

Say What | G-11 Climate Change Emergency Call to Action | JimAsh

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SPEAKERS

Kassie Ripsam, Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam, Jim Ash

Kassie Ripsam 00:20

Welcome to another Say What? podcast. Thank you for joining us today while we chat with Jim Ash, one of the authors of the G-11, Climate Change Emergency Call to Action resolution or Community of Christ World Conference in May 2025, and member of the Human Rights team for Community of Christ. Welcome Mr. Ash to Say What? Thank you for helping us understand the G-11 resolution. First, we have a few getting to know you questions.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 00:58

So, my first question is, would you survive a zombie apocalypse?

Jim Ash 01:06

I thought a lot about that. I don't believe I would.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 01:12

That is the first no we have gotten, believe it or not,

Jim Ash 01:18

I don't see how I don't see how anyone could. I mean, just given the definition of the fact that you can't ever stop a zombie,

Kassie Ripsam 01:29

He's not wrong.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 01:30

I mean, we've heard answers from faith in humanity to building a fortress, so

Jim Ash 01:40

I still don't think I'd survive.

Kassie Ripsam 01:41

I will.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 01:42

I get that, I honestly get that.

Kassie Ripsam 01:46

I don't know I am, would you?

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 01:52

That is a question I will have to think on personally.

Kassie Ripsam 01:57

So what part of a driver's test, would you most likely fail today

Jim Ash 02:06

Coming to a complete stop at a stop sign?

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 02:10

I like that. Why? Why? Why is that?

Jim Ash 02:14

Some would say it's because I grew up in California, and the definition of a California stop is that you just kind of slide up to it, look around and keep moving. Yeah, others would say that I'm a little bit urgent in my driving and so stopping, coming to a complete stop, just seems to me as a waste of time.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 02:39

Yeah, it's a yield sign. It's a yield sign.

Jim Ash 02:44

There you go.

Kassie Ripsam 02:45

So, do you talk to inanimate objects? Like, do you shout at your computer or your phone or bump into something and then, like, Oops, sorry.

Jim Ash 02:58

Doesn't everyone? I absolutely do. Sometimes it's to, it's to get it to explain to me what it's doing.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 03:08

Like, why are you doing that? I know I told you to do that, but why are you doing that?

Jim Ash 03:12

Exactly? Sometimes it's to explain to it what I wanted to do. And sometimes it's just, you know, I don't know, you walk into a room and you say, Well, what are you doing there? I thought I put you somewhere else,

Kassie Ripsam 03:29

Like, I'll drop something and just like, What are you doing?

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 03:34

And then, like, just ask the universe, where did I put that?

Jim Ash 03:40

I'm only, I'd only be afraid if the universe responded,

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 03:44

Yes. So, what is the weirdest dream you've ever had?

Jim Ash 03:53

That is a, that is a tough one, I think. I think it's because dreams are hard to remember. You know, after, a day, they're sort of gone, you know. And then you go to bed again and maybe have a dream, and that one's around for a day, and then it's kind of gone. I don't know how weird it is, but when I was not much older than you, I had a, I was in an automobile accident, and for four weeks after that, no matter what was happening in a dream something, something would happen. I'd drop something, or I'd bump into a doorway, and the sound of whatever that was in my dream was the sound of the automobile accident that I had been in. So, I put, like a put a coffee cup down on a saucer, and instead of it being a little chink, it would be this huge, you know, smashing of metal and whatnot.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 04:46

Wow, this sounds like some weird Roblox game or something.

Kassie Ripsam 04:50

It sounds weird. It's just sounds more like traumatization than a weird dream.

Jim Ash 04:55

Fair enough. Fair enough.

Kassie Ripsam 04:59

We'd love to ask you a couple of questions from your bio. So, you went to Graceland college for your law degree. What was your favorite part of the Graceland experience?

Jim Ash 05:11

So, I'm going to break that up a minute, because I actually, Graceland did not have a law school. I went to Graceland for part of my undergraduate degree, and then I went to UCLA to finish my undergraduate

degree, and then I went to UCLA law school. [Okay], okay, but I'm happy to answer the question, what was the best part about Graceland, and that was meeting my wife of now 48 years Pam,

Kassie Ripsam 05:41

That's awesome.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 05:42

I think mommy and daddy met at SPEC at Graceland, so...

Jim Ash 05:51

It's a great place.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 05:54

So, what advice would you give someone considering going into law?

Jim Ash 06:01

I'd advise them to make sure they understand the impact that a career as a lawyer can have on your personal relationships. So, there are lots of different things you can do with a law degree, lots of different ways you can be a lawyer, but all of them take a huge amount of time. And so just be aware of the fact that it is not a get up in the morning and go to work at nine o'clock and come home at five and have dinner. It's a job that runs depending on the kind of law you do, 24 hours a day. Europe, you know, Europe is six hours apart from us, and transactions can be all through the night. Clients tend to want you to work all the time, and every client believes that they are the most important client. And as a lawyer, you have to make them to think that they're right. And so, there's a lot of you can, you can end up sacrificing a lot of time with family and time for other things in your life if you're not careful.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 07:09

Yeah, um, honestly, I can, I can see how that would work. The be on hold, having to work long hours, very, very long hours. And honestly, just watching movies, I can get, I can get that thing of everybody thinks they're the, the most important client, and then I hear... okay, I have an extra, I have an extra question. Talking about clients who think they are the most important client, do you have any crazy or annoying stories, or just funny stories from clients? You don't have to name names or anything.

Jim Ash 07:54

I have lots of annoying stories. I don't know about funny stories. I had a, I had a person one time throw a chair at me. [Oh, wow], that was annoying. I, let's see, I've had a lot of interesting stories. I one time had a worked on a transaction where I happen to, I don't as well as I used to, but I speak Spanish, and I was on a working on a transaction down in Miami, and all of the support staff in the building were many of them Cuban, but all of them Latino, and they all spoke Spanish, but didn't know that I spoke Spanish, and so they would tell stories about where they worked and tell stories about the people there and about what was happening around them that I probably shouldn't know, and they didn't understand that I was understanding everything until we were done, we were leaving. I'd been down there for many weeks, on and off, and I simply went around each one of them as we were thanking them, and we'd

say, thank you. You know, I hope this works out well. And then I would say it in Spanish. I would say, muchas gracias And just watching their eyes get the size of saucers with kind of a thing.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 09:20

That is a funny story.

Kassie Ripsam 09:22

What are your responsibilities as part of the Human Rights Team in the Community of Christ Church?

Jim Ash 09:31

So, the team is appointed by the First Presidency, and it, it exists is so it's, it's repopulated every few years, right? And it exists to continue to raise awareness within the church of human rights issues around the world. So, all of us on the, on the group, and there's 15 or 20, bring to it a different background or a different aspect. We have people on the team who are indigenous people to North America. We have people that are non-white cultures. And so, our job is to, as a group, think about human rights issues and raise awareness of them to the First Presidency, and we're given a pretty broad latitude to do that. So, we've broken up this time into subcommittees. And we have a subcommittee that's working on gender justice issues, we have a subcommittee that's working on violence/anti-violence issues, and then we have the subgroup that I was on that specifically led to the legislation that we're going to talk about with you guys, and that is the legislation on climate crisis and refugees.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 10:48

Interesting.

Kassie Ripsam 10:51

So, you've worked in law for over 40 years, and we're highly regarded for your ability to understand the human side of transactions and keep peace during stressful negotiations. Tell us more about your ability to understand the human side of transactions.

Jim Ash 11:09

I learned early on that every transaction is about people, whether it's someone needing something, they physically need to buy something, or to or to sell something, or it's their ego, or their boss has told them to do it, and so they think their job is on the line, or it's their family business, and they have siblings and parents and children who are also involved in what's happening. Everything is about the people, and if I can understand the motivation of the people, then I can help get done what it is that they really need done, not necessarily what they're telling me they need done, but what is it that they really are trying to accomplish and we find a way to do that.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 12:00

I think it's something similar, like I saw this video on Brain Games. It's a brain series I love to watch, and it showed a video of people that were just shouting, and I don't remember if they were saying, like, actual words, but they were clearly angry. And so made you rethink it. Like this one person, his

daughter is in the hospital. This other one just got divorced and things like that, where they have a reason to be so angry, or they have a reason to have the mood that they're in right now.

Kassie Ripsam 12:43

And then you weren't upset anymore with them shouting at you. You were just, you just felt sorry for them instead.

Jim Ash 12:51

It's exactly right. I mean, the issue is, and people do in in the legal world, get upset and get anxious and get angry and it's because something else is going on. And if we can identify what that something else is, then if I can bring something to bear to help that, then what I'm trying to accomplish in the legal part goes very smoothly.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 13:16

How is your law experience similar or different to your involvement in human right, for human rights.

Jim Ash 13:28

For me personally, I think they're different, and they're different in this way, my work, my profession, was very hands on. I met with people all the time. I talked to people all the time. I sent emails. You know, I had individual communication. It was very hands on. My work with human rights has been much more academic, much more distant. I'm not someone who goes to the place where people are struggling in their lives and brings food and support to them. My work in human rights has been much more at the academic level, at the lobbying level, at the dealing with the federal government and its agencies.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 14:12

So, it's the difference between how you're interacting with the people that you're dealing with, or not interacting with the people.

Jim Ash 14:20

Yeah, I think that's exactly right.

Kassie Ripsam 14:24

I personally am curious as to it. Are there any similarities?

Jim Ash 14:34

Yeah, there are some. One of the things that that a lawyer does is tries to break down a difficult topic into smaller, manageable pieces, right? Otherwise, you just get lost in worrying about the big top and so doing that with human rights issues is helpful. If you're in a meeting and people aren't, they're kind of talking all around, they can't quite figure out what to do. It's helpful to kind of, to say to them, let's, why don't we just stop for a minute? Let's kind of take this, break it down into manageable pieces, and see what we can deal with. Maybe there are parts we can't deal with, and we should put those aside so that we can actually focus on some things that we can accomplish.

Kassie Ripsam 15:16

So, it seems you're really, really good with people, and that is obviously helpful with your work in human rights. Would you say that that's a trait that comes from your lawyer degree, or that's something that you were taught early on?

Jim Ash 15:36

Well, first of all, that's very nice of you to say, I don't think, I don't think you learn in law school and it, I don't think you learn it a lot dealing with a lot of the people you have to deal with as a lawyer. I think I've learned it more and more from my wife, who is a social worker and continues to think about the personal or the individual aspect of things. I think I've learned it from being active in my church, which calls me to be willing to be vulnerable to other people, to stop and listen and hear their story, and give them a place that is, for them as important as any place else. So, I don't think you'd learn it necessarily from being a lawyer. I think it comes from other aspects of your life, and then you apply it to being a lawyer.

Kassie Ripsam 16:32

I mostly asked because I don't think I could have dealt with that situation if you gave an example of throwing a chair.

Jim Ash 16:41

Well, it was, it helped that he then stormed out of the room. So that was kind of helpful. But, you know, I think what you have to do is just, so I, there I was sitting there with my clients around me, and the other side, and it was a person on the other side. Thank goodness. Got that angry, not my own client. And he stood up, got angry, picked up the chair, kind of threw it at the wall. We kind of, you know, dodged it. And then I simply turned to my clients, without kind of trying to engage his side, who were, I think they were genuinely embarrassed by his activity. And I simply said, "Well, gosh, that really wasn't very productive." It was not, but I think it helped break the tension, right? I could have yelled and screamed, and then everybody would have been yelling and screaming, yeah. So, I think it helps to just, you know, say I get it, he's mad about something, yeah, and try not to take it personal.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 17:41

Yeah. So, you were appointed by President Obama to the Board for International Food and Agriculture Development. How did this experience affect and mold you to be on the human rights team?

Jim Ash 17:58

It was a wonderful experience, and it helped me in two ways. One way was, it gave me access to an amazing, people who are amazing, people who had won the World Food Prize. One of the people on the on the board with me is the man who developed the world seed bank up in Northern Norway that houses one, at least one, of every variety of edible plant on the earth, [wow] and keeps them in a cave dug into a frozen mountain, so that they are constantly at a temperature that protects them in case there's a zombie apocalypse. And, to people who were involved in huge foundations, the Gates Foundation and others. And then it also gave me access to pretty much all of the resources that of the United States government in USA, USAID, USA International Development. So, it opened my eyes. Gave me an, gave me insights to things that you know most people don't get, and also made me

realize how many really well meaning, really thoughtful people are working hard to deal with the issues of the world hunger.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 19:43

Honestly, that sounds like, I kind of want to go to that cave now. That's, like, really interesting.

Jim Ash 19:50

It's called Svalbard, and you can, you can look it up and go there. Well, you can't go there. There are more polar bears on this island than there are people.

Kassie Ripsam 20:02

Wow. Uh, I think it's amazing that those needy people that you mentioned were working towards trying to help, not just what they needed, but what other people in the same situation would need as well.

Jim Ash 20:22

It is, it is amazing, and I think it speaks to the best nature of humans. When you see people who are struggling themselves and their own families living in countries where there's devastating hunger, and yet they're working to eradicate hunger elsewhere, right? It's not a selfish thing for them. It's not I'm hungry, my family's hungry. Let's figure this out. It's I'm hungry, and I know what that means, and I don't want anybody else to experience this.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 20:57

That is beautiful, honestly, and beautiful, and that kind of experience, like I have gone through hard times, and like you said, I don't want anybody else to have to go through it, like it applies in other things as well, from therapy to lots of other things as well.

Kassie Ripsam 21:19

Adoption, the foster care system, stuff like that, and, yeah, therapy that people have gone through and then gone into.

Jim Ash 21:33

it's not uncommon. It's not common. But you know, it is it's really heartening to see in others, right? To see, you know, people who say, I've been, I have survived this, and I will help others, because I know, I know survival is possible.

Kassie Ripsam 21:53

So, the reason we wanted to interview you was because you helped write the G-11 resolution Climate Change Emergency Call to Action for the upcoming World Conference. So, let's talk about that. First, we'd like to acknowledge that both you and Zach Weaver co-authored this resolution. We've chatted with you briefly about your past, so we'd like to take a moment and read the brief bio that Mr. Weaver sent us. Says, I'm based just outside Manchester, England, working as a solicitor advocate. I joined the HR team with a view to provide, providing a European viewpoint from a younger perspective, but also

to challenge my own engagement as a baptized member of Community of Christ, having been fortunate enough to serve on the previous team on non-violence, and having taken so much from this.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 22:52

So first, we would like to summarize G-11 for our listening audience, but we don't want to do it a disservice to the authors, you and Mr. Weaver, so please feel free to elaborate if we narrow the multiple parts too briefly.

Jim Ash 23:08

Well, thanks, Mary Anne, before you go on, I just want to make clear, it's probably fair to say that Zach and I brought together the words that you are going to talk about, but we had a subcommittee that all of us worked together to build what it is that we talked about. So, we might have, we might have pulled words together and helped kind of bring ideas more concretely. But I think Zach would not want, nor would I want to be sort of called the co-authors and not give credit to everybody on the subcommittee.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 23:45

Would we be correct if we were to summarize, summarize G-11 in this way, as a Community of Christ, members, congregations, Mission centers, regions and their national church actively respond to the climate emergency by developing study material and discussion resources regarding climate change and its effects on human rights, and the church declaring its support of laws, policies, and international coordination, including UN treaties that recognize refugee status of people who are forced homeless or country-less due to climate change, asking the First Presidency to be responsible to adopt further reports and statements to represent as legislation at the 2028 World Conference. Lastly, we asked the First Presidency to direct a body to develop an intergenerational educational curriculum designed to raise awareness and to promote ways to respond to the climate change.

Jim Ash 24:52

I think that's a very fair summarization.

Kassie Ripsam 24:55

So, we love the background statement given for the G-11, for the resolution. For our listening audience, could you give a summarization?

Jim Ash 25:06

I'll do my best. So, we believe that creation is sacred, not just the biosphere part of it, not just the animal/people part of it, but all of it is sacred and so and it's in crisis. There are, you know, there's the animal part to it, there's the ocean part to it, there's the land part to it, there's the air part to it, and there's the ice cap part to it. Those, those parts make up everything that we see as creation, right? The earth and what it has. And they're all in balance. But when one part starts to get out of balance, then the whole thing starts to spin, you know, wobbly, and it gets more and more out of balance. And then, then other parts get out of balance. Then it spins even more wobbly, and sooner or later, zombie apocalypse. So, when we believe that everything is starting to get out of balance, then we have to, we have to raise our voices, and we have to do it individually and collectively. We have to raise awareness so that everybody will be thinking about the issue. But we also have to take action. We can't just stand

on the street corner and rail against the rain. We have to take action, and we have to encourage other people to take action. As is stated in the background statement, one of the Community of Christ recent revelations, says that we should pursue peace on and for the earth. So, the “on” part is how people deal with each other, but the “for” part is about recognizing that the Earth itself is sacred. And so just as we oppose violence against persons, we have to oppose the violence that is happening against the environment.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 27:13

So, it's basically about not just recognizing, but fully realizing how sacred this earth is, and if we keep heading in this direction, is this just going to get way worse 2000 years from now.

Kassie Ripsam 27:30

It's maybe not even 2000.

Jim Ash 27:31

Yeah, I don't want to, you know, I don't want to scare your listeners. I don't have many years. I don't have that many years left in my life. But there are projections from the UN that say we'll have twice as many, right now we have 200 some million people dealing with being homeless or country-less as a result of climate change. And the UN is some, some in the UN projected by 2050, so that's certainly within your lifetime.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 28:02

Yeah, it feels distant. But, I mean, we just watched a movie and it mentioned, though water levels rising and coastal communities disappearing and being underwater, we live in Florida, so like a lot of the communities in America are settled on the coast.

Jim Ash 28:29

Mostly more so and more so in other parts of the world, yeah, Bangladesh has lost hundreds of 1000s of hectares of tillable land that now can't grow the rice that it used to grow because the salt waters have invaded it. So, any low-lying place is in danger. And it's not just the rising sea levels. Hurricanes and typhoons come from warm water. [Oh, yeah] right? And so, as the temperature of the ocean rises. Gee, have there been more hurricanes across Florida in the last couple of years?

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 29:09

They seem to have gotten more clustered together.

Jim Ash 29:13

Yeah. I think it's easy for people to say, oh, yeah, maybe it's getting a little warmer, but, you know, who cares? Or it doesn't snow as much as it used to, but who cares? Well, we're going to care. In a few years, we're going to start caring a lot more the climate change is easy to put into a local situation and say, well, it's not really bothering me, or it's not really changing anything here, but when you think about it as it doesn't, it isn't always just things getting hotter. Sometimes it's places getting cold. It's not always places getting wetter. Sometimes it's places getting more dry, and the droughts that are becoming harder droughts, deeper droughts, and frequently across Sub Saharan Africa, where hundreds of

millions of people live, are just as difficult, just as hard for people to live with as the flooding that's happening in other places of the world.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 30:11

I mean, the water's gotta go somewhere.

Jim Ash 30:13

Gotta go somewhere.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 30:15

What prompted your team to write a resolution calling the church to action.

Jim Ash 30:22

This was the one topic that the First Presidency asked the Human Rights team to specifically address for the upcoming World Conference, the issue of refugees as a result of climate, the climate crisis.

Kassie Ripsam 30:37

That's interesting. Specifically, the presidency asked you to do this.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 30:46

Yeah, that's kind of that's kind of cool personally, like most of the resolutions are presented by the congregations and mission centers. So, it's interesting to know that the First Presidency asked you guys to do this,

Jim Ash 31:04

I think it shows a real awareness at the leadership level of the Church of the human impact of climate change. We can all talk about climate change, and we can all say that it needs to be fixed and we need to do things about it. But, you know, I think one of the unique things about Community of Christ church is it is very human-focused. So, I think the First Presidency had that view that this is a human issue, and we need to deal with it in that way.

Kassie Ripsam 31:34

My thought process, similarly, is that we can sit and talk about whatever we want to, but that doesn't do anything. We have to actually do something.

Jim Ash 31:47

We have to actually do something.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 31:51

Kind of reminds me that song, yes, I'm Gonna Do Something.

Kassie Ripsam 31:59

Um, what do you think is most important for people to know about this resolution?

Jim Ash 32:08

So specifically in the resolution, we talk about the church and its members supporting in their various jurisdictions, legal steps to recognize climate refugees for amnesty purposes. I think people don't understand that. People don't understand that there are hundreds of millions of people moving either within their country or looking, having to leave their country, go across borders as a result of what's happened from climate crisis to them, and they get to a border of another country, and they get turned away. They can't say, Well, I'm coming because my faith is being, you know, people in my faith are being harmed in my home country, or I'm coming because the cartels have taken over my city, or I'm, I'm coming because I believe in this particular kind of politics, and the government, my government doesn't, so I'm trying to escape that persecution, right? That's pretty much recognized around the world for amnesty purposes. So come into our country to, we'll let you into our country so that you don't have to live with that, that terrible thing in your life. But we don't recognize the fact that people lose their homes and their farms and their livelihood because of climate change, and then have to leave and come to a border, and they can't say it's because of their religion or because of their color, or their tribal status, or whatever, they simply say, we got flooded and we're never going to be able to go back there, or we've had a drought for the last five years, and nothing will ever grow where we're used to growing. They come to the border and they, and they're met with, sorry, go home. So, we specifically say in the legislation that we, in countries like the United States, but in other places in the world, need to be talking about that legal and political answer those people should be recognized as legitimate international refugees and dealt with in the same way as people escaping persecution for other reasons.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 34:25

Yeah, I read a graphic novel about a woman and her son who got stuck on the border. Think it was between America and Canada, and couldn't go either way, just that fact that they got stuck and they couldn't go either way was kind of powerful for me.

Jim Ash 34:45

I think our legislation tries to get people to realize that's not a political issue. It's a humanitarian issue. There these people are, they've lost everything. They can't go back because there's nothing to go back to. Countries either need to think about ways to provide them safe passage to where they need to get, protect them along the way as they travel. Remember, these people have left, have lost everything in many respects, and they're very vulnerable to violence along the way, and they don't have food, so they're vulnerable to disease and starvation along the way. So, I think our legislation tries to raise awareness, particularly in the Western cultures, of the plight that these refugees suffer. Very interesting.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 35:36

So how do you think your work in law affected the way you helped write G-11?

Jim Ash 35:43

I think it, it helped us as a group, focus on that, on these legal and international border issues, and the political, where the law and the politics kind of overlap, and this issue of building international protection for people that have been forced away from their homeland as a result of the climate crisis.

Kassie Ripsam 36:07

If this resolution passes, which action do you feel is the most important step for the church to take right now to address the climate crisis?

Jim Ash 36:20

I know I sound like I'm a broken record here, but I think the most important thing right now is for the church to join with other organizations that are saying these people that are being forced out of their homes as a result of climate change should be seen with the humanitarian, through the humanitarian lens, just like people who are escaping persecution and violence, both groups can't stay where they are safely, they must move. They should be allowed the same rights and privileges in that regard,

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 36:55

If there's no food where they are, that's even animal instinct. If there's no food, they move.

Jim Ash 37:01

Exactly right. That's exactly right.

Kassie Ripsam 37:04

I agree with you. Broken record or No, I absolutely agree that is a serious problem that needs to be addressed.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 37:19

Your support statement said the mission prayer partly inspired this resolution. What aspects of the prayer influenced you and your team and how do they impact the resolution?

Jim Ash 37:32

So, there's a phrase in the mission prayer that says, "Help me be fully awake," and to us that meant, stop. You know, sticking our head in the sand like an ostrich. Stop ignoring the fact that the climate crisis exists. Stop ignoring the fact that, while we may not, we in North America, we in more developed countries may not have feel it immediately. Help me be fully awake to the fact that there are hundreds of millions of other souls on the earth that every day are dealing with the impact of the climate crisis. I think that was the part, help me be fully awake and help me find ways to respond.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 38:16

Yeah, just right now we got we got our eyes half closed, where we're kind of acknowledging that this exists. Most of us are acknowledging that this exists, but we're not really like doing anything about it.

Kassie Ripsam 38:27

So, which parts of the resolution were directly influenced by that, or is it just like the Mission Prayer kind of broader helped you with the idea.

Jim Ash 38:41

I'd say, I'd say the latter. It's the Mission Prayer, in that respect, is a call to action, right? It's called the mission. And so, our resolution has several things in it that are calls to action. One of them is, is right now, let's, let's raise this issue of the plight of refugees and international law. But also, let's act in a way that is responsible in educating others about this issue. Let's raise the awareness. Help me be fully awake. Let's raise the awareness within the church and elsewhere of climate change, of the impact it's having on the food world, food issues and on violence, just as a brief note, we read about or see in the news, groups in Sub Saharan Africa that are recruiting young people to be fighters, to have a gun, to go kill people, and one of the reasons they can recruit them is because they can feed them. And so, if you have a choice of starving or being fed, and the people who are feeding you are telling you, well, here's what you need to do to continue to be fed. And the ripple effect of this issue, of climate change and what is happening, what it's doing to the world food supply. It isn't, and I don't want to say "just" people not having food, because that's a horrible condition, but it's these other things that happen as a result. So fully aware, fully awake means understand all the ramifications of this and what it's doing to the sacred creation.

Kassie Ripsam 40:21

So, you mentioned in your resolution that you hope to get a curriculum designed to raise awareness for the climate crisis. What do you hope that that looks like?

Jim Ash 40:31

I hope, first of all, that it is realistic and honest, that it's not just academic, that it includes some practicum, that it includes some real-life things to learn from given today's world. I hope it is multimedia. I hope it includes social, you know, social network awareness. I hope it includes all kinds of things that will reach people differently. So, you know, I hope it includes some gaming. I hope it includes things that will reach people that we need to reach. I mean, I've only got so many years left to do this. The people that we need to reach are people, I think, your audience that has many, many more years left, and we'll think of all kinds of different solutions that my generation hasn't thought of. So, I hope the curriculum recognizes that.

Kassie Ripsam 41:27

Personally, when I think of this, you started talking, and I wasn't, I wasn't sure what I expected, but I definitely got more than I expect. Seeing as that coming into this, the only thing I knew about global warming was that carbons going into the air, melting the ice caps and those sea levels rising. That's pretty much the most I knew. I didn't know that all that, all the rest of this is happening, really. And so, I hope that whatever this curriculum is, it could go deep into all of the effects of global warming, instead of just glazing over the surface, as much curriculums tend to do.

Jim Ash 42:15

I think that's exactly right. A good example is you just mentioned. A lot of people think it is true that the ozone layer is there's a hole in the ozone, we're getting warmer. The ice caps are melting, and the ice caps are melting so that ice is becoming liquid, and it's, you know, raising the sea level, right? But what they don't recognize is that as the polar ice caps melt, the polar ice caps help to reflect radiation from the sun. As that, as the polar ice caps get smaller, more and more of the sun's radiation hits the part of the earth that it can warm. So, when I mentioned earlier that there were these different spheres, there's

the land mass, the human animal part the biosphere, the plant animal, right? The Rock part, the actual Earth itself, you know, the dirt of the Earth, the oceans, all of them interact. And when the ice cap gets smaller, the radiation comes in. The radiation comes in. It makes some plants go away. It makes more air, more water to fall ... rain. Some places less water to fall ... drought. Other places, people don't realize that when places that didn't used to be wet get wet, then more and more insect populations invade. There are more diseases, cholera, dysentery, things that come from water that is now contaminated. It's happening in Florida, contaminated water just to take it home for you guys. So, to your point, Kassie, I hope you're right. I hope that the curriculum helps people understand all of this interconnectivity.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 44:05

I think the people that don't know that the more water there is, the more insects there are, don't live in Florida. We have like a giant mosquito population.

Kassie Ripsam 44:18

So, this caught my eye when you say the right to a healthy environment is the missing jewel in the crown of human rights. What exactly do you mean?

Jim Ash 44:32

Yeah, so that's a great question. I think what we mean is a couple of things. One, so the, you know, we talk about the fundamental human rights, the right to food, the right to shelter, right? the right to safety. If you think about those as the building block, then one of the top ones is, okay, you've been fed, you've been housed, and, right? you're physically safe, but now you need an environment in which you can thrive, certain [inalienable rights]. There you go. There you go. So just surviving isn't what we think our creator had in mind for our part of creation, the part that walks and talks. We think our creator wants that part to thrive and to grow and to grow, you know, up with a fuller understanding of the creator's love for us. If all you're getting is food, shelter and clothing, that's great. That's, those are basic. But then you need an environment that allows you to thrive, and that is an environment in which things are in balance and the Earth isn't, isn't dying around you,

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 45:59

Even animals in zoos. Sure, they get food, clothes, they get, not clothing, food and water, but they have to have that natural feeling environment, if not entirely natural environment. Otherwise, it's considered animal cruelty. So, the right to a healthy environment, kind of, like, should kind of be one of those inalienable rights, however you pronounce it, because it's natural.

Jim Ash 46:36

You know, that's, that's why we, I think the term, and that's actually not our quote. That was a quote from short I think that that's why they said it's the crown jewel, right? It's the, it's the top part.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 46:49

So, now for a harder question, we hear quite often from people we know that climate change is no big deal and is fluid or shifting. With your ability to keep peace and stretch stressful situations? Would you please guide us in a response that is both loving and peaceful and promotes a call to action against the climate crisis?

Jim Ash 47:17

I want to make sure that your listeners know you gave me this question in advance, because I couldn't have just come up with this immediately, I've given this, I've had to give this some thought. I would say something like this. I would say, look, the clear facts are. Facts are that global temperatures have risen over the last 200 years, and they are. They are rising every decade more than they did the decade before. That's just a fact. The clear fact is that sea levels are rising. That's just a fact. You can go measure them. They're rising. So we can agree to disagree about the causation of those things, but without action, it's clear that those trends will continue. Lands will flood, droughts will lengthen, hundreds of millions of people will be in food insecurity. Is that acceptable to you? Because it's not acceptable to me.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 48:28

I like that. I really like that. And some people say, well, it's like 90 degrees every summer, but I think they don't realize that the temperature change is smaller than that. It's like decimal points in certain places, yes, but that still endangers the more fragile creatures and the weather patterns.

Jim Ash 48:58

That's exactly right. I mean, it's not like temperatures have gone up 10 degrees. Global temperatures have risen by I think it's like 1.3 degrees Fahrenheit. Just think about it this way. There sits your scale, and on one side there's 10 of something, and on the other side there's 10 of something, and they balance. Now, just put 1.3 on one of the sides and see what happens.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 49:24

It gets unbalanced. It's...

Jim Ash 49:26

It gets unbalanced. And so, everything else, then, is unbalanced. The air temperature rises. It unbalances the sea levels. The sea levels get unbalanced. It covers up more of the land, more of the land that's covered up, less of it can be, can be available to allow humans to survive, or, as you said, more insects, more diseases, more plant diseases. Certain plants that do quite well in dry areas don't do well in wet areas and rust and blight and other things. Things affect them. So, it's just like you said, it's just that enough to get it out of balance and what. And you know, another way to think about it. This isn't, I think science, but the way to think about is the Earth spins at about 25,000 miles per hour right now, right? Just go spinning, spinning, spinning. Well, thank goodness it doesn't wobble, because once it starts wobbling, just do that on your own, right. Once it starts wobbling, it wobbles more and more and ... zombie apocalypse.

Kassie Ripsam 50:34

All right. So last question, if you could have coffee or tea, whichever you prefer with anyone alive or dead. Who would it be and what would you ask them?

Jim Ash 50:48

Okay, this is just hard.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 50:52

Every, this gets everyone.

Jim Ash 50:55

I mean, there are, there are some easy, obvious answers that you probably heard from all kinds of people, right, like Jesus, and that's, that's a pretty good one. That's a pretty good one. I, I really, this is a hard one. I think I might ask President Eisenhower.

Kassie Ripsam 51:23

Eisenhower

Jim Ash 51:24

You don't know who that was, but he was president before Kennedy, after the, after Truman, after the war. And rumor has it that it was during his presidency that the first aliens like crash landed on the earth, and that that's what started the whole Area 51 then. I think I might want to ask President Eisenhower if it's true that we really have been visited by extraterrestrials.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 51:54

Honestly, I don't think I've heard that, but now that I think about it, that would be a really good question. Because personally, I think that the odds are in favor of extraterrestrial life, but the way that people picture it is probably untrue, but I've never heard that before. But yeah, the whole thing about people saying Jesus or Abraham or all these, they're like, Yeah, that's probably the right answer. But I'm going to go with this, you know.

Jim Ash 52:31

I think the problem is, any question I would ask Jesus, I think I already know what you tell me.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 52:36

Yeah, we've heard his stories so many times. We pretty much have his personality, you know, written

Kassie Ripsam 52:43

on paper.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 52:44

on paper.

Jim Ash 52:46

Indeed.

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 52:50

So, thank you, Mr. Ash. We feel like we understand G-11 and its authors so much more.

Jim Ash 52:57

Thank you both for having me.

Kassie Ripsam 52:59

It was our pleasure, honestly

Mary Anne Bennett-Ripsam 53:01

And we thank you listeners for joining us again today. We welcome your comments and questions and appreciate your loyalty. If you have suggestions for future, say what podcast. Let us know. Thank you again, and don't forget to put on Your full armor of God and walk In truth. You