

To the Bishops and Deputies of the Episcopal Church Assembled at the 79th General Convention,

We believe that "The earth is the LORD'S and all that is in it, the world and all who dwell therein."
(Psalm 24)

One of the most dangerous and daunting challenges we face is global climate change. This is, at least in part, a direct result of our burning of fossil fuels. Such human activities could raise worldwide average temperatures by three to eleven degrees Fahrenheit in this century. Rising average temperatures are already wreaking environmental havoc, and, if unchecked, portend devastating consequences for every aspect of life on earth.

Climate change is recognized as a human made threat to all God's people, creatures and the entire created order, while particularly placing unjust and unequitable burdens and stresses on native peoples, poor communities and people of color. The leaders of over 190 countries have signed the Paris Climate Accord, acknowledging the critical role every country must play if the life-sustaining climate of the earth is to continue to sustain life as we have always known it.

The Book of Common Prayer bids us to pray, "Grant that, as we probe the mysteries of your creation, we may come to know you more truly, and more surely fulfill our role in your eternal purpose. Give us wisdom and reverence so to use the resources of nature, that no one may suffer from our abuse of them, and that generations yet to come may continue to praise you for your bounty" BCP p. 827

Therefore the Episcopal Church in Connecticut has resolved to work collaboratively across the state with local governments, other denominations and communities of faith, as well as community partners and agencies, school systems, businesses and other stakeholders to take concrete steps to address climate change in our local communities and to uphold the aims of the Paris accord.

Inspired also by the 2011 Pastoral Letter from the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church, we have resolved and committed to helping community members across the ECCT see the ways in which relatively small lifestyle changes in their own families and homes can make big differences in terms of environmental impact, with special attention to habits around food and eating, heating and light, trash and recycling, transportation, and land and water use. We have called the worshiping communities of the ECCT to a season of prayer, contemplation, preaching, action, and celebration of the infinitude, mystery, and grace of God's created order that helps the faithful see themselves as essential parts of the divine plan of a web of life and as stewards of God's creation; deeply committed to advocating for those people and creatures rendered most vulnerable by climate change and therefore in the greatest need of protection and justice.

Concrete actions may include but are not limited to:

- Keeping the Sabbath by disengaging from electronics and un-necessary transport and by resting 'off the grid' as much as possible, thereby restoring and refreshing our souls and our spiritual life
- Greening our parishes and helping parishioners green their homes through use of renewables such as solar power and with the use and application of new technologies in lights, thermostats, and efficient use appliances
- Paying attention to how and what we drive and working for more and better public transit
- Conserving and protecting our water and air
- Eschewing plastics
- Recycling
- Working to reduce food waste and eating locally sourced foods as much as possible
- Planting and sustaining organic community gardens, using the fruit of the earth to feed the poor
- Protecting the habitats of local flora and fauna
- Working with our local and state governments for sustainability
- Advocating locally, nationally and globally for a cleaner climate, for environmental justice, and for those people and creatures most negatively impacted by climate change and environmental exploitation

Sources

ESUSA House of Bishops Pastoral Letter of 2011

The Bible and the BCP

A Life Of Grace For the Whole World Curriculum by The Rev.'s Stephanie M. Johnson and Jerry Cappel

Respectfully submitted,

The Episcopal Church of Connecticut. Voted and affirmed at the November 2017 Connecticut Convention