

<p><b>1. RESPONSIBILITY to Care for Creation – ‘Stewardship’</b></p> <p>We have a mandate from God, a command to be good stewards of the earth.</p> <p><i>“This call for active involvement in conservation is actually not an option. It’s a command that God gave us. Our priority is sharing that and embodying it in our lives”</i></p> <p>Stewardship is a commitment to future generations: ‘we do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children’</p> <p>Luke 12:48 <i>The one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be expected.</i></p> <p>What am I personally responsible for? Where can I make my most effective contribution?</p>	<p><b>2. ETHICAL Living = Sustainable Choices</b></p> <p><i>“It just seems wrong screwing up the planet for future generations”</i></p> <p><i>“Doing the right thing”</i>; doing what is ‘right’ for the planet is also ‘right’ in a Christian biblical understanding of morality.</p> <p>James 1:22: <i>Be do-ers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.</i></p> <p>Small personal actions are more important than talk or policies.</p> <p><i>“There’s hope in the small. If lots of people do lots of small things, that’s going to make the difference.”</i></p> <p>What steps can I take in the right direction? How do I choose between competing ethical principles, e.g. buying local vs no plastic?</p>
<p><b>3. Concern for the Poor – ‘Environmental JUSTICE’</b></p> <p><i>“The world’s poor are bearing the brunt of climate disaster and ecological collapse. Let’s prevent poverty caused by climate change rather than just reacting to it.”</i></p> <p>Matthew 25:40 <i>What you did for the least of these, you did for me.</i></p> <p>Amos 8:4 <i>Hear this, you who trample on the poor ...</i></p> <p>How are environmental and justice issues connected? How can we work in partnership and constructive mission?</p>	<p><b>4. FAITH: God Is Creator &amp; Universe Is Creation</b></p> <p><i>“I see the creation is almost an extension of God’s being.”</i></p> <p>John Stott: <i>‘We get to know God through His Word and through his world.’</i></p> <p>Romans 1:20 <i>From the creation of the world God’s power and nature has been clearly seen through what he has made.</i></p> <p>Christians care for the natural world because God does. We recognise a divine hand at work in the natural world, from the origins of the universe as Creation to the intricacies of interconnected ecosystems</p>
<p><b>5. Church as Eco COMMUNITY</b></p> <p><i>“You don’t have to do this outside of the church. Actually the church should be some of the best at this.”</i></p> <p><i>“A more responsible attitude to looking after the earth has got to be one of our tools for engaging with our society.”</i></p> <p><i>“being part of something bigger than yourself – connectedness”</i></p> <p>In Creation Care mission and worship, fellowship and discipleship come together.</p> <p>1 Corinthians 12:5 <i>There are different ways of serving, but the same Lord is served.</i></p> <p>How is our church growing in Creation care?</p>	<p><b>6. HOPE for Creation Renewed</b></p> <p><i>“Hope is based on what God says that he will recreate, renew and create a new Earth.”</i></p> <p><i>“Jesus is going to redeem everything.”</i></p> <p>A key question for Christians is whether the ‘new creation’ will include the ‘old’. Do God’s ultimate plans only include humans?</p> <p>Romans 8:21 <i>Creation will be set free from the bondage of decay into the glorious freedom of God’s children.</i></p> <p>Work out for yourself what you actually think about the future. What does the Bible predict? How does God feel about today’s realities? What is Christian hope?</p>

<p><b>7. Love: the BEAUTY of Creation</b></p> <p><i>"The beauty of creation is something I just adore and I just can't get over how absolutely incredible it all this."</i></p> <p><i>"I can look at a grasshopper, and I see God in there."</i></p> <p>A sense of awe in the presence of nature is both profoundly biblical and deeply human. Perhaps it is central to our 'image-of-God-ness'. Beauty draws us into praise.</p> <p>Psalm 19:1-3 <i>The skies declare the glory of God - night after night - with no words.</i></p> <p>Take time to appreciate a created thing. What does it tell you about God? If I let myself truly love a natural space or creature, what might that mean for me?</p>	<p><b>8. PRACTICAL: Land, River, Garden &amp; Forest - 'Get stuck in!'</b></p> <p>Hands-on projects for conservation are <i>"a good way to get people involved."</i> Children, youth and all ages enjoy and benefit.</p> <p>It is wonderful to see improvements in life, biodiversity and beauty through wild-space restoration and community gardens, often in partnership with other groups.</p> <p>Genesis 2:15: <i>God put Adam in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.</i></p> <p>Which places matter to me?</p> <p>How could we help them become more beautiful and safe homes for other creatures?</p> <p>What land does the church own? How could this be enhanced?</p>
<p><b>9. HEALTH: Wellbeing &amp; Mental Health</b></p> <p>Anxiety about climate change creates "a strange and troubling atmosphere" (Pikhala). Taking action overcomes anxiety and helplessness, <i>"it makes you feel good, knowing that we're doing the right thing."</i></p> <p>The Biblical word for wellbeing is Shalom, inner and outer peace. Good relationship with our physical environment is vital. Nature is good for our physical and mental wellbeing!</p> <p>How do you nurture your health with nature?</p>	<p><b>10. CONFRONTED by Damage to Creation</b></p> <p><i>"When I read the science of climate change it is just so alarming, so worrying. I feel really confronted and grieving."</i></p> <p>For Christians, being aware of damage we cause leads to confession. Our theology of sin and forgiveness motivates concern for Creation because we recognise human greed, pride and rebellion as part of God's story.</p> <p>Romans 8:22 <i>Creation has been groaning</i></p> <p>Which environmental issues concern you?</p>
<p><b>11. Respect for MAORI as Tangata Whenua</b></p> <p><i>"Biculturalism and environmentalism aren't separate. They are actually very very connected ... a natural way of living out the Gospel as a modern church"</i></p> <p>A Maori relate as whanau, deep connection with land, rivers, trees &amp; ocean. The 'gods' of myth are grandparents, whakapapa.</p> <p>Exodus 20:12 <i>Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land</i></p> <p>Psalm 25:10 <i>All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant</i></p> <p>God's core nature is 'hesed', faithful love. Maori people hold this long faithfulness. Te Tiriti o Waitangi is our Covenant in NZ.</p>	<p><b>12. FEAR of Disasters</b></p> <p><i>"We are now gambling with the futures of everyone born since the millennium. For the sake of young people alive today and future generations, we have to believe it is not too late and work as hard as we can to change the ending of this carbon story."</i> Bronwyn Hayward</p> <p>Like the Old Testament prophets climate scientists warn of massive growing problems and threats of disaster.</p> <p>Isaiah 42:15 <i>I will lay waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their vegetation.</i></p> <p>But does fear motivate us? As Christians we stand in faith and are energised by hope more than fear.</p> <p>John Stott: <i>"In the end there are only two possible attitudes which Christians can adopt towards the world. One is escape and the other engagement."</i></p>

Workshop for SWBC Camp, Waitangi Day 6 February 2021

Silvia Purdie

## **Why bother? What motivates Christians to care for Creation?**

1 hour

### **Intention:**

- a) to connect people with their personal motivations for caring for creation
- b) to stretch their thinking about the reasons for Christians to engage in sustainability

**How?** By using my '12 Motivations' framework

engaging the group in discussion

linking personal motivation to Calling and Scripture

Each of the motivations

... a Bible verse & Big Idea & critical question

Prayer to begin and end