

DOWN TO EARTH

Thoughts on the exhaustion of our natural resources and eco-sensitive spirituality.

AN ECHURCH TREND REPORT

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introduction

Evangelical Christians are usually either blasé or sceptical about themes such as these (Conradie 2006a: 12). We want to make it clear from the start that this report should be a call to spiritual revival for followers of Jesus. It is about developing a Jesus-centred, unselfish, Biblical spirituality (Bauckham 2001: 12). The words that follow are therefore not (unlike what many churchgoers believe) driven by strange secular or political 'green' agendas, even though these 'weird' green groups are far ahead of the Christian Church in their thinking on these matters. The point of departure is that we are dealing with Christian spirituality since it concerns the Christian faith's most fundamental teaching: the Creation. We, therefore, ask that you read the following with an open mind.



Introductory thoughts

From the outset, we have to admit that the various sources used in this report are at times very difficult, complex and detailed. Reports about the decrease of, for example, the numbers of certain animal species will depend on the specific environment where the animals are found, the time of the year, general natural birth and death cycles, and many other local factors. Where research about certain themes are concerned, such as climate change and global warming, many of the results depend on the specific definitions of concepts such as global warming, the measurement instruments and research methods used, common variations in natural tendencies in local environments and even wind streams in specific geographic areas. There are schools of thought that deny the existence of global warming (Monckton 2009: ad loc.). Others reckon that the sun's activities could contribute to the impression that the Earth's temperature is rising (Than 2007: ad loc.). It must, therefore, be said that this report firstly aims to keep things as simple as possible.

We won't go into any of the complex detail, but we'll rather focus on general issues where there is relative agreement. Between all the different scientific, political and other agendas there are still common threads on which most researchers agree. This report relies on these common results.

Secondly, certain sources were treated as more authoritative than others, depending on the intellectual integrity of the research, as well as the global academic consensus.

Lastly, it should be mentioned that, although the heading of this report suggests that the exhaustion of natural sources will be discussed, the emphasis is actually on the most fundamental resources that would ensure the future existence of life, for example, water, oxygen, food and animal life. Other natural resources, such as coal, oil, and minerals, have been ignored to maintain a particular focus, as well as keeping the report short and concise.

The world in crisis

Scientists think that we have already passed the point where the Earth's ecological scenario is simply a 'problem'. It is much more than that. It is a crisis (Klein 2014: 4). There are currently an estimated 7,4 billion people on Earth. This growth is currently exponential (Worldometers 2016: ad loc.). According to the latest predictions, there will be 9,6 billion people by 2050. Because of this fast-growing population and unbalanced consumer habits, there is currently intense pressure on our planet's most important natural resources – oxygen, water, and food. A scientific report, the WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) Living Planet Report of 2014 claims that the human impact is growing extremely fast and may already be unsustainable (WWF 2014: 12). There is talk about the human ecological footprint – the cumulative ecological influence of humans on nature. This footprint is calculated in relation to Earth's bio-capacity, in other words, the Earth's capacity to sustain life. The ecological footprint of humans on the planet in terms of demand surpassed the capacity of one Earth in 2010. We currently need one and a half Earth to satisfy our needs according to the demands we make on our planet. And it is getting worse (WWF 2014: 10)!

Here are a couple of shocking facts:

- Between 1970 and 2010 the number of animal species has decreased by 52% (WWF 2014: 12, 16).
- The number of freshwater species on Earth has shrunk by 76%, while saltwater species have decreased by 39%. The biggest decrease happened in South America, with Asia and the edge of the Pacific Ocean in second and third place respectively.
- Saltwater-fisheries place so much pressure on the capacity of the oceans, that fish populations in large parts of the oceans have been obliterated (UN 2016: 7).
- The United Nations Report (UN) claims that industrial production and agricultural activities cause huge amounts of toxic substances to be dumped in the ocean (UN 2016:8). Our oceans are a complex network of systems that are interlinked and dependent on a very delicate systemic balance. The fundamental systemic character (in terms of the animal and plant populations, ocean currents and chemical makeup) of the oceans is changing fast as a result of climate change, pollution and the exhaustion of fish species. This causes surviving sea animals to migrate to the North and South Poles, where they cause further changes in their new habitats, which leads to further problems (UN 2016: 9-10).

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- Global warming causes freshwater ice to melt, which changes the salt quality of the oceans. The release of increasing amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere causes water to become more acidic, which is deadly for the organisms that live in it (UN 2016: 11). The excessive levels of carbon dioxide cause the oceans to absorb increasing amounts of gas from the atmosphere, which combines with water to form carbonic acid. All these things lead to disruptions in the ocean's circulation, the development of extremely strong storms, drought on the land, a drastic decrease in plankton populations, lower seagrass production, lower shellfish reproduction and also damage to coral reefs (UN 2016: 13-15). There are already over 500 so-called 'dead zones' in our oceans where no life exists (Klein 2014: 14).
 - In order to satisfy the planet's needs, unrealistic demands are made on the freshwater capacity of the Earth. Only 2,5% of the Earth's water is fresh. The rest is salt water. Most freshwater is found in rivers, lakes, subterranean sources, glaciers and the ice caps at the North and South Poles. Because of the massive increase in the demand for water in rich countries and societies, worrying amounts of this water is used for farming activities, a variety of production processes and households. As a result of pollution and global warming, large amounts of this water aren't released back into the consumption cycle (WWF 2014: 46).
 - About 200 macro-riverbeds around the world (which together provide water to about 2,5 billion people) currently experience at least one month of intense water shortages per year (WWF 2014: 49). On all five continents, there are areas that previously had abundant water, but are now mini-deserts with permanent droughts conditions.
 - Food is becoming scarcer. According to some predictions, the will reach its maximum capacity in terms of the provision of food by approximately 2050 (Wolchover 2011: ad loc.). This means that the current demand for food will rise by as much as 70%.

Global warming

More than half of mankind's general ecological footprint (53%) involves increased global warming as a result of an increase in carbon dioxide. It is called the greenhouse effect. Just like a greenhouse, our atmosphere allows short-wave radiation from the sun to penetrate it. However, the higher carbon dioxide levels prevent long-wave radiation from leaving the atmosphere again. In this way, too much energy is trapped inside, and the temperature rises as a result (SAWS s.a. ad loc.). According to studies by NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, the average temperature of the planet has risen by 0,8 °C over the last 100 years. (<http://www.conserve-energy-future.com/various-global-warming-facts.php>). Two-thirds of this warming happened after 1970, especially the rise in temperature on the world's coastlines (UN 2016: 10).

The last two decades have been the hottest in the past 400 years (<http://www.conserve-energy-future.com/various-global-warming-facts.php>). Temperatures rise twice as fast in places like Alaska, Canada, and Northern Russia compared to the rest of the planet. Currently, scientists are hoping that the average temperature will ease to no more than a 2 °C by the end of this century, although most experts believe this to be a too optimistic view (Klein 2014: 13). The current prediction is that we will be closer to a 4 °C by 2100, with heat waves, dwindling food sources, a loss of ecosystems and biodiversity, as well as a life-threatening rise in ocean levels as our fate (The World Bank 2012: ad loc.). Ocean levels can rise by one to two meters, which will swallow island nations like the Maldives and Tuvalu and endanger places like Ecuador, Brazil, and the Netherlands, as well as California and the north-eastern parts of the USA (Klein 2014: 13-14).



Arctic ice is melting at a terrifying pace and Antarctica is expected to experience its first iceless summer by 2040 (Wagner s.a. ad loc., Klein 2014: 14). In May 2014 scientists from NASA and the University of California warned the world that melting glaciers in an area in western Antarctica (more or less the size of France) can no longer be stopped (Friend et al. 2014: ad loc.). Although this melting process will take between 100 and 200 years to complete, it will cause a rise in ocean levels of between three and five meters. By the time we reach those conditions, many people will be forced to relocate to safer areas and futurologists are even talking about climate wars (Klein 2014: 17). Global warming is mainly caused by the combustion of carbon in our atmosphere (WWF 2014:32) as well as livestock farming (Cowspiracy 2014 ad loc.). Natural sources of carbon dioxide include mainly general decomposition, the release of gasses by oceans and respiration by plants. However, human activities cause an unbalanced increase in carbon dioxide by means of the production of cement, the destruction of rainforests, and especially the burning of coal, oil and gas (<http://whatsyourimpact.org/greenhouse-gases/carbon-dioxide-emissions>). Global warming has a cyclic effect on the extinction of animal species, the development of water crises and failed food harvests.

Although rising ocean levels are mostly limited to certain areas, depending on fluctuations in winds and ocean currents, average ocean levels at our coastlines have risen by 3,2 millimetres per year over the last two decades, that is, 64 millimetres in 20 years (UN 2016: 7, 11). If global warming causes the Earth's temperature to rise by 4 °C by 2100, ocean levels will rise by one to two meters.

How wil this affect South Africa?

In short, our country is in grave danger, mostly because of our dependency on coal. In 1998 the first South African Greenhouse Gas National Report was compiled. Since then, especially between 2000 and 2010, is has been expanded and updated. The report shows that South Africa's carbon emissions rose by 21,1% between 2000 and 2010 (GHG 2000-2010: 37). The visit by the WWF to South Africa showed that South Africa's carbon emissions are the same as industrialised countries, and far higher than that of other developing countries (Grobler 2009: ad loc.) Our emissions currently stand at 11 tons per person per year, while it should ideally be lowered to 1 ton per person per year. Compare this to Brazil, which stands on five tons per year, China at six tons and Mexico at two tons. This despite the fact that only 73% of the South African population have access to electricity, compared to 99% in China and 95% in Brazil. This could mean that South Africans are trying to live way beyond their means.

The Greenhouse Gas Report claims that South Africa will be plagued by erratic rainfall patterns in the near future, which will have a direct impact on our farms. Our coastlines are not really affected by rising ocean levels yet, thanks to our relatively steep shores.

Although South Africa's beef industry is relatively large in order to provide meat to the most well-off areas of the country, there has been a marked decrease of 7,6% in meat consumption between 2000 and 2010. This can be attributed to higher meat prices. As a result, there is now also more interest in chicken products (GHG 2000-2010: 155).

What causes these phenomena?

Let's consider the main causes of the decrease in animal species, the exhaustion of water and food sources, as well as the causes of climate change:

Destruction of rainforests:

According to the WWF Living Planet Report, 44,8% of the loss of animal life is caused by the destruction of habitats and natural areas such as forests, as well as ocean pollution (WWF 2014: 20). The rainforests of the Earth are the 'lungs' of our planet because they absorb massive amounts of carbon dioxide and release oxygen. But one acre of forest is destroyed every second of every day (Cowspiracy 2014: ad loc.). That is 4 000 square metres per second! It means that 100 insect and plant species disappear every day.

Unlimited and unregulated hunting:

37% of the loss of animal life is caused by unlimited and unregulated hunting and fishing as a result of an increase in demand by humans (WWF 2014: 20). This overuse of animal and fish sources is so serious, that some studies refer to serial consumption or even serial killing (Cowspiracy 2014). According to the most studies, 75% of the world's fish sources have already been exhausted (UN report from Cowspiracy).

Global warming:

7,1% of the loss of animal life is caused by climate change and global warming, as a result of the burning of fossil fuel (WWF 2014: 20).

The biggest cause

All three causes discussed above can be tied together under one umbrella cause: overconsumption by humans. To be more specific: overconsumption by rich people who continue to use their economic power to make impossibly high demands on nature. This includes businesses that are afraid to lose clients and want to continue to satisfy their clients' needs.

Of all these human activities, agricultural meat production seems to be the biggest challenge (UN 2016: ad loc., Cowspiracy 2014: ad loc.). The UN report said the following in 2006 already (ad loc.):

“The environmental costs per unit of livestock production must be cut by one-half, just to avoid the level of damage worsening beyond its present level.”

Meat production doesn't only include the number of animals that are consumed, but also the processes that were followed to produce and process the animals and their feed, as well as the large physical space needed for this. It is said that livestock farming with the aim of meat production takes up 45% of the physical area of the USA (Cowspiracy 2014: ad loc.). In poorer areas of the world, people eat meat once a week, or not at all. Dieticians indicate that people who want to eat meat every day should not consume more than 80 grams per day (Weaver 2010: ad loc.). Meat production is also responsible for the largest portion of water use and abuse.

In the USA, 5% of water use goes to households, while cattle farming use 55% (Cowspiracy 2014: ad loc.). The UN report of 2006 (ad loc.) claims that livestock farming, although it only produces 9% of all carbon dioxide, also produces a far greater amount of gasses that are even more toxic. Livestock farming is supposedly responsible for 65% of the production of nitrous oxide, which has 265 times the potential to cause global warming than carbon dioxide. The most nitrous oxide is produced by animal faeces. Livestock farming is also responsible for 37% of human-manufactured methane (which has 23 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide) (UN 2006: ad loc.), as well as 64% of ammonia (which plays an important role in the formation of acid rain).

It is, however, important to note: it is not about the production of a reasonable amount of meat that people can consume in moderation. It is the insistence by rich people on eating meat every day, and then as much as 900 grams per day. This is also true of other consumer products that are bought often. People often buy more from greed than true need or basic needs.

What is needed to bring relief?

De Witt gives the following three broad guidelines from a Christian perspective (2008: 27-28):

1. **Creating awareness.** Since humans and Creation both belong to God, and humans are also responsible for Creation, we may not stay ignorant about what happens in Creation. We should not let our attention slip. God did not relieve us of the responsibility of caring for everything after Genesis 1-2. Ignorance is therefore not an excuse anymore. When something is your responsibility, you make sure that you have the necessary knowledge.
2. **Appreciation.** We should respect and appreciate nature. It is easy to respect a lion, but we should do the same to the smallest members of Creation such as the ant, since that specific ant colony also contributes to maintaining the balance of nature. It is therefore about appreciation of every little part of nature.
3. **Stewardship.** Stewardship takes us far beyond awareness and appreciation of values and responsibilities, such as restoration. Apart from restoration, stewardship surely also involves service to and in nature. The latter implies things such as loving and caring for Creation and everything that God has entrusted to our care; to keep it pure and ready for His return.



What can the Church do?

Stop looking away and look reality straight in the eye (Klein 2014: 3).

When Jesus declares that He is the truth, then not only He, but any other truths and realities should become our aim. More and more people are beginning to reveal how they were initially very sceptical about climate change and lived in permanent 'climate change denial', but that they couldn't continue to ignore the truth. Naomi Klein (2014: 3-4) writes: "I denied climate change for longer than I care to admit... We deny because we fear that letting in the full reality of this crisis will change everything. And we are right." This crisis is huge, but it can be beaten if only enough people can be persuaded to work together. This is an opportunity for the Church to make a huge difference in the world and worldly time.

Rediscover the Creation theology of the Bible, and especially the Gospel. Here are a few ideas about this part of theology.

Firstly, it is good to remember that Creation theology is the most fundamental theology of the Bible. It is fundamental because without God who created the visible world, other theological issues that are important to us today (the Kingdom, salvation, spiritual renewal, discipleship, the Church, spiritual growth) would not even have existed. Everything flows from God's Creative activities and His protection of everything that lives. The whole of Creation belongs to God and there is nowhere we can go and nothing we can do that will put us outside the sphere of God's created material reality. We are His guests here, we live in His world and therefore we are stewards of the world. God's first and most fundamental instruction to humans was to that mankind should care for, manage and work with everything (Gen 1:26-28).

Together with this, individuals within the Christian movement have always had their most inspiring spiritual experiences in nature (Conradie 2006: 21). The Creation is meant to reveal God (Psalm 19). We should, therefore, stop thinking about 'green' activities as something which is non-Christian and foreign (such as New Age or Eastern customs), as so many Christians do at the moment (Conradie 2006a: 12) There is good theology that points toward the fundamental principles of the Bible.

Secondly, it is significant that God created plants, living animals and humans, all from the ground of the Earth (Gen 1:11-12, 24-25; 2:7,9). It wasn't just humans. There is, therefore, a commonness that we share with the Earth: all of us were made from the same dust (Bauckham 2011: 4-5). All living organisms are, therefore, 'family' in a way, according to the New Testamentist Richard Bauckham (2011: 5,223). The instruction to humans to rule over the Earth should never be executed at the expense of other living organisms and involves a creative and shepherd-like function of caring for nature (Gen 1:26, 28, 2:15).

Thirdly, Genesis 3:8-19 makes it clear that it isn't just the relationship between God and humans that was broken, but also the relationships of humans with fellow humans and also with nature. God's Kingdom is therefore about all three these relationships.

Fourthly it is interesting to see that God didn't make His covenant with Noah alone after the Great Flood, but rather with '... you and your offspring after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark...' (Gen 9:9-10). The phrase 'with all the living creatures' is repeated in verses 12, 15, 16 and 17! Throughout the Bible God not only concerns Himself with humans, but with the entire Creation.

Just have a look at texts like Genesis 49:6-7, Exodus 23: 4-5, 10-12, Deuteronomy 20:19, 22: 6-7, Leviticus 19:23-25, 25: 2-4, 26: 3-6, Numbers 22: 22-35, 35: 33-34, Job 5: 22-23, Psalms 8, 36: 6-7, 145: 9, Proverbs 12:10 and Isaiah 5: 8-10.

Fifthly, in the books of the prophets, where God creates anticipation for the coming of the Messianic period, the future shalom (peace) is often expressed in the language of nature (Isaiah 11:1-9). In fact, in Hosea 2:17, God makes an agreement with wild animals.

In the sixth place, Paul, in Ephesians 1:3-11, talk about everything that Jesus had done and he then explains what God's purposes was with all of it: 'His purpose was to unite everything in Heaven and everything on Earth under one master, namely Christ.' Take note of the use of 'everything' instead of 'everyone'. Jesus came to restore the entire Creation, not just humans. Colossians 1 gives us the same idea with verse 16 that says: 'Everything is created through Him and for Him.' Not only did Jesus create everything, He also created everything for Himself. God finds joy in Creation, the whole of the Creation. Jesus, therefore, comes to restore the entire Creation, not one day after death, but here and now. Very little is said about the life in the Kingdom of Heaven as a life after death. Jesus talks a lot more about His Kingdom as a life lived here and now (although it continues after death).

The Creation doesn't only involve a few verses in the Bible, but should form part of the entire set of glasses through which we read the Bible.

Ecological tools and training as part of the congregation's discipleship programme (Van Heerden 2012: ad loc.).

Apart from equipping congregations with theology for a 'greener' life (Conradie 2006: 126), the following can also be considered:

Firstly, prepare people on a practical level: For example, people should be informed about the relationship between following Jesus and our consumption habits (Conradie 2006b: 54-57). It could be important to identify the hedonistic and selfish consumer values in society and to challenge it. Although we should enjoy everything that God blesses us with, a purely hedonistic lifestyle could surely not be Christian (Conradie 2006b: 53-54). Why don't we sometimes cycle instead of taking a car? It would do much in the way of reducing exhaust gasses and its effect on the ozone layer (<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/14/business/climate-accord-draws-mixed-reaction-from-business-leaders.html>). I have a friend who cycles the 6 km to work every day because of his awareness of this important issue. Following Jesus in a selfless manner may also mean that you learn to eat selflessly, for example. To deny ourselves, to take up our cross and to follow Jesus, could, for example, mean that we reduce the amount of meat that we eat in order to reduce the demand for meat in general. In the Western World, it may no longer be necessary to fight for our faith against wild animals in arenas. Perhaps our life of sacrifice (Romans 12:1) lies in us challenging each other to reduce our weekly meat intake by a certain percentage, or to consider vegetarianism or veganism in some cases. Perhaps we could ask medical and dietary specialists to help us to find alternative sources of the protein that our bodies still need.

People could also be made aware and be encouraged to calculate their own carbon footprint on the Internet with the 'Carbon Footprint Calculator' at <http://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx>.

Today there is a trend in the direction of a minimalist lifestyle where responsible rich people begin to realise that they share this planet with billions of other people and that everyone should get a part of it in order to survive (Goleman 2009: 233). Who else but selfless Jesus-followers should set this example? At the moment we, unfortunately, see the opposite: many non-Christians are teaching Christians how to live a selfless life in terms of the ecology.

'Green' worship, liturgy and preaching (Van Heerden 2012: ad loc.)

It is ironic and strange that, despite the centrality of this truth in the Bible, responsibility for the Creation receives little attention in Church thinking, in discipleship programmes, or even the church calendar (DeWitt 2008: 1-25-27). The Church has "seasons" in which the focus falls on Jesus and his work (Christmas and Easter). There is also a time when we focus on the Holy Spirit (Pentecost), but when do we spend time on nature as the Creation of the Father? It's no wonder that Church is so far behind the rest in the fight to keep life on Earth alive! We have forgotten our own theology. Have a look at websites of congregations and liturgists who have thought about this in a theological way, such as Season of Creation (<http://www.greenanglicans.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Season-of-Creation-Two-low-res.pdf>), Web of Creation (<http://www.webofcreation.org/>), Eco-Congregation (<http://www.ecocongregation.org/>), or even Creation Time of the World Council of Churches (<https://www.oikoumene.org/en/what-we-do/climate-change/time-for-creation>).

In the Church, we are currently living in a worship culture with worship leaders and bands. The songs that we sing are however mostly about people's vertical relationship with God, while the song traditions of both Jews and Christians – the Psalms – included all themes of life, the Creation too (See Psalm 8, 84, 104, 145, 147, 148, 150). Worship leaders should return to writing songs about the Creation. One Christian group called Gungor writes worship songs with names like I am mountain (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L4agJNu4odI>) and The Earth is Yours (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4EPnM62O8A>). Look at the lyrics of The earth is yours:

*Your voice it thunders
The oaks start twisting
The forest sounds with cedars breaking
The waters see You and start their writhing
From the depths a song is rising
Now it's rising from the ground
Holy, holy, holy, holy Lord
The earth is Yours and singing
Holy, holy, holy, holy Lord
The earth is Yours
The earth is Yours
Your voice it thunders
The ground is shaking
The mighty mountains
Now are trembling
Creation sees You
And starts composing
The fields and trees
They start rejoicing
And now it's rising from the ground
Now it's rising from the ground
Hear us crying out
Hear us crying out
Holy, holy, holy, holy Lord
The earth is Yours and singing*

Worship leaders and music leaders should write more songs such as these and use them to worship God in the context of the Creation. In this way, we can worship God through all three relationships with the Kingdom, and not just one.

As a congregation, take part in "green" activities.

For example, congregations can establish gardens in informal settlements in order to support the work that local leaders are already doing in the area. Congregations could also start and maintain their own large-scale gardens to provide fresh produce for their own people, as well as others in need.

Another example is participation in initiatives such as Earth Hour, where the entire congregation commits to switch off all electricity for an hour or two on a certain date and time in order to save energy. In 2016 Earth Hour was celebrated on Saturday 19 March from 20:30 to 21:30 (<https://www.google.co.za/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=earth+hour+2016>). Congregations could even organise their own Earth Hour.

We can make our people aware of new material that can convert greenhouse gasses to clean energy (http://www.businessinsider.com/promising-new-material-can-convert-carbon-dioxide-into-clean-energy-2016-1?amp%3Butm_medium=referral) or technology that can turn your food waste into energy (<http://www.fastcoexist.com/3045025/this-tech-can-turn-food-waste-into-graphene-power-and-fuel>) (<http://www.fastcoexist.com/3040124/this-tiny-vertical-garden-has-a-built-in-composter-so-you-can-feed-it-food-waste>).

Recycling is a topic that can be discussed more often.

Other activities include collecting and donating clothes to charity or to help out as a group of volunteers at an environmental charity organisation or even to organise a vegetarian or vegan dinner or a green party for the congregation. Congregations can also organise song evenings where God is thanked and worshipped for His Creation which serves as our home.

An Anglican professor in the New Testament, NT Wright, says it beautifully (2008: 1-79): “Jesus is coming – plant a tree!”



Green management of church buildings and finances (Van Heerden 2012: ad loc.)

"Green management" is a current trend with many businesses. Do research about what they do and how they have adapted their strategies. See whether the congregation can systematically begin to integrate these principles in their leadership and management.

For example, Bill Gates invested \$7 billion in green energy (http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/28/us/politics/bill-gates-expected-to-create-billion-dollar-fund-for-clean-energy.html?_r=0). How wonderful wouldn't it be if local congregations could encourage their member to make similar donations! Well-off congregations could hold their own fundraisers and the money could then be donated to green initiatives.

By focussing on Creation, we may just be able to rediscover the God behind the Creation winking at us and inviting us to a better way of life! This is our hope.

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Echurch trends and research equip and enable church leaders to understand the world, and contextualise their ministries accordingly.

Research | Through empirical polling and survey based research, our projects give critical insights on the realities of what is happening in and around the local church. Coupled with real-world insights from ministry veterans these publications are indispensable tools in the hands of the local leader.

Trends | Pulling from popular trends and tendencies in art, culture, sport, politics, ecology and science, these short-form publications inform and inspire not only to be aware of what's happening in the world around us, but also to take action in expanding the kingdom of God in this world.

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