

The Integrity of Creation

## CHERISHING GOD'S CREATION

“Ever since the creation of the world [God’s] eternal power and divine nature, invisible through they are, have been understood and seen through the things [God] has made.”

Presbyterian Curriculum Publishing Area

### Short-term Study Course for Adults

Presbyterian Peacemaking Program

*According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation . . . that foundation is Jesus Christ.*

-1 Corinthians 3:10-11

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Short-Term Study Course for Adults

Presbyterian Peacemaking Program

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[www.pcusa.org/environment/resources.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/environment/resources.htm).

Study Guide  
for  
Cherishing God's Creation

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## **SETTINGS**

### ***The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program***

The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, coproducer of this video, helps the church grow in its witness and commitment to peacemaking. The program has developed a variety of resources, events and programs that assist the church as it responds to the gospel calling to "Seek peace and pursue it." Find Peacemaking resources online at <http://www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/pubs/pubs.htm>.

### ***Use of This Video Unit***

Settings for the video *Cherishing God's Creation* include the following:

- Adult church school classes. The video has enough material for five to ten sessions.
- Session or other church officer training events. One might use the video as a guide for regular theological reflection as part of a session meeting.
- One- or two-day churchwide retreats on such themes as "The Integrity of Creation," "Ecojustice," "Peacemaking," "The Interdependence of Creation," "The Spirituality of Earth-Care," and the like.
- Church suppers or other events where all or portions of the video may be shown as an essay on thinking theologically.
- Short-term study groups that want a seasonal focus.
- Older youth and young adult classes or for older youth summer camp programs.
- Adult groups such as women's associations, men's groups, Mariners, and so forth.
- Study sessions conducted at the homes of shut-ins or those recovering from illnesses.
- All-church gatherings. Young and old can learn from each other as they hear how individuals respond to the situations presented in the video.
- Environmental justice or peacemaking committee planning meeting. The video details the crises facing creation and offers suggestions for action.
- Pre-presbytery assembly workshop on caring for God's creation.
- Resource for special event commemorating Earth Day.

## **LEADING THE DISCUSSION**

### ***A Simple Approach to Discussion***

The simplest way to use the video is just to watch it and then talk about it. The segments are dramatic and provocative enough in their own right to promote considerable discussion. The following are some questions that the leader might put to the group after they have watched the video: With what do you identify in this segment? What do you find jarring or troubling? What is the issue? What is at stake? What tensions exist? What difference does a Christian point of view make? How is this view at odds with cultural values? Where do *you* stand? How does this video help you? If your situation is different from that of the people in the video, how does the issue relate to you? How does this challenge you to reconsider what theology is and how to nurture it in your life? How do the situations and ideas presented square with what you face in ordinary, everyday living? Where do you look for strength?

Try to get a good grasp of what the video is about and what its central issues are. It will help if you read carefully the **Overview** (p. 6) and the **Context** section in each part of the Guide, as well as review the entire video. You will want to look to the Bible for guidance in dealing with these issues. A biblical reference is suggested in each part, or you may select your own.

### ***Add Variety to Your Approach***

A general rule is that viewers will get more out of a video (or any other resource) if the stage is set for it through a brief discussion or, at least, a presentation of the issues. It usually helps for the leader to place the issues in context. The leaders should review each part before class time and decide the best way to proceed. Variety in presentation will enhance discussion. The Overview section that follows and the leader suggestions for each part will help the leader do this. After watching the video, proceed to the discussion (see the Discussion Suggestions section in each part of this Guide) and the Bible study (see the Bible Reference sections). Theology is something you do. Invite people to *do* theology in the manner shown in the video. A measure of how well the video works as a resource will be how well the viewers are able to identify with the people, ideas, and methods presented. Always try to relate what's on the screen to real events in the viewers' lives and experience.

### ***Bible Study***

A biblical reference is given for each part of the video. The Bible and life interact. Thus, you might want to start with the Bible study and then go to the video; other times, you might start with the video and then turn to the Bible study. The Bible illumines life, and life experiences interpret the Bible to us. This is a way of doing theology; we discover God in life and talk about actual experience in terms of our relationship to God in Christ. Our goal is not to *learn* theology, but to make sense of ourselves and our world. The Christian point of view is that we cannot adequately do that without reference to our divine origin, to the place of Christ, and to the response we ought to make to God's presence in the world.

The biblical passages selected have been drawn from both the Old and New Testaments based on their appropriateness for the topic under discussion. A psalm is suggested under the rubric "Antiphonal Psalm." Psalms have always played an important role in Christian piety. The psalm is included here for devotional use, an antiphon to your discussion. You may want to read it responsively.

Please feel free to use other Scripture passages for your Bible study. Encourage class members to think of passages that they find particularly illuminating or, conversely, troubling in regard to the issues under discussion.

### ***Suggestions for Leaders***

The leader's helps (which are in five parts in the Guide) contain suggestions for using each part of the video. Each part is divided into these four categories.

- **Theme** – states the intended subject matter and issues under scrutiny for that session. Broader than a mere statement of the topic, it helps the leader see the intended direction of the session and the scope of the discussion.
- **Context** – presents some main ideas related to the theme and attempts to place the theme in an understandable context. When choosing the material for a particular session, it is helpful for a leader to know what the author has in mind. With adults, it is more important to raise the relevant questions than to give the “right” answers. A leader is well equipped to lead a fruitful discussion when he or she is armed with a grasp of the context of a study, understands the reasons a specific presentation was chosen, and can offer some original ideas.
- **Bible Reference** – presents suitable Bible study passage, along with questions. A psalm to be read responsively is also suggested.
- **Discussion Suggestions** – proposes various ways to develop the discussion. Leaders should preview the video and plan the discussion, and then arrive early to set up the equipment. This video does not take an objective, journalistic approach to these matters. It does not try to give both sides or several sides of these issues. Rather, the people you meet in the video are, by and large, passionately involved in the struggle for ecojustice, sustainability, and the integrity of creation. In doing so, some of them are standing up to very large corporate interests. The video does not present the corporate side. If people in your class object to this, let them offer alternative arguments. That can only stimulate the discussion. The video, a product of the church, tries to represent the prophetic stance taken by the church in these matters by various task forces and study teams.

The video and the Bible study provide ample material for discussion, but the leader may want to supplement this material with additional background information. Members of the class may be asked ahead of time to prepare reports on various theological issues or community concerns. It may be helpful to have available a variety of commentaries, Bible dictionaries, concordances, theological dictionaries, word books, and references.

## OVERVIEW

Do you cherish God's creation? "Of course!" Most people would probably answer this way. After all, *cherish*, at a bare minimum, means to appreciate. More often though, *cherish* means "to hold dear, to feel or show affection for, to keep or cultivate with care and affection." So, do you cherish God's creation? Let us look at some reasons you might.

The first Creation story contained in Genesis 1 recounts that creation is good because God the Creator declared it so; hence, it has value in and of itself. Its value is inherent and not simply utilitarian in terms of what use we humans can make of it. The creation does not exist apart from God. Rather, it is a created reality owing its existence to God's divine will and action. We who love God cherish as well what God has made.

Biblical scholars in recent years also have noted that Adam, whose very being was created by God out of *adamah*, or topsoil (*Gen. 2:7*), was placed in the garden and told to "till and keep" it (*Gen 2:15*), an instruction to cultivate it lovingly. Thus the original human vocation included cherishing the creation so that it would provide sustenance to all living things. Human beings from the very beginning were dependent on creation for their physical and material needs.

Noted environmental ethicist and philosopher Holmes Rolston of Colorado State University, also a Presbyterian minister, has summarized scientific understanding on the kinship of human beings with the rest of creation. For example, there is a 99 percent identical correspondence between the amino acid sequence of the average human protein and its chimpanzee counterpart. Looking from a genetic viewpoint, Dr. Rolston concludes, "The genetic code is essentially the same for all living organisms. The twenty amino acids are common to all." He observes, "I live in a community on a front of shared family heritage, shared human heritage, shared primate, mammalian heritage, indeed shared biological heritage." Thus science is confirming the biblical affirmation that all of creation is interconnected, all is under God's realm and covenant.

In recent years, scholars of other disciplines have begun exploring a concept called *biophilia*. As defined by Harvard University Professor of Science E. O. Wilson, *biophilia* is "the innately emotional affiliation of human beings to other living organisms. Innate means hereditary and hence part of ultimate human nature." Thus, the human species depends on creation to satisfy its desire for "aesthetic, intellectual, cognitive, and even spiritual meaning." In fact, a case could be made that by cherishing the rest of creation, we will come to cherish even more what is human.

So there are powerful, compelling reasons to explain why we would answer, "Of course!" But do we really cherish God's creation and its gifts to us: earth, air, water, habitat, and other people? Ample evidence exists that our quick answer is wrong. At this point, commonly one could begin to cite numerous indicators of ecological degradation. The video and the rest of the study guide will focus on many of them. Let us, however explore our religious attitudes first.

The most frequent criticism of Christians and their attitude toward creation, or the rest of the natural world, is that they have turned the Genesis Creation stories into a license to use and abuse nature to satisfy whatever desires they have. Behind this is an interpretation of two key concepts of the Genesis story: dominion and image of God. In short, Christians have read the passage in which God gives humankind dominion over the earth as meaning to "subdue it, to rule over it." Or they have viewed being made in God's image to mean that humans alone have inherent value or enjoy a special status of superiority.

The effect of such a reading has been to help us set ourselves apart from the rest of creation. We adopt a hierarchical stance that pictures God at the top; then comes humankind followed by the rest of creation. Human status becomes elevated even further as we discount God's intervention in history

as the only thing God did that has importance. We reach a point where our classical theology can separate human history from nature and permit us to proclaim that nature is merely the “scenery on the stage of human history.” Such a posture reduces the natural world to mere utilitarian value that commands no moral obligation from humankind and is left out of God’s divine and mysterious intention.

With the natural world having little or no value except to serve human desire, human enterprise can easily rationalize the ecological impact of its actions as being secondary to human need, no matter how whimsical. In short, we greatly expand our vocation of “tilling” and shrink our vocation of “keeping.”

Fortunately, this is not the last word. The increasing awareness of our ecological situation has prompted serious reexamination of our biblical heritage. If humankind is to “rule” over the earth, what is the nature of that rule? Certainly it is not a right to abuse, but rather an obligation of service, a call of responsibility in relation to creation, to act “for” or “on behalf of.” We serve the reign of God in justice and righteousness (*Psalms 72*). We thus recognize that creation was not made for us, but we for it. Having dominion does not mean being a despot, but being a “citizen of nature,” as J. Baird Callicott describes it.

To bear God’s image, according to Presbyterian theologian William Gibson, is to have the potential to be with God, to live in a relationship with God that includes trust, praise, and faithfulness. Or as a Methodist ethicist James Nash describes it in his book *Loving Nature*, we are representations of nurturing and serving love. We have the rational, moral, and creative capacity to be responsible representatives of God’s interest and values, to be protectors of the ecosphere.

And we are rediscovering the first covenant, the one made with Noah (*Gen. 9:8-17*). Referred to as the Noachic or Rainbow Covenant, God the Creator clearly extends God’s pledge to all of creation and to all generations. The interdependence and interconnection of all of creation is asserted and affirmed. Humankind is expected to respect this covenant, sometimes called the ecological covenant. A breach of it is, as Nash puts it, “an attack on the created order itself. It is disloyalty to God, other creatures, other humans, future generations, and ourselves for we are all bound together with common interests in saving the ecological integrity of our home, the earth.”

This does not diminish God’s intervention in human history through many saving acts, especially incarnation in Jesus Christ. God is the one who “executes justice for the oppressed,” the Redeemer of God’s people. Yet as we will see throughout the video and in the study guide, God’s redemptive activity extends to all creation as God through Jesus Christ “was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross” (*Col. 1:20*). Neither nature nor history is God, but God the Creator is in nature just as God the Redeemer is in history. Thus we experience God as both Creator and Redeemer.

Do you cherish God’s creation? “Of course!” There are compelling needs and reasons for this answer. Whether quick or not, may it ring more true and endure.

## Part 1: *EARTH*

Running Time: 17 Minutes

### **Theme**

What is the connection between ecology and justice? How do we understand God as both Creator and Redeemer? What does the Creation story tell us about our relationship with nature? God's Creation is interconnected and interdependent. Ecological degradation knows no boundaries and impacts rich and poor alike. Human beings are dependent on the earth and have a special relationship to it.

### **Context**

The biblical story tells of a God who is both Creator and Redeemer. God created "heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them . . ." And God "executes justice for the oppressed." This God loves the whole creation, as evidenced by the recognition of it as "very good," and acts to save the creation when it languishes in agony and cries out. Thus we understand God as both Creator and Redeemer. As we seek to follow the God faithfully, we are called to be Earthkeepers. This means, as the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has affirmed, that "we humans are to relate consciously, lovingly, caringly not only to the Creator but to all human and nonhuman companions." Our task, then, is to pursue ecojustice: the well-being of all humankind on a thriving earth.

### **Bible Reference**

*Gen. 1:1-2:3; Gen. 2:4-25*

1. Compare the second account briefly with the first. Note that the sequence of creation is different. God makes the earth and the heavens and then proceeds to make the human creature before there were any plants or herbs or even rain. Next God creates a garden and places the human creature in it, and then creates trees to please one's sight and provide food. Later God takes pity on the human creature's loneliness and forms animals and birds to be named by the human creature. Finally, God differentiates the human creature into male and female as partners with the common task of "tilling and keeping" the garden in which they live. What does this sequence say about our place in Creation?
2. *Genesis 2:15* is especially significant. God tells the human creature to "till and keep" the garden. What does this instruction mean for you? *Tilling* means to work the earth, thus symbolizing everything we do to draw sustenance from nature. It certainly implies agriculture, but would include mining, manufacturing and trading: in short, all the economic activity done to provide for shelter, food, and other human needs. Yet *tilling* is linked to *keeping*. What does that imply? To watch over, to guard, to defend, to protect are all definitions cited by biblical scholars, yet for what purpose? Is it to maintain the capacity of creation to provide sustenance for the human creature? Does tilling the soil in such a way as not to deplete it imply an obligation to future generations? Dr. George Kehm describes humankind as "responsible for promoting God's rule over the created world, thereby assisting it to praise and glorify God through the exuberant and harmonious life of its stunningly diverse creatures." The 1990 General Assembly acknowledged this interpretation: ". . . making sure that the world of nature may flourish, with all its intricate, interacting systems upon which life depends."

**Antiphonal Psalm:** *Psalm 104: 1-13*

### **Discussion Suggestions**

1. How have people experience God as Creator? Display *Rom. 1:20* on newsprint. It reads, in part, “Ever since the creation of the world [God’s] eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things [God] has made.” Let people take some time to describe physical places where they have sensed the presence of God. Ask what they have learned about God from these experiences.
2. How have people experienced God as Redeemer? Display *John 3:16-17* on newsprint. It reads, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.” Let people describe how they have experienced redemption. What have they learned?
3. Turn to the Bible study. Read the Creation accounts aloud and discuss the questions in the Biblical References section. Then posit the assertion that the Bible affirms the interdependence of all creation. Have the group list various examples of interdependence contained in the Creation stories of Genesis. Does your own experience validate or contradict these observations? One familiar concept is the food chain. Are there others?
4. You might try the following exercise from *For God So Loves the World: Peacemaking and the Care of God’s Creation*. One way to view the relationship among God, humankind, and the natural world is the dominion model that shows God on top with human beings directly below in the position of overseeing the rest of the natural world. Can you envision other models to describe how these three are related? Ask the group to diagram their understanding using lines, circles, squares, triangles, or other symbols. Have them share their diagrams with each other and see whether they can agree on a common diagram. It may be one that someone has drawn, or a new combination of several drawings. Then ask each group to present its diagram to the entire group. Ask them to reflect on the following questions:
  - a. Why does it matter to people of faith what relationship they have with God and the rest of creation?
  - b. Do you see humans more as creatures or as “little gods”? What are the possible dangers of an extreme of either position?
  - c. How do the different diagrams of the human-God-nature relationship imply different kinds of behavior toward nature?
  - d. In the video, agriculture in Costa Rica and Ohio is discussed. Ask the group to reflect on the food they have purchased this past week. Where did it come from before it got to the store or market or restaurant? How many people were involved in handling the food and under what kinds of conditions was it processed? When was the last time they were on a farm? Have they ever toured a factory that makes pesticides? Banana plantation workers in Costa Rica have suffered from pesticide poisoning. Should the United States be allowed to export pesticides that are not allowed in our country? Should Costa Rican workers be able to sue for damages in U.S. courts? Have you ever shopped at a farmer’s market or considered sponsoring one in your church parking lot? What is the implication of vertical integration of agriculture for your community? Should we try to eat lower on the food chain, so to speak, or seek to shorten the physical distance between food production and food consumption? Ask people if they have purchased any food products that are considered “organic” or pesticide-free? If so, what has been their experience?
  - e. The degradation of the environment and the exploitation of vulnerable people often go hand in hand. Can you think of other examples besides the ones in the video where this might be true? If you can, obtain a map of your community that shows various industrial

- sites, land fills, hazardous waste treatment facilities, Superfund sites, or other environmental hazards. Are there residential neighborhoods near these facilities? Who lives there? Are health statistics available for those neighborhoods? Invite the class to begin a bulletin board of articles from your local paper about environmental threats in your community and mark them on the map. Add to this each week and keep the bulletin board as a long-term project for your church. Ask the class to pray about these situations.
- f. The video features active Christian laity and clergy. All are deeply committed to the healing and restoration of God's creation. In this segment, Rolando Mendoza introduces us to a farmer who grows coffee, but not like it is done on the large plantations. He is trying to protect the rich soil for agriculture rather than housing. He has such a special relationship to the earth that he cannot picture living in any other way. We meet Leisa Bowle, who is advising Ohio farmers, and Father James Schmitmeyer, who is trying to uphold the viability of two rural communities. Are there members of your church who share this vocation of earthkeeping, even in a different way? If they are in the class, invite them to share briefly what they do. Create another bulletin board with their pictures and a synopsis of what they do. After the study is finished, this display can be moved to a more public location to celebrate the earthkeeping ministries of church members.
- Show various church resources on ecojustice to the class beginning with those listed at the close of this study guide. Be sure to order copies ahead of time. Several books and booklets that are reasonable in length and easy for most church members to understand are available. Some couple theological and biblical insight with practical ideas for congregations and individuals. From them, develop a reading list to be shared with the class and consider adding some of the books to the church library. Ask class members to suggest other resources and books. Do not forget children's resources as well. Ask if someone would volunteer to write a short book review for the church newsletter. Additional information about resources and books is listed on the Environmental Ministries website at <http://www.pcusa.org/environment/resources.htm>.

## Part 2: AIR

Running Time: 10 Minutes

### Theme

Air. How dependent are we on clean air? Is it significant that the second Creation story depicts the human creature literally created by the breath of God? In Hebrew there is no difference between the breath of God and the wind. While air provides us with life, our lifestyle is pumping greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and promoting global climate change. Efforts are under way to reverse that impact.

### Context

Human activity since the Industrial Revolution has altered the composition of the air we breathe and the nature of the earth's atmosphere, which permits life as we know it. By emitting certain gases, such as carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and methane, we have enhanced the "greenhouse effect." Ordinarily solar rays penetrate the upper atmosphere to the earth. Most of them are reflected back into space after warming the earth, but the concentration of some gases traps some of the radiation to warm the planet further. When these gases are kept in balance at a certain amount, thus acting like a greenhouse, the earth retains the necessary heat to support life. This natural effect keeps the earth's temperature at approximately 33 degrees centigrade. Unfortunately, as the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere increases, more of the sun's radiation is trapped, thus further warming the earth. The earth has been warmed by about 0.74°C (plus or minus 0.18°C) since the late nineteenth century, making the 1900s the warmest century on record for at least 600 years. The decade ending in 2009 was the warmest on record.

The potential effects, and those already under way, on the earth and its climate are emerging as research continues on this problem.

### Bible Reference:

*Gen. 1:1-2:3; Gen. 2:4-25*

1. Read the first Creation story aloud. As it is long, you might consider asking several people to read a few verses each. In this account, God creates a dome to separate waters (*Gen. 1:7*). For the early Hebrews, there was no scientific understanding of an infinite space beyond the earth, but they knew that the rain and snow came from above. The dome called *Sky* protected them from the waters above. It may have even been solid and held up by pillars. In any case, its protective role was crucial. With the waters now separated, God could gather the waters under the *Sky* into one place to form seas and could cause dry land to appear. How does our modern understanding of the atmosphere differ? Are there similarities in the understanding of its purpose?
2. Throughout the first Creation story we find the phrase "And God saw that it was good." After God creates humankind, God surveys everything and declares it to be "very good." This is the basis for asserting that all of creation has intrinsic value. It was created by God, declared good by God, and is valued by God. In what way can we say that the atmosphere, in comparison with other things created by God, has intrinsic value?
3. Some modern self-understandings, some based on a different interpretation of Genesis, place humankind over nature. Do you see yourself as separate from or a part of nature? In what ways? Is sharing the "breath of life" with other creatures a basis for an environmental ethic? How would our actions be different if we believed that a violation of nature carried moral or spiritual significance?

**Antiphonal Psalm:** *Psalm 19:1-6*

### **Discussion Suggestions**

1. Look at the questions in the Bible Reference section. Why is the understanding the “dome” as providing a basis for life to exist important for us? Focus also on the implication of our sharing of *ruah*, or air, or the “breath of life.” This suggests that the atmosphere we share is a “common good,” a gift of God. However, to economists it is considered a “free good” with no cost. Therefore, it has no value and can be excluded from any economic equation no matter how much it is degraded or altered by our actions. In what ways could we put a cost on the degradation of a common good? Suppose we had to pay for the air that we breathe. Would you value it more? Since we are all responsible for greenhouse gas emissions, does it make it easier to share the cost of cutting back? How does this differ from costs of cleaning the air of the harmful substances?
2. Take a moment to review how each one of us can reduce greenhouse gas emissions or help with mitigation strategies. We can all help reduce carbon dioxide emissions by simply doing the following: planting a couple of additional trees (20 lbs. per year); using a reel mower to cut the lawn instead of a power one (80 lbs. per year), replacing our refrigerator with a high-efficiency model (220 lbs. per year); buying food and other products with reusable or recyclable packaging (230 lbs. per year); replacing our washing machine with a low-energy, low-water-use model (440 lbs. per year); installing a solar thermal system to help provide hot water, thus saving approximately 720 lbs. per year; or recycling all of our home’s waste cardboard, newsprint, glass, and metal, thus saving 850 lbs. per year. In fact, by making our homes more efficient through things like insulation, furnace tune-ups, and energy-efficient shower heads, we can save 2,480 lbs. per year. The largest savings, however, can be achieved through a change in how we travel. Leaving the car t home two days a week and going to work on foot or by bike or mass transit brings a savings of 1,590 lbs. per year, and buying a fuel-efficient car (rated at 32 mpg or better) to replace your most frequently used automobile will save 5,600 lbs. per year. Ask the group to share ideas about how they can change their own lifestyles to reduce emissions. Consider having a display of various energy-saving devices from compact fluorescent light bulbs to newer shower heads. Look for pamphlets at local stores on how to insulate your home or apartment.
3. Take a look at your own church. Have you done an energy audit recently? Ask your church treasurer how much is spent on electricity and items such as light bulbs. What has been the trend on this budget item over the past few years? Are there ways to cut back? The Interfaith Coalition on Energy (ICE) notes in a report, “Using less energy adds money to the congregation’s budget by reducing expenses, creates less environmental harm, makes equipment last longer, is better for the building, is safer, demonstrates good management to the members, and just makes plain sense.” One Chicago congregation cut its energy use by 40 percent through a series of changes costing about \$3,000. They calculated that the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions was the equivalent of taking ten cars off the streets. And the resulting savings netted them \$1,200 after expenses. One church leader noted, “If 2,000 congregations made similar renovations, it would be like taking 20,000 cars off the road, and it would save \$2.4 million annually.” Could your congregation help involve others in such energy-efficiency efforts?
4. You might want to tackle some provocative issues related to climate change. For example, fuel efficiency of U.S. cars and trucks had been increasing until the introduction of the popular light trucks and sports utility vehicles (SUVs). Ask people to think about what transportation they use. Do they own a “gas guzzler”? Should such vehicles be taxed to reflect their level of fuel efficiency?
5. Help the class understand the differences and similarities between climate change and clean air. There are several greenhouse gases, including water vapor, and most of them occur naturally. Human activity, however, has contributed significantly to increases in their atmospheric concentrations. And many air pollutants are produced by the very same processes that produce

greenhouse gases. For example, nitrogen oxides come from automobile emissions and the burning of fossil fuel. Sulfur oxides and particulates come from coal and oil-fired power plants. Arsenic can come from copper smelters. In this way, strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions can also serve to lower air pollutants that cause lung problems or other health concerns. Ask the class about their knowledge of air quality in their community. Are there smog alerts? Does the air pollution exceed federal standards? What are the primary sources of air pollution? Do their senators and congressional representatives support legislation to enforce and strengthen the Clean Air Act?

6. The video focuses on Portland and its efforts to address air pollution through public transportation built around a light-rail system. According to Robert Stacey, Portland has integrated its concern for clean air with land-use and transportation planning. Urban renewal and development is focused on creating employment in the downtown area. How are planning decisions made in your community? Where are the jobs located? Try to obtain from your city or county government maps showing transportation patterns, including bus routes, job location, mass transit usage, major highways, and parking lots. What drawbacks exist to increased use of public transportation? Mr. Stacey talks about the difference between mobility and accessibility. How do you understand the two concepts? In your life, what do you need accessibility to?
7. Professor Rasmussen cites a book, *The End of Nature*, by Bill McKibben (New York: Doubleday, 1990), an environmentalist and a Methodist church school teacher as well. McKibben paints a picture of human power affecting all of nature, even in places where few if any humans are physically present. Humankind's ability to disrupt or alter basic life-sustaining cycles now extends throughout the biosphere. If nature has an intrinsic value in and of itself, what does this say about the exercise of human power? Can this power be used to restore ecological integrity, and if so, how?

## Part 3: WATER

Running Time: 10 Minutes

### Theme

Water is essential to life on earth. It is scarcer, and therefore precious, than people know. Yet we continue to abuse water with pollution, overuse, and waste. Water is a gift of God often used as a rich metaphor in the biblical story. Its ability to sustain life is threatened unless we begin to appreciate it and manage it wisely.

### Context

We owe our very being to water. Scientists tell us that the first organisms were bacteria that developed in the ocean depths around four billion years ago. They helped create the very conditions under which life as we know it could evolve. According to James Kasting, writing in *Science* magazine, these marine bacteria transformed carbon dioxide into oxygen. This in turn raised the atmosphere's oxygen levels to where more complex life forms could develop.

Human activity has not been kind to water. Our oceans and freshwater supplies, both groundwater and surface water, are being polluted from many sources. Aquifers and groundwater are contaminated by industrial discharge, faulty septic tanks, leaching of chemicals from the soil, and leaking underground storage tanks. Heavy metals from mining and manufacturing invade our water supply. Pesticides from agricultural runoff (and do not forget our golf courses and lawns) add to the contamination. Concentrations of nitrates in the soil leach into the groundwater. When consumed, the nitrates in this water can be converted into nitrites that deprive the body of oxygen, a risk particularly to infants.

### Bible Reference:

*John 7:37-39; Rom. 8:18-25*

1. Water's precious quality to the Hebrew people is important to the Gospel writer John. In this famous passage on Jesus as the living water, John relates to the Hebrews' practice at that time of carrying water in a golden pitcher from the Pool of Siloam to the temple, a ritual symbolizing the water from the rock in the desert (*Num. 20:2-13*). It also was a symbol of the hope for the Messiah's coming to deliver God's people (*Isa. 12:3*). Jesus, the true water of life, fulfills the prophecy. From your experience, is water as precious to you as it was to the Hebrew people? Have you ever been truly thirsty? What significance does the image of Jesus as the living water have for you?
2. Think about other places in the Bible where water is used as an image of God's blessing and promise (*Rev. 22:1-2*, for example). What would come to mind if we found out that this water was polluted?
3. As all things come from God the Creator, "for whom we exist," and from Jesus Christ our Redeemer "through whom are all things and through whom we exist" (*1 Cor. 8:6*), Paul can declare that all of creation will be redeemed (*Rom. 8:21*). Yet the creation has been "groaning in labor pangs," due to the sinful actions of human beings. In what ways do our oceans, streams, lakes, and coastal area "groan in labor pangs"? Paul further affirms that the destiny of the rest of creation is inextricably bound up with our destiny. In *Rom. 8:19*, the creation "waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God." Some see in Paul's writings hints of implications for the church's work of reconciliation in the world. Should our mission work also emphasize efforts to heal the wounds of creation? In what ways can we as a congregation or as

Christian individuals work to alleviate creation's suffering? Finally, Paul links this longing and waiting to hope "for what we do not see." This hope leads to patience. Is an attitude of patient hope possible when we see what is happening to creation? How does our penchant for quick fixes and easy solutions compare with Paul's description of a faithful life?

### **Antiphonal Psalm" Psalm 104:14-23**

#### **Discussion Suggestions**

1. Look over the Bible Reference section. Ask the class to reflect on the questions posed by Dr. Rasmussen. Ask them to think about their own baptism and the significance of clean water to it. If baptism means being born again as a new person in Christ, is its meaning enhanced by science's observation that all living things essentially emerged from the water of the oceans? Does the violation of these oceans in some sense violate our own origins? If we see God as Creator, in what ways does our pollution of water reflect our true attitude toward God? Is the reverse true? Does being baptized in water mean some responsibility for safe and pure drinking water for this child?
2. Human beings share important characteristics with freshwater and marine creatures. For example, the phylum *chordata*, whose basic characteristic is a flexible spinal cord and complex nervous system, contains both bony fish and human beings. What other things do we share with the sea and its creatures? Peter Weber writes, "Time and evolution have distanced us from these origins, but we still bear the traces of saltwater heritage in our blood. And the nearly universal human fascination with the timeless procession of waves, the smell of saltwater, and the call of seabirds also bespeaks a deep-seated psychological connection with the sea." Ask people to reflect about their feelings as they walk along a beach, or sail on the seas.
3. Think of some creative ways to dramatize the scarcity of water on a global scale. Use a large glass container (try a 100 ml beaker to make the measurements easier) with one ice cube in it. Pour out 97 percent of the water into a bowl and put salt in it. Place the ice cube in another bowl. Pour the remaining one percent into a glass. With an eyedropper, distribute that water unevenly among the class. Ask people whether they have ever really understood how the little water we have must be used for so many purposes.
4. The Florida Everglades presents a compelling story of a unique ecosystem faced with many competing uses for its water. Described as a "river of grass," a large sheet of water flows down from Lake Okeechobee in Central Florida, a very large freshwater lake, into the Kissimmee River basin and on into the Florida Bay at the bottom of the peninsula and into the Keys. The Everglades became home to many species of birds, as well as plants, fish, animals, and reptiles. Yet human beings wanted that water too. At first, they demanded only a little of it, but as the population, agriculture, and industry mushroomed, the demand increased significantly. Brent Provinsky thinks that humans must learn to coexist with such unique ecosystems. How is this possible? Whose need for the water should take precedence? How should this be decided? Who will speak for the nesting and wading birds dependent on this watery ecosystem? Are there similar examples of conflicting needs in your community? These might involve wetlands, water treatment, or pollution of rivers.
5. Liz Hamilton, in so many words, speaks of the old concept of "multiple use." As Executive Director of the Northwest Sport Fishing Association, she knows the importance of clean streams for the recreational and economic benefit of her region. She also believes deeply in the healing powers and spiritual renewal that comes from immersing oneself in nature. What are the "multiple uses" of water in your community? Are they in balance with one another? Show the

class a map of your watershed to help them think about all the sources of water you have and of what may threaten them.

6. The concept of “stakeholder” has been emerging to describe an inclusive model of decision making. Ms. Hamilton offers one role the faith community can play by reaching out to groups and people who normally do not communicate well with each other. The church can then foster dialogue, a search for common values and understanding. Are there similar efforts in your community? Is the church playing any part in this process? If there is a major issue brewing in your community, who should be involved in the discussion who is not already? Could your church serve such a function?
7. The original Clean Water Act was passed in 1972, two years after the first Earth Day. Yet today some 40 percent of the rivers and lakes in the United States are still too polluted for fishing, swimming, and aquatic life. Challenge the class to learn more about the Clean Water Act and how to get involved in testing water quality at <http://rivernetwork.org/>.
8. Have people estimate their daily water usage. Ask them to bring their latest water bills to class. Two-thirds of the world’s people use less than 13 gallons of water per day. If you can, display 13 one-gallon jugs of water. Ask each person how many jugs they would need to supply their needs. Record their answers. Then ask them to record their daily activities that require water and calculate how much each takes. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the average family of four in the United States consumes about 400 gallons per day. Older toilets use between 3.5 and 7 gallons per flush. Bathroom faucets generally use 2 gallons of water per minute. Traditional washing machines use between 27-54 gallons of water per load. Discuss what changes people could make in the daily routines to conserve water (taking shorter showers, for example). How much could be saved by installing water-saving devices such as efficient shower heads?

## Part 4: *HABITAT*

Running Time: 11 Minutes

### **Theme**

What is a healthy community? A healthy community balances the complex needs of human habitat with those of the natural environment. How can we measure the health of a community? What qualities do we seek for the human habitat?

### **Context**

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, over three-fourths of the people in the U.S. live in urban areas, a higher percentage than is true for the world's population. Half of them, or more than 3.3 billion people, live in cities, and the trend is increasing. In 2005, according to the United Nations, there were 20 megacities (population over 10 million) in the world. New York and Los Angeles are the only U.S. cities among them. In the United States, fewer than half our urban dwellers live in central cities. The rest are in the suburbs. Population shifts are uneven, with some cities gaining, some losing. And some have larger numbers of senior citizens and youth, but lack people in their middle years. However, the population does move a lot, as nearly half report moving to a new home within the past five years.

### **Bible Reference:**

*Col. 1:15-20; Eph. 1:3-10*

1. Both passages present a cosmic vision of Christ. A central affirmation of Colossians, the supremacy of Christ in the universe and in the church, is proclaimed in this early hymn. Christ is present "before all things" with God, in Christ "all things were created," and Christ "holds all things together." Paul was countering false teachings within the church at Colossae, which held that Jesus Christ was insufficient as a divine revealer and redeemer. In contrast, Paul portrays Christ as the creative agent, the unifying force in all things and the one who reconciles all things to God (v. 20). What do you think of this New Testament passage? If we are to be "ambassadors of Christ," to use Paul's term, what does Christ's purpose of reconciling all of creation to God say to us as Christ's followers? Can earthkeeping ministries be seen as bearing witness to the gospel, and, if so, how?
2. In v. 15, Paul describes Jesus as the "first born of all creation." Elsewhere in Paul's writings, Jesus is referred to as the new Adam, the last person compared to the first person (see *1 Cor. 15:45*). Jesus is also head of the church, the new community in which we are united as a witness to the "mystery of [God's] will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth" (*Eph. 1:9-10*). We become part of the body of Christ, where there is no Gentile or Jew. Can one add that we are also linked with the nonhuman creation as well? In what way? What does this mean as we seek to build livable, sustainable habitats?
3. *Ephesians 1:9* mentions the word "mystery," a theme throughout Ephesians and Colossians. God's eternal purpose, now revealed, is to call all people to share boldly and faithfully in Christ's redemptive work. Perhaps the real "mystery" is how God could have possibly thought it possible to bring everyone into the same body. With the endless procession of wars, clashes of cultures and peoples, and disregard for the nonhuman creation, couldn't God have been more realistic? In our lives, do we manifest this sense of confidence in God's eternal purpose? How often do we dismiss people with different beliefs or values as "tree-huggers" or "eco-Nazis" or

“polluters”? How often do we dismiss other species or ecosystems as having no value? What can we do in the church to foster unity of purpose?

**Antiphonal Psalm:** *Psalm 148*

**Discussion Suggestions**

1. Have the class review the Bible Reference section and respond to the questions. Pay particular attention to their relationship to our own personal and corporate ministries. If we believe that Christ is truly sufficient as our redeemer and is the unifying force of all creation, what “false teachings” is Paul warning us against in our day?
2. The next exercises will help the class members identify their values in relation to their view of home, community, and land use: in short, their habitat. It will involve visioning, a process of moving toward something positive. Ask the class to describe – using drawings, maps, and words – a place where they have lived, where they live now, and where they would like to live. Ask them to reflect on several questions regarding these three visions. First, where do you fit into these pictures? Where is your home, your worksite, your school, your church? Where do you spend your free time? Second, when you leave your home, how do you get to the places where you want to go? From where does the food in the grocery store come? Where do you get your water, and where does your waste go? Third, what do you solely own and what is owned in common? Can you do whatever you want with your resources, or do others have a say about what can be done. Too much say or too little? In order to learn from each other’s experiences, ask the members to share their visions and discuss their answers to the questions.
3. Another approach is to focus on your specific community and what you would like it to be. First, ask everyone to draw from memory a map of the community with its current geography as they perceive it. What physical features are most important now and for the future? Present a couple of the maps and see whether you can identify the features that are valuable to the one who drew it. Now, given this physical habitat, help the class to identify its vision for your community’s future. Note that visioning seeks to produce a common goal toward which your community can move and to unleash creative thinking and energy, giving people a sense of empowerment that they can shape their community.

Post prominently a list of categories for reflection: people, housing, schools/libraries, jobs/economy, health care, crime, transportation, amenities, environment, and public involvement. Pose the following questions, and others you may think of, to the class: If you had the power to transform your community, how would you change it? Where would people live and work and shop? How would they get there? What kind of work would they do? Where would they go and what would they do in their leisure time? What kind of house would you live in, and who would your neighbors be? How would they be like you or different from you? What kind of energy would be used for heating, transportation, and travel? Where would it come from? How would you keep the air, water, and environment clean? What use would you make of the valued physical features?

Break the class down into small groups to discuss what an ideal community would be in ten or twenty years and ask them to be as specific as possible. They can use the ten categories listed above for discussion starters. Remind the class to be creative in their thinking. For example, under the category “Amenities,” have them consider community events such as Fourth of July parades and other festivals. Is there a place for aesthetic qualities of life? Under “Schools/Libraries,” would there be international students? If so, from which countries? Under “People,” what would be the ideal percentage mix of certain age groups (children, senior citizens, etc.)?

The foregoing exercises are drawn from the teacher's guide for *Exploring Sustainable Communities* published by the World Resources Institute. You can order it and other valuable resources at [www.wri.org](http://www.wri.org).

4. Take a look at the examples lifted up in the video. Gary Coates, who teaches architecture at Kansas State University, speaks about "healing architecture." Have you ever heard of architecture being "healing"? Have you known particular buildings or human-designed places that inspired you, or soothed your being? What about landscape architecture? Have you ever visited a Japanese garden? Ask the class members to describe these places and the effect they have on them. Does the architecture of your church produce a similar reaction? How does it help or hinder your experience of God's presence?
5. In Portland, the video provides an overview of efforts to ensure that all citizens, whether in suburban or inner-city neighborhoods, enjoy a livable habitat. It describes how one downtown church, First Presbyterian Church, involved itself in rebuilding the neighborhood immediately around it. Has your church been involved in similar efforts to address the need for affordable housing? Was it a Habitat for Humanity project or a multifamily unit? Jenny Holmes sees such efforts as an opportunity to model how to be a community, how to do sustainable development. She advocates using low-impact building materials and promoting energy conservation. Has your church done this as well? Artist Cliff Lewis, and Alder House resident, described the peaceful qualities of the place that permit him to pursue his art career even in the middle of the downtown Portland bustle. How does Portland measure up as a "livable and sustainable" community as defined by the U.S. President's Council on Sustainable Development? What role does Alder House play in that?

Conclude with prayer and the antiphonal psalm.

## Part 5: *PEOPLE*

Running Time: 15 Minutes

### **Theme**

The human species was created by God out of the topsoil as were the other creatures, forming a web of interconnected and interdependent life. Endowed with special abilities, the human being was made to bear God's image while cultivating the earth to ensure that all of creation can flourish. Human beings have often misused these abilities to harm creation through intentional and unintentional acts. This harm to the earth can rebound to harm other people.

### **Context**

Human beings are very much a part of the natural world. We rely on plants to transform carbon dioxide into oxygen to breathe. We require nourishment of our bodies from plants and, for some of us, from animals. Every creature affects its environment and leaves a trace of its presence. For the vast majority of creatures, this trace is fleeting as the cycles of renewal allow ecosystems to adjust and absorb. Human beings, however, by the kind of technologies we can develop, can alter ecosystems permanently, and impact basic cycles of nature.

### **Bible Reference:**

*Isaiah 61*

1. The eleven verses of *Isaiah 61* serve as a linkage point. They contain images that clearly allude to the tradition of Jubilee described in *Leviticus 25*. God's sovereignty over history and nature is affirmed. God's intent that all humanity should share in an equitable distribution of the earth's resources is proclaimed. An end to oppression and alienation caused by the accumulation of unaccountable economic power is called for. The cultivated fields are allowed to lie fallow (*Lev. 25:2*; see also *Ex. 23:10-11*) so that through proper stewardship, the earth can continue to provide sustenance for God's people.

*Isaiah 61* also uses Jubilee imagery to proclaim the messianic redemption and restoration to come when the anointed one comes to "bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor . . ." (vs. 1 and 2). Significantly, Jesus chose those words to read in the synagogue, setting forth the nature of his ministry (see *Luke 4:16-21*). Thus, the one through whom God will restore both nature and humankind to God's eternal purpose uses the hope embodied in the Jubilee model to signal ethical demands for God's people. What are some aspects of the Jubilee year? How would our society be different if we followed the Jubilee tradition? Would you be willing to trust in God's providence enough to practice the Jubilee model?

2. *Isaiah 61:4* describes a people of God active in restoration – ancient ruins are raised up, ruined cities and devastated generations are repaired. How is the ministry of your church active similarly?
3. Note the imagery of v. 11. Here the writer uses the natural fertility of the earth to describe the certainty of God's salvation. Compare it with *Isa. 64:14*, which describes the redemptive effect on the people of Zion of God's comforting Spirit, as like the rest the cattle receive when they descend into the valley. What other images from nature could be used?

**Antiphonal Psalm:** *Psalms 104:14-35*

### Discussion Suggestions

1. Review the questions in the Bible Reference section. Do you see any similarity between the practice of Jubilee and the purpose of God reconciling all things to him through Jesus Christ?
2. Dr. Larry Rasmussen recounts the creation of Adam in *Genesis 2*, noting the interplay of the Hebrew text. Here “Adam” is made from *adamah*, the dust of the ground in many translations. The more exact translation is *topsoil*, that rich, fertile part of the soil so necessary for growing abundant crops. What a rich image for an agricultural people like the early Hebrews! Other commentators have noted the “human-humus” imagery. He notes further that all other creatures came from the same *adamah*. What is your reaction to this observation? Does it help you to see how you are connected with the rest of creation? Does it diminish in any way your sense of the place of humankind in creation?
3. The world’s population continues to expand and will do so for the foreseeable future. Large population growth has been linked to poverty. Are there other impacts on the human population – for example, in health or longevity? Population growth has also been linked to environmental degradation. Can you site some examples? Has your own community grown as well? Ask people to look into their own family history to see how many children were born in different generations. What factors may have been at work in the number of births when they increased or declined?
4. *Carrying capacity* is a term emerging in recent years to describe “the maximum population of a given species that a particular environment can support indefinitely (i.e., without habitat damage).” The idea is that any species must live in balance with its environment so that enough nutrients can be produced to sustain its life and the lives of other species it relates to, and the environment can absorb its waste or any other impact it produces. For human beings, with our abilities, one must factor technologies and social organization as we stretch the ability of some environments to support larger numbers of people. However, the idea of a *carrying capacity* connotes limits. Do such limits exist? If so, what are they? If not, why don’t they? Can you cite examples from human history where the *carrying capacity* was exceeded? (For example, the classic case of Easter Island in the Pacific, or the no-longer-existing cedars of Lebanon.) What human activities in this modern industrialized society serve to increase or reduce the earth’s *carrying capacity*? Do you find this concept helpful as we seek sustainability? [Note that this is used as an ecological concept here as it was originally. Others have tried to appropriate the concept to other issues, such as a *cultural carrying capacity* for debates about how much cultural diversity a given society can tolerate and maintain its identity.]
5. As noted, much of the world’s population increase occurs in developing countries. At the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, efforts were made to address population growth. Delegates from developing countries noted that a child born in their countries would consume much less of the world’s resources than a child born in the United States. They would not discuss population-reduction programs unless the developed countries, particularly the United States, would talk about its consumption patterns. President George Bush said this reciprocal discussion was nonnegotiable. Would you agree? In what way is the U.S. lifestyle driven by consumption, and what are its environmental consequences? Have you tried to simplify your own lifestyle? How?
6. Immigration, as it relates to the size of the U.S. population, is often a difficult subject to discuss. As noted, it contributes to the reality of U.S. population growth. Immigrants include refugees seeking political asylum, legal immigrants, and undocumented people (often here seeking employment). Some would add that you need to include the offspring of such immigrants, as some have higher rates of childbirth than do the present U.S. residents. Do you believe that U.S.

population size should be limited? Why or why not? Should the question of levels of immigration be included in the discussion? How would this apply to the various categories of immigrants, or the policy permitting extended families to be reunited? What other factors should be considered if one wants to address U.S. population size?

7. In Eugene, Oregon, volunteers help maintain the city's wetlands. They need protection from polluted storm runoff (often from paved areas) that contains oil, paints, soaps, fertilizers, and pesticides. They need to protect drinking water for themselves and people living downstream. Ruth Koenig, the coordinator of volunteers, remarks that wetlands are also important for wildlife. Do you have wetlands in your community, and if so, where are they? What functions do they serve? Have you ever visited them? What environmental stresses affect them? What lifestyle choices would be made to help limit these stresses?
8. The Hartzler family in Ohio made some serious decisions about the way they earn a living from farming. They switched from using herbicides after learning of some of the effects on the soil and on their son. Now they have incorporated organic methods into their dairy from start to finish – no pesticides, no herbicides, no fungicides. They also altered the pasteurizing process to maintain a quality, sweet-tasting milk and found a market for this milk. Could more people make similar moves, even if not as complete as the Hartzlers' changes? Do you patronize businesses producing eco-friendly products? If they cost more, how much more are you willing to pay if you know that a particular product does not harm the environment? [A 2009 *Presbyterian Panel* revealed that 52 percent of members, 53 percent of elders, 71 percent of pastors, and 78 percent of specialized clergy were "very willing" or "fairly willing" to pay much higher prices to protect the environment.]
9. Take a moment to analyze how you are linked to the globalized consumer economy. Where were your clothes made? Your shoes? Your car or TV? How about the bananas you put on your breakfast cereal? Do you know under what conditions these products were made or grown, or what environmental standards were followed? Professor Ross Kinsler describes the Latin American experience of an export-oriented economy and its consequences. How has it affected the people of Latin America?

## ***Suggestions for Further Study***

- Subscribe to Eco-Notes, the e-newsletter from PC(USA) Environmental Ministries at [www.pcusa.org/environment/subscribe.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/environment/subscribe.htm).
- Find resources on Just Living from Enough for Everyone, PC(USA) at <http://www.pcusa.org/justliving/>.
- *Hope for a Global Future: Toward Just and Sustainable Development*. The 1996 General Assembly Statement addresses global poverty and environmental degradation including policy recommendations and study guide. [OGA #96-013] Available to order or for download at [www.pcusa.org/acswp/resources.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/acswp/resources.htm).
- Johnston, Carol, *And the Leaves of the Trees Are for the Healing of the Nations: Biblical and Theological Foundations for EcoJustice*. A 35-page review of the basic affirmations on ecology and justice. [PDS #72-640-97-001] Available to order or download at [www.pcusa.org/environment/resources.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/environment/resources.htm).
- *Keeping and Healing the Creation*. A resource paper prepared by the Presbyterian Ecojustice Task Force providing comprehensive background on the ecojustice crisis and biblical theology and ethics. [PDS #331-89-101] Order at [www.pcusa.org/environment/resources.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/environment/resources.htm).
- Find helpful resources from the National Council of Churches Eco-Justice Program at <http://nccecojustice.org/resources/>.
- McFague, Sallie, *Super, Natural Christians: How We Should Love Nature*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997.
- Rasmussen, Larry, *Earth Community, Earth Ethics*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press, 1996.