

A Call To Action by Presbyterians for Earth Care

A SPIRITUAL ISSUE FOR OUR TIME: Presbyterians for Earth Care calls on all of its members, all Presbyterians and all people of faith to take action in response to the permission granted by the Army Corps of Engineers to Energy Transfer Partners to resume construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline, including running the pipeline under the Missouri River just north of the Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota. PEC makes this call for action for these reasons:

CLAIM OUR VOCATION: God gives humankind the vocation of caring for creation (Genesis 2:15, Numbers 35:33-34). We desecrate creation by polluting and turning away from the reality that God alone owns creation (Deuteronomy 10:14, Psalm 24:1). Like the prophets of the Bible, we are called to act and to speak out when creation is defiled (Jeremiah 2:7, Ezekiel 34:17-18, Hosea 4:1-3).

1. **PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH:** Leakage from the DAPL can pollute not only the drinking water of the Standing Rock Tribe but also the drinking water of millions along the Missouri River south of the pipeline. [High numbers of pipelines spill](#) each year (e.g. 633 in 2016, 715 in 2015), such as in [Iowa](#), [Missouri](#), and [North Dakota](#). Leakage from pipelines not only puts oil into the water but carcinogens such as [benzene, toluene, and xylene](#).
2. **ENVIRONMENTAL DANGERS:** This pipeline promotes dependence on fossil fuels. Instead of building more pipelines, investments and resources should be directed toward developing sustainable sources of energy. The Indigenous People of Standing Rock believe they are standing up to the fossil fuel industry not only for themselves but for all people and for all the earth.
3. **SACRED LAND VIOLATED:** Sacred burial sites north of the Standing Rock Tribe have been irreparably damaged by the building of the DAPL. State inspectors identified some sites and these were avoided, but failed to do so for other sites. These sites are on “private” land, and [federal law states](#) that these sites are to be respected and preserved.
4. **FALSELY CLAIMED, OBJECTIONS DENIED:** Energy Transfer Partners has claimed that no members of the Standing Rock Tribe came to public meetings held to discuss the building of the pipeline. According to the Standing Rock Tribe [such claims are false](#). Objections were made when the Keystone XL pipeline was proposed, when the DAPL was proposed, and when the route of the DAPL was moved to just north of the Standing Rock Reservation.
5. **ANOTHER BROKEN TREATY:** The Standing Rock Tribe states that it never agreed to or signed the Ft. Laramie Treaty of 1851 and therefore the land the DAPL sits on north of the reservation still belongs to them.
6. **RACISM:** The building of the DAPL is another example in the long history of [geographical racism](#) against people of minority ethnic groups by taking away their land or by placing them in undesirable locations without consultation or agreement. Along the Missouri River, five dams were built in the 1940s and 1950s without proper consultation with tribes whose fertile lands were taken away by the resulting man-made lakes. The construction of the DAPL is just another instance of geographical racism.

7. **STRONGARM TACTICS:** Protests made by Native Americans and supporters at the DAPL site were met by police in riot gear deployed with military-styled vehicles. Concussion grenades, pepper spray, water cannons in the sub-freezing temperatures, attack dogs, tear gas, rubber bullets and snipers were used by the police and private security guards. Most protestors practiced prayer in the face of such violent displays. Hundreds of protestors were arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, criminal trespass and obstructing highways, along with reporters who were observing and recording the events.
8. **DISREGARD FOR THE LAW:** The Army Corps of Engineers agreed in December, 2016 to conduct and complete an [Environmental Impact Study on the DAPL](#) as spelled out in the Federal Register before permission to continue construction was given. Although the EIS was not completed, the Corps reversed itself and gave permission for the DAPL to proceed. Also, the DAPL project was [fast-tracked](#) using what is called a “Nationwide Permit No. 12” process which treats the pipeline as a series of small construction sites rather than the large multi-state project it is. As a result, the risks to the Missouri River, the Sioux people, and others were never properly assessed.

TAKE ACTION: Because of these reasons, Presbyterians for Earth Care urges its members, Presbyterians and all people of faith to respond with the following actions:

- a. **DEFUND** banks that support the DAPL. Close your accounts and encourage all organizations, governments and colleges you are associated with to do the same. A list of these can be found [here](#).
- b. **DONATE** money to: [Presbyterians for Earth Care](#), [Presbytery of the Northern Plains](#) (in North Dakota), [earthjustice.com](#), the legal fund at [Sacred Stone Legal Defense Fund](#), [Red Warrior Legal Defense Fund](#), and [Synod of Lakes and Prairies, 2115 Cliff Drive, Eagan, MN 5512](#). Payable to: Synod of Lakes and Prairies; *note: Dakota Access Pipeline Acct #2087*, to help defend those who have been arrested and to fight in court the easement granted by the Army Corps of Engineers.
- c. **PROTEST** to support our Indigenous brothers and sisters against the DAPL in our cities, including [Washington, DC](#) ([standwithstandingrock.net/march/](#)), and at Army Corps of Engineers offices.
- d. **PRAY** for those at Standing Rock and pray that God’s justice will prevail with the DAPL.
- e. **SPEAK OUT REPEATEDLY** to government officials, especially your U.S. Senators and Representatives. Call Senator Maria Cantwell, Chair of the Committee on Indian Affairs and other members of the committee. [Congress.gov](#) has contact information for legislators as well as pending bills and other legislative information and activities.
- f. **STAY INFORMED**. Know the facts. Keep your contacts informed through social media.
- g. **BOYCOTT** Sunoco, Phillips 66, Chevron and Conoco who are associated with Energy Transfer Partners and DAPL. Encourage others to do the same.