

Planet's rescue a matter of faith

By Jim Gainsford

CARING for the environment is a matter of faith for Miriam Pepper, secretary of the newly formed Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARC).

Dr Pepper will visit St George to spread the word and promote the new inter-faith environmental group launched last November.

She will be guest speaker at an International Women's Day event, called Sisters On The Planet, at St Mark's Anglican Church, South Hurstville.

ARC is supported by the Climate Institute, where Dr Pepper is faith project officer, and which aims to support the faith community in taking action on climate change.

Dr Pepper, who did a PhD in Christian religion and consumerism, said caring for the environment naturally went hand-in-hand with religious faith.

"Because of our values and beliefs, we have concerns about the Earth, and consumerism and over-consumption," she said.

Dr Pepper puts her thoughts into action at her



Green beliefs: Dr Miriam Pepper is spreading the word on caring for the environment.

own church, Maroubra Uniting, where parishioners have improved the church buildings by installing a solar hot water system and green power for its electricity.

"In our congregation we do things like car-sharing and other environmentally friendly measures," she said.

"We also worked with three other churches for Clean Up Australia Day at Maroubra Beach."

Dr Pepper said ARC encompassed a broad range of religious groups, including the al-Ghazzali Centre for Islamic Sciences and Human Development, which does a regeneration project at the Cooks River.

Dr Pepper said her talk at St Mark's would be an attempt to motivate people of faith to think about what they could do in their own personal situation.

"Our teaching says we should care for the Earth, care for the most marginalised, and be a positive sign and seed of change," she said.

To mark Earth Hour, ARC will hold a candlelight vigil on Observatory Hill on March 28. Sisters On The Planet will be held at St Mark's Church, The Mall, South Hurstville, on Sunday, March 8, 3pm. Details: 9546 3236 or www.southhurstville.anglican.asn.au