

## Climate-Crisis Preaching: Selected Resources

Looking for guidance as you prepare pastoral and prophetic sermons about the climate crisis? Here is a short list of resources for preachers that was assembled in September 2021 by the Rev. Dr. Jim Antal (Special Advisor on Climate Justice to UCC General Minister and President) and the Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas (Missioner for Creation Care [Episcopal Diocese of Western MA & Southern New England Conference, UCC] and Creation Care Advisor [Episcopal Diocese of MA]). We may update the list from time to time. If you have additions or corrections, please email [mbj@revivingcreation.org](mailto:mbj@revivingcreation.org).

(Updated 9/24/21)

### Climate preaching resources from Jim & Margaret:

Jim Antal's website, [JimAntal.com](http://JimAntal.com), posts news & thought about the interfaith climate movement, upcoming events, and ways to take action. His website includes a [3-page pdf of climate crisis resources for congregations and clergy](#) that is packed with information and contains links to many UCC resources, resolutions, newsletter, etc.

Margaret's website, [RevivingCreation.org](http://RevivingCreation.org), includes about one hundred lectionary-based sermons about climate change and Creation care, plus blog posts, articles, upcoming events, videos, and books. Sign up for her monthly newsletter, *Creation Care Network* [here](#).

**Jim Antal, *Climate Church, Climate World*** (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018), especially the chapter, "Prophetic Preaching," 121-135. The book includes study questions and can be used for group study as well as individual reflection. [Visit Jim's Website](#) to see what people like Bishop Desmond Tutu, Prof. Walter Brueggemann and Bill McKibben have to say about it.

**Leah Schade and Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, ed. *Rooted and Rising: Voices of Courage in a Time of Climate Crisis*** (Rowman & Littlefield, 2019). This anthology of 21 essays on courage and spiritual resilience from a range of faith traditions includes stories and insights useful for climate preaching, plus study questions and spiritual practices. It can be used for group study as well as individual reflection. For a 30% off discount, buy it from the publisher and use the code **RLFANDF30**: <https://rowman.com/ISBN/9781538127759/Rooted-and-Rising-Voices-of-Courage-in-a-Time-of-Climate-Crisis>.

**Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, "[Addiction, Climate Change, and Spiritual Liberation](#),"** *Religions* (September 2021). Drawing from her long-term recovery from addiction and her decades of ministry as a climate activist, the author reflects on how understanding the dynamics of addiction and recovery can inform our efforts to protect the web of life and bear witness to the liberating God of love. Topics include, among others, climate grief, denial, and "Is climate change my fault?"

**Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, "[Preaching When Life Depends on It: Climate Crisis and Gospel Hope](#),"** *Anglican Theological Review* (Vol. 103, 2), pp. 208–219. The author reflects on the power of sermons to awaken moral courage and considers six ideas for preachers: how to frame the climate emergency in terms of Christian theology; how to approach the lectionary; how to be adequately informed about climate science; how to connect climate change with other issues, such as coronavirus and racial and economic justice; why and how to infuse sermons with the empowering love of God; and individual and collective actions to encourage.

### Other climate preaching resources:

- Fletcher Harper, "[Stop preaching about 'being good stewards of the Earth,'](#)" Sojourners, Sept. 16, 2021
- Peter Sawtell, "[Three Layers of Environmental Preaching](#)" (If clicking the link doesn't work, use a search engine to find the article)  
Peter Sawtell's archive of weekly emails to his 6,000 subscribers is a treasure trove of resources and reflection for clergy and congregations: <http://www.eco-justice.org/E-list.asp>
- "[Let's Talk Faith and Climate: Communication Guidance for Faith Leaders,](#)" produced by EcoAmerica and Blessed Tomorrow, explains why our faith calls us to lead on climate, provides key talking points, and gives examples of "successful messaging"
- [SustainablePreaching.org](#): This ecumenical Website provides lectionary-based sermons. You can look up biblical passages and read sermon suggestions.
- **EcoPreacher 1-2-3**: In an effort to encourage clergy to preach and teach on Christian ecology at least once a month, The Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development and the Rev. Dr. Leah Schade have partnered to develop a new *free* resource called **EcoPreacher 1-2-3**. Drawing from *Eco Bible*, a Jewish ecological commentary on the Hebrew Scriptures, Dr. Schade provides sermon preparation for preaching about caring for God's Creation that is short, accessible, and based on a solid biblical foundation. **EcoPreacher 1-2-3** offers a brief "eco-exegesis" for interpreting a Hebrew text from the Revised Common Lectionary for the coming Sunday, followed by one "eco idea" for the basis of the sermon, two "eco questions" to go deeper, and three "eco actions" to choose from to help a congregation put their faith into action. With this resource, preachers can use the sermon ideas in their own context and make it relevant for their congregation. [For information and to subscribe to weekly emails, click here.](#)
- Leah Schade, *Creation-Crisis Preaching: Ecology, Theology, and the Pulpit* (Chalice Press, 2015)

### Staying informed about climate crisis:

- Basic information is available from many sources, such as  
NASA <https://climate.nasa.gov/resources/global-warming-vs-climate-change/>  
Natural Resources Defense Council <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/global-climate-change-what-you-need-know/>
- Subscribe to [InsideClimateNews.org](#) (the weekly newsletter from a Pulitzer Prize-winning, non-profit, non-partisan news organization) and/or to [Climate Nexus](#)'s daily newsletter (send an email to: [info@climatenexus.org](mailto:info@climatenexus.org)) and/or for [GRIST](#) (either daily or weekly).
- To learn about your region's environmental concerns, contact your local chapter of Sierra Club. To view climate risks and clean energy opportunities in each of the 50 states, visit [Climate Nexus](#).

### Other faith-based resources: Online

- [Christianity and Climate Change](#) is a nine-part video series for small groups featuring Katharine Hayhoe, the internationally renowned climate scientist and Evangelical Christian. The videos are only six minutes long, leaving plenty of time for discussion:
  - What the Bible says about the natural world,
  - Climate change is a poverty issue,
  - How to persuade others to care about climate change,

- What we can do as a church,
  - Speaking to other Christians about climate change,
  - Grateful for fossil fuels but time to move on,
  - Climate change is a threat multiplier,
  - There can be a better future, and
  - It is not too late.
- Episcopal Diocese of Western Mass. provides Creation-care resources in four areas: [Pray, Learn, Act, and Advocate](#) (The “Learn” section includes articles connecting climate change and racism, climate change and Covid-19.) The Website also includes links to many Episcopal resources.
  - “Climate Change and Social Change” (<https://greengoodnews.org/blog/2019/10/7/climate-change-and-social-change-presentations>): Four presentations by T. Wilson Dickinson on how movements for food justice, climate justice, and social justice fit together, and the role that Christian communities can play

### Other faith-based resources: Books

- T. Wilson Dickinson, *The Green Good News: Christ’s Path to Sustainable and Joyful Life* (Cascade Books, 2019) – an environmental justice reading of the Gospels
- Pope Francis, *Laudato Si – Praise Be to You: On Care for Our Common Home* (2015) (also available as a free download on the Web)

### Other helpful resources:

- [National Issues Forum Institute](#) has materials on controversial issues (e.g., immigration, policing) and a short video about how to moderate “deliberative forums,” in which people deliberate with each other on a variety of difficult public issues.
- Anything by environmental justice activist, Mary Annaise Heglar, such as “[I work in the environmental movement. I don’t care if you recycle. Stop obsessing over your environmental ‘sins.’ Fight the oil and gas industry instead.](#)” (Vox, 2019) or “[We Don’t Have to Halt Climate Action to Fight Racism](#)” (HuffPost, 2020).
- Eco-America/Blessed Tomorrow recently (2021) two-page action sheets. The front includes “What You Need to Know,” and the back includes “What You Need to Do.”
  1. [Climate Solutions for Your Home and Neighborhood](#)
  2. [Climate Solutions for Your Workplace and Congregation](#)
  3. [Climate Solutions for Your Community](#)
  4. [Climate Solutions Advocacy with Policy Makers](#)

### Possible “asks” in your sermons:

- **Lighten your carbon load** Inform your congregation about ways to reduce their carbon footprint – e.g. <https://blogs.ei.columbia.edu/2018/12/27/35-ways-reduce-carbon-footprint/>  
For instance:

Eat low on the food-chain – moving toward a plant-rich diet is one of the most immediate and effective ways we can reduce carbon emissions. Eat local. Eat organic. Waste less food.

Buy less stuff. Get an energy audit of your home, so that you can identify ways to be more

energy-efficient and perhaps save money (if possible, tell your congregation where to get an energy audit).

Drive less. Walk, take public transportation, carpool, rideshare or bike to your destination, when possible. If possible, purchase a hybrid or electric car. Fly less. If you must fly, buy carbon offsets (e.g., [www.terrapass.com/](http://www.terrapass.com/)).

• **Join the climate justice movement** Pushing for systemic change is more important than making personal changes. Get politically engaged. Vote! ... Join [350.org](http://350.org), the global grassroots network to stop all new coal, oil, and gas projects and build a clean energy future for all ... Join [ThirdAct.org](http://ThirdAct.org), environmentalist Bill McKibben's new initiative seeking to harness the wisdom and resources of elders (people over 60) to assure that we leave a fair, stable planet for future generations... Stand alongside marginalized, vulnerable communities in your area that are fighting environmental racism.

• **Restore the land and grow food** Support local land trusts and farms. Cultivate a landscape that sequesters carbon and provides food for the homeless and low-income households. Launch projects such as composting, tree planting, habitat restoration, permaculture gardening, and growing produce for food pantries. Join the [Good News Gardens Movement](#).