



Gathering Together, Nurturing Innovation, Strengthening Communities
Reuniéndonos Juntos, Animando Innovación, Fortaleciendo Comunidades
다같이 모이기 - 공동체를 강화하기 - 혁신을 키워나가기

February 14, 2019

Dear Presbytery Leaders and Stated Clerks,

Over the past two synod assemblies, commissioners adopted and affirmed a commissioner resolution concerning our climate change and fossil fuels. The Synod of the Northeast expresses its profound concern about the destructive effects of climate change on all God's creation, including a disproportionate impact on communities of persons of color, those living in poverty and in the least developed countries; the elderly and children; and those least responsible for the emissions of greenhouse gases. The synod recognizes the moral mandate for humanity to shift to a sustainable energy regime in a way that is both just and compassionate. This mandate compels us to action as a synod to divest from the fossil fuel industry even as we reduce our use of fossil fuels and shrink our carbon footprint.

The resolution called upon the Board of Trustees of the Synod of the Northeast to immediately stop any new direct investment in fossil fuel companies and begin work with asset managers to divest the Synod's directly held or commingled assets including holdings of either equities or corporate bonds in the fossil fuel companies identified in the *Carbon Underground 200* list <https://fossilfreefunds.org/carbon-underground-200>

by:

- working with current and prospective asset managers to develop and implement institutional fossil free investment options;
- actively seeking out and investing in renewable and energy efficiency related securities;
- taking no action inconsistent with fiduciary duty of principles of sound investment, including the real and substantial risk of stranded carbon assets;
- and reporting progress made to the Synod Mission and Ministries Commission.

The synod has responded to the mandates of this resolution. We fully divested from fossil fuel companies. The investment committee will continue to review the portfolio to see if there are other companies from which to divest and companies in which to invest in alternative energy sources. Additionally, there are ongoing efforts to facilitate connections among local environmental justice work for mutual encouragement and resourcing of congregational and presbytery witness.

How does this concern you? This letter is intended to inform you of these actions and to recommend that presbyteries and congregations discern your calls to divestment. We ask that within 12 months presbyteries report on work you or any of your congregations have done in this area including divestment from fossil fuels, educational programs for the presbytery or with congregations, creation of a task group focusing on this issue, etc. We will create a report of presbytery and congregational actions across the synod. In the meantime, if you wish to highlight any activities, please send your information to Margaret Mitsuyasu, the synod communications manager, at margaret.mitsuyasu@synodne.org. She will include your information on the synod website's section under Community called Around the Synod.

Below, please find links to resources that may assist you in your discernment. Within these resources you will find people with whom you can speak to answer questions your presbyteries or congregations may have.

Presbyterian Foundation Green Energy Investment – first steps

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/presbyterian-foundation-supports-green-energy-investments/>

PCUSA Earth Care Congregations

- <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/environment/earth-care-congregations/>

PCUSA Eco justice and worship resources

- <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/environment/worship-and-eco-justice/>

Fossil Free PCUSA

- Theology of Earth Care - <https://www.fossilfreepcusa.org/facts-action/theology-of-earth-care/>
- Facts and Actions - <https://www.fossilfreepcusa.org/facts-action/faq/>

Christian teachings/statements curated by GreenFaith

- https://greenfaith.org/christian_teachings

Faithfully,



Nancy Talbot
Synod Stated Clerk