



Kentucky Council of Churches

## February 2014 Valentine Edition - Care for Creation

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### CARE FOR CREATION PRIORITY TOPICS



#### Care for Creation Issues - Creating a Climate for Stewardship

A network of faithful proponents of care for creation meets under the aegis of the Kentucky Council of Churches. Our chair is the Rev. Carol Devine. Most members are also active in another program and so we are able to keep each other updated and find ways to collaborate. When working to guide the Council's state-wide profile on creation care issues, we stay within the Council's insightful policy statement, **Caring for God's Earth**. To connect with this program unit, please reply to this email.

This newsletter brings you the major topics before us this winter and spring. They include raising specific concerns about the proposed natural gas liquids pipeline proposal, promoting public participation in legislative advocacy to protect creation, encouraging attention to climate change around Valentine's Day, inviting Kentuckians to two "Ground For Hope" events, and resourcing congregations interested in study, prayer, action and observance of special emphasis days such as Earth Day.

### Calendar of Events

February 5

Clean Energy  
Advocacy Day

February 12

Smoke-Free  
Advocacy Day

I Love Mountains  
Advocacy Day

February 16

Climate Change "Preach  
In"

March 8

Ground For Hope -  
Central Christian,  
Lexington

March 9

Ground For Hope -  
Highland Baptist,  
Louisville

April 22

Earth Day

Follow us on



## Pipeline Protections

### **It's about more than just property rights!**

In December, the Council released a statement about the proposed natural gas liquids pipeline project. Since then we have continued correspondence with Cabinet Secretary Len Peters about the inadequate progress in creating a strong regulatory regime to protect the public.

The Council's December statement began,

*"We all, together and as individuals, have a moral duty to assess the impact of the proposed transport system on the health, safety and economic well-being of the people, flora and fauna of Kentucky, as well as present and future impacts on our land and water resources. To do this, we must take time to learn the facts, insist on a comprehensive environmental impact study, and guarantee authoritative oversight of any well-studied plan that may be approved."*

It concludes,

*"We ask Kentucky legislators and the governor to create a siting board with oversight authority, and ask the Corps of Engineers and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to require an environmental impact statement in order to protect the public and our sacred water and land."*

The full statement is available to download within the article at [this link](#).

The legislators are currently focused mainly on the narrower issue of who gets to use the power of "eminent domain" - the power to require a private property owner to make land available.

The concern of the Council of Churches and its Care for Creation unit, however, is that the larger issues will get lost -- how will Kentucky assess the pro's and the con's and the moral dimensions of the pipeline issue, and what will be the process for accountability if a pipeline project is approved? The regulatory regime for energy transport in Kentucky is not strong because the Energy and Environment Cabinet has not lived up to their now 10-year-old mandate to regulate it.

What can you do to influence policy makers?

1) Please call the Legislative Message Line at 1-800-372-7181, give your name and address, and say something like: *"It is not enough to deal with 'eminent domain' issues - please insist on a full impact assessment to be done, and on creation of an oversight board."*

2) Please send an email to Cabinet Secretary Len Peters expressing your concerns about the situation, using this [email address link](#)

3) Please write to your legislators, which you can do easily by [clicking here](#).

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## Advocacy Days

### **Your voice counts, too**

The Council encourages churches bringing voices of faith into public debates, and creation care issues are no exception. You can help by encouraging people you know to sign up for Council alerts [here](#).

Legal issues affecting creation care span a wide spectrum, wider than the Council can monitor. A helpful beginning point for research about current legislative proposals is the Kentucky Resources Council [site](#).

In addition, several organizations offer "advocacy days" where citizens can get briefings on issues and make connections with public officials. Two key days are coming soon:

February 5 - a day focused on "[clean energy](#)" [advocacy](#) and meetings of the Kentucky Sustainable Energy Alliance.

February 12 - the popular "[I Love Mountains](#)" day, and also the day to highlight policies that would [create smoke-free work places](#) throughout Kentucky. Kentucky Interfaith Power and Light offers transportation on the 12th; more information [at this site](#).

Currently, the Kentucky Council of Churches' own advocacy emphasis is the proposed natural gas liquids pipeline; please see this newsletter's section on that topic!

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## Climate Change Preach-In



### **Will it preach? If you will preach it!**

The Rev. Sally Bingham is at the heart of a growing movement to raise faith voices about climate change, including but not limited to an annual "Preach-In" connected to Valentine's Day.

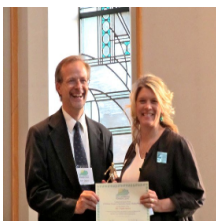
To see her two-minute promotional video for 2014 on YouTube please [click here](#).

To consult the national resources about this effort, go to [this link](#).

And to connect with Kentuckians who are doing this, contact Kentucky Interfaith Power and Light. The phone is 502-210-8920

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## Ground For Hope



### **Kentucky Stars to Shine over Ground For Hope**

A national movement to connect faith and creation care is partnering with Kentucky leaders to launch two events in March. The details are still being finalized but we expect these events to feature several prominent Kentuckians. One is the Rev. Patricia K. Tull, author of [Inhabiting Eden](#). Two others, pictured here, are Mr. Tim Darst of [Kentucky Interfaith Power and Light](#), and the Rev. Carol Devine of the [Green Chalice](#) program. Green Chalice is a program of the Christian Church Disciples of Christ, and Carol Devine is also the chair of the Kentucky Council of Churches Care for Creation program unit. She is pictured here receiving the "Kippie" award given annually by Ky Interfaith Power and Light.

The Saturday March 8th event will be at Central Christian Church in Lexington and the Sunday March

9th event will be at Highland Baptist Church in Louisville. Further details are being posted at the Ground For Hope site, [here](#).

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## **Prayer and Study**

### **Curriculum**

Kentucky is blessed to have deep thinkers and writers for church audiences about creation care. Lent is a particularly appropriate time in the liturgical calendar for addressing these issues, and in addition April 22 (two days after Easter) is Earth Day. If you are planning programs for church groups, then, please consider the following:

**The 4.5 Curriculum:** Produced by the Passionist Earth and Spirit Center in Louisville, there is a multi-denominational curriculum that has a week-by-week plan for Christian study of Christian Simplicity, Consumption, Water, Energy, Transportation, and Gratitude and Generosity.

**Blessed Earth:** Several resources produced by Matthew Sleeth and his team are designed for use in faith-based groups. A book and dvd on [keeping the sabbath](#), "24/6," is related to creation care as well.

**Earth Day:** A go-to place for faith-based resources for Earth Day is the Creation Justice program that grew out of inter-denominational collaboration. Resources will be posted there as soon as they are available and you can sign up to get notices.

### **Prayers for West Virginia**

The chemical spill in West Virginia left some 300,000 people in a state of risk and anxiety. The West Virginia Council of Churches asks for prayers, and has been responding with aid; their advice about donations is [here](#).

### **The Prayer of St. Patrick**

A favorite prayer about creation is from the ancient prayer attributed to St. Patrick. Even as we pray it, we remember that the earth is not stable along the New Madrid fault, and the sea may not be deep enough to deal with what humankind is doing - all the more reason to come together for prayer, study, advocacy, and changed lives in the spirit of worship of God:

*I bind unto myself today  
the virtues of the star-lit heaven,  
the glorious sun's life-giving rays,  
the whiteness of the moon at even',  
the flashing of the lightening free,  
the whirling winds tempestuous shocks,  
the stable earth, the deep salt sea  
around the old eternal rocks.*

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