

Dear friends,

"We belong to the earth far more than it can ever belong to us. We—God, humankind, and the earth—are tied together. We have no life apart from this Trinitarian interdependency and we are called to care for the earth as if we are caring for ourselves and our Creator. The health and well being of one—be it God or humanity or the planet—is dependent on the health and well being of the others."

MODERATOR'S MESSAGE

By Diane Waddell

These were the words of my friend, the Rev. Jay McKell at a gathering of environmentally-minded people this spring at Village Presbyterian Church of Heartland Presbytery in Kansas. "We are to have dominion in the manner that God has dominion over us. In other words we are to heal, to help, to teach, to guide, to inspire, to create, and above all else, to love." Amen.

There is MUCH going on in creation-justice work. General Assembly is scheduled for June 14-21, 2014, in Detroit, and PEC is working to support social and environmental justice overtures. Beginning this General Assembly, overtures brought forward by a Presbytery will need another Presbytery to concur with the main overture statement, although the rationale can be different. Please see Holly's article, 'Upcoming Environmental Overtures' on page 4 regarding current overtures, and reply to our PEC coordinator if you are interested in more information about any of these upcoming overtures.

We welcome our new coordinator, Tricia Bruckbauer. PEC contracts with Creation Justice Ministries (formerly NCC Eco-Justice) as we share a staff member, a fellow from the Lutheran Volunteer Corps. (See Tricia's brief bio on page 6.)

We are looking forward to a very meaningful PEC conference at Ferncliff in Little Rock Arkansas, October 9 - 16. The theme for the conference is Ethical Earth Care: Keeping Creation Sacred. Elspeth Cavert, our previous PEC coordinator, has accepted the position of conference coordinator. She joins a team of visionaries, musicians, and prophets to lead us in a wonderful experience in sharing our passion and expanding our vision in Creation Care.

Please be in touch with us regarding your work in earth care as we join together "to heal, to help, to teach, to guide, to inspire, to create, and above all else, to love" this beautiful gift of creation.

Peace and passion,
Diane Waddell, Moderator. Presbyterians for Earth Care

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Servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God
(1 Corinthians 4:1b)



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PRAYER AND EARTH CARE

By Holly Hallman

Prayer? Of course!

When the Steering Committee met in October, last year, Rick Ufford-Chase, Moderator of the 216th General Assembly, invited the group to examine what PEC values, what the organization wants to grow into, and what might be missing in our work, newsletter/e-blasts, and overall foci. Care to guess what bubbled up as “missing”? Scripture and Prayer!

Our meetings and phone conversations begin and end with the gentle acknowledgement that the Holy Spirit is present and moving through our concerns and our decisions. But, none of those present felt we were reflecting that priority in our written communications. In a fun, free-for-all, way, Scriptures were suggested.

And so we hope you have noticed the addition of our unanimous favorite scripture now located under our logo on the www.presbyearthcare.org home page: *Servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God (1 Corinthians 4:1b)*.

In an effort to remind ourselves of who is really in charge, we are including a prayer in all of our newsletters and e-blasts.

How easy it is to squeeze in a few extra words and squeeze out the wonder of the *mysteries of God*. Really!

If we want the secular, we have many wonderful places to turn for connections. But, we are faith-based and all of us on the Steering Committee agreed that we want to emphasize the assurance of God’s love and presence. We will continue to make Scripture and prayer front page items!

*Holy One, you are the page and the ink!
You are the mystery and the reason for our organization/organizing. May we listen to your urgings. May we delight in your creation! Most of all may we be servants of Christ and stewards of all your wonders. Amen*



Grizzly Giant in Yosemite National Park.
Photo by Abby Mohaupt

Presbyterians for Earth Care (PEC) invites individuals and congregations to participate in the growing earth care movement within the Presbyterian Church(USA). PEC is a national eco-justice network that cares for God’s creation by connecting, equipping, and inspiring Presbyterians to make creation care a central concern of the church. Founded in 1995 as a grassroots organization to help the denomination educate and energize church members to address environmental concerns from a faith perspective, it works in partnership with PC(USA)’s Environmental Ministries Office and the Office of Public Witness to promote earth justice with a biblical and theological base. Regional representatives recruit presbyteries, churches, organizations, and individuals to help form a national network of Presbyterians to work toward the common goal of restoring creation for ecology and justice. Check out PEC’s web site at www.presbyearthcare.org If you would like to become involved or have questions, contact Tricia at presbyearthcare@gmail.com or your regional representative.

CELEBRATING WORKSHOPPING AT THE PEC 2013 FERNCLIFF CONFERENCE

By Nancy Corson Carter

As workshop coordinator for this conference, I rejoice in the willingness of leaders who have come forward to offer such a rich cornucopia of experiences. Many are ordained with special Earth-caring emphases; some work in PC(USA) national offices; there are scientists, musicians, poets, educators, and political activists in our midst. PEC's mission of "Caring for God's Creation by Connecting, Equipping, and Inspiring" is carried out by a truly gifted team.

It was hard for me to choose which of the 24 workshops I would attend; I'm sorry that my own workshops prevent me from participating in simultaneous ones. Nevertheless, we all have superb choices. Every workshop amplifies, in one way or another, our theme of "Ethical Earth Care: Keeping Creation Sacred." Together, they are intended to feed our souls, to help us return to our congregations and communities with new spiritual and practical resources, and to equip us to deal with some of the thorny dilemmas now facing us.

Here's a brief overview of our exciting workshops (more details at www.presbyearthcare.org): We look into spiritual treasures we've inherited as we examine scriptural resources in such workshops as "Digging Deep into Theology: the Garden of Eden, Cain and Abel, and Noah": we explore "Celtic Saints and Earth Care," and we highlight the wisdom of native people in "Environmental Justice Through Indigenous Eyes."

Our leaders provide opportunities to explore Earth care on local, national, and international levels. For local activism, we have "Putting the Community in Community Gardens," "Earth Care in Congregations" (particularly using the wide variety of resources in PC(USA) Environmental Ministries), "Green Ideas for Camps that Can Energize Children, Educate Adults, and Inspire Churches,"

and "Experiencing Green in the Congregation," based on experiential education models.

Nationally we venture into various realms of advocacy with "Speaking Truth to Power: Prophetic Witness as Ministry and Discipleship," "Writing Overtures and Resolutions," "Eco-Justice Advocacy: What Can We Do When Congress Isn't Doing Anything?" and "A Life-Giving Approach to Clean Water and Clean Air Advocacy."

Particular issues of national scope, which of course have wider relevance, are "Fracking: A Stained Glass Window on the Energy Future and the Human Prospect," "Mountain Top Removal Mining," "Connecting the Dots: Environment, Poverty, and Violence," and "Chemicals and Health"

Primarily on the international level we have "The Rio Experience/UN Goals," "Solar Energy in the Developing World," "Food Sovereignty: Land, Water, Seeds," and "Are We Doomed?" a question for us all.

To explore creativity, we have "Artshop! (Creating & Creation)," "Contemplating Our Holy Center" with Mary Oliver's poetry and walking the labyrinth, "Eco-Justice Worship, Ritual, and Spiritual Formation," and "Tour of Heifer Ranch," a truly creative organization.

These workshops are only a part of a conference that is sure to be a blessing to all who participate. If you miss it, be sure to look for resources we'll share on the PEC website and on future *PEC Update* pages.

Nancy Corson-Carter, Ph.D., is a former moderator of PEC and a ruling elder in the PC(USA).

GET THE UPDATE EMAILED TO YOU!

In 2013, we would like to encourage our members who are comfortable with email to get *The Update* in electronic form only to decrease PEC's dependency on paper.

If you would like to make this change, please contact PEC's Coordinator, Tricia Bruckbauer, at presbyearthcare@gmail.com. Thank you!

UPCOMING ENVIRONMENTAL OVERTURES

By Holly Hallman

Up until recently, I thought an overture was the first part of a symphony. A resolution was what we made on New Year's Day. Now I understand both to be an outpouring of concern from the heart of a person who meets another person with a kindred desire, that finds a congregation to grow their seed of awareness, that has their session approve, bless and pass forward the documented idea to a presbytery and, with further nurturing and growth, births the child of that initial desire. An Overture!

And there it is, in a committee with many thoughtful minds engaging in dialogue, exploring, examining and, often, recommending this seed of concern for the consideration of all attending General Assembly. And so, from one person, joined in community by others, comes the voice of PC(USA) in Washington D.C., in congregations all over the nation, in Louisville, and in the hearts of those who first planted the seed. It isn't the first notes of a grand symphony, but the overture surely makes a sound that pleases our Creator.

Are you one of those people who hold a seed of concern but think the task of creating an overture too grand to attempt? Well, once upon a time, a man wearing sandals spoke his seeds of concern into a few ears and look at what is happening, still, with his passions.

PEC has documented five areas of advocacy: XL Tar Sands, Mountain Top Removal, Fracking, Coal Export, and most recently, Divestment. Two of those topics are being "overtured" and a synopsis follows. A third area of concern is flowing into an overture on Sustainable Development: the Precautionary Principle, a guide for evaluation of environmental and health ventures. That too is excerpted below. Food Sovereignty is a fourth focus. See Below. But, who will write for the other areas and who but you will speak your seed of concern into a focus for our Church? If you start, others will help you with the details. We even have an October workshop at the conference where many overtures will be birthed.

Perhaps your congregation feels compelled by the work done in another presbytery. This year, for the first time, all overtures must have two presbyteries concurring on each submitted document. Can you help another group by taking their "seed" to your session? And if you are voicing

your "seed" will you let us help you find concurrences? It takes a village... Or, if you are following the fellow in sandals, it takes a few willing (if grumpy at times) disciples. PEC wants to be the "few", the village, that grows many, many environmental seeds at the 2014 General Assembly.

The following are overtures that are currently in the process of being approved by presbyteries across the denomination. Each overture will be available in full on our website at www.presbyearthcare.org.

Coal Export

As people of faith, we are called to love our neighbor as ourselves. In the United States, coal-fired power has steadily declined in the last decade because of a shift to natural gas, increased conservation and renewable energy, as well as stronger anti-pollution rules. Local communities, including many faith voices, have prevented new coal-fired power plants from being built and set strict limits on air pollution from existing plants. Knowingly enabling pollution of the air that our global neighbors breathe is morally unacceptable. Additionally, air pollution in China contributes to pollution in our Presbytery and across our synod, including mercury in local waters, melting glaciers and disruptive weather patterns.

Further reliance on coal slows the transition to better stewardship of God's creation through clean and renewable energy, conservation and energy efficiency. Climate change is a serious threat to generational justice. Faith community leaders have the moral responsibility to ask civil authorities to consider all effects of the mining, transport and burning of coal on all of God's children.

Divestment from Fossil Fuels

As people of faith, we are called to love the least of these. Climate change has had a disproportionate impact on those living in poverty and in the least developed countries, the elderly and children, and those least responsible for the emissions of greenhouse gases. The destructive effects of climate change will reach all of God's creation. By divesting as a denomination from fossil fuel companies—a prophetic act—the PC(USA) drives public awareness of the massive damage being done by the fossil fuel industry, builds public recognition of the urgent need to

drastically reduce humanity's dependency on fossil fuels, leads a commitment to leave untapped 80% of the known carbon reserves while developing renewable energy resources, and calls for reinvestment in renewable and efficient energy. Divestment from the fossil fuel industry would no longer allow the PC(USA) to profit from the destruction of creation and the suffering of humanity caused by climate change from burning fossil fuels.

Divestment would take place in three ways. First, any new investments in fossil fuel companies would stop. Second, in five years, the Board of Pensions and the PC(USA) Foundation would be fully divested. Third, regular reports on progress toward full divestment would be readily available.

Earthkeepers of Heartland Presbytery is submitting the following two overtures to the Presbytery

Sustainable Development:

The Precautionary Principle

The Precautionary Principle affirms the vital importance of an ethic of responsible and moral development of consumer products. If governments/societies used the Precautionary Principle as a guide, the burden of proof of the safety of products coming to consumers would shift to the developer

AN OVERTURE ON LEED DESIGN

This time last year, I was headed into Washington, DC for the Greening Congregations event at the White House. It was an amazing experience, but the best part was being invited to a follow-up event for the ENERGY STAR Buildings Partner Meeting in October. This was a great gathering of ENERGY STAR partners from across the country, in a variety of sectors. One of the keynote speakers was from a school district, talking about the savings that the district realized by instituting a district-wide code for energy use, building renovations and upgrades, and other greening measures. Because of the savings realized, the district was able to save teacher positions that were in danger of being cut because of lack of funding.

I immediately had the idea to propose a similar overture or resolution at the next GA meeting. Not just something that would be approved presbytery by presbytery, but a follow up to the Restoring Creation policy

or corporation before the product is sent to the public. Concerns most specifically relate to Genetically Modified crops, toxic chemicals, and products of nanotechnology. Currently if a product comes to the public which is harmful, the burden of proving the harm is placed upon the individual or group in the public realm harmed. This overture "affirms the Sacred in societal and Creation care, protecting the Earth for future generations."

Food Sovereignty for All

This affirms the vital importance of Food Sovereignty, in which people are able to educate and empower themselves to manage their own food (and water) systems in a culturally appropriate and sustainable way, leading toward a just, peaceful, and sustainable world. This overture addresses hunger issues, unequal distribution of food and monetary wealth, water rights, land grabs, possible challenges brought by corporations, and Fair Trade (with definite concerns about the Trans Pacific Partnership free trade agreement).

The leaves of the trees
are for the healing of
the nations...

Revelation 22:2



By Katie Preston

and the Carbon Neutral policies that have been passed over the years.

Below is my suggestion for language for an overture on implementation of LEED design throughout the denomination:

The Presbytery of the James overtures the 221st General Assembly (2014) to encourage all congregations within the denomination to institute the following policy regarding new construction or renovations of existing buildings:

When considering a new building project, congregations will strive to meet at least Earth Craft certified, but will consider LEED design options as well.

When renovating existing structures, sustainability practices in design and demolition will be considered by all congregations.

TURNING THE TABLES AT BIG TENT

By Rebecca Barnes

Over 1,700 Presbyterians gathered in Louisville, KY, for Presbyterian Church (USA)'s Big Tent conference, where participants shared plenaries, worship, and meals with everyone in attendance, and also got to take specific tracks provided by the ministry areas of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. Presbyterians interested in environmental, economic, and social justice—particularly as these concerns relate to food justice—gathered for “Turning the Tables,” a Compassion, Peace and Justice Summit. Planned and led by young adults, this conference featured interactive dialogue, informative presentations, creative worship, a laid-back coffee house to share the arts (with social justice themes), and hands-on action opportunities/site visits.



“Turning the Tables” was a nice mixture of newcomers and long-time veterans of the PCUSA peace and justice scene. From throwing beach balls to identify our questions about food justice, to getting on buses to see environmental justice sites, a refugee agricultural plot, or to deliver a Fair Food letter to a local Wendy's, this conference was full of high spirits and good connections.

Conference planners created a packet of their conference session agendas and sent it to participants afterwards, with the hope that anyone who wanted to replicate any of the sessions “back home” could do so. In addition to spreading education back home, actions

from “Turning the Tables” included:

- following the Farm Bill as it gets reconciled between House and Senate and advocating for food stamp benefits and conservation measures to be included,
- paying attention and taking action for environmental justice in your own community,
- supporting or creating a community garden, and
- engaging in community organizing in order to build relationships and resolve problems in community.

Rebecca Barnes is the Associate for Environmental Ministries. You may contact her at Rebecca.Barnes@pcusa.org

MEET OUR NEW COORDINATOR: TRICIA BRUCKBAUER

Tricia grew up in Buckley, WA right near Mt. Rainier and recently graduated from Gonzaga University with a degree in Communications. She is participating in the Lutheran Volunteer Corps this year and has been placed at Creation Justice Ministries, part of the National Council of Churches. She has a passion for the environment, especially public lands. In her spare time, she enjoys traveling, baking, and crafting. She is a self-professed national park “junkie”. Tricia is excited about this partnership with PEC and looks forward to this year!

Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving;
make melody to our God on the lyre.
He covers the heavens with clouds,
prepares rain for the earth,
makes grass grow on the hills.
He gives to the animals their food,
and to the young ravens when they cry.
His delight is not
in the strength of the horse,
nor his pleasure in the speed of a runner;
but the Lord takes pleasure
in those who fear him,
in those who hope in his steadfast love.
Psalm 147:7-11

PRAYER AND PREPARING FOR THE 2013 CONFERENCE

By Neddy Astudillo

Fred Bahnson, in an article in the Washington Post said*: “Make no mistake: we won’t end climate change or obesity or hunger by growing a few tomatoes at the neighborhood community garden. We need activists and congregations pushing our leaders for sweeping change on multiple fronts. But our passions and convictions need to first be formed in a place where we can glimpse that unbroken wholeness for which we all yearn.”

Our worship at Ferncliff will be such a place. A place to nurture our calling as caretakers of God’s earth, a place to hear her story, our story, a place to recognize her brokenness, our brokenness; a place to challenge, heal, inspire and empower our lives, to follow paths where all the earth can find its wholeness.

Let’s ready our hearts on our way to Ferncliff praying together:

On the way to Ferncliff
may we humbly walk with you, God of life.
On the way to Ferncliff
guide us as we gather, pray and deliberate
as disciples of Christ.
On the way to Ferncliff
lead us in the way of eco-justice,
peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

(* July 31st, 2013

Adapted from the WCC resource for the 10th General Assembly

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO PEC’S BYLAWS

By Jane Laping

PEC is continually updating and making changes to our operations to be a more effective and more efficient organization. For example, advances in communications have made mailing less practical and changes in the economy have made meetings of the membership more challenging. These differences are reflected in changes to PEC’s Bylaws that the Steering Committee approved at its July meeting. The following amendments will be voted on by the membership at the PEC Annual Meeting at Ferncliff Conference Center on October 18.

- The Steering Committee election will be conducted electronically in addition to a mailed written ballot prior to the Annual Meeting.
- The Annual Meeting will be conducted at the Steering Committee’s Annual Retreat.
- An Executive Committee, made up of the Moderator, Vice-Moderator, and Treasurer will have full authority to act for the Steering Committee in managing the affairs of the organization between meetings of the Steering Committee.

- A provision for the Steering Committee to fill a vacancy on the Committee, by appointing a successor to serve the remainder of the vacating Director’s term has been added. The Steering Committee may also authorize the Moderator to make interim appointments to fill vacancies. Any person appointed to fill a vacancy on the Steering Committee will hold that office until the Annual Meeting at which the successor is elected and assumes office.
- The Nominating Committee will be approved by the Steering Committee instead of being elected by the Membership. The Membership will still vote on the slate of nominees.
- A quorum will consist of one-half of the Steering Committee members.

These amendments are being published in the PEC Update in accordance with the PEC Bylaws to notify the membership at least 15 days before the vote. A blackline document showing all the changes and edits to the bylaws can currently be viewed at www.presbyearthcare.org.



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NEW in 2013:

Please note that you now must opt-in to receive a hard copy of the PEC newsletter via US mail. If you do not check the opt-in box above, you will receive the newsletter via email only.