

'An evening with Rachel Mash'

April 29th St Michael's Summertown

As well as a campaigner for climate justice at a global level Rachel Mash is also transforming the work in her province by establishing a network of local eco champions in individual diocese in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa. She gave a vivid account of the ongoing difficulties resulting from climate change in her country, both in rural areas and the city.

She recently organised a Water Justice conference in Cape Town where climate injustice was recently made very real for those living there, who experienced water shortage as they watched “**Day Zero**” approach; that day would be when they would have to collect water from the shared stand pipe. The **drought** brought home to those living in Cape Town the reality of what it is like to carry water - something that their poorer neighbours do as a daily task. As Rachel said '**until you have carried water, you don't realise how heavy it is**'.

Water shortage is one result of climate change while the warming of the atmosphere causes flash flooding. While Cape Town experienced drought and prayed for rain, just a few miles away there was **devastating flooding**. Rachel gave us an account of farmers who had previously been able to rely on a consistent planting and harvest season resulting in sufficient to eat and extra to sell. Now the unpredictable seasons and flash flooding mean that not only is the crop output seriously affected, but many **roads are being destroyed** meaning access to markets is impossible. The effect on rural areas in these circumstances is disastrous to living standards.