

Dear worship planners,

Hi and thank you for using these resources prepared by members of the [PCUSA Walk for a Fossil Free World](#) planning team. Please feel free to use these resources as-is, adapt them, or select parts (if credit is listed in our resource, please be sure to credit the creator in your bulletin as well). We hope that you'll also participate in the Earth Day Campaign for a Fossil Free World that launches on Earth Day, April 22. The Minute for Mission talks a bit more about this campaign, and the goals are twofold:

1. To invite people to participate in the PCUSA Walk for a Fossil Free World and the wider movement for creation justice
2. To invite people to financially and prayerfully support this historic and bold effort taking place in June 2018

We hope your congregation will take part in celebrating God's creation this Earth Day and supporting the PCUSA Walk for a Fossil Free World. This Earth Day Campaign for a Fossil Free World begins April 22 and goes until May 15. You could do this by introducing the campaign on Earth Day and taking an offering on a Sunday before May 13...or maybe you introduce the effort and your mission committee can decide to dedicate a gift to the Walk. However you do it and in whatever amount, we ask that you send any offerings toward this campaign by May 15.

Offerings can be made online at pcusawalk.org/donate or by sending a check made out to Presbyterian Peace Fellowship to 17 Cricketown Rd. Stony Point, NY 10980 (with "Earth Day" in the memo line). **Gifts of all sizes are deeply appreciated and will be put to good use--toward medical supplies, food, and travel scholarships so that people from communities that are directly impacted by climate change can join the Walk.**

The PCUSA Walk for a Fossil Free World is a 16-day walk beginning on on June 1 from the PCUSA headquarters in Louisville, KY to the 223rd General Assembly in St. Louis, MO. **Through this Walk, participants seek to love creation with each step that we take and put our bodies on a journey for earth justice.** This Walk calls for the PCUSA to divest its money from fossil fuel companies and seeks to center the voices of people most directly affected by climate change in our conversations as a denomination. Everyone and anyone is invited to participate as walkers and/or virtual walkers. For more information, visit PCUSAwalk.org.

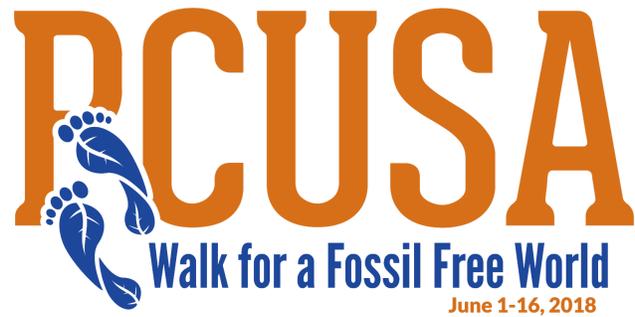
For creation,

Rev. abby mohaupt,

Moderator of Fossil Free PCUSA
Fellowship

Rev. Emily Brewer,

Director of Presbyterian Peace



Introit: "The Peace of the Earth" (arranged by John Bell)

Hymn Ideas:

- For the Beauty of the Earth (Glory to God #14 / The Presbyterian Hymnal #473)
- Abundant Life by Ruth Duck (New Century Hymnal #563)
- Touch the Earth Lightly (Glory to God #713)
- God of the Sparrow (Glory to God #22 / The Presbyterian Hymnal #272)
- [O God of Life, Your Waters Flow](#) by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette
- [At the Dawn of Your Creation](#) by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette (especially if using Genesis 1 as the sermon text)
- [We Were Born Out of the Waters](#) by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

Call to Worship and Litany of the Elements:

The Earth is the Lord's, and everything in it,
The world and its inhabitants too.

For the water that sustains us:

We thank you Creator God.

(Bring up a pitcher filled with water and pour it into a bowl.)

For the plants that breathe for us:

(Take a deep breath in and out.)

We thank you Creator God.

(Bring up a potted plant.)

For the soil that nourishes us:

We thank you Creator God

(Bring up a plate that has soil on it.)

For the light that guides us
and darkness that restores us:

We thank you Creator God.

(Bring up a candle and light it on table).

For the Earth that is a home for us

We thank you Creator God.

Amen.

Call to Confession:

In this world, we believe too much in our call to have dominion over creation. We forget that God calls us to that vocation from a place of love and care. And so, we must confess our shortcomings as human beings on this planet together.

Prayer of Confession:

God, you called us to love our neighbors, and to care for the wonder of your creation, but time and again we act in ways that defile the Earth and bring misery to its inhabitants. You gave us plenty of fresh, clean water, but we have allowed such overwhelming contamination that millions have nothing to drink. You instructed us to till and to keep, but in our ravenous hunger for resources, too often we have interpreted this as a license for exploitation. Help us recognize our complicity in ecological violence. Remind us that we were created as part of the ecosystem that is your Creation, not parasites draining its life. Remind us that we are creatures made by a loving Creator, made to love and to care for each other and all of creation.

Assurance of Pardon:

Friends, believe and proclaim the good news: in Christ, we are a new creation. We are set free to love God and love God's creation with our whole selves.

Possible Scripture Readings and Sermon Ideas:

About creation:

- Genesis 1:1-2:4 - What does it mean to be creatures/creations? What is our relationship to other creation/creatures? What does it mean to name and care for God's creation? How is God still creating and how are we participating (or not) in that creating?
- Psalm 104 - This Psalm has so many images of water--the "watery deep," the "gushing springs," water that's provided for every animal; The Psalmist even refers to the oceans that God put in an "established place" so that they will "never again cover the Earth" (v. 8-9), harkening back to the Genesis 1 text when God separates the sky, water, and land. The Psalmist couldn't imagine that we'd be living today with rising waters caused by human interference and that these rising waters are forcing some of the Earth's most vulnerable people from their homes. They are called "climate refugees" and just like the prophets implore us to care for the refugees among us, we must respond to the crisis of climate refugees not just by providing services and places for them to live, but by changing our own habits that are causing the waters to rise and force people from their homes. [This article](#) from the New York Times, "Resettling the First American Climate Refugees," talks about climate refugees and how some governments and organizations are responding. How are people of faith called to respond? How are people in your own local community responding to the urgency of climate change? Some Presbyterians are participating in the PCUSA Walk for a Fossil Free World as one way of putting their bodies on a journey for creation.
- Other creation-themed texts: Psalm 148, Romans 8, Job 39

Lectionary Texts:

- Psalm 23 - The Psalmist reflects on the still waters beside which God leads them. What waters are important in your place? What is the watershed that keeps your community alive ([check out this website if you're not sure](#))? What would it look like if, instead of orienting ourselves by political lines like states or counties or countries, we oriented ourselves and our sense of place by our watershed? (For more on this, see Ched Meyer's book, *Watershed Discipleship*). What communities or places do not have clean water? What does this say about how we have cared for creation and the creatures who depend on it. Is particularly worth noting that all of us are affected by climate change, yet communities of color and poor communities tend to be disproportionately affected by contaminated water - more on environmental racism can be found in [this article](#)). The Common English Bible translates the first three verses as "The lord is my shepherd. I lack nothing. He lets me rest in grassy meadows; he leads me to restful waters; he keeps me alive." How would our Earth and the global family look if we took seriously that "we lack nothing" and everything we need is provided by God, given we don't take more than we need? Where do we see examples of this (i.e. in the Standing Rock resistance that shared resources and whose central message was "Water is Life!")
- Other texts for the week: 1 John 3:16-24, Acts 4:5-12, John 10:11-18

Prayers of the People/Prayers for all creation:

Creating God, we give you thanks for all that you have made and all the ways that you are still creating. We give you thanks and we also lament the pain and suffering that we see in your world. We pray for the people of Puerto Rico, who continue to mourn all that has been lost to Hurricane Maria. We pray for the people of Houston, and especially for the communities closest to the oil refineries who suffered from the flooding of Hurricane Harvey and also for the pollution from those refineries.

We pray for our siblings in Iraq and Kurdistan and Iran and in so many other places whose lives and lands are exploited for the oil that rests beneath the Earth they inhabit. We pray for all those who have lost their lives in wars for oil, and we pray also for all who are driven by greed and profit that exploits the earth and God's children.

We pray especially today for the indigenous people of the world, who continue to bear the brunt of that greed and violence. Help us to listen to the wisdom of the Earth spoken through the words "Water is Life." Help us to respond with faithfulness to the call to change the ways that we live and consume. Help us to see ourselves as an integral part of creation instead of having dominion over creation.

God, Through the promise of Easter, you show us that new life is indeed possible, that despite all our doubts and all the devastation we see around us. Resurrect hope in us, Oh God. Resurrect in us the belief that change is possible, that this Earth that you have created can be home for everyone, with resources shared and all creatures cared for. Resurrect in

us the energy and imagination to be part of this creation that you are still doing, God. We pray all this and more with the words your Son taught us to pray:
Our Father, who art in Heaven...

Minute for Mission:

- If you have the technological ability to show a video in your service, you can play this video: <https://youtu.be/k4Qx7YJ6C6Q>
- Below is also a written minute-for-mission that someone could read
- [A PDF](#) is also included in these resources that is intended to be included as a bulletin insert

Offering sentence:

The God who spoke the Earth into being and breathed life into our bodies continues to speak and breathe life into our world today, providing us with enough resources for what we need if we share with one another. With thanks for our life and this precious Earth, let us share our gifts.

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

God of abundance, we give you thanks for the many gifts that we have among us today--for relationships, for the resources we need to do your work in the world, for the call to help build your kingdom on Earth. Help us to see that what you have given us is enough for all of your creation to thrive if no one takes more than their share. Give us hearts of generosity and abundance, that we might indeed share resources and wealth and that in so doing, we might build a piece of your kingdom right here and now.

Benediction:

Let us go now to love God, love each other, and love all of creation with our whole selves. And may the God of hope and abundant life go with you now and always.

Minute for Mission:

The Greatest Commandment is to love God with our whole hearts, souls, and minds, and also to love our neighbor as ourselves. Today, climate change is one of the greatest threats to God's earth and children. So if we are serious about loving God and loving our neighbors as ourselves, we must respond as people of faith to the reality of climate change. The Presbyterian Church has lots of policy saying that climate change is real and that we are called to respond. We are called to respond with our whole selves. That means changing our individual habits of consumption and also working to change government policies. It also means making sure we do not profit financially from the exploitation of the Earth by investing in the fossil fuel companies that are most responsible for climate change. We must listen to the communities in the world who are already being affected by climate change--indigenous communities, Puerto Ricans, and others. Their lives and their stories matter and their message is clear: the time to act for Creation is now.

That's why this June, a group of Presbyterians are walking--yes, walking!--from the Presbyterian headquarters in Louisville, KY to the General Assembly in St. Louis. This General Assembly has the opportunity to take the bold and prophetic action of divesting from fossil fuel companies as part of our faithful response to climate change. The PCUSA Walk for a Fossil Free World calls for the PCUSA to divest its money from fossil fuel companies and seeks to listen to the voices of people most directly affected by climate change in our conversations as a denomination. Each night of the Walk, walkers will stay in churches along the route and have teach-ins and worship that will be livestreamed on Facebook so people from all over can participate.

We, too, are invited to take part as walkers or a virtual walkers, and the PCUSA Walk for a Fossil Free World is actively seeking support from congregations who are ready to invest in climate justice. So this Earth Day, as we pray and sing for the Earth, can we also put our money and our bodies behind this effort as we seek to love Creation with our whole selves? <insert information here about how to give--by putting an offering in the plate today or on a date before May 13, or by another way that your congregation decides>.

Thank you for taking part in this movement to love God, love our neighbors, and love Creation with our whole selves by supporting the PCUSA Walk for a Fossil Free World.