

Eco-Theology/ Eco-Justice/ Eco-Reformation

July 2, 2018

Suggested Resources

Books (annotated)

Steven Bouma-Prediger, **For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision for Creation Care**, (Baker Academic, Grand Rapids Michigan) 2001.

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.

Diana Butler-Bass, **Grounded: Finding God in the World** (New York, Harper-Collins), 2015.

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.

Helder Camara, **Sister Earth: Creation, Ecology and Spirit**, (New City Press, Hyde Park, N.Y.)1995.

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.

David Cloutier, **Walking God’s Earth: The Environment and Catholic Faith** (Liturgical Press: Collegeville, MN) 2014.

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.

Lisa E. Dahill and James B. Marin-Schramm **Eco-Reformation: Grace and Hope for a Planet in Peril** (Cascade Books: Eugene, Oregon) 2016.

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.

Explores eco-theology from global perspectives. Chapters on biblical eco-theology, Christology, theodicy, Spirit, eco-feminist theology and eschatology.

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.

Melanie L. Harris, **Eco-Womanism: African American Women and Earth Honoring Faiths** (Orbis Books: Maryknoll, N. Y) 2017.

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.

John F. Haught, **God After Darwin: A Theology of Evolution** (Westview press, Boulder, Colorado) 2000.

Argues Darwin's thought gifted theology. Interesting chapters like, "A God for Evolution", "Evolution, Tragedy and Cosmic Purpose," "Religion, Ethics and Evolution"

Kevin W. Irwin, **A Commentary on *Laudato Si*: Examining the Background, Contributions, Implementation, and Future of Pope Francis's Encyclical**,(Paulist Press, New York), 2016.

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.

Stephanie Kaza, **Mindfully Green: A Personal and Spiritual Guide to Whole Earth Thinking**,(Shambala, Boston), 2008.

Kaza describes the "green practice path." She is an environmentalist operating from a foundation in Buddhist philosophy and practice. There is no one "green practice path." Each way is determined by one's individual experience, local needs and personal motivation. From a systems perspective, she understands the political, economic and social constraints that limit our actions. There are three aspects of the "green practice path." *Seeking Green Principles* begins by recognizing suffering and sharing in it, seeking to do no further harm. *Following the Green Path* develops a commitment to green practice, based on clear intentions, community engagement and shared wisdom. The emotional challenges to green practice (doubt, anxiety, anger, and despair) must be addressed. *Acting on Green Values* develops energy awareness with respect for conserving and maintaining energy in a consuming world. The nature and allure of desire is explored, while practicing restraint and contentment. The third value to be developed is that of peace-making. Kaza draws from the Buddhist traditions of understanding the interdependence of all things, respect for nature and life, and restraint from killing as antidotes to the drivers of consumerism.

Frances Moore Lappe, **Eco-Mind: Changing the Way We Think, To Create the World We Want**, (Nation Books, New York), 2011.

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

Mark Lynas, **The God Species: Saving the Planet in the Age of Humans**, (National Geographic, Washington, DC) 2011.

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.

Mishka Lysack and Karri Munn-Venn ed., **Living Ecological Justice: A Biblical Response to the Environmental Crisis** (Citizens for Public Justice) 2013.

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.

Daniel W. Martin, ed. **Beyond Dualism: Sermons and Essays on Christian Faith, Science and Technology**, (Denominational Resources, Louisville, Kentucky) 1992.

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.

Daniel C. Matt, **God and the Big Bang: Discovering Harmony Between Science and Spirituality** (Jewish Lights Publishing, Woodstock, Vermont) 2016

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”

Sallie McFague, **The Body of God: An Ecological Theology**, (Augsburg Fortress, Minneapolis), 1993.

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.

Lawrence Mick, **Liturgy and Ecology in Dialogue**, (The Order of St. Benedict, Collegeville, MN) , 1997.

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.

Donald W. Mitchell and William Skudlarek, editors, **Green Monasticism: A Buddhist-Catholic Response to an Environmental Calamity**, (Lantern Books, New York) 2010.

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

Cynthia D. Moe-Lobeda, **Resisting Structural Evil: Love as Ecological-Economic Vocation** (Fortress Press: Minneapolis, MN) 2013.

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.

Christine Valters Paintner, **Water, Wind, Earth and Fire: The Christian Practice of Praying with the Elements** (Sorin Books, Notre Dame. Indiana), 2010.

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 ***Laudato Si: The Encyclical of Pope Francis on the Environment*** (Orbis Books: Maryknoll, NY) 2016.

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.

Larry L. Rasmussen, **Earth-Honoring Faith: Religious Ethics in a New Key** (Oxford University Press: New York, N.Y) 2013.

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.

Rosemary Radford Reuther, **Gaia and God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth-Healing**, (Harper San Francisco), 1992.

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)

Bruce Sanguin, **Darwin, Divinity, and the Dance of the Cosmos: An Ecological Christianity** (Wood lake Publishing, Kelowna BC), 2007.

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.

Leah D. Schade, **Creation-Crisis Preaching: Ecology, Theology and the Pulpit** (Chalice Press: St. Louis, Missouri) 2015.

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.

Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, ed. , **Living Cosmology: Christian Responses to *Journey of the Universe*** (Orbis Books: Maryknoll, N.Y.) 2016.

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?

Harvey Cox, **The Market As God**, (Harvard University press, Cambridge, Mass.), 2016.

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.

David Ray Griffin, John B. Cobb Jr., Richard A Falk, Catherine Keller, **The American Empire and the Commonwealth of God** (Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville), 2006.

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

John W. Wathey, **The Illusion of God's Presence: The Biological Origins of Spiritual Longing**, 2nd ed. (Prometheus Books, Amherst, New York) 2016.

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. Do 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/>

Painting the Stars, curriculum under “Living the Questions”. See <https://www.livingthequestions.com/xcart/home.php?cat=485>, possibly available through Abundant Life Lutheran. View **trailer** here.... <https://www.livingthequestions.com/xcart/home.php?cat=485>

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?

And adding to the resources of short films, check out this link to BBC.

https://www.bbc.com/ideas/?ns_mchannel=email&ns_source=pan_solus&ns_campaign=PANINT_SOT_26_IDA_USA_BBCIdeas&ns_linkname=bbcideas_bbcideashomepage_curiosity&ns_fee=0

Create an account , browse the topics, save those that interest you to the MY Ideas button and watch later at your leisure. Here are some suggestions:

History of the Universe in Four Minutes

How Will We Source Clean Energy for All?

The App Fighting Food Waste

Could Plastic Roads Save the Planet?

The Woman Who Planted 50m Trees (With a Little Help)

Imagining a World Without Fossil Fuels

Opinion: The Superrich Are Damaging the Environment

These films last 3-4 minutes and could be excellent discussion starters. Imagine how you might use these to introduce Sunday worship!

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_Earthkeepin_g.pdf?_ga=2.56152238.40580894.1523907026-672282431.1518714960

Hunger and Climate Change

http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Agriculture_And_Food_Security_In_A_Changing_Climate.pdf?_ga=2.131546634.40580894.1523907026-672282431.1518714960

Poverty and Hunger in a Changing Climate

http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Poverty_And_Hunger_In_A_Changing_Climate.pdf?_ga=2.52821165.40580894.1523907026-672282431.1518714960

Other ELCA Web-based Resources

<http://www.elca.org/en/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Caring-for-Creation>

Link to statements and study guide

http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/EnvironmentSS.pdf?_ga=2.28114367.223687513.1518714960-672282431.1518714960

Social statement PDF, 1993

<http://www.elca.org/Resources/Caring-for-Creation>

Link to Hunger resources: Valentines; Advent; Lent, meal events, devotionals, bulletin inserts

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 world” 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>

<http://ncrnews.org/documents/NCR%20Readers%20guide.pdf> Six session Catholic study guide for *Laudato Si*. Published by National Catholic Reporter. Offers commentary and discussion questions.

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/environment/pope-francis-encyclical-inspires-laudato-si-project-wisconsin>. Published by National Catholic Reporter. The *Laudato Si* Project in Wisconsin has sponsored sustainability fairs and other events to get people into nature and to think theologically.

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/environment/divestment-fossil-fuels-witness-our-faith>. 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.

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/environment/green-mountain-states-diocese-gets-greener>. 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?

<http://www.laudatosiproject.com/home.html>. Resources for education, stewardship, and recreation. 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 <https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/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
<http://elcic.ca/praiseappeal/documents/2015PraiseAppealServiceoftheWord.pdf>

Creation Not for Sale booklet
https://www.lwfassembly.org/sites/default/files/resources/DTPW-2017_Booklet_Creation.pdf

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/Community 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.cramptonmarket.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

<http://bnrc.ca/community-development/incredible-edible> Brandon Neighborhood Renewal Corporation has a tab about neighborhood gardens as a means of community building. The project is called Incredible Edibles Brandon. Some gardens are private rentals, like we have in Wpg. Others are meant to be community efforts – like a garden across from a skateboard park – kids pick radishes, cukes and the like while using the park. The idea comes from Britain. Check the related Ted Talk at https://www.ted.com/talks/pam_warhurst_how_we_can_eat_our_landscapes.

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