



## **Pastor and Church Engagement Guide**

Thank you for your interest in the Good Steward Campaign! We are excited to get you involved and find ways for you to bear witness publicly on behalf of the least of these who are suffering from the negative consequences of climate change.

The purpose of this document is to guide you through how to go about engaging your community pastors and churches in conversation about creation care. It is best and easiest to start with your own pastor and church, but a community can have more of an impact if several congregations come together.

### **WHY?**

First it's important to address – why are we asking you to meet with your local pastors and churches? Well, looking at the big picture, our churches are supposed to be the moral voice of our society. We are called to bear witness and care for God's world and the poor. What better way to do this than to meet with our churches' leaders face-to-face expressing our concerns?

### **HOW?**

Logistically, how do you set up meetings with community churches and pastors, and who do you want to talk to?

1. Identify local churches you want to reach out to. If you're working with a group, split up the churches to either individuals or pairs.
2. Reach out to the head pastor, assistant pastors or other church leaders. Start with an e-mail. A sample e-mail can be found on Page 3.
3. Follow-up with a phone call a day or two later.
4. Arrange a meeting that works for both your schedules.
5. Feel free to print out some copies of the [Good Steward Campaign one-pager](#) to use in the meeting.
6. Meet!

### **MEETING OUTLINE**

Below is an outline for a meeting. Adapt it for your particular circumstances.

- Thank the pastor/church leader for taking the time to meet
- Tell the pastor/church leader that you are there to speak about the Good Steward Campaign – something that is an important part of your faith. Before you get started, ask the pastor/church leader what he or she believes about the importance of protecting Creation.
- Thank the pastor/church leader for sharing his/her views. Describe what you came to talk about – creation care, environmental stewardship and specifically, climate change. Speak with conviction. Tell the pastor/church leader how much these issues matter to you and why.
- Ask the pastor/church leader-

- Will you preach/encourage your pastor to preach about creation care/the climate crisis?
- Can you share the sermon with the Good Steward Campaign?
- Are you willing to write a blog post for the Good Steward Campaign?

### **THEMES TO STRESS**

- Our central concern of the climate crisis is how it affects God's most vulnerable people, who are heavily impacted by pollution and climate change. This resonates with pastors and church leaders, many of whom are involved with ministry to the poor.
- We have a sense of urgency that doesn't exist among the general public. Climate change is an issue that is only going to get worse the longer we sit around accepting the status quo and we and our children are the ones that are going to have to suffer the consequences.
- Occasionally pastors have questions about the science behind climate change. Stress here that the respected scientific community is in complete consensus that the earth is warming and humans are the primary cause. While some people have tried to politicize the science, we believe, as Christians, that we need to take this science seriously – just as we take science seriously when we learn we or a loved one is suffering from a serious illness. It's not political. It's moral.
- Don't speak extensively to the science if you are unaware of all the details. If you want to be informed check out [www.skepticalscience.com](http://www.skepticalscience.com). Point them to that resource and other resources like our website and the books, videos and podcasts we point people to there.
- Talk about how investing in renewable energy will create jobs for Americans. Say that you are sad to see our country falling behind China, India and others in building an economy for the future because of a senseless political standoff. Note that you are confident that the market can create new jobs that create prosperity and protect the environment. Say that this is good news – that it can give people meaningful work, a way to serve God, and a way to support their family.

## Sample E-mail

Dear Pastor \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm writing on behalf of the [Good Steward Campaign](#), an initiative gathering Christians in several states, including North Carolina, to answer the Biblical call to care for God's creation and to protect the poor from the droughts and severe weather that are part of global warming. We need your help to make a difference.

A recent [study](#) revealed that 81% of young Christian adults are more likely to believe their religious leaders than any other source about global warming. As we confront the most crucial issue of our generation, your voice is critical.

Scripture tells us that "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it." (Ps. 24:1) As Christians we're called to be good stewards of creation, and the Good Steward Campaign has developed a number of resources to help congregations discuss and engage on these issues, such as:

- An exegetical [scripture guide](#) on creation care
- [Bible studies and lessons](#) on creation care for both adults and children
- A sermon/teaching visit to your church on good stewardship from a member of the Good Steward Campaign team, such as Rev. Richard Cizik, Rev. Mitch Hescox, and Rev. Jim Ball
- Free educational webinars and continuing education activities
- Tips on cutting down consumption in your church and home
- Opportunities for advocacy

**I would love to meet if you are available! Are you available [insert 2-3 dates/times]?** Please feel free to connect me with a member of your congregation or anyone else you think would be interested. I'll be in touch quickly to learn more about your interests and how we can work together!

Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you!

In Him,

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