

DO THE MATH

The future of our planet may rest on three simple numbers. Here they are:

Number 1: 2 Degrees Celsius. In the past century, we have, by burning coal, oil, wood and gas, raised the temperature of the planet by 0.8 degrees Celsius. The burning continues, unabated and intensified. Two degrees Celsius will further melt the Arctic (30% of it has already been lost), make the oceans more acidic and make the atmosphere over the oceans wetter. Swaths of now inhabitable land (Bangladesh is an example, as is the Jersey shore) will disappear.

Number 2: 565 gigatons. This is how much carbon dioxide we can add to the atmosphere by 2050 and still stay under 2 degrees.

Number 3: 2,765 gigatons. This is the amount of fossil fuel that corporations already have in their reserves. The intention is to sell this fuel and burn it. Why is this number such a big deal? Bill McKibben says, "Think of 2 degrees Celsius as the legal drinking limit—equivalent to the 0.08 blood-alcohol level below which you might get away with driving home. The 565 gigatons is how many drinks you could have and still stay below that limit—the six beers, say, you might consume in an evening. And the 2,795 gigatons? That's the three 12-packs the fossil-fuel industry has on the table, already opened and ready to pour."

(Bill McKibben, Rolling Stone, 8/2/2012)



Connected To God's Green Earth



GODLY FOOTPRINTS

At the Parish of St. Paul



The Episcopal Parish of St. Paul

1135 Walnut Street

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Dear Beloved Community,

For the past five years at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Sunday morning groups have been addressing the science and theology of caring for God's creation. We've read books, heard sermons, walked for hunger, and proposed socially responsible investments. We'd like you to know what we've been doing.

What's the connection between our faith and our earth?

FRIENDS OF CREATION

Bishop Bud Cedarholm is fond of quoting St. Basil the Great, from the 4th Century. He said, "Let creation penetrate us with so much admiration that wherever we go, the least plant is enough to occupy our minds in beholding the art with which it has been made." Bishop Bud himself challenges us "to go deeper into the heart of God for the strength, courage and wisdom for the long race" of caring for creation.

(Letter, 9/4/2012)

Presiding Bishop Katherine Jefferts Schori says, "The gaping maw of our greed is already making life harder for our human sisters and brothers, as weather patterns shift and food crops repeatedly fail in traditional growing places. Deserts are expanding, water is evaporating, and there is less health and healing power in parts of this body.....The results will cause suffering, want, anxiety, insecurity. We know what will almost inevitably follow: conflict, violence and war....."

(Sermon at Trinity Copley Square, 4/27/2013)

Anne Goldman says, "When did I begin to connect creation with the creator? With the hymns of my childhood? With my education in science when each lesson revealed a wonder of even more intricate, inter-woven mysteries? With the drip-drip of repeated Sunday liturgy and insightful sermons? When did I decide that just changing light bulbs was a pathetic response to an increasingly imminent disaster?"

(Letter, 7/20/13)

Rev'd. Gretchen Grimshaw says we need to "ask forgiveness for our greed and disrespect of the dignity of God's creation. Our next step is to turn our feet in the direction of our values. To begin to take whatever steps we can to help renew and restore God's good earth . . . Now is the time to be bold.

I ask you, my beloved community, will you walk with me? Will we put our feet on this path together?"

(Sermon at St. Paul's, 5/5/2013)

It's a big claim to make that CLIMATE CHANGE is the defining issue of the 21st century. But the global chorus of alarm is growing rapidly and those of us who've sat around with this issue on Sunday mornings for years are convinced that we must act.

We at the Parish of St. Paul are very good at analysis and advocacy. Care for the earth, care for each other, our children, and the marginalized of the earth is on our agenda. We invite you to worship with us and join the conversation.

Creation Care Committee
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