

St. Mark's Cathedral Creation Care Ministry monthly meeting
Tuesday, February 28, 2023, via Zoom

Saint Mark's Cathedral acknowledges that we gather on the traditional land of the first people of Seattle, the Duwamish People, who are still here, and we honor with gratitude the land itself and the life of all the Coast Salish tribes.

Present: Kathy Minsch, Marjorie Ringness, Ruth Mulligan, Richard Hartung, Sue Ratner, Doug Thorpe, Carolyn White, Libby Carr, Jon Achée, Joshua Liljenstolpe.

Kathy opened with the Land Acknowledgement and Ruth read an opening prayer.

Kathy invited the group to offer a response to this question: What book or film have you read/seen lately that inspired you, and why?

Kathy encouraged us all to attend the **Creation Care retreat** to be held this Saturday, March 4 at Diocesan House. Once again, the Rev. Stephen Crippen will facilitate, and the Rev. Jennifer King Daugherty will assist and participate. Please rsvp to [Kathy](#) no later than Friday if planning to attend.

Richard reported on the work of the **Actions Group**, which usually meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 3pm, via [zoom](#). *All are welcome to attend anytime* and can contact [Richard](#) with questions. *Note: The March 8 meeting time is changed to 2pm, when Rev. Jennifer King Daugherty will join us.* Topics for [Climate Conversations](#) have been determined through October (second Tuesday evenings monthly.) Discussion continues about how to get more families signed up on the carbon tracker tool at www.SustainIslandHome.org. Ideas are being discussed about ways to give people opportunities to share and celebrate the actions they are taking to make a difference with climate change. This may be part of a forum on Sunday, April 23. More to come on this later.

Kathy reported that the **Legislative Advocacy group** is tracking and commenting on several bills during this 4-month state legislative session. Several climate change related bills have passed through committees and are progressing, including: HB1131 the WRAP Act, HB1181 Climate Change Growth Management Act, HB 1378/SB5433 Derelict Aquatic Structures, SB5104/Puget Sound Shorelines Monitoring Bill, and HB1047/Toxics-Free Cosmetics Act. Contact [Kathy](#) if you would like to be added to the group and receive email updates. John Achée also shared a bit about his past advocacy work in California and the power of people organizing around a cause.

Marjorie reported that several people have expressed interest in developing a **Creation Care Pledge**, as encouraged by Diocesan Resolution #4 adopted at this past fall's convention. A few met recently and began the conversation, which focused on the pledge being an expression of commitments from the community – something like “My Part.” The April 23 forum could include an introduction to the community of this concept. Contact [Marjorie](#) if you'd like to participate in this continuing conversation. The Creation Care Ministry will discuss the possibility of a Season of Creation (Resolution #5) in more depth at a future meeting. Seasons of Creation are generally recognized in the fall. The 2 Diocesan resolutions are copied at the end of these notes.

The planning for **Cathedral Day** on Saturday, April 22, which is also Earth Day, was discussed. Canon Wendy Barrie has said the liturgy and day will include an Earth Day theme. Our members suggested several ideas for activities after the liturgy: information about the Middle East Children's Alliance water projects, a walk through the Greenbelt on the paths, offering a way for people to write down the actions they're taking to fight climate change and post them somewhere, Leffler garden tours and a planting activity, a tour of the bees. It seemed to us that the planning for Earth Day activities should be led more by the new Diocesan Advisory Committee for Creation Care than St. Mark's Creation Care Ministry, but we are certainly open to more ideas! Marjorie and Kathy represent Saint Mark's on the Advisory Committee.

We are all encouraged to attend the **Sunday morning forum "Earth & Spirit"** with Gordon Miller coming up on March 19. Gordon will share from his writings, as a Lenten reflection.

Marjorie reported that the Diocesan Advisory Committee for Creation Care is hoping to host a presentation with John Kydd and Lisa Graumlich about their experiences at **COP27** on Wednesday, April 5, with a follow-up presentation connecting this work to the Diocesan Creation Care resolutions on Wednesday, April 19. These dates are not yet confirmed, but please tentatively mark them on your calendars.

A **Rogation Day Liturgy** planned for May 17 was briefly mentioned. It was suggested that we inquire if the youth choirs could participate, which may help to increase attendance. We will be in touch with Rev. Linzi Stahlecker to see if there are ways the Creation Care Ministry should be more involved or help with this liturgy.

Kathy and Marjorie reported that Wayne Duncan is still working with the **Visual Arts Ministry** to bring an exhibit to St. Mark's of works by two artists portraying farm workers and agricultural themes in Washington State, tying in well with climate justice and the effects of climate change on farm workers. Wayne is in contact with the artists to determine a date, likely in the fall.

The group spent a few minutes reflecting on how our meeting tonight touched on St. Mark's Mutual Ministry goals of 1.) Creation Care and Carbon Reduction, 2.) Restorative Justice and Systemic Change, and 3.) Innovative and Intergenerational Community.

Marjorie closed with a reading and short prayer.

Next Meeting Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Minutes submitted by
Marjorie Ringness & others present

See below and next page for several upcoming dates to remember:

Tuesday, March 14, 6:30-7:30pm on Zoom – [Climate Conversation](#) – Reuse

Sunday, March 19, 10:10am in Bloedel Hall – [“Earth & Spirit”](#) Forum with Gordon Miller, sharing from his book *Wisdom of the Earth* and his edition of Goethe’s *Metamorphosis of Plants*.

Wednesday, April 05, 7:00pm – *Tentative* - Diocesan forum on COP27 with John Kydd and Lisa Graumlich. On Zoom only.

Wednesday, April 19, 7:00pm – *Tentative* – Diocesan forum with John Kydd discussing Creation Justice resolutions. On Zoom only.

Saturday, April 22 – [Cathedral Day](#)

Sunday, April 23, 10:10am, Bloedel Hall – Intergenerational Forum with Creation Care

Sunday, April 30 – Earth Ministry Gala in Bloedel Hall. More details to come

Wednesday, May 17, 6:45pm – Rogation Day liturgy.

Creation Care Resolutions Passed at Diocesan Convention – October 2022

Resolution 4 - Creation Justice Pledge

Submitted by: John Kydd (Chair) and The Rev. Gail Wheatley on behalf of The Bishop's Task Force on Climate Justice.

- Resolved**, that the 112th Convention of the Diocese of Olympia recommend the study, reflection, education in congregations about the Creation Justice Pledge and encourage congregants and congregations to study the pledge, adapt it to their local context, and adopt it, and be it further
- Resolved**, that the Diocese of Olympia consider providing a web page for those adopting the pledge and which would provide resources for assisting in determining their personal and congregational carbon footprint.

Explanation

Pledging is central to faith. It keeps the lights on. Pledging for Creation Justice should be central to every faith. It keeps existence on. Committing to lowering our individual carbon footprints is important but no longer enough because most carbon expression is systemic, and the impacts of climate change inflict far greater harm on poor and marginalized communities. Like COVID, climate change harms the “have nots” far more than the “haves.”

We cannot address climate change without addressing our environmental racism and other forms of systemic discrimination. We cannot continue to pretend to be a colorblind society when we have, for four centuries, systemically deprived our people of life, liberty, and property based upon their color.

Per the COP Paris Accords, every country is urged to pledge to reduce carbon expression and assist countries harmed by carbon expression. The primary reason developed countries and energy companies have not pledged to address their harms is that they are unwilling to face the injustice they have created.

Since pledges by key nations are “empty,” we, as people of faith, can set the moral example by making pledges that are “full.” As our forebears pledged to abolish slavery and later to seek civil rights, we can seek climate justice.

The Episcopal Church has written creation care pledges and covenants such as the Episcopal Creation Care Pledge <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/creation-care/pledge/> and the Episcopal Covenant to Care of Creation <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/creation-care/> to build upon. Each reflects a commitment to care for Creation such as by eliminating the use of single-use plastics, learning to use a carbon tracker, planting trees, or purchasing carbon offsets.

We can pledge to understand and undo injustice to Creation by assisting another congregation significantly harmed by climate change. As congregations we can set an example for what countries should do.

The pledge is not fixed. Each congregation can adapt it to their needs. It is also optional. One need not commit to every term. As commitment grows, the pledge can grow. The Pledge allows clergy to assess the interest of their congregants. Members of the Bishop's Task Force on Environmental Climate Justice and others can assist in providing content for the diocesan webpage.

Creation Justice Pledge

1. I agree we have a climate emergency. I pledge to determine my carbon footprint (<https://www.sustainislandhome.org/>) and to reduce it by 50 percent by 2030.
2. I agree to urge my congregation to declare that there is a climate emergency. I pledge to determine the carbon footprint of our buildings and activities and to reduce them by 50 percent by 2030.
3. I pledge to educate myself about climate change so I can educate others about it. As part of my education, I pledge to complete a comprehensive climate change training such as Climate Reality Leadership Training (<https://www.climaterealityproject.org/training>).
4. To understand climate injustice, I pledge to complete the Episcopal Sacred Ground Program (<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/sacred-ground/>) this calendar year.
5. I pledge to learn how to write effective letters and op eds through, for example, <https://thirdact.org/> or some other organization.
6. I pledge to support youth and other climate activists.
7. I pledge to urge my congregation to adopt a curriculum that teaches the need for the care of Creation to our children as a central part of our faith.
8. I pledge to stop using banks that provide major funding for fossil fuel extraction.
9. I pledge to reach out to a congregation significantly harmed by climate change here or abroad and seek ways to address their harm.

Taking Action: Pledging unites us in reflection and action through which we promise to study, understand, and renew our frayed relations with Creation and join with others to speak out on climate issues.

Results: Pledging shows we are serious about our faith and about climate justice. As the situation worsens, more and more people will seek congregations that are facing, not fleeing, reality. As we embrace our deeper faith mission to seek Creation Justice, others may wish to join us.

Resolution 5 - Considering Adoption of a Season of Creation

Submitted by: John Kydd (Chair) & The Rev. Gail Wheatley on behalf of The Bishop's Task Force on Climate Justice

2 **Resolved**, that the 112th Convention of the Diocese of Olympia join other Episcopal dioceses in considering adoption of a Season of Creation, and be it further

3 **Resolved**, that the Diocese of Olympia incorporate this five-week season into its Diocesan
4 calendar for promotion and education in our diocese, and be it further

5 **Resolved**, that this Convention commend to and encourage all congregations in our diocese to
6 study and creatively adapt the Season of Creation to celebrate and better understand Creation
7 in their locality

Explanation

Creation Season (September 1-October 4) is celebrated by billions of Christians around the world. It begins on September 1 with the World Day of Prayer for Care of Creation <https://www.creationjustice.org/world-day-of-prayer-for-the-care-of-creation.html> and concludes with the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi on October 4.

The Season of Creation started in 1989 when Patriarch Dimitrios proclaimed September 1st as a day of prayer for creation. September 1st is the first day of the Orthodox church year so this was a celebration of God's Creation. The World Council of Churches extended it to a season from September 1st to October 4th by adding it to their annual calendar.

Pope Francis adopted the Season of Creation in 2015. The Anglican Communion recognizes the Season of Creation and resources provided by Anglican Communion Environmental Network has provided several here: <https://acen.anglicancommunion.org/resources/season-ofcreation.aspx>

Climate change now threatens all worship. As nations fall short of commitments needed to address global climate change, faiths can provide critical support by standing for the sacredness of Creation and Justice. Too many see creation as a series of resources instead of a web of sacred relations. Our faith worship can elevate the importance of addressing climate change and our capacity to adapt to it. Our first commandment is to protect and serve the garden of creation (Gen 2:15). Let us do so with beauty and ceremony worthy of God's gift of Creation.

Two Season of Creation resources packed with prayers and song offer many ideas for interested congregations. The first is from both Dioceses of Massachusetts. It can be found at <https://www.diomass.org/creation-care>. Their 2022 theme is "Listen to Creation" <https://seasonofcreation.org/>

The second is from South Africa which promotes the wonderfully mutual concept of "ubuntu" ("I am because you are") extending it to eco ubuntu ("we are because the planet is"). Their Season of Creation Manual can be found at: <https://www.greenanglicans.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/manual-2022-final.pdf>
For example, their five-week season celebrates: 1) Land Justice and Ubuntu, 2) Water Justice, 3) Gender and Climate Justice, 4) Justice for all God's creatures, and 5) St Francis and Ubuntu.