

Episcopal Public Policy Network
For the Beauty of the Earth

Climate Change and Our Surroundings

"The destruction we see around us is not an accident. But then, neither is the fact that you and I have been placed here to do something about it." -Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston

Our climate is changing – and increasingly we are seeing how these changes impact our surroundings. In some places it means droughts, in others extreme storms, many areas see invasive species and plants, many regions have increased loss of habitat, and in still others melting ice and permafrost. As stewards of creation we have a responsibility to be doing all we can to slow the degradation of the amazing beauty God created for us.

Catechism of Creation

Genesis 1:26-28 states that human beings are created in God's "image and likeness" and given dominion over all other creatures. "Dominion" does not mean "domination," but refers to the need for humans to exercise stewardship over the earth on God's behalf. In Genesis 2, the human beings are given the garden to tend and serve, symbolizing our obligation to care for creation. Human beings do in fact exercise dominion over "this fragile earth, our island home" (Book of Common Prayer, p. 370). God wills that we exercise it in accordance with God's desires and purposes. God declared the whole of creation to be "very good" (Gen. 1:31): earth and all of its living creatures have value in and of themselves. As "the earth is the Lord's and everything in it" (Ps. 24:1), we human beings are called upon to tend and serve the earth as a sacred trust for which we shall one day give an accounting.

<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/climate>

Episcopal Public Policy Network
For the Beauty of the Earth

Climate Change and Our Surroundings

"The destruction we see around us is not an accident. But then, neither is the fact that you and I have been placed here to do something about it." -Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston

Our climate is changing – and increasingly we are seeing how these changes impact our surroundings. In some places it means droughts, in others extreme storms, many areas see invasive species and plants, many regions have increased loss of habitat, and in still others melting ice and permafrost. As stewards of creation we have a responsibility to be doing all we can to slow the degradation of the amazing beauty God created for us.

Catechism of Creation

Genesis 1:26-28 states that human beings are created in God's "image and likeness" and given dominion over all other creatures. "Dominion" does not mean "domination," but refers to the need for humans to exercise stewardship over the earth on God's behalf. In Genesis 2, the human beings are given the garden to tend and serve, symbolizing our obligation to care for creation. Human beings do in fact exercise dominion over "this fragile earth, our island home" (Book of Common Prayer, p. 370). God wills that we exercise it in accordance with God's desires and purposes. God declared the whole of creation to be "very good" (Gen. 1:31): earth and all of its living creatures have value in and of themselves. As "the earth is the Lord's and everything in it" (Ps. 24:1), we human beings are called upon to tend and serve the earth as a sacred trust for which we shall one day give an accounting.

<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/climate>

Climate Change affects:

Human activity can cause changes in atmospheric characteristics that impact **agricultural** productivity in the US and the world. Climate change is expected to diminish **forest** health and productivity and cause changes in the geographic range of certain regionally important tree species. **Sea levels** are rising along most of the U.S. coast and around the world, affecting the delicate nature of the sea coasts as well. Climate change affectst **water** availability, quality and streamflow because they are sensitive to changes in temperature and precipitation. Weather patterns may be affected causing more **extreme weather events** such as heat waves, cold waves, storms, floods and droughts.

How do we help?

The best way to slow climate change is by reducing our, our community's, our country's and the world's greenhouse gas emissions- the world, the US, and the Episcopal Church are all trying. The Kyoto Protocols and the Bali Conference on Climate Change both aim at a global initiative to curb climate change. The Senate is entertaining two bills to reduce the nation's Greenhouse gas and carbon emissions. S. 2191 and S. 309 The Episcopal Church has urged all congregations use their resources to promote a sustainable global environment and to incorporate environmentally friendly habits into worship and church life.

We can make a difference. Even small changes in our daily living make a difference. Each of us can do something different today that will acknowledge the sacredness of creation encourage others in our communities to do likewise.

Lenten Discipline: *Making a change*

This week commit to one simple change in your routine that will conserve or reduce your impact on the environment. Use cloth shopping bags instead of getting the plastic ones at the grocery store, change 1 light bulb to a compact florescent, use a coffee mug not paper or Styrofoam cup, or make sure to turn off all electronics when you aren't using them.

<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/climate>

Climate Change affects:

Human activity can cause changes in atmospheric characteristics that impact **agricultural** productivity in the US and the world. Climate change is expected to diminish **forest** health and productivity and cause changes in the geographic range of certain regionally important tree species. **Sea levels** are rising along most of the U.S. coast and around the world, affecting the delicate nature of the sea coasts as well. Climate change affectst **water** availability, quality and streamflow because they are sensitive to changes in temperature and precipitation. Weather patterns may be affected causing more **extreme weather events** such as heat waves, cold waves, storms, floods and droughts.

How do we help?

The best way to slow climate change is by reducing our, our community's, our country's and the world's greenhouse gas emissions- the world, the US, and the Episcopal Church are all trying. The Kyoto Protocols and the Bali Conference on Climate Change both aim at a global initiative to curb climate change. The Senate is entertaining two bills to reduce the nation's Greenhouse gas and carbon emissions. S. 2191 and S. 309 The Episcopal Church has urged all congregations use their resources to promote a sustainable global environment and to incorporate environmentally friendly habits into worship and church life.

We can make a difference. Even small changes in our daily living make a difference. Each of us can do something different today that will acknowledge the sacredness of creation encourage others in our communities to do likewise.

Lenten Discipline: *Making a change*

This week commit to one simple change in your routine that will conserve or reduce your impact on the environment. Use cloth shopping bags instead of getting the plastic ones at the grocery store, change 1 light bulb to a compact florescent, use a coffee mug not paper or Styrofoam cup, or make sure to turn off all electronics when you aren't using them.

<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/climate>