

Joy in Enough



CEL's new Initiative 'Joy in Enough'

Our current economic system is busting the limits of creation. Like a cancer it is putting all of life at risk. It's stopped making people any happier. To turn around a well-known phrase – it's a stupid economy!

Within Christian Ecology Link we're learning from people like Tim Jackson (Economics Commissioner on the Sustainable Development Commission before it was disbanded in 2010 and author of *Prosperity without Growth*), Dan O'Neill (lecturer in ecological economics at the University of Leeds and co-author with Rob Dietz of *Enough is Enough*), and the work of the New Economics Foundation – among many others.

Now we want to equip Christians to become advocates of a new order – prosperity without growth. A steady state economy, in scale with creation, will not only restore ecosystems but repair humanity and honour the reign of God. Far from being 'worse off' we will discover the 'joy in enough', and lay to rest the myth that environmentalists are grim obsessives who can only say 'no'.

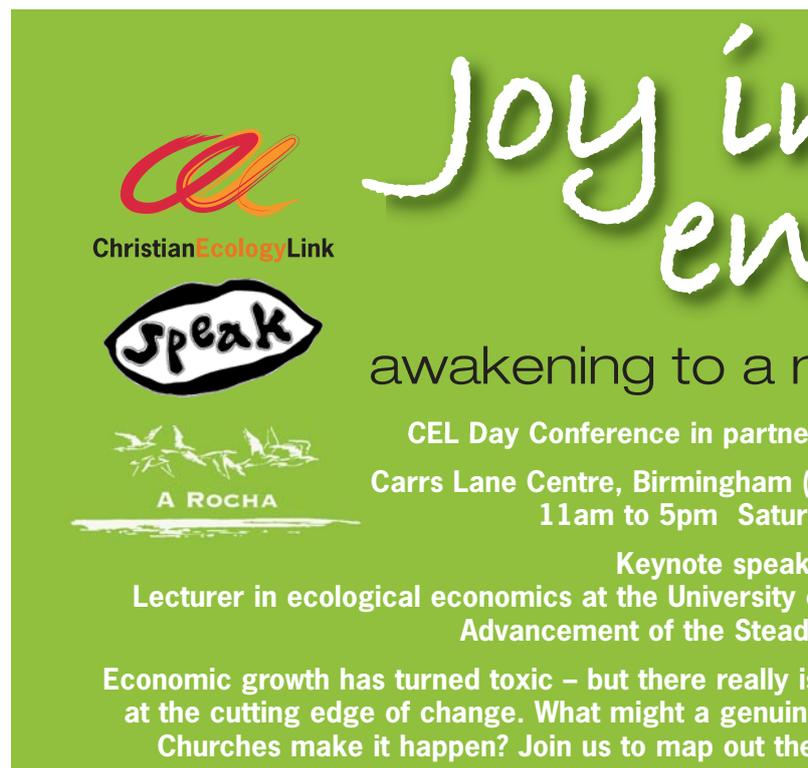
It is one of the most ambitious and innovative projects that CEL has ever undertaken, and will be a focus of our activity for the next two years at least.

Our journey begins with an inaugural conference to which you are invited on Saturday 29 March 2014 in Birmingham (see the advert on the back page). We are excited that Dan O'Neill, one of the UK's most articulate and accessible advocates for this 'new economics', has agreed to be our keynote speaker. Dan introduces the economic case for transformation in his article, see over the page. One of the aims of the conference is to develop the theological mandate for Christians to take action for the kind of programme Dan sets out. For a full statement of the aims of the project and next year's conference, see the box on page 16.

We're calling the initiative 'Joy in Enough' to celebrate the flourishing and well-being that comes from living lives freed from the pressure to consume. The old economy of air miles, bottled water and casino capitalism will be very much constrained, but the quality of our

lives will be enhanced – more time and opportunity for the things that matter, like creativity, culture and sport and friendship.

We've set up five working groups to look at different strategies to make the difficult transition to a steady state economy that promotes well-being for all long into the future. There's no silver bullet, no one solution. Instead there are a number of different strategies that are feasible to implement and which, together, would help turn round the giant oil tanker of 'growth forever' economic thinking. We're looking for more people to join these working groups – to discuss by email and phone and come together for the conference on 29 March 2014. Get in touch with Tony Emerson if you want to join a working group or find out more about our 'Joy in Enough' project. Tel 020 8769 4078 or email tony.emerson12@btopenworld.com



Joy in Enough
awakening to a new way of living

Christian Ecology Link

Speak

A ROCHA

CEL Day Conference in partnership with
Carrs Lane Centre, Birmingham (B15 2TH)
11am to 5pm Saturday 29 March 2014

Keynote speaker
Dan O'Neill
Lecturer in ecological economics at the University of Leeds
Advancement of the Steady State Economy

**Economic growth has turned toxic – but there really is a way out
at the cutting edge of change. What might a genuine alternative be?
Churches make it happen? Join us to map out the way forward.**



Enough

The five working group themes are:

1. The big transnational questions of limiting resource use and waste production and cutting emissions.
2. Reform of the financial sector; changing national economic goals and how we measure progress; investment in 'low-carbon economic activities that employ people in ways that contribute meaningfully to human flourishing' (Jackson. P. 123).
3. Tackling inequality in our society and promoting work-time reductions and work sharing to challenge the myth that we can only solve unemployment through growth.
4. Promoting conditions that can make more possible close family and community relationships, challenging consumerism.
5. The imperatives in scripture and theology for this new kind of economics, and their implications for the Churches' mission.

As Tim Jackson has shown we **can** have prosperity without growth. Another world **is** possible – a world of visions of society, at different levels in different places, where people are less stressed, more sociable, more fulfilled, more peaceful than most of us are now, where unemployment, extreme poverty and inequality are less – and without destroying global life support systems. We are not putting 'nature' before 'people' as we are sometimes accused of in the Churches. We are putting 'love thy neighbour' into practice, relevant to the 21st century. We're not talking utopia – neighbours will still quarrel, all life's challenges will still be there. But with current technology and know-how we can sustainably create a much better world than we have now.

Join us on this road to a new economy. Help us equip the Churches to proclaim another world is possible. ■

The overall aims of *Joy in Enough* are to:

1. articulate the theological imperatives for a post-growth economy and mission/evangelisation strategies for transition
2. empower ordinary people, in Churches and beyond, with agency to recover economics, politically and culturally, from the economic elite
3. equip individuals and Churches of mainstream UK Christian denominations to create political space in which sustainable economies can be constructed.

Our aims for the first year of the project and particularly for the conference on 29 March are to:

1. establish theological imperatives for a post-growth economy
2. identify political/economic alternatives to growth economics
3. identify key aspects of economic, political and cultural transition
4. confirm the aims for the project (quoted above, amended if necessary)
5. produce a Christian manifesto as a basis for further work
6. commit to a process for further development of theology, mission and advocacy.

Enough
new economics



Partnership with A Rocha and SPEAK

(close to Birmingham New Street)
Friday 29 March, 2014

Speaker: Dan O'Neill

Professor of Leeds; and chief economist at the Center for the Study of State Economy (CASSE).

What is an alternative. Christians have a responsibility to be part of a more just and sustainable economy look like? And how can the journey to a happier, healthier, and holier world.