Eco-Theology/ Eco-Justice/ Eco-Reformation

May 21, 2018

Suggested Resources

Books (annotated)


Broad discussion of ecological issues such as food production, waste management, water management, etc. Describes with details and statistics the deepening global crisis and adds biblical wisdom, ethic and character.


What is our place in the world? We have a “natural habitat,” involving dirt, water and sky. And we have a “human geography,” involving, home, neighborhood and commons. She begins with personal stories and looks for cosmic implications.


Poetic, devotional pieces on the following themes: Humility in Creation; Humility in Incarnation and Redemption; the Humility of the Holy Spirit; and The School of the Universe. Written by a former bishop of Rio de Janeiro. This is intended to be read devotionally each day for four weeks.


A devotional approach, literally inviting readers to go for a walk to discover the beauty, wonder, and trauma of creation. Topics include creation and covenant, redemption and renewal, contrasting food and fuel, city and country, work and play. Seeing the world and our place in it as holy.


Excellent starting point for understanding and theological reflection. Collection of Lutheran scholars writing on a variety of themes. Check out the Australian proposal for a new ninety-five theses for eco-reformation!

Celia Deane- Drummond, Eco-Theology, (Novalis, Toronto, Ontario), 2008.


Ilia Delio, Christ in Evolution, (Orbis, Maryknoll, New York), 2008
See bio of this fascinating theologian. https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/grace-margins/evolution-ilia-delio. Doctoral degrees in theology and science. Understands the cosmos is about deep relationality. Christo-centric understanding of evolution. Not only is the universe evolving, so is Christ. The Love of God is both the beginning and the end of evolution.


This book reveals a subset of feminist theology, drawing from the distinctive experience and reflection of Afro-American women, with a nod to southern hemisphere and GLBTQ sources as well. An interesting source for stories and litanies that ought to be shared widely.


Offering background, noting Pope Francis’ contributions, considering resulting implementation and then suggesting further development, this is more than an explanation of the encyclical. It is a developmental piece as well.


Explores seven traps that inhibit hope and action and contrasts with seven mindful leaps that reframe our thought and energize our action.


Looks at the environmental crisis from a humanist point of view. Seeking a purely rational approach, we need to strip our responses of political, religious, and social particularities. Proposing nine planetary boundaries Humanity must cross, Humanity achieves its God-like quality and power to care for and protect the earth. A misplaced humanity caused this mess. A recovered Humanity can rescue it.


This book was distributed by our national church. Collection of short essays around three themes: “protecting what we love,” “the biblical case for creation advocacy,” and “abundant life for all creation in worship, community and action.

A compilation of articles and sermons drawn from the Presbyterian Working Group on Christian Faith, Science and technology. Moving beyond dualism, we have god cresting one world which may be understood theologically and scientifically.


A Jewish perspective. Four themes: in the beginning, the big bang; “self and cosmos contrasting oneness and nothingness, discovering a personal God; “Torah and the wisdom of God”; and “the end of days”


A deep book building on themes of Cosmology, Methodology, Anthropology, Theology, Christology and Eschatology. An early, foundational construction.

Allister McGrath, The Big Question: Why We Can’t Stop Talking about Science, Faith and God, (St. Martin’s Press, New York) 2015

A reflective response to the new atheism from an Oxford scholar who used to be one. Science is not a threat to theology. Scientism is. Science and Theology are distinct disciplines, each necessary to fully describe the world and our place in it. Science describes what is but cannot describe what ought to be. Ethics comes from religion. Religion offers the story of the why behind science’s story of the what.

Megan McKenna, Harm Not the Earth, (Veritas, Dublin), 2007.

Taking familiar biblical themes like Genesis and Noah; prophets like Amos and Isaiah and their relationship to the land; Jesus’ particular relationship (geography) with water; and the expectation of a new heaven and earth – McKenna interweaves global, tribal and inter-faith stories of creation and evolution into a richer imagination of creation.


Mick develops the now familiar argument of the universe embodying the interconnectedness of all things and revealing an incarnational Cosmic Christ. This short book then contrasts private property and the common good and develops the ecological response as a matter of social justice. The book closes with practical suggestions for seasonal worship emphases.


Take two very different monastic traditions, Benedictine and Buddhist, and compare the values, motivation, commitment, and practice of care for the earth.


Featured theologian in the Grounded video series. Looks at the systemic sin that contributes to the global crisis. Very relevant to today with the chapter, “Unmasking Evil
that Parades as Good.” Faith and theology must attack political, social and economic structures that oppress not only the people but the living planet. Faith is the source for a deeper reality, a new vocation and a moral framework.


In the tradition of Francis of Assisi, Paintner offers resources to reflect prayerfully on Brother Wind and Brother Fire, Sister Earth and Sister Water. Short prayers, scripture verses and traditional writings develop each theme in devotional ways.


Pope Francis’ encyclical. Check the commentary above as well as in the on-line resources section. The encyclical is available free for downloading. See special section in the other resources below.


Another Lutheran scholar featured in the *Grounded* video series. Begins with an extensive exploration of a new Christian ethic. Contrasts Asceticism and Consumerism, what we deem holy and what we commodify; our mysticism and alienation; and other perspectives.


This is an early classic. The author builds a case in four movements: 1-Creation; 2-Destruction (with religious narratives and a new narrative); 3- Domination and deceit; and 4- Healing (drawing from covenantal, sacramental and spirituality influenced politics)


Sanguin begins with or home in the universe. The scientific story is also divine revelation; evolution, a divine unfolding. Part-2 integrates biblical stories and Jesus’ saying with ecological perspectives. His epilogue is a strong statement of the ecological disaster as Christ crucified and risen.


How does the preacher prepare to preach? More than scolding or offering simplistic instructions for “green” responses. Preaching as proclaiming God’s new reality, a reality of suffering and resurrection. Sample sermons included.

Important collection of chapters responding to the movie from an historical and evolving faith perspective. I recommend the section on ecological jurisprudence. Our constitution is written for the protection of persons, not creatures and creation. These chapters argue we need to recover the court jester (I would add prophet) who challenges the empire with an alternate vision. The argument is that nature has intrinsic rights; we do not “bestow” rights. Nature is not a collection of things we commodify and exploit but a living entity with which we are in relationship. The principle of guardianship requires that we protect what does not otherwise have a voice.

Peter Wohlleben, The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel – How They Communicate (Harper Collins) 2015. Recommended by Gloria Dei

Other Related Readings: As the universe expands, so do related topics...

How do we address social sin and systemic evil without addressing the threat of western capitalism and the imperialistic claims and actions of the American Empire?


The Market has become the omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent source of life and security. Big churches have bought into a similar spirit with big banks. Politicians and economists exhibit the same spirits as the Trickster, the Fox and the Coyote archetypes of folklore. Protestant virtues of thrift, delayed gratification and support for the common good have become hindrances to consumer-driven (market-driven) economy. A sometimes amusing, often shocking read.


A prophetic judgement of American imperialism since Reagan. But like any faithful prophetic vision, there is also a promise of a hopeful alternative.


A research scientist exploring the evolutionary origins of spirituality and religion. Are we hard-wired for God? Or is the spiritual experience based on tricks of the mind and early developmental relationships. Dow our understandings evolve? Does God?

Video Resources
**Earthbound: Created+ Called to Care for Creation**, (Seraphim Communications, St. Paul, Minnesota) 2009
Six sessions with Facilitator Guide in PDF format on disc. Excellent resource! View trailer at this website – http://www.lutheransrestoringcreation.org/Home/highlights/videos/earthbound-dvd-educational-series

1- Created/Called – created life is not to be placed on the earth but with the earth- care of creation is our vocation;
2 – Here/There – Christianity is misunderstood as preparation for another life in another world – we are placed here, in this place at this time;
3-Domination/ Dominion – Everything is interconnected and is our responsibility to care for, not use and abuse;
4- Me/We – Our culture prioritizes individuality, but the Biblical story is always about community;
5-Now/Forever – We think short-term, perhaps six months – but life is lived to the third and fourth generation and beyond – The decisions we make affect the future – Loving our neighbor includes the generations to come;
6- Enough/Too Much – We have a God of abundance, not scarcity – God promises to provide all we need- Life changes when we stop competing for what we don’t have and live gratefully with what we do – and share out of our abundance

**Journey of the Universe: An Epic Story of Cosmic, Earth and Human Transformation**, (Shelter Island) 2013
A thought provoking and stunningly photographed film about creation and evolution and the role of humanity in it. Told from a scientific point of view, there are many talking points for faith and science conversations. View trailer here… http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/film-trailer/


You Tube videos with a punch. Check out Nature Is Speaking at this link: https://www.conservation.org/nature-is-speaking/Pages/default.aspx. Sponsored by Conservation International, celebrities take on speaking roles. Liam Neeson is ICE. Harrison Ford is OCDEAN. Julia Roberts is MOTHER NATURE. Penelope Cruz is WATER. Many more. Stunning photography. Each video is 90 seconds. The theme is consistent: Nature doesn’t need people; people need nature.” A bit of a challenge to these. What if they were shown overhead as an introduction to worship/confession of sins/intro to prayers of the people?

**Faith and the Environment ELCA Documents**
http://www.elca.org/Resources/Caring-for-Creation

*Awakening to God’s Call to Earth-Keeping* http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Awakening_To_Gods_Call_To_Earthkeeping.pdf?_ga=2.56152238.40580894.1523907026-672282431.1518714960

*Hunger and Climate Change*
Poverty and Hunger in a Changing Climate

Link to statements and study guide

http://www.elca.org/Resources/Caring-for-Creation
Link to Advocacy resources: school meals; voter education; child nutrition; food and farming

https://www.selectlearning.org/
Website for a synodically authorized ministry – on-line study courses; amazing store for DVD’s.
Earthbound comes from the “store – church and the wold” Material includes Luther pastors, theologians and seminary faculty from across the ELCA.

Faith and the Environment – Laudato Si

Laudato Si – the text of Pope Francis’ encyclical - Download PDF or read on-line or order a print copy.
https://laudatosi.com/watch

Lutheran Study Guide for Laudato Si – four-week sessions
http://www.lutheransrestoringcreation.org/Home/highlights/laudato-si---lutheran-study-guide

The Laudato Si Project in Wisconsin has sponsored sustainability fairs and other events to get people into nature and to think theologically.

Canadian coalition of institutions seeks divestment from fossil fuels as an expression of faith and justice. Response is to do “both and” – keep enough shares so as to have a voice but encourage investment in sustainable resources.

Dioceses in Vermont set 2017 as Year of Creation for promotion, study and action. Stimulates a regional response. Suggests something our own church could be doing?

Naturally the list of networks is the most interesting. Look under partners on the home page for ideas for schools, camps, businesses, public media, etc.

**Lutheran World Federation**

LWF Season of Creation  
Six-week Study 1- Time for Everything; 2- Contemplating Creation; 3- Stewardship of Creation; 4- Christ and Creation; 5- Revealing the Children of God; 6- Joy of Creation

ELCIC Praise Appeal Creation Not for Sale – worship service – service of the word  

Creation Not for Sale booklet  

**Stewardship Articles from Luther Seminary, St. Paul**

*Eating Our Values*  
http://www.luthersem.edu/stewardship/default.aspx?m=6667&post=4986

*Stewardship Lessons from Environmental to Financial*  
http://www.luthersem.edu/stewardship/default.aspx?m=6667&post=4502

*NIV Stewardship Bible Study: Discover God's Design for Life, the Environment, Finances, Generosity and Eternity*  
a review  
http://www.luthersem.edu/stewardship/default.aspx?m=6667&post=4159

*Stewardship of the Earth: A Theological Perspective*  
https://www.luthersem.edu/stewardship/default.aspx?m=6667&post=4010
Transforming Stewardship for Climate Action
https://www.luthersem.edu/stewardship/default.aspx?m=6667&post=4781

Water of Life
https://www.luthersem.edu/stewardship/default.aspx?m=6667&post=4833

Creation Worship Resources

https://foodgrainsbank.ca/news/earth-day-worship-resources/
Food Grains Bank Earth day resource, 2017

http://www.creationjustice.org/educational-resources.html
List of links for Earth Day Worship, 2004 – 2017

Creation Partnerships Websites

http://www.creationjustice.org/members-and-partners.html
Creation Justice Ministries – check out list of partners, including ELCA
Follow links to other resources, such as worship, education and advocacy
   Check out campaigns: Protecting Places; Energy; Climate Change; Environmental Health
   Campaigns: Suggestions for Action

http://www.creationjustice.org/capsules.html
Creation Justice Ministries Newsletter

https://mcccanada.ca/
Mennonite Central Committee

https://www.clwr.org/
CLWR

https://arocha.ca/
A Rocha – Has a Manitoba Chapter; sponsors lay training events and educational events: conservation, sustainable agriculture, environmental education
Interested in creating a community garden? Here is a link to a Community Garden Resource, https://arocha.ca/get-involved/green-living-resources/#gardeningtips. Find here a blog and helps with organizing, planning, and start-up, including release forms (?)

https://arocha.ca/where-we-work/winnipeg-area/
Keep up-to-date with information on activities in the Winnipeg area.
CSA’s Farm Production Subscription Services
http://csamanitoba.org/find/
Overview and listing of area farms

https://www.myfarmersmarket.com/
Subscription or Casual services

http://www.freshoption.ca/

https://www.cramptonsmarket.com/cramptons-food-box/

http://www.wildfirefarms.ca/
Not CSA but grass finished beef, free range chicken and free-range pork
Pick up at St. Norbert Market or home delivery

http://climatechangeconnection.org/
Important local news. Background information on science, emissions, impacts, solutions, connections, and other resources

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