



Introduction to Creation Care and Environmental Stewardship

Overview of Series

- **Sunday, April 28th:** Introduction to Creation Care // Sarah Nolan
- **Sunday, May 5th:** RiverWise Congregations // Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
- **Saturday, May 11th:** East End Cemetary Clean-Up // Chris Graham and Lynn Williams
- **Sunday, May 12th:** Shalom Farms // Dominic Barrett, Executive Director
- **Sunday, May 19th:** Moving Forward – What’s Next // Sarah Nolan, Lynn Williams,
Keli Cooper

So what is Creation Care?



Defining the Terms

- Sustainability
- Environmental Stewardship
- Creation Care
- Eco-theology





Stewardship

- *Stigweard* (11th Century English): Someone who kept or cared for the affairs of a household.
- *Oikonomos* (NT Greek: “Steward” or “Manager”)
 - *oikos* = house or household
 - *Nomos* = law or order
 - *Oikos* also lies at the heart of “economics”, “ecology” and “ecumenical

“The coming age is to be seen as the age of stewardship: we are here not to govern and exploit, but to maintain and creatively transform.”

- Henryk Skolimowski, *Eco-Philosophy*



To Keep...

- After Adam was created, “the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep [*shamar*] it.” (Genesis 2:15)
- “The LORD bless you and keep [*shamar*] you.” (Numbers 6:24)
- *Shamar* (Hebrew): to guard, protect, keep watch, preserve.

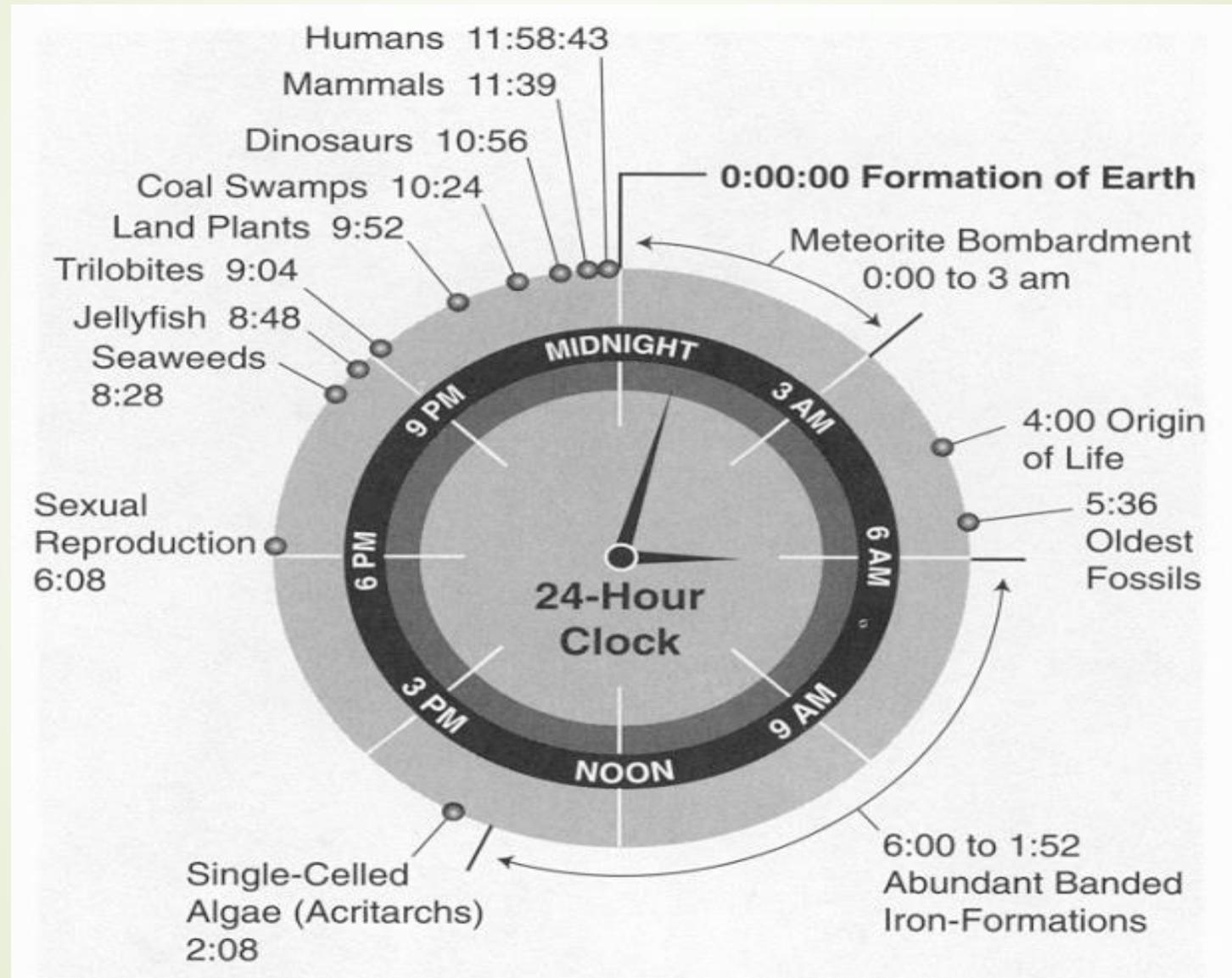
“The keeping we expect of God when we invoke the Aaronic blessing is one that nurtures all of our life-sustaining and life-fulfilling relationships with our family members, with our neighbors and our friends, with the land, air, and water, and with our God.”

- Calvin DeWitt, *Creation's Care and Keeping*

“As humans, our primary vocation is taking care of - keeping - what belongs to God for the mutual flourishing of all life.”

- Jennifer Butler, *Introducing Evangelical Ecotheology*

Re-orienting Relationships





“Scientific knowledge today is repositioning the human species as an intrinsic part of the evolutionary network of life on our planet which in turn is a part of the solar system, which itself came into being as a later chapter of cosmic history...We evolved relationally; we exist symbiotically; our existence depends on interaction with the rest of the natural world. Relocating anthropology in this broader context provides the condition to rethink the scope of significance of the incarnation in an ecological direction. The flesh that the Word of God became as a human being is part of the cast body of cosmos.”

- Elizabeth Johnson, *Ask the Beasts: Darwin and the God of Love*

19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; 20 for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; 23 and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

- Romans 8:19-23



Ecologies of Relationship/Intersectionality



- “Before you finished eating your breakfast this morning, you’ve depended on more than half the world. This is the way our universe is structured...We aren’t going to have peace on earth until we recognize this basic fact of the interrelated structure of reality.”

- Martin Luther King Jr.

- "All the organic carrots and farmers’ markets in the world are not going to end hunger unless we also end racism...We need to be building a restorative society, complete with a restorative system of justice and a restorative food system. For that we need to dismantle racism in our society, in our food system and in our own food movements ...

- Eric Holt-Gimenez

Defining the Terms

► Eco-Justice/Environmental Justice

- ❖ “Ecojustice is rooted in the ‘intersectionality’ of classism, sexism, racism, and ecological degradation.”
- ❖ Environmental Justice is the equitable distribution of environmental risks and benefits; fair and meaningful participation in environmental decision-making; recognition of community ways of life, local knowledge, and cultural difference; and the capability of communities and individuals to function and flourish in society.

► Environmental Racism

- ❖ Environmental racism is the disproportionate impact of environmental hazards on people of color.
- ❖ Episcopal Task Force on Creation Care and Environmental Racism.





An Episcopal Vision for Creation Care

The Jesus Movement is the ongoing community of people whose lives are centered on Jesus of Nazareth. We follow him into loving, liberating, life-giving relationship with God, with each other and with Creation.

As a whole church, we have promised to place the care of God's Creation at the heart of our common life. Together, we have taken up church-wide action in order to safeguard the integrity of Creation and to sustain and renew the life of the Earth.

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- **Loving** - Goal #1 - Create and sustain a network of Episcopalians dedicated to the care and protection of the whole Creation, especially by providing grants and cultivating circles for Story Sharing among practitioners in local and regional ministries.
 - **Liberating** - Goal #2 - Stand in solidarity with the most vulnerable victims of the impact of climate change - particularly women, poor people, and people of color - as part of seeking the liberation and flourishing of all God's people.
 - **Life-Giving** - Goal #3 - Set climate mitigation benchmarks as individuals and as a church, in order to live more simply, humbly, and gently on the Earth.

Practicing Stewardship

- Home
- Church
- Region
- Global

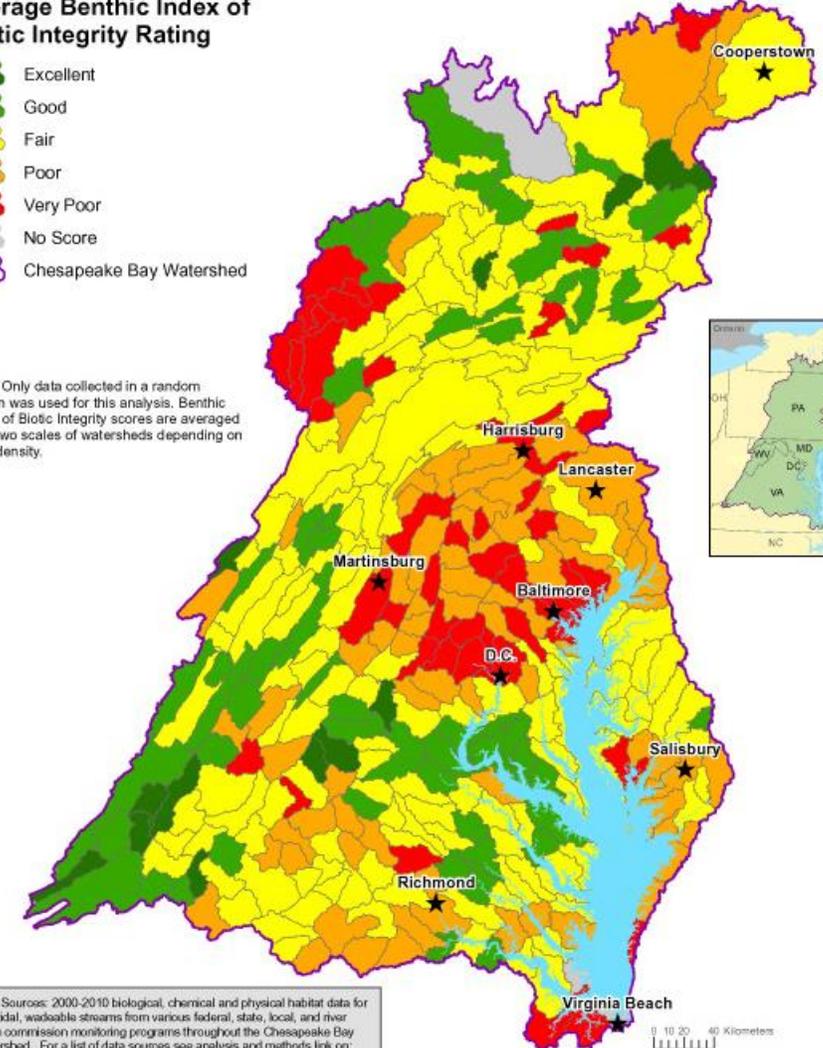
Average 2000-2010 Stream Health in Chesapeake Bay Sub-watersheds



Average Benthic Index of Biotic Integrity Rating



Note: Only data collected in a random design was used for this analysis. Benthic Index of Biotic Integrity scores are averaged over two scales of watersheds depending on data density.



Data Sources: 2000-2010 biological, chemical and physical habitat data for non-tidal, wadeable streams from various federal, state, local, and river basin commission monitoring programs throughout the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. For a list of data sources see analysis and methods link on: http://www.chesapeakebay.net/status_streamhealth.aspx



“But ask the animals, and they will teach you; the birds of the air, and they will tell you;

Ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you.

Who among all these does not know that the hand of the LORD has done this?

In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being.”

- Job 12:7-10

