

GRACE NOTES

News from and about Grace Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan

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CREATION CARE: A Grace Church initiative that needs YOU!

"God blessed them [Adam and Eve] and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it! Rule. . .'" (Genesis 1:28a, NIV)
In other words: (from The Message) "God blessed them: 'Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth! Take charge! Be responsible. . .'"

In an effort to respond obediently to God's creation command to humankind to take charge, to be responsible, a group of Grace members met on October 15, then again on December 15, to sketch out a range of activities that make up an obedient response to our Creator. Under the theme of CREATION CARE, here's what we hope will take shape in the new year.

Greg Yoder and Gary Nederveld have agreed to coordinate efforts, which means they'll encourage individual groups and receive suggestions from Grace folks for new interest and action groups. We've started with these suggestions, but we'd like to grow. That's why we need YOU!

PROGRAM KICKOFF: January 13

Plan to gather at Grace Church (and invite your friends) at 7:00 p.m. to view the recently released (October, 2016) film, "Before the Flood." The film, produced by Leonard DiCaprio, provides a sobering look at climate change today and suggests ways of addressing this real and serious challenge to our global community. Childcare will be provided.

What does this painting: *"In the Garden of*

Earthly Delights" by Hieronymus Bosch have to do with climate control? Come see the film on January 13 to find out!

REDUCING YOUR HOME ENERGY CONSUMPTION

Meet with Jon Ippel on Sunday, January 15, to learn more about Jon's experience in the area of tracking home energy use and how to cut your own utilization of gas and energy. (Additional meetings will be scheduled at that



time, depending on the interests and schedules of participants.)

SMART GARDENING

Join Master Gardener Marcia Lucas this spring for a series of three meetings aimed at examining garden practices from a scientific



viewpoint. Topics will be developed based on participants' interests and questions,

and might include: Healthy Soil; Where and How Do Gardeners Find Reliable Information; Weed and Pest Management; Lawns; Water Use In Your Garden. Mark your calendars for the initial meeting to be held at church on April 16.

REDUCING, REPURPOSING, RECYCLING

Want to learn more about the Grand Rapids Recycling program, or how to recycle old electronics, or how to dispose of

yard waste and pick up free wood chips at the same time? Paul and Trudi Ippel will convene a group on Sunday, January 22,



that will address questions like these—and those you add to the list. (Trudi, having visited the GR recycling facility, would love to take others along next time—interesting and helpful!)

EATING WELL, EATING HEALTHY

Food choices aplenty—how does one plan, shop and cook to eat well, eat healthy, and eat lower on the food chain?

Come to church on Friday, March 10, to think about (and talk about) it! We'll have a potluck and family game night, so bring your favorite vegetarian (protein complementary) or low-meat dish (along with the recipe) to share. Taste, talk, play games with kids—your own or someone else's. Hosted by Virginia LaGrand.

LEARNING MORE

There's so much more to learn and do. Greg and Gary will lead the effort to discover more about climate change and how the US and global

community is responding. Sign up on the bulletin board outside of the sanctuary to receive information about films at UICA, local presentations, and new publications.

...AND MORE!

We're not the only ones in the Grand Rapids community who care. Find out (and perhaps join) local groups that are trying to be good stewards of the soil and water in our city. For example, you might want to join the Climate Witness Project. Membership is open to anyone who is a regular worshiper—you needn't be CRC—and you can be involved as little or as much as you wish. (Email Steve Mulder at Steven.Mark.Mulder@gmail.com.) More possibilities to check out:

*<http://network.crcna.org/creation-matters/climate-witness-project-christian-reformed-church-north-america>

*The Urban Forest Project

*Plaster Creek Stewards

*West Michigan Environmental Action Council

Got questions? Ideas? Suggestions? More information? Creation Care takes a congregation—that means we need YOU! To continue the conversation, contact Greg Yoder (gsyoder@gmail.com), Gary Nederveld (garynederveld@gmail.com), or Virginia LaGrand (lagrand.virginia723@gmail.com).



The Christian Reformed Church's Position on Creation Care

Called to be stewards. . .

"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it," says Psalm 24:1, and just as God placed human beings "in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it" (Gen. 2:15), so the Lord calls us, the crown of his creation (Ps. 8:5), to be stewards of his natural world. As a church we "affirm a commitment to work vigorously to protect and heal the creation for the glory of the Creator, as we wait for the restoration of the creation to wholeness" (*Agenda for Synod 2010*, p. 46).



. . .we commit ourselves to protecting creation.

"We lament that our abuse of creation has brought lasting damage to the world we have been given: polluting streams and soil, poisoning the air, altering the climate, and damaging the earth. We commit ourselves to honor all God's creatures and to protect them from abuse and extinction, for our world belongs to God" (*Our World*

Belongs to God, para. 51).

Equipped with God's gift of knowledge. . .

We uphold "biblical principles of responsible dominion, care, and stewardship of creation," recognizing that our continually growing knowledge about God's world should "guide us in our love of God and neighbors, including care for the creation"; "even when scientific uncertainties are taken into account," we are compelled to address "human-induced climate change" as "an ethical, social justice, and religious issue";

. . .we live and work to sustain our world and its people.

we are therefore called to be "voices for justice and public examples in the effort to live sustainably within our God-given resources, to promote stewardship in our own communities and our nations," and to "examine energy choices" in our daily life and work "from a perspective of stewardship, challenging ourselves to use less energy and to use it more wisely" while seeking "justice for the poor and vulnerable among us and for future generations."

(*Acts of Synod 2012*, pp. 803-805)