

Care of Creation Blog – August 2019

We may do our little bit by recycling, planting or clearing rubbish but many people still feel daunted by the amount of work that needs to be done. Someone suggests that planting a trillion trees will solve our problem. Another says that we should send snow machine to rebuild several hundred miles of the Antarctic coast to stop the ice shelf sliding into the sea and causing sea levels to rise and flood coastal cities. These people may have their calculations right but they do not believe anyone will actually do it.

Human beings have been like this from the beginning. People like Abraham and Moses followed God's plan but there were always those who had other ideas. For more than 2,000 years the work of faithful people has made great changes, but time is not on our side when it comes to the climate. The planet may be a tiny part of God's universe, but it's the only home we have. We must trust in a loving God who knows all about it, and do our best. Some efforts are inspiring. According to the BBC,¹ Ethiopia planted 353 million tree seedlings on one day and aims for a total of 4 billion!

Local events

A Rocha held a national leaders' hui at Raglan from 2 to 4 August, followed by an informal dinner and catch-up on 10 August. Every month they hold regular planting and weeding days at Unsworth Heights or Oakley Creek. Contact Sarah Woodfield sw.nz@outlook.com for details.

Anglicans Climate Action Network have made submissions politically and will present motions at Synod. At Pukekohe, the network's agent, John Allen, continues to demonstrate how a parish with a bit of land can share in using it to learn new ways of gardening sustainably. He also has a survey that people can do at home to see just how much CO2 they may be releasing into the atmosphere.

New Zealand Christians in Science is holding a conference in Dunedin at the end of August. 'Ethics, Faith and Extinction' is the theme of their winter lecture series at the Maclaurin Chapel in Auckland: August 14 – Climate Action, Faith, and the University – a panel discussion with Dr Jenny Salmon, Olivia Yates, Mark Barnard, and Dr Matheson Russell.

August 21 – Look at the Birds: Faith, Evolution and Extinction – Associate Professor Andy Gosler

August 28 – Ecology, Evolution and the Bible – Professor Barbara Rossing

New Creation New Zealand. Phillip Donnell will be busy with whatever parish or church invites him to talk about how the good news is not just for humans but for the whole of life here on Planet Earth. He says he has no bookings in Auckland this month but New Creation NZ is planning a conference for young adults at Otaki from 31 August to 1 September on reconciliation between humans, creation and God.

Other churches, religions and people who do not believe in God are facing up to climate change, rightly seeing it as an urgent matter, but great numbers take no notice. It is interesting to see the attitude of some in the New Plymouth area whose income has come from the energy industry.

¹ BBC News 'Ethiopia "breaks" tree-planting record to tackle climate change'. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-49151523>, accessed 5 August 2019.

Ceasing oil exploration will mean they lose their jobs, but once wind and solar energy companies become established there will be new jobs available.

I am still looking for people who can help us with this blog, as I cannot attend all the meetings mentioned. Please get in touch if you can help.

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