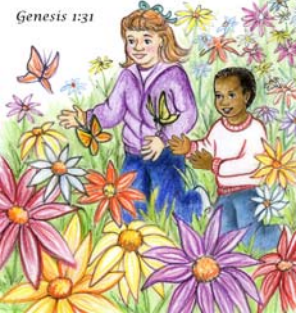




Going Green

God saw all that
he had made,
and it was very good.
Genesis 1:31



ENVIRONMENTAL AFFIRMATION FROM THE NEW SOCIAL CREED FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

The ecumenically developed New Social Creed for the 21st Century was adopted by The Presbyterian Church USA at the 2008 General Assembly, 100 years after the adoption of the Social Creed of 1908. It consists of a series of Affirmations that, like the moral vision and tradition of action identified with the Social Creed of 1908, can help guide our ministries in the decades ahead. The following is based on just one of these affirmations.

Sustainable use of earth's resources, promoting alternative energy sources and public transportation, with binding covenants to reduce global warming and protect populations most affected.

Our call to action by God begins in Genesis 2:15, as humankind is placed in God's good and wonderful Creation and charged with the freedom and responsibility to "till it and keep it." Implicit in this charge is the mutual dynamic of our right and "just" relation to the earth and its creatures. Yes, the earth is there for us to "till" and to use as a resource for our food, fiber and necessary material goods.

But, in return, we must "keep it", giving back as good as we get, instead of depleting it without heed to the long-term consequences to the earth "that is the Lord's, and everything in it". The awareness of eco-justice, defined as the well-being of all humankind on a thriving earth, was not a part of the 1908 Social Creed, written in the early days of the Industrial Revolution. For the New Social Creed, after one hundred years of industry and "tilling without keeping", the Creation is at a crisis point.

There are three important truths. First, the potential supply of renewable and alternative energy sources far exceed the current and projected demand. God has truly furnished creation with energy in abundance. Nevertheless, the second truth is that our nation still relies heavily on fossil fuels and nuclear power to provide 93 per cent of the energy we currently consume. We are not living sustainably in relationship with God's creation. This leads to the third, sad truth: Our reliance on these traditional energy sources poses grave danger to justice, peace and the integrity of creation. We find ourselves at a pivotal moment in history with regard to global climate change. Scientists warn that global greenhouse gas emissions need to be reduced 80 per cent below 1990 levels by the year 2050 in order to avert catastrophic consequences associated with global warming.

Through the grace of God, humans have been placed in this wonderful Creation, with the freedom to share in its beauty and its abundance to meet our basic needs. However, God also reminds us to save Noah's animals, and to "keep" the earth when we "till" it...that it may continually and fairly provide for many generations after this one.

Submitted by: Ruth Mehl