

Care of Creation Blog – May 2020

Being in lockdown myself this month, I have had the same difficulty as all those others in lockdown. Auckland church groups laid out their plans for the year and began to set dates, then had to cancel some things because of the lockdown. My computer screen was full of plans but not everyone was telling me what had been cancelled.

I see a message from A Rocha New Zealand saying that they will have to miss their usual count of penguins off Karioi, near Raglan, as well as other things. Our Auckland group did some planting before the lockdown. It is great to care for birds and plants but you cannot do it if you are sick or dead, so first things first. In some ways I myself am doing well as I do not have a lot of things to go to and can tidy my papers here at Selwyn Village and walk about outside as long as I do not get close to others.

ACAN still has its sights on encouraging the Church to be serious about taking a lead in the care of creation, and Cathy Bi-Riley, with sustainability champions, is working on it. Dr Richard Milne invites Dr Nicola Hoggard-Creegan to manage ACAN. With everyone in lockdown, meetings cannot be held and the usual NZCIS stream of visiting professors to Maclaurin Chapel and southern centres is cut off. Someone who is not too busy with other work has to plan as the vision of the work enlarges – from managing CO₂ emissions, to Auckland Anglicans' response to climate change, AARCC, and a whole lot of other things.

Jesus warned us that there would be all sorts of troubles and persecutions but that we should be ready and found working when He comes. There have been plagues down the ages and this time one can see Jesus' followers and others using all their love and scientific skills to help. What some people are saying is that handling this gives us a vision of how, by working together around the world, we can deal with the matter of climate. Canon Rachel Mash, Environmental Coordinator for the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, looks at it the other way, saying that if we had settled the ecological matter first the pandemic would not have arisen. I am not so sure about that, but if we got as close to God as Moses was, we would not have had people eating animals with diseases of their own.

Phillip Donnell and his New Creation group see the care of living creatures as part of the change God wants us to prepare for.

Some cannot see how science fits in with religion, but New Zealand Christians in Science works in this field all the time. As I see it, when people greet me with, "Christ is risen!" the answer is, "Yes, and Christ is showing us what to do and we are not doing it."

Jim Hunt, for the Care of Creation committee

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