

Season of Creation

Small group material week 6: caring for God's creation

1. Welcome

Welcome everybody in your group to the last session of 'Season of Creation'. Have you become uncomfortable with easy answers? Have you been challenged to look at how we see our planet?

2. Opening Prayer

Ever living God, you created the Earth and all that is in it and found it very good

Forgive us all that we have done to harm the Earth and one another

God of life and love you created all that exists to sustain life here on Earth, human life and all forms of life

Forgive us all that we have done to harm the Earth and one another

God of mercy and hope forgive us our apathy and arrogance, short sightedness and greed. Guide us now in the study of the holy scriptures. **Amen.**

3. Bible study

Read the following passages: Mark 16:15; Revelation 22:1-2.

- What is the good news that we are called to bring to the whole creation?
- What do you understand by "the healing of the nations"?
- How can we celebrate creation in new, more meaningful and imaginative ways in our congregation?
- Where can we make space for new ideas in order to infuse the ideas of creation care into the thinking, teaching and learning of our faith?

Read Ezekiel 34:18

- 'Stewardship' can be applied to the wise management of money, material and human resources. As members of our church, how do we respond to the urgent call to live more sustainably, more lightly, on the earth?
- What kind of stewards have we been? How wisely have we 'managed' the earth's fruitfulness?

Read Ezekiel 47:9

- What can we change or improve so that we are less wasteful and more careful to sustain the fruits of the earth?
- What can we change or improve to make our office more friendly?
- How can we raise awareness about the problems of energy use and climate change?
- What ideas can we implement to manage our energy use more efficiently and effectively?
- What can we do to reduce and manage our waste in our faith community, our homes and our community more effectively?
- How can we become better 'earth keepers' with our land?
- What are your initial impressions and ideas about the Church's responsibility for creation? Is this something we should be concerned about or not?

4. Creative ideas

Celebrate 'green Sunday', when you turn off electrical goods such as TVs, to spend time with the family. Walk, cycle or lift share to church, and so on.

5. Where to from here?

a. Watch the video that describes the Klipriviersberg Conservancy. Most of us at BMC live within this area and can play a part in the promotion of our area as a conservancy. As a church we have joined this initiative, why not consider joining as an individual (forms available for download)?

b. Think about developing an environmental or creation care policy or statement of intent for BMC

c. Decide to become an Eco-congregation. This is a programme for local churches of all denominations which aims to: encourage faith communities to raise the profile of local and global environmental issues; support them in finding positive and practical ways of responding to the crisis; provide resources to support their activities; offer an award scheme for congregations that show evidence of their commitment to respond to the environmental crisis through a range of actions and activities (www.safcei.org.za or 021 701-8145).

6. Close in prayer