

CARING FOR THE CREATION WORKSHOP 4



Held at Makerere Faculty of Food Science

05 February, 2013

1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE WORKSHOP

The training was conducted on 04 February, 2013 bringing together a total of 45 participants among these were pastors, priests and church members from various churches. The purpose of the workshop was to bring church leaders together to acquire knowledge on creating for God's creation with the guide of Bible Study book "Caring for the Creation" second edition published by Nola Stewart 2010. The three studies in the book that were tackled are; Let us Praise the Creator, By the Power of the Son and Generation of the Earth through the Holy Spirit, with a Summary of the studies made through developing posters.

2.0 PROCEEDINGS OF THE WORKSHOP

The workshop commenced with the arrival of the Ecological Christian Organization (ECO) staff that arranged the hall and registered the participants; Ms. Diana Nekesa led the self introduction process and asked a volunteer among the pastors to led the praise and worship, which was then up by Pastor Paul.



Ms. Diana During the introduction process

2.1 WELCOME REMARKS

Welcome remarks were given by Mr. Isaac Kabongo the Executive Director.

The director welcomed members to the workshop and asked participants if they have heard about ECO and what it does, the response was that some knew the organization and the new members didn't know the organization however curious to learn about its work. The director then gave an overview of ECO's work.

He define environment for the group explaining that environment is everything and everything is part of it including us the people living within the environment, he emphasized that "when talking about the environment include yourself." He explained why the term Ecological was used as an organizational name, Why add Ecological to Christian, he referred to the book of Genesis how God created the earth. Beyond the earth there are other planets, as we promote the spiritual being we as ECO go beyond and promote the physical being as a way of supporting communities through different activities like providing alternative livelihoods thus ecological. He also explained that when we talk about the world we mean the universe; the recent

discovered planet is Mass. He stretched further to gave an example about Muslims who believe there are seven places on earth yet in reality there are more, this shows that as religious people our knowledge is limited but through prayers we shall be able to learn more



Mr. Isaac Kabongo gives opening remarks

about the world and embrace it. Do you know why the earth was picked and given more emphasis? The participant's response it's special; it's the only place with living things. He gave a precise answer as, because it's where his image is located. God gave us abundantly with all his hands but many are not showing love to the giving of the lord.

ECO is not only interested in the Christian dimension but goes beyond the human need which is the soul. He then paused a question asking for the difference between the heart and soul? Response from

participants:

Mind and soul are the same

The Soul deals with God, the heart pumps blood and the mind is meant for thinking.

The soul is the inner being and the mind is for thinking.

The soul is the immortal part of the being.

He concluded the session by mention that ECO has realized that the cause of climate change are human activity, the organization is committed to work with churches to help communities adapt to climate change.

Training to enable leaders to take on conversation to the church, the church should participate in the creating of green jobs. We should not care out these activities with the motivation of gaining from them.

2.2 STUDY ONE: LETS US PRAISE THE CREATOR

The study was conducted by Pastor Dancun Asimwe

The pastor read out Genesis chapter one to give the entire picture of God's creation. He shared that our role is to care for the creation of God as a way of glorify him. The aim of caring for God's creation or praising the Lord is to ask the creator to have us understand our natural role to protect the creation. The facilitator urged that It should be the centre in our hearts as we pray, further still he advised that let's not praise God because his healer or provider but because he is the creator of the earth and heavens.

A prayer on page 2 of the study book was said to ask the evenly father enable us appreciate his creation and to have us understand the creation. Members were asked to say it from the bottom of their hearts. They then sang a praise song.



Pastor Dancum delivering Study two



Participants tease out their sense of smell

Members were asked to mention the five senses they have been given by God, among the five these were mentioned; sense of feeling, hearing, and smelling, tasting, sight.

Nuts were used to give a clear understanding of the sense of taste and oranges were equally distributed among the participants for the sense of smelling. Pastor Dancun asked members not to take God's creation for granted. He informed them that we owe God a lot, so we should routinely praise, worship and adore him for the great senses. The pastor further explained how the different senses have direct might functions. He gave an example of the different attitude the hands can express, a hard rough touch extended by a hand is a sign of anger and danger while soft touch is love and appreciation.

This lesson sparked of a moment of prayer to glorify the lord for the great work.

He emphasized that the background of a human being doesn't matter they are all wonderfully and with various purposes to complement each other in society. He gave an example of the Batwa community how are said to be backward and illiterate, he informed members that they are a community with the greatest knowledge on natural medicines (herbs)

Readings were taken from the book of Psalms 24:1, 2 Ps 50:1, 10, 11 Ps.8:1, 3, 4 read by various participants.

2.2.0 Rada

The pastor explained Rada as follows, Plants has various parts which are visible and roots that are under ground with a purpose to look for water and food. Its strength is between the roots and the upper part of the plant. Participants at this point were informed that human beings are like the Rada, the strength of every creation.

Genesis chapter 26 was read. Refereeing to the reading he said that ruling over the creations should not be suppression or exploitation of the other creators. But the ruling over is caring for the creation. As rada is the strength of the entire tree, human beings are the strength that sustains God's creation. We thought our participation in doing that we suffer, Psalms 8 was read.

Participants then were able to fill in the study sheets with the guidance of Pastor Dancun.

2.3 STUDY TWO: BY THE POWER OF THE SON

The study was led by Pastor Paul Mutebi.

He explained the purpose of the study to the participants as, a session meant bring them into the presence of God's son through whom all things are made. He assured them that through the process they will be able to conference the inadequacy of our care for the natural world and to seek the power of the Risen Christ to help us in God's work of rescuing and restoring his good creation.

A prayer on page 10 was recited by the group.

God has positioned us to appreciate what he created but also enabled us to be the people we need to lead the creation. He highlighted that environment protection is part of the work that brought his son, it's our work to win people back to protect the environment as we carry out the Christian roles. We need to realize our mistakes and be able to correct them as a commitment to God.

He narrated his life story on how his grandfather taught him to hunt sparingly. It gave a picture of how God treasures his creation. He then stressed that when you are hunting you need to reserve for tomorrow for sustainability as God requires us to do.

He mentioned that much has been told to conserve the environment but there is still no energy to conserve the environment among God's people. We need to love his creation to be in position to conserve his creation. We need to understand who we are in God that we shall appreciate his creation and preserve it. Mathew 21:33-41 taken from different bible versions being read by different pastors.

2.3.0 Reflection on the readings

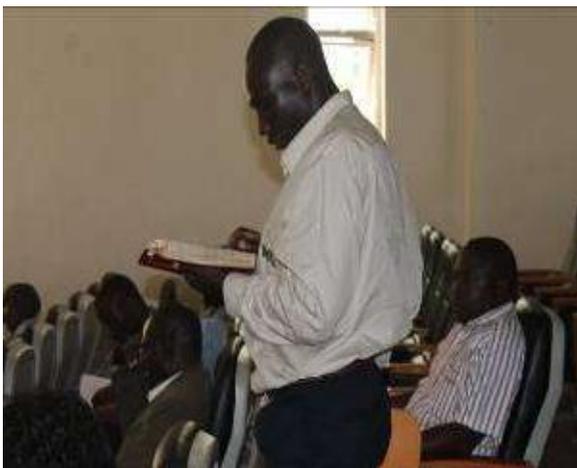
Question was posed to the pastor. What kind of tenant could you be?

When we neglect our tenants then we also turn out to be bad. The tenants in the reading were self centered.

We as tenants in the garden of the creation we are at the mercy of the creation.

We here are similarly strange tenants, when we get the message from the workshop we don't take the initiative to implement.

The environment enables the creators to thrive and treats it as it's for someone else God explains his love for the environment by creating biodiversity in our homes.



A pastor reads out a verse in the bible

Story on page 14 was read. The pastor concluded this story by asking members to not only preach but preserve nature like the Bullock driver.

Another Story on page 10 was read out. At this point the pastor asked the participants to share experiences on the wild animals they have seen. One saw a wild pig playing in mud like a domestic pig. Another dancing monkey in the zoo that dances to scare away its enemies. The third person shared that his area is blessed with a variety of birds, also in Queen Elizabeth Park all animals come

out of the hidings in the evening and relax in the open. In his village cows graze with zebras. We need to reserve the creatures as a way of appreciating God's creation.

Filling of Study sheets.

Pastor Paul asked the participants to read the different books as highlighted on the sheets and together as a group they were able to answer the questions.

The facilitator concluded the session with a prayer to thank God for the creation.

2.4 Study Three. Regeneration of the earth through the Holy Spirit

Rev. Peter Nantamu led the team through the third study.

He started off with a prayer followed by a worship song.

He then informed the participants that in this study we seek to submit humbly to God's purpose for us as appointed stewards of his creation. And also to seek the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit to restore the health, well-being and diversity of God's good Creation on Earth.

Pictures in the study book were projected showing a cup of coffee, small coffee table and cardboard package of biscuits. He asked the participants after the projection, how many such items do you think may be purchased throughout the world?



Members singing a worship song

Response

As many as factories can produce in a day.

As many as small ants in a single anthill.

Millions

How many cups of coffee can a coffee lover take in a day?

Uncountable they addicted they that one can't number them.

5 cups a day.

Then he asked again, how many cups can a population of 6.8 billion take?

The participant's laughed out loud and couldn't figure out the number.

He asked them how many coffee table are bought globally? They mentioned , hundreds, millions.

He then shared a picture of a forest and the bird of paradise in the study book.

A further asked them to answer the effects that so many average consumers have on the species and ecosystems from which the projected items originally come.

Responses:

Many species of birds and animals are disappearing due to our bad habits.

We have destroyed the world and forgotten to conserve the biodiversity.

Our habits have increase climate change and we are heading for dome, which we should not blame on God because he gave us his creation with love but we are mismanaging it.

We are harboring desserts

He asked another question, How did the problems faced by the natural world get to be so big?

Mishandling of the natural resources

We have lost love for God's creation by focusing more on manufacturing worldly thinks.

The increasing population has change the world creating various needs from a cross-section of people.

The chorus based on Psalm 51:10-5 was read out.

Pastors were asked to read genesis 2:4-3:19. These lead to the question and answering on page 18.

The facilitator moved to contrasting God's plans for Israel in the Old testament with God's plans for the church in the New Testament. Readings were taken from the book of Genesis and Luke.

Members with the lead of facilitator were divided into two groups one standing on the left and the other on the right side and read out passages in the study book.

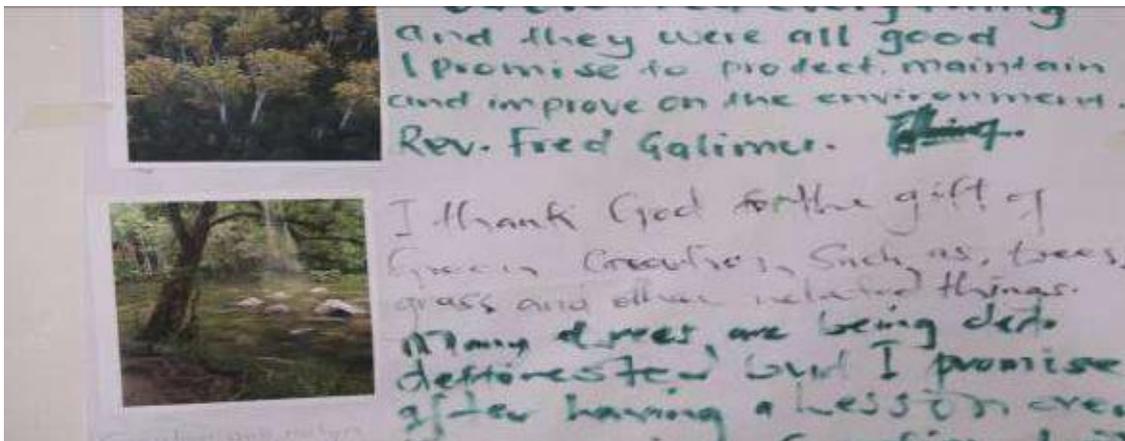
He concluded that study by advising members to use resources well because we are stewards, and stressed that some natural resources are not renewable. The major role of the holy spirit is to convict us so that we can repeat.

Worship song sang out and a prayer was said.

2.4 MAKING POSTERS

Participants were asked to make poster reflecting on what they had learnt in groups to summarize the studies conducted. They were asked to share these with their churches.

As a way forward participants were asked how do we use the CC Studies in our local Church question.



One of the posters from the workshop

Response

We shall integrate these in our bible study lessons.

Use them during youth conferences

We should together as a group of those who are in position to facilitate themselves come up and make summaries that we can use as sermons in the church

Create report back sessions in our respective churches and share with other church leaders for preaching purposes because the people of God need this information.

The workshop was closed with praise songs and a prayer of forgiveness for the destruction of God's creation.

Annex

(I) List of Participants

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