

## Book summaries/reviews on Environmental topics

### **General theological works**

(Not necessarily without practical suggestions)

#### ***God is Green***

Ian Bradley, 1990



“Aims to show that the Christian Faith is intrinsically Green”

Argues that Christianity has unique good news to contribute to the response to our environmental crisis. Challenging the idea that the physical world is any way base or inferior to the spiritual world, and that human beings are the pinnacle of all things and the world’s resources are there for us to exploit.

Short, concise and readable, an excellent starting point for anyone wanting to read in this area. Would make a good basis for a discussion or discipleship group.

(Widely available secondhand for under £5)

#### ***Rivers of Green Wisdom***

##### ***Exploring Christian and Yogic Earth-centred spirituality***

Santoshan (Stephen Wollaston) 2016, Green Spirit

Santoshan was put off Western Christianity by dogmatism, lack of mysticism, dualism (placing the spiritual world as inferior to the spiritual one) and anthropocentrism.

He argues that Spirituality that is purely concerned with internal life is meaningless.

Argues that the bible reveals a creator who is permanently creating. The resurrection is a continuation of what was begun in Genesis. God is continuously present in all things - this perspective should determine our response to the environmental crisis.

*I don't think this book adds anything, theologically, to 'God is Green' - it does however provide a strong example of the effect of the church neglecting to care for creation, on the authenticity of our evangelism and mission. The gospel is incomplete without it.*

### **Eco-Theology**

Celia-Deane Drummond, 2008, Longman & Todd  
(Available from diocesan resource centre)

A thorough analysis of the issues, and their human causes, the structures of society and economy that obstruct positive change and perpetuate environmental damage.

Theological contributions from churches North, South, East and West.

Ecology and theology are natural study/lifemates. Both are about our interdependence, our meaning and purpose. The need for the healing of the world to live as one, in self-giving and recognition of our mutual need - and reverence for the complexity and beauty of the world.

Ecology and Christology

Christ as redeemer of the world. God made flesh - for a reason!

Ecology and Theodicy

How evolutionary and ecological studies can shed light on the Q's of suffering and evil

Ecology and Spirit

HS as creator - not solely redeemer. Creation is now as well as then. Healing of the world is the action of the HS.

Eco-Feminist Theology

Patriarchal perspectives tend to view the world in dualities, therefore perpetuate the utilitarian view of the planet's resources. (Spiritual-Natural hierarchy means earth not revered)

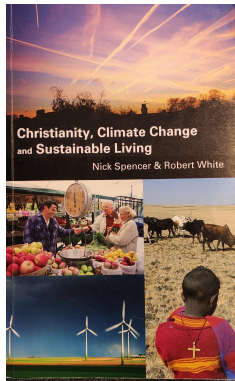
Eco-eschatology

Redemption is both now and not yet. This is the reality of living in the end times.

Therefore caring for creation is joining with the Trinity in the redemption of the world, as much as is sharing the gospel, making disciples and transforming injustices.

## ***Christianity, Climate Change and Sustainable Living***

N Spencer & R White, 2007, SPCK



The nature of the problem,  
Biblical perspectives  
A Christian response

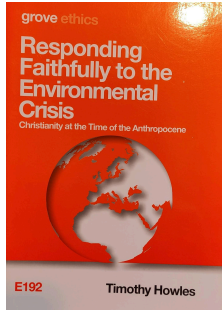
If love of God and Neighbour is the pinnacle of the Good Life, then our failure to love God means we fail to love the things God loves. Our unsustainable life, particularly in the west, is symptomatic of that brokenness.

Exploitation of the world results from putting ourselves, at the centre of all things, and the lack of relationship to God and neighbour.

A good book for someone wanting a thorough and readable theological and scientific grounding for any work on Climate Action and sustainability.

## **Grove Ethics**

### ***Responding Faithfully to the Climate Crisis: Christianity at the time of the Anthropocene***



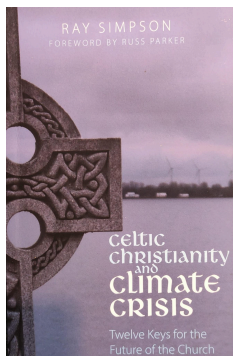
A good, short, and accessible look at the issues, and a theological response. Could make a basis for a discussion group/day.

*(Anthropocene - means the human era, the age in which we are living, since 100,000 years ago).*

## ***Celtic Christianity and the Climate Crisis***

### ***12 Keys to the future of the Church***

R Simpson, Sacristy Press, 2020



An interesting work - more academic than practical.

Argues that the Capitalist West has shaped the church in its own consumerist, colonial image. Where Western capitalism has lived by the axiom 'Expand or die', and the church has served this, Celtic Christianity lives more by 'Steward or die'.

Celtic Christianity - in common with many indigenous Christian (and non-Christian) traditions, was and is shaped by its landscape, explores God through the landscape and therefore has an innate sense of care for all of

creation. The Celtic church has much to teach the world about equality, justice, freedom, sustainability, peace and hope in daunting and ultimately self-destructive times.

### ***The Environment: A Talking Points Book***

D Gobbett, The Good Book Company, 2022



A short, clear, theological explorations of the Christian responsibility, and hope, in the face of environmental crisis.

## **Discipleship and worship**

### ***Changing the climate***

### ***Applying the bible in a climate emergency***

### ***A resource for families and churches***

Debbie, David and Jamie Hawker, 2021, BRF

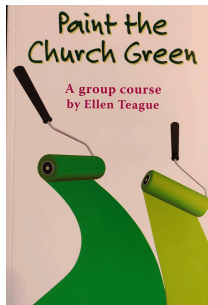
Practical, applied, scientifically-fed eco-theology, aimed at Climate justice. Thematic chapters on different areas of env crisis, with bible passages (the book refers to every book of the bible).

Example of situations around the world, bible reflections, questions for discussion, suggestions for action (at a household or personal level).

Good household/family resource.

### ***Paint the church green: A group course***

E Teague, Kevin Mayhew 2008



Bible study and reflection for groups aged 16+. Exploring the relationship between Christianity and concern for the natural world. Taking a holistic view of the world - not setting humanity against nature but with it.

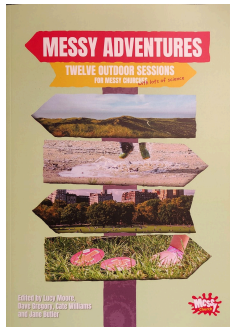
Looking at:

- Environmental Issues
- Sustainability
- Global Poverty
- Reflections on the Western Lifestyle

Resulting in positive practical suggestions for change in individual and communal life.

## ***Messy Adventures: 12 outdoor sessions for messy churches, with lots of science***

L. Moore, D. Gregory, C Williams, & J Butler, BRF



Each session has three sections:

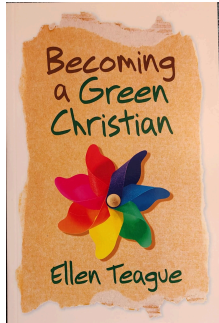
- On the move - based in a walk with stations
- Adventure on the spot - activities on a fixed site, away from the usual meeting space
- Activities - exploring the theme in the churchyard, garden or carpark.

Users can piece together a session from a selection of the above, to suit your context.

Each session explores a theme within a bible story - eg 'Wild and Wilderness - Jesus in the wilderness' and 'Wet and wild' - Jesus' baptism. There is lots of advice for those unused to open air worship - such as, for example - outdoor activities take longer - you don't need as many for a session.

## ***Becoming a Green Christian***

Kevin Mayhew, 2009



A thorough handbook for individuals or groups.

An argument is put forward for going green being an inherently Christian thing to do - being a way of life that enacts love, justice, peace and hope. Practical suggestions for where to start are given, beginning with having a hopeful outlook, and moving on to assessing your environmental impact. Theological, spiritual and practical in equal measure.

### ***Wild Bible, Wild Church***

P. Eley. Kevin Mayhew, 2021

The story of a church that lost its building and sprang to life by turning wild. The realisation that the bible shows us a wild God. Non Christians found this way of being church intriguing and exciting - in contrast to their response to talk of church life and Christianity that involved worshipping in a recognisable church building.

The author describes how worshipping outdoors and becoming aware of the natural world led to a deeper understanding of the bible. Building-based church tends to perpetuate dualism - inside:outside, holy:unholy, spirit:nature. This rooted-in-buildings practice can result in being a Sunday Christian - faith happens in church, not outside it.

The book goes on to outline worship, reflections and activities set in different types of landscape.

Both practical and theological. From an evangelical viewpoint - but something for everyone.

### ***Green Reflections: Biblical Inspiration for Sustainable Living***



M & M Hodson with paintings by M Beek. BRF



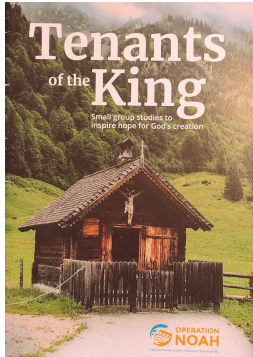
A series of reflections with paintings. (One painting and many reflections per section).

- The wisdom of trees - a spiritual journey through the bible's woodland. Reflections on the great diversity of trees in the bible.
- Biblical guidelines - how the bible provides a fresh approach to tackling a number of contemporary problems
- Landscapes of promise - Learning in the landscape. God teaches us through the place we are in now, as God ever did.
- Sharing resources - and using them reverently, wisely and selflessly
- Storms and fair weather - Weather as a metaphor for the seasons and journey of life.
- Christian reflection on environmental issues - biodiversity loss, climate change, water shortages, overpopulation, consumption of the world's resources.

An excellent book for deeper personal, or group reflection.

# ***Tenants of the King***

Operation Noah



Available in paper or as a pdf. Supported by online leader's notes and videos on YouTube.

4 sessions giving a biblical perspective, to encourage environmentally conscious living.

Thick with biblical references, and fairly directive in the discussion questions.

Good practical suggestions for 'living gently' on the earth.

Encourages political engagement.

An excellent section at the back covers, concisely common questions/objections to the arguments for environmentally responsible living, as Christians.

Includes a reading list, suggestions for films, videos and music as well as suggestions and resources for action.

Both biblical and practical.

## **Online resources**

Green Christian has a lot of good Lent courses (which could be adapted for use at any time).

<https://greenchristian.org.uk/lent-2024/>