

Living For the Earth: Choosing Creation Over Empire

An Ecological Justice Workshop

Date: April 24, 2010

Time: 1:00 - 4:00pm

Place: Victoria Avenue Church in Chatham

Time	Name / Objective	Development	Resources
15 min	Intro	<p>Welcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome (& prayer) – Chuck or Annalee • Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nelson • “Climate bingo” ice-breaker to help participants mingle & get comfortable • Overview of the agenda for the afternoon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate bingo cards • Name tags • Suggested prayer (below) or any appropriate hymn or dedication.
45 min	Overview of the Climate Crisis	<p><i>Point: emphasize the reality & urgency of problem / provide a common starting point</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Change 101: Statistics, visuals & stories • a dynamic visual presentation (charts, video clips, photos, etc.) on climate change & supporting evidence – <p><u>Effects of Climate Change in Canada</u></p> <p><i>Point: projections tell us Canada will be one of the least affected countries</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plusses: opening of the polar route, mining, fishing, longer farm seasons, have enough access to water • minuses: damage from erratic climate <p><u>Effects of Climate Change in the Global South</u></p> <p><i>Point: Poor countries will be the most affected</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a PowerPoint presentation reviewing statistics of devastation of climate change on people and the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projector (LCD) • Laptop #1 (Nelson will provide) • Powerpoint / Keynote presentation
15 min	Taking Stock	<p><u>Who is Responsible?</u></p> <p><i>Point: Rich countries have the biggest share of responsibility but poor countries will bear the brunt of the worst costs.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate footprint: volunteers are given a country to speak about. They present information on a cardboard cut out sized to represent the different carbon footprints of various countries – per capita (e.g. Zambia = 2.1 tonnes / person; India = 1.8; China = 3.1; UK = 15; Canada = 19.6; US = 28.6). • This measure takes account of manufactured imports (so environmental 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cardboard cut-out of footprints with country info • WiFi connection to carbon calculator • Extra large sticky notes

		<p>costs are not hidden / displaced)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other General Stats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The G8 countries have 13% of the world's population, but produce more than half of the world's greenhouse gases. ○ 33 million Canadians use more energy than 760 million inhabitants of Africa. <p><u>How would you describe this situation?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants write down their one word assessment of the "climate crisis" on a large stick-note and put them up on a wall 	
10 min	Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optional: participants can take the time to calculate their individual carbon footprint on the computers set up during the break. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laptop #2 with wireless connection
30 min	Understanding Climate Change as a Justice Issue	<p><u>The Evolving United Church Framework I: Ecological Debt:</u></p> <p><u>Point:</u> familiarize participants with a way of looking that draws links between faith, justice and environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open with this quote and ask participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "If you drive your car into your neighbour's living room, don't you owe your neighbour something? On this planet, we're driving the climate car into our neighbours' living room, and they don't have insurance and we do." - Peter H. Gleick, Pacific Institute for Studies in Development, Environment and Security • <u>Historical perspective:</u> the historic emissions of rich countries industrialized and polluted the planet for generations. • <u>Ecological debt:</u> accumulated damage to the earth and other people through over-production & overconsumption. This debt is owed by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • industrialized, wealthy countries who have historically (and continue still today to) plunder resources and dump waste. • economically and politically powerful national elites to marginalized citizens • by current generation to future ones • by humans to other species on the planet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • powerpoint • visual of car crashing through a living room
30 min		<p><u>Exploring the Concept of Empire</u></p> <p><u>Point:</u> review of the concept of Empire as a metaphor for understanding social / environmental relations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are invited to provide a one-word answer to the question: "What comes to mind when you think about empire?" • Slide with images of empire is presented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powerpoint presentation • Flip-chart paper

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Visual definition of Empire</u>: the Unfinished Wheel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an incomplete wheel: hub & spokes but no rim. • an empire always has a core (hub) & periphery (spokes) • power is at the core • resources / wealth flow from the edge to the centre • vertical core - periphery relationship ; but a weak periphery – periphery relationship (no rim) • <u>Word-based definition of Empire</u>: (from a UCC partner) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Empire is the convergence of economic, political, cultural, geographic and military imperial interests, systems and networks that seek to dominate political power and economic wealth. It typically forces and facilitates the flow of wealth and power from vulnerable persons, communities and countries to the more powerful.” • <u>Connecting back</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review list of adjectives and thoughts provided by participants above • Participants are asked to answer the question, “Do you see similarities between the system that created the climate crisis & these definitions of empire?” • Depending on detail of discussion these questions may be useful: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the empire-like features of our global system? • What / who would be the hub and spokes of the food system? • Empire is a lens that can be used to understand relations 	
15 min	Climate Change as call to Heal	<p><u>The Evolving United Church Framework II: Everyone is a Neighbour</u> <u>Point</u>: help motivate participants. Create a Faith and Justice link.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are invited to think about why we would respond to this crisis and to think of obstacles (and possible responses to these obstacles) • <u>Reasons to Act</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Survival</u>: there is no way to solve the problem but to address poverty and climate crises together • <u>Moral</u>: justice calls on us to do better • <u>Spiritual</u>: our role as neighbours / stewards in a shared relation • <u>Hope & Healing</u>: a justice orientation gives the church a reason and identity in the world (apart from survival) → “prophetic church tradition” • <u>Reasons not to Act & Responses</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overwhelming scope / Hopelessness → starting with small, concrete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepared flipchart notes

		<p>actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too difficult → we have the knowledge and tools to address, just need the will and enough people • It doesn't matter / it's not true → overwhelming evidence, justice issue (even without climate change the poverty gap needs to be addressed) • Others... 	
15	<p>Moving to Hope-Filled Action</p>	<p>Brainstorming Some Options for Action</p> <p><u>Point</u>: provide participants with concrete avenues for implementing awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We share positive stories from our partners, and within and outside the church of creative, courageous action people are already undertaking. • Participants are provided with a list of possible actions and then are invited to generate and share their own (sticky notes cluster exercise) <p><u>Local</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a Ecological Justice presentation for your congregation • Create a "Green Team": <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Help your congregation become more sustainable. ○ More information at www.greeningsacredspaces.net • Look to Participate in the <u>Moderator's initiative</u>: Soul, Community and Creation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ East-West-East cross Canada Spirit Express & Town Halls begins in October 2010 (Alberta by mid-November). ○ More information at www.united-church.ca/moderator <p><u>Community Wide - National</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Ecumenical Dinners</u> with MPs: Call for Inspired Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Invite your MP to an ecumenical dinner to talk about what faith communities want in advance of the G8/G20 summit ○ Priorities: address poverty, care for our earth, invest in peace. ○ Interfaith Leaders' Summit: June 21-23; G8/G20 Summit: June 25-27 ○ Information and resources available at www.faithchallengeg8.com • <u>Kairos</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Carbon Sabbath & Re-energize campaigns ○ Financial transactions tax for adaptation funds (at the end of March) ○ Educational resources (workshop outlines, worship resources, articles, etc), action items available at www.kairoscanada.org • <u>Stand up Campaign: Make Poverty History</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ International campaign for more and better international aid, better trade (for farmers), cancel the debt of the poorest countries, end child poverty (in Canada). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handout with inspiring stories of people creating change. • Handout of possible means of action – with space for writing down additional ones. • Extra large sticky notes

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Petitions, education resources, events, groups across Canada ○ Information and resources available at www.makepovertyhistory.ca <p><u>What Options can we Create / Participate In?</u></p>	
5 min	Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief evaluation and thank yous • Closing prayer 	

A Suggestion for an Opening Prayer

Beneath our toes

Beneath our shoes

Beneath floors

Beneath basement and cement and foundation

We are still standing on holy ground

Amidst cheerful chatter

TV drones and telephones

Planes and trains

Sirens, horns, and the squeal of tires

We listen for the call of the Earth

As square, grey scenery is photographed

Amidst trash, contamination, pits, pollution

Waste, seen and unseen

We are a tired people, grasping for energy

We are still standing on holy ground

Bike riders and gardeners whisper alternatives

As creation groans beneath the weight of waste and excess

Beneath even that sits holy ground

Firmly rooting all in the moving, shaping,

Cleansing powers of creation,

We listen for the call of the Earth