

SCARBOROUGH CHRISTIAN ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS MEETING (Feb 17th 12:30pm)

We had a great time today with some invigorating discussion, coffee and biscuits! First we looked at various reasons why we may be interested in coming to such a meeting as this.

Here is a list of possibilities:

1: Theological/philosophical interests

2: Practical reasons: For some project to engage in.

3: Biblical: To learn what the Bible says about our relationship with the environment.

4: Social: To meet up with people who have similar interests.

5: Evangelical: For purposes regarding our witness for Christ.

6: Political: To engage as Christians in the political arena.

7: Other:

We graded them 1-10 individually (1 being most important)

And here are the results!

1:15; 2:20; 3:19; 4:26; 5:28; 6:26

So theology wins! (But I think everyone agreed the others had plenty of "mileage")

Under "other" 2 extra comments:

"To engage with people inside and outside the church to encourage practical action starting from a common Christian base"

And: "to clarify main issues and what difference/influence Christians can make"

We then looked at how we would like to structure the meetings. A basic list of content headings was displayed as follows:

Ideas: (Practical; Courses available; Projects initiate; Projects to engagement with)

Books / Links etc: Books read; Site links for further thought.

Facts: Latest figures/ stats regarding Climate issues etc

Speaker: Invite someone to talk on various issues

Prayer:

Bible Study: Select a passage to study

Extras:

As we went through these much conversation took place. Paula kindly took notes so when they come I will be able to highlight some of it.

After that we had an excellent talk by Rev Kevin Ridd who had, in 2003, completed his PhD entitled "Beyond Stewardship". He told us that the issues he raised then are still relevant today. While stewardship is important it is a loaded word which when we go back to the Bible is termed "Dominion". It is clear to all of us that this idea has been seriously abused by a power hungry humankind treating the planet as a means to an end rather than having intrinsic value in itself. Even when we try to take more seriously the idea of stewardship we have anthropocentric considerations where our motives for our stewardship are not for the planet but for ourselves. Discussion about a hierarchical approach to creation ensued.

Kevin's other main emphasis emphasised the need, not only for practical action but a change of heart - true repentance. This will enable us to reconnect with the planet, and one another through God's love from the heart. Much more was said, and perhaps I will be able to draw more from Paula's notes.

After that we had a group discussion on 2 issues:

A: In what ways do you think the church has (has had) a –ive effect upon Environmental / Climate issues?

B: In what ways do you think the church has (has had) a +ive effect upon Environmental / Climate issues?

Some of the issues raised will no doubt arise in further discussions but I think that is enough for now.

We closed in prayer

A big THANK YOU for all the contributions from people today, to St James Church for giving us the room, and also to Kevin for his great contribution.

(I will get a copy of his leaflet and post it on the page later)

Finally Ian Smith and I are to arrange a night when we can meet in a pub for those who cannot make it during the day so WATCH THIS SPACE!