Creation Justice Network presents reminder of Earth's health

shared by Rev. Karen Richardson Dunn
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Creation Justice Network Team
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On February 29, 2020, the Creation Justice Network held its first annual "Biscuits and Popcorn Climate Mobilization Film Festival." At last, nearly four months later, we have our compilation of the festival's short videos (and a couple of PowerPoint presentations) available for you to share with your congregations. You'll see some familiar SOC faces, and also hear about Creation care efforts from congregations and faith-based environmental groups beyond the Southern Conference. But each video offers a unique vision of how you and your congregation can become more engaged in care for God's beloved Creation.

Download list of resources in either:

Docx and/or PDF formats
The Southern Conference staff will be observing its annual summer leave from July 4 thru August 3, 2020. Should you have an Association issue that requires attention which cannot wait until the end of the leave, please contact those below according to your Association.

The phone messages at the Conference office will continue to be checked throughout this time. Should you need to get in touch with the Conference office, leave a detailed message at 336-222-8771 and the appropriate person will return your call.

**WNCA:**
Rev. William Vanderberg----704-622-9792---- blackberry48@gmail.com
Rev. Jim Luck----336-740-5780---- jrluckjr@gmail.com (not available July 5-12)
Rev. Barbara Rathbun----828-891-9405---- bmrathbun@bellsouth.net

**EVA:**
Rev. Ernest Hammond 757-380-0472 ernestham@verizon.net

**ENCA:**
Rev. Gary Leath 336-213-6357 vankess39@yahoo.com

**Annual Gathering save the Date**
A Virtual, Unified Southern Conference Annual Gathering...has ENCA, EVA, and WNCA joining together to have Association Meetings and the Southern Conference Annual Gathering over two days, October 16-17, 2020.

Look for additional information and training in the coming months on how this never done before event will unfold. See you there!

**A Note of Thanks**

Rev. Edward Davis (D.Min.), Southern Conference Minister, would like to thank all who tuned in for the Southern Conference informational webinars from April thru June and who sent messages about how much they enjoyed them. Please look forward to even more informational webinars when we reconvene in August. Have a safe summer!

**Subscribe to SOC e-News / add names here**

ALL persons are invited and welcome to receive the Southern Conference e-News. Churches may submit names, or share this invitation with their members for individuals to self-subscribe.

To add names, submit by e-mail to editor: stumb@boone.net
Please include 1) name, 2) e-mail address, 3) church or other affiliation, and 4) role in church, agency, etc. (i.e. council president). #4 category is optional.

**Rev. Darryl Peebles retires and offers books**

Rev. Peebles is retiring from serving local churches after 48 years, and will be doing freelance ministry including programs, pulpit supply, weddings, counseling and much more, including his YouTube channel Daily Dose of Darryl. However, he does have quite a few books that he would be happy to give to a young minister who can't really afford to buy books. A copy of the book cases is attached. They have to be emptied by August 31st. Peebles can be contacted at
"Oh Freedom!" - The Golden Gospel Singers
Rev. LaShauna Austria noted the sign in this 1950's video, and asked cohorts in her White Privilege session, "Where is the Church today?"
view video on YouTube:  https://youtu.be/veiJLhXdwn8?t=1

See below - links to 3 Part Series and slides of:

America on Fire!
A racial equity conversation

Featured Presenter: Rev. LaShauna Austria is the Southern Conference Minister for Racial Equity and Justice.

New release -- PowerPoint slides from 3 part series -
- America on Fire! A racial equity conversation -- by Rev. LaShauna Austria / view or download presentation

America On Fire Part 1
https://youtu.be/DHPwAdcQlFc

America on Fire Part 2
https://youtu.be/DMMhN1JfhE8

America on Fire Part 3
https://youtu.be/LVIj_nguSpM

Links from previous SOC Zoom Webinars

Resources and links for previously aired webinars can be found on the Southern Conference web site
Funerals during the Pandemic

Written by Rev. Colleen Samson (D.Min.)

Clergy who perform a funeral during this time of pandemic encounter a special challenge. Recently, an elderly person in the Bethany/Claremont congregation passed away. The daughter of the deceased called me to arrange a time for the funeral. The funeral home had more funerals than usual, so the time of the funeral was not flexible. I asked the daughter if the funeral was only for family, and she responded, "Oh no, anyone who wants to come can be there."

The funeral was held in the late morning. It was hot. There were probably forty people who attended. The seats under the tent were filled and many were standing in the back. I assured those who were standing that the service would not be long because I was aware they were standing in the heat. Maybe 35% of the people wore masks. I wore a masked except for the time I was conducting the service.

I did a combination of the "Thanksgiving for One Who Has Died" and the "Committal" service in the UCC Book of Worship. It did not seem like enough to just do the "Committal" service. If you have done that service, it is very short. There was not a bulletin for the service. One of the scriptures I used was Psalm 23, and I asked people to join me, if they would like. We also said The Lord's Prayer together.

Outline for the service:

Sentences from both services
Greeting from the Thanksgiving Service followed by the Prayer
2 Scripture Readings
Hymn (The family and the funeral home arranged for two songs over a portable sound system.)
Meditation
Hymn
Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession followed by The Lord's Prayer
Committal from the Committal Service
Prayers from the Committal Service
Benediction

The length of the service was 20-25 minutes. I modeled wearing a mask and social distancing. I did not do the customary handshake of family members at the end. I did stand in front of each family member and express my condolences.
A statement from Karen Richardson Dunn

Over the past two Thursday evenings the Rev. LaShauna Austria, SOC's minister for Racial Equity and Justice, has led a remarkable webinar series discussion titled "America on Fire!" In this three-part series, Rev. Austria explores the roots of our country's systemic racism up to the present-day unconscionable killing of George Floyd and the resulting worldwide protests. (Links to recordings of that series and her PowerPoint presentation are available in an above column of this e-News.)

What strikes me in listening to Rev. Austria's presentation is that -- just as white supremacy has brought upon the oppression and destruction of black and brown lives, black and brown bodies -- so has the concept of humankind's supremacy over Creation wrought terrible destruction upon the earth. And as is so often tragically the case, those human beings who suffer most from the degradation of our earth are these same black and brown people, further exploited and yes, killed, under an unjust system.

Both the concept of white supremacy and that of "dominion" twisted into "exploitation" are born from hubris and greed, and are ongoing poisons that must be eradicated, and no place more especially than in our pews. My hope is that our churches will rise up as in no other time in history to face down and call out these evils -- in our own hearts, in our families, in our communities, in, yes, our pews -- and work together for the transformative change that is God's Kingdom on Earth.
Read below FINAL update for DISCOVER 2020 program

Virtually: July 5-10
Virtually: July 12-17

Can register as an individual or as a group
www.catawba.edu/discover

ASHEBORO, N.C. -- Middle and High School Students are invited to join us for Virtual Discover 2020 as we explore God's vision for us and for the world. Due to recent trends with COVID-19 all our sessions will now be online using Zoom to facilitate small group discussions, theological reflection, crafts, worship, and games. Participants will receive a box with all the items they need to participate. Please register by June 30 to ensure you get your supplies on time. For questions please contact samartin12@catawba.edu.

Johns River Valley Camp offers lodging as vacation destination

COLLETTSVILLE, N.C. -- Did you cancel a summer vacation due to COVID-19 concerns? Are you still hesitant to go near crowds? We might have a place for you to travel this summer.

As many of you know, we felt compelled to cancel our summer camping schedule for the summer of 2020. While we are saddened by the need to make such a decision, we are looking for the bright spots. Our unique location in the remote and scenic Johns River Valley makes it possible to offer you a safe space to travel this summer.

Contact Phil Hardy at 336-266-1617 or phardy.jrvc@gmail.com to learn about rates, open dates and to begin planning your family's vacation.

***This event has been re-scheduled

Johns River Valley Camp is launching a "Connect" program for Middle and Senior High youth.

Caring for planet Earth, our shared home
Re-scheduled for September 25-27 - Cost / $120.00
in 2020 with Brooks Berndt, UCC Environmental Justice Minister

Each year we will turn our thoughts to our connections to the Creator, to Creation and to one another. With minds for justice we will ask in what ways we are connected, what those connections mean and what they require of us?

This weekend will concentrate on being good stewards of the Earth and encountering God in Creation. Saturday will include a bike trip on the Virginia Creeper Trail. Read more
2020 Church Women Calendar

SAVE THE DATES:

2020 and 2021 Church Women of the Southern Conference Summer Conferences:  Due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) our traditional Summer Conference (June 18-20, 2020) has been postponed until June 2021. We will still have our Annual Business meeting for this year via Conference Call (see below).

September 12, 2020 (Saturday)
Fall Enrichment - EVA-CW

June 2021
2021 CWSC Summer Conference

October 15-17, 2021
Southern Region Women's Retreat - Live Oak, Florida

July 22-25
United Church of Christ's National Youth Event postponed until 2022.

September 25-27 (Re-scheduled from original date of May 15-17)
Johns River Valley Camp will welcome Rev. Brooks Berndt, Environmental Justice Minister of the United Church of Christ. "Connect: Caring for Planet Earth; Our Shared Home" will invite Middle and Senior High Youth to reflect upon their connection to Creation and their role in providing it care. Cost will be $120 and will include meals, lodging and a bicycle trip on the Virginia Creeper Trail. Read more / Register
October 5-7
Please save the date for the Tenth Annual UCC Retired Servants' Retreat at Blowing Rock Conference Center

October 16-17
Virtual United Southern Conference Annual Gathering combining meetings of EVA, ENCA, and WNCA together with the Southern Conference
Tentative schedule:
  Friday, October 16 - SOC Annual Gathering is called together in the AM
  Friday, October 16 - Associations meet separately in the PM
  Saturday, October 17 - SOC continues Annual Gathering with business and workshops

Summer, 2021
General Synod 33 of the United Church of Christ to be a virtual experience

June 27-30, 2022
Due to the unforeseeable impact of COVID-19 on the health, social, and physical distancing behaviors of the world, National Youth Event (NYE) at Purdue University is postponed until June 27-30, 2022.

Lectionary Reading: Fifth Sunday after Pentecost / July 5, 2020 / Psalm 145:8-14
photo by C. L. Stumb

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