

## **A Proclamation for Sustainability**

Binkley Baptist Church

Chapel Hill, NC

**Earth Day**

**April 22, 2018**

The congregation, ministers, staff and friends of Binkley Baptist Church are aware of and alarmed by the dramatic changes being wrought on God's creation by the unsustainable practices of our 21<sup>st</sup> Century society. A mass extinction of plant and animal species is underway, estimated by scientist to be between 1,000 and 10,000 times higher than the natural extinction rate. Habitat loss is the largest cause of extinction, exacerbated by hyper-consumerism, and human-induced climate change.

The dramatic build up of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere, the root cause of global climate change is scientifically irrefutable and is impacting all life on Earth in devastating ways. Droughts, heat waves, mega-fires, glacial and polar ice melting, and unprecedented flooding caused by super storms and rising seas are escalating in scale and frequency around the world. While all living things are affected, the greatest human impacts are borne by some of the poorest people here and around the world.

In the face of these current realities, Binkley Church is called to action. In Genesis 2:15, God charged humankind with stewardship of planet Earth. We are called to "serve it, to honor it and protect it." Francis of Assisi, whose statue in our courtyard is constant inspiration, invited all Christ-followers to honor Mother Earth "who sustains us and governs us and who produces varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs."

***With a Biblical and spiritual foundation and with firm resolve, we commit ourselves as a community of believers to a path of sustainable practices that reduces our negative impact on Earth's environment, extends our mission of social justice, and expands our joy for the natural world.***

In practice this means reducing our reliance on fossil fuels: oil, gas and coal; eliminating single-use items in food, drink and other commodities; recycling everything possible; composting all 'waste' vegetable matter and biodegradable products used in church functions and by other users of the church facilities (Binkley Preschool, KidSCOPE, and community groups); and engaging in practices that contribute to the "greening" of Binkley Church.

We further believe it is our duty to encourage members and friends of Binkley Church and others to appreciate, enjoy and celebrate the natural world - and to live more thoughtfully and less harmfully in relation to Mother Earth. We commit to educating ourselves in 'best practices' of sustainable living and to putting those practices in place at church, in our homes and in our workplaces, knowing that, in some cases, we may pay more for doing so. We also commit to asking and helping our partners in the wider community to respect our "green" policies and practices when using Binkley's facilities.

We pray for mercy and guidance as we seek to live in greater harmony with God's creation.

Earth Ministries Committee

Buck Horton and Charles Coble, (Co-Chairs), Linda Bourne, Karin Mills, and Rev. Dr. Stephanie Ford.