



Environmental Theology

5 week course

How does our relationship to God shape our relationship to that which surrounds us?

Dates: Thursdays 20, 27 April, 4, 11, 18 May 2023: 6.30-9.00pm

Venue: Lindisfarne College of Theology

Church House, St John's Terrace, North Shields, NE29 6HS

Cost: £50.00

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By the second half of the twentieth century it was apparent that the unintended consequences of human activities were posing existential threats to other things we hold dear: flourishing nature, stable climates, clean food and air, and more.



One of the complicating features of this realisation is that these threats often do not manifest in the same place or at the same time as the human activities which give them rise. This has presented considerable difficulty for environmental activists; it is hard to motivate behavioural change when harms are distant or deferred.



Wherever we describe a place or system as threatened by human activities, we are noting an incompatibility between values. We cannot have a world of unlimited fossil fuel consumption without the effects of their emissions; nor can we have the cheap products of unregulated manufacturing without the destruction of nature and exploitative labour. Because we are increasingly aware of these consequences – although often in unclear or indirect ways – that awareness prompts reflection about what we value most, and what we are willing to risk as the unintended consequences of our daily lives.



This kind of self-reflection will serve as the entry point for our approach to environmental theology. Why do we value what we do, and what do our values have to do with our relationship to God? How is our theology manifested in our actions - which is to say, how does our theology affect the world, both near and far?



These reflective questions will be framed by a variety of readings and multiple approaches to environmental issues. We will spend time with theologians from the Global South and majority world; readings of feminist, liberation, and eco-theologies; and will also draw on Biblical scholars and historical theologians to explore traditional Christian understanding of the relationship between humanity and creation.



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