

Josh Mangelson 00:17

Welcome to the Project Zion Podcast. This podcast explores the unique spiritual and theological gifts Community of Christ offers for today's world.

Brittany Mangelson 00:33

Hello, and welcome to the Project Zion Podcast. This is Brittany Mangelson and I will be your host for today. I am really excited about this episode because we are introducing you to a new series on topic that has been highly requested for years. This new series is called Climate Brewing. Now, climate change is something that we've touched on on PZP before, but we've never done anything like this--a full series dedicated to climate change. So the North American Climate Justice Team has been running a climate series that started the summer of 2020. And in November, they added world class climate scientists and other experts to the conversation. Now you might be able to tell where we're going with this, but Project Zion Podcast is going to be featuring podcast interviews with some of those experts on climate change. So today, we're going to be introducing this project with Rod Downing and Susan Oxley. Rod is the chair of the North American Climate Justice Team for Community of Christ, but before that, he has had decades of peace and justice advocacy work. And I want to make note that he received the Human Rights award by Community of Christ First Presidency in 2007. So what I'm saying is that Rod knows his stuff. And we also have Susan Oxley, who is a team member of the North American Climate Justice Team. And she's also a retired Community of Christ Apostle. She served for 10 years as an Apostle from 2005 to 2015. And when I briefly asked Susan about her interest on this topic, she told me that it was actually being an Apostle in the field and seeing the impact that climate change was having that sparked her interest in this topic. She saw rising sea waters in the French Polynesia that caused entire islands to be evacuated, and people had to permanently relocate. She also saw the forest fires in California and the melting glaciers and ice caps in Canada, and she could not ignore this issue anymore. So climate change weighed heavy on her mind. And when she met up with Rod at World Conference in 2019, this new team was formed. So we're gonna get all into all of that in just a second, but I just want to thank rod and Susan, for being on the podcast today. So let's have you introduce yourselves to our listeners just a little bit more. And Rod, we'll start with you.

Rod Downing 03:01

Sure. Great to be with you. And thanks for having us. Yeah, so I'm Rod Downing I live in on the west coast of Canada, Vancouver, BC. It's the church I go to. I live in the suburbs of Surrey. Being a member all my life, though, almost left the church at one point. But have developed a strong passion for what originally I called Zion. And we now call it a variety of terms peaceable kingdom and such. It's it's sort of one of those fire in your bones, types of experiences. That even though I'm a bit of an old barnacle now, I, that fire is still as fierce as it ever was. So that's, that's a bit of a background for me.

Susan Oxley 04:10

I'm Susan Oxley, and I live in West Seattle, Washington. And I attend the Renton congregation of Community of Christ, which, you know, right now only meets occasionally, mostly online. And I'm also an evangelist. I have been a member of Community of Christ all of my life, and have been on quite a

journey of spiritual growth and theological development through those years and was privileged then to be able to serve the church in full time appointment. So I'm retired now of course from appointment, I homeschool my three grandkids, actually two of my grandkids of the three and then I have a 17 year old granddaughter, was graduating from high school and has been accepted into Bryn Mawr. So we're quite pleased with her academic career and the future that she has.

Brittany Mangelson 05:14

Excellent. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Like I said, I'm so excited about this conversation that we're going to have. And I know that our listeners will be too because like I mentioned, this is a highly requested topic. So I know that there will be a lot of excitement generated around this new series. So speaking of this project, let's talk a little bit about it. I'm curious about your organization about this team, and who's sponsoring it, what we can expect? All of the the nitty gritty details of what this this new series is going to entail.

Rod Downing 05:52

Sure. The actual team had its genesis in 2019 World Conference. And I want to clarify, there has always been the Earth Stewardship Committee, that's a standing committee of the world church, and it's been an it's doing marvelous things, and we're in sync with it. And they're going to be bringing out some really, really skookum resources. What happened in 2019? Actually, it starts in 2018. You have to know, first of all, about the IPCC that's the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. You know, when the media talks about, "Oh, these 1000s of climate scientists say this or that", that's the body they're talking about is the IPCC. So they meet regularly, they have reports every five or so years. But on October the eighth 2018, they published, surprising everybody, they published a special report saying, "Oh, our previous predictions, were too generous. This is a more dire situation than even we thought it had been." And at that point, they were, you know, 97% sure that this was a human induced, and and if we didn't get our temperatures, drop our temperatures, two degrees by 2050. You know, we'd be in big trouble. I'll skip the details. But they recognized even that was too optimistic. And so they decided to put put out this special report on October the eighth. Now, I mentioned that date, because if you realize that that was about six months or so until the 2019 World Conference, there, I was sitting with that report saying, "Oh my gosh, this, how in the world can we have a World Conference that doesn't mention something as critical as this? And yet it's too late!" You know, you It needs a year for submissions, that, you know, the cutoff date of being June of 2018. And I've worked on one of the standing committees before and I know even they so that even Earth Stewardship Committee wouldn't have been able to react to this more dire call clear kind of clarion call from the IPCC. So what I did, being a high priest and I was going to go to World Conferences, I decided what I would do is draft a resolution for the high priests corm. Take it to them. And this resolution would be one directed to the First Presidency, basically, to investigate the significance of that October 8, IPCC report that they gave. So you got to the World Conference 2019. That's what happened in the High Priest quorum. High Priest they voted on it. Yes. And, and it went to the First Presidency and I should say, I wanted to go to the First Presidency because I didn't want it to go to the floor yet. I mean, I'm, I'm very strong on, you know, democracy and and our theocratic democratic system. But I like smooth transition and dialogue. And, you know, the conference hadn't been prepared for that. So I thought, well, this will set it up for next time. In doing that at conference, then what happened was sort of a spontaneous emerging of a bunch of people who were also really concerned for a variety of reasons. And Susan, of course, with her

apostolic field and concern, was one of them. And there were a few others. And it just jelled. I basically had decided, well, while we wait for the First Presidency, let's, let's see if I can get a committee going while I'm here at World Conference. And lo and behold, you know, there were people just kind of chomping at the bit to do something. So I contacted Brad Martell, who had been quite involved in environmental and peace and justice issues, sat down with Laurie Gordon, who is spiritual formation, who is someone I would want on, on such a committee for her expertise. And then there was Susan, who I had previously known. And Joan Thompson from Canada East who's on the Standing High Council. So we basically formed this core committee of the people that I mentioned, along with eventually the Dean and Susie Wade, and the other members. It was it's a broader committee than that, but you can go up to our website that we'll be posting on the Project Zion website, to get the full committee, but during the so during the World Conference, it just emerged. Like I was surprised, I was so pleased, it was just the one of the greatest experiences I think I've had. And the main thing that I saw that excited me was everyone was passionate about this subject. And that's maintained itself. And that's why we originally were just going to do a weekend colloquy and then along, of course, got two thirds way through long came the pandemic, we decided to switch to online. So this committee that was just going to be sort of a six month gap until, you know, Earth Stewardship could sort of take over the reins and things. It then went this thing then went online. And you've just got the introduction from Brittany about what we've been doing since the summer, we've been having these monthly sessions. And and now we've got these kind of world class, climate scientists and other people coming in. So yeah, just things happen. It was amazing, fantastic, and very encouraging, and got a lot of good feedback from people saying, Oh, so grateful to see the church, you know, again, Earth Stewardship had done some great stuff. And at the 2019 conference, had this really good man, you will and things like that. But just to see even more action now was something I think a lot of people were looking for. So at the time that we got together there, World Conference kind of gathered around Rod as the touchstone and began talking about meeting virtually because we were scattered all over the United States and Canada at that point. And at the time that we began meeting and talking about, "well, yeah, let's talk about our concerns. Talk about what we want to do. You know, is there something that we can offer the church?" And we thought in terms of raising awareness, and possibly providing some educational resources. And then up came this idea of the colloquy which as Rod said, transformed into an online series of webinars, the conversations and then webinar. So as this develops, it just sort of emerged out of our concerns for climate justice. We began to find our place in the team and offer our skills and abilities in various ways to make all of that happen. And it was, I think, very much movement of the spirit that brought us together to share the specific expertise and abilities that we had on a team to make it actually work. And I personally was surprised to find out easily we all work together, how we blended our skills, and began to organize and function to make all of this happen. So it really was spirit blessed, and has been a blessing to all of us as we've got to know each other and share together, not just about climate, but also about our, our own concerns in lives and where we're going. As the pandemic hit, and we were concerned about relatives. It's been a blessing, I'm thrilled.

Brittany Mangelson 16:06

I have to say that this detail of how this team came together is something that I'm just finding out for the first time. And I am so impressed. I work with a lot of seekers with a lot of new members and Community of Christ and trying to get folks to understand that in Community of Christ, we want you to go after the mission, the ministry that you feel called to do. It's a little bit backwards from other

denominations or other organizations where you kind of wait around to be told what to do, or you know, there's a bunch of red tape, and there's a bunch of issues that you have to work through. And that's not to say that there's not, you know, there's none of that in Community of Christ. But the fact that you could say, this is something that is weighing heavily on my heart. And we have to start talking about it now. We can't wait until 2022 to start the conversation. We need it now. And you got a group together, and you brought your own personal skills and giftedness and interest to the conversation. And then you're creating things right? You're creating resources and having this conversation. Yes, Susan?

Rod Downing 17:16

And so at the beginning, we did not have a sponsor, we were just a bunch of church members that were meeting. And when we started actually wanting to do a colloquy first face to face, we thought whoops, we don't have authority to do this. So we very quickly since I live in the Greater Pacific Northwest mission center, and so did Susie and Dean White, and rods just north of us. I went to the mission center leadership in my own mission center and said, Here's what's happened. Here's who we are, this is what we'd like to do. Can we take us under your wing as a ministry of the Greater Pacific Northwest mission center. And they graciously said, Sure. And then I pushed a little further and said, and can you set us up with a budget line in case we have to have some expenses and raise some money and all that? Sure. So we got official permission, talk to the apostle, even wrote to Steve Veazey, and got a wonderful, wonderful leadership support all up and down the line.

Brittany Mangelson 18:26

I love hearing this again, this is just, this is, this is how Community of Christ works best, right? This is liberating giftedness and seeing a need in the world seen a need of peace and justice and then just going after it and diving in and using God's Spirit and God's boundless love to just drive that. I just, I absolutely love this. It's it really is getting me going. This is great. So that's a little background about this group, this community of saints who are trying to make a difference in the world. So let's talk about this specific project. I'm very intrigued by this title of world class climate change scientists. I'm really curious to know how you made these connections, how you decided on what topics to explore just kind of the details of the actual colloquy series that is now going to be on the podcast?

Rod Downing 19:29

Sure, I'll start with that one. I mean, part of it was in terms of content, because I had been involved in that broad broad category of peace and justice, in my mind has always meant the environmental issues as integral to all of that. So you know, that's been 30 or 40 years. I've been working in, in various capacities, from writing to activist work and things. So I had a pretty good sense of the the various topics that at least I wanted to see. And so it's great, I just bring my ideas and to the to the team, and the team, they just such a such a gifted group, they augment, you know, it and, and fill in all, you know, any of the missing pieces, or suggest alternatives and things like that. So there was that element of choosing the topics in terms of finding the people. Again, it was a combination of luck, and just plain digging. I was or, I tend to be the type of person who's, who starts high, you know, reaches as high as possible. And so, I very much wanted someone from the IPCC itself. And then I thought, "Okay, well, I actually, within that would even prefer someone who was on one of their committees, and or who was an author of one of those major reports." Now, the reason for that is, is because climate change is a still a contentious issue with some people and it's just an overwhelming issue. And it's one that, you know,

there's just a lot one doesn't know about. So I wanted to start with someone who didn't matter who you were, where you were in the world, or whatever, you'd say, Well, now there is a top expert, you know, I can rely on what this person says. And in some ways, we were, were simply fortunate in finding out about it was Dr. Richard gammon, who kicked off that part of this series. And he was part of the IPCC wrote, co-authored the very first report. So he goes all the way back, and he's seen all the dynamics good and bad since then. So there was simply this wealth of information. So that was, that was simply a case where someone had either gone to something or saw it on Google, but that's how we've found a lot of our things. Occasionally, we have a contact, you know, a personal contact that we can go from there. But the idea was always in my mind that is this, this be the top people in the world that we can find, simply to put at rest any, any sense that oh, well, does this person really understand, you know? Oh, yeah, yeah, these people are all going to be the top some of the top people. And that just gives, you know, that's just to meet kind of common sense, you know, you want people to have the assurance, A and B, to be able to ask just about any question under the world, and they'll be able to answer it. Because we as a committee, we're not the experts. You know, like I say, I've worked 30-40 years in this stuff, and Oh, heavens, don't don't ask me these questions. I even if I didn't know I've probably forgotten 90% of it. And, and we do have some some good science qualified people on the committee. But that was sort of the reasoning behind our, our selection, we're not entirely finished our selection. There's like three or four more slots that we haven't nailed down yet. But anyway, we're well on our way to it, and I'm very excited for all of the people that we've selected so far. But if you want to add something to that, Susan? It's been, again, it's been a journey, connecting with people finding folks that were not only passionate and expert in their field, but also willing to donate their time and their energy to the committee, because we did not have funding to pay high stipends. And, and even if we had the money, oh, there are legal ramifications for giving stipends, and you know, all of that kind of thing. So we ask our, our experts to donate their time. And they have been willing, and eager to do that. Because they too, are passionate, and they want the word out. They want to reach as many people as possible so that we can build a network, a community of people interested, concerned and willing to make adjustments, and act for climate justice.

Brittany Mangelson 26:10

Again, I'm just so energized by this because not only did a little group of folks get together to have this conversation, but you were able to get top, world class top scientists, I think that sometimes in the ministries that I've been involved with, you know, I don't want to aim too high, because I don't want to be disappointed. But why not? Why not contact the top climate change scientists in the world? You never know, maybe they'll come on your colloquy. I'm just so impressed at the drive and the stamina and the ability that you have had to bring people together on this important topic. And again, politics aside, or money aside all the things that we, that can divide us or get in the way of these important conversations, it seems like you have really carved a way to bring people together without just without those divisions and just being able to actually have a conversation because this is something that needs to be talked about. So I'm I don't know, I'm just I'm singing your praises. I'm really impressed. This is great. I'm so I'm curious now, what types of topics? Are you exploring? What can our listeners when we get these experts on the podcast? And when we share the material that you've already created? What can we expect to learn about what what specific topics are you addressing?

Rod Downing 27:38

Sure. Well, first of all, when all else fails, go to our website. Everything is there. And, and, yes, a shout out to Emily Rose on our committee, she she put together a wonderful, wonderful site for us. We wanted to start with the basic science. And that's why we got Richard Gammon. We've already had him and so his talks are already up on the website, you can go watch them anytime you want. He's and appreciated Susan's comments. Yeah, we didn't want just we, yes, we wanted the best experts. But we also wanted people who are very relatable, who could speak, you know, just not Einsteinian formulas or something, you know, that would leave us dazed, and he was great. He's a really nice, really nice guy. But we wanted to start with basic science, because that's where it all started. And that's what we've got to keep our eyes on our all those carbon molecules up in the air, you know, we bring them down, or we we bring down the the, the the, the ratio of them and stabilize the climate at a lower level of carbon emissions. Or we don't, and we suffer the consequences. It's as simple as that, really. So that's why we wanted to start with the basic science. But there's a lot more to it and so actually coming up this time, and we may get into this in a moment, our next session is on is actually bringing in President Council of 12 of Ron Harmon and and others, Kate, Katie, Katie and Zac Harmon-McLaughlin, and such to talk about the faith implications. So it isn't, in other words, it isn't just All science is also discussions about, okay, what does this mean? And how does the faith our faith in such, bolster, or augment or help support this? or How are we to change perhaps as well? So there is that element to it. But for the most part, yes, it's it's science and other experts. So following that, for instance, in March, we bring in someone who spent most of their time in Africa on biodiversity, because that's a critical topic. I mean, just think, if all the bees if all the pollinators disappeared on the face of the earth, and by the way, the bees bumblebees are down 90%. And, you know, most species are significantly down. Now, this isn't all just because of climate change, but climate change plays a role in all of that. Remove that and what happens, you know, we're this interconnected network of life. And biodiversity really brings that home. And that's very critical to understanding climate change. As well, we have, for instance, the consequences, humanitarian consequences, such as Susan mentioned, you know, in some of her field areas, the waters are rising, and the low islands are being flooded, and they've had to move. In other areas, there's glaciers melting. And just a couple of days ago, one of the glaciers in the Himalayas caused that flood and killed a number of lives. Glaciers are also because they're melting, eventually going to dry up and some of those rivers that people are depend on, you know, so we wanted to look at some of the humanitarian impacts, both in those local areas, and what are they going to do in areas, for instance, where temperatures rise, and it becomes constant trope? Well, they're going to migrate. So there's issues of migration as well. And quite separately, issues and we're going to deal with this in a separate session, eco racism and issues such as that the more social side of things. Economics, politics, of course, are all part of it. Part of the problem, and part of the solution, this is enormous problem we feel, and this has been a bit of a mantra from day one. Susan, you can pipe in if you want to add anything on this, but a bit of a mantra is that, you know, gradual steps aren't going to get us there. We're way past that. We're already too far past the the easy route out. Minor steps are great for starting, but they aren't going to do it, we need overwhelming change. And that's why the economics and politics has to come in. It's not just personal change. It's that systemic change that's going to be required. So we're going to bring in people on that. And then a final, at least a final topic, and like I say there could be others is basically on human psychology. I think we've recognized with the rise of populism over the last few years, that oh, we have a harder time talking to each other than we thought on controversial issues. The word confirmation bias was never in my vocabulary, but it's pretty

mainstream now. So we have all these evolutionary processes, biases that we aren't even conscious of. So we thought, well, let's bring someone in and get them out in the open. That's, you know, I'm all about dialogue. To me dialogue is the one and only non violent, non coercive way to transform a situation. Now it's not always going to be possible. But dialogue definitely is going to be enhanced if we understand some of these biases and how they play in. So let's bring someone like that in as well. So that's the range that I hopefully, that gives you some idea of the range that we're looking at in terms of this. So one of our goals, besides education and awareness is also to help people become a little bit more comfortable and make the commitment to act. But some people will want to do some gradual slow changes in their own lifestyle, and that is as much as they can do, others will be able to jump in and do some advocacy with their municipal governments or, or beyond. Rod, maybe I could prompt you to share the level levels of action that you told us about and promoted. Help the hearers understand that there's different ways of becoming involved. Sure. Yeah, in you know, there's nothing new in the world, you know, anything that I'm going to talk about, it's not like I invented it, or anything like this. But but one of the helpful, I have a bunch of conceptual [inaudible] at least that's what I talk about. One of them is what I call the layers of peace. Now that goes back to Gandhi's songs of peace, but was, you know, has been North Americanized. And it's, it's quite simple, and they all should be simple, or someone probably doesn't know it well enough. So the layers of peace the fundamental, there is always inner peace. Without that essential layer of inner peace. And I see that I've seen this all the time, in protests and marches and things that I've been involved in, that there are those people that are grounded, and you can tell that they have this sense of inner peace, dignity, self respect, appreciation of beauty, and, and love and dignity and things like that. And, and then those that don't, they get angry, and they, you know, they do, they end up doing counterproductive things. So that layer of inner peace is actually quite critical. And that, of course, is one of the strengths, or should be one of the strengths of religion, is to help engender that sense of inner peace, because of God's Spirit, and its nurturing abilities and such. Next level is the inter personal level. And that, too, plays into these dynamics, because we got it. You know, even as a team, we've got to talk with each other. And when we're out in the world, we've got to share with each other. So you know, there are interpersonal skills, and some people are gifted with that. And that's where they should spend some of their focus, whereas others, their focus really should be on the intrapersonal. And then there's at the community level, some people are gifted at organizing things and putting stuff on, and then you go up to, in its simplest form, you know, it can be the national level and the global level and that's where other people, they are big picture people. And that's, you know, that's where their passion lies. So it's combination of getting people to recognize where their passion is, and also recognizing the necessity of the other layers, and the value of them and the value in having other people work in. You know, when I'm out on the front lines, I am so thankful for people who are doing pastoral care work and when I'm doing pastoral care work, I'm so thankful for someone who's out on the front lines, you know, that type of, well, valuing diversity! I think that's one of our enduring principles. And that's why I find these again, part of why I'm still in this church because it's got some really good anchors and a really good concepts. And there is an example.

Brittany Mangelson 36:48

So I'm so glad the way that you both articulated what you just shared, because I grew up in, I did not grow up in Community of Christ. And so my experience with faith and religion was very much, you know, this earth is a gift from God and we don't necessarily have to take a ton of care of it because you know, Jesus is coming back and it'll all be made right! And so I did not grow up with this idea that we

were supposed to be stewards over the earth and that we were interconnected in salvation here and now and so, which to be clear is very much not my personal theology anymore. But I think that it still is such an idea and a thought that runs through so many Christian's mind, it's like, well, we don't have to worry about that because Jesus is returning. And so we don't need to worry about these things that aren't impacting us today. And that also speaks of privilege, right? Because maybe we don't live on the coast or our island is not being flooded. And it's really, really easy to just ignore it, because it's not in our backyard yet. And so I really appreciate how you tied it into not only the Enduring Principles, but as an issue of justice and taking care of one another on this planet. And I really do think that in Community of Christ, our focus on the sacredness of creation is so foundational in how so much of our theology interplays with one another and our sense of community, because being a disciple means we take care of each other. And it means we take care of what we have, and we have one planet, we have, we don't have an unlimited amount of resources. And it's, it has completely shifted how I have seen my everyday life, how I've interacted with my neighbors. Just it this is this is really deep core theological stuff for me at this point in my life. And so I just really appreciate how you both married the gospel and our understanding of salvation, through things like the Enduring Principles and mission initiatives, etc, and marry that with climate change. And it really puts put some action to our theology. I'm really interested, Rod than what you said, this idea that, you know, we can take small individual steps, and Susan, you said that a lot of times, we feel like that's all we can do, and that there's different levels of advocacy. But in reality, if we want to make a difference, there needs to be systemic change. But I wonder if you could just share a little bit more about that. Because it, it doesn't sound like this can be one family caring, or one church caring, or even one country caring that we have to rally together as humanity worldwide and actually do something about that. So and maybe this is, you know, the purpose of this project, but now I'm like, What do we do? How do we do this? How do we create systemic change?

Rod Downing 42:55

Well, and I think we all find ourselves to some extent, or at least encounter that at some point where it does seem. So, once you started to grasp the scope of this issue, you know, air and water, you know, they know no national boundaries, the these are global dynamics that are that are taking place. So yes, how do you how do you address that aspect of it? And that is where we are basically, as a world, yes, we have this UN IPCC that puts out these reports and things and governments, the you know, we have the Paris Climate Change Accord, but it has no teeth to it. And and that's where we sit. So, you know, at that global level, well, it is at the end of the day, remains a something where in you build the political constituency. Where in your government, within democracies were invented, then your government feels either the pressure or the desire to push for these types of change. And you simply hope that that model works, but you don't stop there. It's been interesting. The environmental movement overall, has shifted focus. It hasn't taken focus on For that global level, but it recognizes that that goes at such a slow pace, that some of that focus has been shifted on to the city level, because it that is so much more agile at adjusting. And we think of it where most people live that's in the city, where do most businesses reside? It's in the city. So there's a lot of things that can be done at the municipal level, within cities around the world. And that's one of the areas where, for instance, even though there could be a bottleneck at the, at those global negotiations, well, all the most of the people in most of the industries that are sitting elsewhere, and you can affect an awful lot of change just by that. So that's just an example of one of the ways that huge that really, the environmental movement is trying to get around this. But the real goal has to remain addressing the systemic issues. And there, there are economists,

for instance, there's this notion of the cyclical economy, you're going to hear about that more and more, developing a cyclical economy that, you know, doesn't just take raw material, use it and throw it away, take raw material, use it and throw it away, but rather turns that into a cycle where things get reused and such. So there are a lot, I guess, that's the other point I want to make is, we're not alone. There are people all around the world. Some of them have been working for decades, some for years. But there are lots of organizations, and part of our role is simply to join them. And even on our website, we say part of our role is simply to donate to them. You know, the simplest thing, the best thing we can do sometimes is Jeez, that sounds so mundane, you got this massive problem, and you want me simply to donate? Well, that is one of the things that we can do to get rid of organizations. That's what's holding them back. So there's there's a whole variety of ways that these things can be addressed. But you're absolutely right, Brittany, personal things are essential, because they wake us up and in waking us up. First of all, they have their own impact. But secondly, they help us see with new eyes over time, but there is this other level that absolutely does need addressing as well. Susan, I don't know if you want to add to that.

Susan Oxley 48:05

Sometimes the systemic action is as simple as voting for a political candidate is aware and engaged in climate justice. But there's always the personal aspect that comes into anything that we do on a systemic level. We are wanting to write letters, contact our Congressman, impact the budget for you know, making differences in fossil fuel production, things like that. Anything that we do on a systemic level, we have to be also willing and aware that it's going to impact us personally. It means that when the system changes our lifestyle is going to change and we have to know that and be prepared for that and be on board with that. Because we can't write a letter to our Congressman, or elected official that's going to be behind climate change. And then when gas prices go up, or we have a new law that says you have to have a hybrid car by such and such a date, we can't then start protesting that, you know that that's not what we want to do. We want to keep on driving our gas guzzler. So they are tied together. We need to make do the activity and the advocacy to get the system to change, but we also have to recognize what it does to us personally in our consumerism, lifestyle, that has to be depressed. We have too many wants that we're trying to feed and we have to let go of those ones in order for the system change to really make a difference.

Brittany Mangelson 49:56

That is such an important point. I know that during the pandemic, I got really interested in the fast fashion industry and just seeing what our overconsumption of clothing is doing to the environment. And, again, environment, but also humanity. And realizing that I am part of that I can point to it and say, Well, this is an evil system. And then I look at my closet, and I say, "Ooh, Brittany, you have contributed to this, you know, look at where you're buying your clothes from, look at where they're made, look at how often you buy your clothes, look at how easily you, you know, donate them or toss them out." So if there were laws put in place that would really tighten that industry, I would be impacted. And, you know, I have tried to clean up my consumption habits and things around clothes and I've been been more mindful of it. But yeah, that that's an example of what you're talking about Susan, and that, you know, we can vote we can try to push for these changes, but then we have to accept that that means that our way of living and consuming and forgetting about things might change, too. So I really thank you for that. I really appreciate it. So you had shared about your website, and we will be sure to link the

website. So our listeners can go back and look at the things that you know, the presentations that you have on there already, and then get an idea of what's coming. But are there any other resources or things that we should be aware of? Before we dive into this new series, are there any other things that you would like us to make sure that we link or include or just anywhere that you can point our listeners to?

Rod Downing 51:44

Well, again, I like to mentioned the Earth Stewardship Committee, or team that's so that you can actually go on the World Church website, and they already have some resources, quite neat. Some of them are person, you know, some of the things we talked about, in general, they get very specific about in terms of what is some of the personal things that you can be doing right now? Take a look at your congregation. What are some of the things you can look at there? You know, you've got heating systems, and, and, you know, your insulation and, and, and whatever. So, again, people have already got some good material out there. And Earth Stewardship is it's not out yet, but they are preparing more congregational resources. So it's more of a keep an eye out for that. So that would be the main thing I'd want to uphold at this point. In terms of augmenting things.

Brittany Mangelson 53:02

Susan?

Susan Oxley 53:02

I'd like to, I'd like to also mention that there are sites on line where you can go to figure out your own carbon footprint, and how your own lifestyle and the things you're doing impact the carbon emissions going into the atmosphere. If you go to the EPA, they have a carbon calculator, carbon footprint calculator, Nature Conservancy has a good one. There's a German one that is quite extensive. And it's down to do you brush your teeth with the water still running? I mean, it gets that detailed. The two that I've mentioned previously, EPA, and the Environment Protection Agency and the Nature Conservancy are simpler, easier to use, and they'll give you a pretty good clear snapshot of what you're doing with your daily life. impact the environment. So go online, look up carbon footprint, calculators, and have fun with it. You know, just explore, see what you think.

Brittany Mangelson 54:10

Yeah, oh, that sounds very interesting, but also a little bit scary. Being faced with your own consumption and your own habits, but again, that's that's what it's gonna take, I think for people to recognize their own personal impact on this topic, and then also spark them to want to help more systemic change. So thank you, and I'll see if I can find some and link them definitely below under this podcast because I do think that that's really, really important. So again, I just want to thank you for this conversation. I feel like my interest in this topic has definitely been sparked even a little bit more. And again, I'm like using big arm actions and saying like, Oh, I have all these ideas swirling in my head and it's I can see how it's really easy to get something going when you find a group of like minded people who are interested in this topic, and so I'm just again really impressed at the trajectory that this little core group of people has been able to propel this conversation and just the interest that it's had and the connections that you've been made that you have been able to make on a global scale. I'm, I'm

impressed. So I always like to end these things by just throwing it back to you to say, is there anything else that we missed that we didn't get to talk about that you would like to add any final words? Yeah?

Susan Oxley 55:38

I'll go first and let rod end with his, his wisdom. I just want to make a little bit of a theological statement. This is my own understanding and my own theology. But I believe this is the world God created. And God called it good. This is the world God loves. This is the world God sent God's Son, into, to redeem. That's how much God loves this world. And this is the world that God has offered us, for life, for breath for a future. And we are responsible for taking care of this world. I leave the afterlife, and the next world in God's hands. It's a mystery and I accept that I will participate in that other life in some way that only God knows. But in this world, I live and I have a responsibility. And I want to care for it. And I want to give it to my children and my grandchildren, and my great grandchildren in the best possible shape, so that they too can say at the end of their lives. This is the world God created. And God made it.

Rod Downing 57:18

Wow. And to that I think all I can really say is Amen. Who that, that that's a wonderful summary. I suppose the only thing I can say is just personally, I found that, well, it can be a little unnerving. And you almost want to back away from it. No, just dabble your toe in it. Gradually, I think you'll find, especially if you can do it with somebody else. your congregation would be a great example or your family or whatever. You can find it very energizing. And even find your sense of aligning yourself with God's good Spirit that Susan just shared about. And, you know, at the end of the day, it's sort of like Sally McFague said, "I want to be found on the side of life and its fulfillment." And this is one of the ways that we desperately need to, can do and can find it just incredibly rewarding. In in doing our part, we all have a part. Not overwhelming, no guilt. Just Yeah. uphold life, however you're able to. And I'd say amen.

Brittany Mangelson 59:06

Amen. As well, I, again, resonate with so much of what you both just shared and just want to make it crystal clear that that's my theology too, and that what we do in this life matters, and all of these theological conversations and speculations that we have about the afterlife, or this concept of salvation being something far off, and we don't have to worry about it now, I don't think that that's what God wants for us. And I don't think that that's what God wants for creation. And so I'm really grateful again, that you both were able to connect the, the spiritual and the temporal, if you will, and just bring about our understanding that all things are spiritual, and that this this matters now and it matters to God and it should matter to us so. So again, I just want to thank you both for sharing with us today. And I want to mention to our listeners, that again, you can go on our website that we'll be sure to link in the show notes below. But I want to just share that our first official episode of Climate Brewing will come later this month. And we will be talking with Dr. Gammon. So I am really, really thrilled for this series and this partnership and for all the things that we are going to be learning together. So again, thank you so much for being here and we look forward to learning more. Thank you.

Susan Oxley 1:00:29

Thank you.

Rod Downing 1:00:30

Thank you for having us. It was a joy speaking with you.

Josh Mangelson 1:00:42

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