

Overview of Knowing Your Place Questions

Session 1

1. What towns, rural areas and bodies of water are within a 5-mile radius of your church building? A 25-mile radius?
2. What urban areas do your members draw upon for goods and services? What rural areas provide for urban areas?
3. Which parts of these areas do you visit frequently? Which parts do you ignore, or know little about?
4. What aspects of your community are you curious about?

Session 2

1. What watersheds are part of your region? Are there other natural dividers such as mountains or changes in vegetation?
2. What roadways connect or sever communities in your map area? Whom do they serve best? How do they affect wildlife or natural areas?
3. How well does your community serve bikers and walkers? How might you make better use of the pedestrian options that are there, or what adaptations are needed?

Session 3

1. What biome is your community in? Where else in the world is this biome found?
2. To what extent are the plants and animals characteristic of this biome present and healthy in your community? Where would you look for them?
3. What natural areas are present within your map area? What do you know about them? What do you wish you knew? Which of these do you and your class members make use of?
4. What plant and animal species inhabit your church property? Learn their names and a little bit about them.

Session 4

1. Where, within your map area, do participants exercise “dominion” over the land, water or other natural resources in any way?
2. What entities within your circle exercise the most decision-making power over the landscape? What do they do?

Session 5

1. What forms of environmental damage or potential hazards are you aware of within your map area?
2. What do you know about income distribution within your region? What social classes live where?
3. Is racial segregation a part of your region? Where do minorities live?
4. Can you see any relationships between the location of low income or minority communities and potential environmental hazards such as landfills and factories?

Session 6

1. What are the primary sources of CO₂ within your map area?
2. What energy sources generate the electricity in your home and church building? If fossil fuels are used, where do they come from?
3. How is climate change expected to affect your region?
4. Are people within your map area planning for climate change? Are there business or government leaders who are concerned about this?

Session 7

1. Are there ethnic groups different from your own living within your map area? Who lives where? What about congregations of different nationalities, races, or religions? How do you think these other congregations would answer the questions in this study?
2. What kinds of goods are *not* produced in your region and are shipped in from international locations? Choose one or more common products and research where they come from. Can you find out where your winter vegetables, petroleum or electronics come from?

Session 8

1. What organizations within your circles are responsible for overseeing the environmental health of the area? What do they do?
2. How does one gain input into these groups?

Session 9

1. Choose a retail business or industry that is located within your map area. Find out what challenges they face in balancing costs and impacts on the environment.
2. Where do the raw materials come from that are used in your local industries? How are they transported to your region? Could the raw materials be produced locally?
3. How much of your spending supports local businesses? What changes could you make to help ensure that the income you spend on goods and services provides income to your neighbors? Is this important to you?

Session 10

1. Where does your drinking water come from? Where does your wastewater go and how is it treated? Are there contaminants in your water?
2. Where does food come from in your community? How much is grown within a 25-mile radius?
3. How can you support the farmers in your region who are doing the best job of caring for their land and animals? Where can you buy their food?

Session 11

1. What native peoples originally inhabited your region? What waves of immigrants followed and when did they arrive? How did they relate to the land? Are remnants of these groups still present?
2. What natural resources or community resources do members within your congregation share? How can the relationships you already have with each other be an asset in caring for these natural resources?

Session 12

1. What soil types are common in your community? What kinds of plants grow best in these soil types? What “root” issues do you notice within your map area?
2. What does it mean to be rooted in this community? What bonds people to this particular locale? How is a sense of place expressed? How has your relationship with God been shaped by this place?
3. What spots within your map area need a sustained commitment? How might Christ the Root provide that?