

## Care of Creation Blog – December 2019

It is now Advent and we are taught to remember the things that prepared the way for Christ's coming and be ready for Christ's coming again. It is a time of penitence and warning that Christ may return at any time. What does this mean? The thing to do is to see what we have been doing wrong, ask to be forgiven and seek guidance and grace to do what is right. People forget that Christ is alive and in charge and showing us how to turn from fossil fuels to other sources of energy. We are given hope that our foolish use of plastics and chemicals can be mitigated.

December is a month when many groups close down for holidays and our Auckland groups like ACAN, A Rocha, NZCIS (New Zealand Christians in Science) are no different, so far as formal meetings go. Yet members continue to think of their place in the scheme of things. This year the deaths of prominent members have affected some groups, but their work goes on. I write this a few days after another meeting at Neligan House as our climate action group meets with the growing number of people who will be sustainability champions for their parishes. Country parishes have an important contribution to make to this group, as farming people have responsibility for larger parts of God's creation than the rest of us.

World news, new discoveries and important activities do not stop just because a lot of people are having holidays. In the Southern Hemisphere we are surrounded by people arranging holidays and businesses advertising things we could buy as Christmas presents. Others, though, are caring for the poor and refugees.

Phillip Donnell in his New Creation NZ news tells of his connection with an Anglican church in Tauranga and continuing teaching along the lines of Wesley Webb's reading of Galatians 6:15, that work on protecting endangered species and action on climate change is all part of the new creation that Christ is leading us into. Phillip is also active in helping keep interfaith links open with the Council of Christians and Muslims.

While political news tells us of wars and the military affairs of the world's superpowers, it is interesting to read about Chinese scientists communicating with fellow astronomers around the world when they find a black hole so big that it upsets current theories. Russian and American astronauts are also working together in space exploration.

It is difficult to follow what is happening in our own country between government, farming and forestry interests. Trees are seen as a source of income but to do the extra work of turning waste timber into biochar costs time and money and needs fire, which foresters do not like. Yet this is what we need to learn about as a means to lock down carbon and improve soils for our increasing populations.

Officialdom looks on forests as either commercial activities or demonstrations of the work of Mother Nature. I suppose this latter is inevitable when so many people do not see everything as God's creation. Whatever happened to the story of Adam and Eve, placed in the Garden of Eden to manage it? There is no such person as Mother Nature. God is the Creator and humans have been given the task of stewardship. I see it as proper to thin and transplant trees so that they develop well rather than damage one another, competing for space and light.

It is sad to see Russia and China cooperating in a large project that takes gas in a pipeline from Russia to China. Politics rules in some things while in the same countries there are people planting trees, helping one another, experimenting with electric vehicles and generally trying out new ideas that will benefit us all.

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