

St Paul's Leads Diocesan Creation Care Network

After 10 years of experience in “greening” St Paul’s, The Natural Cathedral Committee decided to take our mission and experiences to the Diocese. Dr Ruth Alexander of St Paul’s drafted a resolution for the 2007 Diocesan Convention. She called it the Creation Care Resolution. It was adopted. The resolution encouraged South Dakota Parishes and Missions to offer Creation Care programs modeled on the Education- Reflection- Action plan of the Episcopal Ecological Network.

After a few years, a survey found that there was little action on the resolution. So, the Natural Cathedral Committee at St Paul’s decided to become more assertive. We had an information table display and workshop at the 2014 Convention. A nascent Creation Care network was formed that included five Parishes.

We have had annual workshops since and the Creation Care Network in 2018 has 12 Parishes, several Missions, and about 30 people. One of our goals is to have a “communion” of Earth Day Sunday events across the Diocese as a way to bring Creation Care into church teachings.

In 2016, a Creation Care Tab was added to the Diocesan website.

In 2017, we offered another Resolution at the Diocesan Convention. It was adopted. The Resolution suggested that churches in the Diocese use four major sources of Creation Care information from the national church.

- 1) The House of Bishops’ Pastoral Teaching and Study Guide
- 2) The Genesis Covenant Project for greening individual parish/mission buildings
- 3) The Catechism of Creation book and course
- 4) Liturgical Materials for Honoring God in Creation (from 2015 General Convention)

“I used to think the top environmental problems facing the world were global warming, environmental degradation, and eco-system collapse, and that scientists could fix those problems. But I was wrong. The real problem is not those three items, but greed, selfishness, and apathy. And for that we need a spiritual and cultural transformation.” (Gus Speth, American Environmentalist)

To effect spiritual transformation requires the faith community’s leadership. In our Network, some Parishes focus on encouraging that spiritual transformation in general whereas other Parishes focus on specific environmental topics such as climate change.

Find out more about the Creation Care Network at
<https://www.facebook.com/creationcarenetwork/>.

Or

<https://episcopalchurchsd.org/outreach-and-mission/>.

Following are some photos from Convention.

1. Bishop John Tarrant (left) spoke at one of workshops. He said “God has no hands but our hands” and welcomed the interest in Creation Care in the Diocese.



2. Rev Larry Ort and St Paul’s Convention delegation at the 2017 Convention. Ort spoke at the first Creation Care Workshop saying “I believe that the first task of the Church as it relates to faith and ecology is to become clear about the interrelationship of the concepts of covenant, righteousness/justice, and love.”



3. Chuck Berry and the table-top Creation Care Network display at Convention.



4. Convention Delegate receives information about the Creation Care Network.



5. Convention youth like Earth balloons.



6. Star quilts are on display at Convention. The star is the morning star that represents the change from darkness (ignorance) to light (knowledge).

