

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “CARE FOR CREATION”?

I commend to you this reflection by Diane Marshall, a member of the diocesan Creation Matters working group – Archbishop Colin Johnson

The Fifth Mark of Mission of the Anglican Communion calls us to ‘strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth’. But what does it mean to be an “earth keeper”: that first mandate given by God to humanity in Genesis?

From the time of the Industrial Revolution our culture has embraced a concept of “progress” which involves the domination of the earth and its resources. Yet Jesus and His disciples “travelled light”, and so we must ask ourselves: are we living in a way that is sustainable on this earth? What are the moral and ethical dimensions of what it would mean to build a culture and an economy of sustainability?

Increasingly, organizations such as PWRDF, World Vision, and Doctors Without Borders have begun to document in their reports that climate change is a major cause of poverty and famine in the developing world. The Primates of the Anglican Communion have repeatedly spoken out on the impact of climate change on their peoples, including extreme weather events such as worsening hurricanes in the West Indies, food insecurity in Africa due to drought, and the South Pacific islands disappearing due to Antarctic melt. Archbishop Thabo Makgoba calls us to “care for where the lambs and the vulnerable are, and...make the linkages between social justice and climate justice”.

Our Christian calling is to “speak the truth in love,” and the need to speak to government, industry, and civil society is part of this justice-seeking. Today, at a time of climate crisis, we, who are people of hope and followers of Christ’s call to love justice and seek mercy must speak out on behalf of the earth, our “island home,” on which we all depend.

IDEAS FOR ACTION

God our Creator, give us the strength to make choices that protect Your world and honour Your gift.



Shelter: Find ways to conserve energy and water in our buildings

- Create a team to evaluate energy and water use in your parish and look for ways to conserve. Faith and the Common Good’s free benchmarking program can help: http://www.faithcommongood.org/energy_benchmarking
- See <https://www.greenon.ca> for rebates, incentives and loans available for institutional buildings and residences.

Sustenance: Encourage local and organic food production

- Start or expand a community garden to provide fresh local food for parishioners and/or neighbours in need.
- Become a food hub/collection point for local farmers’ CSA programs or FoodShare’s Good Food Box <https://foodshare.net/program/goodfoodbox/>

Consumption: Find ways to reduce, re-use and recycle together

- Hold a rummage sale or clothing exchange
- Have handy (and willing) parishioners? Hold a “repair event” to teach how to fix small appliances and other items.
- Collect items that can’t go in the blue bin but can be taken to depots for recycling, such as batteries, e-waste, aluminum foil or textiles.

For more ideas, visit www.toronto.anglican.ca/environment