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## Gentle with the Earth

*(A Statement adopted by the congregation, April 2017)*

*"Love is the motive, but justice is the instrument."*

*-- Reinhold Niebuhr, An Interpretation of Christian Ethics*

*"We, the members and friends of Mount Olive, live in the presence of the Triune God, experiencing God's graceful resurrection love for the world." (Vision Statement, Mount Olive Lutheran Church)*

God is the Creator of life and that which sustains life: light, water, air, earth. In worship we give God our thanks and praise for the gift of life, both ours and that of all on planet Earth, both great and small, along with the heavens, the universes and galaxies. We are grateful because "the earth is the LORD'S and all that is in it." (Psalm 24:1)

*"The fire of the Holy Spirit we experience in our worship in this place transforms us into the Body of Christ and flows through our lives as faithful service."*

We believe that in the act of worship we are transformed by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ to serve God and neighbor. Worship propels us into the world as changed people to love and to serve.

The world we serve is not just the people of the earth: it is also the world in which humans live, the environment—earth air, water, soil. God's creation includes all creatures: our sisters and brothers the plants, the rocks, the atmosphere, the animals, other humans. To serve God in the world is to preserve and care for all that God has created, to work together with God to sustain life, out of honor and love for God and for all that God has made.

**Created by God, baptized into Christ, transformed by the Spirit, the people of Mount Olive Lutheran Church, desiring to live out a more conscious and intentional service to and love of God's creation, will strive to lovingly and consciously evaluate all aspects of our life together and how our life as the body of Christ can be a blessing to earth.**



**To this end**, we at Mount Olive Lutheran Church commit:

- To take as a first step a pledge, known as the **Paris Pledge**, to strive to reduce the carbon emissions in this place by 50% by the year 2030, and to be carbon neutral by the year 2050;
- To establish a **permanent task force for Care of the Earth/Climate Justice**, to guide and provide resources for the church, its committees, and the people who gather here);
- To **pass our decisions through the sieve of the questions**: Is this beautiful? How will this affect the earth, those who have no voice or power, and the next generations?

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe  
and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love,  
that we may protect life and beauty.

Fill us with peace, that we may live  
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor,

help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,  
so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives,  
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,  
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts  
of those who look only for gain  
at the expense of the poor and the earth.  
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,  
to be filled with awe and contemplation,  
to recognize that we are profoundly united  
with every creature

as we journey towards your infinite light.  
We thank you for being with us each day.

Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle  
for justice, love and peace.

Amen

(From *Laudato Sí*, Encyclical of Pope Francis I)