

cell outlines

WITHNESS WITH THE EARTH

These Cell Outlines are written by Youth and Children's Ministries. They are available every month from our web site. For more information and other Cell resources, visit [salvationarmy.org.uk/children-and-youth-resources](https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/children-and-youth-resources)



INTRODUCTION

Creation story. Relationship. With God, with one another, with the Earth.

Right at the beginning of the Bible we find our mandate for WITHNESS – for connection.

And for the remainder of this year we will take that blueprint for God’s created order and dig into what it means for our everyday lives. Lives in which we thrive because we take time to invest in understanding our created purpose. Essential to every relationship is the connection that comes from being ‘with’.

At the moment, those connections look different, but they’re just as important as they’ve always been. This past year and the months ahead have been defined by disruption, and in that disruption the thing we need more than ever is WITHNESS; an unfamiliar but beautiful and helpful word that helps us think about what this essential connection looks like. Although how we do ministry will shift and change shape as the impact of COVID-19 lessens, our need for good and quality connection – for WITHNESS – will not.

This month, we will be exploring WITHNESS with the Earth. We will use different parts of a tree as a structure for the four sessions.

Session One will consider the biblical **roots** for creation care – why is caring about the environment and tackling the climate crisis something followers of Jesus should be engaged in?

In Session Two we will use the analogy of a tree **trunk** to look at different elements of discipleship and what part creation care plays.

Session Three will look at the **branches**. How can we reach out to others to share our concern for creation, and encourage corporate action on the climate crisis?

We will consider the **leaves** of the tree during Session Four. We will think about the outworking of our WITHNESS with the Earth – what it looks like to care for creation – and some practical actions we can take as a church and as individuals.

If lockdown restrictions are still in place and you choose to run a physical meeting, you will need to complete a risk assessment form. We also recommend you read the guidance document provided by Safe Mission. Please consult your corps officer or DHQ for further info.

Over the next few sessions we are going to be thinking about **WITNESS with the Earth**: our relationship with God, how this connects to our relationship with creation/nature, and what that relationship means for how we live our lives.

WELCOME

What comes to mind when you think of 'Creation' and/or 'Nature'? Draw a picture or use words to express your thoughts.

Share your drawings/words with the group.

- * How and why might people feel closer to God when in nature?
- * How familiar are you with the concept of creation care?

Additional activity: Jamboard

Use a **Jamboard** to show the following quotes on screen. Read them aloud and then give the group time to read and reflect on them quietly. Invite people to mark their name/initials on the one that resonates with them most.

“ God writes the gospel not in the Bible alone, but also on trees, and in the flowers and clouds and stars.

— Martin Luther

“ A wrong attitude toward nature implies, somewhere, a wrong attitude toward God.

— TS Eliot

“ God intends our care of creation to reflect our love for the Creator.

— John Stott

“ One blade of grass or one speck of dust is enough to occupy your entire mind in beholding the art with which it has been made.

— Basil the Great

“ In the created world around us we see the Eternal Artist, Eternal Love at work.

— Evelyn Underhill

“ The first law of our being is that we are set in a delicate network of interdependence with our fellow human beings and with the rest of God's creation.

— Desmond Tutu

“ In a time of ecological emergency, the church can offer to the world a hope that is rooted in the power of God to bring new life into all that has been created.

— Wesley Granberg-Michaelson

Why did you choose the quote that you did?

WORD

Pray with the group.

As we consider **WITNESS with the Earth** over the next few sessions, we are going to use the analogy of a tree to think about creation care. Each session will use a different part of a tree to help shape our thinking. Today, we are considering roots.

Roots are essential to the growth and survival of trees. They absorb water, nutrients and minerals from the soil which are then dispersed throughout the tree. Roots also serve to anchor the tree in the ground – they are its strong foundation. Today we are going to consider the biblical roots of why followers of Jesus should care for creation.

Ask different members of the group to find the following verses and read them aloud to the group: Colossians 1:15-20; Psalm 24:1; Psalm 96:11-12; Psalm 145:9 and Genesis 1:31.

- 🗨️ What do you notice as a recurring theme in these passages?
- 🗨️ To what degree do you see yourself as part of creation/nature, or separate from it?

These verses are just a few examples of where God’s heart for all that he created, not just humans, is evident. As such, Rev Dr Dave Bookless (A Rocha International) speaks about creation care being a ‘golden thread’ which runs throughout the Bible, and that you can see God’s love and purpose for the whole of creation throughout the Scriptures.

Play: Whisper Challenge

The person ‘speaking’ mutes themselves. They then say a phrase (or sing a song) and the rest of the group must guess what they are saying/singing.

It can be tricky to understand what people mean sometimes. It can also be tricky to understand what the Bible means. After all, it was written thousands of years ago and has since been translated into English multiple times from the original Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. Whilst there is consensus amongst Christians that the key message of the Bible is one of love, what that means practically for our lives has been interpreted in different ways.

There are certain words in the Bible – or more specifically the translations of them – which have shaped our understanding of humanity’s relationship to the rest of creation.

At the very beginning of the Bible, the creation story expresses God’s intention for people’s role within creation:

“Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them *radah* the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

— Genesis 1:26 NRSV

- 🗨️ What do you think the word ‘*radah*’ means?

There are a few English words which can be used to understand the Hebrew word *radah*: ‘to have dominion over’, ‘to rule’, ‘to reign over’. But what does ‘dominion’ or ‘rule’ look like? Does it mean that humans are justified in knowingly doing things which pollute and damage the Earth or overuse its resources?

Climate scientist Katharine Hayhoe explains that the word *radah* must be understood in the context of its other uses in the Bible (eg Psalm 72, Ezekiel 34:2-5, 1 Kings 4:24) and alongside other passages which show God’s desire for how he wants us to interact with creation.

For example, when speaking of God’s reign, Psalm 72:8-13 says, ‘May he *radah* from sea to sea...’ in order to ‘deliver the needy who cry out’ and ‘the afflicted who have no one to help’ – to have compassion on the ‘weak and needy’ (NIV). This suggests that we are called to care or have compassion, listen to and respond to the needs of others and, in fact, every living thing.

This idea is then supported by reading Genesis 2:15: ‘Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to *abad* it and *shamar* it’ (NRSV). These words mean to serve, protect and care for – ‘a concept of stewardship, of taking care of something on behalf of another who values it’¹

- * To what extent do you agree that Christians should care about creation?
- * What are some of the ways that you try to care for creation in your daily life?

¹ Katharine Hayhoe https://digital.faithtoday.ca/faithtoday/11122020/MobilePagedArticle.action?articleId=1633466&app=false&fbclid=IwAR0axCZE5X961qpi5_QwUnmU_Xy0Qh2PkxtHmxQ9Qc5cQTSdT-ymGtqAERw#articleId1633466

WORSHIP

Ask two people to read to the group the following adapted Lord's Prayer² (one reading the bold text, the other the italicised)

Our Father, who art in heaven...

You are also at home in the air, the soil, the forests and the oceans;

Hallowed be your name...

...by the care we take of your creation.

Your kingdom come...

All that you see is good.

Your will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven...

Your will to till and care.

Give us this day our daily bread...

...that all may have sufficient to live life in fullness.

Forgive us our trespasses...

...our greed, our exploitation, our lack of concern for other species and for future generations,

As we forgive those who trespass against us...

...by reconciliation with justice and peace.

Lead us not into temptation...

...the temptation to equate dominion with exploitation,

And deliver us from evil...

...the evil of destroying your gift of creation,

For yours is the Kingdom...

Yours, Lord, not ours,

The power and the glory...

...in the cross and the resurrection,

For ever and ever...

And so be it.

Amen.

Additional activity

Watch the video: So Will I (10 Billion X) – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2U7ffUM5Ec>

WITNESS

Take time out in nature this week. Take a slow walk in which the only purpose is to experience God through the natural world. Allow yourself to feel part of nature and pray about your role within it.

Additional activity

Spend time this week praying about creation and humanity's role within it. Return to your drawing/writing from the beginning of this session. Would you like to redo it, or is there anything you would change or add to it?

² <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-06/9-prayers-leeds-diocese.pdf>

Note for leaders:

In Session Four we will be looking at practical actions we can take to care for creation and address climate change. The Great Big Green Week, organised by The Climate Coalition – <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org> – (of which The Salvation Army is a member organisation), is taking place from 18-26 September 2021.

Thousands of events will celebrate how communities are taking action to tackle climate change and protect green spaces, and encourage others to get involved too.

National organisations, institutions, businesses and media outlets will join in, getting more people involved up and down the country, and putting pressure on the UK Government to up its game on climate change.

You may want to get involved in a local event or organise your own. If so, you may want to introduce this idea to the group in today's session so you can plan something in plenty of time.

Visit greatbiggreenweek.com for more information.

In the last session we discussed the biblical roots for creation care. The roots are one of the most important elements of the tree – if the roots are unhealthy, the tree has little chance of survival. Today we are going to think about discipleship and the part that creation care plays in our lives as followers of Jesus.

As we consider discipleship, we will continue to think about roots, but also consider the trunk of the tree. If the tree is well rooted, the trunk can carry essential nutrients to the branches and leaves. The trunk is also made up of many components – much like discipleship.

WELCOME

Four quadrants

Draw two lines, in a cross, on your page to make four equal quadrants. Draw a picture in each quadrant as a response to the different prompt. Then share your responses with the group.

1. My discipleship journey
2. My community
3. My passions
4. My strengths

Additional activity

Play: Count the Seconds

Ask everyone to close their eyes (except the leader). The leader then says an amount of time (eg 30 seconds) and sets a silent timer on a phone. The group members must put up their hands when they think that amount of time has passed. The person who raised their hand the closest to the time wins. Play a few rounds.

WORD

Start by praying together.

Our verses for today are taken from Ephesians 3:17 and Colossians 2:6-7.

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul's prayer is that '*...Christ may dwell in [their] hearts through faith, as [they] are being **rooted and established (grounded) in love***'. He also shares this sentiment in Colossians: '*...live your lives in him, **rooted and built up in him**, strengthened (established) in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thanksgiving.*'

- 🗣️ What does it mean to be rooted in love?
- 🗣️ Is being 'rooted in Christ' and 'rooted in love' the same thing?
- 🗣️ What are some ways that we can establish strong roots in Christ?

Show the image of the cross-section of a tree. We can think of discipleship like a tree trunk in that it has multiple elements which are all important.

- 🗣️ What are the elements of discipleship?

Three key discipleship practices are Bible reading, prayer and spending time in a discipleship community. We all have different skills, interests and preferences, so what it looks like to engage in these practices will be different for each of us.

In the first session it was noted that Rev Dr Dave Bookless referred to creation care as a 'golden thread' which runs throughout the Bible.

- 🗣️ To what degree is creation care a 'golden thread' in your own life of discipleship?
- 🗣️ Have you considered creation care as an element of discipleship before?
 - ▶ If not, why do you think that is?
 - ▶ If you have, what does that mean for your daily life?

Additional Activity

“ ‘It seems quite inexplicable to me that there are some Christians who claim to love and worship God, to be disciples of Jesus, and yet have no concern for the Earth that bears his stamp of ownership. They do not care about the abuse of the Earth and indeed, by their wasteful and over-consumptive lifestyles, they contribute to it.’

– John Stott

What do you think of the above quote?

WORSHIP

Watch/listen to ‘Thrive’ by Casting Crowns: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQ71RWJhS_M

Additional activity

Watch James May video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbdur2TjTbk>

As James May explained in the video, the rings of a tree are very informative about its life. Whilst the number of rings help to identify the age of a tree, the size of those rings indicates the growing conditions of each season. A wider ring indicates faster growth as a result of good growing conditions, and a narrower ring suggests slower growth caused by poorer growing conditions.

Using this as an analogy for our own lives, we’re going to draw our own growth rings.

Show the example image of a person’s ‘growth rings’ – <https://i.pinimg.com/564x/6b/8e/1d/6b8e1d7bab3a2f79facfa2451bb4b5a.jpg>. Invite the group to draw their own version, starting with a small circle at the centre of the page and adding a ring for each year of their life (eg if they are 15 years old they should draw 15 rings). As they do, invite them to consider times in their lives which were especially joyful or challenging.

Consider in what ways did their relationship with Jesus influence moments in their lives.

This is a personal, private exercise and group members are not expected to share unless they feel especially led to.

WITNESS

If you are choosing to get involved in Great Big Green Week, use this time as an opportunity to discuss ideas for what you can do as a group or as part of your wider church. Visit greatbiggreenweek.com for more information, local events and ideas of what you could do.

Additional activity

Read and reflect on a different passage of Scripture each day this week:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Day 1 – Psalm 89:11-12
All things were created by God and belong to him. | Day 5 – Ezekiel 34:18
Don’t concern yourself only with your own needs. Ensure others are also well provided for. |
| Day 2 – Romans 1:20
God’s nature is revealed/visible through creation. | Day 6 – Psalm 33:5
The earth is full of God’s unfailing love |
| Day 3 – Leviticus 25:1-7
The land is to have a regular year of rest. | Day 7 – Matthew 22:37-40
What does it look like to love your neighbour in a climate-conscious way? |
| Day 4 – Ephesians 1:10
God redeems and reconciles all things to himself through Christ. | |

WELCOME

Sell It!

At the start of the session, ask each person to grab any item from their home, but don't explain why. If they ask, let them know they will find out soon. Once everyone has an item in their hand, explain that they are now going to try to 'sell it' to the other members. They can set the price and have one minute to deliver a sales pitch and one minute to answer questions. After all pitches are made, everyone can say (or write in the chat) which one item they would 'buy'. The person who gets the most people to purchase their product wins.

Discuss the following questions:

- What made it easier for people to sell their product?
- What encouraged you to buy the product that you did?

Over the past couple of sessions we have discussed the belief that God wants humanity to care for all living things, and as such it is a central part of our discipleship journey.

Today we continue to use the analogy of a tree to think about creation care by considering the **branches** – how we can reach out to others about creation care and work together to address climate change.

It is impossible to discuss the importance of creation care without discussing climate change, since climate change is a direct result of human activity which has failed to care sufficiently for God's creation.

Your group may already be very familiar with the issue of climate change and not require the following explanation.

The world's global temperature is rising. This has led to climate change: the changing pattern of weather over a long period of time. Human activities such as burning fossil fuels to power factories and vehicles, large-scale farming and deforestation all contribute to changing the climate. As a result, the weather is getting less predictable and more extreme. Watch this short video explanation https://www.ted.com/talks/kristen_bell_giant_ant_why_is_the_world_warming_up#t-70911.

Climate change is not only for environmentalists and 'tree huggers'. It is a justice issue, affecting every single person on the planet, and affecting the world's poorest worst.

- How easy is it to 'sell' the idea of climate action to other people?

Whilst many Christians will happily accept that they are called to care for creation, it may be more difficult to have a productive conversation around climate change.

- Why do you think that some people might be reluctant to talk about climate change?
- What might help people get on board with addressing climate change?

Share your screen and swipe through the 'I don't care how green you are...' Instagram post by Mary Heglar on the 'chicksforclimate' page. Invite a different person to read from each 'slide'. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CQmRtN2n0DC/>

- How did the statements in this post make you feel: encouraged, surprised, challenged or something else?
- How effective do you think this kind of approach is at convincing people to act on the climate crisis?
- As the post says, some people have little choice but to work in fossil fuel industries (eg on an oil rig). How can individuals and the Church encourage a just transition away from fossil fuels?

Additional activity

Play: Pointers

(Instructions – <https://youthgroupgames.com.au/games/pointers/>)

- Whose responsibility is it to care for creation?

When we are passionate about something, it can be easy to start ‘pointing fingers’ at others and wondering (aloud) why they are not as concerned about it as you.

- Have you ever been convinced about something you previously didn’t agree with? What changed your mind?
- Consider some of the justice issues you care about; what alerted you to them and what made you care?

WORD

‘I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.’

— John 15:5

This verse relates back to the verses we looked at in the previous session about being rooted in Christ (Ephesians 3:17 and Colossians 2:6-7). If we (the branches) are rooted in Christ (the vine) and creation care is an important part of discipleship, then surely it is essential to work alongside other Christians (branches) to care for creation and address issues that are harming creation.

Physician Cheryl Holder explains that *‘climate change impacts us in four major ways. Directly, through heat, extreme weather and pollution; through the spread of disease; through disruption of our food and water supply; and through disruption of our emotional wellbeing.’*

Climate change is a justice issue, and one of the greatest injustices is that whilst it affects people everywhere, it is those who contribute least to global carbon emissions (ie those experiencing material poverty, children and future generations) that are most affected.

- Have you considered climate change as a justice issue before?
- Where does the responsibility of addressing climate change lie?

Climate change and poverty are linked, as the impacts are experienced most severely by the poorest and most vulnerable communities.

As a group, read Matthew 25:34-40

‘Then the King will say to those on his right, “Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was ill and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”

‘Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison and go to visit you?”

‘The King will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

- How could this passage relate to the climate crisis?

We are called to love our neighbour (Leviticus 19:18) and no geographical boundary was stipulated in this command. The passage above implies that when we help someone who is hungry, thirsty or displaced from their home, it is an expression of our love for Jesus.

- What can we do to love our neighbours who are most vulnerable to climate change?

Additional activity

Learn more about the 2021 Helping-Hand Appeal - Feeding Hope.

salvationarmy.org.uk/feedinghope

The Helping-Hand Appeal is an annual collaboration between the Family Ministries Unit and International Development UK. Each year corps and groups across the UK are invited to take part in Helping-Hand to fundraise for a different area of The Salvation Army's international community development work.

During 2021 the Appeal will support food security projects around the world – Feeding Hope to farmers now and for generations to come.

Read the [stories](#) or watch the short videos – https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dISS_Togo_k&list=PLR_bB8f1qKj-iyCw-le1TYx7mSCSCc8U – to see the impact of climate change on farmers' lives in Zimbabwe.

WORSHIP

Comedian Michael Che once said that the environmentalists aren't getting through to people because they keep saying that 'we're gonna lose everything', but 'nobody cares about *everything*, people only care about *some* things'.

The Climate Coalition's current 'Show the Love' campaign started out as 'For the love of...' in 2015. The whole idea behind this campaign is that we all care about different things but, importantly, that all the different things we care about are affected by and potentially vulnerable to climate change.

Individually, write down three justice issues that you are passionate about. Share them as a group. Taking the three issues that have been mentioned the most, discuss how the climate crisis affects these issues.

Pray together for the issues you have discussed.

Additional activity

Ask the group to voice prayers for each other and their own role in the fight against climate change:

- * for conviction to commit to a life of caring for creation
- * for opportunities to talk to people about creation care
- * for boldness and grace to challenge activities which are harmful to God's creation

WITNESS

Where is your corps (church) in terms of its engagement with creation care and acting on climate change?

Speak to your corps leaders about your group organising and leading a Sunday meeting on this topic. Consider using the Climate Sunday resources – <https://www.climatesunday.org/> – to help plan your meeting.

If your church is further along in the journey, consider signing up as an Eco Church. This involves completing an online survey about how your church is caring for creation in different areas (eg in worship and teaching, community engagement, building management). As your church takes more actions, you collect points towards an Eco Church Award.

ecochurch.arocha.org.uk

Additional Activity

Each day this week, look at the 'Climate Change' section of a news website (eg BBC – <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/topics/cmj34zwmw1zt/climate-change>, Independent – <https://www.independent.co.uk/climate-change/news>) to read the latest updates and impacts on countries around the world. Spend time praying around a specific story each day.

In our final session on **WITNESS with the Earth** we are looking at the **LEAVES** of a tree. In this context, we are considering what it looks like to care for creation, the choices we make and practical actions we take in our lives.

WELCOME

<https://www.ourplanet.com/en/video/a-reason-for-hope/>

Climate change may seem like an insurmountable problem but, as David Attenborough says in the video, there are solutions. We just need to 'stop doing the damaging stuff' and embrace the opportunities for restoration.

Some of the solutions to the climate crisis involve systemic changes at governmental, industrial and corporate level, and some are things we can do in our everyday lives.

- 🗣️ How easy is it to 'stop doing the damaging stuff'?
- 🗣️ What are the barriers to making changes that are better for the planet and all its inhabitants?
- 🗣️ It's been said that 'some of the solutions to climate change seem more threatening than the impacts of climate change itself'. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

Lockdown restrictions during 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic led to a reduction of air travel and road traffic and saw global carbon emissions drop by a record 7 per cent. In some ways, lockdown gave people an opportunity to live in a more climate-friendly way.

- 🗣️ Were you able to adopt a more 'climate-friendly' lifestyle during lockdown? Are there any aspects you would like to continue now that / once restrictions are permanently lifted?

Additional Activity

Take the 'Are you an activist?' quiz: <https://factivism.globalgoals.org/are-you-an-activist>

You could go through the quiz together, but group members could answer on their own device so that they get a personalised answer. This is just a bit of fun but gives useful suggestions for how to take your activism to the next stage, wherever you might be in the journey.

WORD

We are called to care for creation, but when faced with the climate crisis it could be easy to become despondent and to feel like it is not worth taking action. Perhaps we have tried to do lots of things all at once and failed.

Louis Sachar said, *'It is better to take many small steps in the right direction than to make a great leap forward only to stumble backward.'*

- 🗣️ Does this quote give you hope for choosing to live in a way that cares for creation?

Watch Finding Nemo 'Swim Down' clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ulucJnxT7B4>

Choosing to live in a way that truly cares for creation can be challenging and personally costly. We live in a society in which over-consumption is expected, fast fashion is the norm and convenience comes wrapped in plastic. If we attempt to do it all alone, we may become disheartened and give up. The journey of actively caring for creation will be far less lonely and far more enjoyable and effective if we travel with others.

It can be easy to judge others for their actions, or feel judged ourselves when we fall short of the commitments we have made to live a loving and ethical life.

The Greek word ἀλλήλων (ah-lay-lon) translated as 'one another' or 'each other', is used 100 times in the New Testament with the majority being instructions for the Church to love one other (eg John 13:34; 15:12 and 15:17; Romans 13:8; 1 Thessalonians 3:12 and 4:9; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:11; 4:7 and 4:11; 2 John v5) and get along (eg Mark 9:50; John 6:43; Romans 15:7; Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13).

Church is a kind of family and clearly Paul (who wrote many of the 'one another' passages) could see how easy it is to

SESSION FOUR

argue with family. In Romans 14:13 he says, 'Let us therefore no longer pass judgement on one another, but resolve instead never to put a stumbling-block or hindrance in the way of another.' (NRSV)

- Have you ever judged a friend or acquaintance because they don't live in a 'green' way? Or have you ever been judged yourself? How did this make you feel?
- How can we support others to make ethical choices in a non-judgemental way?

Living in community is a key element of Christian discipleship. This is highlighted in Acts 2:44-47 as we see the early Church doing life together and serving the needs of others rather than accumulating personal wealth.

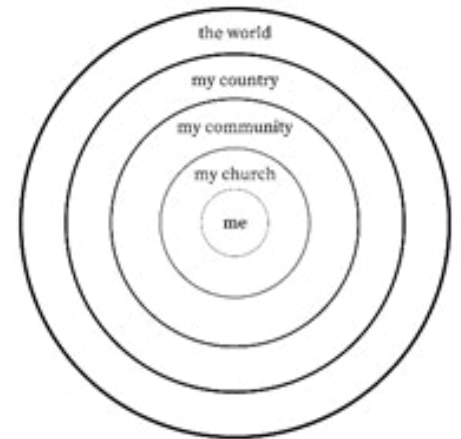
- What can your corps (church) do to respond to creation care as a community?

WORSHIP

Returning to our tree analogy, leaves of different trees come in a wide range of shapes and sizes as they respond to different environmental conditions. What it looks like to embed creation care in our lives may vary according to our circumstances.

Invite the group to draw a series of concentric circles on a piece of paper labelling them 'me', 'my church', 'my community', 'my country', 'the world'.

Imagining yourself at the centre, each circle represents a wider area of involvement. In each circle write the practical actions you can take in that area of influence. For example, in the 'me' circle you might write about making your diet less 'carbon hungry'; in 'church' it could be using reusable cups/cutlery at gatherings. Are there local initiatives that could go in the 'community' circle? The 'country' and 'world' circles could include actions such as lobbying your MP or supporting an international charity that is working to support people adversely affected by climate change (such as The Salvation Army International Development UK – <https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/international-development>).



Additional activity

One purpose of leaves is to take in carbon dioxide and sunlight from the atmosphere. So again, to use this as an analogy for our own experience of creation care, we can 'take in' knowledge, best practice and ideas from others – individuals, community groups or organisations.

The Great Big Green Week – <https://greatbiggreenweek.com> – is taking place from 18-26 September and is a brilliant opportunity to connect with others in your local community. It may be that there are already a lot of activities that you can take part in, or perhaps there are others who want to take collective action but are not sure where to start. Could you work together during The Great Big Green Week to raise awareness about the importance of caring for creation, and take action to address the climate crisis?

There are already hundreds of events planned as part of The Great Big Green Week such as art events, family fun days, nature walks, webinars and local theatre shows. Visit <https://greatbiggreenweek.com> to find events near you, or become inspired to organise your own.

WITNESS

Learn about the things you can do to personally address climate change and care for creation:

- The Salvation Army is a member of The Climate Coalition. If you are interested in getting actively involved in their campaigns, contact id@salvationarmy.org.uk
- Find out who your MP is – <https://members.parliament.uk/FindYourMP> – and ask them what they are doing to address climate change

- * Calculate your carbon footprint - climatestewards.org/offset
- * Speak to your corps leaders about signing up as an Eco Church – <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk>
- * Get practical tips for reducing your plastic use - plasticfreejuly.org
- * Reduce the amount of meat and animal products you consume. For recipes and ideas visit vegansociety.com

Additional activity

Watch Plastic Free Party: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7cdZwEHUV4U>

This is a comedy video about plastic free parties but actually shares some practical tips on how to reduce plastic use in an everyday scenario.