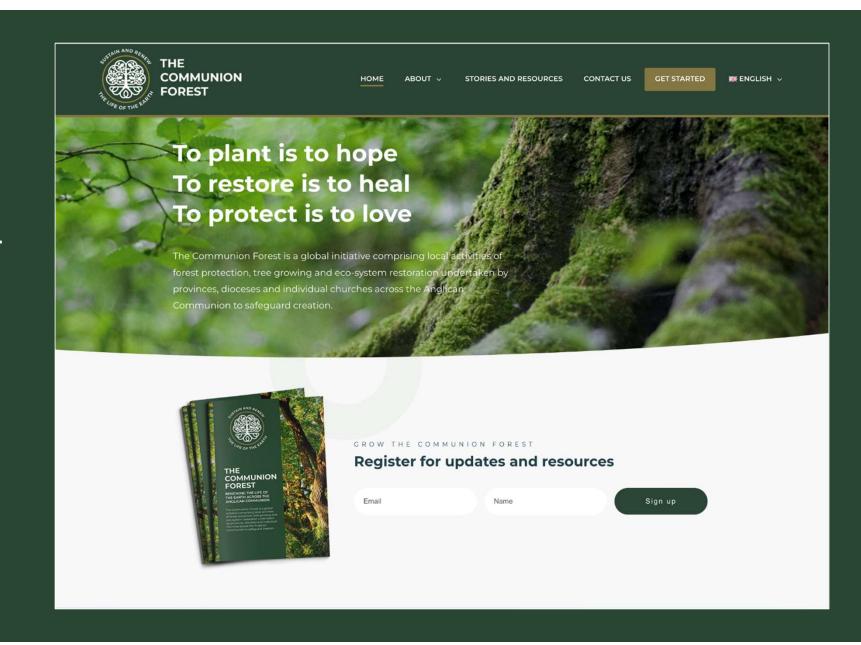




Please join our community!

Subscribe to our newsletter and following us on social media.





Please reach out to us and tell us what you're doing:

Communionforestglobal@aco.org

or

Nicholas.pande@aco.org

Please subscribe to our newsletter.





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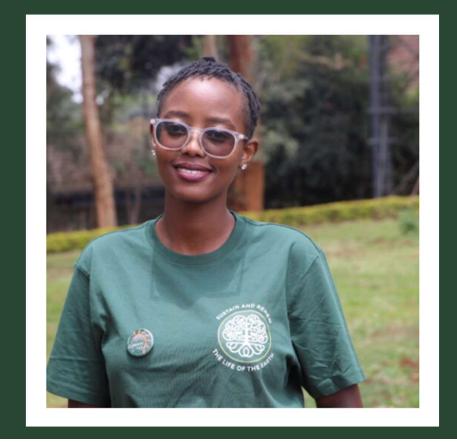
Communionforestafrica@aco.org

or

Irene.sebastian@aco.org

Please subscribe to our newsletter.





THINGS WE HAVE HEARD ABOUT SINCE THE LAUNCH



Where are we now? Post Lambeth Conference initiatives include....

Iowa (USA), Swaziland (Eswatini) and Brechin (Scotland)



SUSTAIN AND AR

The Diocese of Central Zimbabwe has committed 105 hectares of church land for the Communion Forest Zimbabwe.



Lesotho prayer walk and orchard creation with MU

Where are we now? Trees as part of confirmations etc really taking off:

Trees at confirmation, Brisbane, Australia











Saplings given to the congregation at the installation of the Bishop of Bath and Wells, England

Where are we now? Pledges of support, including from:

- Anglican Church of Southern Africa
- Episcopal Church of the Philippines (plus joint project with IFI)
- At least three dioceses of The Episcopal Church: Virginia, North Carolina and Washington. Part of a wider commitment of The Episcopal Church to the Communion Forest, made at the 2022 Episcopal Church General Convention
- Diocese of Ballarat in Australia has made the CF its project for the year



"When it comes to climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss, the vast majority of us have a learned reaction of helplessness, we see the direction the world is headed and we throw up our hands. Yes it is terrible, but it is so complex and so big and so overwhelming. We can't do anything to stop it.

"This learned response it not only untrue, it is fundamentally irresponsible.

"Know that you are incredibly lucky to be alive at a time when you can make a transformative difference to the future of all life on earth. You are not powerless. Your every action is suffused with meaning and you are part of the greatest chapter of human achievement in history."

Christiana Figueres in The Future We Choose





Thank you!





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THANK YOU!



