

## **Amelioration of a liturgical *ethos* mindful of *anamnesis* and its convergence with environmental justice**

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### **Abstract**

This article deals with the problematic praxis of life in the Anthropocene amidst the urgent calls for environmental justice. Normally, people are confused and misled by this concept due to a political ringtone. However, the article argues that justice or righteousness should always be integral to a faith community's outlook on life. Among numerous other ministry manifestations, liturgical praxeology offers unique opportunities to establish a deep-rooted liturgical ethos. Contemplation about the harmful effects of injustices on a meaningful life provides the opportunity to reconsider how liturgy can enhance or ameliorate a liturgical ethos grounded in moral principles. The concept of ethos touches on the persuasive or performative essence of liturgical enactment. If this is the case, surely a hunger for destruction, wars, and devastating acts that limit opportunities for a liveable life in the environment should be considered essential. The liturgical ethos must remind people to remember the precious memories of what should be done regarding righteousness (justice) and wardship. In laying the foundation for a deep-rooted ethos, responsibility takes centre stage. Faith communities, by emphasizing this sense of responsibility, can contribute towards a renewed hunger for justice and righteousness in their environments. The research question guiding this exploration is articulated as follows: How can liturgical ethos, with explicit reference to anamnesis and its convergence with the gravity of environmental justice, contribute to fostering responsibility for the environment among participants of the liturgy? This question is addressed through a qualitative literature study. Browning (1996:34), for example, is interested in practical wisdom's (*phronesis*) purpose of understanding human action and defines a research activity as a process that starts with a description and then moves to the endeavour of systemization. Eventually, strategizing perspectives will offer liturgical perspectives on a liturgical ethos or praxeology that could promote moral responsibility among the liturgy participants.

### **Key words**

*Liturgical ethos; memories; remembrance; environmental justice*

## Introduction

Liturgy encapsulates not only the one-sided flow of promises of grace from God to people but also encompasses the response of people concerned with the everyday beauty of creation (Geldhof 2018:12). The concern for the world's interests is promulgated, but the memory of creation's graveness in the liturgy should be heralded in widening circles.<sup>1</sup> Wolterstorff (2011:97) refers to the remembrance of God's love for justice, anchored in His concern for the hundredth one, the so-called outcasts in our environment. The tears of God due to injustices are like the soil in which his love of justice for creation and creatures is rooted and should always be remembered. Spiegel (2002:156) makes it specific to liturgical enactment, in which rituals and liturgy are related to life memories as constructive building blocks for the present, helping people to actualize life so that what is remembered is relived with renewed hope.<sup>2</sup> Cockayne and Salter (2021:281) offer a valuable contribution to remembrance in liturgical enactment, emphasizing that it is a steadfast activity in reshaping a communal *ethos*. This process enables participants to identify with the values of a faith community, ultimately translating into the practice of justice for those frequently overlooked and helping all to enjoy God's all-encompassing *shalom* in creation (Wolterstorff 2011:100).

There is a crucial need to purposefully shape a liturgical ethos that is committed to enhancing perspectives on ecology and environmental justice (Long 2004:47–48). Tyagi (2013:6), on the other hand, delves into the complexity of liturgy, highlighting its close connection with participation that involves active *listening*, reflection, and commitment. This process unfolds five stages: hearing, understanding, remembering, evaluating, and responding. The notability of remembrance stands as a hinge, underscoring the vital role of remembrance (*anamnesis*). Hearing that cultivates understanding hinges on remembering and enables participants to evaluate meaningfulness with the outcome to respond. In essence, liturgy can be

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1 The Church, therefore, fulfils its public and political nature – its role of renewing human community in celebrating its liturgy (cf. Wannewetsch 2004:81).

2 Cockayne and Salter (2021:184) explain the underlying idea of remembrance as a mental time travel endeavour. It increases the manifestation of discernment of what God's will entails, and consequently, in remembering, vital skills are passed on.

seen as the event where participants can start at the beginning to rehearse or practice the tangible impact of their attitudes on everyday life<sup>3</sup> To state it more concisely using Wilbricht's (2010:39) words, liturgy is the rehearsal of attitudes on creation (cf. Gribben & Fagan, 2020:2; Wickman & Sherman, 2020:14; Berger, 2019:21).

Onkongkwu (2011:36) contends that the significance of an outlook on creation encompasses a dual interest, delicately balancing the imperative to safeguard the gift of creation and the necessity of preventing people from self-destruction. For this reason, Rasmussen (2023:2) reminds us of the *sine qua non* of what could be described as the gravity surrounded by protection, referring to the sixth mass extinction caused by human-induced changes, in which climate change and environmental destruction play an imperilment role (Hosen, Nakamura & Hamzah, 2021:670). The notion of ecological justice significantly permeates research, emphasizing its dedication to promoting a conduct towards and worthwhile involvement of all people, regardless of ethnicity, nationality, or income. It is crucial to acknowledge the development of environmental laws and policies in this context (Waiker, 2017:4). According to this understanding of environmental justice,<sup>4</sup> enforcing environmental policies is inevitable for the foreseeable future. However, the author of this article contends that mere compliance with policies may lead to a distant or superficial practice. The following representation (cf. Hernández, 2015:154) vividly portrays the underlying tension field caused by dangers resulting from human conduct that disproportionately jeopardizes the most vulnerable individuals. This illustration encapsulates the urgent call for environmental justice:

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- 3 Wilbricht's (2010:33) understanding of liturgy as a rehearsal of attitudes is closely interwoven with the participants in the liturgy, who should see life differently. One's attitudes are formed from the early stages in the development of children where parents, faith communities and friends are playing a significant role.
  - 4 Environmental justice, a term coined by Robert Bullard, Paul Mohai, Robin Saha, and Beverly Wright in the 1980s, describes the equitable distribution of environmental benefits and harms experienced because of rectifying systems of oppression. In the ground-breaking work 'Toxic Waste and Race' Bullard et al. argued that landfills were disproportionately sited in low-income communities – leading to disparate human health impacts, lower economic value of property, and less greenspace available for these communities (cf. Dearing, 2023:1).



Figure 1: Hernández (2015:154)

Lathrop (2003:179–197) therefore highlights the cosmological significance of home in liturgical enactment. Stating it differently, if the blessing of the liturgy is inextricably connected to homecoming, then it seems inevitable to acknowledge that it should be done with a renewed sense of justice (Conradie, 2013:15). The idea of justice, as indicated in the representation above, is intricately linked to moral concepts such as defiance, onslaught, oppressive toxins, and oppressions that should be addressed. If we start with Cilliers’ (2014:4) postulation that liturgy creates a space where the dynamic interplay between play and purpose becomes evident, framing liturgy as a *space against waste*, we must contemplate how to enhance a liturgical *ethos* to address serious concerns about environmental justice. If participants in the liturgy maintain this focus, it transforms from a mere worldly experience to one that is earthly and justice focused. A liturgical praxeology after all, cannot ignore the world’s suffering, pollution, poverty, and hunger for war (cf. Cilliers 2014:3).

The research question under consideration is as follows: *How can liturgical ethos, with explicit reference to anamnesis and its convergence with the gravity of environmental justice, contribute to fostering responsibility for the environment among participants of the liturgy?* To address this query, a qualitative literature study is conducted. Browning (1996:34), for example, is interested in practical wisdom’s (*phronesis*) purpose of understanding human action. He defines a research activity as a process that starts with a *description* and then progresses towards *systemization*. Eventually, *strategic*

perspectives will offer liturgical insights on a liturgical ethos or praxeology that may encourage responsibility among the participants of the liturgy.

### **Descriptive perspectives on ameliorating the formation of a liturgical *ethos* dealing with the remembrance of environmental justice**

This section will offer descriptive perspectives on environmental justice and the essential place of remembrance as a kindling of the beauty of justice.

#### **Descriptive perspectives on threatening aspects of human security and a liveable life**

Kierkegaard (1967:37–39) once delved into the most fundamental need of human beings, namely *pathos* or the dreaming of a place where one belongs. One could say that the quest for *pathos* or need for belonging or homecoming necessitates *Sinndeutung* or a compelling urge for life's meaningfulness encapsulated by the sense of belonging. Louw (2023:307) enables us to realize that hope, as a crucial element of human habitus or a liveable life, should deal with more than merely perceiving a harmful reality as indicated in the abovementioned representation. Veith and Ristuccia (2015:37) elaborate on the meaning and assert that imagination utilizes people's memories to store, reproduce, and arrange meaningful images acquired during their lives. Hence, the connection between an individual's efforts to make sense of life and vivid remembrances is recognized.

The section as mentioned above reiterated the importance of memories. In highlighting the urgency of environmental justice challenges in South Africa and its memories, President Cyril Ramaphosa underscores, in his latest newsletter dated 26 September 2023, that the recent catastrophic floods in the Western Cape serve as a stark reminder of the acute vulnerability of developing African countries to climate change (cf. Arnoldi 2023:1). President Ramaphosa repeatedly emphasizes climate justice, boldly stating that developed countries are obliged to fulfil their obligations and promises to developing African countries. He adds that this is not an act of charity but a matter of economic and social justice (Peek 2019:113). The orbit to make sense of life amidst growing threats continues to intensify in

widening circles. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report (2022:5) has revealed, among various aspects, new threats to human security as an indication of the functioning of a new Anthropocene context. As mentioned above, this context can be described as a menace to both the ecosystem and human well-being. Currently, an estimated 2,5 billion people globally grapple with hunger insecurity. Climate change is projected to lead to the potential loss of up to 40 million lives in developing countries due to rising temperatures, with approximately 84 million facing displacement. Additionally, 1,2 billion people are exposed to the violence of wars (UNDP 2022:6–7). Countries with weaker and less universal healthcare systems encounter significant challenges in health, attributed to the surge in non-communicable diseases and the enduring impacts of pandemics (Comtesse, Verena, Sophie, Hengst, Smid 2021:733). The assumption of the Human Development Report (UNDP, 1994) that human security is synonymous with living free from fear and indignity appears detached from the present reality (Kelz & Knappe 2021:2)

It is essential to connect the idea of human threats within the *Anthropocene* to the current reality in South Africa. Only one concerning matter among numerous other aspects will be touched on. According to the Blue Drop Progress Report, in 2022, nearly 55% of water supply systems in South Africa were at a medium to high-risk level (Department of Water and Sanitation, 2022). This implies that, according to the case study, over half of the water supply systems in South Africa are not safe for human consumption and sanitation. The 2023 Blue Drop Progress Report (Department of Water and Sanitation, 2023) indicates that 41% of water supply systems pose a serious health risk, emphasizing the urgent need for local governments to safeguard local communities. Concerns related to sustainability and dignity are paramount in this context where water supply becomes a challenge.

Burke, Fishel, Mitchell, Dalby, and Levine (2016:501), referring to dignity, pinpoint what they describe as the true terror of the current moment. They assert that the pivotal question is no longer about assigning responsibility in the *Anthropocene* but instead focuses on how humans can adapt to the world they have created. Hornborg (2019:23) makes an intriguing contribution to this topic, highlighting the detrimental impact of economic

processes and political ideologies on environmental crises.<sup>5</sup> Within their workplaces, individuals often find themselves subject to companies' profit-driven strategies at the expense of the environment. The technological production and bureaucratic structures inherent in the workplace inevitably influence people's feelings, contributing to deep-seated attitudes towards life in the *Anthropocene*. Therefore, the current research refers to liturgy as a meaningful process of rehearsing attitudes.

Based on the study of Lövbrand, Beck, Chilvers, Forsyth, Hedrén, Hulme, Lidskog, and Vasileiadou (2015:214), the idea of the *Anthropocene* is interwoven with a troubling concept that is used to describe challenging times. Cognitive dissonance in people's minds is unavoidable, especially when exposed to workplace practices, highlighting the pressing need for a liturgical ethos to effectively persuade and alter attitudes towards the environment. One should acknowledge that life in the *Anthropocene*, surrounded by the idea of the true terror of the moment, is wedded into a language of fear and sorrow, given the irreparable loss of Arctic ice sheets, mass species extinction, acidified oceans, and degraded lands. Edkins (2003:16–17) emphasizes the importance of a constructive approach with special reference to societal mourning rituals. Such rituals enable individuals to remember catastrophes and traumatizing events, fostering a meaningful process of remembering the consequences of irrational acts. Atkinson (2021), on the other hand, posits that mourning rituals hold the potential to play a crucial role in fostering a practice where the visibility of acts of injustice provides the opportunity to voice what went wrong.

Satici, Saricali, Satici and Griffiths (2022:4) deliberate on another problematic aspect when referring to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They touch on the seemingly impossible ideal of reducing violence while simultaneously ensuring human security. The engagement

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5 Berger, Berger, and Kellner (1974:82) refer to the effect of pluralisation that has gone hand in hand with other forces in modern society. The final consequence of all this leads to the modern person suffering from a deepening condition of "homelessness". It could further lead to a process called a metaphysical loss of "home". It goes without saying that this condition is psychologically hard to bear. The reason for this is that the core beliefs of people in the public sphere are no longer shared by the community at large. It boils down to people feeling that in their private life, they can believe what they want without interference from others in the new modern society, but in public life, this becomes difficult.

in warfare and people's hunger for war have multifaceted detrimental effects on the environment. After all, the cognitive aspects and environmental consequences of wars unfold long before they do. Military forces consume vast quantities of resources and misuse cognitive coercion from governments. Susser, Roessler and Nissenbaum (2019:29) shed light on the psychological hazards of cognitive warfare, exposing manipulation as a covert force that seeks to disrupt individuals' decision-making processes and guide them toward the manipulator's ends.

Furthermore, the resources consumed in the pursuit of military readiness encompass not only the capture of people's minds but also common metals, rare earth elements, water, or hydrocarbons. The training of soldiers and military drills contribute significantly to resource consumption. Military vehicles, aircraft, vessels, and infrastructure, integral to military operations, demand substantial energy, often sourced from oil. Notably, the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from established militaries surpass those of many entire countries combined (Kristensen & Bartusevičius, 2021:90). While preparing this article, the Israel-Palestinian conflict and events in the Gaza Strip became a much-debated issue. Disturbing images of rubble (*debris*) and waste caused by the ongoing war come to mind and one starts to ponder on memories and how faith communities should deal with this matter in future.

Based on this reality of waste, Moore (2022:8) posits that the manifestation of crises like the *Anthropocene* and the fear of war reminds us that Practical Theology is fundamentally a discipline of crisis. Practical Theology belongs at the epicentre of ecological crises, which have already produced harsh results, ecological despair, and a time-dated urgency for daring decisions and actions. Crises serve as pivotal junctures, moments when converging forces demand critical decisions that profoundly influence the future for both individuals and other beings. The author expresses apprehension about a praxis in which practical theologians react in a mere reactive manner. The article asserts a distinctive contribution, arguing in favour of a proactive and anticipatory response.

### **Descriptive perspectives on the quest for environmental justice**

The idea of the environmental crisis was mentioned, symbolizing a watershed moment. It signifies that environmental degradation and



pollution are beginning to adversely impact human beings. However, environmental pollution does not haphazardly afflict individuals and communities. Worldwide, people are compelled to breathe unhealthy air, consume contaminated water, and absorb chemical substances. Furthermore, environmental deterioration extends to harm the extensive ecological commons upon which life relies (Salkin, Dernbach, Brown 2012:6). The dehumanizing and far-reaching impacts of environmental injustice are undeniable, especially within our continent. As Lucero (2009:282) emphasizes, poverty and environmental degradation mutually reinforce one another. Individuals living in poverty are compelled to engage in environmentally harmful activities, such as deforestation, as well as agriculture and grazing on degraded lands, solely for the sake of survival. However, environmental degradation, in a cyclical fashion, perpetuates the poverty of these vulnerable populations as a formidable chain. Those living in poverty tend to find themselves reliant on the scantiest parcels of arable land and exposed to invisible gaseous pollutants in the air.

Considering the ideas mentioned earlier, the notion of environmental justice is defined as the fair and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, colour, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies (Diaz, 2020:2). Rasmussen (2023:2) emphatically underscores the centrality of safeguarding all forms of life on earth. The concept of “environmental justice” cannot be applied loosely or treated as a simplistic mechanism to describe life in the *Anthropocene*. When the concept is utilized, a kaleidoscope of dimensions of people’s well-being undeniably emerges (Whyte, 2016:160). This can be likened to examining a leaf, where the individual veins gain significance upon closer inspection, especially when using a magnifying glass. Environmental justice can be described as a fractal, which suggests a multitude of angles and aspects when the threats caused by environmental degradation are mentioned (McAdams, 2021:2; Mazur, 2007:3).

### **Descriptive perspectives on remembrance (anamnesis) as activity of making memories about environmental justice vivid**

Interestingly, the notion of value frequently features in research on people’s memories and remembrances of the environment. As outlined by Scholte,

Todorova, Van Teeffelen and Verburg (2016:470), the interactions people have with ecosystems, and the value they assign to them, are intricately connected to their memories. The preceding discussions underscore the significance of individuals' attitudes toward the environment. Consequently, it becomes evident that these attitudes are shaped not primarily by logical reasoning but by the knowledge derived from past experiences and memories (Hirons, Comberti, Dunford 2016:550). Mercier (2020:465) continues with the argument and underlines the importance of the memories of the cultural context people in a specific region have. Based on the mentioned memories, people are obliged to acknowledge the past, which contributes to what is called *valuing*, when it comes to biodiversity. Valuing the environment inevitably hinges on remembering the past, reimagining the present, and restoring the environment's value for the future (Flood, Mahon, McDonagh 2021:2). People's memories of their environment provide their minds with a means to construct bridges between the past, present, and future. As they remember and interpret the past, these memories shape actions in the present, enabling them to anticipate the future (Rovelli 2019:17 and Cresswell 2014:9).

Studies in this regard suggest a significant alignment between the cultural memory of a group and what memory is for individuals (Tengberg, Fredholm, Eliasson, Knez, Saltzman and Wetterberg 2012:20). In this sense of the word, through remembering practices and culture, people are reminded in the present of things that have positively offered meaningfulness to them. However, as observed by Kelman (2020:14), vital aspects of life in the *Anthropocene* are prone to being easily forgotten, presenting an opportunity to delve into what people may have overlooked. Witze, Duine and Mahy (2015:13) contend that the process of remembrance, aimed at making memories vivid in the present, represents a constructive approach through which resilience, particularly in terms of wardship, is improved.

De Massol De Rebetz (2020:7) advocates for the importance of private and public ceremonies that place the remembrance of ecological losses at the forefront. The notion of communal memories emerges, with Hervieu-Léger (2000:11) asserting that faith communities should acknowledge religion as a chain of memory – a manifestation of collective memory. While a unified body of people strengthens collective memory, individuals as group members remember. Therefore, the dialectical tension between collective

and individual memories should be acknowledged (Ricoeur 2004:124). Interestingly, research on public commemoration reveals the emergence of ecological mourning as an essential liturgical concept (cf. Colebrook, 2016:150). One can't help but wonder why Heritage Day in South Africa, for example, is not more prominently infused with meaning, embracing both mourning and celebration as integral aspects of the same arrow movement, taking wardship seriously.

### **Systemizing perspectives on a liturgical *ethos* ameliorating cognizance of environmental justice through remembrance (*anamnesis*)**

In this section, the research will focus on two focal points: first, what environmental justice within an ethical outlook should entail, and second, how the dynamic of remembrances could ameliorate a liturgical *ethos* addressing environmental justice.

#### **Systemizing perspectives on environmental justice are viewed from a normative angle and the viewpoint of ethics**

Hickey (2006:75) proffers a compelling argument about a society fraught with risk, wherein environmental risks are distributed unequally. I agree with the author's assertion that environmental justice is never a static or theoretical concept. Instead, environmental justice involves creating a space and allowing everyone to manage their environment responsibly. The inherent tension within the concept of environmental justice revolves around the risk caused to the environment when it is detached from deliberations in the economic and political spheres. While it is commendable that governments sometimes take environmental concerns into account, there arises a concern about whether the action-steps taken inadvertently contribute to further environmental injustices due to self-serving agendas and varying interpretations of justice (Cragg and Ran 2022:151 and Wapner 1996:41).

## Normative perspectives on a gnawing hunger for justice or righteousness (δικαιοσύνη) from Matthew 5:6

I agree with Louw (2020:116) regarding the importance of carefully defining one's understanding of (environmental) justice. One should redefine the meaning of justice also from a theological viewpoint. Louw and Nida (1993:744), for example, denote that the word δικαιοσύνη belongs to a sub-domain linked to moral and ethical behaviour. It entails an act of doing what is required by God and, therefore, doing what is right. Brown (1985:353) posits that in the ancient world, a righteous person was someone whose behaviour fitted with the societal framework and fulfilled all duties related to their gods and fellow humans. The essence of morality, justice, virtue, and uprightness defines righteousness (Talbert 2010:32). The Gospel of Matthew employs the concept of "righteousness" seven times to define the identity of a faith community in contrast to outsiders (Carter 2000:8).

The appropriate conduct, previously discussed, is further emphasized by adopting an attitude characterized by an intense hunger and thirst for justice (righteousness), as evident in Matthew 6:5. This conceptualization envisions a significant role for faith communities that should align with a lifestyle acknowledging the absence of righteousness in society. The liturgy refines this way of life and nurtures the daily pursuit of righteousness in everyday existence (Smith, 2007:133). Therefore, Stott (1999:45) emphasizes that, in Matthew, righteousness implies an inner righteousness of the heart, mind, and people's motives. Righteousness (δικαιοσύνη), according to Morris (1992:99), is the quality or state of fairness, justice, equitableness, and standing *righteously* before God. Individuals who live righteously conduct themselves fairly, correctly, and appropriately in every aspect of life (Morris, 1992:101). Similarly, Day (2010:32) emphasizes that the willingness to do what is right (Matthew 5:10) brings forth the idea of pursuing and doing what is right. Matthew 5:20 introduces an additional dimension in the movement of thought regarding a commitment to do right that activates a righteousness that excels (δικαιοσύνη πλειον) (Baker 2009:213). The notion of God's bliss, engulfing those with a hunger and thirst for righteousness (justice), becomes notably apparent in Matthew 5:6. The concept of being filled (χορτασθήσονται) denotes that God will satisfy the needs of people with a hunger and thirst for righteousness. This act of being filled is paradoxical, as it both satisfies the righteous and leaves

them desiring more. The continuous quest for justice or righteousness deals with the concern that people are called to engage in the hunger and thirst for righteousness actively.

In conclusion, this section emphasizes the understanding that righteousness initiates at an intrinsic level, creating a ripple effect on the environment. It signifies a right relationship with God, a vision for other people, embraces proper conduct in this world, and boils down to a never satisfying hunger and thirst for righteousness. The beauty inherent in a justice-oriented lifestyle is that God will fill this lifestyle with flourishing, and one could never get enough of this act of being filled.

### **Systemizing perspectives on environmental justice from an ethical viewpoint**

This article does not attempt to claim that liturgy and ethics alone can transform practices related to environmental injustices. Instead, its goal is to make a significant contribution to changing people's attitudes. The author agrees with Smit (1997:56) in acknowledging that one's *ethos* plays a pivotal role in influencing an ethical outlook on life. An individual's *ethos* in life encompasses what could be described as their habitual character and disposition. Therefore, one's *ethos* and the functioning of attitudes are inherently interconnected. Morrill (2022:77) compellingly argues that the interplay between liturgy and ethics is intrinsic. Liturgy and ethics, especially in an intimate relationship, offer new avenues that shape people's understanding of daily life and underscore the significance of living justly in their environment. In a similar vein, Wainwright<sup>6</sup> (1980:18) emphasizes the outlook on life that a liturgical-ethical approach offers, asserting that when faith communities comprehensively worship life, it becomes the focal point of rituals. A liturgical *ethos*, attentive to the vividness of remembrances, provides an outlook on the elliptic reciprocity between the beauty of the environment and the justice within it. The response of praise encompasses appreciation for the splendour or beauty of justice and the justice of beauty.

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6 Wainwright (1980:8–9) touches on the importance of liturgy's outlook in close interplay with the notion that it entails a focused concentration on what matters.

In the researcher's view, a faith community responding with praise to beauty should always be relevant in lifestyle and show character in addressing the lack of righteousness in society. Negligence represents a practice of turning the head away and contradicts the identity of seeing remembrance as the essence of beauty and justice. The quest for righteousness in liturgical enactment should not be assumed but actively cultivated.<sup>7</sup> An ethical perspective on liturgy allows participants to enhance their awareness of human dignity and the responsibility to care for creation justly. People living in the *Anthropocene* are perpetrators of causing environmental harm, but they are simultaneously reminded of stewardship. Moltmann's (1993)<sup>8</sup> words serve as a reminder that the stewardship of creation should be evident when people observe the world, and at the heart lies the acknowledgement that only God is the Lord of the cosmos. Conradie's (2013:5–6) emphasis directs us toward concreteness, where a liturgical-ethical outlook touches on a way of seeing a cosmological vision that participants in the liturgy should have. In close connection with the remark mentioned above, the words of Welker (1999:9) ring a vital bell, namely that humans seem to have forgotten about their creatureliness, their embeddedness within creation, and their interdependence with other creatures.<sup>9</sup>

Next, the author aims to highlight a few hindrances regarding a reflection of environmental justice. Firstly, one should lament how environmental justice is unilaterally associated with politics only. Words like “distributive justice” and “equitable distribution” of risks and benefits are linked to specific political agendas, leading to the oversight of the theological dimension inherent in this concept (Bolte & Hornberg 2011:460). Secondly, Dotson and Whyte (2013:57) contribute an ethical and theological insight into fundamental errors made by individuals. Perpetrators in the *Anthropocene* often employ the excuse of unknowability regarding environmental justice (Plumwood 2002:63). This section on an ethical outlook or ethos explored how ethical attitudes and behaviours shape human interaction with creation and its natural resources. It was further

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7 Smith (2007:133) stresses that a faith community's vision on righteousness should be more than mere words.

8 Moltmann (1993:27) emphasises that humans should realise that God is the only Lord and that He is the *dominum terrae*.

9 See Bauckham's (2010:32) emphasis.

demarcated that moral responsibility should emerge when people touch on environmental justice without ignoring the ramifications and rippling effects of utilizing this concept.

### **Systemizing perspectives on remembering the preciousness of the environment from the viewpoint of ecological studies**

Meier (2019:2) touches on what can be called “prospective memory”, which is important because it enables people to represent action in future by remembering their responsibility in their environment. Ungar (2012:2-3) agrees but elaborates on building an ecological-prospective memory. Remembrance in this context fulfils a profound need, wherein people aspire to share their memories with others (Hirst & Echterhoff 2012:64). This brings us back to what we have touched on, namely *ethos*. According to Beach, Bissell and Wise (2016:66), this sharing process holds meaningful significance. It aligns with the notion that stories adhere to a schematic structure with a setting, plot, character, and moral solution for the problematic praxis. Applied to the current research, people’s memories and experiences could be enhanced by sharing their stories on pollution, climate change, and a hunger for wars that increase the remembrance of environmental justice.

Pasupathi’s (2001:660) research indicates that remembrance concerning environmental justice entails a meaningful communicative process of co-construction. The benefit of continuous retelling of narratives is that it strengthens awareness and strengthens memories. Based on the perspectives of the abovementioned authors, it is important to foster an *ethos* of environmental justice by emphasizing the value of shared memories. Retelling memories of people’s experiences of their environment should be ignited, and a liturgical *ethos* cultivating the beauty of wardship in the *Anthropocene* is essential. Liturgical enactment could, therefore, open windows to more opportunities to share and talk about the horror and beauty in people’s environments (Lathrop (2003:5-7).

Thus far, we have touched on a liturgical *ethos* that deals with a clear picture of the world in which people live. In Lathrop’s (2003) words, liturgical enactment is not disconnected from our world but helps liturgy

participants see the environment in the light of God's delight. In this vein, Arthurs (2017) helps us grasp the importance of one's memories in the sense-making endeavour and underscores the idea that remembrance essentially involves the stirring of one's memories. To conclude, Ruether's (2003:232) plea that remembrance (*anamnesis*) in liturgical enactment holds the potential to significantly aid faith communities in restoring the broken relationship between people and creation is of great importance. Marsh (2021:61) highlights three important aspects regarding how *anamnesis* can play a pivotal role in restoring the human relationship (righteousness or justice) with the environment, namely:

- It permits an affirmation of the idea of sacramentality of created things, including beauty and justice.
- It transforms a destructive attitude and distorted outlook on creation.
- Hence, present, past, and future are essential in pursuing what is just.

### **Amelioration of a liturgical *ethos* mindful of the notoriety of *anamnesis* and its convergence with the gravity of environmental justice**

The following perspectives dealing with the triangular interplay between a liturgical *ethos*, environmental justice, and the influence of remembrances will now be offered:

#### **The hermeneutical interplay between phases of the current research**

Firstly, a hermeneutical interplay between the perspectives offered thus far should be stated, and the following aspects have emerged:

- Human insecurity increases due to ecological disasters and the hunger for warfare. The devastating effects of war cannot be ignored but should be supplanted by a thirst for righteousness (justice).
- Environmental justice is an umbrella concept, and many societal challenges and injustices arise when one concept is used.
- Righteousness, when viewed from an ethical and normative viewpoint, reminds faith communities of moral behaviour regarding life in the Anthropocene. It is about doing what is right.



- An encompassing cosmological awareness dealing with remembrances could provide a dynamic impetus for cultivating worship and a willingness to address concerning aspects interwoven with environmental justice.

### **Forming a liturgical ethos focused on the beauty of justice**

This article emphasises the significance of cultivating a liturgical *ethos* when addressing environmental justice. Von Balthasar's (2000:53–54) exciting thoughts on the interplay between beauty, goodness, and justice cannot be overlooked. According to the abovementioned author, where justice is done, the good comes, and where the good comes, beauty shines, and *vice versa*. Based on this insight, justice is essential to the good and beauty. De Gruchy's (2009:133) words should be considered necessary when stressing that when faith communities bring justice to their environments, they express the beauty and goodness of what they confess weekly. Hence, one could speak of a liturgical *ethos* focused on justice as beauty in action. The current research has indicated that ameliorating a liturgical *ethos* concerned with environmental justice amidst the horror of injustices is needed. If this is the case, then indeed the pneumatologically amazement of the creative activity of the Spirit and the gift of breath (see Welker, 1999:160–161) bestowed upon living beings will be the firm anchor to cultivate a meaningful liturgical *ethos* of beautification (Benge, 2022:2). Hence, the departing point in ameliorating a liturgical *ethos* inevitably starts at this point, valuing the work of the Beautifier in and around us.

Considering the research findings thus far, an amelioration of a liturgical *ethos* in which the

the beauty of creation is taken seriously and should still be realized. It is, after all, in their worship that faith communities learn to see things differently, and they are reminded of seeing creation differently. But how can a liturgical *ethos* be ameliorated? It all starts with realizing that liturgy relates to the rehearsal of attitudes and the igniting influence of remembrance in participating in the liturgy. Wolterstorff (2011:25) guides us in appreciating the beauty of justice and the justness of beauty as departing point in liturgical enactment. Recognizing vivid remembrances of God characterized by love and participation in justice should propel faith communities to wholeheartedly commit themselves to God's encompassing

shalom for creation. The harsh realities of environmental injustices should be remembered and based on the remembrance of the beauty of justice, participants in the liturgy should start living liturgically. Liturgy, as a remembrance of God's salvific acts and the beauty of justice, is intricately intertwined. Mentioning the idea of environmental justice reminds us of enjoying, lamenting, and the value of dwelling in *shalom*.

The continuous formation of an *ethos* entails unlearning painful memories and harmful habits while exploring new avenues for imagination. For instance, faith communities confess their faith weekly, and within the centre of their *credo*, as a manifestation of their communal memory, participants in the liturgy remember that God is the Creator and Beautifier of His creation. They remember so poignantly that they could acknowledge the words: we believe in God, the Creator of all things. Based on this idea, the vivid corporeal remembrance of God's mighty acts and His will for creation, a new commitment within a liturgical *ethos* should become visible (Müller 2007:447). Consequently, the confession of faith should evoke a dynamic act or divulgence of confession of sins when it comes to a distorted awareness of wardship in creation.

### **A liturgical ethos or habitus and communication of the vivid remembrances**

Müller (2007:442) highlights the dynamic formation of liturgical enactment, asserting that liturgy possesses the capacity to redefine and reshape people's lives in the face of environmental injustices. The notion of what could be called a provocative or prophetic liturgy comes into play, advocating for a praxis that avoids succumbing to the trap of domesticated harmful practices rooted in condoned ideologies. Instead of operating selectively, a liturgical ethos is committed to remembering the pain and injustices surrounding humans' lives, including the harm caused by humans to the ecology. Bosman and Müller's (2009:2) enabling concretization, favouring a reminding liturgy that situates people's stories and a vision of the earth's story, including the universe's story, within God's overarching story, proves to be insightful.

If we earnestly contemplate Conradie's (2005:342; 2012:3) words, acknowledging that God's story is filled with the memory of His nourishing and nurturing love, then liturgical enactment should invite participants

to cooperate (remember) in this narrative of God's love for His creation. Similarly, Cilliers (2021:19) focuses our attention on a liturgical praxeology, noting that creation fundamentally celebrates God, and in return, God celebrates creation. Something noteworthy should be remembered when celebrating in worship as a feast. Wolterstorff (2015:26) thus underscores that worship deals with remembering God's unsurpassable greatness and grateful adoration of who He is.

Steward's (2012:1) timely reminder that the liturgy participants in their relationship with the environment should celebratedly ascribe worth to God is essential. Promoting the celebration of ecological awareness and environmental justice could involve re-examining liturgical dynamics such as lament, joy, and doxology, which includes hymns and prayers (De Klerk 2014:3). Based on Brueggemann's (2001:115–116) emphasis on the criticizing and energizing directedness of liturgical enactment, lament on the brokenness of life on earth due to the sighing described in Romans 8 can be ameliorated. Confession of faith, Scripture reading, and prayers play a role in cultivating the identification of the infidelities that make our everyday life toxic (cf. Brueggemann 2011:37–38). Consequently, dynamic divergences, such as acknowledgement of guilt, grief, and loss, should be made.

To conclude the argument, if environmental justice serves as a reminder of distorted attitudes held by people toward their environment, and a renewed focus on the rehearsal of attitudes is deemed vital, it becomes evident that the spark regarding people's attitudes toward the environment has been lost. This research underscores the necessity for a liturgical *ethos* addressing the rehearsal of its participants' attitudes, emphasizing the need for remembrance (*anamnesis*) as a powerful catalyst for igniting people's memories.

## Conclusion

This article underscores that addressing concerns about the ecological crisis goes beyond relying solely on rhetoric based on reason. While logical arguments about ecology are valuable, a more comprehensive approach is required. In our quest for hope in the *Anthropocene*, a liturgical praxeology

to change priorities and lifestyles, as well as a different culture and ethos, is essential. This article highlighted the organic functioning of remembrance in liturgical enactment, advocating for a focus on the present life where environmental injustices should be addressed, and an *ethos* committed to a morally upright approach to creation should be established. Practices that harm the environment also result in the suffering of vulnerable people. Thus, reflection on environmental justice should expose all forms of injustice. While remembrance is crucial for editing all memories of the past, remembrances of living a just and righteous life, starting with the environment, and extending to humans and their interrelationships, should be evident. Enhancing a profound liturgical *ethos* aimed at increasing awareness of environmental justice could enable faith communities to fulfil their role in society tangibly.

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