

Church of the Covenant

*Fully Divested from
Fossil Fuels*

Join us in this work of
Climate Justice!



FOSSIL FREE UCC

United Church of Christ



Presbyterian Church (USA)

Earth Sunday: Shepherding Divestment
The Fourth Sunday of Easter

67 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02116
Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ



Church of the Covenant

Sunday, April 26, 2015

10:30 a.m.

LEADERS COPY

The Fourth Sunday of Easter Earth Sunday: Shepherding Divestment

Prelude

Sheep May Safely Graze

J.S. Bach

Welcome & Announcements

One: Peace be with you.

All: And also with you.

***Call To Worship**

East: For the rising of the sun, energy source for all of creation,

All: **We give to God our praise.**

North: For the precious polar ice caps, and habitats of hope,

All: **We pledge to God our stewardship.**

South: For the communities of the Global South and their inspired sustenance,

All: **We pray the Spirit's empowerment.**

West: And for the gift the setting of the sun, revealing the wonders of a star-studded cosmos,

All: **We pray, that awake may we watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace.**

***Opening Hymn: NCH (blue) 464**

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore

Thee

Lighting of the Christ Light Candle

Moment for Divestment

Rob will begin with overall intro, and then introduce Nancy in order to share how COTC decided to fully divest.

Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. ~Luke 12:34

Litany of Divestment & Prayer for God's Grace

Refrain (**Rob** will lead us into this section): After each stanza, **the reader** will lead us in saying: "Let us pray", and we will all together say:

Refrain: We confess our complicity, forgive and renew us O God.

Barbara D.: I divest from.....putting my own convenience above the needs of other humans and other beings God created. Let us pray:

Refrain: We confess our complicity, forgive and renew us O God.

Nancy S.: "I divest from guilt and shame about not doing more to protect the environment." Let us pray:

Refrain: We confess our complicity, forgive and renew us O God.

Christine R.: "I divest from the over use and consumption of too much fresh water, a precious finite resource necessary for all life." Let us pray:

Refrain: We confess our complicity, forgive and renew us O God.

Nancy S.: "I divest from despair in feeling that it may be too late to make a difference in saving the planet." Let us pray:

Refrain: We confess our complicity, forgive and renew us O God.

Hope S.: I divest from an unfettered trust in capitalism and the addiction to always have and do more. Let us pray:

Refrain: We confess our complicity, forgive and renew us O God.

Julie R.: I divest from my own complicity. I divest from believing that the current ways in which we acquire food, treat farmworkers, and pillage our earth are truly the best and most faithful way to be stewards of our planet home. Let us pray:

Refrain: We confess our complicity, forgive and renew us O God.

Christine J.: With God's help, I work daily to divest from despair. It's a hard thing to do in a world so fraught with violence, neglect, destruction, and fear.

A butterfly magnet holds a quote from American author Sam Keen at eye-level on my refrigerator so I see it several times a day: "We don't know enough to despair. Despair is hidden arrogance. 'I have seen the future and it doesn't work.'" Let us pray:

Refrain: We confess our complicity, forgive and renew us O God.

Julie R.: *Having confessed our need to divest, let us now, in the light of the Risen Christ, open our hearts to God in silent prayer...*

Shared Silence

Assurance of God's Grace **JULIE**

One: Christ comes into every shadowed corner of creation with the light of Easter. New life, new chances, new hope is possible! Therefore, let us celebrate:

All: In Jesus Christ we are set free and made whole. Alleluia Amen!

Litany of Investment (**Rob introduce**)

After each of your "I invest in", you will lead the congregation in the response: saying "Alleluia Amen!", and we will all say: "Let us invest in hope!"

Refrain: Let us invest in hope!

Barbara D.: I invest in...joyful celebration and cherishing of this beautiful earth and all its wonderful and diverse humans and animals and plants and rivers and oceans and mountains! Alleluia Amen!

ALL: Let us invest in hope!

Nancy S.: "I invest in eating a plant-based diet that decreases the amount of fossil fuels used in animal agriculture and saves the lives of animals." Alleluia Amen!

ALL: Let us invest in hope!

Christine R.: "I invest in sustainable design, spending my professional career dedicated to building a more sustainable built environment for the future." Alleluia Amen!

ALL: Let us invest in hope!

Nancy S.: "I invest in taking public transportation as much as possible."

Alleluia Amen!

ALL: Let us invest in hope!

Hope S.: With Wendell Berry, I invest in the hope of the two inches of earthy humus that will build under trees every thousand years. Alleluia Amen!

ALL: Let us invest in hope!

And/OR

With Wendell Berry, I invest in the practice of planting sequoias and beeches – trees whose shade that I will never live to benefit from, but future generations will. Alleluia Amen!

ALL: Let us invest in hope!

Julie R.: I invest in asking and exploring the questions of our faith: How do we honor the Divine that dwells within each body? How do we honor the Divine that dwells within the earthly body, within bodies of water, bodies of animals, the bodies of each human? I invest in living these questions and celebrating God in all things. Alleluia Amen!

Alleluia Amen!

ALL: Let us invest in hope!

Christine J.: With God's help, I work daily to invest in hope. Sam Keen's quote helps me here, too, by ending with: "Hope is rooted in trust in the unknown. Work, wait and hope. That is enough." Alleluia Amen!

ALL: Let us invest in hope!

*** Exchange of the Peace JULIE**

(Please exchange greetings of Christ's peace and reconciliation)

One: May the peace of Christ be with you. All: And also with you.

*** Sung Response: Celtic Alleluia**

Al - le - lu - ia, a - le - lu - ia!

Al - le - lu - ia, a - le - lu - ia!

Time With Children **JULIE**

- introduce Tiffany
- Today, as we celebrate Earth Sunday here at Covenant, I began thinking about the term “Mother Earth” that we often use to describe this amazing earth that we live on. Which made me wonder, what does it mean to be a mother or a parent? Can you tell me some of the things your parents do for you? Or parents, can you tell me some of the things you do as a parent?
- Hearing this, it sure makes sense that we call our earth “Mother” because that it was the earth does for us—provides us with food, gives us life, provides healing when we’re sick. Not only do we have adults in our lives whether they be parents or our friends at church who help nourish and care for us, we also have our wonderful Mother earth!
- My friend Tiffany is with us today and she inspires me a lot because she works for an organization that is trying to help us take better care of our Mother Earth. Tiffany can you tell us a bit about the place where you work?
- Let us follow the examples of our mothers and grandmothers and everyone else who shows us what it means to love and to care for another. Just as our earth is a Mother to US, why don’t we try to be like mothers to our earth? We can listen when it seems to be crying out, we can provide healing when it is sick, we can take care of it, and we can try to give it the same love as a mother gives her beloved child.

Sung Response: Celtic Alleluia

Laying Down our Lives, Rising Up to Love

Scripture Reading: Gospel of Luke 12:54-56 **CHRISTINE R. (upper eagle)**

54 Jesus also said to the crowds, ‘When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, “It is going to rain”; and so it happens. ⁵⁵And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, “There will be scorching heat”; and it happens. ⁵⁶You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?

One: God is still speaking. This is the word of God,

All: Thanks be to God.

Introduction: **Rob** (*explain different form of today’s sermon, intro speakers again, and use Luke 12 to make the point that everyone should be able to look at the weather/ climate and know what is happening. But currently there are strong forces/ hypocrites out there blinding us to the ways of good climate stewardship – FF industry. But an exciting FAITHFUL movement is afoot- and today’s special guests will use scripture and their experiences to inspire and challenge us in this collective work*).

One (ROB): As shepherds and stewards, may we lay down our lives,

All: And rise up to love!

Response: Glory, Glory Hallelujah NCH (black) 2, verses 1 & 2

Glory, glory hallelujah, since I laid my burdens down (x2)

I feel better, so much better, since I laid my burdens down (x2)

Scripture Reading: 1 John 3:16-18 **CHRISTINE R. (upper eagle)**

¹⁶We know love by this, that Christ laid down his life for us — and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. ¹⁷How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

¹⁸Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.

One: God is still speaking. This is the word of God,

All: Thanks be to God.

Reflection: **Patrick C.** (*Patrick: Hard truths about climate change / Spirit-led Activism/ Harvard students laid down to sleep in this spirit of walking the talk, loving in truth and in action / We too as congregations can do so/ congrats to COTC for divesting*)

Response: Glory, Glory Hallelujah NCH (black) 2

For the sake of, all creation, I will lay my burdens down (x2)

Scripture Reading: Gospel of John 2:13-16 **CHRISTINE R.: (upper eagle)**

13 The Passover was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money-changers seated at their tables. 15Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. 16He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making God's house a market-place!"

One: God is still speaking. This is the word of God,

All: Thanks be to God.

Reflection: **Rev. Tiffany C.** (*Tiffany: The image of Jesus throwing over the tables of the money changers in the temple...and how that relates to divestment...and sharing some reflections from my own experience of how social (in)justice and climate crisis are interrelated (race, class implications, etc) Divestment is turning over the tables of injustice. Harvard Heat Week.*)

Response: Glory, Glory Hallelujah NCH (black) 2

Glory, glory, you will free me, when I lay my burdens down (x2)

Scripture Reading: Gospel of John 10:11-17 **CHRISTINE R.: (upper eagle)**

11"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down her life for the sheep. 12The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away — and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. 14I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, 15just as God knows me and I know God. And I lay down my life for the sheep. 16I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. 17For this reason God loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again.

One: God is still speaking. This is the word of God,

All: Thanks be to God.

Reflection: **Marla M.** (*Marla: We are Shepherds of each other. We are shepherds of collective future. The FF industry are wolfs in sheep's clothing. Why Marla is passionate about this work. How her faith drives her. In laying down our lives, we are celebrating that God loves us.*)

Response: Glory, Glory Hallelujah NCH (black) 2

Feel like shouting, "hallelujah!" since I laid my burdens down (x2)

ROB: "Justice is what love looks like in public." Cornel West.

'Planetary Selma.'

One: (ROB) As shepherds and stewards, may we lay down our lives,

All: And rise up to love!

Response: Glory, Glory Hallelujah NCH (black) 2, verse 1

Glory, glory, hallelujah, since I laid my burdens down (x2)

Food and Climate Justice Moment **(HOPE)**

Call to Offering **JULIE**

Offertory

I Thank You God

Lloyd Pfautsch

i thank You God for most this amazing
day:for the leaping greenly spirits of trees
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth
day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing
breathing any—lifted from the no
of all nothing—human merely being
doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below,

Praise God for all that love has done,
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.

* Prayer of Dedication **JULIE**

Celebrations and Concerns **JULIE**

One: God, in your grace,
All: Receive our prayer.

Pastoral Prayer **ROB**

*Closing Hymn NCH (black) 314
Christ

Community of

*Charge and Benediction **ROB**

Postlude

Fugue from "Pastoral Sonata" Josef Rheinberger
Please no applause following the Postlude