

REA 2024 Fall Gathering with Wornom Awardees
Wednesday, October 23, 2024 7-9 pm (EST)

Dr. Beth Nolen, Brisbane Catholic Education

“What do five-year-olds think about God, creation, and relationships with the earth? Insights from a research journey.”

Christian schools frequently use Scripture stories to teach children about God and how God invites people to live in the world. As these sacred texts were written thousands of years ago by different authors in varying contexts, teachers can find it challenging to interpret Scripture texts in ways that enable learners to discover appropriate meaning for life today. Without addressing the need to build the capacity of teachers to teach Scripture competently and confidently, children may not develop the skills to discover rich meaning from Scripture texts, limiting their ability to understand God’s dream for our world and the role they can play in bringing about God’s dream. This paper tells the story of a religious education leader who searched for meaningful ways of interpreting and teaching the second creation story in Genesis 2 and outlines her experience of introducing five-year-old children to this text, learning about children’s insights into God, creation and relationships with the earth. The story of a research journey is also presented, highlighting findings about pedagogies, learning and teaching processes and building teacher capacity to teach Scripture in meaningful, engaging ways.



Paul H. Van Straten, Memorial University of Newfoundland

“Anticipating the Opportunities and Challenges of Using Commercial-off-the-Shelf Games to Educate People on Environmental Sustainability in a Christian Context”

Some studies show that digital games and board games can be used to facilitate religious learning in Christian post-secondary settings. Would game-based learning be a viable option for educating Christians on environmental sustainability in a congregational church environment? This paper analyzes several commercially-available ecological digital games and board games to explore potential learning opportunities and challenges for integrating such games in a Christian small-group study environment.



Shannon Hopkins

“Notes on the Land: Towards An Economics of Mutuality Formed By and Informing New Communities”

This project wrestles with the undeniable crises that loom over the future of rural land and land use in the UK--the combined effects of climate change, rising inequality, rising food costs and environmental degradation. It seeks to address the following questions: *What does the future of land use look like in the UK? What is needed going forward for the health of the land and for the good of people and the planet? What innovations can drive a more sustainable land economy in the UK?* Using case studies, signs of hope that are already operating within the ecosystem are considered. By applying "ecosystem thinking" and prioritizing the design principles of community, connection, and creativity, opportunities for progress and innovation are identified and discussed. Overall the project marks the beginning of a conversation and the building of a network to support new interventions with strategic foci, and invites others to co-conspire for change in their regions.

