



INTERSECT

Massachusetts
Council of
Churches
Fall 2009

The Vision of a Future with Hope

By Marla Marcum, Th.D candidate, Ecological Ethics, Boston University School of Theology; Chair, Climate Change Task Force, New England Conference, United Methodist Church.

The prophet Jeremiah cried out to the people of Israel, “Stand at the crossroads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies; and walk in it...” (Jeremiah 6:16). The people had turned away from God, seeking their own visions of the good life, and vision links human action directly to the wellbeing of God’s creation: “The earth shall mourn” (4:28); “I looked on the earth, and lo, it was waste and void” (4:23). Jeremiah understood that the entire creation (including humans) suffers or prospers together, just as God created them together.

In our time, we *have* damaged God’s creation so profoundly that the very systems that support our lives are threatened with collapse. Climate change (sometimes called “global warming”) is caused when we emit massive quantities of heat-trapping gases like carbon dioxide. Our contemporary ways of being in the developed world rely heavily on burning fuels like coal and oil that emit carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other heat-trapping gases. Too much atmospheric CO₂ destabilizes the delicate balance that makes life



350 is the number that leading scientists say is the safe upper limit for carbon dioxide —measured in “Parts Per Million” (PPM) — in our atmosphere.

on this planet possible. Just a few degrees of warming can completely change the world as we know it, threatening the lives of billions of people around the world.

350 is the number that leading scientists say is the safe upper limit for carbon dioxide —measured in “Parts Per Million” (PPM) — in our atmosphere. Today, the concentration is 389 PPM and rising. We are standing at a crossroads in the life of the entire creation, and we have the power to seek the “good way” of living that will protect people and our kindred throughout God’s creation.

God is calling us today to live into that hopeful future through our faithful actions in the

world we inhabit. All around the world, a movement is building to take on the climate crisis, to get humanity out of the danger zone and below 350. *The Massachusetts Council of Churches calls upon all member congregations to join this movement.*

Global Warming —It’s a Spiritual Issue

“God writes the gospel not in the Bible alone but on the trees and flowers and clouds and stars.”

—Martin Luther

Our faith teaches us that God created a good and beautiful earth. Our responsibility is to be good stewards of God’s creation.

Our responsibility to solve global warming, which we all helped to generate, goes to the heart of our trust relationship with God.

Global warming is a problem shared by everyone. Thus, if we love our neighbors, we have a duty to join with them to do what it takes to keep the earth a livable place.

As people of faith, we are people of hope. While some claim it is already too late to make a difference, we believe there is always hope and a reason to try.

People of faith are people of commitment. Let us all commit to doing what ever is necessary to get back to 350 in our lifetimes.

With God’s help everything is possible.

“I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth.”

—Genesis 9:12–13

Statement of the Environmental Ministries a Missions and Justice Committee of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ.

The Time Is Now!

The United Nations will host a global climate conference in Copenhagen, Denmark this December. Unfortunately, the current draft of the treaty is far too weak to create a safe climate future. While we are not in a position to craft the treaty ourselves, we CAN make it clear to the delegates that their goal must be to create a

Continued on page 2

Creation Care



Caring for God’s creation is indeed an imperative for we who confess the Christian faith. Our biblical and theological foundation is grounded in the creation narrative and underscored in the Gospels proclamation call to love God’s people.

We know through scientific evidence that an environmental disaster is threatening countries around

the world, along with the people who live in them and the creatures God placed here. We know that environmentalists, scientists, civic organizations, and educational institutions are all seeking to address this environmental crisis. We believe it is a moral imperative that people of faith join together, a witness of Christian compassion and eco-justice in affirming care for God’s creation.

An open letter, “God’s Earth is Sacred” issued by the National Council of Churches in 2005 noted: “While we honor the efforts in our churches, we have clearly failed to communicate the full measure and magnitude of Earth’s environmental crisis — religiously, morally, or politically. It is painfully clear from the verifiable testimony of the world’s scientists that our response has been inadequate to the scale and pace of earth’s degradation.”

This issue of *Intersect* is dedicated to “Creation Care.” We encourage our readers to engage their local churches, pastors and laity, to seek ways in which your faith community will witness in caring for God’s creation. We share with you resources, programs, and occasions of gatherings that we trust will enhance your witness in caring for God’s creation.

Climate Convocation at Memorial Church, Harvard University: October 18, 2009, 2:00 pm

—Bill McKibben Keynotes

In anticipation of the October 24th International Day of Climate Action (<http://www.350.org>), writer and environmentalist Bill McKibben will offer his penetrating insights on global and local efforts for climate justice and the individual institutional, and political change the crisis demands. People of faith and people of conscience, educators and community leaders, scientists and students will meet at Memorial Church, Harvard University to hear a common call to action. Together we can make it clear that the world needs an international plan that meets the latest science and safeguards our irreplaceable earth for future generations. Mark your calendar today.

The Vision of a Future with Hope, from p. 1

plan that gets us back to 350. We can also call for climate justice — for a treaty that guarantees that poor countries will have a fair chance to develop. A safe climate future need not perpetuate the continuation of mass poverty in places where people are already suffering. In fact, a safe climate future creates the necessary conditions for human wellbeing everywhere! We need to use our voices (and perhaps our church bells) to send a signal to our leaders to act decisively and act now.



Prophets throughout our scripture, tradition, and recent history teach us that there is a time to cry out against injustice and seek a better way. The time is now to act to prevent the worst impacts of climate change. We need to create the biggest, most powerful movement we can in a very short time. We will connect actions all around the world and make them add up to more than the sum of their parts. Together we can solve the climate crisis.

Climate Witness: October 24th is the International Day of Climate Action

On October 24, 2009, people around the globe will join together in visible, public actions that call out for a better way. The Massachusetts Council of Churches has developed a set of resources to help you plan an event in your own community, and we have a committed group of volunteers who are ready to provide support. You can also get ideas and get educated at the website www.350.org.

There are 351 incorporated cities and towns in Massachusetts. Let’s make sure that October 24th climate witness events are planned in at least 350 of them! Plan a symbolic, visible action that is easy to participate in and accessible to everyone in your community. Some churches will ring their steeple bells or hand bells 350 times, some communities will join on the town common for Climate Theatre events, and some will host 350-themed art shows or mural painting. Whatever you choose to do on October 24th, work together with other faith communities and committed local organizations. We have developed a comprehensive set of resources for use in planning, including event ideas, a Climate Theatre toolkit, media assistance, worship aids, and educational materials available at www.masscouncilofchurches.org

Let’s work together to live into that future with hope that God offers to us and to the entire creation!



Ecumenical Dinner 2009: Keynote speaker the Reverend Cannon Sally G. Bingham

The Council family will gather on Thursday evening, October 29th, for the second annual Massachusetts Council of Churches dinner at the Plymouth Church in Framingham. This year our dinner is being co-sponsored by the Massachusetts Interfaith Power and Light which has been in partnership with the Council around environmental ministries. The occasion is a celebration of ecumenical hospitality and fellowship, an evening that will be a sharing of a great dinner, table conversation, stirring music, and a provocative speaker.



This year's keynote speaker is the Reverend Cannon Sally G. Bingham. Bingham is a priest in the Episcopal Diocese of California, currently serving as the environmental minister at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco. She is the founder and executive director of the Regeneration Project, whose mission is to deepen the connection between ecology and faith. The project is primarily focused through the Interfaith Power and Light Campaign, which has 26 state affiliated programs, including the Massachusetts Interfaith Power and Light. Reverend Bingham serves on the National Board of the Environmental Defense Fund, the Advisory Board of the Union of Concerned Scientists, the Board of the Environmental Working Group, and the Chair of the Diocese of California Commission for the Environment.

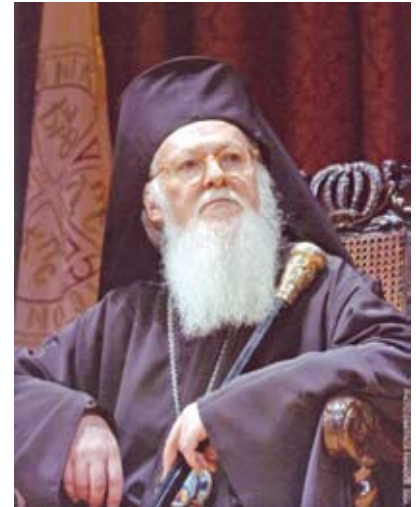
Bingham writes "who are we, as human beings, if not caretakers of creation? Stewardship of the planet and our care for one another is our greatest moral duty. The pursuit of justice, peace, health, and harmony are our spiritual mandates. Who, if not our religious leaders, will show the way to this new creation? We can and we will love God and heal earth." ("Love God and Heal Earth," St. Lyons Press, pg. 213).

Join us and others in an evening of a Massachusetts ecumenical family gathering.

Reservations: www.masscouncilofchurches.org or call Council office at 617-523-2771.

The Green Patriarch

His Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch of the Greek (Eastern) Orthodox Church, Patriarch Bartholomew, is the spiritual leader of the Greek Orthodox Church worldwide and has been internationally recognized as the "Green Patriarch." In a way that is profoundly loyal to the tradition of worship and reflection in the Greek Orthodox Church,



Patriarch Bartholomew has insisted that ecological questions are essentially spiritual ones. Probably more than any other religious leader from any faith, this brave and visionary pastor has put squarely on our agenda the question of how we express spiritual responsibility for the world we live in. Bartholomew in his Encyclical on "The Protection of the Environment," noted "An increasing number of people understand that the irrational use of natural resources and the unchecked consumption of energy contribute to the reality of climate change, with consequences on the life and survival of humanity created in the image of God and is therefore tantamount to sin."

Massachusetts former Governor and Presidential candidate, Michael Dukakis, noted "I don't remember any other Patriarch, not a Pope, not a Jewish leader, not a Muslim leader, who stood up and said this is a moral imperative and we need to do something about it."

The Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Council of Churches invites you to a screening of "The Green Patriarch," hosted by His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios on Thursday evening at 7:00PM, September 24th at the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Boston, 162 Goddard Avenue, Brookline, MA. Our evening together will be the launching of our fall program year that will underscore the importance for our member denomination churches to witness to the care of God's creation. The program will be the occasion to announce a student program in cooperation with the schools of the Boston Theological Institute to work together as students of faith in caring for God's creation.

Please register at louise@masscouncilofchurches.org or call the Council office 617-523-2771.

HEALTHY KIDS, HEALTHY CHURCHES, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

**An adult curriculum for adults and high school youth on environmental health and justice
For a copy of the curriculum go to www.Masscouncilofchurches.org**

Take Back Your Time... October 24th

“So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all his work” Genesis 2:3

Creation Care... Begins with Self Care

The Genesis’ narrative of the creation story concludes with God resting on the Sabbath, the only day out of seven that God blessed. Could it be that resting for God was an occasion to behold creation’s beauty and goodness? As we lift up in this issue of *Intersect* our understanding of creation care as an act of biblical stewardship, we, too, need to pause and wonder what Sabbath keeping might have to do with creation care.

Unique is the intersection of creation care and Sabbath. The question is which is more challenging, our consumer oriented lifestyle that mandates a 24/7 pattern of behavior, or the havoc that such life styles play with our environment.

There are environmental limits. We burn through non-renewable resources without concern for their eventual disappearance, draw down renewable resources faster than they can be replenished and produce more waste products than our environment can absorb. It is what Brian McLaren calls “prosperity dysfunction.”

Could one argue that until we stop, rest and reclaim Sabbath that, we like God, might better appreciate the creation. Might it



not be that such appreciation would compel us to be more responsible for its care?

So as we seek to join countless others, whose sensitivity to environmental care is sweeping our world, that we acknowledge part of our Christian witness in caring for the creation is caring for the centerpiece of creation, human kind.

Yes, this *Intersect*, lifting up a day of International Climate Awareness (October 24th) intersected by the day that marks the beginning of the “Take Back Your Time” period (also October 24th), reminds us that creation care begins with

Sabbath. It is in pausing, resting, and reflecting on the creation that we experience the goodness of God’s creative order and in so doing are motivated all the more to care for the creation.

This fall, plan appropriate ways to affirm the occasion of “Take Back Your Time.” The period of October 24th through December 31st provides a time period for intentional planning in your church to set creative ways to affirm Sabbath keeping.

Display the poster found in this edition of *Intersect*, plan appropriate worship centering on Sabbath keeping, and create “Take Back Your Time” events in your congregation.

An Ecumenical Witness Making a Difference

As we lift up the theme “Take Back Your Time”, a program of the Council, we note how one man is making a difference. Father Luke Veronis, pastor of St. Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church in Webster, became concerned about Sunday morning sports when it hit home. Father Luke told his son he couldn’t play football because the games were held on Sunday morning. “Why don’t you do something about it?” challenged the ten year old. Father Luke did.

Father Luke began a letter writing campaign and coordinated a public statement in the Webster area signed by seventeen clergy. The statement, “Reclaiming the Sabbath: Sunday Morning Youth Activities and a Time of Rest,” was signed by clergy from the United Methodist, American Baptist, Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, Roman Catholic, Episcopal and Assembly of God congregations.



The campaign received area media coverage as well as editorial affirmation from the “Catholic Free Press” newspaper of the Diocese of Worcester. Sermons were preached in area churches, as well as conversations with parents, coaches, and civic leaders. The results have been a greater awareness of the need for Sabbath observance as both an occasion of worship and rest.

Many in our faith communities believe that the observance of Sabbath is a lost cause. The witness of Father Luke and his ecumenical colleagues tell a different story.

We commend Father Luke for his leadership in reminding others to take back your time. For more of the story, sermon, the statement, the MCC’s policy statement on youth sports on Sunday, and related articles, visit our web page www.masscouncilofchurches.org/CurrentNews.htm

Sabbath, Sunday and Discovering the Weekend

By Rodney L. Petersen
Executive Director, Boston Theological Institute

A poll conducted several years ago by the Gallup Organization showed that seventy-nine percent of Americans preferred Sunday to all other days of the week. It is true; this had little to do with Puritan conceptions of Sabbath practice. Many liked Sunday because it is a day to hibernate, become absorbed in a favorite pastime, do a crossword puzzle, watch a football game — or take that additional job to help pay the bills.



Many different groups, including the Massachusetts Council of Churches, might wish it were otherwise. In the face of an individualized and commercialized Sunday, observing diminishing Sunday church attendance seems like watching pools of water evaporate on a hot summer day. Nevertheless, consider some of the things that are enhanced and strengthened by regular public corporate worship on a conventional Sunday.

An understanding of individual and social health, which Christians refer to in its deepest sense as salvation, is strengthened. A recent issue of *The Atlantic* (July/August 2009) featured articles on “How to Fix the World” — and we must, whether we take our cue from the Hebrew prophets, the Eightfold path of Buddhism or some other more secular source. Jesus talked about the in-breaking of the Kingdom of God — and early churches began the practice of meeting regularly on the day of Jesus’ resurrection to celebrate this. An advantage to this continuing practice is that it gives strength to change ourselves and the world, but acknowledges a greater vision and grace toward its accomplishment — something affirmed by mystics, theologians and politicians through the ages. An added value of the visible and physical practice of Sunday worship as families is that we pass along the vision of faith and hope to the next generation.

Corporate public worship is a way of affirming the structural reality of the church. Churches are made up of people like you and me. Regular corporate worship acknowledges the existence of the church as a public institution with its own internal logic, organizational structure and practices. The pastoral function of a church includes consolation and support of persons and the community; it is also to acknowledge its own faults through confession toward restoration. For example, in a society prone to conflict, the liturgy might be seen as an antidote to violence. Consider the exchange of peace practiced in most churches, to paraphrase from Matthew 5:23-24: be reconciled to your neighbor before legitimate worship can happen. Christians worship one they call the “prince of peace,” still a figure worth emulating when considering the options. Church norms are taken from the lessons of reconciliation found in the Old Testament and letters and writings that became the New

Testament. And the point of the service is the repair the world (Matthew 25:34-46).

The existence of a public and corporate entity in society that draws together in regular public worship reminds us that persons and societies are held to values greater than themselves. This point recognizes the integrity of a prophetic role in society. This is not to say that churches or other religious bodies have always been on the cutting edge of social truth or have the corner on the market of social criticism. It does say that in ministerial preparation and practice these are norms to be emulated and fostered. It acknowledges the importance of such a prophetic voice in the dialectic of debate and controversy. This separate and prophetic role has often been taken up by colleges and universities, but we cannot forget its origin in the vision and practice of religious communities.

To go back to that Gallup poll: My hunch is that if we lose the religious basis for the weekend, long grounded in Jewish and Christian Sabbath practices, we will soon lose the weekend (and the favorite pastimes, crossword puzzles, football games, etc.), something intimated by Karl Barth in the *Church Dogmatics* (III, pt 4, 53) — and something that is clearly happening under the social and economic pressures of the times. To cite historian Alexis McCrossen, “It may be that the solution lays not simply in refashioning Sunday. Nor does it lay in refashioning Americans Rather, it lays in remaking the United States of America so that both its citizens and its Sundays can escape the limitations of selfish individualism and market capitalism.” (See “‘That Sunday Feeling’: Sundays in the United States,” in *Sunday, Sabbath and the Weekend; Managing Time in a Global Culture*, edited by Edward O’Flaherty, S. J. and Rodney L. Petersen with Timothy Norton [2009]). It lays also in a theological recovery of vision that sees the church as central to and supportive of an innate human impulse to heal and to restore, something Elizabeth Spelman refers to as *homo reparans*.

..Observing diminishing Sunday church attendance seems like watching pools of water evaporate on a hot summer day.

Lord’s Day Alliance Sermon Competition

Here is a way for pastors to affirm Sabbath and perhaps win affirmation and recognition from the Lord’s Day Alliance with monetary compensation. The deadline for the 2009 Lowndes Sermon Competition is November 30th. Why not preach a sermon addressing Sabbath keeping during the Take Back Your Time designated time (October 24th through December 31st.) and submit the sermon to the Lord’s Day Alliance. For more information go to www.ldausa.org

Interfaith Connections



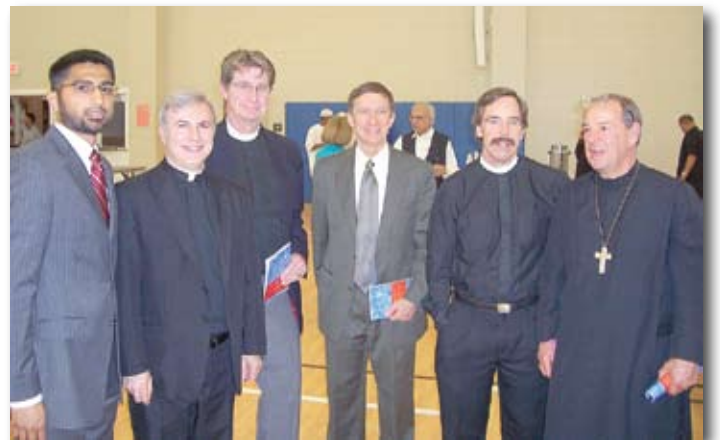
On March 25, the Archdiocese of Boston hosted the re-dedication of the Yom Hashoah Menorah, which honors the victims of the Holocaust; it was first presented to the Archdiocese by Jewish leaders in September 2002. The occasion was one of affirmation of the important interfaith relationship between Christians and Jews. Cardinal Kasper, President of the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews was a special guest on this occasion, addressing critical issues facing Jewish Christian relationships. (From L-R) The Most Rev. Archbishop Cyril Salim Bustros, Eparch of Newton, Melkite Eparchy of Newton; His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios, Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Boston; The Rev. Jack Johnson, Executive Director, Mass. Council of Churches; His Eminence Walter Cardinal Kasper; His Eminence Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley, Archdiocese of Boston; Rev. Dr. Edward M. O'Flaherty, Director, Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, Archdiocese of Boston; Ms. Nancy Kaufman, Executive Director, Jewish Community Relations Council. (Photo by George Martell, Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston)



A symposium, *Religious Leadership in an Age of Religious Diversity: A Meeting of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Educators*, co-sponsored by the Council, Boston Theological Institute, and Hebrew College, brought religious leaders to the campus of Andover Newton Theological School on June 15th–16th. (l-r) Dr. Abdel-Rahman Mohamed, Islamic Council of New England; Dr. Arthur Green, Hebrew College; Dr. Diana Eck, Harvard University; Rev. Dr. Raymond Helmick, S.J., Boston College.



The new 68,000 square foot Islamic Society Cultural Center in Boston, perhaps the largest on the east coast of America, was dedicated on June 26th.



The grand opening of the Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center was the occasion for Mr. M. Bilal Kaleem, President and Director of the ISBCC, to welcome Christian friends of the Massachusetts Council of Churches to the Interfaith and Civic Leaders Inaugural Breakfast. Pictured with Mr. Kaleem (l-r) is Fr. David Michael, Interfaith Officer of the Archdiocese of Boston; The Rev. John Stendahl, past President of the MCC; Dr. William Graham, Dean of Harvard Divinity School; The Rev. Jep Streit, Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral; and The Rt. Rev. M. Thomas Shaw, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts.



The Council co-sponsored, with the Greater Boston Chapter of the American Jewish Committee and the Archdiocese of Boston, an evening with Rabbi David Rosen. Rabbi Rosen is a member of the Israeli Chief Rabbinate's Delegation for Interreligious Dialogue with the Holy See and is the founder of the Interreligious Coordinating Council in Israel that embraces some seventy organizations in Israel involved in interfaith relations. (L-R) Rabbi David Rosen, Mr. Robert Sarly, member MCC Board of Directors; The Rev. Joel Anderle, Vice-President of MCC Board of Directors; Dr. Robert Leikind, Director, American Jewish Committee; and The Rev. Dr. Edward O'Flaherty, Ecumenical Officer for the Archdiocese of Boston and MCC Board Member.



In collaboration with the Jewish Community Relations Council, the Reverend Hurmon Hamilton, Co-chair of the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization and Rabbi Eric Gurvis, past President of the Massachusetts Board of Rabbis, Christian leadership engaged in a week long learning seminar in Israel in early July. (L-R) First row: The Revs. Roberto Miranda, Skip Windsor, Hurmon Hamilton. Second row: David Vincent-Lamare, The Rev. Arlene Hall, The Rev. Dr. Marilyn Weeks, The Rev. Caroline Edge, The Rev. Sylvia Johnson. Back Row: The Rev. Fr. Demetrios Tonias, The Rev. Liz Walker, The Rev. Joel Anderle, The Rev. Dr. John Buehrens, The Rev. Gerald Bell, Mr. Alex Kern, The Very Rev. Jep Streit, The Rev. Dr. Ray Hammond.

Gambling Still on Legislative Agenda

Gambling proponents continue to propose the expansion of gambling here in Massachusetts as a means to raise revenue for the Commonwealth. Proponents, including the speaker of the House, Representative Robert DeLeo, believes slot machines are the future of gambling expansion and promises to bring such proposals before the legislature this fall.

In national news: Slots were voted down in the Senate in Kentucky, despite a desperate plea that slots were essential to saving horse racing, which is a large industry there.

Slots and casinos were voted down in New Hampshire.

Twin Rivers Casino slot parlors in Rhode Island have filed for bankruptcy and called for a massive government bailout (again).

Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun in Connecticut continue to face a decline in their revenue, seeking new ways to be competitive in the gambling market in the northeast.

All these factors continue to portray an understanding that gambling revenue is neither dependable or a prudent means to raise revenue for the common good. We, too, know that slot technology gets people to play longer, faster, and more intensively. Known as "the crack cocaine of gambling", slot machines and other electronic devices are explicitly designed to be addictive. Eighty percent of all gambling profits are generated by these machines and 90% of casino profits come from 10% of the gamblers.

The Rev. Bob Massie, an Episcopal priest, former candidate for Lieutenant Governor, and a leading opponent of gambling expansion writes "No state has ever introduced slot machines and then been able to get rid of them. It is not only the people who get addicted to them — the state does too. The short term gain (licensing fees, construction jobs) fades away and the state is left holding a heavy bag of long term pain — broken promises and broken people."

Once again, we note that the logic of raising revenue for the common good that has a social cost, a cost that hurts, and in some cases destroys human life, is morally reprehensible. We invite you to join with other Christians in making a difference in stopping predatory gambling.

Join us today by:

Contacting your state legislators. To find your State Senator and State Representative in General Court, visit www.wheredoivotema.com and then call the House switchboard at 617-722-2000 and Senate at 617-722-1276. You can call the Governor at 617-725-4000.

Offer to host a community meeting at your church. MCC staff are able to come lead a discussion on predatory gambling. To set up a meeting, please email louise@masscouncilofchurches.org.

Join our petition campaign. A copy of the petition may be found at www.masscouncilofchurches.org. Print out the petition and invite members of your congregation to sign the petition. Forward signed petitions to the Council at 14 Beacon St., Ste. 416, Boston, MA 02108



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Spotlight



**The Environment, Creation Care,
and Global Warming.**
See pages 1-3.

In this Issue

CONTENTS

The Vision of a Future with Help	1
Global Warming — It's a Spiritual Issue	1
Creation Care	2
Ecumenical Dinner 2009	3
The Green Patriarch	3
Take Back Your Time 2009	4
An Ecumenical Witness	4
Sabbath, Sunday & Discovering the Weekend	5
Interfaith Connections (Photographs)	6
Gambling Still on Legislative Agenda	7
Aardvark Jazz Orchestra Benefit Concert	8
MCC 2010 Annual Meeting	8

Massachusetts Council of Churches

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INTERSECT Massachusetts Council of Churches



Aardvark Jazz Orchestra Christmas Concert

The 37th Annual Aardvark Jazz Orchestra (pictured above) Christmas Concert will benefit the Massachusetts Council of Churches and the Poor Peoples United Fund. The event will be held on Sunday evening, December 20th at 7:30 pm, at Emmanuel Church in Boston.

This annual concert has become a popular Boston Christmas celebration delighting audiences for years. We invite you to support the Council by planning to attend this occasion, an event for your congregation during the Advent season. Ticket information may be obtained by going to the Council web site www.masscouncilofchurches.org.

2010 MCC Annual Meeting

Mark your calendar now for the 108th Annual Meeting of the Council to be held on January 23, 2010 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Our gathering will be at the Assumption College in Worcester. The preacher for our Annual Meeting will be Archbishop Vicken Aykazian, Diocesan Legate and Director of the Ecumenical Office of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern). Archbishop Aykazian is the outgoing President of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., and a noted international ecumenist. The meeting will host judicatory leaders from the Commonwealth, delegates from member denominations, and friends of the Council. The gathering will be held during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Support your Council Now and for the Future



As you and your church plan year end giving we ask you to consider a financial gift to your Council. Consider designating a gift from your mission budget to the Council whose mission impacts broad public policy issues that effect the welfare of so many here in our Commonwealth.