



## Climate Change and the Purposes of God

### **Session two: How can I better celebrate creation as God's gift?**

#### 1. How do you see the world?

- What do you see when you open the front door in the morning?
- With which of your senses do you relate best to nature?
- What affects you most about what is happening to our changing climate?
- What faith resources help you to live simply with creation?

#### 2. What comes to mind when you hear the word 'nature'?

Do we, as Christians think differently from the secular world about what 'nature' means? Christians understand 'nature' as 'God's creation'. In this they are following in the footsteps of some of the poets who wrote the psalms ( e.g. Psalm 8, Psalm 19, Psalm 104).

#### 3. Reflection on Psalm 104

*(You may be able to see a DVD with the words of Psalm 104 from The Message version of the Bible; it can be downloaded from the Operation Noah website. If not, read it slowly, a section at a time).*

- The opening paragraph (v1-4). What is being celebrated? What was the world created for?
- Verses 5-9. Where does the poet take us now? What are we celebrating now?
- Verses 10 – 18. What are these verses about? Life - and the means of life - come to us as gift.
- Verses 19 – 23. What is the focus of these verses? Time, too, is given by God.
- Verses 24 – 26. Why does the poet say this about the sea? The sea monsters are also part of God's providence.

- Verses 27-30. Spend a moment to reflect on these verses and ask how they relate to you.
- Verses 31 – 34 are the climax of the poem. How do they make you feel? Here is the psalmist meditating, praising, worshipping.
- Verse 35 is rather unexpected. What do you think is the point of this jarring note about sin?

#### 4. Climate Change and the Purposes of God says:

##### **FIND JOY IN CREATION!**

*'How many are your works, Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures..... May the Lord rejoice in his works.'* (Psalm 104:24, 31)

*According to the witness of our Scriptures, everything that we have, life and the means of life, comes to us as gift. This is the ground of our worship. The beauty and harmony of God's creation is for all cultures a source of human wellbeing, spiritual nourishment and joy. Christians understand God's relation to creation in three ways. All reality comes from God the Father; the flourishing of the earth and its future are foundational to the mission of God (and therefore to the Church's mission). God embraces material reality in Jesus in whom all things hold together (Colossians 1:17). God the Spirit gives life to all reality at all times and in all places. 'The love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,' (Romans 5:5) overflows in our love and care for all God's creatures.*

'Life and the means of life, comes to us as gift'.

? Think about one or two phrases from this Declaration in relation to your own lifestyle and priorities. Maybe discuss this with others.

? What implication does 'life and the means of life comes to us as gift' have for our attitude to the earth and everything we "own"?

? When we reflect on Christian mission in today's world, what is the most important thing for the Church to take from this part of Climate Change and the Purposes of God?