

Conclusion

We're arriving at a new beginning, one where we must unlearn before we can learn. Our way of seeing the world has put blinders on our capacity to see the harm our ways have inflicted on all of Creation. We are at the beginning of a new story that we must first write with our hearts, our deeds, and our relations. It is less ours to discover than it is ours to uncover because most of what we need to know lies long neglected and deep within.

This time we are not alone in the world but together as the world. Together there is nothing we cannot face, nothing we cannot feel, nothing we cannot repent, and nothing we cannot repair.

Creation is calling.

“This is a differently shaped universe than many of us thought—and leads to a very differently shaped spirituality. As Bill Plotkin says, spirituality becomes a ‘sinking back into the source of everything.’ Suddenly we realize, of course, that God is not ‘out there,’ but God is in all, through all, and with all.”

—Richard Rohr

Readings and Other Resources

This is not intended to be a bibliography. It is intended to be the start to a Creation Justice Book Forest. In a Book Forest, each book is accompanied by a brief review noting why and how the book had value for the reader. The reader's name follows the review. Future readers may add their remarks with their names. This process allows the diocese to measure of the book's popularity and to consider whether a purchase of it would be reasonable. Readers from different congregations could contact each other based on the reviews to deepen their understandings. Kinship can be woven from shared interest. The metaphor of “forest” is suggested because most books are rooted

in contact with other books and most personal transformation is rooted in interaction with others. Readers of a “Book Forest” are encouraged to root into each other as well as the book.

- Amadeo Aho, Talitha. *Deep Waters, Spiritual Care for Young People in a Climate Crisis.*
- Chandler, Diane J. *Creation Care: A Call to Christian Educators and Church Leaders.* This book examines the ethical responsibility for Christians in terms of addressing climate change and Christian scholarship on Creation Care.
- Charleston, Steven. *The Four Vision Quests of Jesus.*
- Charleston, Steven. *Ladder to the Light: An Indigenous Elder’s Meditations on Hope and Courage.*
- Clare, Mary M., and Ferguson, Gary. *Full Ecology: Repairing our Relationship with the Natural World.*
- Davis, Ellen. *Scripture, Culture and Agriculture: An Agrarian Reading of the Bible.*
- DiAngelo, Robin. *White Fragility: Why It Is so Hard for White People to Talk About Racism.*
- Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. *An Indigenous Peoples History of the United States.*
- Gilio-Whitaker, Dina. *As Long as the Grass Grows: The Indigenous Fight for Environmental Justice from Colonization to Standing Rock*
- Goodall, Jane. *Reason for Hope.*

- Harris, Melanie L. *Ecowomanism: African American Women and Earth Honoring Faiths.*
- Hayhoe, Katherine. *Saving Us.*
- Jennings, Willie Janes. *After Whiteness: An Education in Belonging.*
- Karelas, Andreas. *Climate Courage: How Tackling Climate Change Can Build Community, Transform the Economy and Bridge the Political Divide in America.*
- Korten, David. *Ecological Civilization, from Emergency to Emergence.*
- Macy, Joanna, and Johnstone, Chris. *Active Hope.*
- McFague, Sallie. *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology.*
- NSRV. *The Green Bible.*
- Painter, Nell Irwin. *The History of White People.*
- Robinson, Mary. *Climate Justice: Hope, Resilience and the Fight for a Sustainable Future.*
- Singh, Annelise A. *The Racial Healing Handbook.*
- Spellers, Stephanie, the Rev. Canon. *The Church Cracked Open: Disruption, Decline and the New Hope for a Beloved Community*
- Wilkerson, Isabel. *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents.*

Appendix: Additional Detail

Adaptation

As Climate change continues, there will be significant increases in food prices due to droughts, shortages, and the migration of new pests. Housing and home insurance costs will climb. We will likely face tropical diseases (such as malaria) as the increase in temperature allows disease-bearing insects to migrate north. Although all this may seem dire, we are blessed with many high-quality IPCC projections of such change and many quality programs for adapting to such change. We must also fathom our faith to secure new tools for adapting to change. Adaptation can be viewed negatively as a series of wrenching losses or it can be reframed as a collective communion with a changing Creation. Adaptation can be portrayed as a brutal “survival of the fittest” process or be reframed to be the survival of those best able to fit into the needs of a rapidly changing creation. Here “fitness” is the capacity to fit into a beloved and resilient community that will seek new niches to live within a changing Creation.

Antipathy

We have, for decades, gathered those who clearly saw the problem, created programs to address it, and found that relatively few people had the time or interest to be involved. This is reflected on the national political stage and the world stage at COP. Very substantial sums have been invested by some corporate interests to reframe the climate problem as one of individual and not of institutional responsibility while strongly lobbying national political interests to view climate-correcting measures as a threat to the family. Very similar tactics were used in the 1960s to assert that desegregation would “destroy the family” and “destroy public safety.” Then as now, implementing change is portrayed as a job destroyer when failing to implement change is a proven job destroyer. Another domain of diversion is the immense investment in asserting that yet-to-be-developed technology will solve the problem. All of these streams of disinformation converge to assert that nothing meaningful can be done (because inaction is human nature) or

should be done (because of the paradoxical opposite that we have the unlimited capacity to invent our way out of problems with technology).

One mandate of this Committee should be to dive beneath the symptoms to seek a better understanding of the disease. For example, the sources of resistance to taking responsibility for climate change appear akin to those of resistance to taking responsibility for systemic racism, slavery, displacement, and genocide of First Nations people and others. In each case, some form of responsibility must be taken and some form of reparation is due. Yet, unlike the Germans who made reparations to the Jews, we avoid taking responsibility for the acts of our ancestors. ***Our reality seems dictated by what we seek to accumulate and to avoid.*** A corollary is that transformational capacity is compromised by our fear of vulnerability.

If true, this suggests that transformation is more likely in small group processes through which a high degree of trust is achieved. Big group meetings can help pass on information but they inhibit vulnerable sharing because trust has not yet been built and confidentiality has not been maintained.

Kenosis

There's much we need to let go of in order to have room for this new and dynamic state of being offered by our peril. This falls into the social science realm of decolonization. This committee should study the various recognized processes of kenosis and recommend those that best fit the needs of the diocese.

Ecological Civilization

We should also explore giving legal being status to natural systems (rivers, lakes, fish, forests) so that they can have representation just as we have created the legal fictions of corporations, cities, states, and other entities. We cannot afford the present economy's normalization of avarice and failure to properly value systems of nature. Another model of civilization must be sought and transitions planned.

Sister Climate Congregations

Although most of these congregations would likely be overseas, some could be in highly damaged areas in the United States. By supporting online meetings between youth and adults and families, we would see what no book or IPCC report can provide: the actual human impacts of climate change. As we come to see the impacts of our lifestyles on the lives of others, transformation becomes less difficult. Since no countries to date are admitting harm and committing to reparation, we can do so with one congregation in ways we can afford. The committee should locate congregations overseas willing to consider being Sister Climate Congregations and make them available to the diocese.