

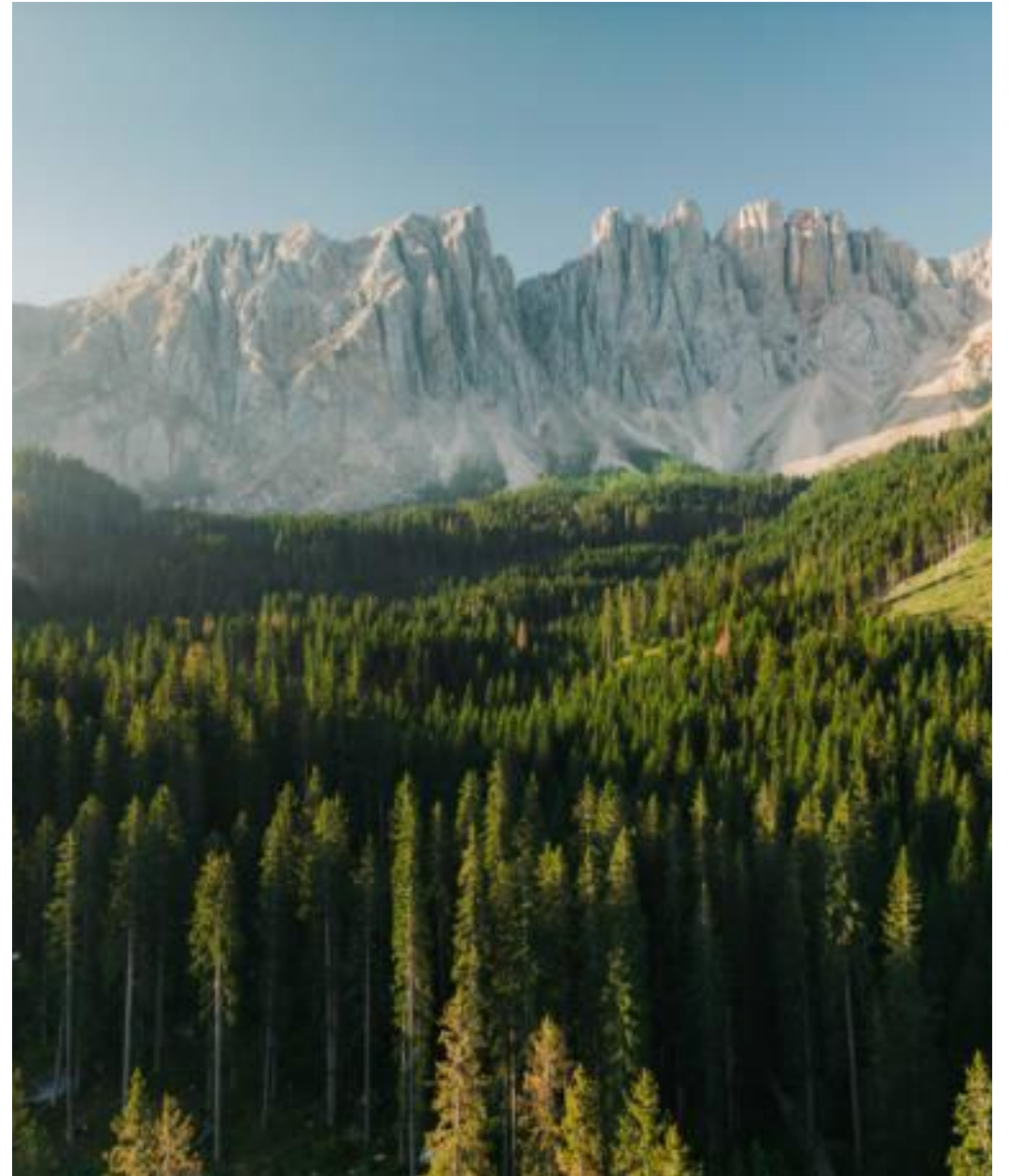
Eco-Theology
*Is God's Love Broad
Enough for Bears?*





Group Question 1
Reflect on the notion of
“**creation** .”

Is it a noun or a verb?
What does it say about God?
What does it say about us?





Agenda

- Introduce the classical theological meaning of creation
- Reasons for its neglect
- The natural world's relation to God in the Spirit through Christ
- The need to be converted to the earth as a community of creatures

Creation: Three Dimensions

CREATIO ORIGINALIS

CREATIO CONTINUA

CREATIO NOVA

Julian of Norwich

“And in this [Christ] showed me something small, no bigger than a hazelnut, lying in the palm of my hand, as it seemed to me, and it was as round as a ball. I looked at it with the eye of my understanding and thought: What can this be? I was amazed that it could last, for I thought that because of its littleness it would suddenly have fallen into nothing. And I was answered in my understanding: It lasts and always will, because God loves it; and thus everything has being through the love of God.”

Julian of Norwich, *Showings* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 183.





Group Question 2
Reflect on the Triune God
of love.

What is the role of the
Spirit in Eco-Theology?
What about Jesus? Do any
images come to mind?

Herbert McCabe - Philosopher

“The Creator makes all things and keeps them in existence from moment to moment – not like a sculptor, who makes a statue and leaves it alone, but like a singer who keeps her song in existence at all times.”

Herbert McCabe, *God, Christ, and Us*, ed. Brian Davies (New York: Continuum, 2003), 103.



Hildegard of Bingen

“I, the highest and fiery power, have kindled every living spark and I have breathed out nothing that can die . . . I flame above the beauty of the fields; I shine in the waters; in the sun, the moon and the stars, I burn. And by means of the airy wind, I stir everything into quickness with a certain invisible life which sustains all . . . I, the fiery power, lie hidden in these things and they blaze from me.”

Hildegard of Bingen, *Mystical Writings* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 183.



Augustine of Hippo

“Let your mind roam through the whole creation; everywhere the created world will cry out to you: “God made me.” . . . Go round the heavens and back again and back to the earth, leave out nothing; on all sides everything cries out to you of its Author; nay, the very forms of created things are as it were the voices with which they praise their Creator.”

Augustine, *On the Psalms Ancient Christian Writers*, Vol. 29 (New York: Newman Press, 1960), 272.



Christopher Southgate, Theologian

“When I consider the starving pelican chick, or the impala hobbled by a mother cheetah so her cubs can learn to pull a prey animal down, I cannot pretend that God’s presence as the ‘heart’ of the world takes the pain of the experience away; I cannot pretend that the suffering may not destroy the creature’s consciousness, before death claims it. That is the power of suffering . . .”



Southgate (continued)

“I can only suppose that God’s suffering presence is just that, presence, of the most profoundly attentive and loving sort, a solidarity that at some deep level takes away the aloneness of the suffering creature’s experience.”

Christopher Southgate, *The Groaning of Creation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 52.





“Exult, all creation, around
God’s throne,” for Jesus Christ
is risen! Rejoice, O earth, in
shining splendor, radiant in the
brightness of your King! Christ
has conquered! Glory fills you.
Darkness vanishes forever!



“Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and its beauty.”

--Albert Einstein

