

Environmentally challenged...

Have fun with St Able and St Oopid as they challenge climate change in two very different ways.

Words: Peter Shaw

SCENE: PRESENTER, A SMART TV HOST, ENTERS.

PRESENTER: Welcome to **Church climate change challenge** Live! Today we're meeting two churches that have been transformed to reduce their contribution to climate change. Welcome Chris from St Able's and Jo from St Oopid's! (*ENTER CHRIS, WEARING A T-SHIRT: 'WE ARE ST ABLE!' AND JO, WEARING A T-SHIRT: 'WE ARE ST OOPID' AND HOLDING A PAINTBRUSH AND PAINT POT*). Let's start with you, Chris. How has St Able changed to be more energy-efficient?

CHRIS: Let's state the obvious first. Becoming a 'greener' church doesn't mean painting your church green!

JO: Doesn't it? (*THROWS BRUSH AND POT OFFSTAGE*) Um, of course it doesn't.

PRESENTER: So, what did you do, Chris?

CHRIS: First we looked at what the Bible says and examined the scientific evidence. We wanted the church to understand that climate change is already happening. And it's hitting poorest people hardest.

PRESENTER: Jo, did you do something similar at St Oopid?

JO: As always, we did things our own St Oopid way. We put a notice up with the Health and Safety regulations: Like it or lump it – we're going green.

PRESENTER: I see. Chris, how has St Able reduced its carbon footprint?

CHRIS: We now use mugs instead of disposable cups –

JO: At St Oopid we only boil a kettle with enough water for one cup at a time. So if you want tea at the end you have to queue for two and a half hours.

PRESENTER: You're supposed to boil only enough for what you need – not one at a time. Didn't you read the guidelines?

JO: Sorry, we recycled them. I thought that's what you wanted?

PRESENTER: Um. Back to Chris. How else have you inspired the church to be more energy-efficient?

CHRIS: We ran a series of sermons about how love does no harm to its neighbour – to help grasp that what we consume has an effect on poor people across the world.

JO: So did we. First week the sermon was 'What Would Jesus Drive?' We got drivers of 4X4s to stand up while we booed them. We followed it up with 'Turn Your Thermostat Down or Burn (In the Eternal Fires of Human-Induced Climate Change)'.

PRESENTER: That's, um, interesting. Chris, how has St Able risen to Tearfund's **Church climate change challenge**?

CHRIS: It's definitely a journey. Sometimes it was a question of trying to find out the right thing to do. Should you wash nappies at high temperatures or use disposables?

JO: Dunno about you, Chris, but I've stopped wearing them altogether.

PRESENTER: (*IGNORING JO*) But you have made a difference at St Able?

CHRIS: Oh, yes. People now cycle, walk or give each other lifts to church. And we have significantly reduced our climate change-causing emissions.

JO: Significantly reduced? At St Oopid, we've reduced our emissions 100 per cent!

PRESENTER: Incredible! How did you manage that?

JO: Everyone's left.

PRESENTER: It seems St Able have put the 'logical' in ecological. Whereas St Oopid, er, haven't. And I know which church I'd rather belong to. *Goodbye!*

END