



GREEN ANGLICANS

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families

THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Report from the Women Faith and Climate Network Collaboration Workshop on:

Mobilising the Grassroots for Environmental Action through Eco Champions:

Lessons from the Anglican Communion

On June 24, 2025, the Women, Faith, and Climate Network held the second workshop in its global series, focusing on how women of faith are mobilising grassroots climate action through the leadership of “Eco Champions.” The event showcased real-world experiences from within the Anglican Communion, demonstrating how church structures, laywomen’s groups, and environmental ministries can collaborate to generate sustained, locally grounded environmental impact on a large scale

146 participants registered to attend, representing diverse faith networks and regions. The session was an opportunity to deepen collaboration, exchange tools, learn from faith-led approaches that support community resilience, climate justice, and ecological transformation, and explore ways to adapt the Eco Champ model for other faith networks and areas.

Speakers and Highlights

Meisie Lerulta – the Provincial Mothers' Union President in Southern Africa, leading over 40,000 Mothers' Union members in 24 Dioceses. She has served in various positions within the Mothers' Union, and is passionate about work promoting environmental sustainability.

- Shared powerful examples of women-led community mobilisation through the [Mothers' Union and Eco Champs networks](#).
- Focused on integrating environmental action into everyday church life: gardening, water harvesting, and climate education at the parish level.
- Advocated for the empowerment of rural women through local training, resource sharing, and intergenerational learning
- Mothers' Union is keen to expand the program to other provinces and to share what we know through partnerships with other players and networks

Rev. Dr. Rachel Mash Coordinator of the Anglican Communion Environmental Network. She is the Coordinator of the Green Anglicans Movement which started in Southern Africa and has now spread to 14 countries across Africa.

- Described the growth of the [Green Anglicans](#) movement, now active in 14 African countries. Showcased the role of youth-led “Eco Champions” in planting trees, conducting cleanups, and lobbying for sustainable church practices; Told stories of 3 Youth Eco Champs each moving into leadership positions in church and community systems, and influencing climate action
- Highlighted liturgical tools and youth-focused programs that link [theology with environmental stewardship](#).

- Emphasized mentorship, peer to peer support and celebration as core strategies to grow and retain grassroots leaders
- Tagged the power of branding to grow a movement as shown by the popularity of the Green Anglican T Shirt .

WHEN WOMEN THRIVE THE EARTH THRIVES!

Jo Chamberlain –the Church of England’s National Environment Officer. My role is to help the Church of England engage with the environmental issues of our day, in our prayer and worship, in our actions, and as part of the national conversation. I’ve been in this post for 5 ½ years, having previously worked for Christian Aid, and before that as a Speech Therapist.

- Outlined the Church of England’s “Eco Church” strategy and net-zero carbon goals.
- Described the role of Eco Champions in supporting local congregations to assess energy use, reduce emissions, and adopt sustainable practices.
- Shared [downloadable tools](#) , and [Church of England Resources](#) as frameworks churches can use to green their operations and teach creation care.

Breakout Sessions: Shared Ideas & Collaboration Proposals

In small group discussions, participants:

- Shared their own examples of grassroots leadership and community projects.
- Expressed a strong interest in training-of-trainers models for Eco Champions
- Planned to follow up with Mothers’ Union leaders locally to explore collaboration
- Proposed creating a cross-network resource hub and regional peer mentorship groups.
- Called for more theological materials contextualised to climate justice
- Emphasised the importance of interfaith storytelling, shared liturgies, and public campaigns led by women of faith.

Key Takeaways:

- Eco Champions are a powerful force for climate action when supported with tools, networks, and spiritual grounding.
- Faith spaces are trusted, accessible platforms for environmental education, particularly among women and rural communities.
- Church groups like the Mothers’ Union can drive large-scale change when their leadership is empowered and resourced.
- Mentorship and storytelling play a vital role in sustaining grassroots action and inspiring new generations of faith-based environmental leaders.
- Training and recognition structures (badges, liturgies, awards, T shirts) help formalise and grow Eco Champion programs.
- Tools like the Church of England’s “Eco Toolkit” and the Green Anglicans’ [youth manuals](#) are replicable across denominations and geographies.
- Women of faith are already leading—this series exists to scale what works and deepen connections.

Participant Reflections:

- “I learned that we can start where we are, with what we have. Even small church gardens can change lives.”
- “Eco Champions can be found in every community. We just need to name them, train them, and support them.”
- “It was inspiring to hear from Anglican sisters doing so much on the ground. We can apply these lessons across our own networks.”
- In the Diocese of Free State we have started developing a Standard Operating Procedure for Sunday School where environmental matters are being included as part of the syllabus of Sunday School MU in SA is certainly ahead and we shall be collaborating with them for capacity building
- “These workshops are helping me build confidence to go back and propose a new project to our church leadership.
- We also discussed scaling – this included taking any small step that we can think of. I shared my interest in prairie grasses and Rachel immediately put me in touch with a bishop she knows in Kansas City who shares this passion – for me it demonstrated how small steps show up when we are alert to seeing and hearing.

Workshop Resources:

- **Full Recording:** <https://youtu.be/XZsDapNoOzw>
- **Presentations and resources:**
 - [Rev. Dr. Rachel Mash – Green Anglicans](#)
 - [Meisie Lerulta – Mothers Union & Eco Champs](#)
 - [Jo Chamberlain – Church of England Environment Programme](#)

Other Workshops in the Series

Workshop 3 – July 22, 2025 : Radical Partnerships for Strengthening the Nexus between Women of Faith & Women-Led Renewable Energy Practices

- **Registration:** <https://jliflc.app.neoncrm.com/np/clients/jliflc/event.jsp?event=578&>

The recordings and resources from the first workshop on Sustainable Agriculture are available on WFCN website: <https://www.womenfaithclimate.org/post/resources-from-radical-collaboration-workshop-1>



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