



# ... BRIEFLY

## Presbyterian Peace Fellowship

Special Issue: **Climate Change & Conflict**  
 Vol. 72 Summer 2015 [presbypeacefellowship.org](http://presbypeacefellowship.org)  
**Trusting the Nonviolence of Jesus Christ Today**

### Climate Change & Conflict

*Thank you, God, for creating a beautifully interconnected universe. Your sun evaporates waters from the earth, which are pushed along by wind before raining back down; your great mountains are weathered away by the precipitation and become soil; your plants grow from this earth and water, sustaining animals and biomes and great climate systems in a wonderful web of creation, of which we are all part. Help us live into our interconnected identity as part of creation. Yes, give your people wisdom and the courage to choose life now. Amen.*

#### Climate & Conflict Case Study: Peru

--Colleen Earp, Richmond, VA & Ben Snipes, Chicago, IL

Around the world, people experience violence over natural resources, sometimes dying for the very land and water that gives them life. Examples: conflict over oil in South Sudan and Iran; clashes over water rights around the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, the Nile River, the Aral Sea, and in drought-stricken places like California, Syria and Kenya; struggle over land in Haiti and India. As climate change grows, conflict grows. We will fight for land, food, resources, water and breathable air.

Many of these environmental problems are intertwined with one another. In Dec. 2014, a Presbyterian Hunger Program group went to Peru to learn how environmental issues are affecting communities there. Our group learned that land grabbing for intensive mineral extraction has caused people to lose arable land and their food. The mining and smelting of heavy metals used in technology have polluted the waterways so badly that in the mountain village of La Oroya, over 99% of the children have unhealthy levels of lead in their blood. Child physical and mental development suffers by living in this place and drinking the water. Mining causes acid rain that breaks down the surface of the Andes

Mountains, further clogging the streams with debris. Furthermore, this water source is already threatened: climate change causes irregular weather patterns as well as the rapid shrinking of the Huaytapallana Glacier that supplies water to this mountain village and desert cities downstream like Lima, the capital.

Peruvian Climatologist Walter Lopez, right, with PC(USA) Mission Co-Worker Jed Koball



Myriad problems stem from environmental changes in this village. And those who defend the land face many risks: 57 local environmentalists have been murdered for their work in the past decade.

Climate change and environmental degradation amplify pre-existing social, economic, and political problems everywhere. This is especially true in places like La Oroya, where people don't have easy access to resources, goods, and political protection to begin with. They are early victims of climate change.

#### Fossil Fuel Case Study: Kurdish Iraq

--Terra Winston, Christian Peacemaker Teams, Iraq

In an ancient farming village in the Kurdistan region of Iraq, kak Latif is a subsistence farmer by heritage, a lawyer by profession and an activist by commitment. After bringing people together for a series of successful protests against Exxon Mobil's oil explorations in his village, kak Latif has become a partner of Christian Peacemaker Team's work in supporting other farming communities who lost their fields, vineyards and orchards, mostly without any compensation, to the same corporation.

During its rule, the Iraqi Ba'ath party headed by Saddam Hussein kept Kurdish oil **(cont. p. 8)**

## Co-Directors Emily Brewer & Fritz Gutwein

On our mind on Emily's first days as PPF's Co-Director:

- The Iran Nuclear Treaty and the US Senate's support
- The racism and violence of the Charleston shootings
- Peace talks underway in Colombia
- Daily gun deaths due to weak rules and enforcement

Hovering over all is the impact of climate change on war. This **Briefly** highlights how the violence of war, racism, and poverty are inextricably linked to the environmental crisis--- and what we can do about it. To join PPF's new team on Climate Change and Conflict, contact Fritz.

We do see great hope. Paul Chappell, *right*, urged us at PPF's June convocation to take hope in the fact that people respond well to the dignity and empathy that create peace. "It's going to take work," he said, "but we have to create a culture in which it's abnormal to stereotype and dehumanize others. It starts with influencing our own institutions. We must have respect for life itself, recognizing the inherent dignity of creation itself."



As leadership changes at PPF, we thank Roger Powers, our gifted long-time Co-Moderator. We are grateful for the ways that Rick Ufford-Chase has led PPF as Director and Co-Director for 9 years -- and as he will continue as new Co-Moderator along with Libby Shannon. Together with you, we all re-commit to discerning God's path away from war and toward peace.  
**Peace Always, Emily & Fritz**

**From left, Rick Ufford-Chase with PPF Convocation Leaders Daher and Amal Nassar; below, Emily, Fritz and Roger Powers. See [presbypeacefellowship.org/content/re-cap-2015-convocation-peacemakers](http://presbypeacefellowship.org/content/re-cap-2015-convocation-peacemakers)**

### **BRIEFLY** is the newsletter of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship

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## A PEACEMAKER'S CALENDAR

**Aug. 6 & 9** Hiroshima and Nagasaki Days

**Sept. 17-20** PPF National Committee, Stony Point, NY

**Sept. 25-Oct. 18** International Peacemakers Tour  
See [pcusa.org/peacemaking](http://pcusa.org/peacemaking)

**Oct. 4** World Communion Sunday, Peace & Global Witness Offering. See [www.pcusa.org/specialofferings](http://www.pcusa.org/specialofferings)

**Oct. 3 Nashville, TN** PPF's "Anne Barstow & Tom Driver Award for Excellence in Nonviolent Direct Action in Retirement" to be presented to Don Beisswenger. Details at [presbypeacefellowship.org](http://presbypeacefellowship.org) or 845-786-6743  
**This is a surprise...don't tell Don!!**

**Oct. 9-11** Event on Rehabilitating the Mississippi River Watershed, Minn. MN, sponsored by the Underground Seminary [www.cando.org/5th-annual-conference/](http://www.cando.org/5th-annual-conference/)

**Oct. 26-Nov.6** Presbyterian Peacemaking Program Travel Seminar to Colombia. 888-728-7228 x 8700

**Nov. 20-22** 26<sup>th</sup> Annual School of the Americas Vigil in Ft. Benning, GA. Contact [marwhite@igc.org](mailto:marwhite@igc.org) & see [soaw.org](http://soaw.org) Activist conference, workshops, rally, commemoration of the martyrs and a march to the Stewart Detention Center

**Dec. 10-13** National Gun Violence Sabbath. To participate in your area, see [www.DecemberSabbath.org](http://www.DecemberSabbath.org)

**March 10-14, 2016** Colombia Accompaniment Training, Stony Point, NY. Can you give one month to walk with church members in Colombia as they live out the gospel in their nation? Explore this with Linda Eastwood at [colombia@presbypeacefellowship.org](mailto:colombia@presbypeacefellowship.org)

**June 18 - 25, 2016** - 222nd PC(USA) General Assembly, Portland OR. **NOTE:** Overtures now require consultation with GA entities impacted and concurrence by at least one more presbytery. Deadline for overtures/ concurrences to arrive at Office of the GA: April 19, 2016 for overtures with financial implications and May 4, 2016 for all others. [pcusa.org/resource/how-submit-overture/](http://pcusa.org/resource/how-submit-overture/)

### Nonviolence News

**The Huffington Post** On July 8 a new blog by PPFers Bruce & Carolyn Winfrey Gillette included "A New Hymn for Charleston" and: *While some lift up the importance of the Second Amendment, people of faith need to pay more attention to the Second Commandment: Don't make idols! When our love of guns becomes more important than our concern for thousands of people who lose their lives each year in the U.S. to gun violence, we have a spiritual problem as well as a practical one.* [huffingtonpost.com/bruce-and-carolyn-winfrey-gillette/](http://huffingtonpost.com/bruce-and-carolyn-winfrey-gillette/)

**Israel-Palestine Update:** The UCC passed Occupation divestment by an 80% vote. Episcopalians voted for corporate engagement in 2016 and then divestment if corporations still profit from or enable the Occupation.

PPF has a new 3 session small group educational tool: **"Can We Be Peacemakers for Palestine?"** See [presbypeacefellowship.org/palestinepeacemakers](http://presbypeacefellowship.org/palestinepeacemakers)

**A Protestant Study Guide for the Pope's Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'***

Pope Francis recently released a highly anticipated papal encyclical on the subject of climate change and faith. An encyclical is a letter which is normally addressed to the bishops of the world to guide them in their relationship with their flocks. But this encyclical, entitled *Laudato Si'* which translates into English as "Praise Be Unto You," has been eagerly embraced by many individual Catholics believers, Protestants and members of other faiths as well.

This guide can assist individuals or small groups in studying *Laudato Si'*. It follows the natural divisions of the letter and recommends scriptural and worship resources to create a seven part study to encourage fruitful conversation. May these conversations lead to a surge of faithful action on the part of Christians from all traditions to care for our common home.

**How to Use this Study as a Group**

Before beginning the study ensure that every participant has a copy of the study guide, the text of *Laudato Si'* itself, and the additional resources that this study uses. All of these documents may be downloaded from the Presbyterian Peace - Fellowship website here: <http://www.presbypeacefellowship.org/laudatosi>

Select one moderator, or a rotation of moderators for each week if preferred. It is the moderator's responsibility to thoroughly read the texts for that week and choose one or two quotes from *Laudato Si'* which they find most worthy of discussion. The moderator guides the discussion and ensures all the participants are given an opportunity to contribute.

You can also use the prayers at the end of *Laudato Si'* to open and close each session. If desired the poetry and music resources could also be incorporated into worship services based on the encyclical, and, of course, it would be highly appropriate to conclude the entire study with a celebration of the Eucharist.

The recommended flow of a single one-hour session is as follows:

1. Moderator reads a couple highlights of that week's reading and invites general feedback about the text.
2. Reflect on the discussion questions provided
3. Read the Scripture Readings aloud together; reflect on how they relate to what you read in *Laudato Si'*.
4. Read aloud or sing the additional resources provided. How do these relate to what you read in *Laudato Si'*?

**Session One - Introduction**

Prior to Meeting: read the introduction of *Laudato Si'* (pp. 1-16) Scripture Readings: Psalm 104

Poem: *The Creation* by James Weldon Johnson Song: *For the Beauty of the Earth* by Folliott S. Pierpoint

Encyclicals are a tradition-bound genre of Roman Catholic social teaching. This means that the beginning of the letter is primarily concerned with establishing its connection to the history and tradition of the church. For this reason Pope Francis quotes several of his immediate predecessors, and of course his namesake St. Francis of Assisi whose poem inspired the title of this encyclical. In a surprising connection, Francis reaches out to the Patriarch of Constantinople demonstrating common ground on this subject and expressing the hope of one day accomplishing full ecclesial communion.

**Discussion Questions**

1. What traditions formed your understanding of humanity's relationship to nature?
2. How do you relate to the tradition of Roman Catholic social teaching this encyclical is part of?
3. What do you think it means to view the world not as a problem to be solved, but as "a joyful mystery to be contemplated with gladness and praise?"

**Session Two - What Is Happening To Our Common Home?**

Prior to Meeting: read chapter one of *Laudato Si'* (pp. 17-61) Scripture Readings: Matthew 6:25-34

Poem: *Manifesto: The Mad Farmer Liberation Front* by Wendell Berry

Song: *O God Your Heart Is Broken* by Edith Sinclair Downing

The first chapter of *Laudato Si'* looks at the facts on the ground. It's remarkable for a document of religious teaching to give such a prominent position to scientific findings. It contains strong clear statements about the overwhelming scientific consensus regarding climate change as well as hints of the social and economic analysis developed in later sections.

**Discussion Questions**

1. A key insight of *Laudato Si'* is that concern for the environment and concern for the poor are connected. What does it mean that developed nations owe an "ecological debt" to the developing world?
2. Francis warns that scarcity of resources, particularly water, may become a major source of conflict in this century. In what ways are warfare and climate change connected?
3. Why is it inadequate to think of endangered species as resources? Why does Francis urge us to see that they have value in themselves?

### **Session Three - The Gospel of Creation**

Prior to Meeting: read chapter two of *Laudato Si'* (pp. 62-100) Scripture Readings: Colossians 1:15-23

Poem: *Canticle of the Sun* by Francis of Assisi

Song: *All Creatures of Our God and King* by Wm. H. Draper

Having considered the facts of our situation, *Laudato Si'* turns toward the biblical understanding of humanity's relationship to creation. Francis makes a strong case that the Bible does not permit an ideology of ownership and domination, but insists that the whole earth and all its creatures belong to God, including ourselves. Humanity is entrusted with the responsibility of caring for the earth and assisting our fellow creatures in reaching our common destiny in Christ.

#### Discussion Questions

1. Francis sets out in this section to demonstrate that our Bible provides ample motivation for Christians to care for creation. How does the Bible motivate you to take care of the environment?
2. What does it mean that Judeo-Christian thought "demythologized nature"? How is this helpful in motivating ecological stewardship?
3. The principle that private property is subordinate to the common good is a striking challenge to our culture. How do you think it would impact our society if we embraced this principle?

### **Session Four - The Human Roots of the Ecological Crisis**

Prior to Meeting: read chapter three of *Laudato Si'* (pp. 101-136) Scripture Readings:

Genesis 2:4-4:16

Song: *Many and Great, O God* by Joseph Renville

In the third chapter, Francis approaches the question of the roots of our ecological crisis from a particular angle. He identifies a tendency which he calls our technocratic paradigm, to rush toward results and in the process to treat animals, the environment, and even fellow human beings as means to an end. For this reason our technology often creates as many problems as it solves, and he fears this pattern will continue unless we step back and take a more holistic approach.



Photo: NASA

#### Discussion Questions

1. According to *Laudato Si'* "Each age tends to have only a meager awareness of its own limitations." What are some examples of limitations our society may not be aware of?
2. What does it mean that "technological products are not neutral?"
3. To ensure economic freedom for everyone, "restraints occasionally have to be imposed on those possessing greater resources and financial power." What types of restraints do you think might be necessary?

### **Session Five - Integral Ecology**

Prior to Meeting: read chapter four of *Laudato Si'* (pp. 137-162) Scripture Readings: Leviticus 25

Song: *This Land is Your Land* by Woodie Guthrie

The fourth chapter provides an example of what a holistic approach looks like. When we speak of the "environment," we mean a complex relationship between society and nature. Thus, an integral ecology considers social, economic, and cultural systems alongside natural ones. How we build public and private spaces for leisure, beauty, cultural heritage, and with the people who live there in mind, and striving toward the common good not only for ourselves, but for generations to come is part of our ecology.

#### Discussion Questions

1. Often questions of environmental degradation are framed as though humanity and nature are opposing forces, but *Laudato Si'* reminds us that we are a part of nature and in constant interaction with it. How might this shape our ecological approach differently?
2. This encyclical calls for us to give special care for indigenous communities and their cultural traditions. How might your community live into this call?
3. This chapter argues that the common good necessarily includes "distributive justice". What do you think that means and how do we further this aim?

### **Session Six - Lines of Approach and Action**

Prior to Meeting: read chapter five of *Laudato Si'* (pp. 163-201) Scripture Readings: Isaiah 11:1-16

Song: *The Earth is the Lord's* by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

In the fifth chapter of *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis turns away from diagnosis and toward prescription with great vigor. There is more than the usual call for dialogue and cooperation here. Francis identifies specific roles for the international community, individual states, businesses, and grassroots organizations. Economic analysis, which has been a theme of the entire document, really comes front and center in this section.

## Discussion Questions

1. *Laudato Si'* consistently charges developed nations with taking up the greater share of the burden for protecting the environment. What are the justice implications of this perspective?
2. What does it mean when Francis says we sometimes have a “magical conception of the market,” and why is it important to avoid this?
3. What role does this encyclical propose for religion in political and scientific dialogue about the environment?

## **Session Seven - Ecological Education and Spirituality**

Prior to Meeting: read chapter six of *Laudato Si'* (pp. 202-246) Scripture Readings: 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

Poem: *God's Grandeur* by Gerard Manley Hopkins Song: *The World Turned Upside Down* by Leon Rosselson

*Laudato Si'* concludes with a call for an ecological conversion which acknowledges our common origin, our mutual belonging and our shared future. Such a conversion is both individual and communal, entailing personal spiritual disciplines as well as the mobilization of social networks which transcend the capacities of groups of individuals. The encyclical grounds its ecological truths in the sacraments and a theology of the trinity.

## Discussion Questions

1. How have you experienced (or are you experiencing?) an “ecological conversion”?
2. What lifestyle changes are you prepared to make as individuals, and as a community? How will these changes bring “healthy pressure to bear on those who wield political, economic and social power”?
3. Since it is in the Eucharist that “all that has been created finds its greatest exaltation,” how can we celebrate the Lord's Supper so that it motivates our concern for the environment, and directs us to be “stewards of all creation”?

## **Climate Change & Conflict - Education & Action Resources**

Readings from PPF's Endowment Committee fossil fuel study at [www.presbypeacefellowship.org/fossilreading](http://www.presbypeacefellowship.org/fossilreading)

**Future Climate Change**, 2015, Environmental Protection Agency, [www.epa.gov/climatechange/science/future.html](http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/science/future.html)

**Global Warming's Terrifying New Math** by winner of the Gandhi Peace Award, Bill McKibben. *Rolling Stone*, July 2012  
Covers 3 key numbers: what an increase of 2° Celsius will do to our planet; how much greenhouse gas we can continue to emit to maintain that limited level of increase; and a more realistic number for actual greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels. <http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/global-warmings-terrifying-new-math-20120719?page=2>

**Dept. of Defense Climate Change Adaptation Roadmap**, 2014, Impact of climate change on security and conflict.  
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/242845848/Read-DoD-report-2014-Climate-Change-Adaptation-Roadmap>

**Big Coal: The Dirty Secret behind America's Energy Future** by Jeff Goodell, 2007, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

**The Price of Justice: A True Story of Greed and Corruption** by Laurence Leamer, 2013, Times Books

**Market Watch, Opinion: The Responsible Investor's Guide to Climate Change** by Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Earth Institute (Columbia University), and Lisa Sachs, Director of Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment, 2015.  
<http://www.marketwatch.com/story/the-responsible-investors-guide-to-climate-change-2015-01-29>

**Talk to the Hand: Engagement with Fossil Fuel Companies Offers Little Promise** by Shelley Alpern, 2015  
<http://cleanyield.com/talking-hand-engagement-fossil-fuel-companies-offers-little-promise/>

**Lead, Don't Follow on Climate Justice**, by Tim DeChristopher, Harvard Divinity Bulletin, Winter/Spring 2015  
<http://bulletin.hds.harvard.edu/articles/winterspring2015/lead-don%E2%80%99t-follow-climate-justice>

## **GROUPS:**

**fossilfreepcusa.org** – Presbyterians working on fossil fuel divestment in the PC(USA) See p. 6-7

**presbyterianmission.org/ministries/environment/** PC(USA)'s Environmental Ministries Office equips “Earth-Care Congregations,” offers energy stewardship programs and an earth-care blog at [pcusa.org/blogs/eco-journey/](http://pcusa.org/blogs/eco-journey/)

**presbyearthcare.org** – Grassroots Presbyterians, formerly Presbyterians for Restoring Creation, working on eco-justice

**climateandsecurity.org** – Retired military and security experts focused on the link between climate change and conflict

**350.org/category/topic/divestment/** Founded by Bill McKibben, international coalition of fossil-free campaigns

**sierraclub.org** - Founded in 1892 by John Muir, the oldest, largest environmental group in the US, with 64 local chapters

**gofossilfree.org/commitments/** Lists schools, funds and organizations that have divested from fossil fuels

**ecostewardsprogram.org** – A network for young adult leaders, age 20-30, focused on the environment

**nrdc.org** – Merges 2 million activists with the courtroom expertise of 500 lawyers and scientists on behalf of the earth



## World Climate Summit Paris, Nov. 30- Dec. 11, 2015

**Goal: A UN legally-binding  
global agreement to curb  
carbon emissions**

Follow Climate Summit news at  
<http://www.cop21.gouv.fr/en>  
or through the groups listed  
as resources on p. 5

## The Origin and Ministry of “Fossil Free PCUSA”

-- Dan Terpstra, Oak Ridge, TN and  
Abby Mohaupt, Palo Alto, CA

It all started, like so many climate actions, with Bill McKibben, author and climate activist, and founder of 350.org. Bill wrote an article for Rolling Stone Magazine in July 2012 called “Global Warming’s Terrifying New Math.” It became the touchstone of a movement to divest from fossil fuel companies, including the creation of Fossil Free PC(USA) in the Presbyterian family.

That article laid out three simple numbers:

1. A 2° Celsius warming limit for the planet, agreed to by more than 190 countries worldwide;
2. A remaining **565** gigaton CO<sub>2</sub> budget in order to not exceed the 2° limit, now down to about 460 gigatons, or 12 years at current rates; (a gigaton is one billion tons)
3. **2795** gigatons of identified fossil fuel reserves as of 2012, or more than 5 times our CO<sub>2</sub> budget.

Those three numbers became the basis of a 20 city cross-country “Do the Math” tour, a 40,000 person “Forward on Climate” rally in Washington D.C., and the coalescing of a grassroots movement within the PC(USA).

On November 10, 2012, the “Do the Math” tour stopped in Palo Alto, CA. Abby Mohaupt and other members of the First Presbyterian Palo Alto’s Cool Planet Working Group attended. They got fired up. Spurred on by a deep sense of the biblical mandate to care for creation, they decided to begin working on a divestment overture for the 2014 General Assembly in Detroit.

On February 16, 2013, Oak Ridge, TN elder Dan Terpstra convinced a friend to join him for an overnight megabus ride from Knoxville to Washington D.C. to participate in a chilly “Forward on Climate” rally on the National Mall. On the long bus ride home he kept thinking about how fossil fuel divestment might play out in the PC(USA). In the following weeks, Dan and Wil Howie, Executive Director of Living Waters for the World, contacted Rebecca Barnes at the Office of Environmental Ministries for the denomination. Rebecca

put them in touch with Presbyterian climate activists from West Virginia to Palo Alto, and points in between. Before anyone really knew what had happened, we had a very loosely organized, very grass-roots group with a name: FossilFreePC(USA).

By May of 2013 the Cool Planet folks had produced a final version of the fossil fuel divestment overture that would go to General Assembly in 2014. Patterned after the requests originally formulated by 350.org, it asked for no new fossil fuel investments, full divestment from the top 200 fossil fuel producers in 5 years, and communication with the companies to let them know what we were doing and why.

Presbyteries began acting on the overture in the fall of 2013, with Boston Presbytery the first to approve in September. Votes were taken in another 14 presbyteries over the next six months, garnering 11 concurrences and 3 defeats by extremely close margins. We brought our overture to the Detroit GA for the first time with more concurring support than any almost other overture on the 2014 docket.

Instead of being voted on at General Assembly, the overture was referred to the denomination’s Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) Committee, but a minority report was filed and discussed in the GA plenary. Young Adult Advisory Delegates, those who will be most impacted by climate change, were frustrated by not getting a chance to speak to the minority report on the floor. Ultimately the subject matter of the overture was referred to MRTI for two years of study and a report to General Assembly in 2016.

Climate change is not waiting for that report. All of creation is groaning in the environmental chaos that climate change is bringing. It would be so easy to feel hopeless and helpless. But trusting in God, we remain committed—to hope, to faith, to creation. Our work is grounded in a steadfast commitment that it is morally wrong to hurt the planet through climate change and thus it is imperative that we not profit from the destruction of creation.

We have a new overture ready for 2016 (see p. 7), incorporating some of what we learned in our first outing. In addition to our previous requests, now with a three year divestment deadline, we acknowledge MRTI’s valuable work in shareholder action by encouraging continued ownership of small amounts of stock specifically for the purpose of shareholder resolutions. We hope to double the number of presbyteries concurring with this overture for GA 2016. We encourage you to learn more about this effort.

See the next page for the short version of our proposed 2016 overture and find a longer version, plus our new study curriculum materials at <http://www.fossilfreepcusa.org/>. You can also follow our work at <https://www.facebook.com/fossilfreepcusa> or on Twitter at [@fossilfreepcusa](https://twitter.com/fossilfreepcusa).

If you are considering an overture to your session or presbytery, or adoption of or concurrence with the enclosed overture, please network with Fossil Free PC(USA) at [ffpcusa@gmail.com](mailto:ffpcusa@gmail.com) or call Organizing Co-Chair Susan Chamberlain at 650-321-9874

## Sample 2016 PCUSA Fossil Fuel Divestment Overture

The Presbytery of \_\_\_\_\_ overtures the 222<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly (2016) to:

1. Express its profound concern about the destructive effects of climate change on all God's creation, including 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 222<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly (2016) thus recognizes the moral mandate for humanity to shift to a sustainable energy regime in a way that is both just and compassionate. This mandate compels us to action as a denomination to divest from the fossil fuel industry even as we reduce our use of fossil fuels and shrink our carbon footprint.
2. Call upon the Board of Pensions and the Presbyterian Church (USA) Foundation to:
  - a. Immediately stop any new direct investment in fossil fuel companies
  - b. Work to ensure that within three years, none of the Board's or the Foundation's directly held or commingled assets includes holdings of either equities or corporate bonds in the fossil fuel companies identified in the Carbon Underground 200 list<sup>1</sup> by:
    - i. Working with current and prospective asset managers to develop and implement institutional fossil free investment options
    - ii. Establishing within one year fossil free investment options for fund participants
    - iii. Actively seeking out and investing in renewable and energy efficiency related securities
    - iv. Notwithstanding the above provisions, retaining or acquiring minimal sufficient investment in fossil fuel companies to participate in shareholder engagement activities
    - v. Notwithstanding the above provisions, taking no action inconsistent with fiduciary duty or principles of sound investment, including the real and substantial risk of stranded carbon assets
  - c. Incorporate into public financial reports regular updates detailing progress made towards these ends
3. Call upon the Stated Clerk of the PC(USA) to inform affected fossil fuel companies and the larger public of the passage and implementation of this resolution
4. Call upon, and provide instructional materials to assist all levels of the denomination (presbyteries, congregations, and individual members) in taking action to slow climate change, including: divestment of fossil fuel holdings; shareholder activism; investments in renewable energy; advocacy at local, state, and federal levels for policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and local efforts to reduce carbon footprint consistent with the 2006 call<sup>2</sup> for denominational carbon neutrality, and the 2008 "Power to Change" recommendations.<sup>3</sup>

### 2016 PCUSA Fossil Fuel Divestment Overture Rationale

In 1981, our church made clear through the document "The Power to Speak Truth to Power" the importance of transitioning away from a fossil fuel based economy. In 2008, our church made clear through the document "The Power to Change" that the catastrophic effects of Climate Change make this transition essential to the preservation of human life and God's good creation.

For over two decades, our church's committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment has engaged in shareholder action with fossil fuel companies. They have done an exemplary job, but have made no impact in addressing Climate Change. When the best people we have make so little progress, the fault lies with an intractable industry, obsessed with profit at the expense of creation.

Our church has voiced support for legislation addressing the need to transition to a fossil free economy, but has no power to enact it. Our church has voiced support for taxes on carbon emissions, but has no power to levy them. Our church has voiced the need for all members of our denomination to do what they can at an individual level, but individuals acting alone can do little to shift the course of an entire economy.

Our church invests hundreds of millions of dollars in fossil fuel companies. We, as Christians, have the privilege, responsibility, and obligation to speak with moral authority on issues of great importance. However, the power and clarity of prophetic voice is easily stained by hypocrisy and inconsistency.

Many claim that it is inconsistent to divest from fossil fuels while we are members of a society that is addicted to them. This is true. But it is equally inconsistent to attempt to rehabilitate that society while invested in its addiction.

Even as we continue working to mitigate the climate crisis, we must shed the burden of our investments in climate destruction. This act will speak more loudly and more clearly than any prophetic declaration we have voiced to date.

It's time to put our money where our mouth is. It's time to divest from fossil fuels.

<sup>1</sup> <http://fossilfreeindexes.com/the-carbon-underground-2014/> or current equivalent (accessed 06-17-2015)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/guide-going-carbon-neutral/> (accessed 06-17-2015)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/acswp/pdf/energyreport.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/acswp/pdf/energyreport.pdf) (accessed 06-17-2015)

## **The Earth is the Lord's**

Tune, ST. DENIO 11.11.11.11 "Immortal, Invisible"  
Text, Carolyn Winfrey Gillette Used by Permission

"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof."  
Creation reminds us, O God, of your love.  
By grace we are learning, as year leads to year,  
We're called to be stewards, your caretakers here.

Your rainforests nurture the world that we share.  
Your wetlands give animals shelter and care.  
Your coral reefs cradle the life of the sea.  
You've shown us, in love, what your good world can be.

Too often, O God, we abuse your good earth.  
We fail to remember its beauty and worth.  
We take from creation much more than we need,  
We threaten your world through indifference & greed.

May we be good stewards of all that you give,  
Protecting creation wherever we live.  
May we be a church that renews and restores  
And lovingly cares for this earth that is yours.

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**Iraq- Cont. from p 1** ...untouched. However, the U.S. led invasion in 2003 redistributed power and resulted in extreme sectarian violence, of which the latest child is ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria). Political changes lent the Kurds autonomy and gave access to Kurdistan's proven 45 billion barrels oil reserves (and estimated 25 billion more) to international businesses. At first, smaller oil companies took on the risky but lucrative ventures. Now major corporations like Exxon Mobil and Chevron have followed, which exacerbates tensions between the two ruling entities, the Iraqi Central Government (ICG) and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). While the ICG owns the oil and only pays the corporations for the extraction of oil about \$2 per barrel, the KRG offers profit-sharing deals. Given the fact that the crude oil is the main income of both governments, and also a potential source of Kurdistan's independence, the KRG allows 35 oil companies to operate in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Those harmed are the local, mostly rural, farming communities. Since Aug. 2013, Christian Peacemaker Teams has supported three communities in their nonviolent struggle for their rights, justice and fair compensation. CPT has been sharing their stories, raising their voices and accompanying the community to meet with parliament and government officials. In Gullan, Latif's relative, a past fighter against the Ba'athist forces, told us: "For generations we have fought occupying powers (Ottoman, British, Iraqi, Ba'athist) and we are still here. But this may be our last stand. If oil corporations, with the help of our own government, build an oil rig here, we will be wiped out forever."

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**Special Issue---**

**Climate Change & Conflict**

Sample 2016 GA Overture p. 7

Protestant Study Guide for the Pope's Encyclical  
*Laudito Si' – On Care for Our Common Home*

Pages 3-5