

Public Policy and Environmental Action Team Minutes

Oct. 12, 6:00pm

Facilitator: Sarah Braik

Minutes: Charles Skold

Present: Sarah Braik, Charles Skold, John Hennessy, Connie Bingham, Ralph Cordes, Kathleen Coughlin, Liz Parsons, Ted Kanellakis, Barbara Ryland

Reflection:

What if religion was each other?

If our practice was our life?

What if the temple was the earth?

If forests were our church?

If holy water-the rivers, lakes, and oceans?

What if meditation was our relationships?

If the teacher was life?

If wisdom was self-knowledge?

If love was the center of our being?

Ganga White

<https://wufshanti.com/2015/06/06/what-if-a-poem-by-ganga-white/>

1. Announcements

- a. [Joint statement on climate change by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch](#)
- b. Red/Blue conversation item will be discussed next month

2. Diocesan and legislative updates

- a. John Hennessy's report
 - i. MCC meeting tomorrow morning to review upcoming session
 1. Around 300 bills moved into the next session (the "short" session)
 2. Probably around 100 to be approved for consideration
 - a. #1 priority is Tribal Sovereignty bill LD 1626

3. Tribal legislation coalition report

- a. 22 key recommendations
- b. Governor and AG have problems with 4 areas
- c. Legislator will probably overwhelmingly pass the bill
 - i. Not sure if it will be enough to override the veto (if the Governor vetoes)
- d. Tribes have built a formidable coalition to support tribal sovereignty

- e. The coalition team has been meeting with the Governor’s team
- f. The tribal casino bill was vetoed last year, was one of the original requests from the tribal commission
- g. [Wabanaki Alliance website with LD 1626 advocacy resources](#)
- h. Kathy mentioned a superb webinar she attended: “Native Voices: A Response to The Episcopal Church’s History with Indian Boarding Schools.” It may be viewed starting around 10/18 at [Native American/Indigenous Ministries of the Episcopal Church | Facebook](#). And here is a link to the Indigenous Ministries page of The Episcopal Church website:
[Indigenous Ministries – The Episcopal Church](#)

4. From Senator King’s most recent newsletter:

- a. Strengthening civics education. I introduced the Constitution education Is Valuable In Community Schools (CIVICS) Act, bipartisan legislation designed to support the development of Constitution and civics education curriculum for students across the country. Read more [HERE](#).
- b. Pushing to prevent government shutdowns. You’ve likely seen some reports about the potential federal government shutdown that we narrowly avoided this week; there’s no earthly reason Americans should have had to worry about such a problem. That’s why I joined a bipartisan group of colleagues to reintroduce the Prevent Government Shutdowns Act of 2021, which would take government shutdowns off the table by setting up an automatic continuing resolution (CR) if government funding has not been enacted on time and requiring Congress to stay in town until the job is done. Read more [HERE](#).
- c. Keeping Maine's forests healthy. My colleagues and I introduced the America’s Revegetation and Carbon Sequestration (ARCs) Act of 2021, a bipartisan piece of legislation that aims to restore ecosystems and boost carbon storage and sequestration through tree planting, fire risk reduction projects, and expanded use of forest products and new wood technologies. Read more [HERE](#).
- d. PPEAT members are asked to contact Senators King and Collins in support of these bills.

5. Supporting Diocesan resolutions

- a. Please reach out to the delegates from St. Luke’s or your congregation in support of resolutions 1, 2, 3 and 4
- b. St. Luke’s delegates:
 - i. John Bancroft johnbancroft207@gmail.com
 - ii. Anna Christie annamkchristie@gmail.com
 - iii. Fred Fowler mainebeachpf@myfairpoint.net
 - iv. Thurl Headen thurlheaden@gmail.com

- v. Jamie Moore alcmene7@yahoo.com
- c. Diocesan website with links to full text of resolutions
 - i. <https://www.episcopalmaine.org/info-for-churches/convention>
- d. Here is the link to the resolution regarding support for Tribal Sovereignty
 - i. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1H-oyPsKLLqgT8wpi7U0uYIAZvneBI7Ec/view>

6. Ongoing matters

- a. Revised **territory** acknowledgment was approved for use at PPEAT meetings:
 - i. “The Cathedral of St. Luke sits on unceded Wabanaki territory. We acknowledge that we have benefitted from the exploitation and subjugation of those whom our forebears failed to understand and honor. We also acknowledge the legacy of colonization embedded within the technology, structures, and ways of thinking we use every day, leaving significant carbon footprints and contributing to changing climates that disproportionately affect indigenous people worldwide. Let us acknowledge all this, and take collective responsibility to make good use of our meeting time, and to work towards dismantling the ongoing legacies of settler colonialism, to preserve lands and waters for future generations, and to support indigenous sovereignty.”
 - ii. St. Luke’s has its own, which is being revised to be more inclusive, as per last month’s PPEAT discussion.
- b. Water justice task force report tabled
- c. South Portland [tree protection ordinance](#) update
 - i. Will be taken up again in November in South Portland
 - ii. Liz will be monitoring conversations with Troy and Sustainability Committee regarding tree ordinances, and report back

7. New matters

- a. Engaging parishioners on climate change/social justice advocacy
 - i. This was one of the original hopes for this group
 - ii. Regular eblast messages
 - 1. Liz used to write “eco tips” monthly, but could be periodic
 - 2. Personal action
 - a. i.e. vegan recipes
 - 3. Political action
 - 4. Barbara and Sarah can work on this
 - iii. Flyers
 - 1. Volunteer(s) to revise our flyer to have on the front table in the Cathedral.
 - a. Ralph and Charles can work on updating this flyer

- i. Simplify the language
 - ii. Add information for social justice
 - 2. Here is the [most recent one](#) from before the Social Action and Eco-justice Teams merged
- iv. Liturgy
 - 1. Earth Day liturgy
 - a. Liz and Kathy can work on this
 - b. Kathy can ask Eleanor if she is willing to take this on
 - c. Sarah bring it up with the Diocesan Climate Justice Council
 - 2. There have been a lot of Earth-centered prayers on Sundays
- v. Other?
 - 1. Copy of our minutes to the vestry members?
 - a. In advance of their meetings
 - b. Sarah discuss with Ben and the senior warden to discuss how best to share the minutes
 - 2. Joan already puts them on the website
 - 3. Guest preachers
 - a. Subject matter experts bring a lot of energy and expertise

8. Action items

- a. Green Faith Day of Action for the Climate
 - i. This Sunday Sarah will be making an announcement
 - ii. Sarah send out the action information to the PPEAT list on Monday morning
 - iii. Here is the bulletin and eblast announcement:
[Greenfaith](#) Day of Action for the Climate

Monday, October 18, will be a day when faith congregations take action for the climate to avert catastrophe.

As part of that endeavor, the Public Policy and Environmental Action Team at St. Luke's is encouraging parishioners to call Senators King and Collins and ask that they include carbon pricing in the budget reconciliation and to vote for the Build Back Better Budget Reconciliation.

The Build Back Better Budget Reconciliation includes clean energy incentives such as electrification of vehicles and buildings. It also designates 40% investment of funds for communities affected by environmental justice issues. Other provisions include reducing methane emissions by 30% by 2030 through stricter regulatory standards and a fee for leaked gas. In addition the bill provides for research and development for battery storage and carbon capture technology.

[Carbon pricing](#) (a steadily rising fuel on all carbon based fuels that goes back to American households in monthly dividend checks) is compatible with all of the above and is essential to getting us to net zero carbon emissions by 2050, which is President Biden's goal.

Here are the numbers to call:

Senator King: (202) 224-5344

Senator Collins: (202) 224-2523

b. Items for everyone

- i. Contact Sens. King and Collins in support of the three bills that Sen. King is supporting
- ii. Contact Representatives and Senators for the Green Faith Day of Action
- iii. Contact Diocesan delegates from St. Luke's to support resolutions 1-4
- iv. Invite others to next month's meeting with Rep. Lookner

c. Items for individuals

- i. Liz monitoring tree ordinances
- ii. Barbara and Sarah work on eco-tips for the eblast
- iii. Ralph and Charles work on the flyer
- iv. Kathy ask Eleanor and Linda about possible connections between PPEAT and World Too Beautiful and Eleanor about Earth Day liturgy
- v. Sarah discuss Earth Day Liturgy at Diocesan Climate Justice Council
- vi. Sarah discuss with Ben and the senior warden about how best to distribute our meeting notes to the vestry members
- vii. Sarah send out Day of Action information over email

9. Next meeting

- a. Tuesday November 9, 2021, 6-7 PM
 - i. Rep. Lookner will be our guest to talk about solitary confinement
- b. Sue Inches will be our guest in December.