



A GRAND STAND FOR THE ENVIRONMENT INC.

**Call for Questions to a QandA forum on Climate Change
Tuesday September 8, 7.30 pm at Manningham Civic Centre.**

**Pope Francis has declared climate change a moral issue.
How should we and our leaders respond?**

Address your questions to a distinguished panel. Who are:

- David Spratt, Climate policy strategist and Co-author of "Climate Code Red"
- Cath James, Uniting Church Synod Environmental Officer and editor of Green Church Update
- Dr Charles LeFeuvre, distinguished Psychoanalytic Psychiatrist, who speaks and writes on psychological aspects of our response to climate change
- Sr Anne Boyd, editor of The Earthsong journal. Anne supports and leads inquiry into our spiritual relationship to our planet.

Each panellist has declared in advance their position on this issue as follows:

David Spratt:

A hotter planet caused by human burning of fossil fuels poses an existential threat to both people and planetary systems. Continued high emissions will produce 4 degrees Celsius of warming, hotter than the planet has been for more than 20 million years, and "incompatible with an organised global community, is likely to be beyond 'adaptation', is devastating to the majority of ecosystems and has a high probability of not being stable", according to one leading climate scientist. If we do not solve this issue, all the other issues which we are concerned will simply become irrelevant.

The papal encyclical, "Laudato si", frames questions of sustainability and climate change and the human relationship with nature as moral ones- in asserting a primarily moral case for action in a climate discourse that has been too much about economic, technological and technocratic questions. Climate has been seen too much as an environmentalists' issue, contributing to framing it as a "green" or left-right issue. By putting a powerful moral case for concern and action from the church, "Laudato si" challenges the left-right framing and helps open the issue to conservatives and to more faith organisations of many kinds.

Cath James.

The Uniting Church has been concerned about the environment from its inception. In 1977 in its first statement to the nation, we said, "We are concerned with the basic human rights of future generations and will urge the wise use of energy, the protection of the environment and the replenishment of the earth's resources for their use and enjoyment."

We see the earth not just has important for humans but of value in itself. This informs how we understand our faith. Over the years, we have come to increasingly see the connections between environmental destruction and corporate greed and the need for a different economy. We advocate an economy of life.

"An economy of life is marked by regard for the common good. Individualism, competition and greed deny human flourishing because the fullness of our humanity is not found in wealth but in relationship with each other and the world around us. We need community for our wellbeing. Systems and structures which breed individualism and competition deny the nature of our humanity and lead to isolation and despair."

Email: info@agrandstandfortheenvironment.org

Web site: <http://www.agrandstandfortheenvironment.org/>



Dr Charles Le Feuvre

Climate change is a reality that is very confronting for us emotionally. Feelings such as grief, fear, guilt and helplessness may need to be acknowledged and discussed otherwise denial is more likely. Strong, realistic yet compassionate leadership, as shown in 'Laudato si', can allow space for uncomfortable feelings; yet also provide a sense of hope and moral direction in the face of uncertainty and insecurity.

Climate change denial can be seen as part of a deeper issue- denial of our dependence on nature. This can be called the Syndrome of Independence from Nature (SIN). This syndrome has many causes, e.g. our narcissistic, capitalist and technological society. As an error of thinking it is based on dualistic, particularly anthropocentric, thinking as elaborated in 'Laudato si'.

In an anthropocentric view, humans have dominion over the Earth and every right to plunder it, leading to destruction of nature and the massive fossil fuel emissions that cause climate change. In addition to the right action there needs to be a change of consciousness from the anthropocentric to the ecocentric. Ecopsychology stems from an ecocentric philosophy and emphasizes our vital connection to and concern for nature.

Sr Anne Boyd

'We are a communion of subjects, not a collection of objects' (Thomas Berry)

An interconnected Universe at every level offers a way of seeing anew our relationship to our 'common home'. Developing our awareness of this reality demands an enormous shift of consciousness with profound implications for understanding our place and role within the community of life systems unravelling in a time of dangerous climate change.

EarthSong's primary focus is to explore the implications of belonging in a sacred Universe. It is the context for a new articulation and living out of spirituality which recognises the need to:

- Celebrate Earth's beauty and mystery
- Acknowledge grief and mourn loss
- Expand our moral frame to bring Earth into primary focus as source of life
- Change our lifestyles in practical and tangible ways to reduce our negative impact on the planet

There is much in 'Laudato Si' which aligns with EarthSong's aims. Placing the ecological crisis within a moral frame has the potential to galvanise action among believers and all those who accept a moral dimension in life. This, in turn, may provide hope to those who are already making changes to minimise the impact of human induced climate change.

Questions:

Should be of a maximum 150 words and be relevant to the panel discussion and will be accepted on that basis. The discussion is not primarily intended to address theological issues. Preference will be given to those questioners who will be present on the night, and the questions selected to address balanced coverage of the topics addressed by the panellists. Questions arising from secondary school student projects addressing related issues are encouraged. A grand Stand for the Environment Inc. reserves the right to reject questions that are outside the scope of the panel discussion as outlined in the briefing statements of the panellists.

For Queries and submission of questions, preferably use the contact form on the Grand Stand web page at <http://www.agrandstandfortheenvironment.org/contact/> . For more information email info@agrandstandfortheenvironment.org, or text of phone Julie on 0418597514.

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