

PRAYER spoken collectively on occasion of the NC Utilities Commission Hearing on Duke's Natural Gas Plant application January 26, 2016 By Rev. Scott Hardin-Nieri

Tonight we let our lives sing for joy! We offer our bodies as prayers for a planet that will be sustainable for all people and all creatures. Asking to weave our lives into the Great Mystery of God.

We give thanks for people:

Our prayers are with each of those who go into this hearing seeking to create a sustainable future for Western North Carolina. That all those who enter this conversation will do so with deep respect for one another knowing that we all have a stake in our common future. May **the truth** and **wisdom** be revealed in all that occurs tonight and in the years ahead as we plan for our energy future, but beyond **truth and wisdom** we ask that our actions and words be expressed with a sense of **compassion and love even in the urgency of our time.**

Hear our Prayers:

We give thanks for the process that allows for dialog, for a state and nation that listens to both those who are **more and less** powerful and for a sense of mutuality in the ways we look to the future. We give thanks for those who serve on this commission and for all decision makers that they may have big ears, wise minds and huge hearts as we move forward.

Hear our Prayers:

We offer prayers of gratitude for the technicians, the plant managers, and all those who work every day to keep the lights on in our schools, our buildings, homes and places of worship. ***Even in the driving snow.*** We offer prayers for those who are experiencing new energy plan as a change of job role, vocation or employment. May new work emerge for those whose jobs may be in transition now and in the future. We give thanks for those who will receive contracts or new employment because of the modernization of the Lake Julian plant and the thousands across NC who are employed by renewable energy efforts.

We offer gratitude for those who seek compassion and creativity, tirelessly inviting governments, corporations, religion, schools and all authority to yield toward the common good. For those non-violently seeking deep social, economic and ecological transformation we celebrate. For those who accompany the most vulnerable in our society we are grateful. Indwell them with an unquenchable knowledge of their belovedness.

Hear our Prayers:

We give thanks for our common home:

We offer prayers for the incredible beauty of God's creation, the diverse forest canopies swaddling above us, the rivers dancing between the ancient mountains and all those flapping, buzzing, lumbering, fluttering, slithering, bounding creatures that call this place home. We give thanks for all creation but particularly for this, our portion of it in Western North Carolina.

Hear our Prayers:

Even while we celebrate the diversity and beauty of this great mystery, we recognize that the groans of creation are growing louder and we are recognizing suffering in so many ecosystems across the globe. We see the clocks of our fruit, our flowers being turned back, as the temperature changes around them. We see our birds finding it more difficult to find homes. We hear less and less of the chorus of creatures that have been a part of our lives. We hear the groans of creation growing and we are broken-hearted as you are broken hearted. Do not let our broken hearts paralyze us. May our common grief stir us toward one another and toward creative action. May we be stirred to action on behalf of all people and all creatures.

Hear our Prayers:

We offer prayers for those who are too young to share their opinion or position on our energy future. For those who are yet to be born into a world that most likely will be ever warming during their lifetime.

Hear our Prayers:

We offer prayers for those who will sleep without a home tonight. For those thousands who do not know when or if their next meal will come. For those who fear for their lives because of the color of their skin, their religion, sexual orientation, where they live or where they were born.

We pray for those who are facing illness. For those whose cancer continues to spread, for those children who cannot stray far from an inhaler or those confined to life imprisoned to dialysis. We ask for bodies, water and land to be healed from the ailments that plague us.

We seek forgiveness for our complicity in this beautiful mess of our own humanity. For our seeking consumption over kindness, high position over humility, busyness over relationship, and the hollow and short sighted answers of violence over the slow sustainable work of compassionate action.

May we be stirred to action on behalf of all people and all creatures. We know that whatever we do to the ecosystems, the animals, the earth, we do to ourselves and our children.

Spirit of Hope we trust that there is a future possible where these divisions are unified for a common love. **There is a future where economics and ecology do not threaten one another.** We inhabit this place where the seeds of non-violence are being sown. May we continue to throw out seeds.



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