

CVVUK NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the Christian Vegetarians and Vegans UK newsletter, Summer 2026



Website: <http://www.christian-vegetariansvegans.org.uk/>

We hope you enjoy this newsletter. As always we would be pleased to receive any of the following from our supporters for future newsletters:

- interesting (short) articles;
- news of any local activities you have been involved in to promote the values of CVVUK;
- information about events that might interest other CVVUK supporters; and
- miscellaneous items such as book reviews, recipes and information about useful resources

If you have anything that you would like to contribute to the next newsletter please e-mail it to us at sampsons@dsl.pipex.com by the end of October 2026.

Miriam and Philip Sampson

Disclaimer: The information in this newsletter comes from a variety of sources and reasonable care has been taken to convey it accurately. Please note that opinions or statements may not reflect the views held by all members of CVAUK, and we accept no responsibility for any errors which may have occurred. Content is produced for information only and is not advice.

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Air pollution from intensive animal farming

Compassion in World Farming is campaigning against ammonia pollution from factory farms.

Ammonia is a nitrogen-based gas released mainly from livestock waste and fertiliser. While nitrogen is an essential nutrient for life, once ammonia is released into the air it becomes a dangerous pollutant, harmful to both animals and humans.

In the UK, agriculture was responsible for 89% of total ammonia emissions in 2024, making it the dominant source of this pollutant. **Keeping animals in intensive indoor systems releases the highest levels of ammonia** compared with pasture-based grazing systems. This is just one of the reasons for their factory farming [End It](#) campaign.

The health implications of ammonia are profound. While ammonia itself is a respiratory irritant, the greatest public health impact comes when ammonia reacts with other atmospheric molecules to form a pollutant known as PM2.5.

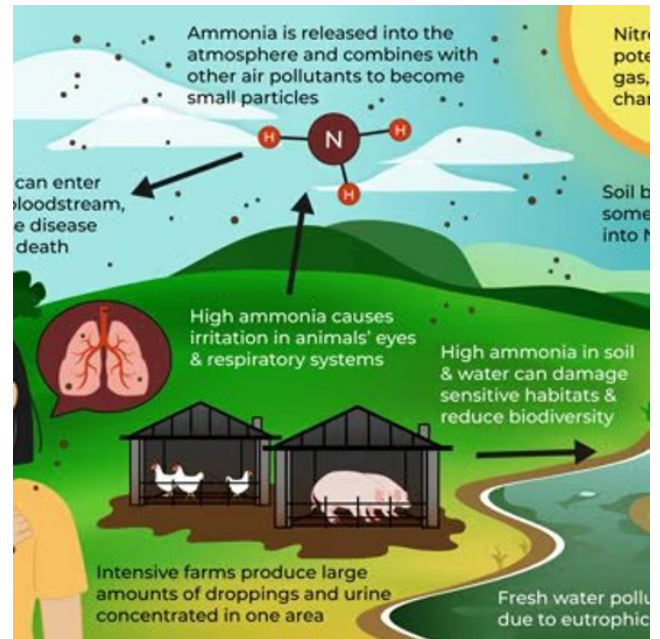
Short Term Exposure: Short term exposure to PM2.5 can cause respiratory symptoms, asthma, cardiac arrhythmias, and cardiovascular events.

Long Term Exposure: Long term exposure contributes to chronic bronchitis, reduced lung development in children, lung cancer, and premature mortality.

Emerging evidence shows that impacts can go even further. Long term exposure has been linked to a wide range of diseases, including type 2 diabetes, impaired cognitive development in children, attention deficit, neurodevelopmental disorders, and neurodegenerative diseases such as dementia.

Dr Amir Khan, TV doctor and Compassion Patron, said: *'As a GP, I see firsthand the toll that air pollution takes on people's health – and ammonia from intensive farming is a major, yet often overlooked, part of that problem'*.

Compassion has produced a pollution tracker where you can discover the levels of ammonia around where you live. Full details here: [UK Factory Farming Ammonia Map – Pollution Tracker](#)



(Image from Compassion in World Farming)

Environmental impact of diet

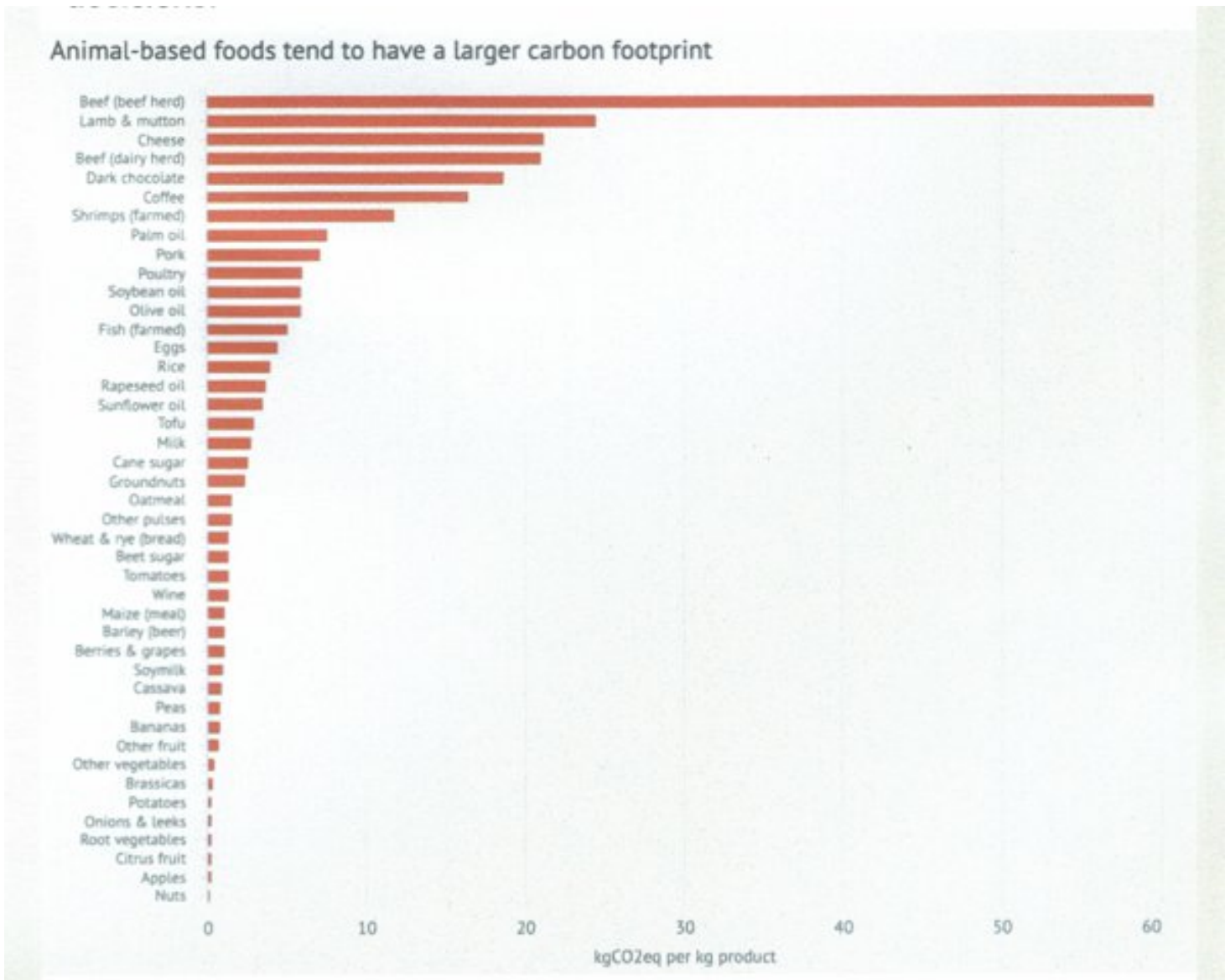
Brenda Ryder writes: I regularly hear reports that a plant-based diet does not have the benefits that vegans claim. We need to listen to new research as it is not right or helpful to exaggerate our case. Nevertheless evidence shows that a balanced vegan diet is good for the environment, our health and feeding the world's poor. And of course it is good for the farm animals who don't have to endure the cruelty of factory farming and slaughterhouses, though sadly this is low in the priorities of many consumers.

We also need to be alert to 'greenwashing' (exaggerating environmental credentials) from the livestock farming lobby. Between September 2024 and February 2025 the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board ran a promotional campaign 'Let's Eat Balanced' which claimed that the carbon footprint of British beef was half the international average and emissions from British milk were a third lower than the worldwide mean.

The well-known naturalist and broadcaster Chris Packham challenged these claims, stating that they don't reflect the full environmental impact of consuming beef and milk. The Advertising Standards Authority agreed because the data was calculated on the process of farm to shop and did not take account of 'cooking, food waste and lifecycle emissions'.

The Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board intends to relaunch its campaign with the emphasis on nutrition.

As I understand it, British beef and milk may have a lesser environmental impact than the global average, but the overall environmental impact is underestimated. A table was included with this post (below) showing the carbon footprint of a wider range of animal and plant foods which is well worth consideration.



(The information for this article was obtained from a post by Peter Goodman on LinkedIn.)

Dietary studies funded by the livestock industry biased in favour of meat

Academic studies funded or supported by the livestock industry are *16 times more likely* to draw positive conclusions about the health impacts of meat than independent research, a new review has found.

Public health experts at the University of Queensland reviewed 500 nutritional studies, including nearly 80 that had received funding or been penned by researchers linked to the meat sector.

These studies promoted the health and nutritional benefits of meat consumption – despite the majority of independent research pointing to health harms including diabetes, cancer, and cardiovascular disease.

The findings come amid a growing public craze for animal-based protein sources, with the livestock sector widely promoting meat consumption on health grounds.

Yet, science shows that over-consumption can lead to obesity, heart attacks, and premature death.

Just nine percent of independent studies drew positive conclusions about the health impacts of meat – compared to 69 percent of those with industry links, the new research published in Obesity Reviews found.

Meat consumption in wealthy countries like the U.S. already far outstrips recommended amounts. A peer-reviewed [study](#) published in October [found](#) that switching to a healthy, sustainable diet with significantly lower meat consumption could save 40,000 lives every day around the world.

Meanwhile, the meat sector has attempted to discredit concerns about high-meat diets. In 2025, [DeSmog](#) and [The Guardian](#) revealed that meat industry lobbyists had launched a “smear campaign” to undermine peer-reviewed research showing the health and environmental benefits of reducing meat consumption.

Livestock farming is a leading driver of climate breakdown, responsible for over 14 percent of all emissions worldwide.

Martin Bowman, senior policy and campaigns manager at the environmental charity Foodrise, said that the new findings were “scandalous” and “deeply concerning”.

They “show the meat industry’s corrosive effects on public health debates, and its direct role in distorting public perceptions of the health risks of meat,” he said.

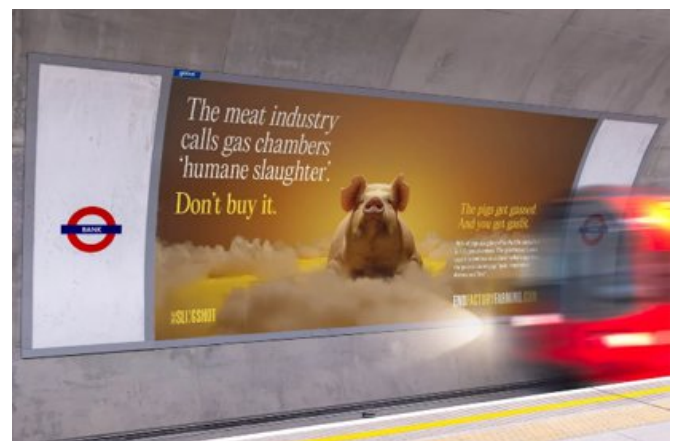
This information comes from the DeSmog website. Find out more here:

<https://www.desmog.com/2026/05/21/industry-linked-studies-disproportionately-advocate-meat-consumption/>

Project Slingshot

Project Slingshot has launched a powerful campaign against factory farming. They first drew attention to the gassing of pigs in slaughterhouses and now they are also highlighting ‘franken chickens’ that are dosed with hormones and antibiotics in order to unnaturally accelerate growth.

Their website states: *‘Factory Farming depends on secrecy: Project Slingshot exposes the system behind it, and the corporations, lobbying power, and industry myths that keep it going’.*



They have launched a hard hitting advertising campaign on the London Underground, backed by a number of celebrities.

Project Slingshot's goal is to ensure gas chambers – and all the other unacceptable practices and outcomes associated with industrial factory farming – are brought into the light, and ultimately to end factory farming by 2040. The group is supported by Meat Free Monday Founders, Paul, Mary, and Stella McCartney, who say: "Project Slingshot is doing exactly what needs to be done: pulling back the curtain on factory farming so that people can make informed choices. That moment of awareness is what changes minds."

Find out more here: <https://projectslingshot.com/>

Tempeh

Tempeh is a very versatile soya product, and an excellent source of plant-based protein. Until a few years ago it was only sold in specialist outlets, but in recent years it has become widely available in supermarkets and online.

Like tofu, tempeh doesn't have much flavour in itself, and some people find the texture a little strange, but it can be marinated and then roasted or fried to create a delicious ingredient for a range of dishes.

You can buy it plain, or smoked, and there are also pre-flavoured versions available.

Here are some ideas for flavouring your own:

- John Ryder recommends tempeh mince (bought as such, or block of Tempeh coarse grated). Stir in some soy/tamari sauce, then some olive oil (optionally garlic infused). Leave to absorb, then spread thinly on baking sheet and bake for 20 minutes and allow to cool. Add to salads.
- Your editor has made Tempeh Bacon. This is best done with the square block of tempeh rather than a cylindrical one as you want to be able to cut it into thin strips, like slices of bacon. An easy recipe can be found here: <https://www.noracooks.com/smoky-baked-tempeh-bacon/> The recipe suggests using liquid smoke, which is not an ingredient found in many kitchens! However if you buy smoked tempeh you don't need to use that ingredient. Once cooked, it can be frozen and individual slices taken out to use as you wish. Take care not to brown it too much in the oven as you will probably want to lightly fry it when you come to use it.

Tempeh bacon is delicious in a BLT sandwich – I like to add avocado as well – as an accompaniment to a tofu scramble or crumbled onto mac'n cheese.

If you have a favourite recipe involving tempeh, do let us know and we will share it.

Unseen and Unblessed

CVVUK supporter Fr Terry Martin recently had an important article published in The Tablet which he has allowed us reproduce below.

Many animal blessing services take place around the time of the feast of St Francis of Assisi, in early October. If your church is planning something like this it might be a good time to raise your concerns about the treatment of farmed animals and encourage your fellow worshippers to see that they are equally deserving of our care.

FEATURES / Animal welfare

A priest of the diocese of Arundel and Brighton explains why he turned down an invitation to preside at the blessing of the animals liturgy in Arundel Cathedral this October / **By TERRY MARTIN**

Unseen and unblest

A **CARTOON I SAW** recently got me thinking. A woman is in her kitchen, preparing supper. She is cleaning and stuffing the carcass of a chicken. Her pet cat comes in from the garden with a bird in his mouth. "Why must you catch and kill those poor creatures?" she says to the cat, while serenely continuing to get the chicken ready for the oven.

Sometimes, human commodification of animals is so entrenched, so culturally unseen, that our actions and our words do not align. The cat, the Church will be quick to tell us, is devoid of reason. St Thomas Aquinas (drawing, as ever, on his beloved Aristotle) argues (largely unchallenged, apparently) that the human ability to reason – and, specifically, the power of the intellect – places humans above all other creatures. St Thomas is keen to point out that animals have a "sensitive" soul, while humans have an immaterial soul that can understand universal concepts, exercise free will, and know the truth (especially about God). Thus he enshrines the natural superiority of human animals over the rest of Creation. Non-human animals, he suggests, are capable only of instinct, memory, sensation – and not much more.

According to this understanding, the cartoon cat is acting on instinct and cannot rationalise why he might want to catch and eat a mouse. The woman, on the other hand, can use her reason to understand that the bird she is preparing for the oven will probably have suffered immeasurably in his short life, will almost certainly have been dispatched in hideous circumstances on a vast kill-line in a slaughterhouse – and is certainly not an essential part of a healthy human diet. But it is the cat who is scolded.

I was asked earlier this year if, in the absence of our bishop (who has been translated to Westminster), I would be happy to preside at the annual service for the blessing of animals, which takes place on or around the feast of St Francis of Assisi on 4 October. I politely declined. Of course, I believe in blessing animals. If we can bless football pitches, trace a cross over crops, and call down divine favours on the machinery of war, then surely we can bless sentient, living beings who are capable of experiencing life and (in the case

In the UK, 1.2 billion animals are slaughtered each year to furnish the dinner tables of humans



ALAMY, WAYNE HUTCHINSON

of at least some animals) show a degree of what appears like self-awareness and a consciousness of the environment around them.

So why did I turn down the kind invitation? Services of blessings for animals, in my view, fit neatly into the pattern of self-deception exposed by the cartoon. Such liturgies shore up the idea that we are an animal-loving nation that treats animals kindly, avoids all forms of unnecessary animal suffering, and praises God for the glory of his whole Creation.

None of these things is true. In the UK, 1.2 billion animals are slaughtered each year for food (to say nothing of the number who die for scientific research, sport or entertainment purposes). The places where the animals are killed are hidden in plain sight, securely protected by guards, high fences and CCTV. Imagine if those places had glass walls ...

On the kill-line, speed is of the essence. Slaughtermen need to get as many animals through the process by the fastest means possible. Very often it is hard to find staff to work in these places (no surprise there), and it falls to those who cannot find other jobs (perhaps because of language difficulties and the like) to perform the unhappy task entrusted to them. Terrified animals are inclined to slow down the slaughter process, and it falls to the workforce to

keep the line moving, regardless of the distress and fear which the animals display. We may consider it acceptable to use the legally required techniques of stunning, so that the animals, in theory, are insensible before the throat is cut. Pressures of time often don't allow for such kindnesses and many animals suffer agonising deaths, crying out in pain and torment. I have never been to such a place. My mental health could not stand it.

We are privileged to work with God as stewards and guardians of God's Creation. If every animal is willed by God into existence, and is not a mere accident of history, how can we

learn to treat them with Christian compassion? Is it acceptable to say, on the one hand, that animals are created by God out of love and for love, and, on the other hand, to raise them in cramped, filthy factory farms before lining them up to be slaughtered?

AWARENESS of the suffering animals unwillingly undergo keeps them at the forefront of my mind. But there is a bigger issue. If, as St Thomas has it, we are the "superior" species, and if we take both the biblical injunction and the largely unheard lessons of Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato si'* seriously, is there really a human nobility, and a reasonable use of human power, in the way that we relate to animals, especially those commodified for food, sport, entertainment and laboratory testing?

Would not human nobility and "superiority" be best displayed in Christ-like compassion, tenderness and kindness, and a genuinely humble use of human power towards all God's creatures? Doesn't justice require that we treat all creatures with respect and dignity since they, like us, are created by God? Is it not a dereliction of our duty to view the animals with which we share this precious planet as mere units of protein, or as mere playthings with which we can do whatever we please?

As the world hurtles towards catastrophe and extinction, is it not the time for Christians, in the spirit of Jesus, to stop the senseless slaughter and conscious "use" of animals for human ends and, instead, to think again?

I won't be blessing the animals at Arundel Cathedral. Until chickens, cows, pigs and sheep are recognised as having a God-given dignity and right to be treated with respect and kindness, others will have to bless the pampered and over-fed cats and dogs who will be there.

Terry Martin is a priest of the diocese of Arundel and Brighton. He is the author of *Animals in Heaven? A Catholic Pastoral Response to Questions about Animals* (Wipf and Stock, 2024).

Such liturgies shore up the idea that we are an animal-loving nation that treats animals kindly

Recipe - Colourful tofu slaw

In this hot summer any dish that does not require standing over a stove or turning on the oven is welcome!

Crunchy, creamy and tangy, this Japanese-inspired tofu coleslaw is from Japanese food writer Yuki Gomi.

The silken tofu in the dressing contributes protein. It would be great as part of a buffet. If you used gluten free soy sauce, this would also be a gluten free dish. However it does contain sesame, a potential allergen for some.

This recipe makes quite a big bowl of coleslaw.

Ingredients:

- 200g white cabbage
- 200g red cabbage
- 1 red onion, halved
- 1 carrot
- 3 sweet mixed baby peppers or ½ large red pepper
- Toasted sesame seeds, or chopped chives, to serve

For the dressing

- 1 clove garlic, finely grated
- 3 tbsp tahini paste
- 2 tbsp Rice Vinegar or Yuzu Juice
- ½ x 300g pack Silken Tofu
- 1 tbsp Organic Soy Sauce
- 1 tsp brown rice miso paste
- 50ml olive oil

Method:

1. Shred all the vegetables into long, 0.5cm wide strips. If you have a mandoline, use this to make uniform slices.
2. Place all the dressing ingredients except the oil into a blender or food processor. Add 1 tbsp water and process until smooth and creamy. Add the oil and stir well.
3. Combine the vegetables in a bowl, reserving some pepper pieces to garnish.
4. Add some dressing and toss together to coat, adding more dressing as needed. Scatter over the remaining peppers, and garnish with toasted sesame seeds, or chives.

Taken from the Waitrose website: [tofu slaw recipe](#)



And finally.....

The Spirit Who Teaches Us to Listen

The Lord of the Rings, Pentecost and the song of creation

Daryl Booth wrote this piece for the SARX website for Pentecost:

In *The Lord of the Rings*, J. R. R. Tolkien imagines a world of hobbits, wizards, forests and ancient powers. Among its most memorable creatures are the Ents: tree-like beings who act as shepherds and guardians of the forests.

The most famous of them is Treebeard. When the hobbits Merry and Pippin encounter him, they meet a being whose speech belongs to an older, slower world. His words are not efficient. They do not rush towards usefulness. They grow, like roots beneath the soil, from memory, place and long attention. To speak too quickly, in Treebeard's world, is almost to fail to speak truthfully.

This is part of what makes the Ents so compelling. They are not voiceless, but their voices do not fit the pace of those around them. They require patience. They require humility. They require listeners willing to be slowed down.

Against Treebeard stands Saruman, a once-wise wizard who destroys forests to fuel his machinery of war. In Saruman's world, trees are no longer living presences with histories and voices. They are fuel. Forests become resources. Creation becomes material for the furnace.

Tolkien's contrast is not difficult to recognise. One way of living receives the world as gift, mystery and fellowship. Another way grasps, consumes and burns. One listens. The other uses.

This is a deeply Christian question, even before we name it as one. What kind of creatures are we, and what kind of world are we willing to hear?

At Pentecost, the Church celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit with wind, flame and speech. The disciples, once fearful and enclosed, are driven into public witness. People from many nations hear the mighty works of God in their own languages. Difference is not erased. The miracle is not that everyone suddenly speaks the same language, but that people are enabled to hear across difference.

Pentecost is often remembered as a miracle of speaking. But it is also a miracle of listening.

That distinction matters. The Holy Spirit does not create communion by flattening the world into one voice. The Spirit creates understanding without destroying creaturely difference. The languages remain many, but they are no longer barriers to communion. Through the Spirit, the strange becomes intelligible, the distant becomes near and the unheard becomes capable of being received.

What might this mean for the way Christians hear the rest of creation?

Scripture does not present creation as mute. The heavens declare the glory of God (Psalm 19:1). The trees clap their hands (Isaiah 55:12). The rivers rejoice (Psalm 98:8). The young ravens cry out and God hears them (Psalm 147:9; Job 38:41). The psalms call sea creatures, wild animals, cattle, creeping things and flying birds into the praise of the Lord (Psalm 148:7–10).

Dr Philip Sampson, author of *Nonconformist Perspectives on Animals and Language*, draws deeply on this neglected Christian tradition. He argues that animals are not silent before God. They 'praise and manifest God; they cry to God, and He hears them'. Their voice is not necessarily human speech, but song: creaturely expression, embodied praise, the life of each creature offered according to its kind.

This is a profound challenge to the way modern people often think about animals. We tend to ask whether animals can speak like us, reason like us, communicate like us or qualify for moral concern by resembling us. But Christian theology need not begin with comparison to humans. It can begin with God.

If animals are creatures of God, then their lives have meaning before they are useful to us. If they praise God according to their kind, then their voices matter even when they do not speak our language. If God hears them, then our failure to hear them is not evidence of their silence. It may be evidence of our deafness.

This is where Pentecost becomes more than a festival in the Church calendar. It becomes a summons to converted hearing.

A Spirit-filled Church should be a listening Church. Not only listening to human neighbours across nation, language and culture, but listening more deeply to the whole creation that groans, praises and waits for redemption.

Animals speak in many ways. A lamb bleats from a transport lorry. A hen dustbathes when given the chance. A pig resists confinement. A cow searches for her calf. A bird sings into the morning. A dog excitedly greets a human. A fish struggles for breath.

Some of these voices are songs of life. Others are cries of distress. Both matter.



Image by

<https://www.shutterstock.com/g/Bachkova+Natalia>

Yet much of modern life is arranged so that we do not have to hear them. Industrial farming depends not only on physical confinement, but on acoustic and moral distance. The cries of animals are kept behind walls, translated into production data, softened by euphemism or drowned beneath the hum of normal life.

We call them livestock, units, yield, stock density or product. Language itself becomes a form of insulation. It protects us from hearing too much.

This is the logic Tolkien gives to Saruman. Living things are valuable only when they can be turned into power. Once creation is reduced to resource, its voices become inconvenient. A forest

cannot be allowed to speak if it is needed for the furnace. An animal cannot be allowed to sing if it is needed only as meat.

But Pentecost points in another direction. The Spirit opens ears as well as mouths. The Spirit makes communion possible where fear, distance and incomprehension have reigned. The Spirit teaches the Church that what first sounds strange may still be full of truth.

To listen to animals, then, is not to indulge sentimentality. It is to recover a Christian discipline of attention. It is to confess that God's world is more vocal than our habits allow. It is to acknowledge that creatures do not need to speak in human words in order to address us.

This listening will not leave us unchanged. Merry and Pippin do not leave Treebeard's forest as they entered it. They have encountered a grief older than their own concerns, a patience deeper than their urgency and a form of life that judges the violence of machinery. Listening draws them into responsibility.

So too with us. To hear animals rightly is to be called into response. We may begin to question what we eat, what we buy, what we bless, what we ignore and what kind of world our habits help to sustain. We may find that the cries we once dismissed as background noise now sound like a summons.

The Christian hope is that we learn to join in with creation's praise. Sampson describes a vision in which animals participate 'in their own distinctive ways in a song of praise to God' and humans are called to facilitate rather than silence that song. This gives Pentecost a wider horizon. The Spirit who gathers the nations also renews creation. The Spirit who gives speech also gives hearing. The Spirit who descends in wind and flame does not draw us away from the earth, but sends us back into it as witnesses of reconciliation.

Perhaps, then, Pentecost asks more of us than we often imagine. Not only, 'what shall we say?' But also, 'whom have we failed to hear?'

The animals are not silent. The creation is not mute. The song is already sounding.

May the Spirit teach us to listen.