Diocesan Environment Network Response to Synod 2019 Motion on the Climate Crisis

Mover: Mellanie Cohoon; Seconder: Charles Bull

The Motion: Resolved that this Synod of the Diocese of NS and PEI:

1.       recognises that there is a global climate and ecological emergency

2.       encourages churches and parishes of the diocese to make the Fifth Mark of Mission (‘To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth’) a living testament to our faith, and calls upon churches and parishes of the diocese to:
      a.     observe the Season of Creation (Sept. 1st to Oct. 4th), setting aside a day in that season as a day of public repentance,
      b.     plan and gather resources that would promote ecological action, including minimizing water-use, setting aside available land for natural growth of plants and trees, transition to renewable energy sources and incorporating creation care into liturgical practice,
      c.     prepare or use an existing Lenten practice focused on Creation
      d.     form small groups to take leadership on environmental issues within each parish and to connect with the Diocesan Environment Network,
      e.     identify environmental and climate-related threats in their context and to develop or adapt existing tools on disaster preparedness and mitigation.
3.     encourages the organisers of both Diocesan and General Synod to make each session of synod as environmentally sustainable as possible.

The diocesan response:

1. recognises that there is a global climate and ecological emergency

**1. Response:** The motion itself recognizes that there is a global climate and ecological emergency.

2. encourages churches and parishes of the diocese to make the Fifth Mark of Mission (‘To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth’) a living testament to our faith, and calls upon churches and parishes of the diocese to:

a.     observe the Season of Creation (Sept. 1st to Oct. 4th), setting aside a day in that season as a day of public repentance

**2. a Response:** Our diocese has more parishes involved than any other in Canada. DEN continues to promote Season of Creation and direct parishes to the website, DEN is formulating plans for a SOC workshop in the spring that will take place sometime between Earth Day and Rogation Sunday. DEN offers guest preachers (e.g. 2019 preached in Pictou) and presentations to parishes. DEN profiles the SOC activities of parishes as examples of creativity and the possibilities. DEN, in partnership with St. Marks, Halifax hosted an Eco Justice Fair, was featured in Halifax Today Sept. edition, and a number of Anglicans marched in the Global Strike). BTW: Global Strike Friday Noon – Grand Parade. We had planned to hold an Art Show during SOC 2020 on the premise that art expresses ideas that words cannot and projects dreams we cannot accomplish in other ways. In all its forms, art can remind us of the beauty in the world. Recognizing that the climate crisis is the most significant crisis of our time, art can inspire us to reconsider our relationship with creation and point the way to a different, more sustainable world. It is our hope the art will reconnect you with the beauty of the earth. Allow the art to inspire you to face the climate crisis and vow to take better care of our world. Because of the pandemic, the Hope & Inspiration Art Show was delayed until November/December and held on line rather than live.

b) plan and gather resources that would promote ecological action, including minimizing water-use, setting aside available land for natural growth of plants and trees, transition to renewable energy sources and incorporating creation care into liturgical practice

**2. b Response:** Eco Justice Fair displays and speakers included everything from recycling and solar energy to green burial. We have offered or promoted Zoom gatherings on gardening tips. Spiritually Connected Through Creation is hosting a session on energy reduction in church buildings. A few years ago, in partnership with the local United and Anglican Churches, we hosted an event on energy reduction in Charlottetown. DEN has local people connected to the network who are knowledgeable about energy reduction and who are willing to share that information with parishes. We have a partnership with The Rev Colin Nicolle doing research on reducing fossil fuel consumption in ministry by using an Ebike instead of a car. As for liturgical practice, DEN shares Season of Creation, Earth Day and Rogation Sunday liturgical resources. DEN offers a meditative practice for developed for Lent 2019 that can be used any time of the year called Stations of Creation. Green Anglicans offers Sunday School resources that DEN promotes. DEN offers guest preachers. In the New Year DEN will also be offering a weekly on line worship called Praying with the DEN Community that will be able to be accessed live, recorded an posted on our You Tube channel.

c) prepare or use an existing Lenten practice focused on Creation

**2. c Response:** Meditative prayer practice called Stations of Creation. Thanks to Donna Giles, The Church of St. Andrew. Our Thursday evening gatherings will focus this year on Lent.

d) form small groups to take leadership on environmental issues within each parish and to connect with the Diocesan Environment Network,

**2. d Response:** DEN provides support for Green groups in parishes and encourages parish priests to encourage their parishioners to develop Green groups. We also offer Spiritually Connected through Creation, a Zoom discussion group held once a week and addresses a variety of topics.

e) identify environmental and climate-related threats in their context and to develop or adapt existing tools on disaster preparedness and mitigation.

**2. e Response:** DEN works with and promotes advocacy groups like Alton Gas Water Protectors, SuNNS (gold mining) and groups dealing with the issue of de-forestation and destruction of wildlife habitat. DEN has supported Extinction Rebellion, Friday Student Strikers, NS Environmental Network and other environmental groups. DEN has presented briefs to government, been involved in the diocesan divestment (actually investment policy) to move from fossil fuel investment to renewable energy investment and is offering to support PWRDF in its commitment to disaster preparedness and mitigation due to the climate crisis.

3. encourages the organisers of both Diocesan and General Synod to make each session of synod as environmentally sustainable as possible.

**3. Response:** DEN has encouraged Synod planning committees in 2019 and 2017 to reduce use of plastics this past few Synods and encourages Synod delegates to bring reusable water bottles and travel mugs.