

PC(USA) Overture 08-06: The Earth is the Lord's

In June 2018, in response to the accelerating environmental crisis threatening God's People and God's Creation, PC(USA)'s 223rd General Assembly (2018) unanimously approved Overture 08-06 entitled **The Earth is the Lord's—Not Ours to Ruin: Priorities for a New Moral Era**. With this Overture, the national leadership was calling upon the whole church to raise its prophetic voice on the urgent issue of climate change and to participate in healing the earth, our home and God's gift for the future of all life. More specifically, it calls for the clergy to accept the mantle of moral leadership and to speak from the pulpits what must be done.

Energized by this overture, the Environmental Action Committee decided to promote this Overture, making it its major initiative and focus for the foreseeable future. EAC called upon Village Church to join the national church in its call to prayer and action to initiate a new moral era. It discussed multiple ways to turn the General Assembly's words into action at Village Church:

- Communicating this Earth-Caring and Earth-Honoring message to the church staff and to our congregation.
- Teaching this message in the classroom and proclaiming it from the pulpit.
- Advocating for environmental justice and social justice within and beyond the walls of Village Church.

EAC's goal became promoting and practicing effective and faithful strategies that will overcome denial, disinterest, and inertia and move people toward awareness, hope, and action. This includes invoking the 2006 PC(USA) General Assembly Resolution on Climate Change that strongly urges "all Presbyterians to immediately make a bold witness by aspiring to live carbon neutral lives."

Climate Change is here and now and getting worse. Climate Change is the overarching moral, social, theological, economic, environmental, and national security issue of our age—an issue that will determine how we live, where we live, and if we live. Climate Change is an accelerating worse-case scenario destined to become biblical in its scope, magnitude, and consequences, affecting the entire arc of human history. Climate change disproportionately hurts first and worst the lives of the poorest and most vulnerable among us—the least among us who are least responsible for its causes and least able to cope with its consequences. Significant and concerted actions on climate justice must be taken on multiple fronts sooner rather than later.

"The Gospel's good news of redemption applies to the earth, as well as the earthling." (Dr. Bob Meneilly, June 14, 1992). Another way to care about people is to care about our environment—the natural world that surrounds and sustains us. Heed the call. Dare to pray, speak and act to heal God's Good Green Earth!

If you have questions, if you share EAC's sense of urgency, if you would like to join EAC in addressing climate change, contact Rev. Dr. Rodger Nishioka or Jerry Rees.