

Social Service Department 2021

Rhona Theodore

Social Service aims to promote the welfare of others.



Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth

Genesis. 1:31 God saw all that He had made, and it was very good.

“The Social Services Department reaches out to the community and individuals who are neglected, suffering or in need, without any prejudice of race, religion, age or gender by sharing the love of Jesus Christ through giving our love and support”. WWCTU

Our World President, Margaret Ostenstad has expressed the opinion that we should include climate change/taking care of the environment in our WCTU agenda, while not forgetting our main work regarding alcohol and other drugs. By caring for the earth God made, we are caring for other people too and by abstaining from drugs and alcohol we create a better social and family environment free from financial crises, abuse, destruction devastation etc., while using the full potential of an individual for a better and happy world.

In our WWCTU planning we are basing much of our department work on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are a collection of 17 interlinked goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". The SDGs were set in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and are to be achieved by the year 2030 (another 9 years).

Sustainable Development Goals 12, 13, 14, 15 focus on “Saving the Earth” and there are many things we can do to reduce our negative impact on the beautiful world that God created for us.

Sustainable Development Goal 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production

This is about doing more and better with less. It is about promoting sustainable lifestyles, which can also contribute substantially to poverty alleviation and the transition towards low-carbon and green economies.

How do we respond? In the workplace and in the home:

Source suppliers carefully. Ensure the products are produced ethically. Read the information on each item.

Encourage reduce, reuse, recycle.

Remember every small change makes a huge impact over time.

Sustainable Development Goal 13 - Climate Change

Excerpts from the UN Sustainable Development Goals:

1. What is climate change? Goal No. 13

Climate is different from weather. When we talk about the Earth's climate, we are referring to the average weather conditions over a period of 30 years or longer. Weather, on the other hand, refers to what you see and feel outside from day to day (e.g., sunny, rainy).

So, climate change is any change in the climate, lasting for several decades or longer, including changes in temperature, rainfall or wind patterns.

Long-term air and ocean temperature records clearly show the Earth is warming. This might not sound like a lot, but 1.1°C represents a massive amount of extra heat and energy – the equivalent of four Hiroshima bomb detonations per second.

While the earth's climate has changed throughout history, scientists agree that the significant changes we've seen over the past hundred years or so have been due to human activities. Recent warming is also happening at a rate that is much faster than previous climatic changes.

2. What is causing climate change?

The short answer is **the excessive amount of greenhouse gases entering the Earth's atmosphere due to human activity is causing our climate to heat dramatically.**

But **since the Industrial Revolution, greenhouse gases have built up in the atmosphere**, leading to more heat being trapped close to the earth's surface. This is because Western civilisations began digging up and burning coal, oil and gas on a massive scale. At the same time, tree-clearing (deforestation) and the production of waste (landfill) also increased. All of these processes produce greenhouse gases.

Carbon dioxide is the most significant of all the greenhouse gases, followed by methane.

In 2019, carbon emissions rose to a new record. The year was also the second warmest year of all time. Now or never, we need to take climate action.

3. What can we do?

Reduce Food Waste

Each year, an estimated one third of all food produced - equivalent to 1.3 billion tonnes worth around \$1 trillion - ends up rotting in the bins of consumers and retailers or spoiling due to poor transportation and harvesting practices. Get a compost bin to turn your waste into good material for your garden.

Most of this wastage is due to cosmetic reasons – food being ugly, bruised, too small, too large, the wrong colour, but still very much edible. Let's learn to look past what we've been taught about the 'right' looking food and signal to our food producers that we will eat what is edible, regardless of appearance.

(In Woolworths Stores (where I shop) in the produce section - "the odd bunch" fruit and veggies. I purchase this regularly and find that it is just as good - but as it says - different sizes. I also look for and purchase 'specials'.) I am sure there are other places with similar produce.

When shopping for groceries - check 'use by' dates and if possible, avoid bulk buying of specials (this is false economy - as a good portion will end up in the bin).

Prepare meals (and freeze any leftovers). If possible, use glass containers that are reusable

LIFE UNDER WATER

The ocean covers **75% of our Earth** and is a home to over 200,000 species. And yet, approximately 40% of our precious water bodies are being affected by pollution.

Make Conscious Choices Every Day - wherever we are.

When hosting events, request facilities to provide jugs and glasses instead of bottled water.

In our homes use water wisely. If possible, have a small tank for rainwater - for the garden (this is a big saving).

Volunteer for Beach Clean-Ups / Support Marine Life Protection Projects

Join with our local councils, neighbours and friends and organise a beach/road/area clean-up day. It's a great way to do good and bond as a team.

Whether it's cleaning up beaches, protecting sea turtles, or preventing illegal shark trading, there is much we can do to stop the abuse of the oceans.

LIFE ON LAND

Remove Single-use in Your Business and at Home

Single-use and disposable should be the new bad words of this decade. While there is some justified use of single-use material such as in the medical field, here we are talking about convenience.

Convenience can no longer be an excuse for unnecessarily polluting our oceans, piling up landfills, and using precious raw material. Plastic production is extremely harmful to the environment: and according to the Centre for International Environmental Law, 'plastic is among the most significant and rapidly growing sources of industrial greenhouse gas emissions.

Reduce The Use of Harsh Chemicals in businesses and in the homes

Opt for more natural materials - they may seem to cost a tad more but using them indicates that we are serious in our endeavour. And it saves our planet.

The emergence of COVID-19 has underscored the relationship between people and nature - and revealed the fundamental tenets of the trade-off we consistently face: humans have unlimited needs, BUT our Planet has limited capacity to satisfy them. We must try to understand and appreciate the limits to which humans can push nature, before the impact is negative. Those limits must be reflected in our consumption and production patterns.

However, there are many benefits and positives during this time of lockdown. C-19 caused industrial activity to shut down and cancelled flights and other journeys, slashing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution around the world. If there is something positive to take from this terrible crisis, it could be that it's offered a taste of the air we might breathe in a low-carbon future. The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that about 3 million people die each year from ailments caused by air pollution, and that more than 80% of people living in urban areas are exposed to air quality levels that exceed safe limits. The situation is worse in low-income countries, where 98% of cities fail to meet WHO air quality standards. The ensuing lockdowns have shown the improvements to air quality that are possible when emissions are reduced on a global scale. This worldwide situation could show us how the future might look with less air pollution, or it may just indicate the scale of the challenge ahead. At the very least, it should challenge governments and businesses to consider how things can be done differently after the pandemic, to hold on to temporary improvements in air quality.

ACTION POINTS!

- **Save** electricity by plugging appliances into a power strip and turning them off completely when not in use, including the computer. **Turn off** the lights. Your TV or computer screen provides a cosy glow, so turn off other lights if you don't need them. *(If people worldwide switched to energy efficient light bulbs the world would save US\$120 billion annually.)*
- **Stop** paper bank statements and pay bills online or via mobile.
- **Share**, don't just "like." If you see an interesting social media post about women's rights or climate change, share it so folks in your network see it too.
- **Speak up! Lobby** our MPs. Ask your local and national authorities to engage in initiatives that don't harm people or the planet.
- **Stay informed.** Follow your local news and stay in touch with the Global Goals online or on social media.
- **Attend** seminars held by Council and other organisations.
- **invite** our friends and family to join us in small projects. Listen to their passion and work from that.



*And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them as their God.
Rev. 21:3*