

Exerts from “Expressing the Mind of the House on Climate and Our Vocation in Christ”, issued by the House of Bishops at the 80th General Convention, Baltimore MD, July 2022.

God is the source of all creation, and we, humankind – made in God’s image – have been given the gift of life and responsibility to care for creation. We depend on God’s creation to sustain our life together, and, by serving as good stewards of creation, we reflect God’s tender love for all that has been made. In caring for our earth, we return our love to God.

We are only fully human and fully alive when we are in right relationship with the whole created order. Apart from each other and nature, we are not our whole selves.

Climate change and environmental degradation are manifestations of our turning away from God. The effects of this willful separation from God resonate across our collective lives: All areas of justice are either worsened or made better depending on the health of the planet. A changing climate and degraded environment worsen conflict, forces human migration, and causes food insecurity. These related crises increase the rate of violence, cause more natural disasters and humanitarian crises, and deepen the wounds of those already suffering from racism. People living in poverty are plunged further into poverty by the deteriorating condition of the planet.

As people of faith, we are not without hope, but the sustainability of God’s creation demands our action. Confronting climate change and environmental degradation has never been more urgent. As members of The Episcopal Church, we are committed in baptism to resist evil, seek God’s will, treat all people with dignity, and strive for justice and peace. Living into these promises, we must face the climate crisis for the sake of love of God and neighbor:

If we hope to treat all human beings with dignity, we must address climate change so droughts, floods, and extreme weather patterns don’t force people into exile and desperate, life-threatening migration.

If we hope to build peace, we must address climate change so that competition for scarce resources does not drive further violence.

If we hope to ensure that every child of God has enough to eat, we must address climate change so that our bountiful earth can continue to support and sustain food systems that nourish people and the soil.

We are a people of hope. We, God’s faithful, are called to share the hope that will empower change. Many of God’s people – especially our children – are in despair as they observe the frightening shifts in our environmental narrative. The risen Christ continues to send us out to proclaim the Gospel to the whole of Creation (Mark 16:15). It is our work to lead the way for change, to model good stewardship, and to move forward with courage and purpose.