



Presbytery of Des Moines



January 2016

Dear Fellow Presbytery of Des Moines member:

We write to you representing the Compassion, Peace, and Justice Task Force of the Presbytery of Des Moines. This past fall, the Task Force studied an overture to the 222nd General Assembly which calls for **fossil fuel divestment by the Presbyterian Foundation and Board of Pensions**. The General Assembly will meet in Portland, Oregon June, 2016. The Task Force is requesting that the Presbytery of Des Moines **concur with this overture at its February 2016 meeting**, and we want you to have a chance to review it prior to the vote.

Fossil Fuel Divestment is a complex and provocative issue where climate change, earth care, and financial gain converge. As people of faith, we are being challenged to stop investing in fossil fuels that contribute to climate change and to start reinvesting in projects and companies that are sustainable and restorative to God's Creation.

The Fossil Fuel Divestment Overture recommends that the General Assembly call on the Board of Pensions and the PC(USA) Foundation to immediately stop new investments in a list of 200 fossil fuel companies and work to eliminate all current holdings over the next three years, except for retaining a minimum value of shares (\$2000) required to participate in shareholder action and advocacy. It also calls for reinvestment in renewable energy projects. The Overture was passed by the San Jose Presbytery September, 2015, and at least eight Presbyteries have concurred to date with more to follow.

Divestment is a **moral and prophetic act** more than an economic one. It means taking a stand and refusing to invest in and profit from an industry that is destroying Creation. In the succinct words of Bill McKibben from 350.org, **“if it's wrong to wreck the planet, then it's wrong to profit from that wreckage.”** When your choices hope for good returns from companies that produce burnable carbon, you're not likely to be an advocate for policies that cut their profits. **“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”** (Matthew 6:21 and Luke 12:34).

Enclosed is the text of the overture and a brochure about divestment. Please also explore additional information through the website www.fossilfreepcusa.org where you will find rationale for the overture and helpful resources such as “Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) About Divestment from Fossil Fuels.”

Look for our information table at the February Presbytery meeting, but also feel free to contact us any time.

Sincerely,

Meghan Davis

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