

www.foothillspresbytery.orgManella Calhoun mhc@clemson.edu<http://www.pcusa.org/environment/>January–February 2016 Issue

Foothills Presbytery Highlights:

Are you interested in brainstorming about ways to share your love of God's creation with children and youth in our Presbytery? If so, please send me an email and let me know as soon as possible!
mhc@clemson.edu.

<http://www.pcusa.org/blogs/eco-journey/>

January 20, 2016

Eco-Palms for Palm Sunday!

Celebrate a sustainable Palm Sunday! More than 300 million palm fronds are harvested each year for U.S. consumption alone — most of them for Palm Sunday. Whereas traditional palms may harm forests and not support local workers, when you order Eco-Palms you are protecting forests, local jobs, and sustainable livelihoods in the harvesting communities.

In 2015, 995 PC(USA) congregations purchased Eco-Palms for Palm Sunday. 2015 orders totaled more than 183,640 palm fronds purchased by Presbyterians. Altogether 4216 U.S. congregations ordered Eco-Palms in 2015, ensuring that over 965,840 palm fronds were harvested sustainably this season. In 2016, we would love to hit the 1,000 order mark for Presbyterians and the 1 Million fronds ordered across all denominations that participate in the Eco-Palms project.

One congregation shared their experience with the Eco-Palms by saying “In working towards the goal of becoming better stewards of the creation that God has entrusted to our care our congregation made an intentional effort to “do no harm” to the environment by purchasing Eco-Palms for our Palm Sunday and Holy Week observances. We hope that all congregations will consider this small, local action with global, environmental consequences.”

[Click here to learn more or order your eco-palms.](#)

About this blog *Eco-Journey is the blog of the Environmental Ministries Office of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It includes a wide array of environmental topics: upcoming environmental events, links to interesting articles and studies, information on environmental advocacy, eco-theology topics, and success stories from churches that are going “green.”*

Author Rebecca Barnes is the Associate for Environmental Ministries at the PC(USA). She is a graduate of Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary with an MDiv & Master of Arts in Religion (MAR) dual degree.



Images of Paris Climate Talks

by Gary Payton

The suitcase is unpacked. The swirl of a wonderful Christmas with family is past. What remains, however, are the indelible images in my mind of two weeks in Paris in December at the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, or COP21.

Across 13 days, representatives of 195 nations hammered out an historic agreement intended to slow the onrush of human-caused climate change, assist developing nations in adapting to impacts, and accelerate the transition to low carbon economies.



Key points of the accord include a goal to keep the rise in average global temperature to "well below" 2 degrees C (3.6 degrees F) and aim to limit the rise to 1.5 C (2.7F), national targets to reduce emissions and ratchet down those emissions via an every five year review, and for wealthy countries to support poorer countries in climate change adaptation via a \$100 billion/year Green Climate Fund.

How then can you and I as PEC members translate a critical international environmental agreement into action in our personal lives, our congregations, and within the agencies of the [PC\(USA\) General Assembly](#)? The images of Paris drive my faithful responses to this question:

- I have stopped describing the impacts of climate change as a future reality. My conversations with a Maryknoll sister from the Philippines, with young activists from southern Africa, and leaders from Pacific Island states drove home that impacts are now, they are present today, and God's children are suffering.
- I am called to redouble my efforts to engage young adults across the PC(USA) and within secular environmental NGOs for climate change education and action. My generation is culpable in accelerating the climate crisis. Young adults will lead in the climate solutions of the 2020s, 2030s, and beyond.
- And, I will continue my work within [Fossil Free PCUSA](#), a PEC supported activity, urging the General Assembly in June 2016 to divest from fossil fuel holdings. "If it is wrong to wreck the climate, then it is wrong to profit from that wreckage."

In the spirit of the Paris Agreement and with God's call in our hearts to care for creation, join me in advancing the PEC supported environmental overtures at the [222nd General Assembly in Portland, Oregon](#).

Gary Payton is an active PEC member, an environmental advocate, and member of Fossil Free PCUSA. He attended COP21 in Paris as an "observer" credentialed with the PC(USA). Gary and his wife, Nancy Copeland-Payton, make their home on a mountainside in Sandpoint, Idaho along with moose, deer, black bears,

wild turkeys, and bunnies.

Updates from Green Congregations: from Ellie Taylor, elptyl@bellsouth.net,
www.FeedingTheKids.com

Hello: We had a delightful brainstorming session at the Clemson Baptist Church last Monday. Thanks to Louise Monroe for hosting our group.

We discussed a format for 2016 meetings and decided to create a calendar. We will continue to rotate our meetings among member congregations. Each congregation will plan a program when we are meeting in their facility. We will continue to meet on the 3rd Monday of most months from 12-1 p.m. If you were not present last Monday, we hope you will volunteer to host in either April or May (see below list).

A REMINDER: This Monday, January 25th from 6-7 p.m. is our first 2016 Earth Dialogue at Moe Joe's Coffee Shoppe in Clemson. We have an incredible panel of experts who will lead a conversation about "Integrating Built Communities with Nature". With so much construction happening on campus and around Clemson we have seen many old trees removed and many parking lots are being created. Much to discuss, so please plan to join in. Food and beverage available at 5:30 p.m or earlier.

ANOTHER REMINDER: Foothills Sierra Club meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson on Pendleton Road. The topic on February 2nd will be solar energy opportunities for homes, businesses and congregations. Everyone is welcome.

If you send information about programs or opportunities, Ellie will be happy to inform our email list.

January: Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson - Susan Peirce

February: St. Andrew's Catholic Church in Clemson-Sharon Fennell and Mary Steffes

March: Peace Congregational Church - Cynthia Warner

April: Open

May: Open

Ellie Taylor, [864-654-1331](tel:864-654-1331), elptyl@bellsouth.net, www.FeedingTheKids.com

Know your farmer. "*Whatever lofty things you might accomplish today, you will do them only because you first ate something that grew out of dirt.*" Barbara Kingsolver

National Council of Churches of Christ - Eco-Justice Program Office

<http://www.creationjustice.org/>



January 14, 2016

<http://sccouncil.net/>



STAND-UP SABBATH / SUNDAY

January 29-31, 2016

or the date which works best for your community of faith

Stand-Up Sabbath / Sunday when we all stand up for the nine.

The nine killed at Emanuel AME in Charleston.

The nine in our state who are killed by guns every five days.

The nine out of every ten South Carolinians who want background checks on all gun purchases, according to the most recent statewide poll.

What better place to stand first for the nine than in our own beloved Sacred Spaces?

South Carolina's Faith Leaders are called on Stand-Up Sabbath / Sunday, Jan. 29-31, 2016, to address the urgent need to close loopholes that allow guns to be sold online and at gun shows without background checks, and to strengthen laws and prosecution pertaining to gun dealers evading the process completely. Ninety percent of crime guns are being sold by 5% of gun dealers.

Congregants will be asked to participate in a specific action as they exit the service that day (materials to be sent to those who e-mail their interest in participating).

Each congregation is asked to have nine volunteers Stand Up for the Emanuel Nine during its service.

Additionally, congregations are asked to recruit people to commit to Stand for the Nine by supporting legislation directly through personal contact with legislators and at the State House when the call to support specific legislation is issued (send names and contact info to gunsenseSC@gmail.com).

This ISN'T a challenge to the Second Amendment rights of citizens to possess firearms. Nor is it a partisan issue; an overwhelming consensus on this aspect of gun safety has been reached in our state. (Public Policy Polling, 2015)

This IS a public-health crisis. It IS a moral crisis. We cannot continue to allow guns to keep falling into the wrong

hands and people to keep dying because the 90 percent doesn't make its voice heard.

South Carolina has the 11th-highest rate of gun deaths per capita in the U.S. and, as of 2009, was the sixth-leading supplier of crime guns used in other states. For the first time ever, the number of people dying from gun violence in the U.S. is expected to surpass the number of those who die in car accidents.

Closing the loopholes for gun sales works. States that have taken these steps have seen significant declines in gun deaths.

Send an e-mail to gunsenseSC@gmail.com with your name, your telephone number, your congregation and city/town.

Those committing to Stand for the Nine will be sent materials and links to facilitate participation on Stand Up Sabbath / Sunday, and advocates will be identified so that direct calls to action on specific legislation can be made.

Interfaith Power & Light

<http://www.interfaithpowerandlight.org/>



The **Faith Climate Action Week** (formerly known as the Preach-In on Global Warming) will take place during Earth Week, April 15- 24, 2016.

Celebrations, sermons, service projects, events, and nature walks will be held, all week, around the signing of the landmark Paris Climate Accord in New York City at the United Nations. [Learn more and sign up now to be the first to receive information.](#)

In honor of the pledge we have made as a nation along with the rest of the world in Paris to limit global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius, we will be focusing on ways we can green our facilities and homes, take action locally, and advocate nationally for positive steps towards a sustainable, 100% renewable energy future.

Join us for a whole week of Creation celebration and carbon-cutting activities. [Sign up to receive](#) information and activities around this exciting event.

NASA's Earth Observatory Where every day is Earth day. <http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/>

The latest from NASA's Earth Observatory (19 January 2016)

Latest Images:

<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/>

* A Fresh Plume from Copahue

<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=87338&src=eoaeiotd>

* Kavir Desert
<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=87347&src=eoas-iotd>

* Measuring the Height of Smoke over Borneo
<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=87329&src=eoas-iotd>

* El Niño Fueled Rains Swamp South America
<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=87334&src=eoas-iotd>

* Flooding on the Lower Mississippi
<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=87305&src=eoas-iotd>

* An Atlantic Hurricane...in January
<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=87324&src=eoas-iotd>

* Hurricane Pali
<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=87314&src=eoas-iotd>

* New Seafloor Map Helps Scientists Find New Features
<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=87276&src=eoas-iotd>

Recent Blog Posts:
<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/blogs/>

Earth Matters

* Sunrise to Sunset
<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/blogs/earthmatters/?p=5771&src=eoablogs>

NASA's Earth Observatory

Where every day is Earth day.

<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/>



Updates from the Cool Green Science Blog

I've had many memorable wildlife sightings over the years, from jaguars to tigers to chimpanzees. But one of my all-time favorites is an inconspicuous but impossibly cute denizen of sagebrush country: the pygmy rabbit.

This tiny critter has faced a hard time recently as habitat disappears and new threats emerge. But conservationists

have developed innovative ways to reintroduce these rabbits to the wild.

While the news is often filled with bad news about endangered species, conservationists are making a difference -- often using creative and even bizarre methods. This month, we take a look at some of the ways your support is helping to make a difference for endangered wildlife.

Pygmy Rabbits on the Brink

Fewer than 30 Columbia Basin pygmy rabbits were left in the wild. But now, a new program has used captive breeding to release more than 1,800 to their habitat.

[Read more »](#)



Miracle on Palmyra

Palmyra Atoll has recovered from many calamities, but it couldn't recover from rats. Can a dying ecosystem be brought back to life? Ted Williams reports.

[Read more »](#)



Raising Cranes: Can Grain Fields Save a Bird?

Greater sandhill cranes have been in decline in eastern Idaho. Can an effort to pay farmers to save some grain for cranes pay off?

[Read more »](#)



Weird Conservation: The Crazy Ways Conservationist Save Endangered Species

A fun look at the creative tools and techniques conservationists are using to save species, from puppets to toxic sausages to semen-collecting hats.

[Read more »](#)



Upstate Update

Upstate Forever



THE TOP TEN ACHIEVEMENTS IN PLANNING AND CONSERVATION IN THE UPSTATE IN 2015

This year it was particularly challenging to finalize Upstate Forever's Top Ten list as we could go on and on!

Because of you, 2015 has been a banner year for conservation achievements. As always, we are grateful for your support as there is much more work to do to protect the Upstate's special places and natural resources.

So here's our annual Top Ten List of the most notable achievements in land use, conservation, and sustainable development issues in the Upstate (not necessarily in order of importance).

For complete information on all upcoming events, visit our [Events Calendar](#).

1/21: Solarize info Session, Anderson

1/23: Adopt-A-Stream Chemical and Bacterial Monitoring Workshop, Anderson

1/23: Solarize SC Winter Sun Solar Home Tour, Greenville/Travelers Rest

1/30: Adopt-A-Stream Biological Monitoring Workshop, Greenville

2/16: WaterRock institute Presents Carl Safina: What Animals Think and Feel, Spartanburg

2/21: Upcountry Muse Fine Arts Event, Greenville

2/23: 7th Annual ForeverGreen Annual Awards Luncheon, Greenville

3/1: Tuesday, 9:00am - 3:00 pm **Your Land, Your Legacy Conference**

3/1: Thursday, 9:00am – 3:00 pm **Your Land, Your Legacy Conference**

4/5: Tuesday, 10:00am, **Conservation Lobby Day and Oyster Roast**

4/17: Sunday, 10:00am **Discover Your Watershed**

5/28: Saturday, 8:00am

RALLY IN THE VALLEY - OCONEE FOREVER'S RIDE ROLLS FOR CONSERVATION!!!

Resources and Opportunities

Online accessibility to locate parks statewide (city, county, state, and federal parks) and for all states: www.recreationparks.net/SC

[www.recreationparks.net/"state"](http://www.recreationparks.net/)

Online accessibility to locate trails, parks, recreational facilities, farmers markets:

<http://letsgosc.org>.

Want to find local produce and free range beef and chicken products, check out the website: <http://www.certifiedscgrown.com/>. This website allows a search by SC county and type of products, other options as well. The Certified South Carolina program is an exciting cooperative effort among producers, processors, wholesalers, retailers and the South Carolina Department of Agriculture (SCDA) to brand and promote South Carolina products. Our goal is for consumers to be able to easily identify, find and buy South Carolina products.

The [National Wildlife Federation](http://www.nwf.org/naturefind/) has a sponsored tool. Explore the outdoors! Find parks, trails, and other nature sites and events. Easy to use, enter zip code and number of miles you wish to explore at the time. <http://www.nwf.org/naturefind/>

Join in on Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Stewardship-of-Creation-Foothills-Presbytery-SC/138564229544090?ref=hl>
