

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Give consideration to the rights of all humans and share resources
Become educated--know the issues and respond faithfully
Stop being ONE--join a purposeful caring committee or group
Engage in activities to teach good Earth stewardship practice
Conduct an energy audit of homes, churches and campgrounds
Respond with proper insulation, windows, and doors; seal cracks, etc.
Avoid using Styrofoam products such as cups and packaging
Avoid using plastic bags, bottles, containers, and straws
Use refillable water bottles
Organize and contribute to food banks
Research how your Community regulates waste
Change incandescent light bulbs to Eco-Friendly types
Observe Earth Day April 22
Use Green cleaning products
Eat a plant based or non-red meat meal at least once a week
Reduce-Reuse-Recycle
Organize trash pick-up in your community
Use gray water
Conserve electricity. Turn it off or use it at non-peak hours
Use Green transportation--ride-share, car pool, public transport
Shop Farmers' Markets, co-ops, and natural grocers for organic products
When planting trees, plant native species and xeriscape where possible
Consider solar power and purchase energy efficiency appliances
Conserve water--shorter showers; wash cars, clothes and dishes less often
Unsubscribe to unwanted catalogs and unwanted mail
Learn about endangered species and how to protect all of Earth's wildlife
Work to reduce use of harmful farm chemicals and pesticides
Work to protect Earth's oceans and marine life from pollution and plastics
Hold elected officials accountable for laws effecting environment
Weigh relationships between need and want and use of resources
Join with organizations seeking to restore and preserve bee populations
Repair or replace leaky faucets and appliances
Involve children and youth in creating responses to Earth stewardship
Support organizations working to reduce deforestation
Support politicians who foster legislation to protect the environment
Join environmental justice groups
Support organizations working to alleviate poverty and hunger.

Prepared by the Community of Christ Earth Stewardship Team.

For more information go to <https://www.cofchrist.org/earth-stewardship>

EARTH STEWARDSHIP

CONSIDER CLIMATE



Climate change is real. It is fact. It is happening. It is science. It has happened before. It is time to leave politics behind and exercise some responsibility—some serious stewardship.

The problem is, it is a multifaceted phenomenon and much of it is human driven. Yes, carbon emissions from autos, factories, and energy production all play a part. However, so does deforestation which robs the air of oxygen and does not recycle carbon dioxide. The air is polluted by methane gas produced by huge animal feed lots--the gas given off as waste from animals and pumped into Earth's atmosphere. Methane gas leaking from natural gas wells is a further pollutant. At the center of all of this looming crisis is people--our wants and needs, our desires to want more--bigger and faster.

Earth's history is replete with periods of climate changes. However, it is now occurring much faster than at any time ever and science indicates it stems from the combination of all the above factors. Furthermore, there has never been a human population so large as what we now experience; more people; more machines; more pollutants being released into the air, greater need for and degradation of Earth's resources.

A dramatic result is that temperatures in Earth's atmosphere are rising. This rise is causing Earth's ice shelves and glaciers to melt. This, in turn, is causing ocean levels to rise, inundating many low-lying shores and islands and destroying habitat for humans and for many of Earth's species. The temperature of Earth's oceans is rising causing death and destruction to many of Earth's great reefs. A further result is a shift of weather patterns causing an increase of violent and severe, unseasonal and destructive storms. Loss of life and major economic impact have become tragic outcomes.

Personal and corporate stewardship then is called into focus. How we respond may very well determine the future and fate of our planet. There's a lot of work ahead of us to discover, to decide and to act to keep our Earth healthy and habitable.

WATER CRISIS—WATER JUSTICE

There's a crisis looming and, one way or another, it affects all of us, everywhere. Water is life. Every life form on Earth is connected by the same need for air, water and nutrition. On Earth the water cycle is a given. Water is contained in either forms of liquid, ice, or gas, such as clouds. The volume of water in the world never changes, but only 2.5% is fresh and more than two-thirds of this is unavailable for human use.

With the advent of a changing climate, various parts of the planet are being inundated with vast amounts of water from hurricanes and typhoons. In the wake of these increasingly monstrous storms, millions of people are left without potable water for drinking, cooking and sanitation for long periods. In other parts of the world, devastating droughts are drying up water sources with increasing efficiency, again, leaving millions of people to face life without water essential for survival. In addition, melting ice from glaciers and the ice shelves is becoming briny as it combines with ocean water. This melting ice is causing the oceans and seas to rise inundating many low-lying land forms further contaminating water needed for human consumption.

In some places on our planet, women and children are faced with walking long distances to carry and provide marginally clean water. In many cases where water is in short supply water-borne disease and mal-nutrition run rampant, resulting in major loss of life, especially among children. In too many of these places large corporations are hoarding water supply and selling bottled water to populations that lack resources to purchase this commodity essential to life. This trade, in addition, creates a further and major problem with disposal of the plastic containers. Much of bottled water is tap-water in the first place and research has shown that even artesian and snowmelt water is not always pure and safe.

Justice and peace are inseparable. There is not justice in denying millions of people free access to fresh and potable water. Our stewardship



demands that we focus on water justice as a matter of peace and also recognize the relationship to poverty and act to make this life-sustaining resource available to countless numbers of Earth's people.

Outreach International photo

POVERTY, FOOD AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Poverty exists, not because we can't feed the poor, but because we cannot satisfy the rich. --Anonymous. That seems to be an indictment directed at many of us. It calls into focus our responsibility as stewards, not only to be aware, but to act, in good faith, to alleviate need and suffering for our friends at home and around the globe

But poverty is a complicated, many faceted problem, often focused on hunger. There are many other issues that those in poverty must face. Poor health, lack of education, disease, mal-nutrition, poor housing, inadequate access to clean water, inequality because of gender, caste systems, or tribal affiliation, little or no access to livelihood or jobs are each problems in their own right. In addition, changing climate comes into consideration, some of which is tied to many of these issues.

The World Bank estimates that climate change has the power to push more than 100 million people into poverty over the next ten years. Drought, flooding, and severe storms, often disproportionately impact poverty stricken communities, often hitting the poorest regions of the world the hardest. These factors reflect on virtually every issue already mentioned.

The World Food Programme says the poor are hungry and their hunger traps them in poverty. Hunger is the number one cause of death in the world, killing more than HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined. An estimated 800 million people worldwide do not have enough to eat.



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There is need to break the cycles, to address the immediate and underlying causes of poverty. Education is vital but it is difficult to address. Lack of funding, lack of teachers, gender discrimination, cultural biases are but a few issues to address. With education the odds for better jobs, which leads not only to resources to buy food and housing, but to self-esteem that builds leadership capable of addressing poverty's issues. Stewardship means responding, in this case to the needs of so many people worldwide. *Everyone is **one** and everyone can do **something**.*