

Caring for God's Creation

Move to 40% Renewable Energy

A Call to Climate Action

by the Leaders of Maryland's Christian Communities

“The earth is the LORD's and everything in it, the world and its inhabitants too.” *Psalms 24:1*

September 21, 2014

We are the bishops and judicatory leaders of Christian churches throughout Maryland and beyond, representing several thousand churches in the state. Like all people everywhere, we live from and rely on the health and well-being of God's creation – air, water and land, wildlife and domestic animals, local ecosystems, and the great interconnected ecosystem that the whole earth shares.

In the coming week, the United Nations will hold an international summit in New York intended to lay the groundwork for a new treaty and new and meaningful action by the governments of the world to slow the world's emissions of greenhouse gases. Heat-trapping pollution like carbon dioxide and methane, released into the air by humans at unprecedented levels in the last hundred years, has damaged our climate and made our oceans more acidic.

In Maryland, we see the impacts of our reliance on fossil fuels in many places. Environmental degradation has the greatest impact on the poor, whom Jesus called his sisters and brothers. We see the health costs to vulnerable people – older adults facing lung problems, young people dealing with asthma, disenfranchised people of all ages subjected to pollution in their communities. We see the impacts of hurricanes and other disasters made worse by climate change. As leaders in a state with 3,190 miles of coastline, we see how many natural and human treasures rising ocean levels will destroy.

Caring for God's creation – including all its inhabitants – means slowing and limiting our use of fossil fuels and significantly reducing our greenhouse gas emissions. In order to fulfill that moral imperative, we, the ecumenical leaders of Maryland's Christian communities, challenge ourselves and our denominational institutions, our churches collectively and their members individually, fellow Christians and fellow people of faith, and all people of good will to **take action on climate change by choosing renewable energy sources (such as solar, wind and geothermal), specifically, to move to 40% renewable energy use by 2025.**

In the next few years, we will be working with partners like the Central Maryland Ecumenical Council, Interfaith Power and Light, Groundswell and many others to educate and motivate our institutions, churches and church members to make this shift, and to advocate together for legislation in Maryland that meets this challenge as well.

We believe that caring for God's creation is the great moral challenge of our time and that the survival and flourishing of all people depends on our ability to move from the temporary and destructive sources we currently rely on to renewable energy sources. Today, we renew our commitment to stewardship and care for all God's creation, and we challenge you to do the same.

Signed,

The Ecumenical Leaders Group of Maryland *

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*The Ecumenical Leaders Group is made of the bishops, presidents, executives of Christian denominations in Maryland called together by Central Maryland Ecumenical Council. The ELG meets five times a year and we address, with one voice larger justice issues.

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