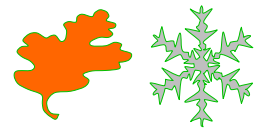


CREATION CARE



The World and all that is in it belong to the Lord, the Earth and all who live on it are His! –Ps 24:1

Northern Ohio District, Church of the Brethren, Stewardship Advocate, Clyde C. Fry, cceseven@embarqmail.com
Occasional Newsletter #26, Spring 2018, On the Web: nohcob.org, click: Resources, click: Creation Care



Spotted Trouble ALERT

The Spotted Lanternfly (Lyvcorma delicatula) is an invasive species from the far East. It is a “sap sucker” kind of bug that at-

tacks both woody and non-woody plants piercing the phloem (living tissue that transports the sugar sucrose throughout the plant). It is threatening the \$18 billion grape, orchard, and logging industries in neighboring Pennsylvania. The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that it will make \$17.5 million in emergency funding available in 2018 to fight the spread of the bug in Pa. and into neighboring states. The Spotted Lanternfly jumps more than it flies. It was first spotted in the U.S.A. in September 2014.

If you see anything that looks like the Spotted Lanternfly (pictured above) you should take a picture of it, collect a specimen and notify the Ohio State Ag department (614-728-6310) right away. ☺

Are you ANXIOUS? DEPRESSED?

What causes these feelings? –and what will address them?



Over 40 million people in the United States suffer from anxiety and depression. The causes are a matter of considerable debate. Below are a few comments about some of the insights involved in the discussion.

A graduate of the Ohio State University, John T. Cacioppo, Ph.D., founder and director of the *Center for Cognitive and Social Neuro-science* at the University of Chicago, teaches that our brains change as a result of how we live our lives as we confront the demands and tasks involved in our social and work environments. He goes on to point out that we need to think in terms of “social neuro-science”

meaning that our brains are primarily reshaped by social forces. Johann Hari, researcher and author writes, in the March 2018 issue of “*In These Times*” (p. 36) that the world’s leading social scientists find “overwhelming evidence that depression and anxiety are, to a significant degree, responses to deep social forces.” The statement takes me back to my college years in the 1950’s. There I learned that individual peace of mind depends upon ones feeling a sense of belonging, being valued, feeling secure in the present moment, and feeling hopeful for the future. These things provide a sense of reassurance which manifested itself in peace of mind and personal power. Notice that the list is social in nature.

The idea that social forces rather than biological forces are the primary cause of anxiety and depression stands in stark contrast to the brain chemical imbalance theories that came into prominence during the last part of the 20th Century where the emphasis was on “better living through chemistry.” Chemical imbalances such as the lack of serotonin took center stage as a cause of depression and medications became the favored treatment. Antidepressants came into common use, had many side effects, but took the edge off of the symptoms for some people. The treatments seldom resulted in a cure for non-pathological depressions however.

The United Nations world health day is held annually on April 7th. Last year it was devoted to the problem of world-wide human depression. The official statement promoting the emphasis pointed out that the “dominate bio-medical narrative of depression” was based on biased and selective research. It suggested that we would be better served to change the focus for the causes of depression from “chemical imbalances” to focusing more on “power imbalances.”



History is filled with the social and cultural struggles that overwhelm people and disrupt their lives. It is in these struggles that people end up feeling either impotent or empowered. Social and individual suppression by governments, businesses, and religions are the primary culprits in causing depression and anxiety.

It is also interesting to note that the treatment of disease is usually monetized and sold in various kinds of health consultations, products, treatments, and pills. Health becomes a matter between experts and clients emphasizing outside direction more than inside sensing. **Today, listening to our body and honing our activities and attitudes in harmony with its rhythms is gaining wider acceptance.**

Is disease only treated from the outside in? Is treatment only controlled and administered by professionals? Isn't the mind more than chemicals and electrical circuits? What about mind and spirit/soul?

In my theological training I learned that in those with a sensitive conscience, wrongdoing leads to guilt and guilt leads to inner turmoil. In an insensitive conscience wrongdoing leads to grudge-holding, feuding, and violence. In either case the inner disruptions create anger, depression, and anxiety which results in a feeling of dis-ease!



Spiritual insight paves the way for a mental balance and inner peace that

comes through faith in relationships: --with God through our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ; --through God's handiwork in creation; --through his earthly body, the Church; --through fellowship with all humanity.

John the Baptist opens the way forward with **"Repent and be baptized"** (Matthew 3). In John 14:27 Jesus promises to give us **his peace**; the kind of peace that takes away our upsets and worries. In Matthew 11:28-30, **Jesus joins us in a partnership** of burden carrying, lighter loads, and rest that will reenergize us. Philippians 4:6 assures us that **our dreams can be fulfilled**: *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."* In Matthew 6:24-34 Jesus tells us: *"Do not be anxious about your life"* **because our daily needs can be met.**

In John 16:33 Jesus says *"The world will make you suffer. Be brave! I have defeated the world!"* **It is important for us to know what we can control and what is out of our control and accept the reality of it. We must know WHO is ultimately in control and, by faith, embrace it.** Finally, we should understand that, in this moment we are earthly creatures of clay and, as Paul writes in Philippians 1:21, *"For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."* ☩



Which States in the U.S.A. are Happiest?

The annual Gallup-Sharecare **State of American Well-Being** studies have been finished for 2017. Ohio is listed in the 5th Quintile and is ranked 44th out of the 50 states – a very low score.



The studies involved more than 2.5 million surveys and attempts to capture how people feel about and experience their daily lives. The studies are based on five elements: **Purpose**: liking what you do each day and being motivated to achieve your goals.

Social: having supportive relationships and love in your life.

Financial: managing your economic life to reduce stress and increase security.

Community: liking where you live, feeling safe, and having pride in your community.

Physical: having good health and enough energy to get things done daily. ☩



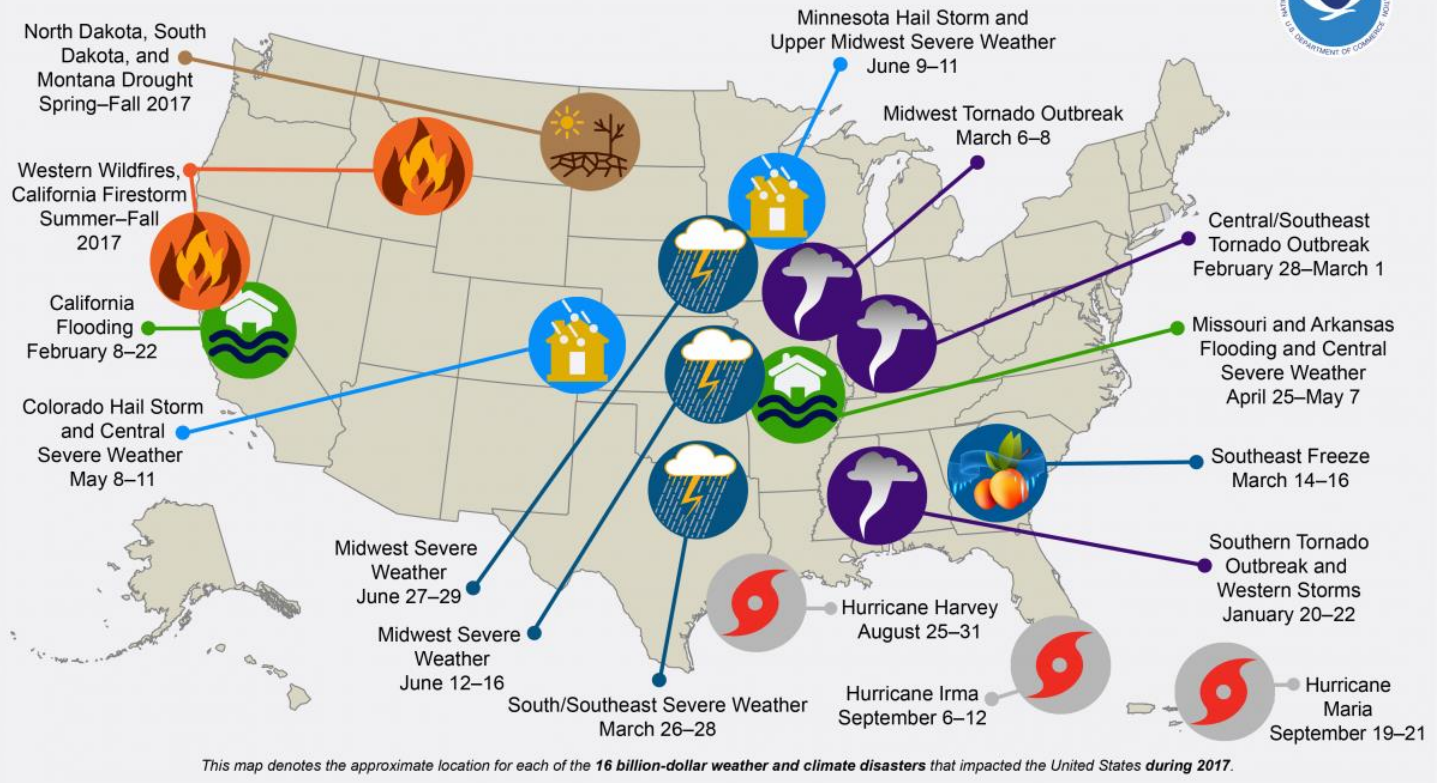
FAREWELL

On 2-2-18 almost 85% (thousands of acres) of the *Bears Ears* and *Grand Staircase-Escalante* national monuments in Utah were opened to private use for hard rock mining by the current administration in WDC. To stake a claim an individual or a business simply marks out as large as 20 acres, hammers four poles into the ground in each of its corners, attaches a description of the parcel to one of the poles, records the parcel with the *Bureau of Land Management* within 30 days, pays \$212 filing fee and an annual \$150 fee to maintain its claim. The Federal Government owns the land, but you own the mineral rights and are not required to pay any royalties on what you extract. This system is covered by the *General Mining Law of 1872* from the "gold rush" days. There are no environmental guidelines to follow in the mineral extraction process and no land restoration requirements. This precedent may also endanger other national parks that are under business/industry pressure.

Many people/politicians/businesses in Western States have long resented the establishment of national parks by the federal government. One argument is that the states should control and manage everything that falls within their borders. The counter argument is that a state is too small a unit and the vested interests there can be too overwhelming to protect the common good. We are the United States of America and vulnerable spaces and resources must be protected in the name of all the people.

The USA was the first country in the world to use its federal power to set aside and protect, from special interests, spectacular natural settings and their resources on behalf of all the people for perpetuity. Let's keep it that way! ☩

U.S. 2017 Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters



Devastating hurricanes and wildfires—fueled in part by anthropogenic climate change—contributed to more than \$300 billion in disaster-related damage across the United States last year, making 2017 the costliest year on record for extreme weather events, according to a government report released January 8th. ☹



200 Environmentalists Killed In 2016. 2017 Reports have not been tabulated yet

The United Kingdom based *Global Witness* group listed the names and locations of 200 environmental advocates who were killed around the world in 2016. The map above indicates the locations (red circles) and the size of the circle indicates the number killed.

John Knox, United Nations special rapporteur on human rights and the environment, told the *“The Guardian”* news: *“There is an epidemic now, a culture of impunity, a sense that anyone can kill environmental defenders without repercussions, eliminate anyone who stands in the way. It [comes from] mining, agribusiness, illegal logging and dam building.”* Many other environmentalists are facing threats, attacks, harassment, stigmatization, surveillance and

arrest. The United States has no documented deaths, but there is a marked increase in the hostile treatment of environmental protesters in settings like the indigenous-led protests of the *Dakota Access Pipeline* with the use of riot gear clad police, rubber bullets, water cannons, and tear-gas grenades. Although, as *Common Dreams* reported, these protests went on for several months, in a single night in November, 26 unarmed protesters were hospitalized and more than 300 were injured following a confrontation with law enforcement. (See the Spring 2017, page two).

Business friendly governments, like our new administration, tend to put economics before environment because economic returns are immediate and self-elating. Environmental change and destruction are often mired-down with confusing allegations and contested information, the sites are hidden from view and the destruction is often gradual. Appetite and instant gratification are hallmarks of the consumer ingrained society. **Earning money** (just return for effort) is often replaced with **making money** (leveraging the system with the use of political influence). ☹



National Climate Assessment Report



In 1990 the Congress passed a law requiring that a *National Climate Assessment* report should be made every four-years. The latest scientific assessment was released on November 3, 2017 without much fanfare. The White House response to these reports has been lukewarm regardless of party

affiliation. The Congress has been just as reluctant to address the climate change issues that the reports raise.

The 2017 report affirms that *"climate change is driven almost entirely by human action,"* warns of potential sea level rise as high as 8 feet by the year 2100, and enumerates myriad climate-related damages across the United states that are already occurring due to 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit of global warming since 1900.

The report is split into two documents. The **first** lays out the fundamental science underlying climate change calculations. The **second** shows how the United States is being impacted region by region. This section lays out the unprecedented increase in large rainfall events, wildfires, coastal and interior flooding. For example, more than 25 U.S. costal cities are experiencing regular high-tide flooding events that are affecting sea-side businesses and residences.

The current administration in WDC is pushing a renewal of fossil fuel use, especially coal, for economic reasons. They also recently put a steep tariff on imported solar panels which will, temporarily at least, put a dent on the huge growth of solar energy jobs and installations in the USA.



In the name of short-term economic stability, our nation is falling behind much of the world. Renewable energy is the future for social, economic and political stability. The sooner we learn that basic fact, the better off our future will be.

Like most new things, renewable energy will be expensive at first. For example, Saudi Arabia, on 2-5-2018, announced that a new 300 million solar plant will provide power for 200,000 homes. The United States must eliminate the money it wastes largely on national *"defense."*

Our nation has become a *warfare state* where over half of our taxes go, for wars past present and future, to the Pentagon, whose books are so corrupt that they have been un-auditable for over seven years! Our infrastructure is dilapidated and our social services are miserly and thin, and, since the recent deficit swelling tax cut and budget deal, will come under great pressure for even more cuts by the present Congress.

It is time for a realistic review of our national spending priorities and of the trillions we pay to support our constant meddling in the political and military affairs of other countries.



The war in Afghanistan (the longest continuous war in our history) is going so badly these days that the government has stopped issuing any statistics about it. We are also becoming mired down in the civil war in Syria. These involvements are not in our national interest. They simply eat-up money that we need here at home!

In world opinion, we are fast becoming a second-rate plutocracy whose only claim to fame is an overwhelming military technology whose costs are emaciating our response to a changing climate and the development of renewal energy sources and the new jobs they will create. ⊕



"How endless is that volume that God hath written of the world! Every creature is a letter, every day a new page."

Joseph Hall (1574-1656) was an English Bishop, a devotional writer, satirist, and moralist. In church politics he tended to seek a middle way between the extremes. He and his wife, Elizabeth, had six children. ⊕

SAVE OUR CHILDREN

A recent study of the *World Health Organization* (WHO) published in the *American Journal of Medicine* found that among the high-income nations, 91% of children younger than 15 who were killed by bullets, lived in the USA. On average, two dozen children are shot every day in the United States, and in 2016 more youths were killed by gunfire here in our nation (1,637) than during any previous year in this millennium. If you would like to have more information go to: gunviolencearcvhive.org. ⊕

TROUBLED WATERS – The National Academy of Sciences reported (2-12-18) that poor water quality is affecting as many as 45 million people (28% of the population) in the USA. Some years are better than others, depending on situations like flooding and water runoff. Incredible as it may seem, on 2-20-18, the Trump administration quietly rolled back certain protections provided by the *Clean Water Act* (1972) and the *Waters of the United States* rule (2015) covering 60% of our waters including re-allowing the dumping of chemically laced fracking waste into rivers and streams. ⊕

