

Panel Presentations

CHRISTIAN LITERARY ECOLOGIES: VICTORIAN AND MODERNIST

To practice a sustainable, flightless form of scholarly exchange, this panel will digitally connect two presentations at Baylor with two presentations at universities in the United Kingdom.

Joshua King, Baylor University

“Body of Christ, Body of the Earth: Gerard Manley Hopkins’s Ecotheology”

How did the Victorian poet Gerard Manley Hopkins find in poetry a potent language for envisioning Earth and its ecosystems as a living body joined to Christ, even the very body of Christ, and how did this inform his portrayal of environmental desecration?

Julia Daniel, Baylor University

“Bringing the Outside In: T. S. Eliot’s *The Family Reunion* as Ecodrama”

T. S. Eliot, while best known for his modernist poetry, turned to the stage in 1939 in order to critique a modern culture divorced from nature in his drawing room drama *The Family Reunion*. How does Eliot invite audiences to reconsider the spiritual and material harm that results from separating ourselves from the local landscape?

Emma Mason, University of Warwick, England

“Winter is Here: Rossetti’s Apocalypse”

How did the Victorian poet Christina Rossetti reconcile the meaning of Christian apocalypse with her ecological politics? To what extent does her reading of grace mediate the cliché of apocalypse as chaos and destruction?

Andrew Tate, Lancaster University, England

“‘Things That Are to Come’: John Ruskin, the Future and Stewardship”

How did John Ruskin, Victorian critic of art and society, engage with concepts of legacy, agency and ethical responsibility in his theologically-inflected and environmentally aware writing?

THE CITY AND CREATION CARE

Students of the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor

Chair—Brent Gibson, University of Mary Hardin-Baylor

A total of six undergraduate students will deliver short papers on the topic of the city and creation care with special emphasis on theologies of the city and of the built environment.

LOOK AT THE BIRDS OF THE AIR: WHAT BIRDS CAN TEACH TOMORROW'S LEADERS

David Ringer, National Audubon Society

Frank Ruiz, Audubon California

Suzanne Langley, Audubon Texas

Brooke Bateman, National Audubon Society

Christina Harvey, Audubon North Carolina

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, birds are used as teaching tools to illuminate spiritual lessons that are seen in nature (e.g., Job 12:7, Matthew 6:26, and throughout the Psalms). What do we see when we look to the birds today? Birds are widespread and familiar—the most manifest forms of wildlife that many Americans encounter in their daily lives (most of us see birds every day!). They bring joy to millions: According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 46 million Americans regularly take time to watch birds. Their songs bring delight and anchor childhood memories; their plumage and antics entertain; their annual migrations across the globe mark the passage of time and remind us that all things change.

In addition, they are powerful messengers about the state of the Earth and the state of our communities. When we pay attention to birds, we quickly and clearly see the consequences of our careless destruction of creation, our poisoning of the air and water, our changing climate. And their fates draw our eyes and hearts to the plight of our sisters and brothers most harmed by environmental destruction—the communities where pollution sickens children and devastation limits opportunity. Often, these communities are those most in need, the “least of these,” for whom our actions, or lack of actions, will be judged as if done to Jesus himself, Jesus said (Matthew 25:31-46). So, as we look to the birds, we can see a better way—a greater harmony with creation that helps birds and people thrive together.

Dr. Thomas Lovejoy's words introduce the National Audubon Society's strategic plan: "If you take care of the birds, you take care of most of the big problems in the world." The National Audubon Society's 1.3 million members are inspired by birds and love of their communities and neighbors. They work on the ground from coast to coast to heal the rifts between humanity and nature, in many cases because of their faith and commitment to conservative principles. They see firsthand the links between the health of bird populations and the health of their communities. When we look at the birds of the air, our polarized, entrenched positions recede into the background. The birds become our teachers, our messengers, and the choice to respond is ours.

This panel discussion features National Audubon Society staff and volunteer leaders, including Chief Network Officer David J. Ringer, to discuss practical and spiritual lessons we can learn from birds, how experiences in Christian congregations and Christian higher education can help or hinder environmental sensibilities, and examples of on-the-ground success stories and ongoing work. Panelists include Frank Ruiz, a pastor who leads Audubon's community engagement work in southern California (where the disappearance of the Salton Sea is simultaneously destroying bird habitat and causing terrible respiratory health woes among people); chapter leaders Suzanne Langley and Christina Harney, from Texas and North Carolina respectively, who work with Christian churches and other congregations to beautify church grounds with native plants and conserve energy and water; and Brooke Bateman, a senior scientist on climate at the Audubon Society.

Finally, to inspire a new generation, the National Audubon Society is launching a chapters program for college campuses in fall 2018, and Ringer and other panelists will discuss the relevance of Audubon's mission in campus life and for the next generation of leaders.

PARTNERS IN SUSTAINABILITY: BAYLOR AND THE CITY OF WACO

Smith Getterman, Baylor University

Dillon Meek, Waco City Council, District IV

Megan Henderson, Waco Downtown Development Corp.

Baylor University and the City of Waco have long enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship and come together in this panel discussion to consider ways they are partners in sustainability. Leadership from the two institutions will explore the following questions and more:

- What is the present impact that Baylor and Waco have on one another regarding efforts of sustainability?
- What are the challenges to advance the aims of sustainability for the City? For Baylor?
- What are the opportunities to advance the aims of sustainability for the City? For Baylor?
- What opportunities are there for future shared space among Baylor and the City? What models of “new urbanism” might be possible?
- How might Baylor and the City reimagine public transportation, walking paths, bike lanes, etc., especially in the downtown area? What are the challenges for the City and Baylor to make common cause on efforts of sustainability? What are the opportunities?
- What makes Baylor and Waco unique and how does that animate what we do for the sake of sustainability and care of creation?

The panelists will share remarks, then invite questions and conversation from the audience.

PEPPERDINE UNDERGRADUATE RESPONSES TO CLIMATE REFUGEES

Undergraduate Students of Pepperdine University

Chair—Chris Doran, Pepperdine University

Far too few people in the world are talking about the impending refugee crisis brought on by climate change. Unfortunately, even fewer Christians are talking seriously about it. While the statistics can vary widely, experts propose that there will be between 200 million and 2 billion climate refugees on the move by the end of the 21st century. Regardless, the tragedy and suffering that is likely to ensue, or is in fact going on presently in many parts of the world, demands a Christian response. For this panel, Pepperdine University undergraduates will propose theological and ethical directions to pursue as Christians attempt to construct an appropriate response to this significant issue of our time. Such responses will include an exploration of how Christians must demonstrate personal sacrifice in order to stand in solidarity with climate refugees through an adaptation of the work of John Woolman; an analysis of how we must come to treat climate refugees as children of God by using the thought of Jane Addams; and imagining how empathy toward others might help us see climate refugees as sisters and brothers in Christ.

A ROLE FOR CHRISTIAN SUSTAINABLE ENGINEERING IN THE STEWARDSHIP OF CREATION

William Jordan, Baylor University

Ken Van Treuren, Baylor University

Alex Yokochi, Baylor University

Christians have been involved for a long time in what is commonly called creation care. Engineering can have a big impact in this area. However, this topic is largely seen as being concerned about the environment. While this is important, sustainable engineering is a much broader approach to improving our quality of life. For example, even if oil could be obtained and used without any pollution, it is still a limited resource that will eventually run out. We need to work to develop renewable resources to meet our needs.

Sustainable development needs engineering to become successful. This is about creating an economy where the needs of the present can be met while still allowing for the future needs to be met as well. In this panel presentation we will discuss several important topics:

- What is sustainable engineering?
- Is there such a thing as Christian sustainable engineering? (We believe the answer to this is yes.)
- Where and how should Christian engineers be involved in sustainable engineering? How can we best prepare our engineering students to be involved with sustainable engineering? We will offer examples of what we in Baylor Engineering have done to address this topic.

SOIL, SOULS, AND SOCIETY IN LOWNDES COUNTY, ALABAMA

Ryan Juskus, Duke University

Emma Lietz-Bilecky, Duke University

Kristen Page, Wheaton College

When Catherine Coleman Flowers, of the Alabama Center for Rural Enterprise and the Equal Justice Initiative, and Dr. Peter Hotez, of Baylor's School of Tropical Medicine, partnered together to study the health effects of a dysfunctional wastewater system, they pointed toward a new way to steward soils and souls in one of the poorest counties in America. Through combining science, religion, and social histories, they pointed toward a practice of stewardship that holds social, economic, and ecological justice together. It is time to move beyond generalized discussions of stewardship of creation to the witness of stewards in very particular places where people are called into caring for particular creatures, human and otherwise. If, as they say, the devil is in the details, then we might not be so surprised to find God and the people of God at work in the details, too. Deep in the soil and water of rural, mostly African American, and economically poor Lowndes County is a more-than-human story that is at the same time an all too human one. The Creek nations believed this fertile land to be holy, impenetrable to expansionist American military forces. The plantation owners who removed and replaced them exploited this land's fertility by importing slave labor from the upper South to supply international cotton markets. The county's soil and hush harbors proved fertile ground for slave Christianity during the Second Great Awakening. Some emancipated slaves later became landowners, and many became sharecroppers as Reconstruction gave way to a reconsolidated racial hierarchy enforced through lynchings, including those of three Lowndes men lynched for working to organize black sharecroppers. "Bloody Lowndes," as it came to be known because of

white residents' extreme reaction to desegregation, also made history when Martin Luther King, Jr., led the Selma to Montgomery march through Lowndes soil and Stokely Carmichael famously announced a shift toward black power while organizing in Lowndes County.

Today, residents cannot flush their toilets without fear of hookworm, migrating tropical diseases, health department citations, and even jail time. The septic technology approved by the health department does not function properly in Lowndes soil, malfunctioning and DIY systems are considered noncompliant, and replacement systems cost around an average annual income for the county. This combination of crippling poverty, tropical disease, ineffective wastewater infrastructure, cruel enforcement, and racial disparity in one corner of the wealthiest country on Earth is what Flowers calls "America's dirty secret." Flowers thinks a better kind of stewardship of this land and its people is possible.

Keeping with traditions of Southern organizing, she began to match local efforts with wider networks. With the strategic support of scientists like Hotez and many others, she got the attention of national and international news media, members of Congress, the United Nations, National Geographic, the New Poor People's Campaign, and universities from Duke and Baylor to Columbia and Wheaton College. Beginning in Lowndes County, she seeks to develop collaborative solutions to problems faced by poor, rural Americans, believing that good stewardship of particular lands is inseparable from good relations with neighbors, near and far. Flowers' work in Lowndes County also brought her into relationship with Native American groups in the American West and the emerging movement to protect and defend fresh water sources that make human and more-than-human life possible.

This panel includes three presenters who will each address a unique intersection of theology and stewardship in Lowndes County. Emma Lietz-Bilecky, graduate student in theology and environmental management, theologically explores Lowndes soil as a witness that can convict societies of sin and invite environmental justice actions directed toward social and ecological healing in wounded land. Kristen Page, disease ecologist, fleshes out a scientific practice of stewardship as neighbor-love rooted in an ecological view of how hookworm and other tropical diseases emerge as a result of over-exploiting resources at the expense of local communities. Drawing on his research into the social and environmental history of Lowndes County, Ryan Juskus, doctoral student in theology, develops an ecopolitical theology of Lowndes soil during the saeculum, a time when both soil and society are complexly faithful and unfaithful, both variously witnessing to distinct constructions of a "we" and a "they."

UNION HONORS STUDENTS PANEL

Wisdom and the Stewardship of Creation

Chair—Scott Huelin, Union University

Abstract forthcoming.

Plenary, Featured, and Paper Presentations

Bryan Baise, Boyce College

Lebenswelt and Littering: Placing Sir Roger Scruton's Conservatism in Conversation with Evangelical Theology

Sir Roger Scruton, an English philosopher, is recognized for his accomplishments in philosophy, teaching, and public education. At the height of his career, spanning decades, he has written and lectured on topics ranging from hunting, art, politics, and natural conservation. His work *How to Think Seriously About the Planet* is a dutiful argument for creation care while holding a serious commitment to conservatism. Very little, however, has been done in placing Sir Roger's analysis in conversation with evangelical commitments to scripture and theology. This paper will seek to analyze Scruton's conservatism and its consequential commitment to the environment with evangelical theology. In particular, the question arises as to how much overlap there may be between the two conceptual frameworks and what evangelicalism may learn from the British philosopher in our desire to care for God's created order. Scruton's emphasis on localism, our role in conservation, and humanity's clear complicity in its present disorder will be explored alongside theological analysis.

Mackenzie Balken, Baylor University

A History and a Home: Creation Care in Willa Cather's *The Professor's House*

In the beginning, God placed Adam and Eve in a garden. Though the curse of the fall has marred creation and caused suffering in and abuse of the natural world, delight in and care for creation has long been recognized as important to the human body, mind, and spirit. In recent years, researchers have increasingly recognized nature-based therapies as beneficial to those suffering from traumatic disorders. Research teams have conducted studies demonstrating the healing powers of interaction with the natural world and suggesting wilderness therapy, ecotherapy, and therapeutic horticulture as means of encouraging mental stability following a traumatic event.

While these studies are immensely valuable, they are not the first to recognize the importance of the natural world to the human person. For centuries, literature of various forms and published in various places has suggested the value of the natural world and the importance of creation care for both the one performing the activity in the moment and for generations to come. One example of this literary interest in the natural world is Willa Cather's 1925 novel, *The Professor's House*. In the inset story of Tom Outland's discovery of the Native American Cliff City hidden in the Blue Mesa, Cather's novel demonstrates the importance of creation care for both the American landscape and Tom himself, a young man experiencing the traumatic effects of orphanhood.

Taking into consideration the traumatic nature of orphanhood and the benefits of participating in creation care for those suffering from traumatic disorders, this presentation will discuss how the uniquely American landscape of *The Professor's House* provides Tom with a place of potential healing. Specifically, I will argue that Tom finds in the Mesa and in the ancient Cliff City a history and a home that he was formerly without. However, when Tom loses the history of the place through the sale of the artifacts that he and Rodney Blake had unearthed, he is left with a home but without a sense of the past. As a result, he is unable to open himself to the other characters in the novel, which inability becomes the mysterious, attractive force that compels or repels each of the St. Peter family members and ultimately leads to the family's

demise. In this way, Cather's novel suggests both the power of the natural world in providing healing, and the importance of maintaining the integrity of a place through creation care.

Jeffrey Ball, Stanford University

Making Renewable Energy Big Enough to Matter

An epic race is underway: the race to make renewable energy big enough to meaningfully curb climate change. The race is creating new winners and losers, and it's doing this faster than almost anyone thought. To be sure, this is a race about energy and the environment—about developing and deploying technologies, such as wind and solar power, that the world will need to fuel economic growth while slashing carbon emissions. More fundamentally, though, this is a race about money and power. The competitors are countries, and industries, and companies, and investors, and regular citizens. The scramble to scale up renewable energy is making big money for some of them and losing big money for others. It is also shifting the geopolitical order, the chessboard on which nations compete for advantage. Foremost among those nations are the United States and China, the world's two largest economies and the world's two largest carbon emitters. What is not at all clear, though, is whether this renewable energy race will do much for the planet. Scaling up renewable energy to a point where it meaningfully helps the environment would require revolutionizing government policies and market practices to make them markedly more economically efficient. If the green revolution is to matter much, it will have to grow up.

Nathan Beacom, John Jay Institute, Alumnus

Begin with the Grass: Sustainable Farming as a Contemplative Practice

The distinction between the active and contemplative life, despite its prominence in the Christian tradition, has a way of falling apart in the practice of farming. In farming, that is, there opens up a possibility for consonance between action and contemplation, where, in Wendell Berry's words, a "Sabbath mood" can rest even on our work.

This paper builds on the theories of contemplation laid out by Jacques Maritain and Joseph Pieper to argue that farming has an inherent contemplative tendency, which has the capacity to transform the way in which we relate practically to the land.

In contemplation, a thing is beheld on its own account, addressed as a substance that is more than the sum of its utility. On the view offered by Maritain and Pieper, this beholding at once transforms the beholder and opens to her a pathway to the contemplation of the fundamentals of being. In the context of this beholding, the work of farming cannot be exploitative, because the land, the plants, and the animals are understood on their own terms as things of value apart from their usefulness. They become to the farmer as the Bible says they are to God: objects of delight. In this context, the work of farming becomes a work of love, and the daily chores of the farm themselves become a sort of contemplation in act, where love for the creatures is expressed in their very tending.

To this end, policy and practices need to be encouraged that allow farmers the space to follow this path that is the natural tendency of farming. A development of this contemplative attitude, this posture of respect, furthermore, is the ground and motivator of efforts in sustainable practices.

Philip Bess, University of Notre Dame

God and Aristotle in the City: Imagining Burnham's Chicago After Liberalism

The formal order of pre-modern cities privileged shared convictions of sacred and civic order, but the formal order of hyper-modern cities privileges the order of global crony-capitalism, with dubious prospects for widespread human flourishing. This talk illustrates how classical humanist sensibilities might coherently manifest themselves in metropolitan Chicago about a hundred years forward—a city chosen for study due to the ongoing internal conflict between its famous proto-modernist origins and history and its 1909 classical humanist *Plan of Chicago* by Daniel Burnham.

Andy Black, Baylor University

Holiness, Horticulture, (Animal) Husbandry...and the Hungry

In a memorable passage, Wendell Berry wrote these words:

We depend upon other creatures and survive by their deaths. To live, we must daily break the body and shed the blood of Creation. When we do this knowingly, lovingly, skillfully, reverently, it is a sacrament. When we do it ignorantly, greedily, clumsily, destructively, it is a desecration. In such desecration we condemn ourselves to spiritual and moral loneliness and others to want. (“The Gift of Good Land”)

This is a manifesto. A credo. Each of the claims here provokes thought and provides occasion for an examination of conscience. Given the stakes, these claims also warrant extensive commentary and critical scrutiny.

As a contribution to the ongoing commentary on Berry's words above, I wish to focus on three areas of reflection. First is the foregrounding of a “natural” pattern of sacrifice woven into the fabric of creation. Berry's opening line echoes the sixteenth-century radical Anabaptist Hans Hut, who preached a “Gospel of All Creatures,” in which the Christian's call to costly discipleship for Christ's sake has its analogue in the service/sacrifice offered to human beings by animals and other creatures. This is merely one example, but it demonstrates that Berry's fundamental contention has precedent. It also provides a fruitful starting point for further theological inquiry.

The second area of focus is what could be called apocalyptic sacramentalism. The late James Wm. McClendon, Jr., hoped to rehabilitate the reputation of apocalyptic prophets like Hut, in spite of the fact that so many modern forms of apocalyptic Christianity had become so otherworldly banal. It is certainly the case that among those contemporary American Christians eager to avoid conformity to the patterns of this world, many do not see an urgent need for nonconformity when it comes to their practices of consuming food (bringing to mind Charles Primus's contention that “any religion that doesn't tell you what to do with...your pots and pans can't be interesting”). Instead, it is now often self-consciously secular folk who seek out possibilities for more “reverent” (etc.) ways of eating, in urgent response to what has been revealed to them about the travails of the natural world and its creatures. Here, Bruno Latour's 2013 Gifford lectures (“Facing Gaia: A New Inquiry into Natural Religion”) provide helpful insight into the connections that must be made, and made explicit, so that more people acquire a palpable awareness that we are living in a “time of the end” such that basic habits of food consumption take on an intensified meaning.

Finally, I conclude with reflections drawn from my work as a professional member of the “anti-hunger community.” Berry implies that a concern for holiness in our consumption of food goes hand in hand with a desire to ensure that our neighbors have the food they need to live. The

reality, however, is that many feel faced with a tragic choice between either stewarding creation via a fundamental reshaping/disrupting of our established habits of food production and consumption, or ensuring that those who are food insecure are fed as effectively and efficiently as possible within the parameters of our current infrastructure and economic system.

To be precise, Berry does not explicitly state that the cultivation of “sacramental” eating habits will invariably contribute to the well-being of our neighbors in need. The challenge posed by Berry’s manifesto, in the context of a nation and world of hungry people, cannot be solved at the level of policies or programs. The theological and conceptual resources described above do not resolve this problematic, but they can guide us toward the way ahead and steel us for attending contemplatively to our most basic acts of consumption *and* to our neighbors (and the deep connections between them), even amidst the end of the world as we know it.

Jeremy Blaschke, Union University

Should All Species Be Conserved? Thoughts on Trinitarian Ecology and the Problem of Parasites

At the core of the Trinity is relationship, fellowship, and community. Three coequal yet diverse persons in one relationship of pure unity and love. All persons complement, encourage, enliven, and benefit the others, and the whole relationship is founded on and surrounded by self-giving love. Creation, as the overflow of this loving nature, reflects the Trinity in a marvelous way: creation too is about relationships—unity with diversity. Every component of a beautiful meadow full of wildflowers, from the nutritive soil and radiant sunshine to the flowers themselves and their mutualistic pollinators, only exists through a united community of distinct partners in abundant relationships. Even the disvalue of predation is a critical component of ecosystems. In Yellowstone, for example, the elk rely on the wolves just as much as the wolves rely on the elk because they all live in a dynamic environment that requires them both. Remove a single partner and the beauty of the entire ecosystem is in danger of collapse.

For the Christian, then, ecology should be a worshipful act because it is the study of these Trinity-reflecting relationships, of animals with their environment, in fellowship with their own species, and in community with other species. These intricately complex, interdependent, and ever-adapting relationships should astound us and foster delight and wonder at God’s creativity, provision, and love for his creation. Likewise, conservation is ultimately meaningful because it is the preservation of these relationships, with the implicit motivation that these relationships are deeply *good* and are worth saving.

However, some relationships in nature seem destructive, even “evil,” rather than good: parasites like botflies that writhe, feast, and mature under the skin of mammals and birds, or tapeworms, roundworms, and blood flukes that afflict millions of humans around the world. By definition, parasites reduce the fitness of their host—they live at the direct expense of others in sharp and bloody contrast to a harmonious Trinitarian relationship. Parasitism therefore, represents a distinct and terrible disvalue in nature because it is a corruption of right relationship. There is no mutualism between parasite and host; there exists only (to use human terms) selfishness, deception, theft, even murder, which leaves an indelible impression that such relationships ought not to be.

How then should Christians steward a creation filled with parasites? I suggest that a Trinitarian view of creation emphasizes that nature should not simply be preserved in its current state. Rather, as God’s image bearers on earth, we should endeavor to partner with God in his creative work by making nature more fully reflect the character of the Trinity. We should reduce

suffering and encourage beneficial relationships. In practice, this means that the sorrowful reality of nature is that not all species should be protected and conserved; sometimes entire species, like the Guinea worm and the malaria parasite, should be eradicated. We have a responsibility to delight in God because of the intricate beauty of the relationships in nature, to preserve the beneficial relationships intact for future generations, and to remove or redeem the harmful relationships in creation that mar the selfless love and unity of the Trinity.

Maria Boccia, Baylor University

Is It Okay If I Do This? Theological Reflections on the Ethics of Animal Research

The emergence of groups such as the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) has eclipsed other groups that focus on animal welfare such as the ASPCA or the Humane Society, as the voice for animal welfare in the US. These groups, buoyed by philosophers such as Peter Singer of Princeton, have argued for the complete cessation of the use of animals in research as well as for granting human rights to animals. The Great Ape Project and Nonhuman Rights Project go further than considerations of welfare and are attempting via the court system to achieve recognition of great apes as persons having rights. In May 2018, the concurring opinion on a case involving chimpanzees in the New York Court of Appeals came very close to acknowledging such rights. The basis for these arguments depends on philosophical assumptions about the natures of human beings and animals, and the meaning of rights and justice. As a Christian engaged in research with animals, I have explored not only the ethical claims, but also the philosophical underpinnings of these movements, and have articulated a Christian ethic grounded in a solid understanding of biblical principles. In this paper, I will address the ethical position at which I have arrived, and provide the theological principles and arguments leading to this position.

The first chapters of the book of Genesis provide the foundations for several doctrines that contribute to this ethical position. First is the creation itself. In the beginning God created...and one's ethic must start with this. Second is the Imago Dei. Human beings are uniquely made in the image of God. What one understands this doctrine to mean will significantly impact how one understands the relationship of human beings to the rest of creation, including animals. Third is the cultural mandate. That is, when God created, he placed the human beings he created in a responsible position over the creation. Whether one interprets this responsibility as domination or stewardship profoundly affects how one approaches creation. These ideas will be elaborated in this paper and applied to the issue of animal research. Briefly, the argument is as follows:

Premise 1: God created the universe, and he created it to reflect his character and attributes. Therefore, the creation has value independent of any value human beings may place on it, requiring that we treat all of creation with respect.

Premise 2: Human beings uniquely bear the image of God, independent of any physical or psychological characteristic, meaning that human beings, for whom Christ died, will always be of greater value than animals not created in His image. Shared characteristics between humans and animals do not diminish this assertion. Because the creation reflects God's attributes, one would expect all of creation, including humans, to share characteristics that reflect His attributes. However, the doctrine of Imago Dei indicates that humans are something more; something not shared with the rest of creation.

Premise 3: God placed human beings in a position of stewardship of His creation and

responsibility to the Lord of the universe for the execution of that stewardship. The cultural mandate includes, from Genesis 1:28, both creation of the social world, building families and communities, and the natural world. This requires the development of science and thus provides the Biblical foundation for scientific enterprise. Furthermore, while historically, the passage in Genesis has been cited to justify exploitation of the creation, careful consideration of context and the rest of Scripture leads to the conclusion that the relationship is more care-taker than owner.

Given these considerations, it follows that animals are part of God's creation and reflect his attributes, but they are not made in the image of God and are of lesser value than human beings. Humans must be good to creation, including animals, and are responsible for protecting both animal and human life. Using animals in research can be a legitimate activity, whether this research benefits the animals themselves or human beings alone, but the legitimacy of that activity is dependent on how it is conducted. Stewardship demands humility and respect for what ultimately belongs to God. Animals used in research must be cared for appropriately, have suffering minimized, and their use be well justified in terms of benefits to human beings or to the animals.

Steve Bouma-Prediger, Hope College

The Character of Earthkeeping: A Christian Ecological Virtue Ethic

In his essay "Christianity and the Survival of Creation," Kentucky farmer, novelist, essayist, and poet Wendell Berry argues that the indictment by conservationists that Christianity is culpable in the destruction of the natural world "is in many respects just." Berry claims that "Christian organizations, to this day, remain largely indifferent to the rape and plunder of the world and its traditional cultures. It is hardly too much to say that most Christian organizations are as happily indifferent to the ecological, cultural, and religious implications of industrial economics as are most industrial organizations." In the very next breath, however, Berry insists "however just it may be, it [the indictment of Christianity by conservationists] does not come from an adequate understanding of the Bible and the cultural traditions that descend from the Bible." Critics too often dismiss the Bible, Berry observes, usually without ever reading it. He thus concludes: "Our predicament now, I believe, requires us to learn to read and understand the Bible in light of the present fact of Creation."

Berry himself has clearly presented his understanding of how to read the Bible in light of the present fact of Creation. His conclusion on the Bible and what it teaches about humans and the natural world is worth quoting at length:

The Bible leaves no doubt at all about the sanctity of the act of world-making, or of the world that was made, or of creaturely or bodily life in this world. We are holy creatures living among other holy creatures in a world that is holy. Some people know this, and some do not. Nobody, of course, knows it all the time. But what keeps it from being far better known than it is? Why is it apparently unknown to millions of professed students of the Bible? How can modern Christianity have so solemnly folded its hands while so much of the work of God was and is being destroyed?

So, Berry concludes, "we have no entitlement from the Bible to exterminate or permanently destroy or hold in contempt anything on the earth or in the heavens above it or in the waters beneath it. We have the right to use the gifts of nature but not to ruin or waste them." In my view, Berry's claims are spot on. We are holy creatures living among other holy creatures in a world that is holy. We have no entitlement from the Bible to exterminate or permanently destroy or hold in contempt anything on the earth. Indeed, the Bible speaks of humans as earth creatures

(*adam* from the *adamah*) who have the God-given responsibility (made *imago Dei*) of caring for the earth and its plethora of creatures. The Bible begins and ends with rivers and trees. The Bible portrays God's good future as earthly and earthy.

Furthermore, in the Apostles' Creed we begin with a confession of God as Maker of heaven and earth. In the Lord's Prayer we pray that God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In the Doxology we sing that all creatures here below praise God. In sum, earthkeeping is woven into the fabric of our faith, if only we have the eyes to see. As the prophetic ecological theologian Joseph Sittler put it:

When we turn the attention of the church to a definition of the Christian relationship with the natural world, we are not stepping away from grave and proper theological ideas; we are stepping right into the middle of them. There is a deeply rooted, genuinely Christian motivation for attention to God's creation.

My argument, more exactly, is that earthkeeping is a better word than stewardship to capture the biblical view of things. While the debate about stewardship continues, for a variety of reasons earthkeeping more accurately describes our human calling on this our home planet. So, after a critique of stewardship, I make a case for viewing humans as earthkeepers and (briefly) explore earthkeeping in terms of a Christian virtue ethic. If earthkeeping is a more robust way to understand the care for the earth that is integral to Christian faith, then what are the character traits of holy creatures living among other holy creatures in a world that is holy? How do we become people who embody virtues such as wonder and humility, frugality and self-restraint, justice and love, faithfulness and wisdom, courage and hope?

Susan Bratton, Baylor University

Contemporary Wilderness Religious Experience, Environmental Focus, and Ultimacy: Reflections on Teilhard de Chardin's "The Mass on the World"

Multiple academic studies have identified indigenous religions as effective in mitigating overharvest and other forms of environmental degradation. Yet historic data do not support the concepts that regional religions operate in balance with nature and are unilaterally protective of regional floras and faunas. The question becomes: when religions do contribute positively to environmental sustainability, how do they achieve this? Examination of cases from animist fisheries and monotheistic garden and architectural design finds they share a characteristic termed eco-dimensionality, where religions promote sustainable values and technology via a constellation of integrated symbols and practices. Religious eco-dimensionality incorporates inventories of biota and eco-systemic processes, recognition of ecological and environmental spatial and temporal dynamics at multiple scales, understanding of communitarian and anti-communitarian human behaviors, structuring of social networks at multiple scales, developmental platforms for sustainable technologies, and an integrative repertoire of religious narratives, aesthetic endeavors and ceremonies. Eco-dimensionality can be diminished, recovered, or evolved to address new issues. Effective strategies reduce "thingness" and raise the value of other species and natural resources by associating them with the supernatural or holy. The discussion concludes with Christian case histories and quandaries concerning contemporary means of sacralization in secularized cultural settings.

Susan Bratton, Baylor University

Is Intrinsic Value Worth Enough? Shared Blessings, the Beatitudes and Biodiversity Conservation

Intrinsic value or the existence value of all species has been a cornerstone of philosophical environmental ethics since the field began to consolidate in the 1970s. Compatible with the Christian concept of creation by a unified and eternal God, intrinsic value has become a dominant rubric for Christian creation care. Environmental philosophers and social scientists have, however, begun to challenge intrinsic value as too universal and deficient in concrete guidance. Investigation of religiously-based environmental planning and management projects suggests that a high level of eco-dimensionality and elevating the value of specific species and ecosystems via sacralization are cornerstones of successful approaches. While intrinsic value counters instrumental approaches and treatment of other organisms as “things” to handle and dispose of at will, it does not identify priority species or ecosystems. This paper argues that intrinsic value should be supplemented by Christian ethical inversion of valuation, as expressed in prophetic texts and in the Beatitudes, where the meek shall inherit. Based in gifts from God and originating, not in actions, but in the person of Christ, the Beatitudes challenge Christians to think “relationally” about the environment. This ethical formulation emphasizes need, reciprocity, and inheritance from God. Utilizing Matthew 5 as a template, this paper experiments with a dual alignment of blessings, incorporating both humans exercising creation care and the creatures also called to sustain the earth’s productivity and biodiversity.

William Briggs, Baylor University

Dominion and Devastation: Environmental Justice in Ezekiel, Zephaniah, and Contemporary America

In light of the growing importance of creation in contemporary discussions of the Hebrew Bible and its relationship to modern ecological concerns, this presentation examines the rhetoric regarding nature within Ezekiel with a focus on Yahweh’s devastation of natural features, in connection to the contemporary issues of land ownership, pollution, and their social consequences. These texts, particularly Ezek 6; Ezek 35-36; and Zeph 2, portray Yahweh as concerned with issues of order, land and land ownership, and the pollution of the land. Human idolatry and failure to recognize that the land belongs to Yahweh leads to the pollution of the land and the violation of the creational order. These texts are considered in view of the contemporary malpractices of large agricultural corporations, allowing the prophetic passages and the modern world to shed light on one another, and in view of the texts’ larger vision of the relationship between care for the land and justice. In contexts both ancient and modern, Ezekiel and Zephaniah speak against notions of unbridled human dominion over creation and assert that humans are deeply intertwined with the world around them.

Savannah Clawson, Brigham Young University

Genesis in Light of Job: Reading the Whirlwind into Eden

While examining the cultural origins of the environmental crises of the modern age, it cannot be denied that the mainstream Judeo-Christian tradition is partly, if not largely, responsible for western societal attitudes towards an anthropocentric environmental ethic. Critics of the Bible are quick to blame these attitudes on the Genesis narrative and its nature as an anthropocentric text. While acknowledging the centrality of the Genesis creation account, my paper seeks to challenge the attitudes responsible for Christianity’s environmental debt, and in

doing so unearth the Bible's ecocentric explanation of Creation, extending the narrative beyond the paradisiacal garden of Eden and into the "whirlwind" of the Book of Job. Job's tale is a lesson in God's omnipotence and power, but this is not its only lesson—Job's journey with the divine is drenched in creation imagery, and when read through an eco-critical lens, confronts many of the primary presumptions of Genesis, both challenging and redefining Christian anthropocentrism, common and shallow interpretations of dominion, apocalyptic rhetoric and earthly materiality, and the implications of a world without wild. An interweaving of the texts births the space for a "Joban" reading of Genesis that reveals the Bible's theological capacity for a divinely appointed ecocentric vantage point that demands an ethical approach to the planetary consequences of our choices.

Brian Clayton, Gonzaga University

C. S. Lewis and the Conquest of Nature

I propose to answer the question: Is there a consistent and coherent view of creation and stewardship in the writings of C.S. Lewis? The most extensive statement of Lewis's view of the nature of creation and of our responsibilities towards creation is probably to be found in the third chapter of *The Abolition of Man*. In *The Abolition of Man*, Lewis begins by analyzing the expression "Man's conquest of Nature" and critiques the attitude towards Nature behind this expression. He goes on briefly to call for an alternative approach that he only sketches out. Lewis most fully puts narrative flesh on the analytical bones of this chapter in the third book of the Ransom Trilogy, *That Hideous Strength*, but we find in his other fiction (e.g., *The Magician's Nephew*) instances of his view of Creation and of the divine mandate for humans to care for that creation. In my presentation, I plan to outline both the critical and constructive elements of Lewis's view and to illustrate these elements as they appear in his fiction. All of this shows, I believe, that Lewis does have a consistent and coherent view of creation and stewardship and that this view is largely of a piece with the rest of his theological and philosophical framework, especially in its ongoing concern with pride and humility.

Gerald Cleaver, Baylor University

Multiverse Creation Theology and the Stewardship of Sentient Beings

Over the last several decades, multiple research directions in cosmology and theoretical physics have come to imply that the universe in which humankind lives is likely not the sole universe. Instead, physical creation is likely an (infinite) collection of universes—a "multiverse." Some (small percent of) universes are expected to possess an underlying set of physical laws similar to ours, while the vast majority would likely have an extremely diversified plethora of sets of physical laws.

Much has been written regarding the scientific, philosophical, and theological implications of a multiverse. This paper focuses on how existence of a multiverse can inform and build on traditional creation theology. We examine what multiverse creation theology implies (and how this may differ for each of Tegmark's four multiverse classification levels) regarding responsibility and stewardship of any sentient, self-aware species for its native environment (e.g. planet earth in the case of humankind) and any other spacetime domains the species may explore and/or settle. The role that a particular amount of entropy in a given universe plays with regard to the need for stewardship is considered.

Bearden Coleman, Houston Baptist University

Visions of Eden, Visions of Destruction in the Natural World: The Films of Terrence Malick and Robert Bresson

This paper will examine the way the films of Terrence Malick and Robert Bresson speak differently—in style and content—to ecological crisis. Both Malick and Bresson are often lumped into the fuzzy category of “spiritual” filmmakers, and both tie their concerns for the environment to our relational and spiritual selves. However, where Malick’s films consider the possibilities of returning to an Edenic state in the natural world (see *Tree of Life*, *The New World*), Bresson’s cinema (specifically in *The Devil, Probably*) embodies the despair and alienation caused by the escalation in grand-scale pollution. Further, this paper will look at the way Malick’s elliptical editing and Bresson’s exacting montage articulate their concerns in two distinct ways. Finally, this paper will consider the efficacy of both approaches to speak to audiences who live with the effects climate change outside of the theater every day.

Jason Crawford, Union University

Shakespearean Nature

This paper will ask what the concept of “nature” means, and how it matters, in the plays of Shakespeare. These plays do think persistently about the meaning, the possibilities, and the limits of nature. In a play such as *King Lear*, where the word in its various grammatical forms appears more than 50 times, the problem of “nature” is an urgent, integral concern. And across the plays, the language of nature catalyzes and focuses some of Shakespeare’s most abiding questions. What, then, does “nature” mean for Shakespeare? Is nature order, the grounds of law and human community? Is nature chaos, the primal impulse to violence that law and social order must contain? Is nature at odds with the human, and with the variegated forms of human making? Is nature an Eden? A book of God? A goddess to be encountered? A passive body to be owned and exploited? To what extent is nature a theater of atrocity? To what extent can nature be a theater of grace? By taking stock of these questions, this paper will consider how Shakespeare’s nature belongs to the longer cultural history of nature, a cultural history which is arguably at a critical moment in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. And it will ask what Shakespeare sees and knows, what his plays still have to teach us about the significance of nature, and the claims of nature, at our own troubled moment.

Melinda Creech, Baylor University

Flora in Dorothy Wordsworth’s Grasmere Journal

Dorothy Wordsworth kept a journal for the first four years that she lived in Grasmere, making a home there with her brother William. In the beginning lines of “Home at Grasmere,” William confesses:

Lured by a little winding path,
I quitted soon the public road,
A smooth and tempting path it was,
By sheep and shepherds trod.
Eastward, toward the lofty hills,
This pathway led me on
Until I reached a stately Rock,
With velvet moss o’ergrown.
With russet oak and tufts of fern

Its top was richly garlanded;
Its sides adorned with eglantine
Bedropp'd with hips of glossy red.
There, too, in many a sheltered chink
The foxglove's broad leaves flourished fair,
And silver birch whose purple twigs
Bend to the softest breathing air.

Dorothy's journal reveals she adopted these same practices—walking around the place and naming things—to find her home at Grasmere. She provides many beautiful accounts of her attentive observations of the natural world in those journals, mentioning flowers, mosses, shrubs, and trees more than 400 times. Her brother depended on those keen observations for many of the poems he wrote during those years.

In the summer of 2017 I participated in a course at Baylor University, “Wordsworth, Poetry, and the Environment.” We traveled to the Lake District in England, studied the original manuscripts of Dorothy and William Wordsworth, and walked in the landscape that inspired William's poems and Dorothy's journal. The invitation to create a project that served both the scholarly community and the wider public in collaboration with the Wordsworth Trust inspired me to create a tool that scholars and the general public could use to become familiar with the flora that is mentioned in Dorothy Wordsworth's Grasmere Journal. I collected the metadata surrounding the flora in the Grasmere Journals, became familiar with the flora of Grasmere, and created a guide, a journal, and a project on iNaturalist, a citizen science application for electronic devices. Begun in July 2017 and continuing month by month until June of 2018, the project encouraged visitors and the wider public to use the guide to become more familiar with Dorothy's flora, to find connections and insights into the Wordsworth's poetry, and to share those insights through comments on the guide, project, and journal. Visitors to the Wordsworth Trust were able to pick up an attractive free postcard with QR codes connecting them to the guide, project, and journal. Ultimately scientists may use the information in the project and guide to determine how the flora has changed since Dorothy wrote her journal in the 1800s. This project not only celebrates Dorothy's connection to the flora of Grasmere, but also encourages a similar celebration of the current flora in Grasmere and instigates a concern for the preservation and sustainability of that flora.

As William Wordsworth prepared to leave Grasmere for a trip abroad, he penned these words in “Farewell, thou little Nook of mountain ground”:

And, O most constant and most fickle place!
That hath a wayward heart, as thou dost shew
To them who look not daily on thy face,
Who being loved in love no bounds dost know,
And say'st when we forsake thee, ‘Let them go!’
Thou easy-hearted thing! with thy wild race
Of weeds and flowers till we return be slow
And travel with the year at a soft pace:

I enjoyed experiencing the “wild race of weeds and flowers” that grew in Grasmere and doing it at such “a soft pace” through this past year, submitting a journal entry and a guide contribution each month of the year and pondering how Dorothy's observations compare to the observations that are currently being made in Grasmere. The guide will prove a useful tool for those who are curious about “scarlet beans” and “London's pride.” The project provides a connection between

Dorothy's world and our own and inspires some present day iNaturalist walks with Dorothy among the mountains, lakes, becks, and fields of Grasmere.

In this presentation I will introduce Dorothy Wordsworth's Grasmere Journal and her manuscripts, discuss the inspiration for my project, and demonstrate the "Flora in Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal" iNaturalist guide, the "Flora in Grasmere" project, and my journal of the experience. I will relate the value of the project to citizen scientists, literary scholars, and the general public, and suggest applications for further uses of this model.

Robert Creech, George W. Truett Theological Seminary **Returning Home with Wordsworth and Berry**

Although Wendell Berry admires Wordsworth's work, he does not do so without reservation. Berry sees the romantic project in general as too much about the poet and his subjectivity. This, he believes, creates a kind of distance between the poet and the natural world. However, Berry acknowledges his appreciation especially of Wordsworth's love for and attempt to know the people of the land.

But there are times when Wordsworth's mind is sounder, sweeter, and more modest, and at these times his mind is turned toward the shepherds, farmers, and other working country people whom he knew well and loved. In *Michael*, for instance, one does not feel anywhere the cold breath of the egotist (189).

Berry's evaluation of Wordsworth (and the Romantics) can certainly be challenged. On the one hand, Wordsworth and other Romantic poets may at times be guilty of approaching Nature as an object merely to be mined for imagery to express the subjective feelings of the poet. This may not be the whole story, however. Wordsworth can express a keen awareness of Nature as an agent, a subject, acting on him and his mind. Additionally, the qualities Berry affirms in Wordsworth are more than superficially present in the poetry. Wordsworth's love for the people of the land and his love for the land are intimately linked. The "Wordsworth" caricatured by such critics as Scott Hess may be more open to such criticism than the poet himself. Wordsworth has had the unfortunate fate of facing two centuries of criticism. A "close reading" of his *life*, attending to his *practices* alongside his poetry, might be more helpful than criticism in understanding how he saw himself coming home to Grasmere. Regardless of Berry's equivocal relationship with his predecessor's work, he and Wordsworth are appropriate minds to bring together in the discussion of what it means to come home. This paper will stress their common insights on the human dilemma of displacement from Creation.

William Wordsworth and Wendell Berry, as it turns out, are certainly fitted to engage this conversation with each other; biographically, they would have plenty to talk about. Both grew up in a rural hill country environment, with farmers and shepherds—Wordsworth in England's Lake District around Cockermouth and Hawkshead and Berry in Henry County in north central Kentucky, bordering the Kentucky River. Both left home for an education and to pursue writing careers, living in some of the largest cities of their day. Both eventually, in their early thirties, deliberately decided to return to the region of their birth and childhood. Wordsworth lived in the Lake District until his death in 1850 at age eighty. Berry, at eighty-four, continues to live outside Port Royal, Kentucky, in Henry County. Both exhibit a love of the natural world, a respect for the common people of their region, and a poetic ability to help others see their world more clearly. Both have a regard for the importance of place, for human ecology, and for the role of nature as teacher. And both reflected deeply on the experience of returning to their home—Wordsworth in his poem "Home at Grasmere" and Berry in an essay, "A Native Hill." Each of

these writings is produced, at least in part, to explain the way in which the poet has been shaped by his place, the way the mind of the writer has become “fitted” to the external world of Grasmere or Kentucky.

This paper will explore the ways in which both Wordsworth and Berry came to find themselves “at home” when they returned to their native place, through the practices of *attentive affection* and *participative possession*. Given the serious and imminent consequences of being displaced human beings, disconnected from the Earth, dislocated from a sense of home here, finding our way home is imperative. Our treatment of the Earth is related to how well we are able to know this place as home. Pope Francis calls all people to an “ecological conversion” that will take up the task of reconciliation with our common home. Such a reconnection can be aided by the mutually supportive practices of attentive affection and participative possession carried out in the locality in which we live.

Ellen Davis, Duke Divinity School

The Land as Kin: Renewing Our Imagination

Looking at texts from both Testaments of the Christian Scriptures, along with contemporary agrarian poetry, we will consider how the Bible can awaken and instruct our moral imagination with respect to the world that the biblical writers recognize to be “the work of God’s hands.”

D. Marcel DeCoste, University of Regina

‘One Among and Not Separate From’: Fallen Communion and Forfeit Community in Cormac McCarthy’s *The Crossing*

The Crossing is not simply “the most overtly religious...of Cormac McCarthy’s novels” (Broncano 72). It is, I contend, a meditation on the ideal of stewardship and its entanglement with our fallen state. Set in motion by Billy Parham’s decision to repatriate a wolf that has crossed the border from Mexico, McCarthy’s tale is shaped by Billy’s sense of duty to nature. Calling himself “custodian to the wolf” (118), this teen leaves his home and country both to discharge this responsibility. What’s more, he insists upon its fiduciary nature, telling those who seek to buy or seize the wolf that she has “been entrusted to his care” (90). Billy’s stated mission thus echoes the Catholic teaching of McCarthy’s upbringing, which speaks of Creation “as a gift addressed to man, an inheritance destined for and entrusted to him” (CCC 88). For Benedict XVI, this demands a “responsible stewardship over nature, in order to protect it, to enjoy its fruits, and to cultivate it” (104). Billy seems to embody this sacred duty of conservation, yet *The Crossing* remains “a novel of loss” (Bourassa 446). Pledging himself to the wolf’s survival, Billy nonetheless initiates events that lead not only to his shooting her, but to the murders of all his family.

This tragic end constitutes, I argue, a Christian warning against making of the call to stewardship an idolatry that usurps our duty to love. Billy’s fascination with the wolf is a longing for communion, a desire to live as it does, “always corroborate to itself and never wholly abandoned in the world” (79). He yearns for a harmony with Creation that would let him be, like the wolf, “one among and not separate from” (127). Billy is drawn, as Hawkins observes, to innocence (35), and he thinks it might be reclaimed by selfless devotion to nature’s purity. But while Hawkins insists that “Billy’s heart...is in the right place” (41), the bloody fruit of his search for harmony suggests otherwise. From the start, Billy’s stewardship is motivated and deformed by a refusal of original sin; the oneness he seeks is the stuff of Genesis. Adam knew

such intimacy with nature, as well as with humanity and God, but in the Fall, Pope Francis writes, “harmony between the Creator, humanity and creation as a whole was disrupted by our presuming to take the place of God and refusing to acknowledge our creaturely limitations” (45). Wedding himself to Creation, Billy seeks a self-authored return to Eden, but, thinking he can thus ignore the limits imposed by his fallen humanity, he only reenacts the Fall itself. Dismissive of others’ faith in Providence—“God looked after everything” (325)—Billy ignores all limits, borders, and boundaries in his lonely attempt to himself play at God’s stewardship. Doing so, he ensures the destruction of that which he reveres and catastrophically rehearses Adam’s sin.

That his idea of stewardship thus partakes of a world-shattering hubris is indicated by the novel’s ending: having served the ruin of all he loves, an indigent Billy is awoken by the false dawn of the first atomic bomb detonation at the Trinity test site (425). This terrible spectacle works to amplify the destructive potential of Billy’s readiness to replace a providential God. In its proclaiming total war triumphant, it also points, by contrast, to a humbler duty that might have saved him. Consistently an object of others’ charity, Billy repeatedly repudiates human community in his quest to commune with animal creation. Twice he abandons his family to mortal violence; three times he leaves his homeland; continually he refuses offers of home. But as the Catechism instructs, “Society is not for [the human person] an extraneous addition but a requirement of his nature” (511). Thus, as he’s instructed by an Indian elder, Billy must return home, “because to wander in this way would become for him a passion and by this passion he would become estranged from men and ultimately from himself” (134). The truth of this prophecy reveals how Billy’s longing for a saving communion with nature works to rehearse the Fall, insofar as it divorces him from the loving community with God and man that, on the Christian view, must undergird any proper stewardship and curb its pretensions to Lordship.

Calvin DeWitt, University of Wisconsin-Madison **The Bible and Environmentalism**

The Bible describes the satisfying and joyful appointment given to Adam and Eve to serve and to keep the Garden of Eden, but their disastrous choice to know evil spoiled people and their life-support system. In the New World, millennia later, settlers in the Eden of America again lost ground, but between 1864 and 1964 they were alerted, principally by five biblically informed people—George Perkins Marsh, John Muir, Theodore Roosevelt, Aldo Leopold, and Rachel Carson. Examination of these five finds them all to have world- and life-views that are expansively integrative, working organically to hold together reciprocity between gardener and garden, between people and the biosphere. Over the course of a century, from Marsh’s *Man and Nature* in 1864 to Rachel Carson’s death in 1964, each worked to re-establish the lost reciprocity of con-service between people and the biosphere, and to safeguard both in the interest of biospheric integrity. Curiously, it was only in 1966, after their deaths, that they were first called environmentalists and their work, environmentalism. The Bible and its exposition were important to all of them, as also was the biosphere and all its benevolent services to life on earth. They were two-books people—not merely readers and students of the Bible, but also readers and students of Creation. And not only Creation beautiful and whole, but abused and neglected. And it was this two-books knowledge that fueled their passion for stewardship. Their testimony and his personal experience motivated Professor Lynton Caldwell to help design flagship legislation that would inaugurate the remarkable environmental decade of the 1970s. This was joined in 2016 by *Laudato Si’*, by Pope Francis, bringing hope that the long-standing Stewardship Tradition would be rekindled not only in America but around the globe.

Chris Doran, Pepperdine University

A Protestant Christian Response to Climate Refugees

While military and other security officials from a number of nations have been strategically planning for decades, far too few people in the world are talking publicly about the impending refugee crisis brought on by climate change. Unfortunately, there are even fewer Christians worldwide talking seriously about so-called climate refugees. There is not even a whisper of a conversation about this topic in American Protestant Christian communities. While some of this stems from the fact that few American Protestants consider climate change to be a serious enough problem to change their daily behavior, many are likely ignorant altogether about even the term climate refugee. While the numbers can vary, experts propose that there will be between 200 million and 2 billion climate refugees attempting to relocate by the end of the 21st century. While some of those will come from low-lying island nations and some from regions where deserts are rapidly expanding, the vast majority will likely come from the regions where the world's great cities are built next to ocean ports. Regardless, the tragedy and suffering that is likely to ensue, or is in fact going on presently in many parts of the world, demands a Christian response.

In this paper, I argue that the mindful and creative practice of Christian virtues like solidarity, hospitality, courage, and justice will provide hopeful ways for Christians, especially American Protestants, to be the face of Christ to climate refugees wherever they might be. In solidarity, we must recognize that we are all created in the image of God, which should be the basis for a commitment to the common good. In hospitality, we must learn to practice new forms of sacrificial living so that more people may be included at the table of God. In courage, we must stand up to the principalities and powers who often vociferously claim that people who come from foreign lands are fundamentally disruptive in their new societies. And finally, in justice, we must learn that sharing of resources is an explicit reflection of the affirmation that God made the planet with enough for all, if only we desire to share. The practice of these virtues will be critical to how Christians will be known in the age of climate change.

Emmy Edwards, Baylor University

Creation Care: A Christian Higher Education Responsibility

This paper argues that Christian institutions of higher education have the unique opportunity to develop creation care in students and provide leadership in sustainable living. Because the Christian college has the responsibility for both student formation and innovative discovery, it is perfectly poised to lead the way in sustainable community living.

This paper will open with a theoretical exploration of the unique position of Christian colleges to lead in sustainable living. First, the Christian worldview sets up the college to have a foundational care for God's creation. The eschatological view of the Christian should inspire her to think hopefully about the future, working towards the Kingdom of God. Similarly, the incarnational nature of God should motivate her to care for the earth in the present moment. Finally, the notion of solidarity, a key aspect of Catholic moral teaching, asserts that all of humanity is intimately connected and therefore should embrace a mutual care for one other. This solidarity should imbue the Christian's worldview with a sense of responsibility of climate care for the sake of those people on Earth, in the present and the future, who are most vulnerable to the climate's changes. These arguments will point to the fact that the Christian worldview should motivate college leaders to take seriously initiatives aimed at sustainability and climate care. Additionally, college leaders should recognize the responsibility to develop this shared

motivation in Christian students while living in community throughout the college experience.

The next section of this paper will unpack the reasons why the Christian college is set up to be a leader in discovery related to sustainable living. Though Christian colleges share in the worldview with Christian churches and communities of faith, Christian institutions of higher education have a unique commitment to the discovery and transmission of knowledge (Ream and Glanzer, 2013). Because Christian colleges are responsible to innovatively seek and spread discovery and innovation, the worldview that motivates creation care can be a motivating force for the careful study of environmental sciences.

However, though the shared commitments of Christian colleges set them up to be leaders in sustainable living, Christian colleges are not as highly represented among colleges known for their ecological wellness. Evangelical or non-denominational schools are behind to an even greater extent. None of the schools on the U.S. News's 10 Eco-Friendly College Campuses list are Christian. Of the schools listed on the Princeton Review's list of Top 50 Green Colleges, only seven are Christian institutions. Of these seven, five are Catholic and two are Methodist affiliated. Of the Methodist affiliated schools, Emory University and Green Mountain College, religious language is mainly confined to discussions of the institutions' histories. Reasons for this lack of Christian leadership in this realm of college administration could be a lack of resources, but many of the secular schools listed were small liberal arts schools. Another reason could be the highly politicized nature of the issue of sustainability.

Finally, the paper will conclude with an exploration of certain institutional examples of a Christian commitment to sustainability and creation care. Two collegiate examples are St. Michael's College, a Catholic college in Vermont, and Berea College, an unaffiliated Christian work college in Kentucky. St. Michael's College, though a more traditional institution in comparison to Berea, has a number of green initiatives in academics and campus life. One of the many benefits of St. Michael's College's initiatives is the connection being fostered between the institution and the surrounding community. Berea College pairs its sustainability initiatives with the work of the students. The work college provides students the opportunity to work throughout their education in order to graduate debt-free. In this way, the culture of sustainability becomes an integral part of campus life.

Though Christian schools have a wide array of institutional commitments and priorities, the pairing of the Christian worldview and the responsibility for discovery allows the Christian college to be a leader in the work of sustainable living. Though funding limitations or political hesitations might cause Christian higher education leaders to waver in pursuing sustainability initiatives, Christian leaders can look to institutions like Berea College and St. Michael's College as exemplars.

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Felix Enegho, Kogi State University

Environmental Change in Nigeria and Its Impact on the Society, the Church and Christian History

The environment is such an important part of any society, and Nigeria as a nation is not an exception. There is so much talk and debate on climate change in our contemporary time and many are curious to know how the issue of the environment can be discussed, which could likely lead to development. The pollution that emanates from the emissions from the exhaust pipes of cars and heavy-duty vehicles, smoke and carbon monoxide from generating plants for electricity in every part of Nigeria due to the epileptic power supply, and the gases that are released via gas flaring in the oil producing parts of Nigeria have continued to contribute to the environmental hazards in some parts of Nigeria. In Nigeria, everyone wants to have a car, as the ownership of a car is considered a sign of affluence in a society where the manufacturing of cars is still in an elementary stage in comparison with other countries in the world. Most of the cars imported into Nigeria are used cars from Europe and America that are often not in the best of conditions. As for generating plants for electricity, which could be found in every Nigerian home and office including government parastatals, one could assert that such engines and high-powered machines are the causes of most of the pollution experienced in Nigeria. And not forgetting the incessant bush burning experienced in many parts of Nigeria, which also adds to environmental pollution and deforestation. Heavy industrial equipment and other goods are still transported through Nigerian roads with trucks and other heavy-duty vehicles, thereby generating pollution in the environment, which has continued to contribute to the climate change experienced in Nigeria.

If the world does not cut pollution of heat-trapping gases, the already noticeable harms of global warming could spiral out of control. Because of pollution's devastating effects on global warming and climate change, it is becoming increasingly urgent to reduce these emissions and curb the pressure that humans exert on the planet. The situation is so critical that, by the International Energy Agency's assessment, if we continue not to remedy it emissions will be up 130% by 2050. Most of the emissions that reach the atmosphere come from coal (43%), followed by oil (33%), which is Nigeria's main source of revenue, and there is a warning that countries must rapidly direct their development toward clean and renewable energy to curb emissions and avoid the dark forecast for 2050.

Global warming and climate change is a global problem and needs to be addressed globally, but individual nations can address this issue separately and responsibly. Nigeria may not have been listed as one of the nations with high emission rates just yet, but it is estimated that if urgent steps are not taken to curb the environmental pollutions experienced in Nigeria, it will get listed pretty soon. Using a historical methodology, the thrust of this paper is to critically assess the environmental change in Nigeria and its impact on Nigerian society, Christianity and Christian history. The issue of the environment is not only scientific, but religious, sociological, and psychological. In fact, it is a human challenge that must be curbed to a reasonable extent. At the end of this paper, there are some recommendations based on research findings, which would to a large extent ameliorate the effect of environmental pollution and degradation in Nigeria.

Alexander Fogleman, Baylor University

The Word of God and the Subversion of Matter: Basil of Caesarea's Creational Anagogy

The fourth-century theologian Basil of Caesarea is often given a pivotal role in the history of science for his writings on the natural world. In his commentary on Genesis 1, *The Hexameron*, Basil delights in the wonders of creation, carefully attending to the world's

particularities and its generative, self-sustaining qualities. This interest in the world is framed by what Colin Gunton has called “the ontological homogeneity” of creation. Marking a clear break with Platonist hierarchies, which deprived creation of its independent status, Basil’s writing, on this narration, paved the way to modern approaches to science. While some scholars have recognized that this appreciation of nature was embedded within a “symbolic” framework, wherein the creation was understood “semiotically” as a text that spoke to the believer about God, by and large, Basil has been praised especially for his attentiveness to creation in itself. Even those committed to reading Basil within his own historical context cannot help but describe his tour of Genesis as a fourth-century version of “national geographic.”

I will argue, conversely, that Basil does not fit so well within the mold of proto-modern scientist. In fact, the symbolic approach to nature that some scholars have noted was far more determinative in his thought than has been recognized. He not only commended, for reasons of piety, the study of creation for what it tells us about the Creator. More significantly, his semiotic approach to nature was grounded in a doctrine of creation that rendered any notion of self-subsisting matter as unintelligible. That is, materiality had, for Basil, no separate or self-sustaining existence. When physical objects in the world were shorn of their accidental properties, one found no fundamental substance underneath them, only the divine will. While Basil’s younger brother Gregory has received more attention in the history of philosophy as an exponent of a kind of “immaterialist” metaphysics, I argue that a similar approach undergirds Basil’s approach to creation as well. To put it succinctly, for Basil the study of creation leads to a study of God because creation has no actual substance “in itself,” but only as it relates to the Creator. Thus, any true study of creation, if it is a study of what creation actually is, is an exercise in ascent to the divine nature.

In this paper, I consider two aspects of Basil’s work that fill out this argument. First, taking for granted that Basil was thoroughly enthralled with and diligently studious of the natural world, I ask how this fascination was reconciled with his recommendation of taking a spiritualist or anagogical approach to the study of nature. Secondly, I look at how this approach to nature was grounded in metaphysical assumptions about reality. I then conclude with a brief suggestion as to how Gregory’s approach may be relevant to contemporary concerns regarding the stewardship of creation.

Carl Friesen, University of Notre Dame

Beyond Stewardship of a Divine Gift: Ecological Natural Law as a Framework for Christian Environmental Ethics

The Christian penchant for otherworldliness or disregard for the social, political, and environmental aspects of the Christian narrative has been roundly criticized since at least the mid-twentieth century. Scholars from nearly every stream of the Christian tradition seem to agree that the redemption inaugurated in and by Jesus Christ extends beyond the spiritual life of the believer to include all of present reality. This movement toward fundamental concern for everyday life has often included an emphasis on care for the natural world. Theologians as diverse as Sallie McFague, Norman Wirzba, Mark Graham, Jonathan Merritt, and Michael Northcott, among many others, contend that nature is not simply so much raw material for human exploitation. Rather, human beings have a mandate to care for or steward creation because it is God’s gift to us rather than something we possess. The contemporary Christian mantra with respect to nature is thus frequently encapsulated in the term “creation-care.” Yet, environmentalists such as Lisa Sideris and Wes Jackson suggest that the diverse manifestations

of this dominant approach in Christian ethics suffers from three critical, concomitant deficiencies: (a) it is premised on the problematically anthropocentric notion that natural value is grounded in nature's relationship to human wants and needs, (b) it presupposes that humans can outthink the ancient structures and functions of natural ecosystems, and (c) the normative implications of natural processes are secondary considerations at best. Christian moral reflection on environmental ethics implicitly perpetuates destructive environmental practices as a result. This essay contends that although theological motifs such as "creation-care" and "divine gift" need not be abandoned wholesale, Christian conceptions of right relation to the non-human world can better address pressing environmental concerns through an ecologically informed re-appropriation of the Christian natural law tradition. Drawing on thinkers like Sideris, Jackson, Aldo Leopold, Thomas Aquinas, and Jean Porter, I begin to sketch such a moral framework and suggest that the practices of what some have called "regenerative agriculture" offers a practical case study in ecological natural law.

Makoto Fujimura, Fuller Seminary

Creation to Culture Care: Emily Dickinson, Rachel Carson and the New Creation

Makoto Fujimura will speak on his thoughts surrounding "Culture Care" (2017 IVP) and his new book *Theology of Making*. Examining the writings of Rachel Carson and Emily Dickinson, Fujimura will explore the thesis of Culture Care as a path to live in the abundance of Creation, and as an invitation to create into the New Creation.

Jeannie Gauthier, Louisiana College

James Fenimore Cooper's Natty Bumppo: Early American Conservationist

From the beginning of America's history, those who traveled to the New World came with a calling to spread the gospel and become God's new chosen people in a new Jerusalem. Early leaders such as William Bradford and John Winthrop determined to create a society based on Christian principles and ideals. However, these settlers' understanding of the stewardship of creation was affected by the European culture of the time. Because they were accustomed to the civilization of the Old World, they looked upon the undeveloped land of America not only as a land of opportunity, but also as a fearful and suspicious place. It was a land untouched by civilization, but more importantly, untouched by the gospel. Upon arrival, William Bradford describes the New World as "a hideous & desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts & wild men" (*Of Plymouth Plantation* Book 1, Chapter 9). Thus, their view of being stewards of creation in this New World was one of dominance and control, rather than care and preservation. Within a few generations, the mass killing of wildlife and clearing of forest land became part of the idea of progress for the European colonists.

Two centuries later, James Fenimore Cooper emerged to challenge these practices. In his *Leather-stocking Tales*, he describes in detail the beauty of the natural landscape and portrays the natural way of living of the Native Americans in a more positive light than the wasteful and disrespectful Europeans. In his novel *The Pioneers* (1823), Cooper's larger-than-life character Natty Bumppo (the Leather-Stocking) prefers the ways of the Native Americans to those of his European counterparts. Ironically, it is not the Christian frontiersman of Cooperstown that have influenced Natty to protect God's creation, but instead the "heathen" Native Americans of the region. Throughout the novel, Natty Bumppo attempts to teach the frontiersmen what he has learned from the Native Americans—a true stewardship of creation. He uses the resources God has provided in nature without destroying the natural balance, and he criticizes the wasteful ways

of the Europeans. Thus, through the creation of his *Leatherstocking Tales*, and more specifically the iconic character Natty Bumppo, James Fenimore Cooper continues to challenge his readers to be good stewards of creation, to take seriously the role that God has entrusted to all of mankind—to care for and protect creation.

Lance Green, University of St. Andrews

Nobility of the Ordinary: A Heideggerian Reading of Tolkien on Modern Technology and the Goodness of Creation

Martin Heidegger asserts that “everywhere we remain unfree and chained to technology, whether we passionately affirm or deny it.” Unquestionably, modern technology wholly orients our lives, and according to Heidegger, hinders the possibility of knowing ourselves and the world in the most fundamental ways. Though Heidegger himself shows no interest in the theological ramifications of his thought, his philosophy of technology certainly bears on theological concerns. I contend that Heidegger can help Christians better understand the problematic nature of modern technology and its relationship to the created world. A fruitful way to bring a theological lens to Heidegger’s philosophy of technology is through the literature of J.R.R. Tolkien, whose own criticisms of technology are well known. Without question, Heidegger and Tolkien are an odd pairing. But the ways in which they correspond on the topic of modern technology is uncanny, and their distinctive thoughtworlds illuminate each other in unexpected ways.

In this essay, I use Heidegger’s philosophy of technology as a lens to interpret how the Enemy wields technology in Middle-earth, asserting that it offers Christians ways to think critically about modern technology’s impact on our interpretation of the natural world. I begin by offering a brief explanation of the fundamentals of Heidegger’s philosophy of technology, specifically the consistency of technology’s essence and the ways in which it orients our interpretation of the world. Heidegger claims that particular technologies, from the food industry to the hydrogen bomb, share the same essence, and that any attempt to focus on ethical uses of these technologies obfuscates the danger of modern technology. Further, modern technology has become for humanity a mode of interpreting the world as a commodity, whether its natural resources, landscapes, or even people. These reductionistic tendencies are similarly found in Tolkien’s literature.

Thus, after my brief explication of Heidegger’s philosophy, I examine technology in *The Lord of the Rings*, specifically in Saruman’s use of technology in Isengard and the Shire, as well as the One Ring’s effects on Sméagol and Samwise. In these scenes, I accentuate two motifs in turn. First, I consider how the Enemy’s technology in Tolkien’s lore is akin to Heidegger’s reading of the essence of modern technology. Both Saruman’s and Sauron’s use of technology demand destruction of the natural goodness of creation, either through the reduction of things to a mere material for use or by disordering naturally good desire for the sake of domination. Second, I tease out the thoroughly Christian interpretation of the created world from these scenes: the divinely inscribed goodness of Creation demands a posture that prioritizes the nobility of the ordinary over and against technology’s reductionistic lens. Thus, in the concluding section of this essay, I demonstrate how Tolkien’s own belief in the ennoblement of the ignoble offers a path for Christians to reevaluate their relationship with technology and posture themselves toward Creation in a way that more appropriately interprets and engages with the rest of the created world.

Paige Gutacker, Regent College

Putting Down Roots in a Digital Age: Virtues, Sacraments, and Sabbath

From the very beginning, the Christian story *places* human creatures; God creates a garden-home for Adam and Eve and charges them with tending it. That Divine caretaking call echoes forth today, tasking us to cultivate, tend, and create. Yet many twenty-first century Christians find that we are disconnected from our world and ill equipped to steward it. In this paper I suggest that three things are necessary if we are to embrace our vocation as caretakers of creation: we must recognize the instrumentalization at the heart of our experience of placelessness; we must become mindful of the way our digital technologies may stymie our formation as virtuous caretakers; and we must be reoriented to creation through the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist.

First, if we intend to answer the call to be caretakers, we must name the source of our placelessness so we can untangle its damaging effects. Places are meant to be epicenters of our lived experience, full of meaning and specificity, shared with neighbors and other living things and grounding us in responsibility and accountability. Yet ours is an age marked by transience and a pervasive sense of placelessness—of being upended from the locales that gave our forbearers identity, strengthened their memory, and undergirded their purpose. One example is the modern homescape of suburbia, which is abstract, ubiquitous, and valued for its proximity over its integrity. But such placelessness goes back before the emergence of suburbia, growing alongside Modernity—which itself arose from the ashes of Christendom, was carried on the shoulders of the Enlightenment, and worked its way out through the Industrial Revolution. For before we became disconnected from the land, we embraced a mindset that Jacques Ellul calls ‘la technique,’ an instrumental rationality characterized by dualisms such as *object or means* ends. As Modernity took hold, we began to see ourselves as subjects and to identify the world as full of objects, downgrading creation to mere stuff that we could control. To overcome our resulting sense of displacement, we must first recognize it as a symptom of this underlying technological mindset.

Second, if we intend to answer the call to be caretakers, we must grow in the four cardinal virtues—prudence, justice, temperance, and courage—as virtue formation may act a corrective to the instrumentality of the modern mindset. Yet growth in these very virtues seems increasingly difficult in the midst of our ever-present digital technologies, which, while positively showcasing humanity's successful transformation of nature into culture, may subtly act back on users in formative (or deformative) ways. We will briefly look at each in turn. Prudence—good judgment and self-governance—may be hindered by the conflation of values that results from accessing all things through a single window. Justice—moderating self-interest in relation to the needs of others—may be stymied by the narcissism that results from mediated relationships, distorting them such that we use other people like products to meet our needs. Temperance—moderation, restraint, and self-control—may be inhibited by the distraction circus that is the Internet, which invites us ever further down endless rabbit trails. Courage—facing danger, pain, or opposition—may be thwarted by the on-screen experience of disburdenment and seeming-invincibility. To overcome these potentially deformative impulses of otherwise beneficial digital technologies, we must balance their pull by rooting ourselves in spiritual practices.

Third, if we intend to answer the call to be caretakers, we must be reoriented and renewed through the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist. In baptism, believers are born again into Christ who is our head, re-cognizing our lives in identification with a crucified Lord. Such a baptism

goes against the grain of our Modern mindset of technique and mastery. Then, in the Eucharist, we are invited to live a new story marked by Christ's self-giving love. This Eucharistic economics—an economy of gift—unravels the Modern impulse to acquire and control. One example of how we may see this gift economy play out is through the spiritual discipline of Sabbath practice, which involves entering into God's rest and living in light of the Resurrection one in every seven days. Perhaps as we practice Sabbath, the regular rhythm of ceasing, resting, embracing, and feasting will slowly teach us the practical wisdom of resisting the instrumentality that leads to the commodification of creation and the idolatry that leads to its overuse. Then and only then will we be ready to answer our caretaking call.

Justin Hawkins, Yale University

Forgetting the Language of Creation: Evangelical Climate Change Skepticism and the Natural Typology of Jonathan Edwards

It is by now a well-established fact that American Evangelicals are that demographic that is more skeptical of climate change than any other demographic in the developed world. And it is frequently the case that their skepticism seems caused by theological, rather than scientific, reasons. This seems to confirm the claim of Lynn White Jr.'s famous 1967 essay "The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis," which has become one of the paradigmatic texts in the relationship between Christianity and the environment, that Christianity has something to do with exploitation of the environment, that Christian theology requires skepticism about environmental degradation and disdain for non-human creation: "Especially in its Western form, Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen...by destroying pagan animism, Christianity made it possible to exploit nature in a mood of indifference to the feelings of natural objects" (White 1967:1205). Those Christians with sincere concerns about climate change and environmental degradation therefore face a two-pronged challenge here: there is the sociological fact of evangelical recalcitrance against climate change belief, combined with the apparent theological fact that Christian theology seems to militate against creation stewardship.

This essay takes up the task of responding to both of these challenges through an examination of the natural typology of Jonathan Edwards. Edwards, the 18th century Puritan theologian, has recently enjoyed a revival in scholarship thanks to the publication of his completed works by Yale University Press and the popularization of his thought through the New Calvinist movement in American evangelicalism. He therefore stands as a trusted source for many evangelicals. A recent study published in the *Journal of Geoscience Education* entitled "Assessing the Influence of an Educational Presentation on Climate Change Beliefs at an Evangelical Christian College" found that of all strategies employed to convince American evangelical college students to believe in human-induced climate change, the most successful one was employing "trusted experts" who shared evangelical religious and theological commitments and who also believed in climate change.

This paper will be an investigation of Edwards's theology of creation, and particularly his doctrine of natural typology, with the aim of demonstrating that Edwards has all of the theological resources necessary to defeat White's theological claims and to act as a theological resource to make plausible the argument that human beings, through their actions, can contribute to the degradation of the natural world. Given his reputation among American evangelicals, he counts as a 'trusted source' for many of them. And given his belief in precisely the Christian doctrines that White says conduce toward disregard for non-human creation, he serves as an important test case for whether White's argument holds. The centrality of the created world in

the theology of Jonathan Edwards has been noted many times before (e.g., Lane 2004; Minkema 2004; Nichols 2010), but never in connection with either evangelical climate change skepticism or White's theological challenge. Therefore, it may be surprising to find that Edwards's theology is suffused throughout with much concern for the non-human world. His *Typological Writings* form an entire volume of the Yale Edition of the *Works of Jonathan Edwards*. On Edwards's account, while God created the natural world to show forth his own beauty and to display spiritual realities typologically, the effect of sin on that structure of communication is twofold: it makes the human hearers of that language forget it, and it makes the natural world itself less capable of bearing the weight of revelation. It is human sin that destroys the ability of the natural world to show us the beauty of God. Therefore, we have theological reason to believe that human beings can (and do) degrade their environment around them, which causes them to lose the ability to see God's grandeur in the world. On Edwards's account, then, the great tragedy of anthropogenic climate change is a theological one: we destroy an opportunity to hear the word of God speaking to us through the medium of creation. Thankfully, however, a recovery of Edwards's theology of creation, and particularly his doctrine of natural typology, holds the promise of contributing to a new generation of Christian creation stewardship.

Sorina Higgins, Baylor University

The Red Side of the Green Ground: W. B. Yeats on Conflict and Creation Care

Many scholars have remarked on Yeats's relative silence on the subject of World War I, and indeed he himself asserted his intentions not to speak about it in "On Being Asked for a War Poem." What may be even more surprising is that Yeats, a poet who loved the land and who was highly sensitive to the beauties of creation (especially in his native Sligo), should not write about the devastating effect war has on the natural environment. This may be due to the national "therapeutic voluntary amnesia" (Foster 125) many Irish people practiced about their conflicted relationship to England's involvement in the Great War. In his play *Cathleen ni Houlihan*, his long poem "Meditations in Time of Civil War," and the four pieces he wrote elegizing Major Robert Gregory, Yeats associates Irish freedom with the fertility of the land. Proper stewardship of the natural environment, especially in an agricultural community, these works assert, requires men and women free from oppressive overlordship, free to work their own land. Thus Ireland's green fields stand for republicanism. However, at the same time, Ireland's fight for freedom wooed young men away from working the land, leaving no one to care for creation, just as Yeats became more and more disenchanted with the increasing violence of Ireland's rebellious cause. What emerges from these works is a conflicted political environmentalism, in which freedom is required for the fertility of the land, but which requires the sacrifice of the very people who would tend it.

Anthony Holdier, University of Arkansas

"And Also Much Cattle?": Theological Reflections of the Zoopolis

Many people affirm negative rights (such as "life") for non-human creatures but stop short at suggesting that humans are necessarily obligated to provide for anything besides other humans. The 2011 publication of Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka's *Zoopolis: A Political Theory of Animal Rights* aims to defend positive rights for non-human animals in a new manner that I argue bears striking similarities to the Christian understanding of stewardship and the eschatological vision of interspecies harmony found in the Bible.

In *Zoopolis*, Donaldson and Kymlicka advance a complex framework for expanding the

positive relational rights which humans enjoy to encompass non-human creatures as well via an expressly political approach that grounds many interpersonal obligations not in biology, but in public relationships. By differentiating inalienable rights (such as “life” and “liberty”) from relation-based rights (such as those given to citizens or non-citizens), *Zoopolis* suggests, for example, that domesticated creatures are positively owed more than wild animals because of the different interspecies political structures they inhabit. By outlining the three basic political relationships within which communities of animals might interact with human populations, Donaldson and Kymlicka defend a citizenship-based theory of animal rights that confers domesticated, wild, and liminal animal groups with citizenship, sovereignty, and denizenship, respectively.

This provocative vision meshes well with the biblical presentation of animals and humans as co-created beings both pronounced to be “good” by God upon their creation in the first chapter of Genesis but ordered in a way such that humans are called to a unique leadership role. Although the Christian tradition has been notoriously opposed to animal rights in many respects (often based on the objective superiority of the *Imago Dei*), the Bible presents several pictures of humans obliged to treat animals as rights-bearers, such as in Levitical laws that promote animal-directed freedom (Ex. 23:11 and Lev. 25:7), rest (Exodus 20:10), and compensation for labor (Deut. 22:4, 25:4), as well as stories of God's love for nonhuman animals, such as that of Jonah, wherein God is hesitant to destroy Nineveh given that it is filled both with people "and also much cattle" (Jonah 4:11; see also Num. 22, Matt. 10:29-31, et al.). And while animal sacrifice is indeed a central element of scripture, God's love for those animals serves both to underline the significance of their deaths (beyond functioning simply as a ritualistic tool) and to further symbolize the culmination of those sacrifices in both the horror and the beauty of the Cross. Altogether, the biblical call for humans to exert themselves as stewards of God's creation entails not simply avoiding certain harms, but positively caring for all of God's creatures in much the same manner that *Zoopolis* seeks to promote.

Moreover, the Bible resounds with images of animals worshipping God alongside human beings, not only in the present state, but likewise in the future, where wolves, leopards, and lions will live in peace not only with lambs, goats, and calves, but with humans as well. Much like Donaldson and Kymlicka's ultimate hope, the eschatological image of the New Heavens and New Earth envisions a structured society with human beings functioning in leadership roles but exercising that leadership not as the dominators of a morally neutral creation, but as enriched guardians of a multifaceted, interspecies citizenry.

In short, this paper brings Donaldson and Kymlicka's groundbreaking ethical work into conversation with the theological concerns of Christian thinkers like Trent Dougherty, Andrew Linzey, and N.T. Wright to argue that Christian theism and its conception of stewardship robustly supports a profound strand of contemporary animal ethics.

Eric Howell, DaySpring Baptist Church

Learning to Live in a Sacramental World: Invitations to Baptists from Franciscan Spirituality

Franciscan creation-centered spirituality can be received as a gift by evangelicals and Baptists who tend to diminish the significance of creation in their theologies. Certainly, this is not an obvious connection, given the distance from the medieval Catholic saint of Assisi and the various ideologies gathered together in contemporary protestant evangelicalism. Yet, viewing the former in light of the latter seems viable and vital at a time when evangelicals struggle to

respond to the ecologic crisis of our time. Francis is widely treasured for his love and care for creation and is experiencing a renaissance in popular imagination these days as the namesake of the current Pope, who also afforded the saint pride of place in *Laudato Si'*. Evangelicals have already romantically incorporated Francis in silent vigil in their backyard gardens. Here we explore what Francis holds for us beyond birdbaths. St. Francis's life and Franciscan thought weave experiential, personal love for God with missionary courage that will be familiar and inspiring to evangelicals who otherwise may not normally turn to Catholic saints for theological inspiration. Drawing particularly on the Franciscan tradition, we find resources that help us attend to our identity as creatures, discover a spirituality of loving care for creation, while deepening our love for God. Indeed, we see more fully how these three matters are intimately related.

The first section of this paper attempts to describe, generally, the diverse landscape of evangelical environmental theology, highlighting common features in the evangelical approach. It would be far beyond the scope of this paper (and seemingly impossible) to attend to every diverse expression of evangelical thought, so I try to give an account of the sense of shared understanding. Sociological studies reveal the essence of the protestant grassroots. *Introducing Evangelical Eco-theology* (2014), written by a group of evangelical scholars, offers, along with various denominational resolutions, views from the grassroots. From these resources we can summarize a general evangelical protestant perspective toward creation which features transcendence as a primary metaphysical attribute of God and stewardship as the shape (and limit) of faithful human relationship with the earth, both rooted in a functionally dualistic view of the material world.

Despite scholarly proclamations of a "greening of Christianity," denominational resolutions affirming our stewarding responsibilities, and full-page ads in the *New York Times* declaring that evangelicals are serious about environmental stewardship, conservative protestant evangelicals and Baptists are largely missing from reflection and action toward creation's care. This is no accident but the fruit of a theology that could benefit from the spiritual legacy of St. Francis. I believe evangelicals and Franciscans have enough in common that a bridge between them is possible.

Following this provisional judgment, in the second section, I sketch characteristic Franciscan alternatives to evangelicals, drawing on the work of Sr. Ilia Delio and a group of Franciscan scholars in *Care for Creation: A Franciscan Spirituality of the Earth* (2008). Engaging these modern-day Franciscans, we find three fecund invitations. First, metaphysically, our vision of God expands from divine transcendence to divine immensity. Second, anthropologically, our view of the place of humans in creation shifts from stewardship to kinship with all creatures. And third, the relationship between spirit and matter opens from dualism, by which spirit and matter are held apart, to a sacramental view of all creation by which the Creator God is encountered through the ordinary stuff of life. St. Clare's pattern of creation-centered contemplative prayer is offered as a spirituality of the sacred ordinary that is just the enlivening spirituality evangelicals may experience as a breath of fresh air in the stale debates about environmental stewardship. We embark on this journey that we may join wholeheartedly all creation in Francis's famous Canticle, "Praised be you, my Lord, with all your creatures."

Philip Jenkins, Baylor University

Climate History and the Remaking of Christianity

Many Christians today are, rightly, deeply concerned about threats to the environment, particularly through climate change. But the more we understand the impact of climate through history, the better we understand how Christianity itself—like other religions—has been profoundly shaped by those global factors. Time and again, throughout history, climate-related crises and disasters have driven religious change and evolution. Particularly in certain transformational eras, such global shocks have shaped the religions we know. In such troubled times—around 1320, 1680, 1740, or 1820—climate-driven wars and plagues have conditioned outbreaks of religious intolerance and massacre. They have inspired persecutions and migrations, and sparked revival movements. These, in turn, have redrawn the maps of where various religions are and where they have been. These shocks have decided the nature and location of religious minorities; the dissemination of new faiths, churches, and denominations; and the likelihood of mass conversions.

This climate history has critical lessons for understanding contemporary and near-future climate change, and its likely impact. We already see the effects in struggles over resources and water. Across Africa and Asia, in the near future, we would expect violent tugs-of-war over the remaining fertile lands and water supplies, with inter-communal raiding. Long historical precedent suggests that such environmental crises will provoke a calamitous wave of religious wars, persecutions, and pogroms, involving Christians, Muslims, and others. We would also expect a thirst for religious explanations of the disasters, and a fresh openness to apocalyptic and millenarian preaching.

If indeed climate change creates the kind of environmental disasters that seem highly probable, then that would surely drive unprecedented waves of migrants and refugees—again, both Muslim and Christian—bearing these new beliefs and insights. As so often in the past, climate change and mass migration will fundamentally reshape the world’s religious realities. Our future is written in water. Predicting religious futures is a sensitive and uncertain affair. But as the Marquess of Halifax sagely observed some centuries ago, “The best way to suppose what may come is to remember what is past. The best qualification of a prophet is to have a good memory.”

Fred Johnson, Hope College

God and the Defense Department: Partners for the Climate and Peace

Every year, the Department of Defense issues reports addressing concerns about climate change and the challenges those changes pose for America’s national defense. Famously pragmatic in its information gathering methodology and explanation of outlook, DOD (and the Pentagon) have managed to stay above the partisan bickering that usually derails rational attempts to discuss humanities’ impact upon the climate. Since wars are still generally fought outdoors, climate’s effect upon the military’s ability to accomplish its mission—keeping America safe—is a matter of utmost importance. Year after year, DOD warns that climate change is a major factor of great, and grave, concern as military planners are forced to adapt strategy, tactics, personnel, and equipment to problems generated by human sourced climate complexities.

Cautionary alerts from military leaders, who, though in the business of making war, have historically been the least enthused about conflict, gives them common cause with Christian keepers and/or makers of peace. The robust proof offered by DOD of (for example) climate

change forcing mass migrations, which makes more acute human competition for scarce resources, underscores the necessity of action by Christians and their governments to, if possible, minimize conflict. Subsequent clashes of culture, stresses upon local populations, and the resentment of those who deduce that their inability to feed themselves, make a living, or protect their families is due to the destruction wrought by external entities, offer powerful recruitment incentives for terrorist networks. Nations of the global north that have historically been engaged in extracting natural resources from less wealthy nations risk heightened vulnerability, i.e., attack, when dispossessed, destitute people connect the environmental and/or climatological degradation of their homes to those powers.

This paper addresses the mutual concerns of Christian peacemakers and America's military establishment for taking expeditious action to protect and preserve God's creation. Along with being a matter of Christian stewardship (in responsibly husbanding the bounty of God's creation), prioritizing environmental degradation as a clear and present danger necessarily addresses the condition and responsibility of human beings who are simultaneously threats to, and threatened by, that degradation. Those Christians who serve the United States either in making policy or in uniform are (ideally) first committed to serving God. By better stewarding the environment, they are uniquely positioned to care for those most adversely affected by climate threats in accordance with Jesus's declaration in Matthew 25:40 when he stated: "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

The spectacular debacle of non or inadequate response in the wake of 2005's Hurricane Katrina; the environmental catastrophe in the oil producing region of the Niger Delta which led to the guerilla attacks by MEND (Movement to Emancipate the Niger Delta); and the dangers of Agent Orange, lingering from America's war in Vietnam, underscore the urgency of the moment. Human beings thrive or perish in accordance with the health of their environment. America's military planners have no illusions about their ability to prevent and/or limit wars if the climate and environment continue degrading. Such degradation will compound their already difficult task, heightening the loss of life among civilians and military personnel. Starvation, civil wars, terrorism and other ills resulting from environmental stresses are likely to do their part in claiming civilian lives before any American martial involvement. For U.S. Christian peacemakers and military leaders, caring for planet Earth and more responsibly stewarding God's creation promises not only a diminution of conflict, but it also makes for good theology and national security.

Sarah Withrow King, CreatureKind / Eastern University

Animals on the Agenda, Not Just on Our Plates

Pulled pork barbeques, fried chicken dinners, Thanksgiving turkey feasts, Friday fish fries, and youth group pizza parties. This is the food of our fellowship meals, where Christians gather to break bread and build relationships. Sharing meals is central to Christian hospitality and mission, but do the centerpieces of those meals reflect our commitment—our responsibility and privilege—to steward the earth well?

Concern for animal well-being is deeply rooted in our Christian faith, and there is a long history of Christian leadership in animal protection movements. But as industrialized systems of animal agriculture have developed over the last century, churches have remained mostly silent about our radically altered relationships with pigs, chickens, turkeys, fish, and cows (and with the people who work to produce our food), and the devastating consequences of animal factories

on the broader environment. Scientist and policy analyst Vaclav Smil has estimated that from the year 1900 to the year 2000, the biomass of all domesticated animals increased from three and a half times to twenty-four times the biomass of all wild land mammals. During that same period of time, the biomass of wild land mammals was halved (Vaclav Smil, "Harvesting the Biosphere: The Human Impact", *Population and Development Review* 37:4 (2011), 619). It is no coincidence that these same hundred years saw the demise of the small family farm alongside the birth and global spread of factory farming, which is now the dominant means of producing animal products for human consumption in the Global North.

As more and more land is consumed by animal agriculture, the wild animal population shrinks, but there are additional urgent problems caused by increased consumption of animals. In addition to subjecting animals to painful physical mutilations, miserable living conditions, and traumatic deaths, industrial farms and slaughterhouses cause widespread environmental damages and use a disproportionate share of earth's resources. Workers within the industrial farming system endure long hours, frequent injuries, and unjust working conditions. The increased use of antibiotics has contributed to the rise of so-called "superbugs" and overconsumption of animal products has been linked to a host of human ailments. In the United States, the vast majority of animal products—meat, milk, and eggs—are now produced on these intensive farms, where it is impossible for creatures to flourish as their Creator intended and where both humans and animals pay a high price for our ability to buy cheap meat.

Worldwide, more than 70 billion fellow land creatures and up to 7 trillion sea animals are killed for food each year. The use of animals for food massively dominates all other human uses of animals, and yet farmed animals—the animals on our plates—are conspicuously absent from the vast majority of Christian conversations about stewardship, creation care, and the environment.

This paper outlines the rise and resulting consequences of factory farming on animals, humans, and the environment, and explores some of the possible reasons churches have been reluctant to engage in what is arguably one of the most urgent issues of our time. The paper then proposes that Christians have biblical and theological grounds for attending to animals as a matter of their faith and that churches have the tools and call to respond by taking some simple first steps towards correcting a grave oversight. Christians can improve life for animals, humans, and the environment by committing to include animal issues in our conversations, conferences, and curricula; individually and corporately reducing our consumption of animal products; and moving to buy the animal products we do consume from higher welfare sources. With these changes, we can establish our churches and communities as places that are attentive and responsive to the needs of the whole world.

David Krantz, Arizona State University

Navigating Spiritual Depths: The Development of an Interfaith Ocean Ethic

Scientists famously have an aversion to faith, but there may be no greater leverage point in the world than religion for scientists to utilize. An estimated 84 percent of the world's population belongs to a spiritual faith, and many are fervent followers. Surely the success of any environmental sustainability solution for the planet will be dependent upon its adoption by people of faith. Yet the connections between religion and nature remain vastly underexplored. This paper presents an event ethnography of when faith-based environmental leaders met for a week to bridge the divides between religion and science as well as between their own faiths, while delving into their own connections to nature, in order to create an interfaith ethic of the

ocean. What was the result of their work? What challenges were faced in the process? And what lessons can be learned for others wishing to follow their path of interfaith cooperation on environmental issues? Research methods include document analysis, event observation and event participation.

Lanni Lantto, The Priory

***Laudato Si'* and Fast Fashion: A Look Behind the Seams of What We Wear and Why It Matters**

Have you ever thought about how your t-shirt came to be? Where did the fibers come from, who picked them, what dyes were used, was there waste from the pattern cutting, and how did it get to you? We live in a culture of “fast fashion” that does not ask these questions, because the less we know, the more we will consume. Only within the past one hundred years have we created an industry out of fashion, one that employs over sixty million workers globally and is worth 2.5 trillion in profits a year. There is a hidden cost: it is the second largest polluter on the planet, and most of its workers’ wages fall below the UN poverty line. No matter our faith background, we are united in our wearing of clothing. We all participate in an unjust system, so how can we break free? Using Pope Francis’s encyclical *Laudato Si'* as a call to action, we will discover how to put our “faith into what we wear” so that our clothing becomes a reflection of our spiritual values. By learning about designers and manufactures that are maximizing the efficient reuse of resources and putting people and planet first, *we* can become a part of a renewed ethical global fashion movement.

David Le, Duke Divinity School

Against the Grain of the Universe: Christian Theology and the Witness of Creation

Within the twenty-first century, there is a strong precedent for a Christian theology of creation for the sake of continuing the faithful life of the Church. As such, this conference seeks to attend to questions of the “religious roots of environmentalism” and the relation between “congregations and creation care” and “literature and creation care.” Instead of addressing these questions separately, this paper will engage them conjunctively through a careful reading of Hauerwas’s theological work, ordinary language philosophy, and biblical theology. Stanley Hauerwas, in his book *God, Medicine, and Suffering*, states that “modern medicine exemplifies the predicament of the Enlightenment project, which hopes to make society a collection of individual free from the bonds of necessity other than those we choose” (108). In tackling problems of theodicy, Hauerwas shows how these questions, along with questions of medical ethics, cannot be divorced from questions of political theology, and the Enlightenment rationality’s claim upon our lives. Hauerwasian theology seeks to shift the question of theodicy to the question of what kind of community is the Church, where it can bare the reality of evil and suffering, a reality that medicine, on its own, cannot hope to contain? Questions of theodicy now depend on more powerful questions of ecclesiology or the presence and form of the body of Christ in the midst of the broken world. But, what does this have to do with stewardship of creation? The theological grammar that constitutes the doctrine of creation gives a certain vision of what Christians believe and see as creatures in a world full of other creatures, but this has not yet been deployed to its fullest extent in regards transgressing or reimagining problems of theodicy. While Hauerwas, himself, has attended to these questions (of suffering, natural/creation theology, the Church) in differing ways, I hope to extend this conversation from his own work by engaging questions of animals and their lives using two literary texts: J.M.

Coetzee's *The Lives of Animals* and the story of Job found in Christian Scripture.

In this paper, I intend to sketch out a mode of theological reflection that uses ordinary language philosophy to interpret the book of Job as a rich account of the LORD's gift of creation and not a solution to the problem of suffering. In doing this, I will give a picture of the relation between ecclesiology and natural theology (theology of creation) so that the distinction between Church and world that is so central to Hauerwas will be transformed into a dynamic dialectic between Church and Creation. Cora Diamond, an ordinary language philosopher and animal rights advocate, has read *The Lives of Animals* in a way that articulates the limits of philosophical argumentation towards attending to the "difficulty of reality" in our human lives with non-human animals. This difficulty resonates with the deepest aspect of suffering within human life. Through unpacking her commentary on Coetzee's work, I will offer a similar reading of the story of Job to show the failure of conventional theology and philosophy to address the "difficulty of reality." I will also show the importance of linguistic theology to show that the gift of creation is central to the story of Job as a witness for the Church's ability to imagine our formative life with animals. By accomplishing this, I hope to indicate the importance for a continual care for creation, so that in its own way, the LORD's creation can take care of us when the difficulty of reality challenges our very modes of human life. By the end of this paper, I seek to vindicate linguistic theology (a philosophical-theological approach indebted to philosophers like Ludwig Wittgenstein, Stanley Cavell, Cora Diamond, and Stephen Mulhall as well as grammatical Thomist, David Burrell) as a viable approach for political theology in the context of creation care.

Sabrina Little, Baylor University

Feeling Good: Moral Emotions in Non-human Animals

One day, Kuni captured a [bird]. [T]he keeper urged the ape to let it go...Kuni picked up the starling with one hand and climbed to the highest point of the highest tree where she wrapped her legs around the trunk so that she had both hands free to hold the bird. She then carefully unfolded its wings and spread them wide open, one wing in each hand, before throwing the bird as hard as she could towards the barrier of the enclosure. What Kuni did would obviously have been inappropriate towards a member of her own species. Having seen birds in flight many times, she seemed to have a notion of what would be good for a bird.

In the *Protrepticus*, Aristotle wrote that "in comparison with the lower animals, a human seems to be a god." Aristotle created a ranking of souls—with humans situated between animals and God—and in doing so, he launched an ontological heuristic known as the *scala natura*, or chain of being. It was refined by the neoPlatonist and Scholastic traditions, adapted by Carolus Linnaeus in the 18th century to serve biological taxonomic ends, and later turned on its side and restructured in deference to evolutionary interrelationships to model phylogenetic trees. On certain readings of the Aristotelian account (particularly those rooted in *De Anima* or *Metaphysics*), humans alone possess the rational soul type, and they are uniquely capable of developing virtue, meaning that the difference between humans and animals is one of kind, rather than degree. However, the difference between humans and animals is less obvious in creatures like Kuni-beasts that are not exceptionally base—where lower animal morality perhaps reflects less moral sophistication, but not behavior of a fundamentally different character.

We are in the process of discovering that animals are more capable of moral-like action than previously thought, and the implication of this is that classical moral statements of humans

made in contrast to non-human animals should be revisited. This paper has two aims—historical and normative: (1) I first assess areas of text in Aristotle which are more sensitive to degrees of moral difference between humans and non-human animals, particularly in terms of moral imagination and nous. I place these sections in conversation with recent work on nonhuman animal “moral” emotions—work which indicates animals to a large degree participate in the same moral economy as humans. I make the historical claim that Aristotle was more sensitive to the pre-moral domain than is often attributed to him. (2) Second, I ask what the conclusions of this project amount to. Knowing what we know—from ancient wisdom and contemporary research—about our moral proximity to animals, how ought we to regard non-human animals? Are there potential ramifications for Christian concepts like dominion and stewardship? I argue that this knowledge helps us to reimagine our relationship to other creatures. There are implications for acting justly toward animals, and for appreciating the richness of the goodness present in the created order.

Sarah Madsen and Michelle Cohenour, Baylor University

A Biblical Defense of Food Insecurity Efforts: Reimagining Stewardship on College Campuses

Today’s college campuses illumine a problematic juxtaposition within student life, and by extension the life of the university. Here, consumption reigns supreme, as students are eager to participate in a version of the good life that favors material security, pleasure, and freedom over truth, goodness, and beauty (Smith, 2011). Socialized to desire such middle and upper-class luxuries and goods by the university itself, students thus engage in zealous shopping, heavy drinking, uncommitted relationships, and casual drug use, all while refusing to properly judge themselves or others who partake in such behaviors (Hooks, 1994; Smith, 2011). In stark contrast, scholars have begun to shed light on the phenomenon of food insecurity in higher education – an occurrence once thought to end when a student left high school (see Goldrick-Rab, Broton, & Eisenberg, 2015; Cady, 2016).

Whereas some students enter college with pre-existing food or housing insecurities, others “deal with food insecurity for the first time” in college as a result of financial pressures (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2015; McKenna, 2016). Notably, food insecurity is defined by “the lack of reliable access to sufficient quantities of affordable, nutritious food,” or the inability “to acquire such foods in socially acceptable ways” (Dubick, Mathews, & Cady, 2016, p. 6; Goldrick-Rab et al., 2015, p. 3). Moreover, this phenomenon is currently conceptualized as existing along a continuum with four positions, namely “high security, marginal security, low security, and very low security” (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2015, p. 10-11). In addition to these food-related issues, food-insecure students also face shame, embarrassment, and stigma in their college experiences (Diamond & Stebleton, 2017).

The effects of food insecurity on college students are a current focus of scholarship today, both in higher education and public health fields. Grounded in the premise that food security is a basic human right and a “foundational human need,” scholars highlight the “potential [of food insecurity] to impact student academic success, health, wellness, and behavior” (Cady, 2014, p. 268; Diamond & Stebleton, 2017; Dubick et al., 2016; Maroto et al., 2014). Although institutional responses to food insecurity can be characterized as limited, the field of higher education is ultimately gaining awareness and starting to address this salient issue on college campuses (Cady, 2014; Cady, 2016).

This paper argues that such institutional responses can be rooted in a Biblical understanding of wisdom and are thus particularly relevant to the practices and policies of faith-based colleges and universities, especially in relation to their stewardship of resources, gifts, and talents. Here, Walter Brueggemann's (2015) characterization of slow wisdom, as described by Glanzer, Alleman and Ream (2017), provides a framework to further explore a Scriptural defense of food insecurity efforts on college campuses. Brueggemann relates slow wisdom to what he calls the triad of fidelity, wherein love, justice, and righteousness are organizing virtues; in contrast, the triad of control is grounded in might, wisdom, and wealth (Brueggemann, 2015; Glanzer et al., 2017). Using Jeremiah 9:23-24 as a reference, Brueggemann expands the triads to illumine their manifestations.

The seven forms each triad expresses are direct contrasts: where the triad of fidelity is concerned with the body, the neighborhood, pain, dreams, imagination, vocation, and commandments, the triad of control seeks abstraction, the club, numbness, present possession, explanation, the career, and gold or honey (Brueggemann 2015; Glanzer et al., 2017). Notably, these expressions of slow wisdom can be applied to institutional responses to college student food insecurity, the result of which is a better understanding of why and how scholars and practitioners should be concerned with the phenomenon. For example, the triad of fidelity demands that we give attention to the bodily and spiritual pain that flows from hunger, whereas the triad of control allows us to be numb to it and abstract such feelings into hard data alone. We will explore each of these manifestations in-depth, with particular reference to food insecurity on college campuses.

The aim of this paper, then, is to offer a new imagination for how we—college constituents—make sense of and respond to food insecurity, a phenomenon organically related to our campuses' natural resources, like food, and our stewardship efforts. We hope session participants will leave with a deeper understanding of this pressing issue, and a richer idea of how slow wisdom can inform our work, especially as stewards in the academy. A commitment to such wisdom is difficult in the current times, but one that ultimately yields to God's goodness.

Sean Martin, University of Dayton **Stewardship and the Promise of *Laudato Si***

The ecological crisis currently facing the human community has brought about a collective recognition that the standard modes within which humanity has interacted with the natural world have been demonstrated not to simply be insufficient but often actually hastening our own destruction. Along with the political summits and scientific conferences convened to attempt to alleviate the effects of the looming environmental catastrophe, Christian theologians and environmentalists have sought a Christian response that both takes seriously the demands of the current ecological realities and, yet, maintains our most foundational doctrinal commitments. While the discussion within Christian circles has been taking place for decades, Pope Francis's 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si*' has thrust the Christian response into prominence within the wider ecological conversation in a manner that has been applauded by the scientific and environmentalist community throughout the world.

At the heart of Francis's discussion is the idea that in the biblical account of God's creation of the world humanity was charged with the stewarding of the Earth for the good of both the human community and the land itself. In doing so, Francis attempts to bring together the Christian belief that humanity was created in the image of God with the notion that despite our ontologically privileged position we are to be in a deeply integral communion with the non-

human world. While his encyclical has been widely celebrated, the stewardship approach to human engagement with the natural world has been criticized as leaving us with an insufficient anthropocentric perspective that is quite simply untenable in the modern world. Yet, the argument of the following inquiry is that Francis's use of incarnation and Eucharist as a model for stewardship successfully addresses those concerns.

To this end, I begin by examining two prominent proponents of stewardship as provided by Ellen Davis and Wendell Berry. Davis, in her *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture*, offers a biblical agrarianism that attempts to bring the theological commitments of Genesis 1:26 and 28 concerning "dominion" into the wider context of the story of Israel and their relationship to the land of Canaan. Berry, on the other hand, in a collection of essays on agrarianism, offers a similar approach to Davis's, yet one that privileges listening to the needs of the land we inhabit for our formation as stewards of God's creation. While each provides a compelling account of Christian stewardship, their understanding of the place of the human person within the context of creation suggests some problematic commitments.

In exploring these difficulties more fully, I examine Richard Bauckham's critique of stewardship in *The Bible and Ecology*. Bauckham argues that insofar as an account of stewardship is committed to the ontological uniqueness of the human person, it must be regarded as insufficient to truly address the needs of the current ecological crisis. Moreover, as understanding humanity to stand in a vertical rather than horizontal relationship to the natural world is environmentally problematic, Bauckham also sees it as biblically unnecessary. While Davis and Berry offer persuasive arguments in support of their approaches to stewardship, I find that they ultimately cannot satisfy Bauckham's concerns.

In *Laudato Si'*, however, Francis's environmental stewardship brings together some of the biblical perspectives present in Davis's account with an agrarianism similar to Berry's in such a way that Bauckham's worries do not apply. By arguing for a stewardship model that understands the ontologically superior human community following the incarnational and Eucharistic example of Christ, I believe that Francis successfully presents an account of stewardship that is both sufficiently vertical and yet thoroughly horizontal while also being consistent with the teaching of the Tradition regarding the *imago Dei*. Thus, I conclude my discussion with an account of Francis's understanding of the ecological crisis, the interconnectedness of all of creation, and the biblical and ecological call to Christian stewardship.

Bruce McCuskey, Duke Divinity School

Work as Co-creation: A Theology of Labor for the Anthropocene?

My paper examines modern theological disputes about the nature of work in light of recent work in political theory on the legal and political challenges of the Anthropocene epoch. In his book *After Nature*, Jedediah Purdy analyzes differing American politics of nature that have served as paradigms to structure their use of the land. He identifies four broad paradigms: the Providential view, which conceives of the land as having been providentially offered to Americans to be developed to create a prosperous civilization; the Romantic view, which saw human interaction as spoiling the sublime beauty of the natural world; the Conservationist view, which was rooted in the Romantic view but combined with a Progressive Era ambition to preserve wilderness through managerial science; and the modern Environmental view, which retained the desire to manage the environment and human use of it but for the first time recognized that the environment was a holistic, interconnected system in which distinction

between human and non-human spheres ultimately made little sense. Purdy argues that a new politics of nature must be developed for the Anthropocene, the new geological epoch in which human beings are the chief ecological change agent. This new political vision of nature and the human relationship to it must be one that cultivates self-restraint, with respect both to the extent to which human beings can use natural resources and to the extent that we can engineer long-term solutions to environmental problems. We must, Purdy contends, learn to look at the world with a humility that will allow us to find beauty in it.

Christians have good reason both to believe that they can and should offer the needed politics of nature. But which self-restraint? And whose humility? Since the primary human relationship to the natural world, especially in the Anthropocene, is through labor, reexamining debates around the theology of labor will clarify what kind of theopolitical vision is necessary. On the one hand, John Paul II, in the encyclical *Laborem Exercens*, and John Milbank, first in his dissertation on Giambattista Vico and then in *Theology and Social Theory*, have separately argued on behalf of the notion that human labor participates in the divine work of creation. Milbank develops a sophisticated account whereby Vico's doctrine of the convertibility of *verum* and *factum* as well as related Baroque accounts of *poiesis* are found to be theological all the way down. Human craftsmanship and creative activity are themselves an imitation of and participation in the work of the creator; as we construct our world, socially, imaginatively, and materially, we discover divine truth. Self-restraint and humility are found here by realizing that we are *imagines dei*, and that our *poiesis* must conform to the preceding divine *poiesis*. On the other hand, Stanley Hauerwas, in his article "Work as CoCreation: A Critique of a Remarkably Bad Idea," criticized John Paul II's conception of human work as unscriptural and overly romantic. Post lapsum work need not and likely should not be worthwhile in and of itself. Scripture promises not an endless cycle of enjoyable work but ultimately Sabbath rest. For Hauerwas, self-restraint and humility comes from the continuing, haunting presence of the poor, who challenge our sense that we know how to be in control.

In adjudicating between these two theopolitical visions I will first argue that Milbank and John Paul II's view is, *prima facie*, far better suited to respond to environmental issues, as it explicitly tries to relate human labor to creation. Furthermore, Milbank's sophisticated Vicoan theology of truth, which is both realist and constructivist, has the resources both to guide solutions to specific environmental problems and to ensure that those solutions have a real connection to Christian life and practice. I will demonstrate this by offering Milbankian arguments in favor of Purdy's proposals for ethical food sourcing and the treatment of animals that respond to objections Purdy acknowledges but admits to being unable to refute. I will then argue that Hauerwas's theology of work fails most evidently at precisely this point: human-animal relationships. Nevertheless, I believe that it is necessary to end my paper on an ambiguous note by pointing out that Hauerwas's charge that John Paul II and Milbank's view is largely unscriptural is likely sound. Thus, it will be up to the character of individual Christian traditions and their relation to scripture to decide which path they will choose in responding to Purdy's call for a politics of nature.

Charles McDaniel, Baylor University

Stewardship Turned Inward: American Protestantism, Care of Creation, and the New "Consumer" Eugenics

The human genome is becoming an increasingly manipulable part of Creation over which humankind is called to exercise stewardship. In many cases, this development is occurring

outside the purview of governments and with little input by ethicists and theologians concerning its moral and spiritual consequences. The advent of Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats (CRISPR) technology is facilitating the genetic alteration of species with relative ease, even spawning mail-order kits that enable gene-editing of bacteria, frogs, and other life forms. Laboratories around the world are taking advantage of these technologies and the absence of a global regulatory regime to tweak human DNA for myriad purposes. Scientists in China have now gene-edited at least 86 individuals; and, two years ago, a Jordanian couple working with doctors from New York at a clinic in Mexico used a mitochondrial replacement technique—prohibited in the U.S. because it is classified as a germline therapy that impacts not only the recipient but also her progeny—to produce a child with three genetic parents. State regulations, such as they exist, are proving unable even to throttle the pace of these changes.

The present threat of a eugenics revolution is much different from what often has been called the “Old Eugenics” of the early twentieth century in which civil society activism and state-enforced marriage and immigration restrictions, along with laws enabling the forced sterilization of institutionalized persons, led to gross abuses of human rights. The Old Eugenics also marked one of the most shameful moments in American Christian history. Mainline Protestants supported programs designed to promote the reproduction of those considered genetically superior while limiting the reproductive possibilities for “inferiors.” Protestant ministers authored essays that appeared in the many eugenics journals that circulated at the time and even participated in “sermon contests” that rewarded those who could seamlessly interweave Christian theology with eugenics ideology. While Roman Catholics overwhelmingly were against the negative eugenic programs of the last century, most American Protestants either were supportive or indifferent concerning policies that realized the passage of forced sterilization laws in 32 states and resulted in tens of thousands being sterilized without their consent, from the first case in 1907 to the last sterilization that occurred in Oregon in 1981.

The “New Eugenics,” also commonly called “Consumer Eugenics,” is altogether different in motivation, generating global markets that offer “customers” the capability to genetically modify themselves and, in some cases, their offspring. Initial efforts often have been to combat genetic diseases such as Leigh Syndrome that parents understandably seek to avoid. Yet what today is mere genetic limitation likely will be redefined in the future as genetic flaw; moreover, the purposes supported by these technologies undoubtedly will grow along with the human imagination as markets for new services expand.

American Christians will be pressed to deal with the ethical and spiritual as much as the material consequences of these developments. In this regard, history is a poor ally; however, American Protestantism has a chance for redemption if it can find its moral voice and help determine the boundary where genetic modification trespasses upon traditional conceptions of the human person that are necessary to preserve our humanity. We soon may be called to deny ourselves what is technologically feasible in support of a higher moral good: that is, avoiding what C. S. Lewis described as man’s abolition through his treatment as “mere specimen,” a product of separating “applied science” from the “‘wisdom’ of earlier ages.” Much Protestant wisdom is available to respond to the challenge. The question is how to cobble these sources together into a coherent ethical tradition and help prevent humankind’s presumed conquest of nature from becoming nature’s conquest of man.

Colin McGuigan, University of Dayton

“The Greatest Danger is Accustomedness”: Pope Francis on Wonder, Encounter, and Ecological Conversion

This paper argues that Pope Francis’s invocations of wonder can speak to and at times challenge Lisa Sideris’s recent contributions to the interdisciplinary discussion of wonder, science, and religion. Although the importance of wonder to Pope Francis’s 2015 environmental encyclical *Laudato Si’* is acknowledged, it has not been widely recognized that wonder is implicated in and forms connections between multiple concepts and postures acknowledged as defining marks of Francis’s papacy: coming out of oneself, encountering others, going to the margins; aversion to doctrinal rigidity; compassion, mercy, tenderness, and humility, to name a few. These defining concepts and stances resonate strongly with certain views on wonder, ethics, and ecology recently articulated by Lisa Sideris, especially in her 2017 book, *Consecrating Science*. In Francis, however, one finds a more affirming treatment of science-based wonder and a response to Sideris’s criticism of theistic wonder.

Examples of resonance between Francis’s and Sideris’s respective contributions abound. Sideris emphasizes the need for sensory engagement with nature—as prior to and more foundational than abstract learning—to motivate ecologically salient moral and aesthetic responses to the natural world. Encountering nature has great power to lead human beings out themselves. Similarly, Francis famously asserts that “reality is greater than ideas,” prioritizes direct encounter over abstractions, and believes encountering otherness naturally leads to joyful, self-limiting regard for others. Also, although Francis is more inclined to speak positively about discerning “the living presence of God” in the world, his very emphasis on the need for discernment, with its implication of an ambiguous world, has definite parallels with Sideris’s valorized “ignorance-based worldview.”

Pope Francis can also open paths of response, even challenge, to certain of Sideris’s claims. Take Sideris’s wariness of science-based wonder. While Francis shares Sideris’s critique of scientific Prometheism, Francis is pronouncedly more comfortable than Sideris with a wonder based on scientific knowledge. *Lumen fidei*, Francis’s first encyclical, comments on what faith can offer to science, namely, wonder opening reason beyond categories that can never fully exhaust reality. However, Pope Francis’s other writings suggest ways that the contributions of science and faith are reciprocal. For instance, scientific modes of attentiveness deepen theological insight. A germane example is how profoundly *Laudato Si’*’s theological anthropology, ethics, and theology of God are informed by the study of ecology (although, Sideris would note, not evolution). So if, as *Lumen fidei* holds, faith checks a slide into totalizing scientism, science in turn checks the sufficiency of religious faith. Moreover, the pope’s invocation of science in *Laudato Si’* shows an urgent contribution of scientific knowledge to religious and moral responses to nature. The scale of ecological loss presently afflicting our common home exceeds individual sensory perception. For Francis, attention to the findings of scientific inquiry is the only way to register certain harms. Only by attending to scientific findings can we make nature’s suffering our own. As such, scientific knowledge is a vital and necessary pathway, even for the scientific laity, to greater intimacy with the more-than-human world.

Furthermore, Francis might be a resource for response to a provocative challenge Sideris puts to theism. In *Consecrating Science*, Sideris argues at length that science-based wonder deflects wonder from nature in ecologically problematic ways. It displaces wonder, Sideris says, from nature to scientific knowledge or the scientist herself. Likewise, in a published conversation

with Celia Deane-Drummond, Sideris suggests that theism may perform a similar deflective operation. In theistic forms of wonder, she argues, nature becomes a mere signpost directing wonder beyond nature itself, which is left behind. The deity becomes the end of wonder. Thus, nontheistic wonder, which does not leave nature behind, is to be preferred for cultivating ecological virtue.

While Sideris's objection is well taken, it needs to distinguish varieties of theistic wondering. It does not apply, I will argue, to Pope Francis, for Francis's theistic wonder does not and cannot reduce otherness to the status of "signpost." In Francis's understanding, the transcendent God forever seeks to shock the church out of all-too-human ideologies in which it would enclose divine life and freedom. Hence Francis claims as a "dogmatic certainty" that God's presence is to be discerned in every person's life, no matter how small, damaged, or remote from the church's ideals. In other words, God continually reveals Godself in surprising ways that challenge prior conceptions and expectations. In his papacy's programmatic document *Evangelii gaudium*, Francis repeats this certainty about finding the surprising presence of God in every life, and in *Laudato Si'* he extends it to all creatures. Two consequences follow. First, paradoxically, taking on Francis's dogmatic certainty means that one must always leave room for doubt: God's presence must be discerned, not deduced. Second, God reveals Godself "on the sacred ground of the other," and thus one who would encounter the divine other cannot leave the world of creatures behind—as with a "signpost"—but must continually look to the world, especially the world's humble, hidden, and crucified places. Thus Francis's theistic wonder is dissimilar to deflective varieties of scientific and theistic wonder. It does not deflect, but on the contrary, leads to humble attentiveness and openness to all creatures.

This paper will offer a close reading of Pope Francis/Jorge Bergoglio to demonstrate that wonder forms an underappreciated undercurrent of this pope's spirituality and teaching. Francis's invocations of wonder are relevant to Sideris's recent contributions. There may be occasion in this paper to note, as well, the resonance between Francis's and others' reflections on wonder: R. W. Hepburn's sketch of wonder's ethical trajectory; Martha Nussbaum's argument that wonder, a singularly non-eudaimonistic emotion, is yet crucial for emotional, cognitive, and moral development; Sophia Vasalou's argument concerning wonder's value for living joyfully and attentively to the world, etc. Especially since, as my treatment will suggest, wonder is implicated in Pope Francis's ongoing efforts to reform the world's largest Christian church—and in his opponents' attempts to prevent his doing so—people invested in the fate of wonder may find themselves invested in the fate of Francis's pontificate.

Clayton McReynolds, Baylor University **Co-creation and Conservation**

In this presentation, I will consider the implications of Christian idealism for practical approaches to the environment. A hard idealist metaphysic, which understands physical reality as in part or whole a construct of the individual subject and thus an extension of humankind, might seem to be at odds with ecocritical efforts, which define themselves against an anthropocentric view of the world. Here, I will question whether particularly Christian iterations of philosophical idealism, such as those of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Owen Barfield, present a solution or a problem to this seeming disjunct, finding ultimately that the idea of participation or co-creation that sets these theistic theories of idealism apart proffers a compromise. On the one hand, Barfield adamantly declares nature to be the representation of man, and thus his position definitively locates man above and apart from the rest of the natural order. On the other hand,

both Barfield's and Coleridge's understandings of phenomenal reality as something created jointly by man and God imply the necessity of responsibly caring for that co-created world because its well-being is integrally linked to the wellness of the human self, human society, and humanity's relationship to the Divine. Thus, while Christian idealism might differ irreconcilably with many strains of ecocriticism on the level of theory, there is nothing preventing a Christian idealist from concurring with many or most of the practical conservation measures supported by ecocritical theorists.

Christopher Miller, Judson University

Stewarding Our Places and Buildings: Managing Material Resources, Supporting Our Social Economies, and Imagining Here and Ultimately the City of God

With God, we are charged with stewardship of this world: both its unmediated Creation and the environment we mediate in our building cultures. In shalom blessing to us and to our neighbors, we shepherd material resources and cultivate homes, in the microcosm of houses and in the macrocosm of cities, that meet our creatureliness, particularly as social beings. Ultimately, we are called to both redeem our places and to anticipate the City of God: we imagine, theologically, our present building of the common good and the beauty of the City to which we are being drawn.

John Monaco, Boston College

***Laudato Si'*, *Mi Signore*: The Liturgical-ecological Vocation of the Human Person**

The late Orthodox priest and theologian Alexander Schmemmann regarded the vocation of all human persons as "homo adorans"—"man/woman who worships." Far from being a vocation which can only be lived out in the context of liturgical worship, Schmemmann understood "homo adorans" as a vocation which extended to the human person's entire experience in the world. "Homo adorans," properly understood, is an identity which is "given"—as clearly seen in both the gift of liturgy and the gift of creation.

This paper will examine the link between the Sacred Liturgy and ecology within the human person's vocation of "homo adorans," particularly by noting the "givenness" of creation and worship. Just as worship is "given" by God for God's people for their sanctification, the environment is "given" to humanity so that it may be a channel of God's life in the world. Using the work of Schmemmann and Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, I will demonstrate how anthropocentrism is the greatest challenge to ecological and liturgical flourishing, and thus frustrates the human person's living-out of her vocation as "homo adorans."

Scott Moore, Baylor University

Wendell, Gene, and Joel: On the Difficulties of Theology and Agriculture

This essay examines the work of three of the most prominent voices in the contemporary literature of sustainable agriculture and cottage farming: Wendell Berry, Gene Logsdon, and Joel Salatin. Whether in fiction or in non-fiction, in lyrical poetry or practical manuals, stinging cultural criticism or self-deprecating autobiography, each of these men has made a profound impact on the revival of interest in sustainable agriculture and cottage farming. Before Logsdon passed away in 2016, each of these men were also friends and co-laborers. They have praised and, on occasion, introduced the published work of the others. And while each of them also grew up in a religious tradition, they have taken very different approaches to the role theological reflection and religious practice might play in the work of farming. Berry, a self-described "bad

weather Christian” who goes to church when it’s too wet to farm, has been sharply critical of the ways in which the Christian Church has poorly equipped its parishioners with the skills or the insights to be faithful to the “gift of good land.” Logsdon, the “Contrary Farmer” most noted for his voluminous insights and witty commentary on all of the practical matters of the farm, was a Catholic seminarian who ultimately left the Church. Salatin, though equally critical of the ways those in the pulpits and the pews have responded to the environmental challenges of industrial agriculture, describes and practices an understanding of stewardship in the rich vernacular of the Christian tradition. Using the complementary and contrasting work of these three men, the essay seeks to understand the difficulties surrounding the integration of theological motivation and insight into the practice of sustainable agriculture.

Adam Myers, Baylor University

Nature between Romantics and Technocrats: A Philosophical Defense

One line of argument in defense of some environmental causes holds, said oversimply, that certain ethical prohibitions or precepts concerning human action with respect to the environment follow from a conception of nature as in some way mysterious or sacred. We might think of this line of thought as characteristic of “Romantics.” Another, related line of argument holds, again to put it crudely, that certain technological developments and especially the technological “drives” behind those developments reflect and reinforce a view of nature, or the environment, that is somehow indefensible. This “technocratic” view, and opposition to it, both presuppose not only a view about nature but a view of technology as well.

In contrast to both these lines of thought, I will defend an age-old dictum: *techne* imitates *phusis*, art imitates nature. First, I’ll argue that, even if nature is mysterious or sacred, that doesn’t imply it is not in crucial respects accessible to reason; on the contrary, our capacity to understand nature, and the natures of things that are part of the natural world, is essential to a defensible environmentalism. And, secondly, I’ll argue that nature sets norms for technical or technological activities, and that technical pursuits are permissible so long as they do not fail to attend to natural norms.

This essay provides a corrective to multiple camps among environmental debates. It criticizes “deep ecology” and like movements for exaggerating the environment’s mysteriousness, and it criticizes technocrats for failure to appreciate nature’s rational norm-setting.

Nicholas Okpe, Kogi State University

An Assessment of Environmental Pollution in Nigeria from a Christian Socio-ethical Perspective

Although pollution had been known to exist for a long time, it has seen growth of truly global proportions only since the onset of the industrial revolution during the 19th century. The industrial revolution brought with it technological progress and the virtually universal use of oil in high proportions. This progress, facilitated by super efficiency of capitalist business practices, probably became one of the main causes of serious deterioration of natural resources. At the same time, of course, development of natural sciences led to the better understanding of negative effects produced by pollution on the environment.

Environmental pollution is a problem both in developed and developing countries. Nigeria is a clear example among the developing countries where environmental pollution has caused and is still causing havoc to the population. The Niger-delta region, where there is a huge

oil deposit in Nigeria, is becomingly uninhabitable due to the destruction caused by undue interference with the natural provision as a result of oil exploration. Both human and animal life is threatened due to oil spillage, which has resulted in loss of life and destruction of the environment. In line with natural provisions, there are three dimensions of the effects of the pollution: water, land and air. It should be quickly pointed out that though Nigeria has considerable aquatic provision, drinkable water is a problem due to the pollution of the environment. Secondly, despite the nature-given agricultural land in Nigeria, a considerable percentage of what is consumed is imported as the arable lands have been polluted. And lastly, airborne diseases abound in high proportion due to activities of various kinds that are inimical to good environment.

Thus, this paper, while taking a general look at the understanding of what may constitute environmental pollution and its resultant effects, also posits from a Christian ethical perspective that God who created the earth saw the good in it which should be upheld. In this way, using theological hermeneutic and sociological approaches, the paper analyzes environmental pollution from the perspective of what we may call natural Theology, which creates a good synergy between pure natural science and Christian Theology. Our discovery is that despite the many good things brought about by advancement in technology, the concern for good environment is a matter for both scientists and Christian theologians. The paper recommends responsible use of nature as provided in the environment around us. In other words, the paper posits that the well-being of human beings is largely dependent on the care human beings give to the environment in which they live. As such, there is need for a positive and responsible reorientation in the use of nature so as to avoid the bad consequences of the wrong use of things provided by God.

Stephen Parmelee, Pepperdine University

Baraka: The Choice Between Stewardship and Exploitation

Ron Fricke's 1992 film *Baraka* is an astonishing film on several levels. It is, first, one of the most beautiful films ever made, almost literally jaw-dropping in its depiction of the natural wonders of the world, having been filmed for over a year in 25 countries on six continents. It is a technological wonder, especially for its time; Fricke shot the film in the ultra-large-negative IMAX format, resulting in numerous shots exhibiting such depth that, although they are rendered in only two dimensions, the viewer will swear they contain three. In order to get the time-lapse scenes he was looking for, Fricke invented and built his own camera when the IMAX camera wouldn't do the job. And it is a film without words, consisting only of its images accompanied by a haunting and mesmerizing musical score.

But perhaps most significantly, the film uses its powerful images to make a point about the world in which we live and about how humankind responds to that world: we see snow monkeys in hot springs in Kyoto, the immense African veldt, a time-lapse day and night in the national parks in the American Southwest. But we also see scenes depicting not just our carelessness with the earth and its resources, but in fact our exploitation and even destruction of them: ongoing demolition in a jaggedly excavated Brazilian quarry, a vast military aviation graveyard in Arizona, the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro. And the destruction is not just of our natural resources, but of our human resources as well: women working in a crowded, steaming cigarette factory in Indonesia, the denizens of the immense city landfill in Calcutta, a row of teenage prostitutes lined up in front of a nightclub in Thailand.

We have (at least) two choices, Fricke suggests, in how we respond to the world that God gives us: the spiritual response, in which we revere it, see it as a gift from God, and treat it

accordingly; or the exploitative response, in which we gradually exhaust our natural resources for profit and use up our fellow humans for money or pleasure. Thus we see on the one hand monks chanting in frenzied unison at a temple in Bali; observant Jews praying at the Western Wall in Jerusalem; the Whirling Dervishes of Istanbul; and the enormous, swirling crowds circulating around the mosque in Mecca. But we also see the perversion of God's desire for his people: a small boy begging on the streets of Rio de Janeiro; a room full of human skulls piled high in a museum at the killing fields of Phnom Penh; soldiers selling weapons and munitions at the side of the road in Cambodia (a helpful price list visible for the prospective buyer); and mammoth oil fires burning out of control in Kuwait.

Some argue that Fricke's film has no center, that his images are, in the words of some viewers, "mundane" or "lacking in coherence." But I would argue that Fricke chooses and orders his shots, his subjects, and his locations very carefully for an experience that is not only cinematographically and emotionally compelling but spiritually investigative of the relationship between humankind and the earth on which it lives.

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Carrie Marjorie Peirce, Azusa Pacific University

Stewards of Creation: For the Love of Companion Animals

After reading and studying animals as part of God's creation and our stewardship of them, it is clear to me that we would not be who we are without companion animals in our lives. Donna Haraway, in *The Companion Species Manifesto*, remarks:

There cannot be just one companion species; there have to be at least two to make one. It is in the syntax; it is in the flesh. Dogs are about the inescapable, contradictory story of relationships—co-constitutive relationships in which none of the partners pre-exist the relating, and the relating is done once and for all.

So, we live with companion animals in our midst. But what do animals have to do with, in and for Christianity? Do Christians have anything to say about the current state of affairs for animals? Does Christianity have anything to say about how humans live in relation to animals? Do Christians have responsibility about how we act toward our companion animals, perhaps even all domesticated animals?

The history of Christianity reveals both a vision of compassion for other animals and a justification for the abuse of them or at least the disregard of them. As Christians, we also have the power to make animals invisible, or at least we think we do. And too often we act as if they do not matter. It is both the power to render animals and have compassion for them that we need to take very seriously. How can Christianity reconsider animals in light of our shared history as companions, as recipients and givers of hospitality and as unfortunate prisoners of abuse and cruelty? The voices and participation of people of faith are a critically important key to the

acceptance of kindness to animals as a key social and spiritual value for our time. We can bring this message to our congregations and by doing so lead and transform the core spiritual values of kindness, compassion and mercy into effective legislation and, ultimately, respectful, responsible stewardship of all God's creatures.

Sadly, in the twenty-first century companion animals face abuse and cruelty at our hands, but these stories are rarely told in our churches and Sunday schools in the Christian world. However, at no other time has the question of welcoming, including and making space for animals been so vitally important. Contemporary Christians especially have an ingrained tendency to overlook or devalue animal suffering, and to emphasize, instead, the special status of human beings as creatures created in the image of God and given dominion over the rest of creation. Is it possible for Christians to cultivate a more compassionate sensitivity to the value of non-human animals as fellow creatures, while avoiding the tendency to devalue the special status of human beings and remaining wholeheartedly committed to a Christian vision of the world?

In my research I have discovered a number of Christian leaders who have spoken out against animal cruelty. First is Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who argues that we should not see ourselves as the be-all and end-all of creation: "It is a kind of theological folly to suppose that God has made the entire world just for human beings, or to suppose that God is interested in only one of the millions of species that inhabit God's good earth" (*The Global Guide to Animal Protection*, University of Illinois Press, 2014). Second, Jurgen Moltmann, Emeritus Professor of Systematic Theology at the University of Tübingen, explained it this way in a speech in 1990: "Whoever injures the dignity of animals, injures God," and he called for a Universal Declaration on the rights of animals (*Ethics of Hope*, Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012). All of these questions will shape the focus of my paper.

George Piggford, C.S.C., Professor of English at Stonehill College

Pope Francis's *Laudato Si*, 'The Mass on the World,' and Flannery O'Connor's 'Revelation'

In *Laudato Si* Pope Francis argues that "Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves.... We are part of nature, included in it and...in constant interaction with it." *Laudato Si* emphasizes the symbiosis between humans and nature, a conception rooted in Catholic approaches to creation most prominently associated with Francis of Assisi. Pope Francis also owes a significant debt to the Jesuit mystic and paleontologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. He is mentioned only once in the pope's letter, but its articulation of "universal communion" is modeled on Teilhard's work, especially "The Mass on the World," composed in 1923 in a remote area of China. With "neither bread, nor wine, nor altar," Teilhard imagines a Holy Communion that is worldwide and ultimately universal, when "the contours of [God's] body melt away and become enlarged beyond all measure." The earth, living and dying, becomes a consecrated Host held up to the cosmic God. Everything is holy, and in Teilhard's anagogical view all creation has become Christ.

Such a cosmic theophany might seem far afield from the writing of Flannery O'Connor, rooted in the red clay of her native Georgia. Often one finds in her stories human beings' unawareness of "integral ecology," as in "A View of the Woods" with its Lucifer-like excavator persistently destroying the natural world. O'Connor's view sometimes tended toward the universal, however, most famously at the end of "Revelation." A shocked Ruby Turpin views from her pig-parlor an upended social order accompanied by "invisible cricket choruses." The story's ultimate gesture is a "climb...upward" into the "starry field" of the visible universe. With

its final “hallelujah,” O’Connor provides a hopeful vision of the ultimate fate of diverse humanity. A vision that encompasses humans, nature, and the cosmos echoes Teilhard’s “Mass” and anticipates the current pope’s emphasis on universal communion.

Cooper Pinson, University of Cambridge

An Esemplastic Reconciliation: Coleridge’s Imagination as a Means to Creation Care

Lynn White argues that the Christian theological impulse is partly responsible for the world’s environmental woes (1996). This paper will argue the contrary. Indeed, humans have been endowed with a faculty from their God with which to steward creation. What is that faculty? Through a synthesis of the ideas of theologian and poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge with philosopher Owen Barfield and theologian Trevor Hart, this paper argues that humanity’s theologically conditioned imagination is a primary tool for Christians in reawakening our care and stewardship of creation and its creatures. The imagination acts as an agent of reconciliation, bringing together creation, creature, and Creator in proper harmony.

Touching on the imagination as understood by Coleridge, C. Brawley has already shown the power of mythopoeics and fantasy as a means to creation care (2003, 2014), and J. McKusick has demonstrated American environmentalism’s roots in Romantic ideology and the thought of Coleridge (2011). But a synthesis of Coleridge with Barfield and Hart, two scholars eminently concerned with creation and creature, has yet to be done. In its synthetic element, this paper will yield new vistas in the Coleridgean vein for creation and creature stewardship. As a foundation, we will first examine Coleridge’s concept of the *esemplastic* imagination as able to put us in proper relationship with the environment and its inhabiting creatures once again, pulling us back from the brink of creation and creature annihilation and reconciling us with those things that share also in our fount of being, God Himself.

We will then bring Coleridge into dialogue with two authors in the Christian philosophical and theological tradition. First, we will synthesize Coleridge with Owen Barfield (1928), uncovering the unique ways that poetic metaphor serves as an *esemplastic* means in awakening creation and environmental care, reconciling humanity with the creation we inhabit. Finally, in the realm of ethics, we will synthesize Coleridge with Trevor Hart (2013). Through Hart’s concept of moral imagining, we will explore how this human-to-human act provides a means of sparking creature care, particularly in a time where love is easily traded for ideological entrenchment. As an invitation to every man, moral imagining is a road to reconciliation between creature and creature.

In a symposium that seeks to explore how we are to go about stewarding the creation entrusted to us, we need more than simple method. This paper seeks to be a prolegomenon in the discussion of creation stewardship, a look at what allows us to engage in our various methods of creation stewardship in the first place. The imagination, rightly applied through human creativity to creation care and ethics, is that very power. Our God-given faculty of imagination is not simply concerned with creative expression but serves within and without creative expression as a means towards the reconciliation and stewardship of creature and creation under the governance of a caring Creator.

Gregory Poore, Shorter University

Reconciling the Food Chain with the Great Chain of Being: Or, a Philosopher Reflects on Raising Sheep for Meat

Many Christians eat meat. Yet in our consumption of meat, many remain, in the words of Wendell Berry, “in biological exile from reality.” We know in the abstract that meat comes from animals—animals perhaps not too dissimilar to those we keep as pets. But we remain personally and experientially removed from the entire process by which God’s living creatures become hamburgers and chicken tenders on our plates. We do not really understand and appreciate the cost at which we eat. And if we are honest, most of us like it this way. We find it disquieting and unsettling when something or someone brings too vividly to mind the reality of what we are chewing between our teeth. Here as elsewhere in the moral life, willful ignorance raises a red flag. If we must eat our meat in ignorance, is our eating a guilty pleasure?

How, if at all, can we reconcile the practice of eating meat with the Christian call to steward God’s creation? We live in the presence of a God who created all creatures for his own glory, who knows the fall of every sparrow, and who promises a new heaven and a new earth where the lion will lie down with the lamb. Knowing this, and being fully aware of what we are doing, can we devour a steak with a clear conscience?

I approach this question personally, drawing from my own experience raising meat sheep. On my small farm of 5.5 acres, I personally tend to the entire process from the conception to the consumption of a lamb. This has been incredibly educational, rewarding, and meaningful. But it has not been without some mental dissonance and soul-searching. This is a good thing. I have had to face the reality of what it means to eat meat. In this paper I wrestle as a Christian and a philosopher with the practice of eating meat, and offer some reflections on how we can consume God’s creatures while still faithfully stewarding God’s creation.

Russell Powell, Princeton Theological Seminary

A Cinema of Collaborative Stewardship: Terrence Malick's *The Tree of Life*

The Tree of Life (hereafter ToL), Terrence Malick’s 2011 film set (for the most part) in 1950s Waco, Texas, contains a powerful vision of responsible stewardship. Precisely what makes this film’s vision so powerful is the fact that it stakes out a shared ground between two deeply influential yet opposing strains of American religiosity: Augustinianism and Emersonianism. In this paper, I argue that Malick’s concept of human-nature relationality and his position on humans’ responsibility to steward the natural world advances an instructive strategy for connecting faith-based environmental concerns with secular ones. Malick’s cinema envisages a creative means of strengthening broad-based coalitions committed to both overcoming humans’ modern alienation from nature and confronting present-day environmental crises.

Ideological tensions have long frustrated Christian and secular groups’ collaboration on addressing ecological concerns. On the Christian side, the fear is that environmentalist groups supplant theocentric values. Particularly evangelicals worry that secular environmentalists reframe devotion to God as devotion to the earth. Environmentalists, for their part, have the opposite concern, worrying Christians’ faith commitments distract from today’s most pressing ecological problems.

Jeffrey Stout, in his book *Democracy and Tradition* (2004), provides a helpful conceptual framework for understanding this impasse. The Christian environmentalist divide maps well onto what Stout sees as a conflict inherent to historical religious identity in America: that is, the

conflict between Augustinianism and Emersonianism. According to Stout, American Augustinians (“from the Puritanism of Plymouth Rock to the denominational soup of our day,” Stout writes) have long condemned Emersonians for replacing loyalty to God with loyalty to the self and its prospects for spiritual and social transformation. In response, Emersonians critique their Augustinian counterparts for what they see as a dogmatic commitment to transcendental value. Faith in God, Emersonians argue, swamps Augustinians’ concern for more earthly moral considerations.

As far as my paper is concerned, I contend that the contribution of Terrence Malick’s *ToL* to these issues is to chart a path between Augustinianism and Emersonianism so construed. My interpretation of the film will advance the argument that, inherent to both *ToL*’s theological interests and cinematic construction, is a vision for cooperation between Christians and secularists on matters related to humans’ relationship to and potential care for the creation. Not many films from the last ten years deal as explicitly with the question of humanity’s relationship to the natural world than *ToL*. Due to Malick’s reliance upon the Judeo-Christian tradition, including that tradition’s texts (*ToL* opens with an epigraph from the Book of Job), its linguistic conventions (concepts like “nature” and “grace” are invoked throughout the film), and its most pressing theological concerns (the film concludes with a rousing rendition of corporeal resurrection), it is not surprising that *ToL* has been interpreted as a specifically Christian statement on humanity’s place within the creation (see, e.g., Candler, 2016; Leithart, 2013). Also not surprising is the Augustinian tenor of these interpretations, which emphasize the alienation humans feel both in relation to each other and the natural world as a result of original sin. Yet the construction of *ToL* relies upon what the film scholar P. Adams Sitney (2008) identifies as cinematic techniques which are part and parcel of the Emersonian artistic heritage. Like Emerson in such essays as “Nature,” “The Oversoul,” “Circles,” and more, Malick’s cinema entails the hypothetical silencing or disengagement of language and narrative. Instead of employing plot-driven storytelling, Malick assumes the primacy of the visual to convey his intended meaning. The use of ocular ellipses and ultra-scenic representations allow Malick’s film to fly free from traditional logical narrative construction.

The result is a film which marries Augustinian content to Emersonian form. What makes this so significant for the question of how people of faith might align with secular environmentalists to more responsibly steward creation is in how Malick broadens theological discourse on humans’ relationship to the earth to include artful techniques from outside the Christian tradition. While Christianity is itself grounded in narrative, Malick employs a cinematic poetry of exhilaration (by which I mean a cinema comprised of rhapsodic visuals, interrelated modes of camera movement, associative editing, and the disjunction of language and image) to reimagine both the character of human-nature interconnectivity and the possibility of overcoming one’s alienation from the created world. Malick, with *ToL*, thus achieves an innovative cinematic vocabulary whereby Christians and secularists might gain a shared language with which to collaborate on overlapping environmental concerns, even while the ultimate values they affirm remain at odds.

Christine Pyle, Baylor University

“Drawn into the Bright Shadow”: Imagination and the Natural World in C. S. Lewis’s *Surprised by Joy*

Once one begins reading C.S. Lewis’s work in an ecological light, a coherent, healthy view about the environment emerges. In the excellent book length study *Narnia and the Fields of*

Arbol: The Environmental Vision of C.S. Lewis (2009), Matthew Dickerson and David O'Hara set out to examine the ecological aspects of Lewis's fantasy novels: the Narnia series and the Space Trilogy. While Dickerson and O'Hara show how Lewis's fiction can shape others towards positive ecological action, my paper turns the same focus on his nonfiction, specifically his spiritual autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*. This spiritual autobiography covers the first thirty years of Lewis's life. Lewis does not seek to give a comprehensive account of these years; instead, the unifying thread is what he calls "Joy"—moments of longing and yearning for beauty—and his quest to re-experience this Joy. Almost exclusively, books and locations of natural beauty provoke experiences of Joy, yet each pang of Joy is essentially linked to nature. For example, at various points Lewis's longings are linked to a miniature forest; a season of the year; or the terrible, expansive beauty of the northern parts of the world.

I argue that, by giving us glimpses of Joy along his journey, Lewis proves that the heart can be formed toward caring for nature—not by any shortcuts, but through the creative imagination, faith, and recognition of nature's beauty and grandeur. In other words, Lewis's autobiography models the long but worthwhile road to transforming the human heart via imagination, through powerful encounters with books and nature. Throughout *Surprised by Joy*, Lewis shows that sparking the imagination through stories is one way to spread value for the environment. Once we realize that natural places are just as full of imaginative energy as stories are, we are more likely to desire their preservation and protection. Further, Lewis models a surrendered, listening approach to nature; his faith guides him to respect and receive wisdom from the natural world.

When Lewis encounters what he calls the "bright shadow" of joy—God—the glimpse turns Lewis towards the physical world rather than away from it. This turning toward is not in order to dominate the world but to receive its beauty without possessing it. Because all is "drawn into the bright shadow," everything in nature is worthy of respect and fair treatment. Lewis's vision thus leads to contemplation and enjoyment without possessing, rather than exploitation and abuse of nature. His glimpses of Joy teach him, among other even deeper realizations, to value a thing, place, or creature for itself rather than for what it can give him. It matters that the thing exists, not what one feels about it. This radical attitude has the power to take us outside of ourselves and our "rights" or desires toward contemplation of—and right care of—beauty.

Richard Russell, Baylor University

Embodying Place: An Ecotheological Reading of Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*

The blackened landscape of Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006) nonetheless suggests the possibility of a future restoration of the earth through the survival of the nameless boy, who is variously figured as a fire-carrier and more specifically, as the Word of God, a chalice holder, a tabernacle. McCarthy's privileging of the bodies of the boy and father suggests how body is the basis for our encounters with the dynamism of place. The sacrificial love of the father for the son exemplifies embodied, emplaced love and is finally Christ-like in its manner and tone. This relationship and the relationship of father and son to the earth, which can be thought of figuratively as God's body, can be best understood through "deep incarnation," a dramatic understanding of God's sacramental presence and action in the world in which human beings build communities of justice and reconsider their place in nature. The present ecotheological reading of *The Road* is the first to unite McCarthy's intertwined environmental and Christian emphases.

Kevin Seybold, Grove City College

Cultural Cognition and Its Influence on Beliefs About the Environment

It is often noted that America is becoming more polarized on political, social, and even religious issues. This polarization can often be seen in views concerning the environment. In general, compared to national norms, religious “conservatives” (most notably white evangelical Protestants) tend to be skeptics when it comes to climate change, while religious “liberals” tend to be more accepting of climate science studies suggesting a change in climate due to human activity. This paper will discuss some of the literature from psychological science (especially cognitive psychology and social psychology) dealing with decision theory, information processing, dual-processing theory, etc., that relates to why people make the decisions and adopt the opinions they do. Importantly, the paper will focus on cultural cognition as a mechanism to understand why positions on seemingly unrelated issues (e.g., gun control, gay marriage, and climate change) tend to cluster together.

Cultural cognition refers to a set of processes whereby what a person believes about an issue (e.g., climate change) derives from their cultural commitments or values. Even on a factual issue that might be answered using empirical data (has the climate changed over the past 50 years or has it not), adoption of a cultural perspective (this is what a conservative person is supposed to believe about the climate) shapes how one thinks about the environment and its care. These cultural commitments create ingroups (people who belong to the same group and think like me) and outgroups (those who belong to different groups and do not think like me). The groups or tribes to which we belong can be formed around religion, political party, ethnic group, or almost any other real or arbitrary category. The existence of these groups, however, has a powerful effect on how we interact with and think about others in or out of our own group. Coming to any sort of agreement with the outgroup can be very difficult as demonstrated by the lack of accord or even civility seen between today’s political party tribes. Do different groups even utilize the same moral foundations? Do religious conservatives and religious liberals, for example, form their beliefs on the issues of the day on similar moral standards? The answer to that seems to be yes and no, which might open up a possible path to reach some manner of agreement between groups.

Various psychological principles relevant to decision-making, judgment, and belief can be used to help understand why “conservative” and “liberal” Christians who read the same Bible can come to such divergent views on gay marriage, abortion, immigration, and care for the environment. Given what we know about decision-making and information processing (including the important role of misinformation), how might Christians (and people of other religions or of no religion at all) become less polarized and more willing to work with others with dissimilar viewpoints? What are some of the findings from psychology that can be implemented to help people reach consensus on the important issues of the day, such as the environment and its stewardship?

Doug Sikkema, University of Waterloo

Can Our Words Save the World?

A recent study about the words we use for places provides a helpful jumping off point for my exploration of how disenchantment, language, and ecological destruction are all intertwined in the late modern world. In *Landmarks*, nature writer and scholar Robert Macfarlane is fascinated by “the power of language—strong style, single words—to shape our sense of place” (1). In this ambitious project he not only shares the stories and work of some of the most prolific

and insightful nature writers, but, more remarkably, provides glossaries—a word, he marvels, which is “just the right term [for] it hints both of tongue and gleam”(19)—of words that are on the endangered species list. Words like *ammil*, “the icy casings of leaves and grasses and blades and sprigs hid in a mist of sun-fire” (40); *pudge*, “a little puddle” (125); and *clitter*, “rock rubble that accumulates around the top of tors ” (281); not to mention *squashle*, *feather pie*, *daddock*, and *nubbin*. Such words are as beautiful in their musicality as they are haunting in their strangeness.

The motivation for his research, however, is not merely his seemingly inexhaustible love for words and places. Rather it is his growing concern that the vibrant plenitude of words for the natural world is being excised from modern dictionaries and, thus, modern consciousness:

The same year I first saw the Peat Glossary [a text with hundreds of words used by farmers, shepherds, sailors, soldiers, walkers, and many others for the moorland of the Outer Hebrides] a new edition of the Oxford Junior Dictionary was published. A sharp-eyed reader noticed that there had been a culling of words concerning nature. Under pressure, Oxford University Press revealed a list of the entries no longer felt to be relevant to a modern-day childhood. The deletions included *acorn*, *adder*, *ash*, *beech*, *bluebell*, *buttercup*, *catkin*, *conker*, *cowslip*, *cygnet* [...] The words introduced to the new edition included *attachment*, *block-graph*, *blog*, *broadband*, *bullet-point*, *celebrity*, *chatroom* [...]. (3).

What Macfarlane is noting is the overshadowing of language for *phusis* by language for *techne*, a favoring of the built world over and against the given, natural world. Such a shift, Macfarlane worries, is not benign, because “what is lost is something precious: a kind of word magic, the power that certain terms possess to enchant our relations with nature and place” (4). The danger is not merely that such natural places and objects may disappear (although that can happen and has), but “that once they go unnamed they go to some degree unseen. Language deficit leads to attention deficit” (24). For this reason he calls his glossaries “counter-desecration phrasebooks” because “once a landscape goes undescribed and therefore unregarded, it becomes more vulnerable to unwise use or improper action” (27). We cannot care for what we do not know.

Undergirding these changes to our lexicon, Macfarlane believes, are a few things. First, the “working relationship” with the earth has changed, particularly in the twentieth century as the “knowledge economy” has created a world wherein most people no longer have communities of work tied to the land (23). Second, and more importantly, Macfarlane suggests that this shift is the endgame of disenchantment; it is what ultimately happens when there is a “reduction of ‘wonder’ and the expansion of ‘will’” and when nature is reduced to its use-value, and thereby “rendered less able to converse with us” (25). Macfarlane’s hope remains that the only way we might begin to heal the world and conserve it is if we re-enchant it through language: “Language is fundamental to the possibility of re-wonderment, for language does not just register experience, it produces it” (25).

It is this second aspect of language I want to explore more fully in this paper. Because I am not so convinced that simply knowing larger glossaries of place-names will effectively “re-enchant” the world in a way in which people come to lovingly care and conserve it. In fact, I would argue that underneath Macfarlane’s claim here is a partially representationalist account of language that has its roots in post-Cartesian thought and is, in fact, part of the very problem he is seeking to remediate. A glossary—much like a museum—is often where something goes when it is already dead. Such glossaries, if they do not naturally grow and evolve and are not embedded into forms of life in a given region—accompanied by habits and embodied practices and

dispositions (a habitus, in Bourdieu's language)—will simply become like so many eccentricities collected in a naturalists' wunderkammer. There is no way of life in which such words find their home.

Therefore, the longer story of just how words have been affected by disenchantment and how we have developed entire ways of speaking that have not connected people to the world but severed them from it, bears a more complete telling. This story, I believe, will help us better appreciate the significance of poetic utterances in general, and those of Christian Wiman in particular.

My paper will explore stewardship through the lens of language, asking: Can our words save the world? I believe they can, but only when we move away from the lingering hangover of representationalism and begin to embody the discoveries around language and meaning given to us in the linguistic turn. Only when we understand that language is downstream of habits, and habits are downstream of our desires, will our words begin to properly care for the world in which they are uttered forth.

Amelia Sims, Great Hearts Northern Oaks

Contra Lynn White Jr.: Ecology with the Church Fathers

This essay examines Christian aspects and attitudes towards the environment in the Early and Medieval Church, focusing on the thought of Church Fathers such as Maximus the Confessor, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, and Athanasius. In the spirit of Vatican II's *ressourcement*, or call to return to the sources of Christianity, we must re-integrate this thought into our understanding of creation for the purpose of ecumenical, spiritual, and environmental healing.

Fifty-two years ago, Lynn White, a historian of medieval science and technology, delivered a paper which proposed that the roots of our current ecological crisis lie in Christianity and its historical tradition. Within a five-year period, this short but powerful paper elicited the response of dozens of articles and an entire new department of ethics within the academy. In this address, which was later published as "The Historic Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," White proposed that the current environmental crisis is a direct product of our Western Christian philosophical inheritance which, White argues, encourages exploitation and excessive anthropocentrism. Specifically, White attacks Christian doctrines of "dominion" and "radical anthropocentrism" rooted in Genesis. He contends, "Man named all the animals, thus establishing his dominance over them. God planned all of this explicitly for man's benefit and rule: no item in the physical creation had any purpose save to serve man's purposes." White continues, "man-nature dualism is deep-rooted in us. Until it is eradicated not only from our minds but also from our emotions, we shall doubtless be unable to make fundamental changes in our attitudes and actions affecting ecology."

On the one hand, many environmentalists gladly seized the opportunity to rid themselves entirely of the oppressive mantle of Western thought and Christianity. They took up animistic views of deep ecology where all parts of creation are equally important. A human has the same value as a tree and maybe less if he cuts down the tree. On the other hand, many eco-theologians, eco-feminists and eco-liberation theologians, such as Sally MacFague, eagerly sought to refashion and deconstruct Christianity in order to respond to the environmental crisis. In doing so, they often entirely ignored the rich and beautiful nuanced ecological ideas and attitudes propounded by the Church Fathers. The message from most theologians of this field remains that the Tradition is not sufficient for responding to our current situation.

Though Christianity's relationship with creation certainly remains checkered, the ecological history of this tradition is historically much more variegated and positive than Lynn White's critical and simplistic portrait. White is correct that an overly mechanistic view of nature developed in the Middle Ages did lead to an exploitation and under appreciation of the environment; however, his monolithic dismissal of the whole of Christian thought ignores some of the richest treasures of writing and narrative on the environment and God's creation. Throughout Medieval and Ancient Christian texts, authors continuously paint the world and nature as a sacrament or means of communion with the Lord. As St. Basil affirms, "The world is a work of art, set before all for contemplation, so that through it the wisdom of Him who created it should be known." In this view, Maximus the Confessor understands that man's role as steward or priest of creation is to bring creation into communion with God in order that it may be fulfilled and saved by Him and through Him. Where White proposes a radically anthropocentric Christianity, let us uncover the radical Theocentrism of Christianity. Where White sees an antagonistic dualism between nature and man, let us revisit God's call for radical harmony between man and nature. Where White sees a mechanistic Christianity of dominance and subdual, let us uncover the aesthetic and liturgical meaning of creation. Where White sees a Christianity willing to discard Earth for the sake of heaven, let us uncover God's intention that heaven and earth may be reunited and renewed. Let us affirm with Paul that "Through Christ, God was pleased to reconcile himself to all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross" (Col. 1:20).

David Smith, Baylor University

Poetic Liturgies, Porous Individuals: Romanticism and Christian Eco-Ethics

Christianity's relationship with the modern environmental movement has been fraught with political pitfalls, lines drawn that artificially and erroneously sunder followers of Christ from their world. Regardless of political allegiance, Christians should be concerned with acting in a responsible and edifying manner towards Creation; as Elizabeth Theokritoff observes, the modern Christian's refusal to engage on this issue bespeaks of "a society sufficiently de-Christianized that the natural world is distanced from the God who created it." Paul Santmire declares that "Christianity in the modern West...has been pervasively anthropocentric. It has focused on human needs and aspirations, not on nature together with humanity" (7). Though humanity is a special aspect of Creation, we are still part of God's handiwork and therefore part of the created order. Thus, any ecological damage or irresponsibility has ramifications on all of Creation, spiritually as well as physically.

Recent criticism and commentary on Christian eco-ethics has placed more emphasis upon orthodox traditions and epistemologies. The use of sacramental and liturgical language resonates more with High Church traditions than the mainstream Protestant. The Reformation's emphasis upon the spiritual aspects of Christianity also led to an unfortunate tendency to delegitimize corporeal and material aspects of the practice of Christian beliefs. This Protestant eschewing of prioritizing the physical realm in favor of spiritual formation and development corresponds with a rejection of liturgical practices in its worship. There seems to be a connection with the Protestant rejection of the physical in theological spheres and the stereotype of conservative Protestants scoffing at environmental activism and responsibility as leftist and overly materialistic. Though I do not endorse requiring a return to orthodox and liturgical worship as a prerequisite for more responsible execution of the Christian's duty as a steward, it seems evident

that a liturgical mindset that emphasizes the physical world greatly facilitates the reorientation of priorities towards a Christian ethos of environmental caretaking and conservation.

When developing strategies to reorient Christian eco-responsibility, then, the form and language of liturgical proceedings can prove invaluable in bringing the need for a reconnection with the physical world to the forefront of Christendom's spiritual and moral duties. The emphasis upon form and language as a way to ground the viewer and encourage them to participate in the proceedings resonates with poetic theory and practice as well, and few poetic movements directed a clearer and greater focus on the formation of an individual in relation to Nature than the Romantic movement that straddled the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Romantic poets like Wordsworth recognized the immense influence the natural environment exerted on their formation as poets and people, in aesthetic, moral, political, and social terms. Borrowing from Charles Taylor's notions of the pre-modern spiritually porous individual vs. the modern secular buffered individual, I propose that encountering the liturgical participation of Romantic poetry, which invites its readers to experience and to join in the act of celebrating and meditating on the natural world, leads to a heightened awareness and appreciation for the interconnectedness that exists between humanity and the rest of Creation. By opening up our emotional and spiritual reservoirs and allowing God to express his delight in us as part of his creation, we become practitioners and communicants of the cycles of life, keenly aware of our own codependence upon the environment as we increase in our dependence upon God. Through Romantic poetry, our imaginations and hearts are baptized into the liturgical celebration of this world.

Jason Smith, Houston Baptist University

Undergreen: A Brief Sketch of American Christian Environmental Creed and Lived Belief Since 1967

Since the modern environmentalist movement re-began in the 1960s, the legacy of Christian tradition and the activism of various contemporary Christian groups have been blamed for causing, exacerbating, denying, obfuscating, and actively colluding with the global ecological crisis. A seminal paper published in *Science* in 1967 by medievalist historian Lynn White laid out the paradigm-establishing critique:

What did Christianity tell people about their relations with the environment? ...[that] God planned all of this explicitly for man's benefit and rule: no item in the physical creation had any purpose save to serve man's purposes...Both our present science and our present technology are so tinctured with orthodox Christian arrogance toward nature that no solution for our ecologic crisis can be expected...until we reject the Christian axiom that nature has no reason for existence save to serve man.

White's critique, apparently relying on a fundamental misapprehension of Christian teaching, ought not to have been allowed to stand; but something different seems to have happened instead. This paper seeks to parse the complex responses by American Christians of Mainline Protestant, Evangelical, and Catholic traditions to modern environmentalism. Why, if White truly was mistaken about Christian teaching, have Mainline Protestants and Catholics responded by "greening" their theological positions? Why did Evangelicals, seemingly affirming White's characterization of Christian theology, initiate an ongoing "anti-environmentalist" movement as part of the "culture wars" effort in the 1970s? This paper argues that with insights from missiological history, Western history, classical theology, and a little help from T.S. Eliot, the

present bewilderment of ideas regarding Christian environmentalism can be coherently explored and rightly cultivated.

Julien Smith, Valparaiso University

Hope and Endurance in Romans: Agrarian Virtues for Citizenship in the Heavenly Commonwealth

This paper proposes a reading of Romans, focusing on 8:18-25, that will serve as a resource to the contemporary church in forming local communities that live in healthy interdependence with the land. Using the methodology of the Exeter Project (Horrell et. al., *Greening Paul*, Baylor 2010), this paper develops a hermeneutical lens for reading Romans in conversation with both ancient political philosophy and contemporary agrarian discourse. The investigation is guided by two interrelated questions: What virtues are required and enabled by citizenship within a heavenly commonwealth (Phil 3:20) whose *telos* is the eschatological transformation of creation (Rom 8:19-25)? And what practices will nurture such virtues both in the church and in the world?

The first part of the paper locates Paul's argument within a wide stream of ancient political philosophy that correlated the formation of virtue with the reign of the good king. As attested by Augustan court poets such as Virgil (*Fourth Eclogue*), the reign of the virtuous king was believed to usher in a golden age marked by virtue and agricultural fecundity. Yet by claiming the return of Saturn's reign as a *fait accompli*, such propaganda implied no causal relationship between human virtue and just, healthy agricultural practices. Indeed, Roman practices such as the distribution of grain (*Annona*) in the face of declining Italian agriculture divorced the fruits of farming from the agrarian virtues that sustain land health. Ironically, the economic practices used to prop up the fiction of Rome's golden age not only failed to inculcate and sustain agrarian virtues, but instead contributed to widespread ecological degradation. Paul's argument in Romans, beginning with the announcement of the reign of Israel's Messiah Jesus (Rom 1:3-4, 16) and proceeding towards a description of the virtues of the church, the body of the Messiah (Rom 12), echoes key elements of the audience's cultural repertoire concerning the inculcation of virtue and the reign of the good king. Yet crucially, Paul looks not backwards with nostalgia, but forwards with hopeful endurance. The virtues of hope and endurance, largely absent from the classical canon, are essential to Paul's vision of the Messiah's reign and its *telos*, the liberation of creation through the revealing of the Messiah's people in glory (Rom 5:2-5; 8:24-25; 12:12; 15:4-5).

The second part of the paper engages in the constructive task of applying the Pauline virtues of hope and endurance to the present ecological crisis. Beginning with Hauerwas's notion of the church as virtue-forming community and MacIntyre's concept of practices that both require and form virtues, we ask: What are the practices that anticipate the eschatological transformation of creation, and how might such practices inculcate the virtues of hope and endurance within the church? It is argued that farming is one such vital practice, and that local congregations, functioning as the "hermeneutic of the gospel," should seek ways to participate in local farming communities and economies. In so doing, churches cultivate the virtues of hope and endurance, essential to the process of God's people growing in glory.

Katherine Smith, Baptist Creation Care Initiative, and R. Darrell Smith, Global Environmental Relief

A Place at the Table for Baptists

Contemporary society is disconnected from nature in a way that would have been unheard of several hundred years ago, before the industrial revolution changed our lives forever. That part of our inmost being that God created to live in tune with our environment has been blanketed by our own creations. We have misplaced the sense of the divine that still is available to us everywhere. We purposely killed off some of the natural world, changed other parts to suit our needs, and intentionally ignore our part in the demise of the world as a whole. We must find that internal gift from God—that graced part of ourselves—that was created to live in harmony with the natural world instead of rule over it. We must find the strength to give up our ‘stuff’ in order to let others live.

Earth Day (April 22nd each year) and the Environmental Protection Agency both had their beginnings in 1970. Since that time, we have had the privilege of learning from numerous people of faith including Pope Francis, Katharine Hayhoe, Calvin B. DeWitt, Bill McKibben, and Walter Brueggemann, plus organizations such as the Evangelical Environmental Network, the Catholic Climate Covenant, Interfaith Power and Light, and hundreds if not thousands of other organizations big and small. Even after years of Earth Days, sermons, blogs, news stories, rules, regulations, and countless scientific reports, we still have situations such as the water crisis in Flint, Michigan, occurring on a much too frequent basis. Where is the Baptist voice on this issue?

The topic of climate disruption, for example, has become increasingly polarizing and confused with a huge amount of misinformation promulgated as fact. Many Baptists and other evangelicals, however, view climate disruption as a political or faith issue and have been hesitant to discuss any culpability in the problem or steps for change. Asking people to give up some of their comfort, their time, or their earned wealth on behalf of others, however biblical or easily seen as an outward sign of love, is usually not well-received. Without a true appreciation of the natural world around us and our interconnectedness with all of creation, any discussions seeking transformation will likely be unsuccessful.

Solutions to these issues must move beyond a new appreciation of creation to include listening to and learning from the poor and marginalized of our own communities and the voices of those from around the world. Our materialism and often thoughtless use of resources to the detriment of others must be challenged at all levels, including spiritual. In order to educate Christians about the very real issues of environmental degradation and encourage them to act on behalf of the natural world and humanity, we will need to get people to open their eyes, metaphorically, and see God’s presence in the natural world beyond a beautiful park setting or a walk in the woods.

Zachary Michael Tackett, Southeastern University

The Rains Have Come: Early Pentecostal Eschatologies and Their Implications for Creation Care

Early Pentecostal eschatology has the ability to provide a positive influence upon the development of a theology of creation care. Early Pentecostals incorporated a modified expression of nineteenth century holiness eschatological thought, emphasizing what was identified at the time as a Latter Rain of the Spirit. This particular holiness eschatology was built upon a premillennialist notion of the immediacy of the return of Christ. The Spirit spoke in word

and practice into the life of the early church at Pentecost—the early rains; the Spirit is renewing the latter church prior to the return or Second Coming of Christ—the latter rains. This agricultural metaphor of the rains of the Spirit emerged from reflections on the agricultural seasons in the Middle East. The spring rains germinate the freshly planted seeds; the autumn rains provide growth to the gain prior to harvest. The spring rains of the Spirit inaugurate the eschatological hope of the church; the autumn rains of the Spirit anticipate the consummation of hope preceding the return of Christ. This is an optimistic eschatology that sees revival in the church, through the work of the Spirit in the latter rains, as anticipating the parousia of Christ. The implications of a Latter Rain eschatology upon a theology of creation care centers around the purposes of the rains. Within this metaphor, the rains in the agricultural seasons bring vitality and growth. In agriculture, the farmer has no control over the rains. Yet, the farmer does prepare and care for the soil that the land may bear fruit year after year. This soil is the livelihood of the community, depending upon the rains. Engaging the seasons of rain metaphor into a theology of creation care could emphasize the fullness of God’s creation—humanity and the world of humanity.

The optimism of Latter Rain eschatology contrasts with the pessimism of other premillennialist eschatologies that emerged in the English-speaking worlds (particularly the United States) during the nineteenth century, such as Darbian Dispensationalism or Millerite eschatology. In the negative eschatologies, emphasis was placed upon leaving the earth. As a result, little concern is given to the earth and ecology as a whole. The focus is upon the spiritual renewal of a particular aspect of creation, the spiritual renewal of the human spirit. Little concern is given to the present state of creation.

American Pentecostals from the 1930s through 1960s, particularly EuroAmerican Pentecostals but also to a limited extent Latina/o and African American Pentecostals, increasingly became influenced by Fundamentalism and Neo-Evangelicalism. Pentecostals adapted aspects of Darbian dispensationalism to the point where most American Pentecostals came to believe that a modified Darbian dispensationalism was the historic understanding of Pentecostal eschatology. Reengaging an inaugurated eschatology, such as the historic Latter Rain eschatology, provides an opportunity to develop ecological theologies.

Significant academic research and theological development in recent years has engaged the relationship of Pentecostal theology to creation care. The works of Michael Welker, A. J. Swoboda, Amos Yong, Robby Waddell, Brian K. Pipkin, Michael Wilkinson, and Steven M. Studebaker are particularly noteworthy. Their works, however, do not place significant emphasis upon historical expressions of Pentecostal eschatology. Other writings have placed emphasis upon the historic relation of Pentecostal eschatology to social justice, particularly the writings of Murray Dempster and Peter Althouse. The uniqueness of this paper will be to address early Pentecostal expressions of eschatology, interact with changes in Pentecostal eschatologies, and evaluate the implications of a renewed Pentecostal inaugurated eschatology for addressing ecological theology.

Lyrice Taylor, Associate Professor of Art History at Azusa Pacific University

Creation Care in the New Dutch Republic: The Dutch Baroque and the Promised Land

The Dutch people in the seventeenth century had just overcome seemingly insurmountable odds: they had successfully defeated the Spanish during the Eighty Years’ War, gained religious freedom, and began the reclamation of land for prosperous farming. During the revolt against Spain, the Dutch compared William of Orange (the leader of the fight for Dutch

independence) to Moses and the Dutch people to the Israelites, the chosen people of God, who had escaped the bondage of slavery in Egypt for the Promised Land in the Book of Exodus. This paper will examine Baroque paintings and prints of the new Dutch Republic (including agricultural land, cities, and architecture) and their identification of their new country with the Promised Land to understand what it meant to care for and develop this new land to God's glory.

Jerry Terrill, Houston Graduate School of Theology

Henry Ward Beecher: Environmentalist for God

It is my intent to show that Rev. Henry Ward Beecher (1813-87) was ahead of his time in his descriptions of experiencing mindfulness,* peace, and joy in nature's beauty, even as he lived through one of the most turbulent eras in American history. Beecher was a committed advocate of abolitionism, and he spoke from the pulpit regarding the evils of slavery. He became infamous for sending boxes of "Beecher Bibles" (Sharps rifles) to the Kansas Territory, which was known as "Bloody Kansas" in the 1850's. He was the brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. President Lincoln would send him on a speaking tour to Europe during the Civil War to garner support for the Union cause. After the Civil War, Beecher became the first president of the American Women's Suffrage Association. He went on to become an advocate for the striking workers of the Great American Railroad Strike of 1877, and for the pro-immigration laws permitting native Chinese to come to America to live and work.

What is not as well known is that Henry Ward Beecher became a social Darwinist after reading the works of Herbert Spenser. Beecher writes, "Evolution was 'God's way of doing things' on earth, guiding the laws of spiritual growth toward ultimate perfection." His attraction to the things of nature began as a boy in the woods of Ohio. His sermons from the pulpit of Plymouth Congregational Church in Brooklyn Heights, N. Y., helped Darwinism gain acceptance in America. Many of his sermons worked on the theme of the sanctity of nature, and he developed these sermons while working on his farm. "After breakfast, I go into my study, as a man goes into his orchard; ...as he finds the ripest and best and plucks them while it (the fruit) is fresh."

Beecher's sermons and meditations were the "fruit" of the spring days spent on his farm. In his sermon "Lilies of the Field: A Study of Spring for the Careworn," Beecher provides an interpretation of nature for individuals dealing with Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). This theme is further developed in "The Storm and its Lessons." These sermons evoke a mindfulness of the sanctity and beauty of God's creation we are called to respect and enhance as stewards of His creation. "The Lord took man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." Genesis 2:15. Beecher believed that "Christ is the living Seed; the bible is the husk that contains the Seed." The "bible is a book of hieroglyphics," signs of God's revelation to this world in which He calls us to be His servants, His emissaries. "Have you ever taken as part of your obedience to Christ, taken time to sit down and think what birds and flowers mean? Have you ever taken flowers and you have enjoyed them—their forms, their colors, their odors—simply as objects which had a relation to a certain sense of beauty in yourself." "[F]aith and life... are not new except as the song of every bird is new, though the same note has been sung by a thousand ancestors." For Beecher, nature reflects the promise of salvation as it creates life anew, and through careful attention to nature, we are guided to be "saved by hope." Beecher loved form and color in flowers, birds, and precious stones, which he believed evoke harmony and peace with God, instilling spiritual, physical, and emotional mindfulness in His human creation.

In the life and work of Henry Ward Beecher and St. Francis of Assisi, it is dysfunction, evil, and sin that destroy nature's harmony and the "integrity of creation" (Pope John Paul, 1982). The writings of C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien are a testament to the insights and wisdom of Henry Ward Beecher. Beecher understood emotionally, spiritually, and environmentally the impact of nature on humanity in restoring harmony to men and women's lives in a world filled with trauma.

*Mindfulness is defined as being aware of your thoughts and feelings in the moment and being able to accept them non-judgmentally.

Rachel Toombs, Yellowstone Theological Institute

A Modern Man, a Machine, and an Improbable Martyr: On Flannery O' Connor's "A View of the Woods" and the Distorted Vision of Technological Progress

Flannery O'Connor's "A View of the Woods" stands as one of O'Connor's most difficult short stories to read. The story centers around two figures: an old man, Mr. Fortune, who takes pride in his high view of technological progress, and his grand-daughter, Mary Fortune. In the opening scene, the child and her grandfather engage in their daily routine of sitting on the hood of Mr. Fortune's Cadillac assessing the progress on his construction site. In the foreground of the scene "the machine systematically ate a square red hole in what had once been a cow pasture," while in the background lies a dark silhouette of trees. These same figures—the child, old man, machine, and trees—are found at the story's close though in a drastically changed condition. This story plays with polarities: the young and old, mechanized and natural, foolish and wise, damned and saved. Interpretively, "A View of the Woods" proves most difficult because of its climactic scene where the old man fatally bashes his granddaughter's head against a rock and then himself dies of a heart attack. While O'Connor insisted that her stories center on the invitation of grace for her characters—an invitation they can reject or accept—this story proves difficult because even the possibility of grace seems unlikely—where can the hope of redemption be found in young and old lying dead, side-by-side in the woods?

In this paper, I argue that the interpretive payoff of "A View of the Woods" emerges when we view the child, Mary Fortune, as an improbable martyr in the face of an increasingly mechanized world. I make my argument in two parts. First, I provide a narrative summary of "A View of the Woods" with special attention to the two central characters—Mary Fortune and Mr. Fortune—and the role of both the "machine" and the trees throughout the story. Second, I demonstrate that the opposing fates of the two characters—one saved and the other damned—rests on their opposing views of the created world and their place in it. Mr. Fortune, in his confidence of human progress through mechanized dominance, sets himself apart from the rest of creation wherein the created order (both human and non-human) only obstructs or serves his own interests. In this story, his weedy plot of land near the road must be put to some "use" by housing a gas station; otherwise it is merely a waste of space and a missed opportunity. In contrast, Mary Fortune possesses wisdom despite her youth because she recognizes herself as part of the created order wherein the plot of land outside her home serves the threefold purpose of a play, a view, and grazing land for her father's cows. The child serves as an unlikely martyr in this story in a way only the genius of Flannery O'Connor could render, when at the story's close the trees themselves keep vigil over the young martyr who refuses to give in to the distorted vision of technological progress.

S. Kay Toombs, Baylor University
Culture, Agriculture and Community

Our reflections on the stewardship of creation and the challenges for people of faith must begin with the fundamental question of how the culture in which we live directly shapes our ability to take care of, and care for, the world around us. Of particular importance is the question of what effect the values, habits and practices of contemporary society have on our children's (the future generation's) relationship with the natural world. I will discuss in detail how one aspect of our modern techno-industrial world—the ever-increasing obsession with technology—is effectively and totally disconnecting us and our children from the land, from reality and from one another—a disconnection that actively discourages an attitude of care and responsibility for the husbanding of creation. I shall then share my experience of living for the past twenty years in an agrarian-based intentional Christian community and will discuss ways in which such an alternative cultural environment provides the framework and nurturing habitat necessary for developing a sustainable culture.

Jesse Watters, Baylor University, and Hannah Rogers, Great Hearts Northern Oaks
The Consequence of Losing an Entwife: Male and Female Stewardship in *The Lord of the Rings*

Throughout his mythology of Middle Earth, Tolkien explores man's role as a steward of creation. This is especially true in his trilogy *The Lord of the Rings*, in which he introduces the ents, the stewards of the forest, and Faramir, the steward of Gondor. Both characters display positive practices of stewardship, but ultimately Tolkien indicates that the ents have failed in their stewardship through the loss of the ent wives. This contrasts with the unity accomplished in the stewardship of Faramir and Eowyn. Through the tragedy of the ents and the ent wives and the accord of Faramir and Eowyn, Tolkien demonstrates that full stewardship depends on the self-giving relationship between man and woman in which both genders display a sacrificial love capable of producing life.

This paper will begin with a description of the failure of the ents and the ent wives, highlighting the ways in which both parties were obstinately dedicated to their own forms of stewardship rather than each other. By my analysis, the tragedy of the ents and ent wives occurs because neither party is willing to relinquish control over the land they steward. Thus, even though both parties practice a completely viable form of stewardship, they cannot reach the fullness of stewardship because of their inability to practice the sacrificial love of marriage.

Then, I will contrast this failure with the success of Faramir and Eowyn. Both characters sacrifice for the sake of the other, thereby making them proper stewards of the land. Accepting Faramir and abandoning her past desires for queenship and dominion, Eowyn is better able to tend to the land with gentleness and healing. Faramir, on the other hand, turns over the kingdom to Aragorn and joins his beloved as the prince of Ithilien, continuing to guide creation while still leaving room for the gentle cultivation of his wife. In this way, Faramir and Eowyn fulfill the roles of the ents and ent wives (respectively), thereby respecting each other's individuality without compromising the unity of man and wife. In this way, Tolkien indicates that their stewardship of the land will be successful.

Finally, I will demonstrate how, according to Tolkien, humanity's stewardship of the earth is dependent upon the fruitfulness of man's relationships. Building upon the first section and connecting it with Genesis 1.28: "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it,"

Tolkien's understanding of stewardship begins with a proper relationship between man and woman.

Such an analysis of stewardship is vital in the face of environmental scholarship that emphasizes the oppression of both women and the environment at the hand of the patriarchy. This scholarship, while making a viable connection between two sorts of oppression, will not provide an effective means of remedying our errors, for it promotes division rather than unity. Woman cannot achieve proper stewardship and environmental conservation without unity with man, and vice versa. Tolkien demonstrates this in his work, and his insights can be used by Christians to develop a more effective means of stewardship.

Stephen Weathers, Abilene Christian University

Dangerous Ground: Faerie and the Feral in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

A recent translator of the medieval classic, Simon Armitage, has suggested that *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* may well be the first English eco-poem, an interpretive hypothesis not lacking in foundation. Without question, this late fourteenth-century work displays deep affinities for the natural world. Mankind's ability to engage, enjoy, and subjugate the feral is affirmed—decidedly celebrated, in fact—as the narrator exhibits an aristocratic initiate's knowledge of stalking, bagging, and dressing wild game. Quite noticeably, he savors the excitement of field sport, lingering in love over the intimate details of a successful hunt. Pristine naturescapes, moreover, elegantly rendered, punctuate this chivalric tale: crisp descriptions of untrafficked and untrammelled scenery festoon the poem's delicately wrought surface. Nature's alluring beauty is here captured in stunning imagery that long remains etched in reading memory. Armitage's ecocritical suggestion, then, enjoys generous textual evidence and remains a quite valuable angle of approach to understanding the poet's values.

The medieval writer's thematic emphasis, nonetheless, would seem to belie Armitage's assertion—to belie it, that is, if the statement implies *Sir Gawain* is an unreservedly eco-friendly poem. It is not entirely so. In crucial passages, the *Gawain* poet takes pains to warn his audience, explicitly or implicitly, of nature's callously insensitive and, indeed, insidiously deceptive powers. The wilderness constitutes a formidable threat to body and soul, offering an arena, true, in which man displays his preeminence within God's created order but, simultaneously, a crucible in which he confronts his radical vulnerability to the forest's malign energies. Heaven's cynosure must not be overly sure, therefore, that his terrestrial mastery will go uncontested by natural savagery and inimical chthonic forces. This conflict of textual interest within *Sir Gawain* should not surprise us, given the poet's embeddedness within a medieval-church context: "The Judaeo-Christian conception of wilderness," a recent primer on ecocriticism reminds us, "combines connotations of trial and danger with freedom, redemption and purity, meanings that, in varying degrees, it still has" (Garrard 68). If the uncivilized landscape offers liberating splendor and sporting glamour, in short, it just as certainly poses grave danger.

In British literature of the Middle Ages, as Brian Stone has rightly observed, there exists a "shadowy frontier that fails to divide pagan myth from medieval Christianity" (13). It is precisely within this territory of mixing and melding, I would argue, a borderland neither thoroughly pagan nor overbearingly Christian, that *Sir Gawain's* ecological dissonance most clearly emerges. On one reading, the wild provides that psychological commodity so necessary to the medieval mind—and we moderns have not outgrown the craving—namely, the need for self-forgetful awe and aesthetic wonder. On a second, complementary reading, a more utilitarian facet shifts into view: the natural world, intimately understood and wisely used, provides

healthful recreation and, perhaps more importantly, bodily sustenance. It is on a closer, third reading, however, that one confronts the poem's entangled, contradictory sentiments. This "shadowy frontier," the contested ground between primordial chaos and a settled, duly domesticated Christian society, constitutes a place of extreme peril—nothing less, in fact, than a potentially fatal ambush for the inattentive. Beyond scenic enticement, pragmatic expedience, and recreational self-indulgence, therefore, acute vigilance remains the order of the day—every day.

Although *Sir Gawain* is a remarkably green poem, present-day readers may find themselves, despite its titular cue, gliding over its eco-poetic elements, wrongly assuming that its treatments of nature serve as mere setting for a more important moral drama being enacted. Such a reading, however, as Gillian Rudd points out, indicates one has been taken in, hoodwinked, by the very faerie influences the knight errant must encounter and from which he will, hopefully, escape unharmed. The *Gawain* poet intentionally wishes his audience, Rudd argues convincingly, to first overlook or discount the cautionary details within his nature imagery, so that we, too, alongside the chagrined protagonist, at last confront our fallibility before the forces of the unpeopled, feral realm (115). Careful ecosensitive scrutiny of this medieval classic is required, therefore, if we are to fully grasp the import of its lovely, lurking greenery.

Sources:

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- (2) Rudd, Gillian. *Greenery: Ecocritical Readings of Late Medieval Literature*, Manchester UP, 2007.
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Nicholas R. Werse, Baylor University

The Prophetic Undoing of the Pentateuch's Creation

Since God first entrusted the care of creation to humanity in Gen 2:5, the Bible has presented human actions as having cosmic implications for created order. The prophets in particular employ the language of creation to depict the cosmic implications of human rebellion against the commands of the creator. This paper explores three passages in which prophetic texts present the undoing of creation using the language of Gen 1:1-2:4. These three passages—Ezek 38:20; Hos 4:3; Zeph 1:2-3—present the undoing of creation as a prerequisite for the necessitated recreation. Recreation is necessary in these texts to restore humanity to correct relationship with both creation and the creator. These prophetic texts thus envision humanity as existing between two creation events: the undoing of creation and the recreation. This paper closes with a theological reflection on humanity's place in the midst of an unraveling created order, looking forward to a recreation.

Matthew Whelan, Baylor University

Agroecology and Natural Law

For my paper, I propose a theological and ethical engagement with the science of agroecology by drawing on natural law reflection. Agroecology is the study of ecology applied to agriculture, and among its distinguishing features is an understanding of the agricultural field as an ecosystem—an agroecosystem. Agroecology characteristically begins by careful consideration of agroecosystems, and it attempts to design and manage agricultural practice on

this basis. In the classic text, *Agroecology: The Science of Sustainable Agriculture*, agroecologist Miguel Altieri argues that by incorporating ecological considerations into agricultural practice, agroecology emphasizes “a deep understanding of the nature of agroecosystems and the principles by which they function.”

In my paper, I display how certain pre-modern strands of natural law reflection offer important tools for theological and ethical engagement with agroecological science because, as Jean Porter, Michael Northcott, and others have argued, such reflection refuses to, as Porter puts it, “drive a wedge” between human life and the wider created order of which human life is a part and upon which it depends. Instead, these approaches to natural law understand human reason to be one expression of a more general intelligibility within the wider created order, in which natural processes display God’s wisdom, albeit in a fragmentary and imperfect fashion. Because natural order is intelligible, it can be analyzed in terms of its own proper principles of operation.

At least on the surface, then, there are clear points of contact between agroecology and this approach to natural law reflection, and I want to argue that the relationship between the two is mutually illuminating. While agroecology can concretize natural law’s claims about natural order, natural law can help further develop agroecological insights about principles of ecological order and their implications for agriculture, as well as clarify agroecology’s underlying anthropological assumptions and political implications.

Cynthia White, Baylor University

Creation Care and Sacramental Living: A Way Leading to Human Flourishing and Vocational Integrity

Different Christian traditions affirm a sacramental view of creation. According to the doctrine of creation, God freely created the world to reveal Himself and to lovingly share the divine life with all of creation. A sacramental view holds that because God is the author of this world, then the physical, visible world witnesses to its divine authorship. The Episcopal Church contends that there “are patterns of countless ways by which God uses material things to reach out to us” (Book of Common Prayer 1979 , 861). Additionally, within the doctrine of creation, God has called humans as His image-bearers and vice-regents to live in mutual harmony and to responsibly care for all He has made.

If one holds to a sacramental view of creation, the practice of attending to and caring for creation becomes a formative discipline for the flourishing of self and neighbor. This formative discipline involves the “holy noticing” of God’s good gifts, which, when performed, cultivates the virtues of gratitude and humility. These twin virtues, in accordance with the wisdom tradition of the Bible, assist us in the renewed discovery of God’s character, and thus, the renewed understanding of God’s mandate to care for and protect creation. Holy noticing also provides the vision to see what is broken and in need of redemption among human and non-human life. All of creation is longing for God’s redemption and goodness to bring about peace, love and harmony. This can only be imagined by fellow image-bearers participating in a dependent relationship with God and an interdependent relationship with all of creation. Living out this vocation comes with conflict and challenges, especially in our individualistic, consumerist, and secularized culture. I will address these challenges and offer practical suggestions as a way that leads to greater human flourishing so that God’s “will is done on earth as it is in heaven.”

In this paper, I will draw upon the rich and diverse fountain of the Christian tradition to inform a sacramental worldview. Notable sources such as Augustine, Assisi, and Buber will provide support and explanation for my theological reasoning. This framework offers a paradigm

for the corresponding practices specific to education and counseling that I will develop in conversation with contemporary sources such as Parker Palmer, Richard Rohr, and Robert Carkhuff.

Robert White, University of Cambridge

Disasters, Nature and Acts of God

We live in a world which God pronounced to be very good. Earthquakes, floods and volcanic eruptions contribute to making it a fertile world, rich in life. But these same natural processes may kill tens of thousands of people at a stroke. Natural disasters pull us up sharp and bring into sharp focus the relationship between the creator God, his creation and humans made “in his image.”

I shall address the issues of what causes natural disasters, and to what extent they are exacerbated or caused by human actions, by living in this world in a way which ignores our God-given mandate to have dominion over it, to care for it in a Godly manner. I will then discuss what scripture says about natural disasters, illustrated by the responses of three biblical figures to disasters: Joseph, Job and Jesus.

The Christian gospel is shot through with hope not just for the present but also for the future. The Christian perspective recognises the brokenness of this world, but also the truth of God’s sovereignty over it and his ultimate plans for a new creation. That does not mean that we need not strive to improve things now. Rather it points in the opposite direction: that we should work for better scientific understanding of disasters; that we should enable communities to build resilience against them; and that we should strive to remove the unjust disparities in wealth and resources that mean it is so often the poor who suffer most.

Lauren Wills, Charleston Southern University

Love Your Neighbor: A Discussion on Environmental Toxicology, Justice and Faith

I will present the importance of environmental toxicology and justice in our discussions surrounding environmental stewardship and creation care. “For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’” (Galatians 5:14; NASB). The call to environmental stewardship is dependent on the idea that we have a mandate to care for God’s creation. Bennett et al. defines environmental stewardship as “local actions taken by individuals, groups or networks of actors, with various motivations and levels of capacity, to protect, care for or responsibly use the environment in pursuit of environmental and/or social outcomes in diverse socialecological contexts.” As people of faith, we have the greatest motivation and capacity to serve the Creator of the Universe. In addition to our concern for the air, waterways, vegetation, climate and wildlife, a mandate to care for creation calls for us to care for those created in God’s image, our fellow man. “If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen” (1 John 4:20; NASB).

In demonstrating love for our neighbors, we must focus not only on their spiritual growth, but also on their physical well-being. If the physical realm is of no consequence, then why did Jesus bother to give sight to the blind man, heal the woman with the issue of blood, or raise Lazarus from the dead? Jesus concerned himself with both spiritual and the physical health, and he requires the same from us. When considering the mandate of environmental stewardship, the concern for mankind falls primarily in the topics of environmental toxicology and justice. Toxicologists examine the adverse effects of chemicals on living organisms and assess the

probability that exposure and harm will occur. There are three broad areas of toxicological research: biomedical, environmental, and ecological. One of the consequences of poisoning the environment is that we are poisoning each other. Our irresponsible use of the earth's resources in agriculture, industrial production, energy consumption, and waste disposal has resulted in alterations in global chemical distributions, and exposure of human populations to dangerous concentrations of both manmade and natural compounds. In the words of Rachel Carson, the most basic of human rights is the "right of the citizen to be secure in his own home against the intrusion of poisons applied by other persons."

Environmental toxicology became a national focus in 1978 when families in New York's Love Canal suffered chemical burns, birth defects and leukemia because their dream housing community was built on a municipal and industrial chemical dump. Forty years later communities are still suffering from man-induced toxicant exposure. Today in Flint, Michigan, childhood lead exposure has rapidly increased due to a discontinuation of corrosion-control treatments in the city's plumbing infrastructure (Bellinger, 2016). These toxicological tragedies are examples of the ways we as humans have failed to love, care and protect the least of these. The populations most vulnerable to toxicant exposure are the young, the elderly, people of color, and those at the bottom of the economic ladder. Proverbs 14:21 (NASB) states, "He who despises his neighbor sins, but happy is he who is gracious to the poor."

Once made aware of an egregious toxicological catastrophe, we are often too slow in correcting the wrong. Politicians and community leaders shift the blame or claim ignorance without adequately addressing the problem. Our negligence can have severe consequences for our neighbors, including cancer, developmental delays, problems in reproduction, failure of the major organ systems, and death. God is the creator, and he has bestowed upon his people the great job of caring for his creation and for each other. "Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?' Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me'" (Matthew 25:44-45; NASB).

Sources:

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Ralph Wood, Baylor University

Newman and Hopkins on Nature as a Heraclitean Fire

Two of Victorian England's most important Catholic converts, the theologian John Henry Newman and the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, both believed that God is immanently revealed in the natural order, even if this evidence of the Divine must be completed and perfected by God's direct self-disclosure in Israel and Christ and the Church. Yet both came to have severe doubts about the sufficiency of natural manifestations of God. Finding nature to be a virtually godless Darwinian process, Newman discerned conscience as the chief sign of God's indirect presence in the world. Hopkins, by contrast, was braced rather than flattened by Darwin's discoveries. He was intoxicated with the analogy between the utter particularity of all natural things and the scandalous particularity of God's own self-identification. Of the lowly bluebell, Hopkins could

say, "I know the beauty of the Lord by it." Yet toward the end of his short life (he died at age 44), Hopkins was no longer buoyed by such natural evidence of God. Faced with his own failing health as well as profound inner disquiet, Hopkins reached for a radically transcendent affirmation in one of his best and most disturbing poems: "That Nature Is a Heraclitean Fire and of the Comfort of the Resurrection."