



Our ongoing “Kairos Covenant Conversation” . . .

There is an ongoing “Kairos Covenant Conversation” . . . developing in our communities, in our congregations, and in our world . . . about how we will move forward together in the context of gravely challenging environmental developments . . . and how our faith informs the way we do this together. The Creation Care Team (CCT) of the Wisconsin Conference UCC is here to help you and your congregation. The CCT seeks to encourage and nurture conversation here in Wisconsin among and within our UCC congregations, and the communities they are in. We want to talk with you, to share resources, help you make connections, and strengthen your advocacy.

So . . . why a “Kairos Covenant Conversation”? Well . . .

“Kairos” – because it’s now or never

“Covenant” – because somehow, some way, we’ve got to navigate a way to do this work together, in relationship with each other, in community

We have begun to talk about the relationship between two related but distinct phenomena: **doing and being** in a way that is reflective of being in a Kairos Covenant, and *speaking explicitly* about a “Kairos Covenant.” It is beginning to become apparent that there is a big thing that might be called “the Kairos Covenant Conversation” that combines both these facets, is ongoing, and is being invented in real time.

We invite you to share with us – and through us, with others throughout Wisconsin (and beyond) – stories about how the Kairos Covenant Conversation” finds expression in your lives and the lives of your families, congregations, and communities.

More about the word “Kairos”

The word “kairos” has been adopted by the UCC in its national setting for addressing the urgent state of our planet - the Kairos Call to Action.

“Kairos” is a word that connotes an extraordinary time, pregnant with meaning; we often speak of a “kairos moment.” The concept of kairos came to be closely associated with several major social justice movements in the 20th century.

Benefits of adopting the “kairos” rubric include:

- **Emphasis on “awareness”** – Inherent in the “kairos” is talking about what people are noticing about this particular moment. What is happening? What has changed? What might happen next? What is our part in all this?
- **Theological connection** – The “kairos” idea reminds us to emphasize on the question, “How does this relate to our faith?”

- **Access to a larger movement** – Since the Kairos Call to Action emanates from the national setting of the UCC, it links us into opportunities for synergy – connection to what is being done by congregations and conferences nationwide, access to a rich pool of resources, etc.

More about the word “covenant”

“Covenant” is a concept that is central, among UCC congregations, to our understanding of how to be together.

“Covenant” carries connotations of “agreement,” “contract,” or “deal,” and those concepts can be helpful, but they can sometimes direct too much attention to quid pro quo and static terms, and not enough attention to the organic and constantly evolving nature of relationship.

In its discussions about this topic, the Creation Care Team has come to realize that it is precisely this ongoing, deepening, relational aspect of “covenant” that makes it so relevant to what we are all endeavoring to do to save our planet. Particularly relevant aspects of covenant are . . .

- *It is going to evolve over a long time.*
- *It isn't going to be easy.*
- *None of us can do it alone.*
- *We're going to need to commit to each other, and hang in there.*
- *Whatever happens, we need to keep listening to each other.*

Covenant happens at so many levels -- between individuals, within families, within congregations, between organizations, across entire communities, and on and on. Like “relationship,” this “kairos covenant” is something that comes into being through acting together. And, also like relationship, kairos covenant is something that has many, many dimensions, and just keeps getting deeper and deeper. In fact, by the time we can really wrap our minds around the full extent and implications of the multi-dimensional kairos covenant we're enmeshed in, it is likely to be quite highly developed indeed!

More about the word “conversation”

Conversation is the currency of covenant. It is the thing that makes covenant go.

One of the things that the Creation Care Team has felt it is important to stress: we all want to do things. And action *is* important. But our “superpower” as Christians lies in our ability to “be in this together,” and at the heart of that is our ability to have conversation and to listen to each other.

As we live into the Kairos Call to Action, and grow our kairos covenant, there will be many actions, many initiatives, many projects, many and diverse efforts; the constant that will keep us in ever-deeper covenant with each other is conversation.

Why not have a conversation with someone about these things today? The CCT team is here to share resources, help you make connections, and strengthen your advocacy. To learn more, contact CCT leaders Bob Ullman at rjullman@gmail.com and John Helt johncliffordhelt@gmail.com.