

CARING FOR CREATION: A RESOURCE PACK FOR CHRISTIAN YOUTH

FIVE MARKS OF MISSION



MISSION FIVE: TREASURE

“To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth”

tearfund
ireland



christian
aid

CIYD CLIMATE INFORMATION PACK

WELCOME TO THE CIYD CLIMATE INFORMATION PACK.

Young people around the world are calling for change. This pack will help Christian youth leaders and groups to understand the climate and biodiversity emergencies and how we can rise to the challenge to 'Care for Creation'.

This pack is a 2 year programme that gathers resources to inform and inspire your group to take action on the environment - to extend God's Kingdom on earth. It provides activities for worship, Bible study, prayer, activities and action. Updates to this pack will be provided quarterly by an email with links to resources you can print and file in this folder.

The resources are kindly provided by our partners: Tearfund Ireland and Christian Aid Ireland.

We welcome your ideas, so please feedback with ideas and links to resource for future updates.

Blessings,

Steve Grasham
CIYD

Stephen Trew
Church of Ireland Climate campaigner



**renew
our
world**



With thanks to Renew Our World for their support.



‘THE EARTH IS THE LORD’S AND
EVERYTHING IN IT, THE WORLD
AND ALL WHO LIVE IN IT.’
~PSALM 24:1

YOU NEED:

- PHOTOCOPIED STATEMENTS AND THE FACTS.
- SCISSORS.
- FLIPCHART PAPER.

ACTIVITY: RIVERS OF CHANGE¹

AIM: TO EXPLORE CLIMATE CHANGE AS A JUSTICE ISSUE AFFECTING EVERYBODY AND LOOK AT ACTIONS TO STOP IT

INTRODUCTION VIDEO:

CLIMATE CHANGE 101 WITH
BILL NYE

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/
WATCH?V=ETW2RRLHS08](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EtW2rRLHs08)

1 STAND IN A CIRCLE. ASK EACH PERSON TO IMAGINE A TYPE OF WEATHER AND WHAT THEY WOULD BE DOING IN IT, E.G. SUN BATHING OR SWIMMING, USING AN UMBRELLA OR STRUGGLING TO CYCLE AGAINST THE WIND. ONE BY ONE THE PARTICIPANTS ACT OUT THEIR SITUATION. THE GROUP COPY THE ACTIONS OF EACH PERSON, SEE IF SOMEBODY CAN REMEMBER THEM ALL?

2 CUT OUT THE STATEMENTS AND THE FACTS (SEE BELOW). PLACE THEM IN TWO SEPARATE PILES.

3 DIVIDE THE LARGE GROUP INTO TEAMS OF TWO. USE AS MANY STATEMENTS AND MATCHING FACTS AS THERE ARE TEAMS. TELL EACH TEAM TO TAKE ONE PIECE OF PAPER FROM ONE OF THE PILES. THEY NOW HAVE TO FIND THEIR MATCHING FACT OR STATEMENT.

4 AFTER ALL THE MATCHES HAVE BEEN FOUND, MAKE GROUPS OF FOUR. ASK THEM TO CREATE A RIVER ON A FLIPCHART PAGE. THE SOURCE OF THE RIVER SHOULD SHOW THE CURRENT SITUATION, THE MOUTH OF THE RIVER SHOW THE FUTURE THEY WANT TO HAPPEN. THE TRIBUTARIES LEADING INTO THE RIVER ARE THE ACTIONS THAT NEED TO HAPPEN SO WE CAN REACH THE FUTURE, BOULDERS AND OTHER OBSTACLES IN THE WATER CAN BE THE CHALLENGES TO MAKING THIS HAPPEN.

5 WHEN THE RIVERS ARE COMPLETED, HOLD A WALKING GALLERY WHERE EVERYBODY GETS TO SEE THE WORK DONE BY THE OTHER GROUPS.



STATEMENTS

CLIMATE CHANGE IS BEING CAUSED BY THE US AND OTHER BIG COUNTRIES, THEY SHOULD SORT IT OUT

PEOPLE WILL JUST ADAPT TO THE NEW CLIMATE.

IT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO SAVE THE PEOPLE AFFECTED BY CLIMATE CHANGE THAN THE PLANTS AND ANIMALS.

ONLY STRONG LAWS WILL MAKE PEOPLE DO ANYTHING TO CHANGE THEIR HABITS.

THE GOVERNMENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR STOPPING CLIMATE CHANGE NOT US.

FACTS

THE UNITED STATES EMITS 24.5 TONNES OF CARBON PER PERSON INTO THE ATMOSPHERE EVERY YEAR, IRELAND 17.5 TONNES. MALAWI EMITS LESS THAN ONE TONE PER PERSON. IRELAND HAS THE 3RD HIGHEST EMISSIONS OF GREENHOUSE GASES IN EUROPE. SO, WHO SHOULD BE PAYING TO SORT THE CLIMATE OUT?

SOME COUNTRIES DON'T HAVE THE MONEY OR RESOURCES TO ADAPT TO A CHANGING CLIMATE. ISLAND COMMUNITIES FROM THE SOUTH PACIFIC AND THE INDIAN OCEAN HAVE HAD TO LEAVE THEIR LAND AND COUNTRIES BEHIND AS THE SEA LEVEL RISES.

THE UN PREDICTS ROUGHLY ONE IN THREE SPECIES ON EARTH WILL GO EXTINCT IF NOTHING IS DONE TO HALT CLIMATE CHANGE. SINCE WE DEPEND ON PLANTS AND ANIMALS FOR THINGS LIKE HOUSING, FOOD, POLLINATION, CLEAN AIR, CLEAN WATER, MEDICINE, ETC., COULD HUMANS BE ONE OF THE THREE?

MORE AND MORE PEOPLE ARE TRYING TO FIND OUT WHAT THEY CAN DO TO HELP PREVENT CLIMATE CHANGE, SIMPLE THINGS LIKE TURNING OFF UNUSED LIGHTS, UNPLUGGING YOUR TV AND COMPUTERS WHEN YOU'RE NOT USING THEM, BUYING LOCAL FOOD AND GOODS CAN ALL HELP YOU SAVE MONEY TOO.

THE GOVERNMENT DEFINITELY NEEDS TO ACT STRONGLY ON CLIMATE CHANGE, BUT WITHOUT PEOPLE TO KEEP REMINDING THEM WHY IT'S SO IMPORTANT AND BY SHOWING WHAT INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS SUCH AS YOUR YOUTH GROUP CAN DO, THE GOVERNMENT WON'T CHANGE AS QUICKLY AS THEY NEED TO.

BIBLE STUDY: TAKING CARE OF GOD'S EARTH



RULERS OR STEWARDS?²

READ GENESIS 1: 26 – 31 AND GENESIS 2: 1 – 15.

In Genesis 1, God instructed humans to ‘rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground’, and to ‘fill the earth and subdue it’ (Genesis 1:26, 28). This passage has sometimes been used to justify abuse of the earth.

Some people believe that the instruction to ‘rule’ over the earth means we have absolute authority over creation. In this view, nature is a resource for humans to benefit from economically, whatever the environmental impacts. This theology has allowed Christians to chop down tropical forests to grow soya for cattle feed and to pollute rivers with waste products from mines as we dig for precious metals.

To challenge these ideas, Christians have turned to the second creation account in Genesis 2. In verse 15, humans were placed in the Garden of Eden and instructed to ‘work it and take care of it’. In other words, God has given us the responsibility to act as stewards of his creation – to care for, manage, oversee and protect all that God owns. What an honour and privilege!

This does not give us free licence to exploit and abuse God’s earth. As stewards, we need to act in the owner’s best interests, treating his ‘property’ with respect. We must not use it in a way that causes harm to our neighbours. One day we will have to give an account to God of how we have treated his earth.

When we forget our responsibility to be wise stewards, creation groans. The earth can no longer cope with the demands humans place on our natural resources. Our waste and pollution are poisoning the air, soil and water. If we continue to exploit and abuse God’s earth, what will be left for future generations to inherit?



BEWARE THE 'WHY BOTHER?' DISEASE

When faced with major global issues (resulting from human activities) – such as climate change and polluted land and sea – it is easy to become overwhelmed.

We might throw our hands in the air and say: 'Well, it is not my fault. There is nothing I can do to prevent it. Leave it to the politicians.' We might think: 'Who cares if I use plastic bags, throw litter out of the car window etc? I am only one person – what difference will it make?'

Beware of the highly contagious 'Why bother?' disease! This is a moral and spiritual issue. What I do in my daily life does matter. The immediate consequences of my actions might not be felt by me, but they will most certainly affect someone else. God sees and honours the efforts we make, even if they seem small to us. And together, we can make a difference!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



WHAT POSITIVE, PRACTICAL STEPS CAN YOU AS AN INDIVIDUAL TAKE TO CARE FOR GOD'S PRECIOUS CREATION – PARTICULARLY REGARDING WASTE?

WHAT CAN YOUR CHURCH COMMUNITY DO?

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU NEED TO STOP DOING?

TAKE THE TEARFUND TOGETHER QUIZ (SEE APPENDIX ONE).

COME UP WITH AN ACTION THE GROUP CAN TAKE TOGETHER. MAKE A LIST OF ALL THE ROLES YOU WILL NEED TO PULL IT OFF. DIVIDE THE GROUP INTO MOBILISERS, MAKERS, ACTIVISTS AND ADVOCATES AND GET THEM TO ASSIGN ROLES BASED ON THE TALENTS AND SKILLS WITHIN THE GROUP. SEE SOME ACTION IDEAS AT THE END OF THIS PACK.

PRAYERS

Our God, you hold our lives in your hands.
You have promised to give us a new heart, and to
put a new spirit in us.

We pray: renew us every day.

Forgive us where we have failed
to be good stewards and to be good neighbours.

Give us the courage to think beyond our own
lives;
to live and consume responsibly
so that our near and far neighbours can experi-
ence their full dignity,
and that we can help restore and admire
the beauty of our communities and of this earth.

Our God, you hold our world in your hands.
You hear your creation groaning
but you have promised to liberate it from its
pain.

We pray: renew our world.

Forgive those of us
who haven't used their power wisely.
Give us and our leaders the courage
to think beyond our own economies;
to seek genuine partnerships
so that all people can experience the fullness of
life,
and that our planet is known to be the common
home
for all creation and future generations.
Amen.³

**TAKE 5 MINUTES
TO REFLECT ON THE
FOLLOWING QUES-
TIONS. YOU MIGHT
WANT TO HAVE THE
GROUP WRITE OUT
THEIR ANSWERS
EACH WEEK.**

**“THE MOST
IMPORTANT THING
I LEARNED WAS...”**

**“THE MOST
INTERESTING
PART WAS...”**

**“I WOULD LIKE
TO DO MORE
ABOUT...”**



‘HOW MANY ARE YOUR WORKS, LORD.
IN WISDOM YOU MADE THEM ALL; THE
EARTH IS FULL OF YOUR CREATURES’
~PSALM 104:24

YOU NEED:

- BEE-FRIENDLY FLOWERS
- HONEY
- BAKED BEANS
- TOMATO KETCHUP
- STRAWBERRY (OR OTHER FRUIT)
- ICE CREAM,
- BIRD BOOK (TO REPRESENT BIRDS)
- A PAIR OF JEANS
- A BOX THEY WILL ALL FIT IN.

ACTIVITY: THE IMPORTANCE OF BEES⁴

AIM: TO EXPLORE HOW A SMALL CREATURE CAN HAVE AN IMPACT ON SO MANY ITEMS WE TAKE FOR GRANTED AND TO UNDERSTAND THE INTERDEPENDENCE AND INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF LIVING CREATURES AND ORGANISMS.

INTRODUCTION VIDEO:

LIVING JUSTLY VIDEO SERIES
– FAITH AND CREATION

[HTTPS://VIMEO.COM/133667866](https://vimeo.com/133667866)



'BIODIVERSITY IS THE VARIETY OF LIFE ON EARTH. IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR SUSTAINING THE NATURAL LIVING SYSTEMS OR ECOSYSTEMS THAT PROVIDE US WITH FOOD, FUEL, HEALTH, WEALTH, AND OTHER VITAL SERVICES. HUMANS ARE PART OF THIS BIODIVERSITY TOO AND HAVE THE POWER TO PROTECT OR DESTROY IT. CURRENTLY, OUR ACTIVITIES ARE DESTROYING BIODIVERSITY AT ALARMING RATES. THESE LOSSES ARE IRREVERSIBLE, IMPOVERISH US ALL AND DAMAGE THE LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEMS WE RELY ON. BUT WE CAN PREVENT THEM.'



1 INTRODUCTION: INTRODUCE THE ACTIVITY BY EXPLAINING THAT BEES ARE FASCINATING CREATURES – AND VERY IMPORTANT TO PEOPLE AND TO OTHER WILDLIFE AS WELL.

2 EXPLANATION: EXPLAIN THAT YOU HAVE BROUGHT IN A BOX OF THINGS TO SHOW THEM – SOME OF WHICH MAY HAVE A CONNECTION WITH BEES.

3 DISCUSSION: TAKE OUT THE ITEMS ONE BY ONE AND ASK THE GROUP TO SUGGEST IF THERE IS A LINK WITH BEES.



FACTS

- 70% of all crops are pollinated by bees and if they became extinct many eco systems would collapse
- Bees contribute over €50 million euro to the Irish economy every year
- According to US research one out of every 3 mouthfuls of food we eat can be linked back to bees.
- Note re birds: Lots of birds eat seeds and berries from plants that have been pollinated by bees - they also eat insects, which eat a lot plants which are pollinated by bees.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

DID ANYTHING
SURPRISE YOU?

DID YOU REALISE
THAT THERE ARE SO
MANY CONNECTIONS
BETWEEN BEES AND
WHAT WE EAT AND
THE CLOTHES WE
WEAR?

WHO WOULD HAVE
THOUGHT THAT
SOMETHING AS
SMALL AS A BEE
MIGHT BE SO
IMPORTANT?

MOVING TO ACTION: (KEEP A PIECE OF FLIP CHART PAPER HANDY TO LIST UP ANY IDEAS THAT MAY BE SUGGESTED DURING THE SESSION)

Bees' biggest problem is that there aren't as many wild flowers as there used to be, so there is less food for them to eat. Bees can collect nectar and pollen from crops like rapeseed oil as well, but they only flower for a few weeks. If that is the only flower, then the bees go hungry when the crop has finished.

So what can we do to help? - list ideas that might come up

Additional idea: Write the word Bee in a circle in the centre of a piece of flip chart paper. As each item is taken out of the box write it up. Ask a participant who sees a link to take a flip chart pen and draw a line between the word BEE and the item (e.g. Baked Beans) while explaining the link that they see to the rest of the group.

BIBLE STUDY: ALL IN THE SAME BOAT – LESSONS ON CARE FOR CREATION FROM NOAH



READ GENESIS 9:1-17

1. WE'RE ALL IN THE SAME BOAT

Noah's ark can be seen as a picture of the planet today - everyone squashed together, competing for space and resources but where God has made enough for all if we recognise our interdependence. God has made a world where the welfare of each species is dependent on the welfare of many others. We can fool ourselves that we can make it on our own, but we are as dependent on healthy ecosystems as the smallest plant or insect - for example the bees that we looked at earlier.

2. GOD CARES ABOUT ALL HIS CREATURES

God is interested in rescuing human and non-human from the threat of disaster. The ark was largely full of all the other species only a very few humans on board. The animals, birds and creeping things were included to 'keep their various kinds alive throughout the earth' (Genesis 9:3) - God was committed to biodiversity and conservation of various species. Following the flood God placed a rainbow in the sky as a promise to 'every living creature on earth' not just humans (v17).

3. HUMAN BEINGS HAVE A JOB TO DO

God uses us in his plans. Human beings have been set apart with a particular role and calling within creation. At the time of the flood God had a plan to save people and other animals, he could have implemented that plan by himself - however he chose to use a human being - the creature made in his image to fulfil his plans. Noah was the first great conservationist.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE STORY OF NOAH'S ARK?

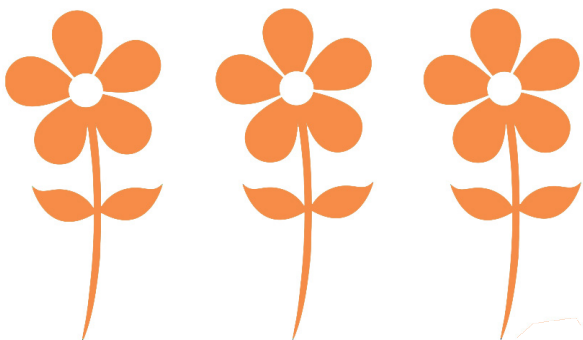
WAS THERE ANYTHING NEW THAT YOU DISCOVERED FROM THE STORY TODAY?

DO YOU THINK THAT YOU HAVE A GOD GIVEN ROLE IN CARING FOR CREATION?



ACTION!

REMINDE THE GROUP OF THE QUIZ FROM SESSION ONE, WHERE THEY FOUND OUT WHETHER THEY WERE A MOBILISER, MAKER, ACTIVIST OR ADVOCATE, AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO ASSIGN ROLES BASED ON THEIR SKILLS AND TALENTS.



IDEAS

- CREATE A SMALL WILDFLOWER PATCH IN YOUR GARDEN, CHURCH YARD OR SCHOOL YARD
- LEAVE A STRIP OF UN-MOWED GRASS ON THE EDGE OF THE LAWN AT HOME OR IN THE CHURCH YARD
- PLANT A VARIETY OF NATIVE PLANTS THAT FLOWER THROUGHOUT THE YEAR
- PLANT INSECT-FRIENDLY PLANTS AND SHRUBS THAT PROVIDE FOOD AND SHELTER FOR BIRDS
- ORGANISE A CLEAN-UP ON A NEAR-BY BEACH, IN A NEARBY PARK OR FIELD.

PRAYERS

Close your eyes and picture the words of this prayer:

Creation flourishing
Rivers flowing
Earth blossoming
Air breezing
Trees swaying
Iguanas lazing
Oceans lapping
Nightingales serenading
Frogs croaking
Lions roaring
Octopuses grappling
Urchins slinking
Ravens croaking
Insects buzzing
Sun shining
Humans loving
Icicles sparkling
Night glistening
God smiling

PERSONAL PRAYER OF REFLECTION

Lord, forgive me for actions I have taken that harm your creation. Please guide me to be more aware of protecting the world you have made. Help me see how the actions I take affect your creation and my brothers and sisters around the world. Guide my decisions to live in shalom with all of creation.⁵

TAKE 5 MINUTES TO REFLECT ON THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS. YOU MIGHT WANT TO HAVE THE GROUP WRITE OUT THEIR ANSWERS EACH WEEK.

“THE MOST IMPORTANT THING I LEARNED WAS...”

“THE MOST INTERESTING PART WAS...”

“I WOULD LIKE TO DO MORE ABOUT...”

SESSION THREE

REAL STORIES: THE HUMAN IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE



‘ THEN GOD SAID, “LET US MAKE HUMANKIND IN OUR IMAGE, ACCORDING TO OUR LIKENESS; AND LET THEM HAVE DOMINION OVER 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.” ’

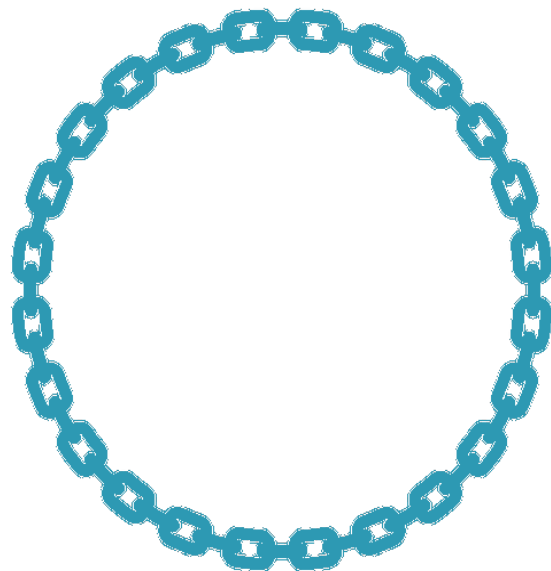
- GENESIS 1: 26

YOU NEED:

- SET OF CARDS (SEE APPENDIX)
- LARGE SPACE

ACTIVITY: CHAIN REACTIONS⁶

AIM: TO HIGHLIGHT THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE.



INTRODUCTION VIDEO:

MANAGING THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON POVERTY:

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?TIME_CONTINUE=4&V=QGI1KEMIM9G](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=QGI1KEMIM9G)

1

BREAK INTO GROUPS OF EIGHT. IN EACH GROUP, GIVE EACH PARTICIPANT A CARD AT RANDOM FROM ONE OF THE CHAINS. EXPLAIN THAT THEY HAVE TO FORM A CHAIN SO THAT EACH CARD FOLLOWS FROM THE LAST ONE. WHEN THE CHAIN IS COMPLETED, IT SHOULD LINK THEIR LIVES TO THE LIVES OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD. THE FIRST GROUP TO COMPLETE THEIR CHAIN IS THE WINNER. WHEN THE CHAINS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED, CHECK TO SEE IF THEY ARE IN THE CORRECT ORDER AND REARRANGE IF NECESSARY.

2

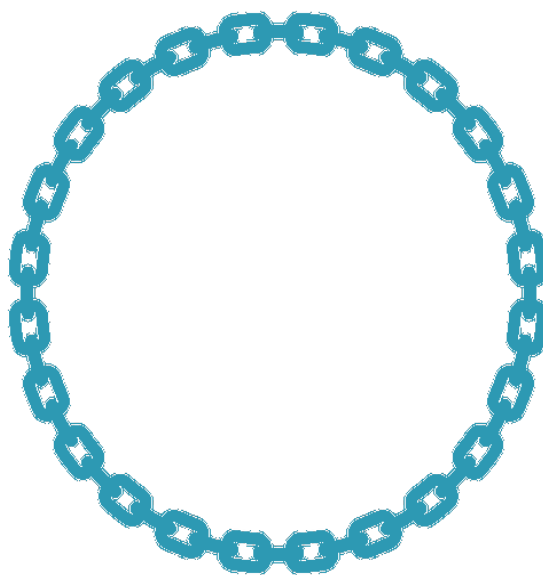
IN THE LARGE GROUP, EXPLAIN THAT THE CHAIN DESCRIBES SOME CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE. ASK IF IT WAS EASY OR DIFFICULT TO GET THE CORRECT ORDER. WHY WAS THAT? DID ANYTHING ABOUT THE GAME SURPRISE THEM? WHAT?

3

EXPLAIN THAT THE ACTIONS DESCRIBED IN THE CHAINS ONLY HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON CLIMATE CHANGE WHERE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY IN RICH COUNTRIES, ALSO DO THEM. IF THE GROUP WANTED TO TAKE ACTION TO MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO TACKLING POVERTY, WHICH END OF THE CHAIN WOULD THEY BEGIN AT? WHAT ACTIONS COULD THEY TAKE?

4

ALTERNATIVELY, FORM SMALL GROUPS AND MAKE A FULL SET OF ALL THE CARDS FOR EACH GROUP BUT SHUFFLE THEM UP. HAVE A COMPETITION TO SEE WHICH GROUP CAN PUT THE CARDS IN THE CORRECT ORDER FIRST.



BIBLE STUDY: LOVING OUR GLOBAL NEIGHBOUR⁷



INTRODUCTION

Climate change is not just an environmental problem. It's not just about the earth. It's also about people. The way we're treating the earth and the effects of that are already impacting the world's poorest people.

We don't get to choose between caring about climate change or caring about poverty, they're interconnected - just like the relationship between God, people and the world.

Today, farmers around the world are finding that the rainy seasons are much shorter so they can no longer grow enough food. In some parts of the world the glaciers are shrinking so that people have less water to irrigate their fields. There are significant pieces of land that are disappearing, so people who lived there have to leave as refugees. Rivers are becoming saltier, which means people can't use them for drinking water. As temperatures rise, diseases spread like wildfire carried by exploding populations of insects.

Ask one of your young people to read out the stories below, and spend time as a group imagining how they would feel if they were in this situation.



STORIES

'I'm Selina, I live in Bangladesh and I'm 29. Climate change is causing many changes. Previously I used to grow rice, but now this is becoming really difficult. People are beginning to farm fish because the water in the area is so salty, but sometimes it's so salty the fish die. The salt water makes it difficult to grow rice like we used to. It's damaging to our environment and to the rice fields. Since I was a child, I have seen that our country has 6 seasons. But now there is only one; hot, hot, hot. In the rainy season there is not much rain. When it's time to cultivate the crops, when the rains come, they come too heavy and destroy our crops. I think that this is the effect of climate change.'



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- IMAGINE YOUR MAIN SUPPLY OF FOOD STOPPED BEING AVAILABLE, WHAT YOU WOULD DO?
- CHANGES IN THE WEATHER DON'T AFFECT US AS MUCH AS THEY AFFECT SELINA, BUT HOW DO YOU THINK SELINA'S CHANGING WEATHER COULD AFFECT YOU? (IF COUNTRIES WHERE WE BUY OUR FOOD FROM – PRODUCTS LIKE RICE – ARE STRUGGLING TO GROW CROPS, HOW WILL THIS IMPACT YOU?)



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- WE OFTEN HEAR ABOUT DISASTERS LIKE THIS ON THE NEWS AND IT'S DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE WHAT IT'S LIKE FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING IT. HOW DO YOU FEEL WHEN YOU WATCH OR READ THOSE KINDS OF NEWS REPORTS?
- WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF A STORM THAT BAD HIT YOUR TOWN? CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN IF A CITY IN IRELAND WAS DESTROYED? WHERE WOULD PEOPLE GO? WHAT KNOCK ON EFFECTS MIGHT IT HAVE?

Angelica is four years old. In November 2013 her home in the Philippines was hit by Typhoon Haiyan. The storm killed more than 6,000 people and it was the strongest storm to hit land that's ever been recorded. Angelica's parents were killed in the storm and the only family she has left is her uncle, Ronnie. Ronnie is 24 and he is the brother of Angelica's mother. He says: 'I have been looking for my sister ever since, but she's still missing; we can't find her body. She could be anywhere.' In the Philippines more than 14 million people were affected by Typhoon Haiyan – around 4 million people were left without homes, and one of the main cities, Tacloban, was destroyed. The change in climate means that sudden and extreme storms like this one will come with unprecedented force.



READ GENESIS 1:1-31 TOGETHER.

WE PROBABLY ALL KNOW THIS CREATION STORY WELL, BUT LET'S TAKE A PROPER LOOK...

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- When we look at Genesis we see a God who created the whole world as one community, dependent on each other. What ways can you think of that we rely on the earth, or on other animals?
- Can you think of ways that our daily lives might exploit and damage the planet? Consider what we buy, what we eat and what we wear as a few starters. Read Genesis 1:28 again. What do you think it means to have dominion over the earth? The original word for 'dominion' means to rule as a king. Many kings in the Old Testament, and rulers in the New Testament were violent and greedy. But in Jesus, God gave us a perfect example of what a good ruler looks like.
- What kind of king is Jesus? How might we be kings of the earth in the way that God intended?

ACTION!⁸

THINK ABOUT WHAT CHANGES THE GROUP COULD MAKE IN THEIR OWN LIVES IN RESPONSE TO WHAT THEY'VE LEARNED. WHETHER YOU CHOOSE TO DO A GROUP ACTIVITY OR PERSONAL ACTIONS, MAKE SURE TO REMIND THE GROUP OF THEIR PERSONAS FROM THE QUIZ IN SESSION ONE AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO TAKE ON A ROLE THAT IS SUITED TO THEIR PERSONALITY AND THE RESOURCES AT THEIR DISPOSAL. SEE SOME IDEAS FOR ACTIONS AT THE END OF THIS PACK.

PRAYERS

You spoke into the silence
Light suffusing darkness.

You spoke into the silence
Blowing clean life-giving air into the space

You spoke into the silence
Warmth and cold infusing the air

You spoke into the silence
Solid ground formed out of gushing water.

You spoke voice carrying over the sound
People, plants and animals came to life.

You spoke each creation balanced against the
next so life would be abundant and sustainable.

You saw everything you had made and declared it
to be very good.

You spoke choosing to give us humans
stewardship over all that You had made.

We speak and act
Darkness of pollution limits light levels and
damages the air we breathe.

We speak and act
Ground poisoned, burnt, stripped bare.

We speak and act
Spoiling, limiting, destroying quality of life
and life itself.

We speak and act
Without hearing Your call over the noise of the
world to be good stewards.

You speak. You create. You want us to be
stewards of Your creation.

We come to You to re-learn how to care for the
earth and people you have made.

Amen.

**TAKE 5 MINUTES
TO REFLECT ON THE
FOLLOWING QUES-
TIONS. YOU MIGHT
WANT TO HAVE THE
GROUP WRITE OUT
THEIR ANSWERS
EACH WEEK.**

**“THE MOST
IMPORTANT THING
I LEARNED WAS...”**

**“THE MOST
INTERESTING
PART WAS...”**

**“I WOULD LIKE
TO DO MORE
ABOUT...”**

SESSION FOUR

THROWAWAY CULTURE: WHY SHOULD WE WATCH WHAT WE WASTE?



‘THE LORD GOD TOOK THE MAN AND PUT HIM IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN TO TILL IT AND KEEP IT.’

~GENESIS 2:15

YOU NEED:

- AN ASSORTMENT OF RUBBISH ITEMS (PLASTIC BAGS, APPLE CORES, ETC. – SEE LIST IN ANSWERS BELOW),
- SEVEN PIECES OF PAPER /CARD, EACH WITH ONE OF THESE TITLES:
 - 1 MONTH +
 - 2 YEARS +;
 - 10 YEARS +;
 - 20 YEARS +;
 - 80 – 100 YEARS;
 - 450 YEARS;
 - NEVER

ACTIVITY: HOW LONG TILL IT’S GONE⁹

AIM: TO DISPLAY THE LENGTH OF TIME REGULAR PRODUCTS TAKE TO BREAKDOWN.

INTRODUCTION VIDEO:

TEARFUND’S RUBBISH CAMPAIGN

[HTTPS://WWW.TEARFUND.ORG/~MEDIA/FILES/ACTION_RESOURCES/RUBBISH_CAMPAIGN_RESOURCES/TEARFUND_RUBBISH_CAMPAIGN_FILM_ACTION.MP4](https://www.tearfund.org/~media/files/action_resources/rubbish_campaign_resources/tearfund_rubbish_campaign_film_action.mp4)



1

ASK YOUR GROUP TO COLLECT A NUMBER OF RUBBISH ITEMS FROM THE ASSORTMENT YOU HAVE BROUGHT. ALTERNATIVELY, YOU COULD ASK YOUR GROUP THE PREVIOUS WEEK TO BRING SOME ITEMS, OR EVEN DO A 15-MINUTE WASTE WALK IN THE AREA SURROUNDING YOUR CHURCH.

2

LAY OUT THE CARDS, AND ASK PEOPLE TO PUT THE WASTE ITEMS THEY HAVE COLLECTED NEXT TO THE SIGN THAT SAYS HOW LONG THEY THINK IT WILL TAKE FOR THAT ITEM TO BREAK DOWN.

ANSWERS

THESE ARE CONSERVATIVE ESTIMATES OF HOW LONG EACH ITEM TAKES TO BREAK DOWN IN THE OPEN AIR. IT COULD BE MUCH LONGER, PARTICULARLY IF THEY ARE IN LANDFILL. MANY PLASTIC ITEMS WILL BREAK DOWN INTO SMALLER MICRO-PLASTICS, SO ALTHOUGH THEY ARE NOT RECOGNISABLE AS A BAG OR STRAW, THEY STILL HAVEN'T REALLY DISAPPEARED.

1 MONTH +

PAPER BAG, APPLE CORE

2 YEARS +

BANANA SKIN

10 YEARS +

ROLLED-UP NEWSPAPER, CIGARETTE BUTTS

20 YEARS +

PLASTIC STRAWS, PLASTIC BAG (THIS CATEGORY INCLUDES THINGS THAT COULD TAKE MUCH LONGER THAN 20 YEARS, SUCH AS A FIZZY DRINK CAN, WHICH CAN TAKE UP TO 50 YEARS)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

WHICH ITEM
SURPRISED YOU
MOST?

ARE YOU GOING TO
MAKE ANY CHANGES
NOW THAT YOU KNOW
HOW LONG THESE
REGULAR ITEMS
TAKE TO BREAK-
DOWN?

(OFFER SUGGESTIONS, SUCH AS RECYCLING GLASS BOTTLES, OR COOKING MORE AT HOME THAN GETTING TAKEAWAY, OR BRINGING A REUSABLE WATER BOTTLE OR COFFEE CUP WITH YOU)

BIBLE STUDY: 5,000 LEFTOVERS¹⁰

The story of Jesus miraculously feeding 5,000 people with five barley loaves and two small fish is incredible. While Jesus has been teaching the crowds, their stomachs have been grumbling. Check out the passage to find out what happens next by reading John 6: 1-14

Discussion questions

- What does this passage tell us about what Jesus has to offer?
- What does this passage tell us about Jesus' attitude towards waste?

Conclusion

It's hard to get your head around, but there is actually more food at the end of this story than there was at the beginning! We catch a glimpse of God's kingdom.



ACTION¹¹

Come up with an action the group can take together. See an idea below, and look at the ideas at the end of this pack for each of the four personas: Mobilisers, Makers, Activists and Advocates (from the quiz in Session One).

As a group

If your church likes to eat together, how about holding a plastic-free 'bring and share' lunch or picnic? Here's how to make sure your event is not rubbish! Choose a date that works for your church and challenge everyone to bring a food contribution or picnic that does not include single-use plastics or at least uses less packaging than normal. (That means avoiding cling film, plastic bags, plastic cutlery, plastic straws or disposable cups, crisp packets or plastic sweet / chocolate wrappers.) Try to make this something that's fun and joyful! Explain that you're taking part in a challenge to notice how much plastic there is in our lives and to realise that we can do things differently as part of our worship.

TIPS

- BRING YOUR FOOD IN A REUSABLE CLOTH BAG OR BASKET.
- WRAP SANDWICHES IN BEESWAX WRAPS OR JUST PUT THEM IN SANDWICH BOXES.
- TUBS/BOXES/JARS CAN HOLD EVERYTHING FROM SALAD ITEMS TO CAKE.
- BRING DRINKS IN REUSABLE BOTTLES AND FLASKS. IF YOU ARE GOING SOMEWHERE THAT SELLS TEA OR COFFEE, BRING A CUP WITH YOU.
- FRUIT OFTEN COMES IN ITS OWN WRAPPER (E.G. BANANAS OR ORANGES), BUT IF YOU ARE BRINGING MORE DELICATE FRUIT (SUCH AS STRAWBERRIES), POP THEM IN A TUB OR JAR WITH A LID. TRY TO BUY IT LOOSE WITHOUT PLASTIC TOO!
- BRING SOME CUTLERY IF YOU NEED IT: IT'S A BIT HEAVIER THAN PLASTIC AND YOU'LL NEED TO TAKE IT HOME TO WASH, BUT WHEN YOU CONSIDER THE RESOURCES USED TO MAKE SINGLE-USE PLASTIC CUTLERY YOU THEN THROW AWAY, THE EXTRA EFFORT DOESN'T SEEM SO BAD. AS PEOPLE SIT AROUND TABLES OR ON THEIR PICNIC BLANKETS, ENCOURAGE THEM TO DISCUSS:
 1. HOW DIFFICULT A CHALLENGE WAS THIS FOR US?
 2. HOW COULD WE REDUCE OUR PLASTIC USE IN FUTURE?

SEE TEARFUND'S RUBBISH EVENT GUIDE FOR MORE TIPS: [HTTPS://WWW.TEARFUND.ORG/~MEDIA/FILES/ACTION_RESOURCES/RUBBISH_CAMPAIGN_RESOURCES/RUBBISH_EVENT_GUIDE.PDF](https://www.tearfund.org/~media/files/action_resources/rubbish_campaign_resources/rubbish_event_guide.pdf)

PRAYERS

Lord Jesus,
the earth is yours and you have commanded the winds and the sea;
help us to leave behind our consumer demand for plastics and move towards behaviours that are environmentally healthy;
help us to follow your lead in caring for the world you love. Amen.¹²

Creator of our common home,
You fill the earth and sea and sky with life
Forgive us our neglect of your creation
The choking waste of our pollution
The damage done by careless habits
And our indifference to future generations.
Help us to amend our lives
To refuse more plastic if we can't reuse it
To lift our voice for lasting change
And to live well and gently on the earth
To the glory of your Son, the Living Word
Through whom you made this fragile world. Amen.¹³

Creator God and loving Father,
Everything you made is good. Thank you for this beautiful home you've given us.
Forgive us for the times we have not looked after the earth as well as we could.
We're sorry for the rubbish we've discarded without a second thought for the consequences.
Thank you for trusting us with looking after creation.
Please help and inspire us to do so, to serve others and
for your glory. Amen.¹⁴

TAKE 5 MINUTES TO REFLECT ON THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS. YOU MIGHT WANT TO HAVE THE GROUP WRITE OUT THEIR ANSWERS EACH WEEK.

“THE MOST IMPORTANT THING I LEARNED WAS...”

“THE MOST INTERESTING PART WAS...”

“I WOULD LIKE TO DO MORE ABOUT...”

APPENDIX ONE: TEARFUND TOGETHER QUIZ

AIM: to empower youth to discover their role in the climate movement.

DESCRIPTION: Discover your social justice “persona” to find out what type of action suits you.

YOU WILL NEED: The Tearfund Together Quiz <https://weare.tearfund.org/groups/>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What resources do we have as a group?
2. What changes could you make this week? Could we pledge a daily action?

ACTION IDEAS

THE MOBILISER

- It’s time to spread the word and gather your friends to pray. Invite your friends to pray with you for 30 days about how climate change is affecting poverty. Gather as many people as possible to pray with you for 30 days, and get them to ‘sign up’ to receiving a text message or a message on social media from you each day to help them pray.

- Ask your friends and family, ask to make an announcement at church, ask your CU leaders if you could do it together as a CU activity or anywhere else you know you have peers who would like to pray.

- Collect up 30 pieces of information – just a sentence or two – one for each day. Use the information you learned today and do some research of your own.

- Make a contact list, and start messaging. Set yourself a reminder on your phone to send a message each day.

- Host a Food Waste Feast. This is a great way to get together with some friends, but also to chew over an important issue. The challenge is to make a meal solely out of food that would have been thrown out otherwise. Ask around local shops and cafes to find out what they do with surplus food. Contact a local organisation that collects and distributes surplus food. Or visit your local supermarket and browse their reduced section. You would be amazed at what you can make out of food that would have gone to waste.

- Check our Tearfund's guide to hosting a Food Waste Feast at tearfund.org/feast.
- Decide on a venue and a date for your feast, and make sure you have all the crockery, cutlery and kitchen facilities you need.
- Invite your friends. Make sure you know of any dietary requirements.
- Host your feast. Prepare something to say in advance. You could watch a film together and think of some discussion questions to ask.

THE MAKER

- Were you surprised to find out how climate change affects the lives of people living in poverty? How could you spread the word and tell others what you have learned?
 - Show your friends, church or community how climate change affects poverty. Come up with your own creative way to communicate the message. You could run an event, write up your own message, develop an action; go wherever your creativity takes you.
 - You could record a video or write a blog and share it online or start your own hashtag and create some conversation on social media.
- Use the tools at your fingertips to create something that makes people think about how much waste they're throwing away. Get your creative juices flowing and take inspiration from what you enjoy. You can choose absolutely anything, but here are a couple of ideas to get you started:
 - Start a vlog or blog that shares news, info and stats on waste.
 - Create a social media campaign with its own hashtag. Use live video, polls, photos, videos, articles and discussions to get people thinking.
 - Design your own t-shirts that introduce the problem of waste in a creative way.
 - Save up all the waste you use in a day and use it to take a photo or create a video - stop motion works really well!
 - Take a walk around your community and look out for photo opportunities around the theme of waste. Take some arty shots then showcase your photos or post them online.

THE ACTIVIST

- Climate change often means people can't grow the crops they need to feed their families. We believe in the power of prayer. We bring everything before God, even the really big issues like hunger. Petition your church to pray about hunger.

- Read up on the issue of hunger. Check out the Tearfund website for some helpful facts and stories.

- Work out how often your church could realistically pray about hunger. It could be once a month or you could time it with an all-age service for example.

- Write a letter to your church leader telling them three things: why you care about hunger, why it's important for the church to pray about hunger and how you would like to help your church to pray.

- Tell your friends, your youth group, your house group or whoever you hang out with in church about your idea. Ask them to join you by signing the letter to your church leader.

- Organise a meeting with your church leader to talk about your idea. Take your letter with you and, if you like, as many friends and supporters as possible to show how much you all care about hunger. Explain further the three things you wrote about in your letter.

- Agree an action plan with your church leader to ensure you and your church are able to start praying together for people who experience hunger.

- Plastic is everywhere, but when we speak up we can make a real difference. Does your school, church or university use lots of disposable packaging, cups or other single-use items? Ask your friends to speak up with you and ask those in charge to make a change. Get some friends together and brainstorm three things:

- What's the biggest waste culprit? Is it single-use cups at church, is it food packaging where you have lunch, or is it something else? What's an easy way this could change? How could the school / church / university reduce this waste easily?

- What might stop them from agreeing to your request? - if it's moving to mugs instead of paper cups, who would wash the mugs, who would buy them? Could you try and think of solutions - maybe the youth group could offer to wash up church cups once a month, or you could fundraise to buy them? Thinking through their main obstacles to make a change will make it easier for them to say 'yes' when you ask.

- to something else that makes a difference.

- Ask to meet the person in charge and write a letter explaining why you care about plastic, and what they can do to make a difference, including your easy ways to make a change and your solutions to what might stop them from agreeing. Could your whole youth group sign the letter to the church leader? Could your whole year group sign up for the letter to your teacher?
- If they say no, don't give up! Ask them why, and then take that challenge back to the group and see if there's a way you can help find a solution. And ask them what else they will do to reduce plastic pollution. If what you've asked for is too difficult, hopefully they'll agree the issue matters and will be able to commit to something else that makes a difference.

THE ADVOCATE

- Lots of people have been forced to leave their homes because of natural disasters. Here's one way to find out how that might feel. Go camping for the weekend with some friends and document the process. If the weekend away isn't possible, why not do the same challenge in a back garden! The catch is, you're only allowed to bring a sleeping bag and a simple lunch. Experience what it's like to have to flee with nothing. Of course, this won't match the reality, but it will bring light to what some of our global neighbours are facing in a personal way. You can write about your challenge on a blog, social media or at church. Here's what you might share:
 - What it felt like not having particular things (a phone, cosmetics, toiletries etc.)
 - What it was like to sleep with just a sleeping bag (comfort, weather, nature etc.)
 - How you felt and reacted to having such little food
 - Not being surrounded by your loved ones
- Challenge yourself and the people you live with to give up all single-use plastics for a week. It'll take some creative thinking and you'll have to let go of some stuff you usually use, but by doing it you'll be standing up for people who don't have a choice and raising awareness of how much plastic we're surrounded by here too. Think about how you can help your family/housemates to buy food free from packaging. If you don't normally do the shopping, plan with the people who do. You might want to start planning a couple of weeks in advance so you have time to find alternatives and get creative together.
 - Have a quick look through what's in your bin at the moment. What's your biggest single-use plastic culprit? How can you cut that out or reduce it next week?
 - How can you buy food without packaging? Could you buy veg loose and take a tupperware to the meat stand in your supermarket?
 - What food might you have to miss out on this week and what could you swap it for?

- How about cleaning, can you reduce the waste there?
- And in the bathroom, do you use any single-use plastic? Can you find an alternative? You could get yourself a bar of soap for showers and another for handwashing.
- Do you have a zero-waste or refill shop near you? Could you get some rice, pasta, snacks and other things from there? Have a look on-line for your nearest store. You don't have to do everything - it's only a week - but by thinking through what single-use plastic you usually use, it will help you plan and prepare well together.
- This is a tough one, and you're bound to still make some rubbish during the week, but each time you do put something in the bin, stop and pray for the people who live among huge piles of it in the poorest countries. Maybe you could stick a reminder on your bin for the week so you don't forget.

APPENDIX TWO: MORE BIBLE STUDIES

SESSION ONE BIBLE STUDY: Climate Change and the Purposes of God¹

1. THERE ARE DIFFERENT VIEWS AROUND ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE:

Where are you on this spectrum of views?



Perhaps your view is different from any of these? Why?

2. SPEND SOME TIME THINKING ABOUT:

- Psalm 24:1 'The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it.'
- Psalm 145:9 'The Lord is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made.'
- Colossians 1:20 'God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of [Christ's] cross.'

'THE LIKELIHOOD OF RUNAWAY GLOBAL WARMING, WHICH WILL DIMINISH FOOD SECURITY, ACCELERATE THE EXTINCTION OF HUGE NUMBERS OF SPECIES, AND MAKE HUMAN LIFE IMPOSSIBLE IN SOME PARTS OF THE WORLD, RAISES QUESTIONS THAT GO TO THE HEART OF OUR CHRISTIAN FAITH'

3. FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

- If you have time read carefully Job 38:4 – 7, and then scan through the rest of chapters 38, 39, 40 and 41.
- What does this section say to you? What does it say about humanity's place in God's creation?
- Why do you think the writer reminds us about: the lion (38:39), the raven (38:41), the mountain goats (39:1), the donkey (39:5), the ox (39:6), the stupid ostrich (39:13-15), the strong horse (39:19), the hawk and eagle (39:26-27), the hippopotamus (Behemoth) (40:15), the crocodile (Leviathan) (41:1), as well as the trees and plants and other vegetation?
- What was Job's response to God? (see Job 42:1-3).

REFLECTION QUESTIONS²

- What are some of the ways you try to care for God's creation in your daily life?
- Why do you think the church has been slow to speak out about caring for creation? Do you think this is changing?
- What is God saying to you, and what will you do about it?

SESSION TWO BIBLE STUDY: God Loves Creation³

Do we love creation as God does? In the passage we're about to read, God is speaking to Noah about the importance of creation.

READ GENESIS 8: 13-19 AND 9: 12-16

Time for a game of Ladders!

Get the group to sit on the floor in two lines, facing each other with their legs stretched out in front of them. Each person's feet should be touching the opposite person's feet.

Assign each pair an animal. You're going to read the passage aloud to the group. The passage mentions animals, birds, and creatures that move along the ground. Each pair should work out which category their animal fits into before you start the game.

As you read the passage aloud, as soon as you mention 'animals', 'birds', or 'creatures that move along the ground', the relevant pairs will get up and race their partner, jumping over all the legs in the ladder to the other end, and back over the ladder until they return to their spot. Make sure everyone knows which way to run to avoid collisions!

The person in each pair to return to their spot first wins a point for their team. After reading the passage, discuss the questions below in small groups. Perhaps print them out and encourage the groups to write down their answers.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

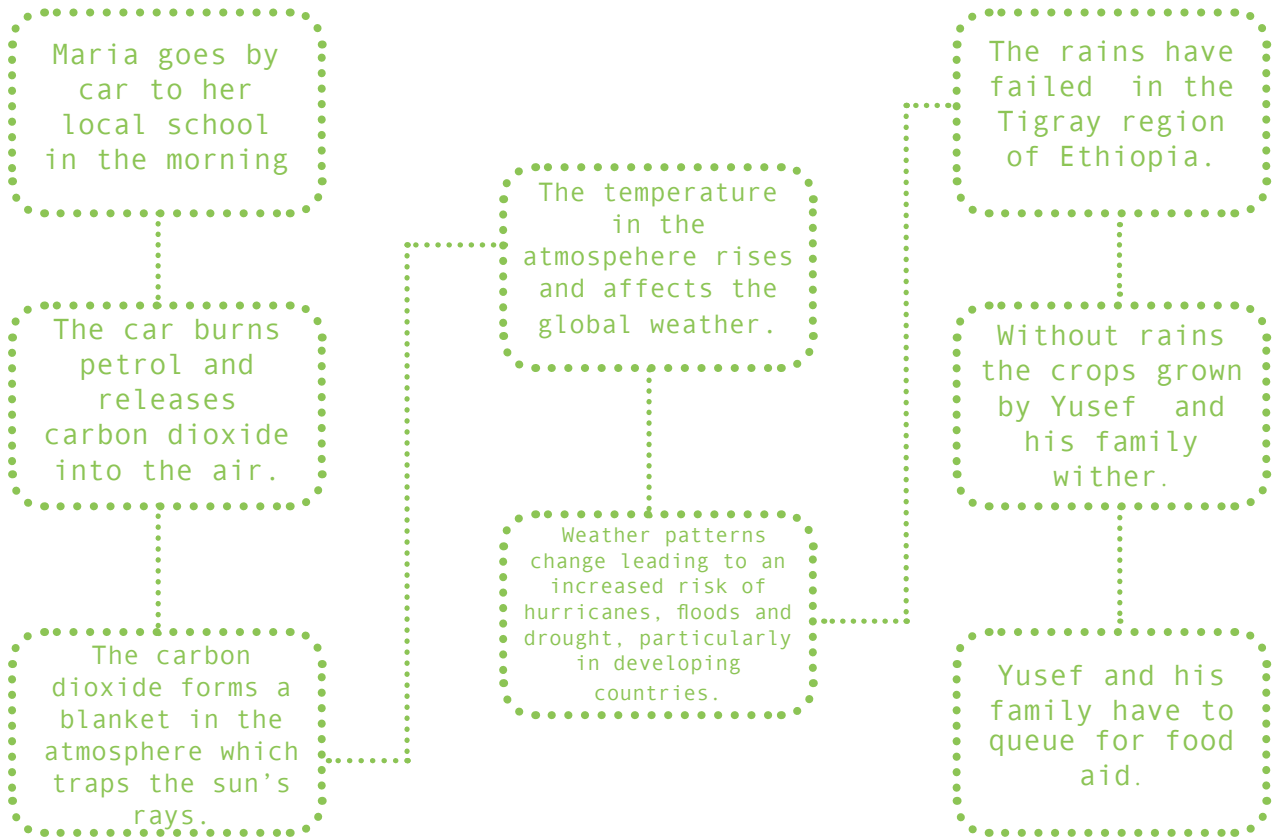
- Why did God flood the earth?
- Why do you think God chose to save animals from the flood?
- As displayed in the rainbow, God makes a covenant - a promise - to Noah. He includes all creation in that promise. Why do you think he does that?
- Do you think God still feels the same way about creation to day? (If you're unsure, look up Hebrews 13:8 and discuss how it might be relevant).

SUMMARY

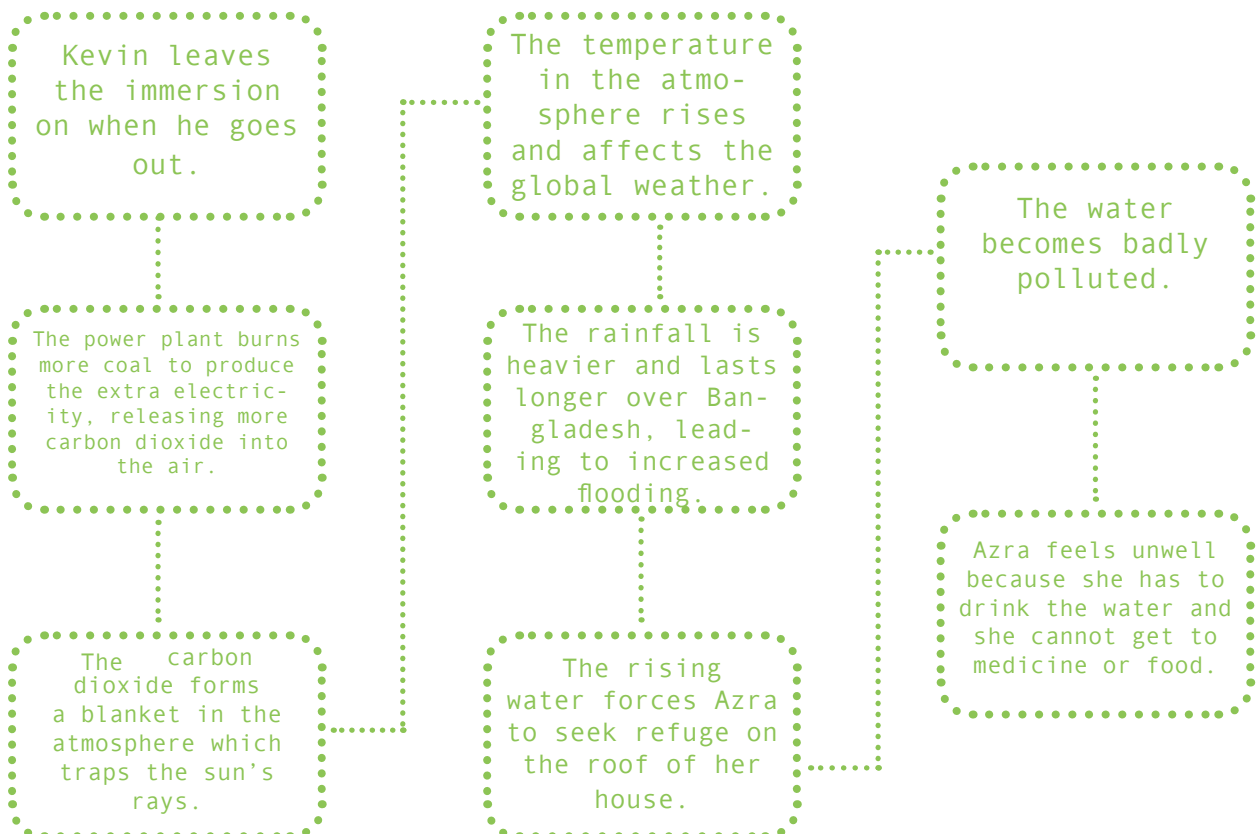
In Genesis 1 we see God design and create everything in this world. At the end of each day he says it is 'good' - the plants, the animals, the people and everything he's made. In this passage about Noah and the flood, and all the way through the Bible, we see a God who cares for creation, who values it, and who cares for the people impacted when creation is mistreated. But the Bible says 'creation is groaning' (Romans 8). But as God's people, we can make a real difference.

APPENDIX THREE: MORE ACTIVITIES

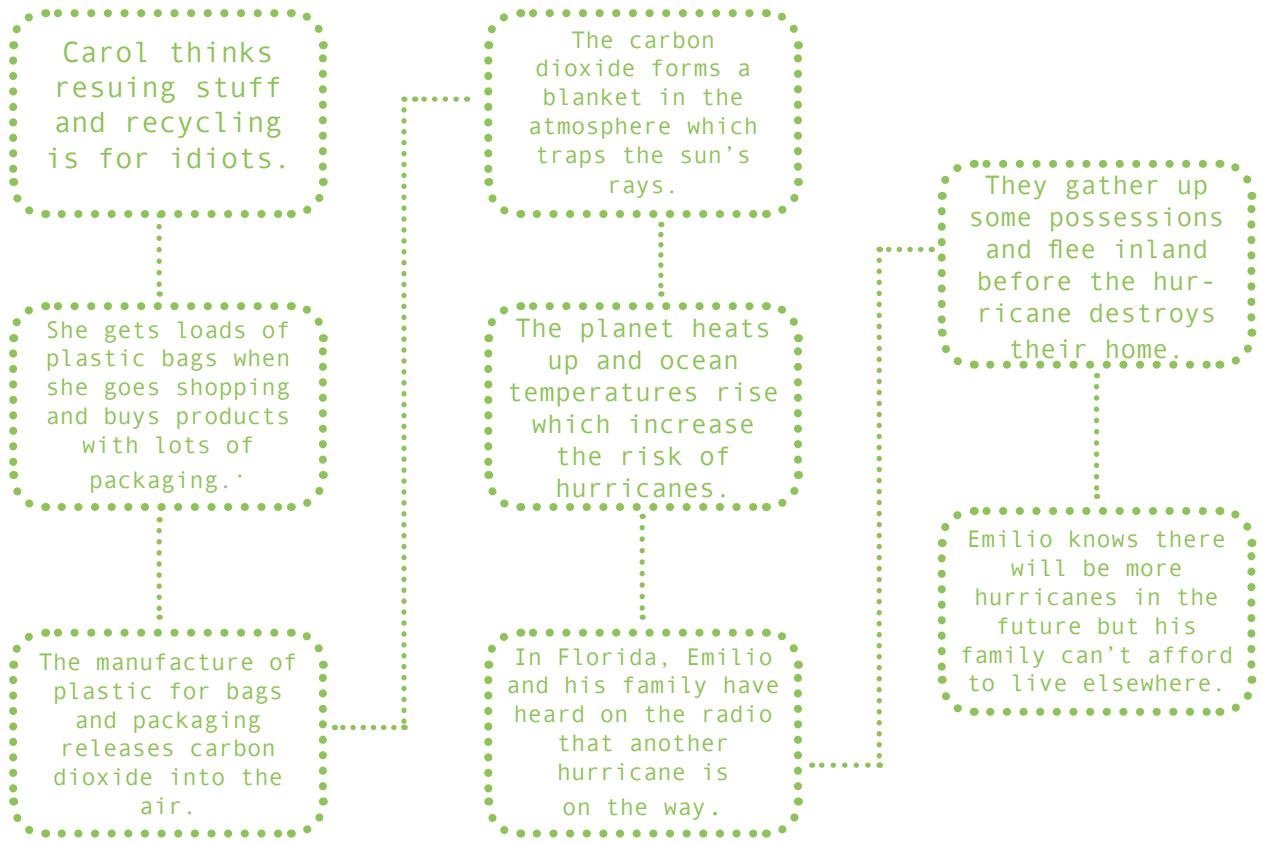
CHAIN ONE



CHAIN TWO



CHAIN THREE



FURTHER REFERENCES

1. Development Education Ireland:
www.developmenteducation.ie
2. NYCI-National Youth Council Ireland:
www.youthdeved.ie
3. NYCI:
www.youthdeved.ie/resources

FOOTNOTES

1. CLIMATE PACK

1. One World Week '14: Environment
2. Source: Footsteps 107, a Tearfund publication https://learn.tearfund.org/en/resources/publications/footsteps/footsteps_101-110/footsteps_107/bible_study_taking_care_of_god%e2%80%99s_earth/
3. Credit: EU-Cord
4. Adapted from an original activity idea from Friends of the Earth
5. Churches Together Britain and Ireland
6. National Youth Council of Ireland
7. Christian Aid
8. www.wearetearfund.org
9. https://www.tearfund.org/~media/files/action_resources/rubbish_campaign_resources/all_age_rubbish_activities_for_your_church.pdf
10. <https://weare.tearfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Waste-Leaders-Guide.pdf>
11. www.wearetearfund.org
12. Rt Revd David Urquhart, Bishop of Birmingham
13. Rt Revd Steven Croft, Bishop of Oxford <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/topical-prayers/prayers-world-environment-day>
14. Tearfund

2. APPENDIX TWO

1. Operation Noah: <http://operationnoah.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/ON-Lent-course-session-1.pdf>
2. Live Justly Bible Study
3. <https://weare.tearfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/CAUSE-Plastic.pdf>