



EARTH CARE @LEWINSVILLE

DID YOU KNOW?

The Presbyterian Church in the United States & Social Witness

Our denomination, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (PCUSA), has a long history of addressing important social and ethical matters. This is the third in a series of newsletter articles intended to inform us about positions taken by PCUSA on our behalf. Did you know our denomination has a long history of concern about the environment? Since the 1960s Presbyterian General Assemblies have been speaking on issues of environmental protection and justice including drinking water safety and acid rain, protecting endangered species, sustainable economic development, climate change, U.S. energy policy, and environmental stewardship. In 1990, the General Assembly adopted Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice (<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/restoring-creation-for-ecologyjustice.pdf>), which calls our denomination to engage in the tasks of caring for God's creation. The policy affirmed that "restored creation is not a short-term concern to be handled in a few years, but a continuing task to which the nation and the world must give attention and commitment." Since then, PCUSA has adopted a number of other Environmental Stewardship statements and established an Environmental Ministries unit. In 2010, the General Assembly (GA) reaffirmed the findings of the 1990 statement, celebrated what had resulted in the life of the denomination, and recommitted to the calling that remains as valid and necessary as it was in 1990.

Also in 2010, the Earth Care Congregations program was launched. The "Earth Care Pledge" that is part of becoming an Earth Care Congregation was updated from "A Pledge to Heal and Defend God's Creation" contained in the 1990 GA's report. From Earth Care Congregations: A Guide to Greening Presbyterian Churches:

"WHY SHOULD WE CARE FOR THE EARTH? Our faith urges us to strive for eco-justice: defending and healing creation while working to assure justice for all of creation and the human beings who live in it. This call is rooted in the human vocation of "tilling and keeping" the garden from Genesis 2:15, as well as Christ's charge to work with and for the most vulnerable. Because of their love for Christ who is firstborn of all creation (Colossians 1:15), churches are challenged to live in a manner consistent with God's call to not only care for creation, but commune with creation."

More information on the denomination's positions on caring for the environment can be found at <http://presbyearthcare.org/pcusa-earth-care-policy> (2016) and http://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/washington/pdfs/policybrief.pdf (2008).