



LEADER'S GUIDE

Loving People and Planet in God's Name

ENGAGING THE LOCAL CHURCH IN THE STUDY AND PRACTICE OF **CLIMATE JUSTICE**

Bob Downs and Crys Zinkiewicz



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Course Overview

As a leader in this course, your overarching goal is to equip and empower participants to engage their local church in creation care and related justice issues.

Goals for the Course

1. Familiarize participants with God's call for environmental stewardship and Christian theology regarding creation care.
2. Explore United Methodist doctrine and denominational action regarding creation justice.
3. Identify societal failures in stewarding God's creation and their consequences.
4. Recognize the impact of environmental degradation, the social justice implications, and the required societal response.
5. Enable participants to identify their personal and communal impacts on the environment and equip them to respond in thought, word, and deed.
6. Equip participants to lay out first steps of a project that engages the local church in education or action to pursue creation justice.

Over the five sessions in this course, participants will:

1. Learn about the interconnectedness between humanity and the natural world and how creation care ties into environmental, racial, and economic justice, as well as the scope, urgency, and possible solutions for the climate crisis.
2. Recognize the connections between creation justice and faithful living by examining scripture and United Methodist tradition, including the Social Principles, and examining personal and congregational practices.

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3. Become equipped with resources and knowledge that empowers them to:
 - ▶ Talk about creation justice, including the theological and scriptural underpinnings, to family, friends, fellow congregants, and other colleagues.
 - ▶ Educate others about creation care and related justice issues through programming, worship, projects, and other opportunities.
 - ▶ Develop a creation care green team, creation justice ministry, and additional environmental leadership within their local congregation.
 - ▶ Lead projects and advocacy efforts both within and beyond the congregation.

Course Format

This leader guide provides lesson plans for five two-hour sessions that can be taught either in-person or online using a platform such as Zoom. The sessions can also easily be adapted into either once-a-week meetings or a multiday retreat setting. You may choose to schedule your session for either more or less than the ten hours recommended, but at least ten hours of sessions are a requirement for those who are participating in the Lay Servant program.

If you are meeting in-person, choose a location that can inspire some lessons on its own. For example, if there is a church in your area that is already involved in creation care work, host the event at their building and highlight the creation care efforts that they have put into action.

No matter what format you choose, either in-person or online, plan for some time to be spent outside. Getting out into nature is an inspiration and helps participants get a more tangible grasp on the work that they are committing themselves to do.

If you plan to hold a retreat for the course, consider the following recommendations:

1. Conduct the sessions at a camp or in a building with natural surroundings.
2. Assign all homework, except project planning, prior to the first session.
3. Schedule the entire time remembering to accommodate arrival, worship, meals, personal time for meditation and project planning, recreation, sleep, and final departure.
4. Consider substituting more structured worship in addition to or as an alternative to scripture studies.

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- a. Start the course with an opening service, preferably outside, including the introduction of attendees, their thoughts about creation care, and the inclusion of appropriate scripture.
 - b. Start and end each day with a worshipful moment (for example, a prayer, short devotion, hymn, or video).
 - c. End the course with a closing service, preferably developed by participants, that commissions the participants and awards Lay Servant certificates.
5. Expose participants to natural surroundings as often as possible, either by teaching in outdoor settings, leading guided group nature walks, or encouraging participants to spend personal time for planning and meditation outside.
 6. Follow the sessions, as described, and try to complete sessions one and two on the first day of a two-day course. That will allow participants to focus on justice issues and project planning on the second day.

Participation

All are welcome to participate in this course. Hopefully, this encourages them to then lead others, especially in their local churches, to understand the issues involved with creation justice and move to act in order to address these issues as people of faith. This invitation includes clergy as well as laypeople.

The primary audience for this course is United Methodist Lay Servants. These laypeople have chosen to deepen their commitment to service through the church. They participate in a basic program of study that equips and empowers them to serve in a variety of ways. After certification, they continue to take courses, such as this one, to broaden and deepen their knowledge and skill. *Loving People and Planet in the Name of God: Engaging the Local Church* fulfills the requirements to be an official course for the Lay Servants Ministries program. (For more about Lay Servant Ministries and becoming a certified Lay Servant, visit <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/equipping-leaders/lay-ministry>.)

Because the course is open to all, Lay Servants participating may invite others from their congregations to attend, especially those involved in creation care. This will provide their team with a shared experience and a common base of knowledge, which will better equip them to engage their local church effectively.

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Another key audience is United Women in Faith (UWF). Long at the forefront of issues of justice throughout the world, UWF has actively been addressing the need for climate justice. This course is in line with the UWF's Living the Vision statement, "We equip women and girls around the world to be leaders in communities, agencies, workplaces, governments, and churches. We work for justice through compassionate service and advocacy to change unfair policies and systems. We provide educational experiences that lead to personal change in order to transform the world." (For more about United Women in Faith, visit <https://uwfaith.org>.)

Timeless Study and Timely Resources

As with other Lay Servant courses, *Loving People and Planet* has a primary text. Originally, published by United Methodist Women for a 2016–2017 Mission U study, *Climate Justice: A Call to Hope and Action*, edited by Pat Watkins, has been recently updated. The text provides an excellent and timeless biblical and United Methodist approach to the issues of climate justice and creation care.

The foundation provided by the text is solid, but creation justice action is also dynamic. Much in the world has changed in a few short years and this change will only continue in the years ahead. Consequently, in order to stay grounded and current, this course breaks the mold of being primarily text-centered and relies heavily on video, slides, and music. These elements can be replaced easily by more up-to-date material that delves into what is happening today. This combination of timeless and timely resources assures a more accurate picture of the situation we are called to faithfully respond to.

In Appendix A you will find the video recordings of the sessions from 2022, as well as other videos and slides that you are welcome to use in your course. We encourage you to customize your choices of video, slides, and music to your own audience and to your geographical concerns. If your participants live near the coast or near the wetlands or in a predominantly agricultural area, then choose media that speaks more to the specific concerns your audience is likely to have. The additional resource recommendations found in Appendix D are a good place to start, but we also encourage you to browse the internet for other options, especially for the case study in Session 3.

Preparing to Lead the Sessions

Note: As with any other curriculum, you are encouraged to adapt what is here to fit your local context, your participants, and your available leadership.

First Steps for the Leadership Team

First and foremost, this course is a team effort. Do not attempt to lead this course alone. Call on God for guidance and a diverse group of individuals with different gifts and expertise to lead the discussion. Here are the first key questions your team will need to answer:

1. Will the course be in-person, online, or hybrid?
2. What schedule and dates work best?
3. How much of the recommended recorded material will you use? Are there additional options that are more current or more specific to your audience?
4. Who on our local team will take leadership for various elements in each session? (For example, lay ministers, clergy, United Women in Faith, frontline community representatives, youth, a tech person)
5. What is the cost of registration and what does it cover? Any meals? Are books included in the registration cost or will students buy them separately? How will they be distributed?
6. Who should be designated to monitor and handle communications, questions, and requests that come up between sessions?

These choices will drive subsequent planning, including your publicity.

Publicity

The scope of advertising for your course will depend on the focus of your training. Are you planning a small group class for your district/conference or country-wide workshop for the entire denomination?

If the former, use district and conference newsletters to invite attendees from your local area. Make sure to work with your district and conference Lay Leadership planning teams to support and publicize the course. They can also ensure proper certification for lay members using this as an Advanced Course. Work with UWF and United Methodist Men to include notices in their publications. Advertise dates and locations for the workshop as soon as possible. Primary emphasis should be four to six weeks prior to the event. Check with district and conference publications to determine timing and the number of times advertisements can be run. Finally, for local workshops, word of mouth, personal invitations, and encouragement from clergy can be powerful tools.

For larger events covering multiple states and jurisdictions, work with boards and agencies to maximize notice of the event. Many of these organizations have newsletters and other communication options for publicity. Check with them for requirements and timing. Work with the United Methodist Creation Justice Movement and Discipleship Ministries to coordinate these events and be sure to include UWF and Global Ministries' EarthKeepers in your publicity planning.

Registration

Having email addresses is essential for communication before and throughout the course. You will want to send homework and reminders of times and of any last-minute changes.

You will also need these address for follow-up communication after the course for the following purposes:

- ▶ Providing Lay Servant Training Certificates or Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for clergy
- ▶ Inviting feedback for the team for evaluation.
- ▶ Staying in touch with updates and new opportunities.

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- ▶ Providing additional coaching as participants bring to life their plans in the local church.
- ▶ Supplying data to a sponsoring body or new team for determining subsequent course offerings.

Be sure to capture all the information that will be helpful, given your audience. For example, in addition to the email address, you may only need the name and location of the congregation at an in-person event, but you may want the conference or state if your event is online and potentially reaching a wider audience. It may also be helpful to have phone numbers and physical addresses for alternative communication and to mail completion certificates.

Homework

As soon as participants register, send out a welcome note, descriptions of the sessions, and list of homework assignments for each session. See the session outlines for these assignments. Make sure they have a copy of the text, *Climate Justice: A Call to Hope and Action*, which is available both in hard copy and digitally.

Small Group Facilitators

In-person small groups and online breakout groups are proven to enhance learning and participant satisfaction. As you see how many people have registered, you will want to begin identifying registrants to invite to be facilitators. Small groups should ideally include five to eight people including the facilitator. You will want to supply facilitators with discussion questions so that their role is truly to facilitate the group. Additional material for small-group facilitators can be found in Appendix C.

Technology Needs

Whether your course is held in-person, online, or as a hybrid event, tech support is crucial. Managing transitions and monitoring questions in the chat are essential functions for a good online event. Planners and presenters should provide tech staff a

worksheet with the flow and timing of each session, clearly marking who is responsible for screensharing and when the shifts need to take place. See the sample worksheets provided for each session.

Additional Recommended Resources List

The purpose of this list of additional resources, found in Appendix D, is to provide relevance and flexibility for your course. The climate isn't the only thing that is rapidly changing. What is happening in response to environmental challenges is also changing all the time and at all levels of society including the international, national, political, commercial, congregational, and personal dimensions. Some of what was true a year ago will change for the worse or for the better. More up-to-date resources are likely to be available and this listing gives you some additional sources to explore.

This list is a reminder that this topic is dynamic and you have both the challenge and the flexibility to choose what is relevant for your group, your goals, and your moment in history.

United Methodist Resources

Session 5 breaks the mold of the previous four sessions in several ways. Participants become the presenters of their own proposed projects, scripture study moves to closing worship, and United Methodist connections enter the picture. Various boards and agencies of the church have provided short videos about what they do, which hopefully will give participants another helpful source of information as they move into leadership in their local setting. The videos provided are in the homework listing for the participants, as well as in Appendix A.

As you plan, consider inviting conference or district committee representatives to attend Session 5. After listening to the presentations by the students, the representatives may well be able to identify ways in which their board or agency can be of help. Having someone present from the conference or district committee of Church and Society, UMCOR, or EarthKeepers, for example, encourages participants to ask

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questions. If a representative is not available, consider choosing one or two of the videos to show and then invite discussion about how that board or agency might be helpful.

Also, encourage participants to sign up for United Methodist Creation Justice Movement News, which is published monthly and is full of excellent resources. Students can also subscribe to the monthly, free United Methodist Creation Justice Tips, which passes along ideas for personal and corporate actions and can be shared with family, friends, and congregations.

Course Leader Checklist

Before the Course

Logistics

In-person Event

- ▶ Arrange for food and overnight lodging (if needed)
- ▶ Identify breakout spaces for small groups
- ▶ Create a setting that aids in teaching, add visual aids to walls and altar
- ▶ Plan ways to incorporate nature using the site

Both In-Person and Online Events

- ▶ Check that all presenters are adept at using the technology
- ▶ Determine leadership requirements and responsibilities for breakout groups
- ▶ Identify and invite attendees who have experience leading groups to be breakout room leaders
- ▶ Talk with each of the small group leaders beforehand to answer any questions
 - ▷ Send each leader the instructions and discussion questions in advance
 - ▷ Encourage leaders to make a hard copy of the questions for easier reference when the group is meeting

Additional Needs

In-person Event

- ▶ Name tags
- ▶ Technology to handle slides, video, and audio (computer, monitor, and so forth)

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Online Event

- ▶ Instructions to rename in Zoom to display conference or local congregation in addition to name

Both In-person and Online Events

- ▶ Each participant needs a copy of *Climate Justice: A Call to Hope and Action* edited by Pat Watkins
- ▶ Homework assignments must be sent to participants in advance
- ▶ Additional resources supporting class activities should be distributed as necessary

For Each Session

Preparation for Leading

In-person Event

- ▶ Identify and make any adjustments needed for in-person instead of online meeting.
- ▶ Prepare classroom space.

Online Event

- ▶ Develop a worksheet that includes times. This step will be especially important for your tech person, who is changing the screen from participants to content and back.

Both In-person and Online Events

- ▶ Plot out time for each segment of the session.
- ▶ Practice using all audio and visual technology.
- ▶ Be familiar with the homework assignments.
- ▶ Review and update the additional recommended resources listings for email distribution.

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Gathering and Introductions

In-person Event

- ▶ Greet people as they gather.
- ▶ Invite each participant to make a name tag and find a seat.
- ▶ Encourage participants to introduce themselves to the people around them.
- ▶ Take a few moments for participants to introduce themselves either in small groups or as a whole group depending upon the number of people and the time available. They should share their name, the name and location of their congregation, and the reason they are taking this course
- ▶ Provide housekeeping information such as restroom locations, the availability of refreshments, and so forth.

Online Event

- ▶ Be online ten to fifteen minutes before the starting time.
- ▶ Greet people as they gather and set a tone of welcome.
- ▶ Ask participants to rename themselves to include either their conference or local church, depending upon the makeup of the group.
- ▶ Encourage participants to introduce themselves in the chat feature.
- ▶ Remind participants that they can make comments and ask questions anytime using the chat feature.
- ▶ Point out the need to use mute during the presentations.

Both In-Person and Online Events

- ▶ Kickoff the event with words of welcome.
- ▶ Do a quick overview of the course or session.
- ▶ Establish discussion ground rules including general courtesy, how to get attention and ask questions, and so forth.
- ▶ Introduce the leader(s) briefly.
- ▶ Open with a prayer or offer a short devotion to begin the session.

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Ending the Session

In-person Event

- ▶ Find ways to use your setting for a moment of worship, for example:
 - ▷ Give a token from nature as a reminder of the content from the session.
 - ▷ Invite participants to touch water and remember their baptism, especially focusing on the baptismal vow to “resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves.”
 - ▷ Have participants join hands in group of two or three to pray aloud simultaneously for Jesus’ presence as they commit to the work of creation justice in their local church.

Online Event

- ▶ Use recorded worship elements and prayers to close the session.
- ▶ Create your own closing worship or prayer experience using images that evoke creation justice.
- ▶ Have someone appointed to save the chat transcript and review it to identify any needed follow-up. Have this person communicate any needs to the team for further action.

Both In-person and Online Events

- ▶ Summarize key takeaways from the session.
- ▶ Introduce the next session’s topic and leader.
- ▶ Highlight the homework assignments for the next session.

After Each Session

Online Event

- ▶ Send an edited version of the chat transcript to participants. (Edit out entries that are not content-relevant.)

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Both In-person and Online Events

- ▶ Email a reminder about homework assignments to participants along with the additional recommended resources list

Ending the Course

Final Worship and Commissioning

In-person Event

- ▶ Create a special time of worship that uses a natural setting.
- ▶ Use the suggestions from Session 5 for wrapping up the session.

Online Event

- ▶ Use the recorded worship elements and prayers from Session 5.
- ▶ Create your own closing worship session modifying ideas from suggested ideas in the session outline.

Both In-person and Online Events

- ▶ Give thanks for the insights and relationships gained over the course and invite a few participants to contribute.
- ▶ Celebrate the ideas generated for engaging the local church.
- ▶ Recognize the participants who are taking further steps as Lay Servants.
- ▶ Pray for the efforts of all the participants and their congregations.
- ▶ Commission and send participants forth to do the work of creation justice.

Follow-Up After the Course

- ▶ Identify who is seeking certification for completing a Lay Servant course or for gaining Continuing Education Units and follow through with getting any information to their respective approving body (conference or district), if needed.

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- ▶ Send evaluation form to all participants. Ask questions that will be most helpful to your local team, especially if you wish to offer the course again.
- ▶ Talk with breakout/small-group facilitators and ask them to share comments based on their experience with their group.
- ▶ Meet with the leadership team to go over the evaluations and comments.
- ▶ Report as needed to any approving body or interested officials.
- ▶ Plan for the next offering of the course.
- ▶ Consider planning a reunion about three or four months later as an opportunity for participants to talk about the results or progress of their projects.

SESSION 1

Our Theological Grounding

Learning Goals

- ▶ To show biblical theology as foundational to creation care and justice.
- ▶ To introduce participants to a simple scripture study methodology that they can replicate in their own settings.
- ▶ To place creation justice in the context of our Wesleyan tradition.
- ▶ To assure participants that reason—both through science and indigenous wisdom—has a role in creation care.
- ▶ To draw out and celebrate experiences of God through nature.
- ▶ To begin developing community among the participants through welcoming and breakout groups.

Homework *(sent before the first meeting)*

- ▶ Read *Climate Justice: A Call to Hope and Action*, Chapters 1–2.
- ▶ Read “Climate Crisis Response From the Council of Bishops” (November 2021). (<https://www.umnews.org/-/media/UMC%20Media/2021/11/10/15/34/council-of-bishops-climate-crisis-response-nov-2021>)
- ▶ Read proposed 2020 *United Methodist Social Principles*: “A Community of All Creation”. (<https://www.umcjustice.org/documents/124>)
- ▶ Review scriptures for Session 1 (Genesis 1:31, Genesis 2:15, and Luke 10:25-27)

SESSION 1 PLAN

Welcome (*18 minutes*)

- ▶ As people arrive
 - ▷ Verbal greetings:
 - If you have a small number of registrants in either online or in-person formats, provide a moment for each person to speak, perhaps adding the name of their local church and a thought about what they want from the course.
 - If you have a larger number of registrants online, invite participants to use the rename feature and invite them to add their location along with their name. Participants can share more both in the chat feature and in breakout rooms. If meeting in-person, invite people to introduce themselves to one or two others who they do not know and assure everyone that they will have more opportunities to get acquainted as the course progresses.
 - ▷ Rolling slides can feature presenters' photos, names, and brief biographical notes, plus any other information like a question to respond to in the chat (See Appendix A for examples.)
- ▶ Overview of Course
 - ▷ Five two-hour classes over two weeks, homework between sessions, other expectations, certification/commissioning at end
 - ▷ Session titles, methodology (presentations, breakouts, homework)
 - ▷ Benefits for participants
 - ▷ Introduce presenter(s) for this session
 - ▷ Opening prayer (Prayers can be in any form—verbal or pre-recorded videos.)

Introduction to the Course and the Wesleyan Quadrilateral

(*7 minutes*)

- ▶ Introduce the course and highlight the purpose of the course.
- ▶ Highlight each element of the Wesleyan Quadrilateral

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- ▷ Scripture
- ▷ Tradition
- ▷ Experience
- ▷ Reason

Scripture Study (*25 minutes*)

- ▶ Introduce the scripture study process for this course. (See Appendix B.)
 - ▷ There will be one to three scriptures covered per session.
 - ▷ The process includes three steps called text, context, and next.
 - ▷ Participants focus specifically on how each scripture is related to creation care/justice.
 - ▷ Breakout groups will work through the process, then consider how it will potentially help engage their own congregation/team
- ▶ Move to breakout rooms to demonstrate and experience the model. Invite groups to work through each of the following scriptures:
 - ▷ Genesis 1:31 (Creation pronounced good)
 - ▷ Genesis 2:15 (Humans are to till and keep the garden)
 - ▷ Luke 10:25-27 (Love God and neighbor)

Wesleyan Quadrilateral Presentation (*30 minutes*)

Scripture (Biblical Theology)

Key points and additional passages:

- ▷ Christians have scripture in common.
- ▷ Scripture compels us to be good stewards.
- ▷ Scripture connects our relationships with God, creation, and justice.
- ▷ Our human response is to pursue a simple and equitable life for all.
- ▷ Scripture has the power to change people's hearts.

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Tradition

Key points:

- ▷ The very first part of our United Methodist Social Principles, “Community of All Creation,” emphasizes interdependence and community rather than dominion.
- ▷ The United Methodist Council of Bishops has issued a compelling statement: *God's Renewed Creation: A Call to Hope and Action*.
- ▷ Numerous theologians, including United Methodist scholars, have written about Christian environmental responsibilities.

Reason

Key points:

- ▷ Science (how) and faith (why and for whom) are not in conflict.
- ▷ God has given us minds, the ability to think as well as to act.
- ▷ Scientific knowledge continues to discover how nature works, how the damage has happened and is happening, and what solutions and alternatives there are. Science lets us continue to learn, science has been sounding the alarm.
- ▷ Traditional wisdom, affirmed in our Social Principles, encourages learning from indigenous peoples to live in harmony with nature, including land use practices and pipeline protests.

Experience

Key points:

- ▷ Experience includes the suffering of people, plants, animals—all of creation.
- ▷ Experience also invites us to recognize God's presence within the awesomeness of nature.

Breakout Group Discussion (20 minutes)

- ▶ Share with one another how your faith as a Christian motivates you to care for God's creation.

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- ▶ Reflecting on this session, share how scripture, our Wesleyan tradition, and the United Methodist Social Principles, inform your reasons for caring about God's creation. How have you resonated with the presentation in some way?
- ▶ Have you ever done a presentation using any of the material that we've discussed today? If so, how did it go? If not, can you envision it being helpful to you as a part of the ministry of your local church's creation care ministry team?

Reporting on Key Points From Discussions *(13 minutes)*

Wrap Up *(7 minutes)*

- ▶ Highlight takeaways from this session.
- ▶ Introduce next session and remind participants of homework for next session.
- ▶ In closing, prepare video slides with recorded music that expresses the majesty of creation. This represents the **experience** segment of the Wesleyan Quadrilateral

Technical Worksheet for Session 1

Note: This sample worksheet has notes particular to the course we lead in 2022. Similar worksheets will be provided for each subsequent section without these notes. This example is provided to give you a better idea of how this tool can be helpful. Feel free to create a customized worksheets for your sessions.

1 OUR THEOLOGICAL GROUNDING			
Time	Activity Title & Type	Presenter	Notes
18 min	Welcome	Bob Downs	Before the session officially begins, greet people as they arrive.
	As people arrive	Tech person provides rolling slides for introducing team, other announcements	Ask participants to note their conference using the rename function. Indicate opportunity in breakouts for participants to get to know one another. Invite people to write in chat a Bible story or verse that has something to do with creation care.
	Official welcome and overview of course	Bob	Refer to project at the end of the course.
	Introduce Pat	Bob	Slide with Pat's bio and credentials
	Opening prayer	Pat	Video: North Carolina Creation Care Team https://www.dropbox.com/s/zxj2o2c1m0h0tn1/NC%20Team%20Video.mov?dl=0

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7min	Wesleyan Quadrilateral Introduction	Pat Tech person will screen share	Slides—Note that in our theological grounding scripture comes first. Introduce Crys to talk about scripture study.
7 min	Explain process in sessions	Crys Zinkiewicz	Text, Context, Next—how related to creation care/justice
18 min	Scripture Breakout Groups	Tech person sends people to breakout rooms. A leader with each group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Genesis 1:31 (Creation pronounced good) and Genesis 2:15 (Humans tend the garden) ▶ Luke 10:25-27 (Love God and neighbor)
30 min	<i>Scripture/Biblical Theology</i>	Pat	<p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Scripture connects God, Earth, people ▶ Scripture compels us to be good stewards, work for justice, and live a simple life.
	<i>Tradition</i>	Pat	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Slides of Social Principles, Part 1; video Social Creed 	Tech person will screen share	https://www.umcjustice.org/news-and-stories/social-principles-2020-607
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Review Bishop's letter 	Tech person will screen share	http://hopeandaction.org/main/resources/basic-documents/
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Look at numerous theologians 	Tech person will screen share	
	<i>Reason</i>	Pat	
	Scientific knowledge and traditional wisdom	Tech person will screen share	Affirmed in Social Principles/Slide
	<i>Experience</i>	Pat	Brief mention (follow up in closing prayer)

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20 min	Breakout (Prompts sent to leaders in advance)	Tech person sends people to rooms and provides a countdown clock and 1-minute notice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Share with one another how your faith as a Christian motivates you to care for God's creation. ▶ Reflecting on this session, share how scripture, our Wesleyan tradition, or UM Social Principles inform your reasons for caring about God's creation. How have you resonated with the presentation in some way? ▶ Have you ever done a presentation using any of the material that we've discussed today? If so, how did it go? If not, can you envision it being helpful to you as a part of the ministry of your local church creation care ministry team?
13 min	Group Reporting	Pat	Pat to facilitate; actual time will be up to Pat, who will monitor it
7 min	Wrap Up Summary Next session title, quick intro homework	Pat Tech person will screen share	Slide of next presenter's bio and credentials
	Closing: Experiencing God through nature	Tech person will screen share	Slides with music: <i>Creation Calls</i> https://www.dropbox.com/s/88949zot805x5gr/Creation%20Calls.mp4?dl=0

SESSION 2

God's Good Gifts: Called as Stewards and Prophets

Learning Goals

- ▶ To connect participants with foundational scriptures for the session and give them practice in a Bible study methodology that they can replicate in their own settings.
- ▶ To introduce the science about climate change and clarify the terminology.
- ▶ To examine three systems in nature, how they benefit all creation, how humans have degraded them, and how we as stewards can make change.
- ▶ To explore personal actions related to creation care, including our stewardship of natural resources.
- ▶ To draw attention to the need for advocacy in the face of systemic issues and speak up as prophets.
- ▶ To continue developing community among participants.

Homework

- ▶ Read *Climate Justice: A Call to Hope and Action*, chapters 5–6.
- ▶ Do the following personal assessments:
 - ▷ Water Footprint Calculator: watercalculator.org
 - ▷ Global Footprint Network: footprintcalculator.org
- ▶ Read “Forget Your Carbon Footprint. Let’s Talk About Your Climate Shadow” by Emma Pattee (<https://www.mic.com/impact/forget-your-carbon-footprint-lets-talk-about-your-climate-shadow>)

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- ▶ Watch video about urban farmer and creation care committee member, Reggie Marshall. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_eVFMP-yV0c)
- ▶ Review scriptures for Session 2 (Job 14:7-9, Matthew 18:20)

SESSION 2 PLAN

Welcome (*5 minutes*)

- ▶ As people arrive
 - ▷ Offer verbal greetings, include any announcements or housekeeping at this time.
 - ▷ Rolling slides can feature presenters' photos, names, and brief biographical notes, plus any other information such as a question to respond to in the chat.
- ▶ Highlight the goals for today's session.
 - ▷ Understand the scope, urgency, and possible solutions of the climate crisis.
 - ▷ Understand humanity's effects upon nature's systems.
 - ▷ Claim our role as caretakers and advocates.
- ▶ Open with a prayer.

Scripture Study Breakout Groups (*18 minutes*)

- ▶ Remind participants of the scripture study process for this course.
- ▶ Move to breakout rooms and invite participants to work through the following scriptures using the scripture study process.
 - ▷ Job 14:7-9 (hope if a tree is cut)
 - ▷ Matthew 18:20 (two or three are gathered)

Climate Change 101 (*20 minutes*)

- ▶ Using the slide presentations and scripts provided on the Lay Servant Ministries website (for more information, see Appendix A), discuss the following basic facts about climate change.

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- ▷ Clarify the differences and relationships between key terms such as climate, weather, greenhouse gases, and global warming.
- ▷ Identify sources of information for participants.
- ▷ Point to key consequences of climate change.
- ▶ Invite questions from participants. If your group is small enough, invite discussion about these topics.

Oceans, Forests, Soil—God's Good Gifts (40 minutes)

- ▶ Using the slide presentation and scripts provided discuss oceans, forests, and soil and highlight the following:
 - ▷ How these natural systems help.
 - ▷ How we degrade them.
 - ▷ Our call to protect them as stewards and prophets.
- ▶ Invite questions from participants. If your group is small enough, invite discussion about these topics.

Breakout Groups Discussion (30 minutes)

- ▶ What did the assessment tools tell you about your stewardship of creation?
- ▶ How did either the article about your “climate shadow” or chapters 5 and 6 of *Climate Justice* add to your understanding of this topic?
- ▶ Share some ways you are practicing being a faithful steward.
- ▶ As you think about all the ways God's good gifts are being degraded, how might you be a prophetic voice?

Wrap Up (7 minutes)

- ▶ Highlight takeaways from session.
- ▶ Introduce next session and remind participants of homework for next session.
- ▶ In closing, watch the video of Amanda Gorman's “Earthrise” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwOvBv8RLmo>)

Technical Worksheet for Session 2

Note: This is a sample worksheet that can be used by the leader as they see fit. Feel free to create a customized worksheet for your sessions.

2 GOD'S GOOD GIFTS: CALLED AS STEWARDS AND PROPHETS			
Time	Activity Title & Type	Presenter	Notes
5 min	Welcome		
	▶ As people arrive		
	▶ Session focus, goals, benefits		
	▶ Opening prayer		
18 min	Scripture Breakout Groups		
20 min	Climate Change 101		
	Invite people to note any questions to be addressed at the end.		
	Questions		
40 min	Oceans, Forests, Soil— God's Good Gifts		
	Invite people to note any questions to be addressed at the end.		
	Questions		

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30 min	Breakout Groups Discussion		
7 min	Wrap Up <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Takeaways from session▶ Next session▶ Homework		
	Closing: Amanda Gorman's "Earthrise"		

SESSION 3

Climate Crisis and Creation Justice: Connecting the Dots

Learning Goals

- ▶ To connect participants with foundational scripture for the session and give them practice in a Bible study methodology that they can replicate in their own settings.
- ▶ To understand the intersectionality of the climate crisis with environmental, racial, gender, and economic injustice and the differences between equality, equity, and justice.
- ▶ To recognize the disproportionate impact of environmental degradation and the consequent implications for social justice.
- ▶ To hear the voice of The United Methodist Church through the Social Principles and the Council of Bishops' declarations.
- ▶ To continue developing community among participants.

Homework

- ▶ Read *Climate Justice: A Call to Hope and Action*, chapters 3–4
- ▶ View “Religion Has Nothing to Say About Climate Change, Right?” by Dr. Katharine Hayhoe. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W53uRqITk2I>)
- ▶ Read the Jemez Principles. (<http://www.ejnet.org/ej/jemez.pdf>)
- ▶ Watch the BBC video, “Extinction: The Facts” by Sir David Attenborough (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dbCR0KSU52g>)

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- ▶ Review scriptures for Session 3. (Isaiah 24:4-5, Ezekiel 34:17-19, Matthew 25:40)

SESSION 3 PLAN

Welcome (*5 minutes*)

- ▶ As people arrive
 - ▷ Offer greetings, include any announcements or housekeeping at this time.
 - ▷ Rolling slides can feature presenters' photos, names, and biographical notes, plus other information such as a question to respond to in the chat.
- ▶ Highlight the goals for today's session.
 - ▷ Understand the interconnectedness of humanity and the natural world and how creation care ties in to justice work.
 - ▷ See the need for advocacy and action in multiple systems.
- ▶ Open with a prayer.

Scripture Study Breakout Groups (*18 minutes*)

- ▶ Move to breakout rooms and invite participants to work through the following scriptures using the scripture study process.
 - ▷ Isaiah 24:4-5 (People transgress and the earth suffers)
 - ▷ Ezekiel 34:17-19 (People pollute and other people suffer)
 - ▷ Matthew 25:40 (What you did to the least of these)

Where's the Justice? (*15 minutes*)

- ▶ Using the slide presentations and scripts highlighted in Appendix A discuss the concept of justice and how it connects to creation care.
 - ▷ Engage the group about where they see injustice.
 - ▷ Define intersectionality and equity as key terms.
- ▶ Invite reactions, questions, and ideas.

Voice for the Voiceless (35 minutes)

- ▶ Using the slide presentation and scripts provided, explore the issue of advocacy, education, and justice in connection with creation care.
- ▶ Highlight how the Social Principles discuss multiple creation justice issues.
- ▶ Invite discussion about concrete actions we can take including education, advocacy, and practice.
- ▶ Affirm that the work we do—or don't do—for justice has an impact.

Local Case Study (15 minutes)

- ▶ Prepare a verbal presentation, slides, or videos giving information about an environmental justice issue in your local area, one in which attendees are likely to have some investment.
- ▶ For example, islands and coastal areas that are affected by sea-level rise, nearby pipeline and tanker spills, wildfires, landfills, or habitat, biodiversity, and forest losses in nearby areas. All of these would be good topics to explore.
- ▶ The Additional Recommended Resources found in Appendix D include possible source materials for this presentation.

Breakout Group Discussion (25 minutes)

- ▶ As a class, debrief and discuss the case study that you presented:
 - ▷ What is the injustice? Who suffers?
 - ▷ Where do you see intersectionality or lack of equity at play?
 - ▷ How might the church be a voice for change?
 - ▷ What can individuals do?

Wrap Up (7 minutes)

- ▶ Highlight takeaways from this session.
- ▶ Introduce next session and remind participants of homework for next session.
- ▶ In closing, watch the following *National Geographic* video by spoken-word artist, Prince Ea. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-nEYsyRIYo>)

Technical Worksheet for Session 3

Note: This is a sample worksheet that can be used by the leader as they see fit. Feel free to create a customized worksheet for your sessions.

3 CLIMATE CRISIS AND CREATION JUSTICE: CONNECTING THE DOTS			
Time	Activity Title & Type	Presenter	Notes
5 min	Welcome		
	▶ As people arrive		
	▶ Session focus, goals, benefits		
	▶ Opening prayer		
18 min	Scripture Breakout Groups		
15min	Where's the Justice? Invite people to note any questions to be addressed at the end		
35 min	Voice for the Voiceless) Invite people to note any questions to be addressed at the end		
15 min	Local case study presentation		
25 min	Breakout Groups Discussion		

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7 min	Wrap Up <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Takeaways▶ Next session▶ Closing: Video by Prince Ea		
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SESSION 4

What Can Churches Do?

Learning Goals

- ▶ To connect participants with foundational scriptures for the session and give them practice in a Bible study methodology that they can replicate in their own settings.
- ▶ To examine a range of congregational examples of environmental justice and stewardship.
- ▶ To assess potential opportunities for participants' local churches to engage in creation care and related justice ministries.
- ▶ To acquire tools to help participants engage their local church in some action, which may include establishing a green team or some other type of project.

Homework

- ▶ Read *Climate Justice: Call to Hope and Action*, chapters 7–8.
- ▶ Read “ENERGY STAR for Congregations” and watch the webinars recommended there (https://www.energystar.gov/buildings/owners_and_managers/congregations)
- ▶ View “Reggie’s Veggies” (https://youtu.be/NLo0Z_q1qRc)
- ▶ Review scriptures for Session 4 (Genesis 45:4-8a, Luke 18:1-8)
- ▶ Read over the three Planning Tools (Appendix E). These will be presented more fully in the session. You may want to print them out for easy reference and possible note taking.

[Note to planners: Appendix E contains instructions meant for you, as well as the Planning Tools template, the Planning Tools With Example, and a handout, “What

Churches Are Doing.” Send to the participants only the pieces you plan to use in this session. You may decide to send other parts of the appendix as preparation for Session 5.]

SESSION 4 PLAN

Welcome (*7 minutes*)

- ▶ As people arrive
 - ▷ Offer greetings, include any announcements or housekeeping at this time.
 - ▷ Rolling slides can feature presenters' photos, names, and biographical notes, plus other information such as a question to respond to in the chat.
- ▶ Highlight the goals for today's session.
 - ▷ Understand opportunities for congregations and churches to contribute to environmental stewardship and creation justice ministries.
 - ▷ Assess your church's involvement in these ministries and the potential to increase that involvement.
 - ▷ Begin planning for a project to engage your church in creation care and justice.
- ▶ Open with a prayer.

Scripture Study Breakout Groups (*18 minutes*)

- ▶ Move to breakout rooms and invite participants to work through the following scriptures using the scripture study process.
 - ▷ Genesis 45:4-8a (Joseph)
 - ▷ Luke 18:1-8 (The persistent widow)

Churches in Action (*30 minutes*)

- ▶ Use the slide presentation and script highlighted in Appendix A to lead a discussion about church involvement in climate care and climate justice action.
 - ▷ Use examples from the recorded presentation if you choose, but be sure to include or substitute local examples.
 - ▷ Consider short videos or a local tour for in-person classes.

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- ▷ Emphasize the scope and variety of involvement available.
- ▶ Show the video “A Sanctuary for the City.” (<http://www.hamlinechurch.org/serve/green-team/>)

Engaging the Local Church *(18 minutes)*

- ▶ Using the slide presentation and script provided, highlight groups that participants may want to connect with in their local church to get support for action:
 - ▷ Ministry Staff
 - ▷ Board of Trustees
 - ▷ United Women of Faith
 - ▷ Youth Ministries

Breakout Groups Discussion *(20 minutes)*

- ▶ Talk about what your church is already doing. What are the strengths you can build on? What new opportunities do you see?
- ▶ What might your church do?

How to Plan Your Project *(20 minutes)*

- ▶ Using the slide presentation and script provided, as well as the planning tools, templates, and samples found in Appendix E, discuss the basics of how participants can begin to plan a project.
 - ▷ Talk about assets, connection, and voice.
 - ▷ Explain how to complete a SWOT Analysis.
 - ▷ Discuss making SMARTIE Goals.

Wrap Up *(7 minutes)*

- ▶ Highlight takeaways from this session.
- ▶ Introduce next session and remind participants of homework for next session.

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- ▶ Emphasize project planning using the Planning Tools (found in Appendix E).
- ▶ Close the session by reading John Wesley's on thoughts on stewardship:

“We are now God’s stewards. We are indebted to him for all we have. . . . A steward is not at liberty to use what is lodged in his hands as *he* pleases, but as his master pleases. . . . He is not the owner of any of these things but barely entrusted with them by another . . . now this is exactly the case of everyone with relation to God. We are not at liberty to use what God has lodged in our hands as *we* please, but as God pleases, who alone is the possessor of heaven and earth and the Lord of every creature. . . . [God] entrusts us with [this world’s goods] on this express condition, that we use them only as our Master’s goods, and according to the particular directions which he has given us in his Word.”

—**John Wesley, Sermon 51, “The Good Steward,”**
§II.1, *Works* 2:283–84

Technical Worksheet for Session 4

Note: This is a sample worksheet that can be used by the leader as they see fit. Feel free to create a customized worksheet for your sessions.

4 ENGAGING YOUR LOCAL CHURCH IN ACTION			
Time	Activity Title & Type	Presenter	Notes
7 min	Welcome		
	▶ As people arrive		
	▶ Session focus, goals, benefits		
	▶ Opening prayer		
18 min	Scripture Breakout Groups		
20 min	Churches in Action		
10 min	<i>Hamline UMC: A Sanctuary for the City</i>		
18 min	Engaging the Local Church		
20 min	Breakout Groups Discussion		
20 min	How to Go About Setting Up a Project		
7 min	Wrap Up ▶ Takeaways from session ▶ Next session ▶ Homework will include videos from various denominational boards and agencies		
	Closing: Wesley on stewardship		

SESSION 5

Your Church, Your Plan

Learning Goals

- ▶ To equip participants to lay out first steps of a project to engage people in local churches in education or action on behalf of creation justice.
- ▶ To generate a range of proposed projects and advocacy efforts so that participants see additional possibilities for their local churches.
- ▶ To introduce participants to the ways United Methodist boards and agencies can assist them in developing creation justice ministries in their local churches.
- ▶ To encourage participants to place their work in the context of scripture and faith.

Homework

- ▶ Read *Climate Justice: Call to Hope and Action*, chapter 8.
- ▶ Watch Rev. Michael Malcomb's keynote from the 2020 Creation Justice Summit "For Such a Time As This" (<https://umcreationjustice.org/climate-justice-advocacy-keynote-address-from-rev-michael-malcolm-for-such-a-time-as-this/>)
- ▶ Read Esther 4:11-15 and 1 Corinthians 3:6
- ▶ Watch these brief videos for an idea of the resources available through our United Methodist connection:
 - ▷ UM Creation Justice Movement – https://youtu.be/_lu0Pq83ZZY
 - ▷ Global Ministries – <https://youtu.be/t74raGBYEq8>
 - ▷ Discipleship Ministries – https://youtu.be/5nRprJuhJ_I
 - ▷ General Board of Church & Society – <https://youtu.be/foBB9ADwTEs>
 - ▷ Wespath Benefits and Investments – <https://youtu.be/2h9vBi90BO4>

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- ▷ United Women in Faith – <https://youtu.be/suRGZJq2jjw>
- ▶ Invite participants to work through the following questions. Remind them that this is now their opportunity to dream and to plan.
 - ▷ How might you engage others in creation care and justice?
 - ▷ What's your vision?
 - ▷ What steps do you need to take?
 - ▷ What hoops might you need to jump through to launch?
 - ▷ How might you communicate your idea?
 - ▷ Are there potential team members you can recruit?
 - ▷ Who might be a prayer partner for you and the plan?
- ▶ Use the planning tools and what you have heard and learned from this course to begin creating a plan. The discipline of working with the planning tools will help you think through how to bring your idea to fruition.

[Note to planners: Depending upon which of the planning materials from Appendix E you used in Session 4, you may decide to send other parts of the appendix as preparation for Session 5.]

A Word of Grace

- ▶ Remind participants that no plan is perfect, especially in the beginning. Don't stress! Tell them to do the best thinking they can at this point and be ready to share their idea with the group.
- ▶ Breakout groups will be able to help you by:
 - ▷ Asking good questions.
 - ▷ Making suggestions.
 - ▷ Steering participants toward helpful resources and people.
 - ▷ Affirming the possibilities.
- ▶ The work of creation justice needs all of us. Our role is to engage others in this sacred work in the name of God.

SESSION 5 PLAN

Welcome *(5 minutes)*

- ▶ As people arrive
 - ▷ Offer greetings, include any announcements or housekeeping at this time.
- ▶ Highlight the goals for today's session.
 - ▷ Listen to each other as everyone shares about their upcoming projects.
 - ▷ Provide helpful input and feedback about the projects as they are shared.
 - ▷ Affirm the value and possibilities of each project.
 - ▷ Send forth everyone to do the work of creation justice.
- ▶ Open with a prayer.

Breakout Groups *(50 minutes)*

- ▶ Send participants into their breakout groups and have each person presents their project to the rest of their group.
- ▶ Invite each set of participants to affirm the ideas as they are presented, provide helpful feedback and support, and assist by asking good questions to help the presenter make their idea into a reality.

Reporting Ideas from Breakout Groups *(20 minutes)*

- ▶ Invite a representative from each breakout group to share the highlights of their conversation and how their discussion was able to improve the ideas that they brought to present.

Resources in The United Methodist Church *(20 minutes)*

- ▶ Use this section of the final session to highlight resources from within The United Methodist Church that can provide support to put these plans into action. A few possible approaches include:
 - ▷ Using the videos from the homework and invite any questions.

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- ▷ Invite local representatives, such as church or district United Women of Faith leadership, or regional experts, such as conference outreach coordinator or EarthKeepers, to attend and respond to the ideas presented or the questions that emerge.
- ▷ Make suggestions about what people or agencies might be helpful for specific ideas.

Wrapping Up the Course *(10 minutes)*

- ▶ Thanks everyone for their participation.
- ▶ Encourage participants to put their plans into action.
- ▶ Remind participants about Lay Servant course certification and answer any questions about this process.
- ▶ Inform participants that an evaluation form will be coming soon.
- ▶ Share that you would like to check in with everyone after three to six months to see how they are putting these ideas into practice.
- ▶ Inform participants of sources for continuing support.

Closing Worship *(15 minutes)*

- ▶ Use the slide presentation and script highlighted in Appendix A to:
 - ▷ Recap the scriptures from each session and add the scriptures assigned for Session 5.
 - ▷ Commission participants in their work.
 - ▷ Send participants forth to do the work of creation justice.

Technical Worksheet for Session 5

Note: This is a sample worksheet that can be used by the leader as they see fit. Feel free to create a customized worksheet for your sessions.

5 YOUR CHURCH, YOUR PLAN				
Session	Time	Activity Title & Type	Presenter	Notes
	5 min	Welcome		
		▶ Greet attendees		
		▶ Today's focus and process		Scripture will be at the end today
		▶ Opening prayer		
	50min	Breakout Groups: Participant Presentations		
	20 min	Reporting plans to the whole group		
	20 min	Resources in the UMC to help		

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	10 min	<p>Wrapping up the course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Thanks for participation ▶ Encouragement for action ▶ Evaluation form ▶ Checking back within 3–6 months ▶ LPP team's availability for support 		
	15 min	Closing Worship		
		▶ Scripture & session recap		
		▶ Commissioning		
		▶ Sending forth		

APPENDIX A

Presentations

Using slides and video presentations gives participants a common terminology and a shared starting point for deepening their learning. Engaging learners' visual senses in addition to hearing or reading material also magnifies the impact of the message.

Listed here are materials we put together as we originally developed and presented this course. They include:

- ▶ **Videos of the sessions we led.** In planning your course, you may find it helpful to have the overview given by these recordings. Additionally, you may use any part of them in your own presentations. Note that after evaluating the experience as a team, we made some structural changes. We have flipped sessions two and three and reordered session five. That is the nature of learning and you also have permission to make changes along these lines.
- ▶ **Videos for homework or for in-session viewing.** Many organizations and media outlets are preparing readily accessible videos on various creation justice issues. You may find other documentaries that are more current or more compelling, but we have included several that we found useful in creating and teaching this course.
- ▶ **Slides and scripts.** The facts and actions related to the climate crisis are dynamic and need to be updated frequently. You will want to focus on your audience and the situations that both affect them and give them opportunities for action. Consequently, as you prepare, you are encouraged to modify the existing slides and scripts.

The key point of these resources is to aid you in your task of reaching the hearts and minds of your audience and moving them to action. These items are here to help, but you are free to use them (or others) in any way that fits your needs. Refer to the

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Additional Resources listed in Appendix D for more options to consider as you plan this course for your group.

[Note: Due to the shifting nature of the internet, slide presentations will be made available to download on the Lay Servant Ministries: Advanced Courses page of the Discipleship Ministries website (<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/lay-servant-ministries-advanced-courses>). All links to external sites are correct as of publication.]

Session 1

Homework

- ▶ No videos or slides

Session Recording

- ▶ “Our Theological Grounding” <https://youtu.be/A2FySx6SNx4>

In Session

- ▶ North Carolina Creation Care Team—*Creation Care*: (<https://youtu.be/YetZkCsS79g>)
- ▶ Introduction slides (available for download at Lay Servant Ministries: Advanced Courses page)
- ▶ Scripture/biblical theology slides (available for download at Lay Servant Ministries: Advanced Courses page)
- ▶ United Methodist Social Principles: Part 1—“Community of All Creation” (<https://www.umcjustice.org/news-and-stories/social-principles-2020-607>)

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Session 2

Homework

- ▶ Urban farmer and creation care committee member, Reggie Marshall (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_eVFMP-yV0c)

Session Recording

- ▶ “God’s Good Gifts: Called as Stewards and Prophets” [Note: This was originally Session 3.] (<https://youtu.be/KWvENrQh4aU>)

In Session

- ▶ Climate Change 101 slides (available for download at Lay Servant Ministries: Advanced Courses page)
- ▶ Oceans, Forests, Soil—God’s Good Gifts slides (available for download at Lay Servant Ministries: Advanced Courses page)
- ▶ Amanda Gorman’s “Earthrise” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwOvBv8RLmo>)

Session 3

Homework

- ▶ “Religion Has Nothing to Say About Climate Change, Right?” by Dr. Katharine Hayhoe (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W53uRqITk2I>)
- ▶ “Extinction: The Facts” by Sir David Attenborough (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dbCR0KSU52g>)

Session Recording

- ▶ “Climate Crisis & Creation Justice—Connecting the Dots” [Note: This was originally Session 2.] (<https://youtu.be/I1xPntQeirs>)

In Session

- ▶ Where's the Justice? slides (available for download at Lay Servant Ministries: Advanced Courses page)
- ▶ Voice for the Voiceless slides (available for download at Lay Servant Ministries: Advanced Courses page)
- ▶ Presenter's script for the slides (available for download at Lay Servant Ministries: Advanced Courses page)
- ▶ *National Geographic* film by spoken-word artist, Prince Ea (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-nEYsyRIYo>)

Session 4

Homework

- ▶ Webinar from *Energy Star for Congregations* (https://www.energystar.gov/buildings/owners_and_managers/congregations)
- ▶ Reggie's Veggies (https://youtu.be/NLo0Z_q1qRc)

Session Recording

- ▶ "What Can Churches Do?" (<https://youtu.be/TRxgWNSWTmo>)

In Session

- ▶ Various Churches' Involvement slides (available for download at Lay Servant Ministries: Advanced Courses page)
- ▶ *A Sanctuary for the City* (<http://www.hamlinechurch.org/serve/green-team/>)
- ▶ Engaging the Local Church slides (available for download at Lay Servant Ministries: Advanced Courses page)
- ▶ Planning Tools slides (available for download at Lay Servant Ministries: Advanced Courses page)

Session 5

Homework

- ▶ Rev. Michael Malcomb's "For Such a Time As This" (<https://umcreationjustice.org/climate-justice-advocacy-keynote-address-from-rev-michael-malcolm-for-such-a-time-as-this/>)
- ▶ Videos about resources available through our United Methodist connection
 - ▷ UM Creation Justice Movement (https://youtu.be/_lu0Pq83ZZY)
 - ▷ Global Ministries (<https://youtu.be/t74raGBYEq8>)
 - ▷ Discipleship Ministries (https://youtu.be/5nRprJuhJ_I)
 - ▷ General Board of Church & Society (<https://youtu.be/foBB9ADwTEs>)
 - ▷ Wespath Benefits and Investments (<https://youtu.be/2h9vBi90BO4>)
 - ▷ United Women in Faith (<https://youtu.be/suRGZJq2jjw>)

Session Recording

- ▶ "Your Church, Your Plan" (<https://youtu.be/OZhaaMG8ego>)

In Session

- ▶ Possible viewing of selected videos from homework related to United Methodist connection
- ▶ Closing Worship Scripture and Session Review slides (available for download at Lay Servant Ministries: Advanced Courses page)

APPENDIX B

Scripture Study Resources

In our Wesleyan tradition, scripture is front and center! Therefore, in four of the five sessions that make up this study, we encourage you and your participants to study scripture together in breakout groups.

Group members will be companions together on this journey through scripture. One benefit of this type of study is that your participants will come to know one another and hopefully will continue to serve as sources of aid and inspiration beyond this course. A second benefit for your participants is that they will be able to learn and practice this simple way of studying scripture among friends. Not only will they be making connections between creation justice and the Word of God, but they will also be learning how to make those connections happen for others.

Throughout *Climate Justice: A Call to Hope and Action* you will find a number of relevant passages to study, but we've chosen twelve in particular to look at as part of these sessions. We've chosen these passages both because they are related to loving people and planet and because they are easy for people to remember.

Years ago, I taught a series on creation care in one of the young adult Sunday school classes at my church. I tried to tie every session directly to scripture at some point. In response, one of women in the class, Katie, reported that she had set up a box in her office and invited her colleagues to contribute their used paper, and then she would take care of the recycling herself. One day a coworker challenged her reasoning saying, "Recycling doesn't have anything to do with being religious!" Katie told our Sunday school class, "I stammered and stuttered, but then I remembered, and I said, 'Yes, it does. Jesus said we are to love our neighbors—and taking care of the place we all live is a loving thing to do!'"

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Helping those in the local church remember and make connections is a way of empowering and equipping them to be ready to speak to family, friends, colleagues, and even strangers from their faith.

Now that you know why we're emphasizing the study of scripture, let's look at how we will be studying scripture in this course.

Consider a sunflower. You may know that sunflowers always turn to face the light. The sunflower is a great analogy for us as we attempt to follow the light of Christ. Think about the center of the sunflower. This is the heart of the flower. In our study of scripture, this is the text itself. Before anything else, we encourage participants to read the text and identify what speaks to them.

Think about the sunflower again. The sunflower would not be very attractive without the petals that surround its center. In our analogy, the petals are the context of the scripture. The context includes what happened before or after the scripture, the larger story around the scripture, and the culture in which the scripture was written and originally read. All of this information adds meaning and richness to the center, just as the petals of the sunflower add beauty to the rest of the flower.

Finally, step back from close examination and think about the sunflower as a whole. What does the sunflower teach you? What does it inspire you to do? How can you use it to show beauty to others or brighten up a room? Ask yourself, what's next? In our analogy, this is when we ask ourselves how scripture can guide us. This is when we consider how God is speaking to us and encouraging us to act, especially in relationship to creation care and justice.

Using these three steps (which we will refer to as text, context, and next) in either small groups or large ones, is an effective way of studying scripture together. You can follow these steps in a linear fashion—text, then context, followed by next—or you can try out a more dynamic exploration, mixing and remixing the three elements as your conversation flows.

As you do, remember to stay open-minded. This is a time to explore! Scripture is rich and there is always more to discover, even when the verse or story is familiar. Keep in mind that different people may take away different meaning and guidance. This is okay. We're not looking for a right answer. We're learning as a community. We value

questions and divergent ideas, they help us all, and the result is more robust, shared insights

Now it's your turn! Invite your participants to take a few minutes to introduce themselves and then begin your study of today's scriptures.

Overview of Scripture Study for This Course

Send the following information to participants after Session 1.

Process

1. Text
 - ▶ Read the text (in different versions if possible).
 - ▶ What speaks to you?
 - ▶ How does the wording of other versions help you understand this scripture?
2. Context
 - ▶ What is the backstory?
 - ▶ What comes before or after this scripture in the text? What does this tell you about the scripture?
 - ▶ What do you know about the culture when this was written that might be relevant?
3. Next
 - ▶ How might this relate to creation care/justice?
 - ▶ What can you take away from this scripture?

Please have your own Bible handy—whatever version you most frequently use.

Session 1

- ▶ Genesis 1:31
- ▶ Genesis 2:15
- ▶ Luke 10:25-27

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Session 2

- ▶ Isaiah 24:4-5
- ▶ Ezekiel 34:17-19
- ▶ Matthew 25:40

Session 3

- ▶ Job 14:7-9
- ▶ Matthew 18:20

Session 4

- ▶ Genesis 45:4-8a
- ▶ Luke 18:1-8

Session 5

- ▶ Esther 4:11-15
- ▶ 1 Corinthians 3:6

APPENDIX C

Small-Group Facilitator Material

Using small groups either in person or online is essential for adult learning and satisfaction with the educational experience. Consequently, identifying capable facilitators is also essential. Those you invite to facilitate do not need to be subject matter experts. Instead, they must be able to:

- ▶ Create a welcoming and gracious atmosphere.
- ▶ Invite everyone's participation, allowing no one to dominate.
- ▶ Assure opportunities to speak for those who tend to be quiet.
- ▶ Manage the overall time to deal with the given discussion prompts.
- ▶ Ask questions that further discussion on a topic.

Some people will be very comfortable with this task given their past experiences as a leader. Others will appreciate additional preparation beforehand, either formally in a training or informally in a conversation. Additionally, you can utilize and modify the Breakout Room Leader Instructions sheet below to give guidance to your facilitators.

We have also provided discussion prompts for each session. Review them and make any changes needed to fit your plan and your participants. The facilitator should have a printed copy at hand so the questions will be readily accessible during the group time.

Recruit your facilitators as soon as you are able. People often wait until the last minute to register for events, especially those online. You may think you have enough group leaders chosen and find out right before you begin that you will need more. Sometimes facilitators will unexpectedly need to miss for a session. Consider recruiting one or two backups who can pick up the role easily on short notice.

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Encourage the facilitators to create a sense of community within the group. One way to do this is by staying in touch with group members between sessions. Another is to ask anyone who must miss a session to let the group leader know. Still another is to look for ways to support one another after the course ends. Depending upon circumstances, participants may feel alone in their desire to care for creation when they are no longer in the course. Continuing the connection when the course is finished may be just what they need to persevere.

Breakout Room Leader Instructions

Thank you for leading breakout rooms during this course. Sessions 1-4 will each have two breakout sessions.

The plan is to have the same four to eight people consistently in each of the small groups. The first session will also include introductions. The hope is that, by being in the same group, members will become more at ease with one another and feel free to engage in more helpful discussion.

The first breakout time in Sessions 1-4 will focus on scripture. The structure for the study is simple—text, context, next—and will be explained in the first session. We've chosen these particular scriptures not only because they can inform our creation justice actions, but also because they are easily recalled. In conversation, planning, and doing, these memorable verses and stories provide inspiration and motivation.

One benefit of this approach is that participants will feel equipped to talk about these scriptural connections both informally and in more formal settings, such as a Bible study where they are called upon to lead. Some of our participants may be experienced and comfortable leading Bible study, others may not. The small group is intended to give everyone confidence in 1) talking about scripture that calls us to action and 2) leading others in a simplified study of God's Word.

The second breakout in Sessions 1-4 will be focused on the topic of the day. You will receive discussion questions in advance via email. We suggest you print a copy and keep it handy for easy reference. We encourage you to draw on your own experience to know when to dig deeper on one question and when to move on to another. Here are some prompts that may be helpful in a discussion:

- ▶ **Which idea resonates most with you?** This question doesn't say there's a right or wrong answer. It just asks what captures the attention of group members or connects most with participants.

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- ▶ **Tell us more about that.** This invitation shows interest in what someone has to say and the perspective being shared, and it allows that person to dig deeper.
- ▶ **Why do you think that happens? What evidence do you have to support that?** Questions like these further critical thinking.
- ▶ **What does this remind you of? What connections do you see?** Questions like these pull in a participant's past and/or current experiences and help everyone in the group make connections to their everyday life, which brings relevance.

[Note: Session 5 will have a different pattern, adding two new scriptures as part of the closing worship.]

Breakout Discussion Questions

Send leaders a copy of the questions before each session.

SESSION 1 OUR THEOLOGICAL FOUNDING

Scripture Study *(About 18 minutes)*

Genesis 1:31, Genesis 2:15, Luke 10:25-27

Invite people to introduce themselves briefly. You may want to ask them to identify themselves as clergy or laypersons, and then say a word or two about what has brought them to the course. Pay attention to your time and make sure everyone has a chance to introduce themselves before getting to the scripture.

Invite someone to read the first two scriptures (text). Ask for volunteers to fill in the context briefly. Then ask the following question (next): How do they see these scriptures informing our relationship to creation and justice.

Once you've finished discussing the scriptures from Genesis, do the same for the passage from Luke.

Discussion Breakout *(About 20 minutes)*

(Make a hard copy of the breakout discussion questions so you can access them easily while you are leading in-person or online.)

- ▶ Discuss the following questions in your small group. These questions will also help the group become better acquainted.
 - ▷ Share with one another how your faith you to care for God's creation.

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- ▷ Reflecting on this session, share how scripture, our Wesleyan tradition, or the United Methodist Social Principles informs your reasons for caring about God's creation. Where have you resonated with the presentation in some way?
- ▷ Have you ever done a presentation using any of the material that we've discussed today? If so, how did it go? If not, can you envision it being helpful to you as a part of the ministry done by your local church's creation care ministry team?

SESSION 2

GOD'S GOOD GIFTS: CALLED AS STEWARDS AND PROPHETS

Scripture Study *(About 18 minutes)*

Job 14:7-9, Matthew 18:20

As needed, remind participants that this breakout is to help them connect the selected scriptures to creation care and justice. It is also designed to give them practice using the following simple Bible study model:

- ▶ Examine the **TEXT**.
- ▶ Surround it with the relevant **CONTEXT**.
 - ▷ What comes before or after?
 - ▷ What is the larger story?
 - ▷ What are possible cultural issues in understanding the text?
- ▶ Look at what's **NEXT**, in terms of how it relates to creation justice.

Discussion Breakout *(About 30 minutes)*

- ▶ What did the assessment tools tell you about your stewardship of creation?
- ▶ How did the article about your climate shadow or chapters 5 and 6 of *Climate Justice* add to your understanding?
- ▶ Share some ways that you are practicing being a faithful steward.
- ▶ As you think about all the ways God's good gifts are being degraded, how might you be able to speak or act prophetically?
- ▶ *If there is time*, you may ask if there are any questions or comments about the presentation or about the video of urban farmer, Reggie Marshall (from the homework).

SESSION 3
CLIMATE CRISIS AND CREATION JUSTICE:
CONNECTING THE DOTS

Scripture Study (*About 18 minutes*)

Isaiah 24:4-5, Ezekiel 34:17-19, Matthew 25:40

Continue with the model of text, context, and next. Encourage participation. The goal of this time is to help participants become comfortable leading others formally in a class or informally in conversation to make connections between scripture and creation care and related justice issues.

Discussion Breakout (*About 25 minutes*)

- ▶ As a group, debrief and discuss the case study:
 - ▷ What is the injustice? Who suffers?
 - ▷ Where do you see intersectionality or lack of equity at play?
 - ▷ How might the church be a voice for change?
 - ▷ What can individuals do?

SESSION 4 WHAT CAN CHURCHES DO?

Scripture Study (*About 18 minutes*)

Genesis 45:4-8a; Luke 18:1-8

Take a moment at the end of your time to ask your group members how they are feeling about this method and whether they view it as something they can use to engage local church members either formally or informally to help them see the connections between scripture and creation care and justice.

Discussion Breakout (*about 25 minutes*)

- ▶ Invite participants to talk about what their church is already doing in regards to creation care and creation justice. What are the strengths they can build on? What new opportunities do they see?
- ▶ Challenge participants to examine the assets, connections, and give voice to more possibilities.

Remind the group that they have received a copy of the planning tools to help them prepare for their project. Ask if they have any questions about the tools.

Encourage them to do the work of writing out the elements of their plan. Point out that the tools are in a document so they can make the spaces for writing fit what they want to say.

SESSION 5 YOUR CHURCH, YOUR PLAN

Scripture Study

There will not be a breakout to discuss scripture as in the previous sessions. The scriptures will be part of the closing worship.

Discussion Breakout *(about 50 minutes)*

The focus of this time is to allow participants to talk about their hopes and potential project(s) for their own church.

After each person has offered their idea, open the discussion to the group to build on the idea. Use the planning tools as appropriate—such as looking at the church's assets, strengths, opportunities, and potential connections.

If there are identified barriers or threats, encourage the group to help strategize ways to minimize or overcome them.

If possible, invite participants to name ways the project can be measured (M in SMARTIE) and possibly identify a time frame (T in SMARTIE) to achieve these goals. Look also at ways to assure inclusion and equity (I & E in SMARTIE).

The hope is that individuals will end the session feeling affirmed, equipped, and empowered to take next steps!

You may want to do one round where everyone names their idea and a second round where people contribute to the various ideas.

Alternatively, you can divide the time so that everyone has an allotted amount and then have each idea shared and discussed together before moving on to the next person.

How you lead this time is up to you! You know your group.

If you are comfortable, when there is one minute left, offer a prayer for the group and their path ahead. Thank you, again, for your leadership! It is truly a gift.

APPENDIX D

Additional Resource Recommendations

Along with the homework for each session, these additional resources will help you and the participants in your course:

1. Understand the interconnectedness of humanity and the natural world and how the work of creation care ties connects with environmental and economic justice, as well as the scope, urgency, and possible solutions of the climate crisis.
2. Recognize the connections between creation justice and faithful living found by examining scripture and United Methodist tradition, including the Social Principles, and through examining personal and congregational practices.
3. Feel equipped with resources and empowered with knowledge to:
 - ▶ Talk about creation justice concerns, including the faith and scriptural underpinnings, to family, friends, fellow congregants, and other colleagues.
 - ▶ Educate about creation care and environmental justice through programming, worship, and other opportunities.
 - ▶ Develop a creation care green team, creation justice ministry, and additional leadership within the congregation.
 - ▶ Lead projects and advocacy efforts within and/or beyond the congregation.

As you plan your course, these resources give you more options for customizing for your purposes, audience, and time.

Send these or the listings you prepare to participants after each session.

SESSION 1 OUR THEOLOGICAL GROUNDING

Loving Nature: Ecological Integrity and Christian Responsibility by James A. Nash, a United Methodist theologian, who served as the executive director of the Church Center for Theology and Public Policy at Wesley Seminary in Washington, D.C.

Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture by Ellen Davis, professor of Bible and Practical Theology at Duke Divinity School

The Paradise of God by Norman Wirzba, professor of Christian Theology and Ethics at Duke Divinity School

Hope in the Age of Climate Change by Chris Doran

Grounded in Love: Holy Communion for the Whole Creation by Tim Eberhart, a United Methodist and professor of Public Theology and Ministry at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

United Methodist Women's Mission u *Study Guide for Climate Justice: A Call to Hope and Action*. [Note: There are also studies for children (*God's Extravagant Garden*) and youth (*Joining Voices for Climate Justice*).] (<https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/climate-justice-study>)

"Let Science Speak" by Katharine Hayhoe (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EV-loFFIwAA&t=2s>)

"The Beatitudes Inspired by Laudato Si" produced by Global Catholic Climate Movement (<https://youtu.be/Ud5nEQ2zPs>)

Pat Watkins has four videos available to view on YouTube:

1. "The Biblical Basis of Creation Care, Part 1"
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rY_s0Yv2TN0
2. "The Biblical Basis of Creation Care, Part 2"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K-CwBBzqFbQ>

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3. "Why Creation Care Is Important to Me as a Christian"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDTvKnAdRj0>
4. "North Carolina Annual Conference Presentation 2018"
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ee4w9_1mjrU

SESSION 2

GOD'S GOOD GIFTS: CALLED AS STEWARDS AND PROPHETS

Wendell Berry's inspiring interview with Bill Moyers (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wONzH-wnloY>)

"Earthrise" by Amanda Gorman, National Youth Poet Laureate (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwOvBv8RLmo>)

The Biggest Little Farm (92-minute documentary film) by a couple who purchase degraded land and over time bring it to thriving. The husband, who, among other things, was a photographer for *National Geographic*, has made the film both informative and stunningly beautiful. (Amazon Prime)

Kiss the Ground (84-minute film) narrated by Woody Harrelson, explores the power of regenerative agriculture to heal the land and combat climate change. (Netflix)

Interfaith Power & Light (IPL) provides a kit for congregational screening of *Kiss the Ground*, narrated by Woody Harrelson.
(<https://www.faithclimateactionweek.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/KTC-Screening-Kit-Live-Links.pdf>)

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind (113-minute film based on a true story). Thirteen-year-old William Kamkwamba was banned from school because his family could not pay the fees due to the climate-change disruption of the agrarian economy in Malawi. He persisted on his own and ultimately enlisted the community in making a change. (Netflix)

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Project Drawdown has the most comprehensive information about more than 100 possible solutions to climate change, including ones related to oceans, wetlands, forests, agriculture, and food. View the website at drawdown.org.

Project Drawdown also has a comprehensive course (<https://drawdown.org/climate-solutions-101>) called Climate Solutions 101, which is a six-video series that addresses the science and the solutions. Between the 14:00–24:00-minute marks you will find the sections called Setting the Stage, Stopping Climate Change, Reducing Sources, Supporting Sinks and Improving Society, Putting It All Together, and Making it Happen.

Browse various websites of organizations related to conservation of either oceans, trees, soil, or biodiversity. Some examples include: oceana.org, oceanconservancy.org, onetreepanted.org, and regenerationinternational.org.

“What Is Afforestation?” by One Tree Planted (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amtXcNe_Scc). You can also check out the website for One Tree Planted at onetreepanted.org. Check out the Stories tab for more information.

“What Is Regenerative Agriculture?” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fSEtiixgRJI>)

“Regenerative Agriculture Advocacy Toolbox.” Developed by Caretakers of God's Creation North Carolina Annual Conference Creation Care Team, this guide is a boon for increasing the effectiveness of any group working in this focus area. <https://indd.adobe.com/view/d86b465b-6b5a-4920-bb4f-7b49f08a556c>

“One Hundred Thousand Beating Hearts.” A former industrial-model Georgia farmer shows and tells about his and his land's transformation to an in-harmony way of being. The film also displays the interconnected system at work, transforming the community also. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UoQWLK8-CYE>)

“How to Green the World's Deserts and Reverse Climate Change,” a TED Talk by Allan Savory (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vpTHi7O66pI>)

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Trees for the Future (trees.org) has an amazing model, the Forest Garden, that is transforming the soil, the economy, the communities and ending hunger and poverty. View the 18-minute documentary here: <https://trees.org/documentary/>.

Federal Legislation Is Needed to Avert the Climate Crisis is a report by Jan Berry, Kenneth Lynn Jobe, Paul Slentz, and Andrea Zink (Creation Justice Movement Team). This 2020 report identifies proposed laws that would radically curb carbon emissions and alleviate environmental injustice. A major criterion for the team was alignment with the United Methodist Social Principles. This report provides a model for a thoughtful, faith-based approach to examining potential legislation which can be helpful as new bills are proposed.

(https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NRqd6IcLXj6j5m5QdB1ZeqhQf44-_DHP/view?usp=sharing)

The Hidden Life of Trees: What They Feel, How They Communicate by Peter Wohlleben. Interesting question to discuss: What can the community of faith learn from the community of trees?

“Using Science and Celtic Wisdom to Save Trees (and Souls)” by Diana Beresford-Kroeger (*New York Times* article)

SESSION 3 CLIMATE CRISIS AND CREATION JUSTICE: CONNECTING THE DOTS

“The Bible Doesn’t Talk About Climate Change, Right?” by Katharine Hayhoe (https://youtu.be/SpjL_otLq6Y)

“The Story of Plastic—Animated Short”
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iO3SA4YyEYU>)

“The Story of Stuff, with Annie Leonard” (<https://youtu.be/9GorqroigqM>)

Just Energy 4 All—United Women in Faith. Explore the website.
(<https://uwfaith.org/what-we-do/serve-and-advocate/just-energy-4-all/>)

Materials for Possible Case Study

“Voices of the People’s Climate March” (<https://youtu.be/njAeLLTEUEo>)

“Farm Workers and the Environment: Harvest of Justice 2020”
(<https://nfwf.org/resource-center/harvest-of-justice/farm-workers-the-environment-harvest-of-justice-2020/>)

“Coalition of Immokalee Workers Is Calling on Wendy’s to Join the Fair Food Program” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Oc25Lf8i0w>)

“Unchecked growth of industrial animal farms spurs long fight for environmental justice in Eastern NC” (<https://www.northcarolinahealthnews.org/2021/10/20/environmental-justice-and-industrial-farming-in-eastern-nc/>)

SESSION 4 WHAT CAN CHURCHES DO?

Saving Us: A Climate Scientist’s Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World by Katherine Hayhoe. In this very readable book, Dr. Hayhoe tackles the tough issues of how we can talk to others about our changing planet and how we can move toward solutions.

Books

- ▶ *7 Simple Steps to Green Your Church* by Rebekah Simon-Peter
- ▶ *Green Church* by Rebekah Simon-Peter (Adult, Youth and Children)
- ▶ *Inside Out: Practices for Going Deeper in Nature* by Beth Norcross
- ▶ *Start Singing: How to Form Your Own Spirituality in Nature Group* by Beth Norcross
- ▶ *Saving God’s Green Planet* by Tri Robinson
- ▶ *Just Eating: Practicing Our Faith at the Table* by Presbyterian (PCUSA) Hunger Program
- ▶ *The Green Bible Devotional* by Carla Barnhill

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- ▶ *Embracing Wholeness: An Earth Perspective for Covenantal Living* by Jessica Stonecypher
- ▶ *The Season of Creation: A Preaching Commentary*
- ▶ *Keep It Good: Understanding Creation Care Through Parables* by C. Lindsay Linsky
- ▶ *The Comforting Whirlwind: God, Job and the Scale of Creation* by Bill McKibben
- ▶ *Climate Courage* by Andreas Karelas
- ▶ *A Hope for the Earth: Faith, Science and the Message of Jesus* by Sally Dyck and Sarah Ehrman
- ▶ *A Climate for Change* by Katharine Hayhoe and Andrew Farley
- ▶ *A New Climate for Theology* by Sallie McFague
- ▶ *Good Food* by Jennifer R. Ayres
- ▶ *The Nature Fix* by Florence Williams
- ▶ *The Food Fix* by Mark Hyman

Films

- ▶ *The Human Element*
- ▶ *Chasing Ice*
- ▶ *Carbon Nation Movie*
- ▶ *The Need to Grow*
- ▶ *Kiss the Ground*
- ▶ *Racing Extinction*
- ▶ *Merchants of Doubt*
- ▶ *Climate Refugees*
- ▶ *Nourish Food & Community*
- ▶ *Renewal*

Information about SMARTIE goals that add inclusivity and equitability to planning practices:

(<https://www.managementcenter.org/resources/smart-to-smartie-embedded-inclusion-equity-goals/>)

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Questions, answers, and what your church can do from Dr. Katharine Hayhoe

- ▶ <http://www.katharinehayhoe.com/faqs/#church-footprint>

EPA Energy Star Action Workbook for Congregations

- ▶ https://www.energystar.gov/buildings/owners_and_managers/congregations

UMW Be Just, Be Green

- ▶ <https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/sustainability>

Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing

- ▶ <https://www.ejnet.org/ej/jemez.pdf>

Worship Resources

Celebrate **Earth Day** in your congregation during the month of April with theological reflection on caring for creation. A sermon, litany and scripture reading will be available for download from Global Ministries on their website in both video and text formats. (<https://umcmmission.org>)

Season of Creation is an ecumenical, international movement that provides resources to Christians for a specific emphasis on creation care and environmental justice from September 1 through October 4, when a blessing of the animals is often celebrated. Visit both <https://seasonofcreation.org> and <https://seasonofcreation.com>.

SESSION 5 YOUR CHURCH, YOUR PLAN

Depending upon your audience, you may want to put together a listing of local sources for additional help, for example:

- ▶ Professors from area universities, leaders active in local organizations, governmental agencies that deal with solid waste and other issues of sustainability.

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- ▶ Articles and videos about your local climate change risks and what's being done.
- ▶ Your conference's UMCOR committee for help with disaster preparedness and recovery.
- ▶ Other churches in your area with an active Green Team that could possibly coach beginners, talk about what they have done, or invite others to participate with them in an event or other programming.

APPENDIX E

Getting Students Ready for Their Project

Session 4 asks “What Can Churches Do?” The presentation then give a wide variety of examples in response. In planning for your event, be sure to look for and include illustrations from your local area. It also helps if you have pictures which you can integrate into the presentation, possibly replacing some of the slides with photos from your own area.

An alternative is to invite people from churches that are already active in this ministry to talk about what they are doing. The key is to provide participants with a sense that many actions are possible and that all actions help.

The homework and Session 5 will concentrate on what the participants have in mind that they can do with and through their church. To that end, in addition to the presentation, we have provided three other helpful aids:

1. The **Planning Tools** template for students to fill out. Make this accessible electronically so participants can write as much as they need to.
2. The **Planning Tools With Examples**. Going over some of this material in class or sending examples home with students will help them understand how to use the tools and see some possibilities for their church.
3. The **What Churches Are Doing** handout. This listing provides additional examples that can inspire participants and assure them that their congregation can do something.

ASSESSMENT

What Churches Bring to Creation Justice

GIFTS	TYPES	DESCRIPTIONS	OUR POSSIBILITIES
ASSETS	People	Leadership, interest, willingness to do and learn, skills and expertise, networks, communication skills: photography, videography, social media	
	Property	Sunshine, land (including gardens, trees, buildings, parking lot, etc.)	
	Location	Waterways, agriculture, community, nearby university, opportunity	
CONNECTION	Other Churches	Other UMC churches, nearby congregations of other denominations	
	Agencies	UM district, conference, general; Creation Justice Movement	
	Community	Local organizations, interfaith organizations	
	Secular	National, international environmental or justice organizations	

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VOICE	Worship	Liturgy, prayers, sermons, music, décor; Season of Creation	
	Study groups	Bible study, Sunday School, small groups, special series, youth group, VBS	
	Church statement	Start conversation, bring others on board, give direction	
	Prayer partners	Can be a contribution by people interested but less able to act	
	Advocacy	Letter writing, petitions, calls with legislators	

SWOT Analysis

<p>STRENGTHS to build on. Personal? Congregational?</p>	<p>WEAKNESSES to minimize. Personal? Congregational?</p>
<p>OPPORTUNITIES to seize. What's missing? What can be done?</p>	<p>THREATS to overcome. What might be a barrier?</p>

SMARTIE Goals

Specific	Be as precise as possible.
Measurable	What can you quantify?
Attainable	Is it possible?
Relevant	Is it closely tied to your mission?
Time-limited	Put a date on it!
Inclusive	Is anyone left out?
Equitable	Are the actions and consequences just?

Planning Tools With Examples

The planning tools give participants three different ways to recognize possibilities for what they can do with and through their congregations. Filling out these tools may be new to some students, although others may be familiar with such tools, which are often a part of strategic planning for companies.

As a leader, you can help participants in two ways: 1) Go over the tools using the examples, which come from the 2022 course, and 2) encourage students to work with at least one other person familiar with their congregation to generate the responses. The synergy of thinking through these questions with two or more people is energizing. The discipline of filling in the information is also effective.

The **Assessment**, “What Churches Bring to Creation Justice,” is helpful as a beginning point, especially when participants don’t yet have an idea as to where to start with a project.

A **SWOT Analysis** is an especially good tool to use when the group has a project in mind.

SMARTIE Goals (formerly SMART Goals) help move a team from goal to action, touching the important bases, including the recently added criteria of inclusivity and equitability.

Use any or all of the tools as part of your course.

ASSESSMENT

What Churches Bring to Creation Justice

GIFTS	TYPES	DESCRIPTIONS	OUR POSSIBILITIES
ASSETS	People	Leadership, interest, willingness to do and learn, skills and expertise, networks, communication skills: photography, videography, social media	Retirees with time and expertise Teens who need service hours for graduation Many people know one another and have lived here for years A few seasonal attendees
	Property	Sunshine, land (including gardens, trees, buildings, parking lot, etc.)	Unpaved parking lots allow water to soak into ground
	Location	Waterways, agriculture, community, nearby university, opportunity	Waterways, university environmental center, agricultural land
CONNECTION	Other Churches	Other UMC churches, nearby congregations of other denominations	Three churches in our charge, an Episcopal church in our area
	Agencies	UM district, conference, general; Creation Justice Movement	Conference could enlist EarthKeepers and/or others trained to deal with creation justice issues

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	Community	Local organizations, interfaith organizations	Working with local Salvation Army—food and shelter—caring for neighbors in need, seek out volunteer opportunities with environmental groups
	Secular	National, international environmental or justice organizations	UM Environmental Center at Horn Point Lab, Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage, Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake
VOICE	Worship	Liturgy, prayers, sermons, music, décor; Season of Creation	Tentatively planning to observe Season of Creation
	Study groups	Bible study, Sunday School, small groups, special series, youth group, VBS	Offer “Loving People and the Planet” when material is available Working with a Horn Point Lab faculty member to present lecture on plastics in our waterways
	Church statement	Start conversation, bring others on board, give direction	Consider forming a charge-wide group in the fall
	Prayer partners	Can be a contribution by people interested but less able to act	Expand prayer chain to include people praying specifically for creation justice
	Advocacy	Letter writing, petitions, calls with legislators	Post local initiatives in the bulletin and ask folks to respond by phone or in writing—little broadband access here

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RESULTS: This example was completed by Nan Duerling, the pastor of three small rural churches, and one member of the church. Examining each category helped them switch from “We’re too small to do anything” to “Oh! We might possibly do that.” Subsequently, the church has reached out to an authority on a local issue to come speak to them. The expert readily agreed to do so, which could be just the first step of something more.

SWOT Analysis

<p>STRENGTHS to build on. Personal? Congregational?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ P: Skill in organizing & researching ▶ C: United Women in Faith (UWFaith)—strong, with good networks ▶ C: UWFaith already has relationship with a nearby school and the church’s preschool ▶ C: Families in the church are potential 	<p>WEAKNESSES to minimize. Personal? Congregational?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Need good promotion & promotional materials ▶ Need buy-in from UWF & church staff
<p>OPPORTUNITIES to seize. What’s missing? What can be done?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Children have broken & used crayons that would ordinarily end up in landfill ▶ Children will be excited by the Crazy Crayons ▶ Children can learn about and participate in recycling ▶ Timing is good with the end of school ▶ Bins can be placed in the church for easy drop off by preschoolers and Sunday school children ▶ Telling others, spreading the word to other congregations 	<p>THREATS to overcome. What might be a barrier?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Need to check the validity of the Crazy Crayons company and the nearby retailers ▶ Need to confirm no rules prohibit access to the school ▶ Cost to mail the crayons collected ▶ The event has potential to be an annual pattern. Would there be enough volunteers to manage it?

RESULTS: Sue Groves checked out the Crazy Crayons company and purchased a set of Crazy Crayons from a nearby retailer. She has enlisted her local UMFaith unit to support the project, and the preschool is excited and thinking ahead to using the event to help the children understand creation care. The elementary school is also enthusiastic.

SMARTIE Goals

Specific	Be as precise as possible. To create a Green Team at our church and start off with an action that raises awareness and generates excitement for creation care.
Measurable	What can you quantify? At least 3 people committed to forming a team. At least 1 event/action planned.
Attainable	Is it a goal that can be reached? The congregation has 250 members. Many have planning skills.
Relevant	Is it closely tied to your mission? The overarching mission is to help the congregation see that creation care/justice is tied to our faith and a calling that all can respond to. A leadership team is necessary.
Time-limited	Put a date on it! Form a Green Team ASAP. Make Earth Day Sunday the kickoff event.
Inclusive	Is anyone left out? Issue the invitation to be part of the Green Team to the whole congregation. Make a specific effort to find ways youth can participate.
Equitable	Are the actions and consequences just? That question will need to be part of our planning for each action.

RESULTS: Eleven people from Central UMC in Albuquerque, NM, responded to the invitation from Dodie Hawkins, who spoke at a “mission moment” during worship. On Earth Day Sunday, the new Green Team members were commissioned and blessed during the service. As people left the sanctuary, Green Team members gave out

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reusable shopping bags as a visible reminder of the church's commitment to creation care and a way for everyone to be good stewards in their daily life.

SMART Goals have been around for several years, and sometimes other words are used, for example Strategic, Ambitious, Realistic. You are free to use whatever wording fits your situation. **SMARTIE** goals, adding Inclusive and Equitable to the planning, is an exciting move forward! For more information check out this website: <https://www.managementcenter.org/resources/smart-to-smartie-embedded-inclusion-equity-goals/>

What Churches Are Doing

Changing Church Practices

- ▶ Deciding to stop mowing a section of the property, allowing it to go wild for the good of pollinators and local wildlife.
- ▶ Ceasing the use of Styrofoam and both plastic plates and cups for meals.
- ▶ Encouraging meatless dishes for potlucks.
- ▶ Setting up a composting system to reduce food waste after meals.
- ▶ Establishing a compost site for members and neighbors to use.
- ▶ Including Creation Justice Tips in newsletters and bulletins.
- ▶ Adding a focus on creation actions to the church website.
- ▶ Installing a rain barrel system for watering.
- ▶ Being more conscious of water use and practicing water conservation.
- ▶ Placing recycling bins where needed and making them easily visible.
- ▶ Touring the building and grounds to identify potential energy-efficiency projects, including caulking leaking windows, changing to LED lighting, adding motion-sensor lights and smart thermostats.
- ▶ Taking steps toward renewable and just energy sources (solar, geothermal, wind) to minimize fossil fuel usage that contributes to climate change.
- ▶ Purchasing bamboo toilet tissue with no plastic wrapping.

Planting

- ▶ Preparing a pizza garden by planting ingredients such as oregano, tomatoes, jalapeño peppers, banana peppers, mushrooms, basil, and thyme, and then having a pizza party celebration featuring the homegrown ingredients.
- ▶ Creating a rain garden.
- ▶ Adding new trees to the church property.
- ▶ Landscaping for a neighbor whose home is being rebuilt after a tornado.

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- ▶ Choosing native plants that help butterflies and other pollinators prosper.
- ▶ Developing a community garden with vegetables and flowers to give away to both those near the church, those who come to help, and to local organizations that provide food in the community

Cleaning Up

- ▶ Adopting a nearby road or stream and picking up the litter and other trash as part of a one-day event or a regular practice.
- ▶ Hosting a recycle day event in the church parking lot.
- ▶ Setting out recycling bins within the church.
- ▶ Going through items that are no longer in use and stuffed in church closets and recycling or donating for reuse.
- ▶ Setting up a compost system for food waste after meals or events.
- ▶ Arranging a collection of items that would otherwise be sent to the landfill and sending them instead to an alternative service, such as ReTold (fabric), Terracycle (numerous items), or the police department (prescription drugs).

Collaborating

- ▶ Inviting another nearby church to join in and work together on creation care efforts.
- ▶ Making a list of sustainability decisions to use as criteria in planning events.
- ▶ Creating a Green Team.
- ▶ Learning from and working with the conference Green Team.
- ▶ Finding out from other churches what they are doing, learning from their experiences, and possibly joining their efforts.
- ▶ Seeking support and possible funding from the annual conference.

Educating

- ▶ Facilitating regular nature experience events for various ages and other groups, including walks in the woods, wildflower walks, “I spy” challenges, and trips to a beach or waterway, a zoo, and so forth to help people love and learn to protect creation.
- ▶ Leading a Bible study and programs on creation care and justice.
- ▶ Hosting a watch party for a film and discussion related to creation justice.
- ▶ Writing a resolution for the congregation to consider, which will start a conversation. Adopting it will give direction to the church.
- ▶ Inviting people from a local congregation that is largely made up of members from a different race to learn about how they experience creation justice or injustice.
- ▶ Asking Sunday school classes to schedule speakers or follow a curriculum related to creation care and justice.
- ▶ Arranging for speakers with environmental expertise, especially about local issues, to speak to church groups.
- ▶ Adding “green space” to their websites, with a focus on what the church is doing for creation justice.

Speaking Up

- ▶ Incorporating creation care and justice in sermons and liturgy.
- ▶ Encouraging planning groups to use the lens of creation care and justice.
- ▶ Informing the congregation about local issues related to creation justice.
- ▶ Putting together a letter-writing or calling advocacy event.
- ▶ Preparing a resolution for the annual conference agenda.

APPENDIX F

The Project and Presenters

This course grew out of an EarthKeepers project. The United Methodist Global Ministries EarthKeepers training requires participants to identify a need and take on the task of addressing it. Bob Downs saw the opportunity to develop a course for Lay Servants on engaging the local church in addressing climate change and environmental injustice from a faith perspective.

A lay member of the West Ohio Conference, Bob worked with a local group including Presian Burroughs, Assistant Professor of New Testament at United Theological Seminary, and Beth Vanoli, former president of Miami Valley District United Methodist Women (UMW), to develop a preliminary course and test it with a small in-person group.

Not long after this work began, the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

During this time, Bob continued to be active with the United Methodist Creation Justice Movement and worked with others planning the 2020 Summit, which shifted from in-person to online. That experience opened new possibilities and brought new people to the task. Together they created the online course which was first offered in the spring of 2021. That course provided the basis for this one.

Six of the eight team members are certified United Methodist EarthKeepers. The seventh is the former assistant general secretary of Church and Society with an emphasis on the ministry of God's creation. All the team members are active in the United Methodist Creation Justice Movement and have experience with creation justice issues. The team members are:

- ▶ Jonathan Brake (online technical director) is an EarthKeeper and ordained elder serving in the Western North Carolina Conference. Jonathan is a D.Min. candidate studying ecology and justice at Methodist Theological School in Ohio and the founder of Creation Care Ministry in the conference.

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- ▶ Pat Watkins (session 1 lead) is an EarthKeeper and retired ordained elder. Pat has an M.Div. from Duke Divinity School. Pat is also a United Methodist Missionary to the Earth and a member of the North Carolina Conference Caretakers of God's Creation Ministry team. Pat is the editor and one of the writers of *Climate Justice: A Call to Hope and Action*.
- ▶ Crys Zinkiewicz (session 2 lead) is an EarthKeeper, retired curriculum developer and editor from The United Methodist Publishing House, chair of West End UMC Creation Care Committee (Nashville), member of Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference Creation Care Ministry steering team, and a writer of Creation Justice Tips. Crys has an MA in christian education from Scarritt Graduate School.
- ▶ Mike Koob (session 3 co-lead) is an EarthKeeper, the chair of the Baltimore-Washington Conference Creation Care Action and Advocacy Team, a certified Climate Justice Mission U study leader, and a founding member of Multifaith Alliance of Climate Stewards. Mike has an MBA in business.
- ▶ Kenneth Lynn Jobe (session 2 contributor) was a nuclear submarine officer. During a career with Corning Incorporated, he managed large capital projects. After retirement, he walked the 2,000-mile Appalachian Trail in a single season. He is working to build momentum toward passage of meaningful legislation to curb carbon emissions and also serves on his local church's creation care committee.
- ▶ Karlah Burton (session 3 and 4 co-lead) is an EarthKeeper, the chair of Creation Care Ministry and Community Garden at St. Matthews UMC in Greensboro, North Carolina, and a spokesperson for Just Energy (UMW). She is also an educator and holds a BS in biology and a BA in math.
- ▶ Bob Downs (session 4 lead) is an EarthKeeper, a lead on the West Ohio Conference Creation Care Task Force, part of the leadership panel for Dayton Partners for the Environment, and a retired member of the US Air Force. He holds an MS in biophysics from Cornell and was the team leader for *Loving People and Planet in the Name of God*.
- ▶ Jaydee Hanson (session 5 lead) is the treasurer and board member of Caretakers of God's Creation in the Virginia Conference, a former assistant general secretary of Church & Society for Ministry of God's Creation, and a policy director for Center for Food Safety. Jaydee has an MA in geography and resource management.