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*"The Earth Belongs to God...
and Everything in it."*
(Psalm 24:1)

The Mountain Vision

A Free Publication of *Christians For The Mountains*

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Our Treasure Is In God's Gifts

"Every Good and Perfect Gift comes from God." [James 1:17] Find any study or poll on those who have found true happiness and one thing is oddly missing. Money! Lists might vary in details, but commonalities include cultivating caring relationships, enjoying simple pleasures, and generous hospitality and giving. On the other hand, scrooges clutching their time and money are unhappy.

Social scientists tell us that American society is unhappier than in previous generations. Yet our society is driven to acquisition, power, money, and pleasure. Our economy and increasingly those of most of the world place their ultimate value on materialism. **The incessant quest for more economic growth is placing an unsustainable burden upon the Earth's carrying capacity. Already tremors of collapse are occurring in lower and even middle socio-economic populations. This is ultimately a spiritual malaise requiring a spiritual realignment.**

This issue of *The Mountain Vision* focuses on money. At a common level, money is useful for exchange. The farmer needs a tailor to make the family clothes, and the tailor needs the farmer's food to eat. Money is a more efficient way of exchanging value. It helps communities thrive through diversity of gifts and work.

On the other hand, **lust for money** as a form of domnitive power is destructive. Jesus taught that one could either (but not both) love money or God. [Luke 16:13] The Ten Commandments are bookended by the first commandment against idolatrously serving other gods, and the last commandment against covetousness. As Jacques Ellul astutely notes, the way to loosen the grip of money on our lives is to transform it into an instrument of grace by giving.

The Gospel of Mark records the first words of Jesus. *"The time has come, and God's kingdom is near. Change the way you think and act, and believe the Good News."* [Mark 1:15, GW] **How world views form, harden and sometimes change is a interest of ours that we touch upon on page 10.**



The Good Samaritan [Luke 10: 25-37]

Scientist, poet, writer, wife, mother, cancer survivor, and activist are some of the words that describe **Sandra Steingraber**. We print on page 13 one of her **letters from jail** for protesting the building of a massive gas storage facility in her neighborhood.

Tom Barnes was a naturalist enthralled with the wonder of God's creation. He died recently and too young. **Fr. John Rausch** writes a moving tribute.

While this issue hits hard at some issues, we remind ourselves that, as the old spiritual song says, *"It's me, it's me Oh Lord, standing in the need of prayer."* God's gift to each and all of us, if we would just receive it, is unmerited, generous love. God's grace is not to be grasped, but given out to others. **God's economy is an economy of grace. Our fulfillment and destiny is in being a channel of God's grace.**

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The Spiritual Battle Against Money Lust

by Allen Johnson, Editor

"Your heart will be where your treasure is." ...Jesus [Matthew 6:21, NCV]

"The wallet is the last to be converted." ...Dr. Eugene Ten Brink

"Follow the money." That phrase was popularized by the Watergate-based film, *All the President's Men*. Those three short words signify the seeming triumph of money over against moral, ethical, spiritual values. Critical ideological positions involving war and peace, the environment, political power, media coverage, education, often even religion, are uncovered if one simply "follows the money."

Money = power. Our culture admires wealth, sneers at poverty. A bumper sticker reads, *"He who dies with the most toys wins."* Success is to be a millionaire by age 35. Losers take non-lucrative career paths. State lotteries prey upon those in low-paying dead-end jobs; how else can they get rich and have dignity in the eyes of others?

Mammon is the term Jesus uses for the personification of money. Just as unbridled sexual lust is dehumanizing, insatiable, and socially corrosive, so is money lust. Almost all political corruption and scandal has at its root either or both lusts. Money can purchase sex, political power, beauty, prestige, security, comfort, hedonistic pleasure, and the illusion of happiness. However, money cannot purchase eternal life, indeed the grasp of money can be a great obstacle to following Jesus. [Mark 10:17]

The lust for money and power is not confined to those with large bank accounts, vast lands, and burgeoning investment portfolios. Money lust can also drive poor people into selfish, thoughtless, and harmful actions. **Money and power are highly seductive and addictive in all levels and spectrums of societies.** Note that the two major competing economic systems of the past 100 years, Capitalism and Communism, are flip sides of the same coin of materialism.

"Serving God does make us very rich, if we are satisfied with what we have. We brought nothing into the world, so we can take nothing out. But, if we have food and clothes, we will be satisfied with that. Those who want to become rich bring temptation to themselves and are caught in a trap. They want many foolish and harmful things that ruin and destroy people. The love of money causes all kinds of evil. Some people have left the faith, because they wanted to get more money, but they have caused themselves much sorrow." [1 Timothy 6:6-10 NCV]

This one planet we all live upon and must rely upon for our very existence faces unprecedented challenges to its very viability. "Follow the money" and one will go deep into the roots of several convergences related to human hubris, self-idolatry, lust for power and wealth, and hard-heartedness and obtuseness. The resulting plague upon the planet includes climate change through unmitigated greenhouse gas exhausts, the serious decline in ocean health, decimation of species and habitat, compromised quality and overutilization of freshwater, and bristling of nuclear armaments stocks. So called economic health and prosperity, which is now considered the measure of worth and happiness (although studies show contrariwise), is predicated on unending growth, efficiency, ruthless competition, and in seducing and addicting societies to materialism and consumerism. As destructive cell growth in a human body is diagnosed cancer, so unrestrained economic growth is ecological and spiritual cancer.

We must be realistic. Humankind on its own cannot dig itself out of its mess. Collectively we have neither the will nor the capacity. Yes, various proposals and technologies have suggested pathways toward a sustainable, viable, ecologically-vibrant future, but our materialistic, consumption-addicted society resists. **So we must cry out to God while going about doing the best we see to do.** And that includes taking risks and incurring sacrifice. God wants us to do that. We pray the miracle.

We are engaged in a spiritual war. Christian spiritual battle is **not** fought with violence and coercion. The Apostle Paul writes, *"Our fight is not against people on earth but against the rulers and authorities and the powers of this world's darkness, against the spiritual powers of evil in the heavenly world."* [Ephesians 6:10-18, NCV]. *"The weapons we use in our fight are not made by humans. Rather, they are powerful weapons from God. With them we destroy people's defenses, that is, their arguments."* [2 Corinthians 10:4, GW]

The Holy Spirit desires to equip us with power to do successful battle. It is a battle for those who are willing to enjoin the fight, who while regretting their own complicity and sin also know that their repentance is a reorientation and striving toward truth, justice, healing, and reconciliation. And who trust that God's love for the world will ultimately triumph. [John 3:16; Romans 8:31-39]

Christians For The Mountains (CFTM)

Steering Committee

Bob Marshall, 2108 Emma Road, Kenna, WV 25248

Janet Keating, PO Box 6753, Huntington, WV 25773

John Rausch, PO Box 1398, Stanton, KY 40380

Patricia Hudson, 3507 Kesterwood Dr., Knoxville, TN 37918



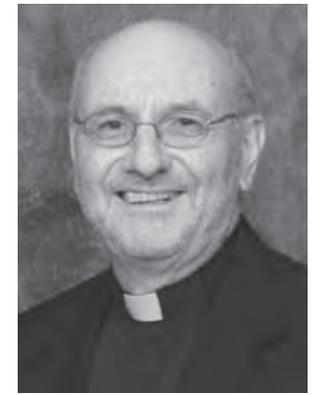
Janet Keating



Patricia Hudson



Dr. Bob Marshall



Fr. John Rausch

Staff

Allen Johnson, Coordinator, 12664 Frost Rd. Dunmore, WV 24934
Ph. (304) 799-4137 Email allen@christiansforthemountains.org

Robert Sage Phillips Russo
Email robert.phillips.russo@gmail.com

Jessi Nixon Russo
Email jnixonrusso@gmail.com



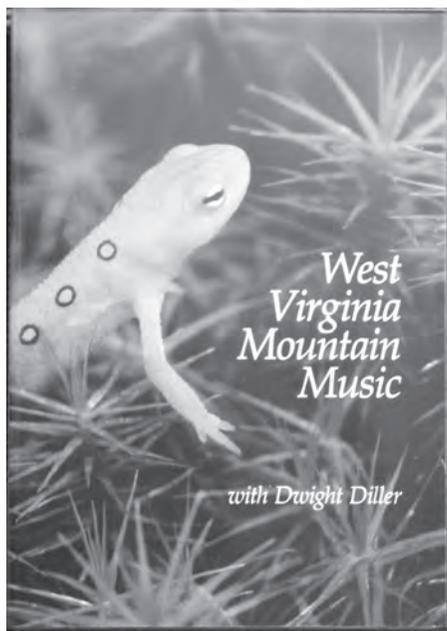
Sage and Jessi Russo



Allen Johnson

www.ChristiansForTheMountains.org
FaceBook friend us at Christians For The Mountains
Phone us at 304-799-4137

Christians For The Mountains (CFTM) invites you to join with us together in partnership for wholesome communities, vigorous clean economies, honest effective governments, rich culture, and healthy populations. CFTM seeks to follow the path Jesus taught of gratitude, service, compassion, truth-telling, and reconciliation.



Dwight Diller

www.dwightdiller.com

West Virginia Mountain Music DVD Free for CFTM Members

CFTM invites our members to enjoy this professional DVD featuring extraordinary beauty and wonder of Creation in the highest mountains of West Virginia, accompanied by the finest in Appalachian Traditional Music. Few of these copies are currently in circulation; however this DVD will be widely marketed in the near future.

As our way of saying “Thank You” for your support, we are offering this DVD Free for any CFTM membership.

For those of you who are current members or who donated to CFTM in 2014 or 2015, just let us know and we will send you a free DVD. Please enclose \$3 for postage and packaging. Additional donations will be appreciated!

Supplies on hand are limited. When we run out we will make a waiting list. Exclusive offer to CFTM members.

The West Virginia Mountain Music DVD immerses viewers into the wonder and beauty of Appalachia. There are no spoken words, only traditional clawhammer banjo and fiddle tunes (28 to be exact), while footage of insects, tadpoles, ferns, snow flakes, birds, and dew drops flit, crawl, and shimmer before our eyes. One does not watch this film, rather, one soaks in it like a relaxing, invigorating bath. There is no plot, no speaker, no buildup to climax; only the rhythm of seasons and the miracle of vibrant life. Inobtrusive subtitles identify locale and species.

Produced by husband and wife Bates and Jody Littlehales, the film is top calibre professional quality. As a staff photographer for the National Geographic Society for 37 years, Bates Littlehales covered a wide range of assignments around the world. He is considered one of the pioneers of underwater photography. After his retirement he embarked on a second career as a nature photographer publishing numerous articles and books. Jody also has decades in her career with National Geographic. Many of the scenes in this film were shot near their West Virginia summer home on Allegheny Mountain on the eastern watershed divide.

Dwight Diller is internationally known for his expertise in traditional Appalachian music. Teacher, banjo and fiddle player, ordained minister, folklorist, friend, Diller’s music embodies the spirit of the mountain culture. Diller has recorded numerous music albums and teaching films. Several cuts of Diller’s music are on CFTM’s Mountain Mourning Collection DVD.

CFTM thanks Dwight Diller for sharing this DVD.

Invitation to Join Together With Us

Name _____			
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We welcome any other information you would like to share (such as your faith; experience; skills; special interests; etc....use separate sheet)			
Mail to: Christians For The Mountains 12664 Frost Road, Dunmore, WV 24934 [Note: This form is not necessary. We welcome pertinent info. Our web online form is also available.]			
CFTM has 501(c)3 nonprofit tax exempt status through a partnership with World Stewardship Institute. 887 Sebastopol Rd Ste A, Santa Rosa, California 95407-6828. Contact Person is Fred Krueger. Telephone 707-573-3161.			

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For any membership & \$3 postage.
Circle **“Yes”** here for a copy.

Your donations are tax deductible.
Thank you for prayer support.

Ken Hechler, Happy 100th!!!



Carol and Ken (Nov. 2014)

Ken Hechler celebrated his 100th birthday with a well-attended party September 27 at Marshall University in Huntington.

While Hechler was teaching history at Marshall in the 1950's, students urged him to run for Congress. Seemingly knocking on every door in his district, Hechler won an uphill campaign to victory. Hechler served in Congress from 1959 to 1976. He was the only member

of Congress to march with **Martin Luther King** at Selma. Hechler was instrumental in enacting black lung and mine safety laws strip mining regulations.

Hechler has a Ph.D in history and government. He was a Major in the U.S. Army as a combat historian, interviewed Nazi war criminals in preparation for the Nuremberg Trials, and wrote a book (later a Hollywood film), "The Bridge of Remagen."



Allen Johnson with Ken at 100th

Hechler was a White House assistant to President Truman from 1949-1953. In his later career, Hechler was West Virginia Secretary of State. **Hechler continues as a stalwart, powerful voice against mountaintop removal.**

Late in life, Hechler married his long-time friend, Carol Kitzmiller. They happily reside in Hampshire, County, W.V. The 100th birthday party was a joyous affair with plenty of food, fellowship, and storytelling. Ken Hechler was in fine form with his sly humor and keen intellect as he greeted many friends and shared fond remembrances.

NEW ON PIPELINE PROPOSALS

Several natural gas pipelines are being proposed to transport shale gas from north central West Virginia to markets in North Carolina and eastern Virginia.

These pipelines are expected to be 36-inches to 42-inches in diameter.

Proposed pipeline routes would be through sensitive headwater streams and in some of the most rugged and elevation-challenged terrain in the east. The Monongahela and George Washington National Forests are in the path.

Info and links on joining in with the opposition can be found at www.eight-rivers.org

No More MTR Permits Day Rally at WVDEP March 16th



The People's Foot Campaign is hosting a rally to petition the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) to acknowledge the science on MTR-related disease.

The rally is at 11 am on Monday March 16, 2015.

WVDEP is located at 601 57th Street SE Charleston, WV 25304. Free parking spaces are available in the vicinity.

The U.S. Constitution, First Amendment (Bill of Rights) establishes *the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.* This is our intent, to petition the WVDEP to protect the health and welfare of our populations who are exposed to dangerous, disease-and-death spewing air pollutants from mountaintop removal (MTR) coal blasting.

We ask that the WVDEP acknowledge and responsibly act upon the science [see page 8 this issue]. We ask that the WVDEP reject all new MTR permit applications based upon this science.

We need people to stand with us! Please!

For further information, contact chief organizer Bo Webb at webb.bo@gmail.com or Allen Johnson at allen@christiansforthemountains.org or go to the Facebook Page for Appalachian Community Health Emergency.

Thank you!!!

NATIONAL MONUMENT PROPOSAL

A Birthplace of Rivers National Monument would add protection and status to some of the most pristine acreage in the eastern U.S. The proposal is all within the boundaries of the **Monongahela National Forest** in West Virginia, adjacent to the federally-designated **Cranberry Wilderness**. A monument would draw economic activity. Hunting, fishing, and often environmentally-responsible commercial activities can be written into plans.

Studies show overwhelming public support for designation of special wild lands.

www.birthplaceofrivers.org

News and Events

Cross In The Mountains Service Come to Kayford Mountain, WV Holy Saturday April 18



You are warmly invited to participate in a prayer service on Kayford Mountain, West Virginia on Saturday noon, April 18, 2015.

The prayer service will follow the steps of the *Via Crucis*, otherwise known as **The Stations of the Cross** or *Via Delorosa*. The Stations help worshipers on a spiritual pilgrimage through meditating upon 14 scenes of Christ's sufferings and death. This is a centuries-old practice across the planet that is done in a spirit of contrition. All of us bear collective responsibility for the insults, suffering, and death of God's Son who bears the sin of the world. Our faithful response is renewed commitment to be instruments of God's healing, reconciliation, and justice to those who suffer.

Kayford Mountain is the homeplace and burial place of **Larry Gibson**, who spent his later years fighting against mountaintop removal. Kayford has a picnic shelter to meet at. A short walk takes one to overlooks of the surrounding mountains torn down by mountaintop removal. Three concrete crosses erected by a long-gone church are on the grounds. A fellowship meal will follow the service. Tours of Kayford Mountain will be available. Wear comfortable, informal clothing. The event is free.

Catholic Committee of Appalachia led by **Jeannie Kirkhope** is the lead sponsor, with other groups helping out such as WV Council of Churches and Christians For The Mountains. For further information, contact **Allen Johnson** at 304-799-4137; email at allen@christiansforthemountains.org; or **Jeannie Kirkhope** at cca@ccappal.org; or check the Facebook page of Catholic Committee of Appalachia. Our planning committee welcomes volunteers to help with preparations.

Directions to Kayford Mountain can be found on the Keeper Of The Mountains website:

<http://www.mountainkeeper.org/kayford-mountain/>

Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow me. [Matthew 16:24, NLT]"

QUOTES & COMMENTS on Christianity, Grace, Money, and Power

The Lord's Prayer

It is incomprehensible dishonesty in the human heart to pray daily that [the Kingdom of God] should come, that God's will should be done on earth as it is in heaven [Matthew 6:10], and at the same time to try to deny that Jesus wanted this kingdom and the ethic it demands of men to be put into practice on the earth.

Anyone who emphasizes that the **Sermon on the Mount** is impractical and weakens its moral obligations should be mindful of its concluding words, "Not all who say to me, 'Lord,' shall reach the kingdom of heaven, but only those who do the will of my Father in heaven." [Mt. 7:21] ...**Eberhard Arnold**

All Wealth Ultimately Belongs to God

At the dedication of the newly-built Temple in Jerusalem, **King David** prayed, "Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a temple for your Holy Name comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you. [1 Chronicles 29:16 NIV]

The earth belongs to the Lord, and everything in it—the world and all its people.
[Psalm 24:1 NCV]

Usufruct: [Definition] The right to enjoy the use and advantages of another's property short of the destruction or waste of its substance. [Oxford]

Usufruct [a short editorial commentary] If I borrow a friend's car, I should oblige myself to return it in same condition, and better yet, if I wash the car and fill up the gas tank. So it is with land that we might have a property title to. That land belongs to its Creator God. We have the privilege to utilize that land, to gain substance and enjoyment from it, but concomitantly, the responsibility to maintain that land in good condition with forethought to the integrity of the natural ecology and justice to humankind, and to pass it on in good condition.



The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, taught by Jesus, might be the first example of "Trickle-Down Economics." [Luke 16: 19-31]

What in the World is Chrematistics?

Aristotle made a very important distinction between *Oikonomia* [the root for the word "economics"] and *Chrematistics*... *Chrematistics* is the branch of political economy relating to the manipulation of property and wealth so as to maximize short-term monetary exchange value to the owner. *Oikonomia*, by contrast, is the management of the household so as to increase its use value to all members of the household over the long run. If we expand the scope of household to include the larger community of the land, of shared values, resources, biomes, institutions, language and history, then we have a good definition of 'economics for community.'

Unlimited accumulation is the goal of the **chrematist** and is evidence for Aristotle of the unnaturalness of the activity. True wealth is limited by the satisfaction of the concrete need for which it was designed. *For Oikonomia, there is such a thing as enough. For chrematistics, more is always better.* ...**Herman E. Daly and John B. Cobb**

Family Values & Capitalist Values

The **family** is precisely the place where noncapitalist values have to be learned, where one is not free to choose his company and where one is not free to pursue self-interest to the limit. Because **capitalism** pursues the opposite goals—the freedom of each individual to choose and pursue his own ends to the limit of his power—the disintegration of **marriage and family life** is one of the obvious characteristics of advanced capitalist societies.

The driving power of **capitalism** is the desire of the individual to better his material condition. It is the unleashing of this power from the restraints imposed by traditional Christian morality that has transformed static societies into the dynamic and growing society of which we are a part. No one can deny either the reality of the motive force of the magnitude of what it has achieved. The name the New Testament gives to the force in question is **covetousness**. The capitalist system is powered by the unremitting stimulation of covetousness. The apostolic advice that a person should be content with food and clothing [1 Timothy 6:8] is not compatible with the development of our kind of society... **Lesslie Newbigin**

The Idolatry of Money

We have created new idols. The worship of the ancient **golden calf** (cf. Exodus 32:1-35) has returned in a new and ruthless guise in the idolatry of money and the dictatorship of an impersonal economy lacking a truly human purpose. The worldwide crisis affecting finance and the economy lays bare their imbalances and, above all, their lack of real concern for human beings; man is reduced to one of his needs alone: consumption. (55)
Pope Francis *Evangelii Gaudium* Joy of the Gospel

Material Wealth and Spiritual Poverty

If you love money, you will never be satisfied; if you long to be rich, you will never get all you want. It is useless. (Ecclesiastes 5:10 GNT)

In his book, *Missions and Money: Affluence as a Western Missionary Problem*, **Jonathan Bonk** provides a list of biblical scriptures that the rich find disturbing and a list of scriptures the rich find reassuring. The ratios in both the Old Testament and New Testament are about 10 to 1. (pp. 85-106)

Global poverty is an acute material problem, no doubt; but Western affluence is a profoundly spiritual one. Is it not at least as difficult for us members of the Western Church to overcome our affluence as it is for our poverty stricken brothers and sisters in the rest of the world to survive their poverty? Unless we come to see our Western world through the eyes of Jesus and the writers of our scriptures, we will continue to excuse the personal and collective covetousness and greed that have made us "great," and above the locked door to the heart of the richest church the world has ever seen will be written—in splendid gilt lettering—"ICHABOD." And her Savior will remain on the outside (Revelation 3:17-20). **Jonathan Bonk**

Giving Breaks the Power of Money

Jacques Ellul writes that **Mammon (money)** is so strong upon us that its grip can only be loosened by **desacralizing its power**. "There is one act par excellence which **profanes money** by going directly against the law of money, an act for which money is not made. This act is *giving*." (110)

"**Grace** must invade the power of money, for when Mammon is destroyed by grace, it is no longer a formidable power." (97)

"Not only does it destroy the power of money, but even more, it introduces the one who receives the gift into the world of grace" (112).

Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "I will give half of my possessions to the poor. And if I have cheated anyone, I will pay back four times more."

Jesus said to him, "Salvation has come to this house today... [Luke 19:8, 9a, NCV]

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Comparing Stranded Assets of Slavery and Fossil Fuel Economies by Allen Johnson

Jesus and a Question on Inheritance

A man ran to him and fell on his knees before Jesus. The man asked, "Good teacher, what must I do to have life forever?" Jesus answered, "Why do you call me good? Only God is good. You know the commands: 'You must not murder anyone. You must not be guilty of adultery. You must not steal. You must not tell lies about your neighbor. You must not cheat. Honor your father and mother.'" The man said, "Teacher, I have obeyed all these things since I was a boy." Jesus, looking at the man, loved him and said, "There is one more thing you need to do. Go and sell everything you have, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come and follow me." He was very sad to hear Jesus say this, and he left sorrowfully, because he was rich. (Mark 10:17-23 NCV. Also Matthew 19: 16-30; Luke 18:18-30)

A wealthy young man respectfully asks Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life. The man leads a moral life. Jesus discerns emptiness in the young man. Speaking out of love, Jesus invites him to sell all his possessions, give the proceeds to the poor, and then come join him to find eternal fulfillment. Yet the thought of abandoning his great wealth was more than he would accept, so the rich young man abandoned Jesus and went away in his emptiness.

"There is one more thing you need to do. Go and sell everything you have, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come and follow me." (...Jesus)

The Challenge of Giving Up Wealth

Oil, coal, and natural gas interests own vast reserves of untapped buried energy wealth. Nations such as Saudi Arabia and Venezuela count on this wealth for their future. Corporations such as ExxonMobil, Royal Dutch Shell, Peabody Energy, Arch Coal, and Alpha Natural Resources control vast amounts of recoverable deposits for future profits.

Yet according to reputable climate analysis, 80% of proven energy reserves must forever remain untapped and unburned to avert catastrophic climate change. For nations, corporations, and investors to forgo such colossal wealth would be a bitter pill they would not swallow down easily. Technology is already available that could massively reduce greenhouse gasses while meeting energy requirements. With political and public will needed to set in motion a clean, sustainable energy future, the chief obstacle is the muscle of the energy industries fighting to retain its profits and capitalize on its vast assets.

Any quantifiable energy reserve values that a nation such as Saudi Arabia controls, or that a corporation such as ExxonMobil has legal rights to, but forfeits if laws or market forces would contravene, are "Stranded Assets."

The Nation magazine published a provocative article by Christopher Hayes, "The New Abolitionism" (May 12, 2014) which argues a comparison between



mid-1800's slaveholder wealth threatened by the abolitionist movement and present-day energy wealth threatened by science-based climate policy.

Hayes makes it clear that chattel slavery and fossil fuel energy are not moral equivalents. Owning a human being to do one's bidding is morally repugnant in a way not comparable to owning petroleum or coal shares. Rather, Hayes' analysis involves economic impact.

Hayes writes,

The leaders of slave power were fighting a movement of dispossession. The abolitionists told them that the property they owned must be forfeited, that all the wealth stored in the limbs and wombs of their property would be taken from them. Zeroed out. Imagine a modern-day political movement that contended that mutual funds and 401(k)s, stocks and college savings accounts were evil institutions that must be eliminated completely, more or less overnight. This was the fear that approximately 400,000 Southern slaveholders faced on the eve of the Civil War.

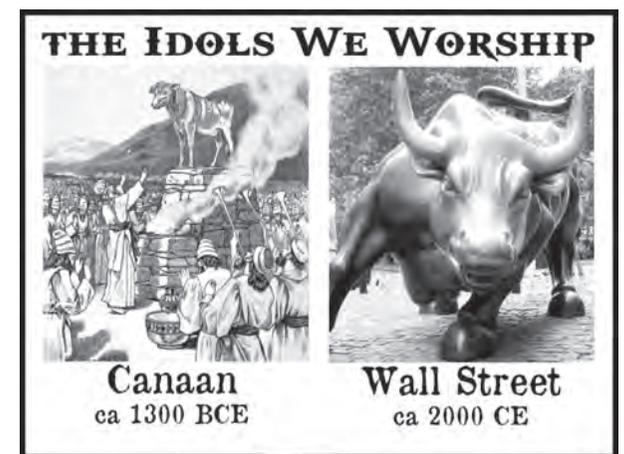
Hayes notes that "In 1860, slaves represented about 16 percent of the total household assets — that is, all the wealth — in the entire country [U.S.], which in today's terms is a stunning \$10 trillion." In the South, slaves represented almost half of total property wealth. Slaveholder resistance to the abolitionist movement included four years of bloody civil war before owners were stripped of their human property. And truth be told, much of the slaveholding South subsequently suffered economic hardship for a century following Emancipation.

In his poignant *Rolling Stone* essay, "Global Warming's Terrifying New Math" (7/19/12), Bill McKibben emphasizes three science-based numbers (2); (565); (2795). First number, the planet absolutely must not exceed 2 degrees Celsius warming. Second number, 565 gigatons of carbon dioxide is the maximum that humans can pour into the atmosphere and not exceed the two degree global temperature increase. Third number, there is 2795 gigatons of emittable carbon dioxide in proven coal, oil, and gas reserves, according to extensive research by the Carbon Tracker Initiative. In other words, 5 times the maximum budget the planet can suffer and still maintain any

semblance of ecological viability and societal stability! McKibben writes,

Yes, this coal and gas and oil is still technically in the soil. But it's already economically aboveground — it's figured into share prices, companies are borrowing money against it, nations are basing their budgets on the presumed returns from their patrimony. It explains why the big fossil-fuel companies have fought so hard to prevent the regulation of carbon dioxide — those reserves are their primary asset, the holding that gives their companies their value. It's why they've worked so hard these past years to figure out how to unlock the oil in Canada's tar sands, or how to drill miles beneath the sea, or how to frack the Appalachians.

If you told Exxon or Lukoil that, in order to avoid wrecking the climate, they couldn't pump out their reserves, the value of their companies would plummet.



John Fullerton, a former managing director at JP Morgan who now runs the Capital Institute, calculates that at today's market value, those 2,795 gigatons of carbon emissions are worth about \$27 trillion. Which is to say, if you paid attention to the scientists and kept 80 percent of it underground, you'd be writing off \$20 trillion in assets.

Christopher Hayes points out the stupendous challenge. "When you consider the math that McKibben, the Carbon Tracker Initiative and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [7] (IPCC) all lay out, you must confront the fact that the climate justice movement is demanding that an existing set of political and economic interests be forced to say goodbye to trillions of dollars of wealth. It is impossible to point to any precedent other than abolition."

[continued on page 7]

(Continued from page 6) Comparing Stranded Assets



“The climate justice movement is demanding that an existing set of political and economic interests be forced to say goodbye to trillions of dollars of wealth. It is impossible to point to any precedent other than abolition.”

Reinvesting in Life

Hayes’ article does not end in “give up, it’s hopeless” despair. He points out that fossil fuel extraction and processing is very costly, especially with the extreme extraction methods and long transport distances required to exploit many of the remaining reserves. *“That constant need for billions of new dollars in investment capital is the industry’s Achilles’ heel.”*

The divestment campaign championed by 350.org is gaining headway as colleges, cities, foundations, and religious institutions move pension funds and other investments away from fossil fuel companies to “reinvest” in clean energy. Resolute efforts to block heavy pollution and dangerous transport, such as the movement to block the proposed Keystone XL pipeline, are mounting. If carbon cannot be safely and cost-effectively extracted or transported, it will stay in the ground unburned. Improved conservation and efficiency in energy use coupled with lower costs associated with renewable power generation such as solar and wind is showing great potential to rival or exceed fossil fuels.

“If carbon cannot be safely and cost-effectively extracted or transported, it will stay in the ground unburned. Improved conservation and efficiency in energy use coupled with lower costs associated with renewable power generation such as solar and wind is showing great potential to rival or exceed fossil fuels.”

“No one can serve two masters. He will hate the first master and love the second, or he will be devoted to the first and despise the second. You cannot serve God and wealth.Teaching of Jesus, recorded in Matthew 6:24 (GW)



Jesus Invites, “Follow Me.”

In contrast to most of his fellow countrymen, the young man who approached Jesus to inquire about inheriting eternal life was very wealthy. Scholars have noted that 2000 years ago about 1% of Palestine’s population held about 50% of all wealth, much of it extracted from the 90% of the remaining destitute population. The encroaching climate change impact has an eerie analogy. Most of the climate-altering greenhouse gasses are emitted by wealthy nations, while the brunt of the misery and (yes) death is borne by the poor in their homelands.

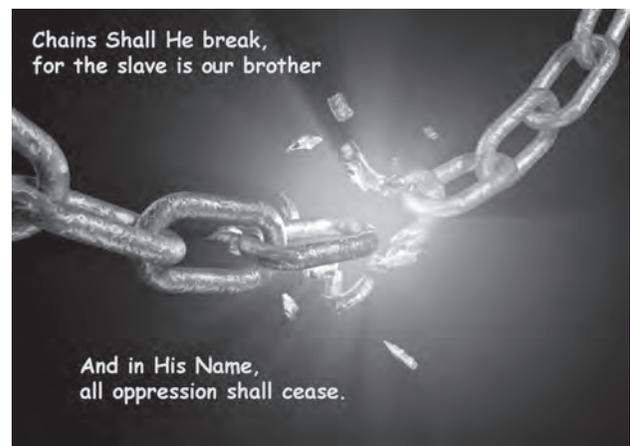
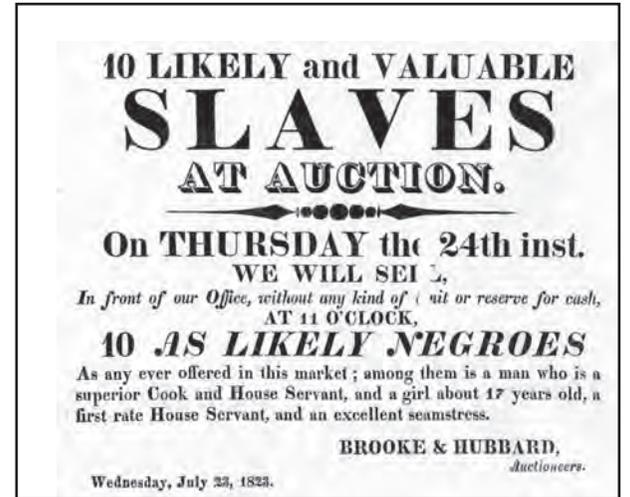
Bible-based allegories can be risky and controversial. But let’s start one. Let’s personify the United States, or a corporation, or you or me, as the wealthy young man who approaches Jesus and asks how to plan for the future. Uncle Sam tells Jesus that he has democratic elections, free public education, has a safety net for the elderly and indigent, freedom of the press and speech, and tens of thousands of varied houses of worship. A corporation tells Jesus about providing desirable and needed services and goods, along with jobs for workers to support their families. I (and maybe you) tell Jesus about our needs to keep our homes comfortable and well-lit, our bodies nourished, our travel and communication in modern society capable, so that our society can function well. And Jesus replies, “I invite you to follow me. But one thing you lack that you should do....”

Following his encounter with the wealthy young man, Jesus pulls his disciples aside to discuss the episode.

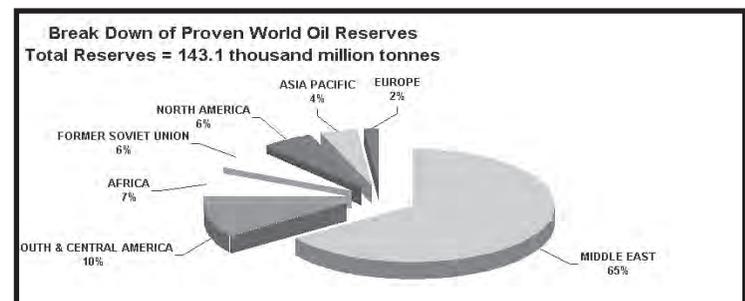
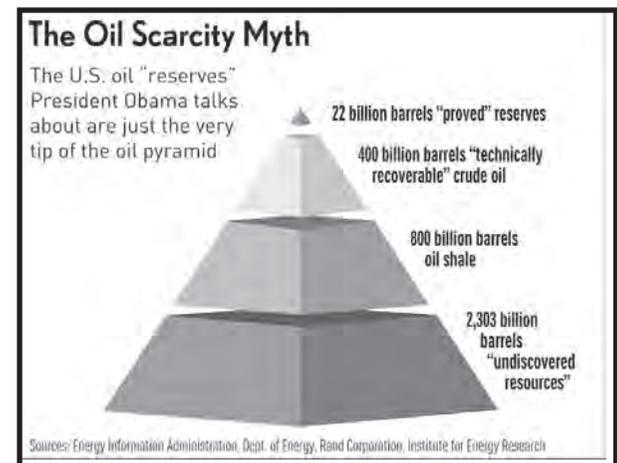
“How hard it will be for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!” The followers were amazed at what Jesus said. But he said again, “My children, it is very hard to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.” Peter said to Jesus, “Look, we have left everything and followed you.” (Mark 10:23-27 NCV)

What is lacking? For starters, we might consider stranding any of our assets that might imperil life here on this planet... and reinvesting our assets and lifestyles that enhance life. Jesus teaches us to pray, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6”10). Jesus calls us to follow Him in this way.

“What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his soul?” (Teaching of Jesus Mark 8:36)



- RESOURCES:**
www.carbontracker.org
www.ceres.org
<http://greenfaith.org/programs/divest-and-reinvest>



NEWS ON THE GOVERNMENT FRONT

WVU Study Concludes Mountaintop Removal Air Pollution Can Cause Lung Cancer

A team of researchers published a study in October 2014 that *“Epidemiological studies suggest that living near mountaintop 1 coal mining (MTM) activities is one of the contributing factors for high lung cancer incidence.”*

The research was conducted by a multidisciplinary team from several institutions, perhaps most notably involving several schools at West Virginia University including the renowned Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center. The title is, *Appalachian Mountaintop Mining Particulate Matter Induces Neoplastic Transformation of Human Bronchial Epithelial Cells and Promotes Tumor Formation.*

The Precautionary Principle is a cornerstone in the realm of scientific and technological ethics. A definition of the Precautionary Principle states, *“When an activity raises threats of harm to the environment or human health, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically.”* Numerous peer-reviewed studies over the past 6 years have pointed out significant correlations between people living in proximity to mountaintop removal and excessively high rates of cardiovascular and pulmonary disease, cancer, birth defects, and premature morbidity. Those studies collectively have more than justified immediate implementation of the Precautionary Principle such as through ACHE Act legislation. This new study is scientifically conclusive: Mountaintop removal air pollutants are carcinogenic. Long-term exposure to such pollutants points as a reason for the increase in lung cancer. Innocent people sicken and die.

The moral choice for policymakers is clear. Ethically, morally, and spiritually, the right thing to do is to stop the spewing of these cancer-causing contaminants. Supporting the ACHE Act is a forward step. The other choice is to ignore the study in order to support the coal industry over against human health. Jesus taught, *“What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?”*

www.acheact.org for more information on how to help

Teens Bring Lawsuit to U.S. Supreme Court Seek Climate Recovery Plan for Their Future

Five individual teenagers, and two non-profit organizations representing thousands more young people, Kids vs. Global Warming and WildEarth Guardians, partnered with OUR CHILDREN'S TRUST in a federal lawsuit at the U.S. Supreme Court.



The youth seek to require the federal government to immediately plan for national climate recovery according to the scientific prescription of leading international climate scientists to restore our atmosphere to 350 parts per million (ppm) of CO2 by the end of the century and avoid the disastrous scenarios of 2°C of warming.

This lawsuit relies upon the long-established legal principle of the Public Trust Doctrine, which requires our government to protect and maintain survival resources for future generations.

Christians For The Mountains, National Religious Coalition on Creation Care, joined with prominent national leaders, including legal scholars, economic and national security experts, religious groups, climate scientists, conservation and social justice organizations, native communities, business and government leaders, and cities in November 2014 filing amicus briefs with the United States Supreme Court in a major climate change case. The case, *Alec L. v. McCarthy, Supreme Court Case No. 14-405*, sought a decision that the federal government has public trust obligations to protect essential national natural resources for present and future generations. On December 8 the Supreme Court declined to hear the case.



Appalachia Health Quarantine: Will Feds Issue Protective Respirators to Kids, Families Near Mountaintop Removal Sites?

by Jeff Biggers (by permission, Huffington Post, October 29, 2014)



On the heels of a breakthrough study that demonstrates the indisputable link between lung cancer and mountaintop removal mining in central Appalachia, besieged residents are wondering if the federal government will issue protective respirators to “every man, woman, and child living near mountaintop removal mining.”

In lieu of emergency federal action--or even a single historic visit by an Obama official to this health disaster zone--such desperate calls for immediate health protection for the thousands of exposed Appalachians are the latest actions by residents who have endured an unmitigated health disaster and mounting death toll from reckless strip mining over the past half century.

“This study shows that dust collected from MTR [mountaintop removal] communities promotes lung cancer,” according to Dr. Michael Hendryx, now at Indiana University’s School of Public Health and one of the study’s authors. *“Previous studies have shown that people who live in these communities have higher lung cancer rates not due just to smoking, but with this study we now have solid evidence that dust collected from residential areas near MTR sites causes cancerous changes to human lung cells.”* Over the years, it has been sickening to watch politicians, coal company hacks and sycophantic journalists defer judgment and split hairs over the connections between massive mountaintop removal operations and public health hazards in the same way black lung disease for coal miners had been denied for decades.

But that era of denial is over.

“We have clear scientific evidence that mountaintop removal coal mining jeopardizes the health of coalfield residents, and today’s study is more proof that we can no longer ignore the dangerous impact of this destructive practice,” said Congressman John Yarmuth (KY-3), who introduced the Appalachian Community Health Emergency (ACHE) Act, along with Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-25), this Congress. *“No one should have to breathe the dirty air or drink the polluted water in mountaintop removal communities, but as long as we allow this public health hazard to continue, we are forcing the residents of Appalachia to do exactly that.”*

One day in the not-so-distant future, our newspapers will feature headlines about the massive wrongful death settlements with the coal companies--such as last summer’s \$26 billion verdict against the tobacco companies for lung cancer--and criminal charges of negligent homicide by policymakers and politicians who have openly allowed such a health crisis to take place.

“Our politicians cannot ignore or deny this report. Mountaintop removal blasting dust promotes lung cancer,” said Bo Webb, who has personally lost family members to cancer and lives under a mountaintop removal operation. *“The report ‘supports prudent adoption of prevention strategies and exposure control,’ so Congress urgently needs to protect public health by passing the ACHE Act immediately. Short of that, protective respirators should be provided to every man, woman, and child living near mountaintop mining.”*

Add Your Voice to the People's Pastoral

The **PEOPLE'S PASTORAL** is an open, ongoing *dialogue* starting in Appalachia and including its people, Earth, the church and all people of good will. Scripture says, "The Lord hears the cry of the poor;" -but, can WE? Therefore, the People's Pastoral is a telling of the story of "the least among us" including Earth, our listening of that story, and the Church's response to it.

Catholic Committee of Appalachia (CCA) is the sponsor of the People's Pastoral. Typically, Pastorals are addressed by a Bishop to Catholic clergy and laity, as well as to all people of good will. Pastorals contain instruction, consolation, or directions for behavior in particular circumstances. However, this **People's Pastoral "Document"** will be a written summary of the voices collected from Central Appalachia and addressed to the Church. It will include theological reflection, social analyses and an invitation to the church to respond in action. Target date for publication is Spring 2015.

The **PASTORAL PROCESS** the Catholic Committee of Appalachia (CCA) has used since 1975 engages grassroots participation beginning with listening. The purpose is to further peace and social, economic and environmental justice in Appalachia.

The **STEPS of the Pastoral Process** are as follows:

(1) **LISTEN** to stories told by individuals or groups who are experiencing some form of injustice (social, economic, environmental);
 (2) **ANALYZE**- apply social analysis, critical thinking;
 (3) **REFLECT** - use theological reflection, prayer, mediation, roundtables;
 (4) **SUMMARIZE** - summarize the stories heard and what was learned from them by any means of expression (*writings, rituals, the Arts, conferences, song, educational programs, prayer, etc.*);
 (5) **RESPOND**: use the summary to inform others, address problems, change systems (*through direct service, intentional lifestyle changes, civil actions, etc.*).

HOW TO ADD YOUR VOICE

CCA invites YOU, first and foremost, whose voices we do not hear easily, often, or at all, including the cry of the Earth. CCA wants to hear the stories of **those of you who struggle**, for example: *those with low incomes or on desecrated lands; who give voice to the environment; who are undocumented, imprisoned behind bars, or stigmatized with a criminal record or social unapproval; minorities of race, ethnicity, or religion; youth, the aging, women, gays and lesbians, miners, farmers, maids and cooks, unemployed and underemployed; those who are lonely, without a family or sense of community, or a feeling of purpose; those struggling with addiction, abusive relationships, degrading work, mental illness, or sicknesses brought on by industrial or environmental causes, etc.* CCA wants to hear, also, from YOU, their advocates and the communities who share the struggle with them. And, CCA asks for words from YOU, beyond these immediate relationships because, in our



interconnectedness through Earth, we recognize all are companions on the journey.

As followers of *Jesus ("I am the Way, the Truth and the Life")*, we believe the more people can work together, the better we can be, as he was, a presence of healing and hope for all God's creation. So, we ask you ...

- What is your story of struggle?
- How would things be different if you had no fear or obstacles?
- Where is there hope in your situation right now?
- What can we do together, and what bigger changes are needed, to bring about what looks promising?
- More Wisdom...

Help Us Hear the Cry of the Poor It's easy.

1. Listen.
2. Collect the stories.
3. Turn them in to CCA at cca@ccappal.org



Make it Public

As we gather up the cry of the poor, there are **a multitude of ways** you can help us give it Public Voice. There is no limit to what your imagination can come up with. This page will list all the various ways and expressions people lift up the Voice in order to invite the church and world to respond to it. Some examples could be: *published poems, art work, exhibits, songs, dances, storytelling festivals, conferences, retreats, academic papers, educational programs, rituals, prayers, etc.*

"God will hear the prayer of the desperate..."
Psalm 102: 17

When you come up with YOUR way, email, phone, or drop a letter to Jeannie Kirkhope.

Jeannie Kirkhope, Catholic Worker Farm
 885 Orchard Run Road
 Spencer, WV 25276
 (304) 927-5798
cca@ccappal.org

More details are available on the website.

<http://www.ccappal.org/the-peoples-pastoral>

Catholic Committee of Appalachia will be publishing a document called "The People's Pastoral" you will be able to read and sign on with countless others. The "People's Pastoral" will continue as a living document that is continually added to as an inspiration and resource for ministry and hope.

History of the Pastorals

In 1975, and again in 1995, members of the Catholic Committee of Appalachia (CCA) held a number of listening sessions around central Appalachia and took notes on what they heard. They summarized the stories, added social analysis, critical thinking and theological reflection and wrote it down. They took the documents to the 27 Bishops of the region and encouraged them to sign and promulgate them as the Appalachian Bishops' Pastoral Letters. Today, "*This Land is Home to Me*" (1975) and "*At Home in the Web of Life*" (1995) are considered the most influential indigenous documents in the modern Church.

PREFACE: At Home in the Web of Life

Greetings to our sisters and brothers in Appalachia: to Catholic Christian laity, religious, and ordained ministers; to Christian believers of every denomination, and particularly to Christians of the mountain churches; to people of all faiths, to all people of good will; and especially to all who are sick, lonely, handicapped, or suffering from injustice. May God's love fill you always with hope and joy!

EXCERPT on Sin and its Healing

The healing of social and ecological sin requires, therefore, both our reconciliation with the land and our reconciliation with the poor.

Gratefully this reconciliation is already given to us in the person of Jesus.

Jesus is the healing revelation of God's abiding love for creation. The Gospel of John again teaches us, "For God so loved the world that He gave his only Son..." (John 3:16)

Breaking Free from Culture Wars' Prisons by Allen Johnson

“Will you change your mind?”

How often we wish others would change their minds. Think like we think, act like we act, do what we want.

“Don’t be so stubborn and close-minded!” That’s what we think about friends, relatives, or neighbors who simply refuse to be influenced by our irrefutable logic. “Why can’t they see what is obvious?”

The most intractable challenge that *Christians For The Mountains* and our allies face is how to win converts to our positions. Just to say this upfront and honestly is to face into a minefield. “How dare someone try to win me over to their cause?” Nonetheless, every ideologically-oriented individual or group wants to spread its message and win adherents.

The United States is locked up in a titanic battle of ideologies. Political movement increasingly is paralyzed and stalemated. Civic engagement tends to be polarized into competing camps. Special interests spend large sums of money to convince fence sitters to come to their side.

Competing at-odds positions polarize Christian denominations and congregations believing the same Jesus, the same Bible, and similar accepted doctrines and practices. Jesus states unequivocally that he testifies to truth, yet outside observers of Christian

**“What is Truth?”
Pontius Pilate asks at
the trial of Jesus**

practice can be as puzzled as Pilate when he asked, “What is truth?” (John 18:37, 38).

The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided By Politics And Religion, by Jonathan Haidt, provides valuable insight into moral judgment. The phrase, “essential reading,” is overdone, yet I cannot restrain myself from applying this moniker to Haidt’s book for anyone truly seeking pathways toward meaningful social change. Haidt is a lucid, interesting, and skillful scholar-writer, pacing his readers step by step into his thesis. Importantly, Haidt leads his readers to understand the moral rationale of those we ideologically disagree with, to diffuse demonization of them, and even how to build bridges of respect and potential collaboration.

Reasoning Serves Feelings, Not the Other Way Around

“Reason is...the slave of the passions... to serve and obey them.” (David Hume, philosopher, quoted p. 29)

Emotions trump reasoning. Feelings are masters of the mind. This insight is key to Haidt’s work. People tend to act out of their own intuitions and instincts, and then seek moral evidence to justify their actions. We position ourselves in groupings (tribes, families, ethnicities, religions, etc.) that reinforce our moral justification. And we vigorously push back against counter evidence that would throw us into moral confusion and threaten our secure position within our group.

“Does higher IQ, or more education, improve moral objectivity?” Haidt trots out research by David Perkins, who replies in the negative, “People invest their IQ in buttressing their own case rather than in exploring the entire issue more fully and evenhandedly.”

Yale Law professor **Dan Kahan** comes to a similar conclusion in his team’s research. Mathematical and logical

abilities indeed can lead to advanced evidence-based problem solving—that is, until ideology gets in the way: especially the ideology of one’s close associates, family, friends, and those he or she greatly admires. “Individuals subconsciously resist factual information that threatens their defining values.” Kahan believes that allegiance to one’s circle is more potent than factual evidence. Using for an example the issue of the highly-politicized issue of climate change, Kahan suggests a subconscious risk-averse rationale

“Nothing any ordinary member of the public personally believes about the existence, causes, or likely consequences of global warming will affect the risk that climate changes poses to her, or to anyone or anything she cares about,” Kahan writes. “However, if she forms the wrong position on climate change relative to the one that people with whom she has a close affinity — and on whose high regard and support she depends on in myriad ways in her daily life — she could suffer extremely unpleasant consequences, from shunning to the loss of employment.”

Human societies developed in survival mode, dependent upon tribal member cooperation for food, shelter, and protection. In primitive societies, betrayal of cultural norms would result in exile from a tribe and consequent death. In our modern enlightened societies, the pulse to identify with a group and its values seems hardwired into us humans through genetic predisposition and life circumstances.

Jesus points out that to follow him with his radical “upside down kingdom” [Acts 17:6, KJV] can mean a brutal break with group identity. Jesus says, “Anyone who comes to me but refuses to let go of father, mother, spouse, children, brothers, sisters—yes, even

one’s own self!—can’t be my disciple” [Luke 14:26, The Message]. Jesus teaches that those who leave family, homes, livelihoods to follow him will come to belong to a new group, but with persecution [Mark 10:29-30]. Jesus explains that his people are so different than how the world operates that they will be hated and persecuted [John 15:18-25]. That such persecution and even marginalization is uncommon in the United States may be indicative of the accommodation and compromise that Christendom has with larger society. One of the distinguishing characteristics of the biblical prophets was their resistance to the peer pressure of their religious, national, ethnic, and family ties, therefore freed up to see clearly from God’s point of view and speak God’s truth fearlessly.

To sum up, rationalization is used to justify and reinforce the value system of one’s primary groupings. Contrasting values held by different groups can lead to competition, hostility, and rigid close-mindedness by either end of the liberal/conservative spectrum.

Six Moral Foundations of Politics

Morality is to a large degree culturally determined. Cultures vary across the planet and across the span of history. Even within a nation such as the United States, value systems differ, as evidenced in the Conservative/Liberal split. Jonathan Haidt proposes six moral foundation pillars that help identify group values and identities.

- 1. Care/harm:** Sensitivity to suffering and need, while despising cruelty.
- 2. Fairness/cheating:** Reaping rewards for collaboration, punishing free riders and cheats.
- 3. Loyalty/betrayal:** Rewarding cooperation, punishing those who disrupt a group.
- 4. Authority/subversion:** Supporting the benefits of social hierarchy.
- 5. Sanctity/degradation:** Prevention of disease, behaviors disruptive to societal harmony.
- 6. Liberty/oppression:** Banding together to resist bullies and tyrants.

Haidt, p. 178; 197

Haidt posits that **liberals** emphasize #1, 2, and 6, while **conservatives** employ all six. Interpretations and applications tend to differ. Thus, conservative political campaigns can exploit all six moral foundations to influence conservatives while liberal political campaigns have to emphasize strongly just the three. In that sense, conservatives have an advantage.



Breaking Free from Culture Wars' Prisons [Continued from page 10]

Every Person Has a Narrative

The core values any of us hold are largely shaped by a matrix of life experience and genetics. Each of us has a story, a narrative that consciously and unconsciously explains our values and ideology. Typically we seek others who will reinforce our narratives, which aggregate into groupings.

In Christian Smith's important book, **Moral, Believing Animals: Human Personhood and Culture**, he points out that "narrative is a form of communication that arranges human actions and events into organized wholes in a way that bestows meaning on the actions and events..." (p. 65). "Our stories fully encompass and define our lives" (p. 78).

Therefore, in order to have a chance to convince someone of a viewpoint, one needs to understand that person's narrative and enter into some commonality. From a Christian perspective, commonality is the point of the **Incarnation** in which God enters into the sinful, fallen creation through the birth, life, and death of Jesus that humanity might break away from our destructive path into the eternal life-giving presence of God.



Constructive Engagement Across the Culture Values Divide

Typically, culture wars battles are waged with the battering rams of science, statistics, fear mongering, religious and secular moral appeals, and bandwagons attached to other issues. Opposing sides dig into their trenches and fire volleys into their opponents, somehow hoping for surrender or defeat. Meanwhile, those caught in between in the barbed wire "no man's land" of noncommittal duck for shelter. On some issues, such as the ticking clock toward climate disaster, stalemate is defeat. So how can this impasse be overcome?



Dr. Kahan answers, "What people *believe* about global warming doesn't reflect what they know; it *expresses* who they *are*."

Kahan continues. [Yale Earthday, April 22, 2014]

"If we want to overcome it [impasse], then we must *disentangle* competing positions on climate change from opposing cultural identities, so that *culturally pluralistic* citizens aren't put in the positions of having to choose between knowing what's known to science and *being* who they are." "Only that will dissolve the conflict citizens now face between their personal incentive to form identity-consistent beliefs and the collective one they have in recognizing and

giving effect to the best available evidence." "You must remove from the education environment the toxic cultural meanings that make answers to that question badges of membership and loyalty to one's cultural group...but to do it, you must banish from the *science communication environment* the culturally antagonistic meanings with which positions on that issue have become entangled—so that citizens can think and reason for themselves *free* of the distorting impact of identify-protective cognition."

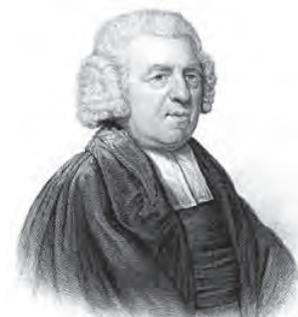
According to Jonathan Haidt, people are not divided by politics and religion "because some people are good and others are evil. Instead, the explanation is that our minds were designed for groupish righteousness. We are deeply intuitive creatures whose gut feelings drive our strategic reasoning."

How do people change their mind? I can think of a number of significant issues that I have changed my mind on. For example, I held strong racist views until my senior year in college when I got to personally know and become friends with some fellow African-American students through athletics. Seeing the humanity in our perceived opponents, hearing their stories, working alongside them in common goals, and understanding their moral narratives, indeed builds the trust to hear one another with openness to their truth claims.

As I reflect upon my life, I attribute positive changes as God-breathed epiphanies through a move of the Holy Spirit. The physical miracles by Jesus testified in The Bible typically point to a spiritual reality. In one of these stories, Jesus and his disciples encounter a man blind from birth. The disciples ask Jesus, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus counters that "neither this man nor his parents sinned, but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him." Jesus healed the man and gave him sight. [John 9]

John Newton was a British sailor who captained slave-carrying ships from Africa, even after his conversion to Christianity. Newton eventually became a well-regarded parish priest. Then, after three decades had passed since he had worked in the slave trade, Newton publicly and actively came out as an abolitionist, teaming with **Wilbur Wilberforce** to end the British slave trade. As a clergyman, Newton penned many hymns, one of these including this telling stanza that summarizes our prayers for ourselves and others.

*Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind but now I see.*



John Newton (1725-1807) in his younger years was a slave ship captain noted for his vulgarity. He called out to God during a storm that almost sunk his ship. Gradually, over time, he came to clean up his own life, give up slave trading, and enter into the clergy. Decades later through the ongoing work of conversion, Newton became an outspoken fighter against the slave trade.

OPEN MY EYES THAT I MAY SEE

Hymn by Clara Scott (1841-1897)

*Open my eyes, that I may see
glimpses of truth thou hast for me;
place in my hands the wonderful key
that shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!*

*Open my ears, that I may hear
voices of truth thou sendest clear;
and while the wavenotes fall on my ear,
everything false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!*

*Open my mouth, and let me bear
gladly the warm truth everywhere;
open my heart and let me prepare
love with thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!*

Notes from the Climate March Week in New York City

by Allen Johnson



Grandmothers march for their grandkids' futures

350,000 citizens carried their plea for effective climate policy as they marched in New York City. The September 21 event was timed to the United Nations Summit on Climate. Hundreds of thousands throughout the world joined in solidarity.

Among hundreds of gatherings surrounding the main event were religious meetings. I was invited by *Green Faith* (headed by Fletcher Harper) to the "Our Voices" panel held at United Nations Church on September 17 in New York City as a prelude. My panel discussion, which included Muhtari Aminu-Kano from Africa and Eddie Bautista from New York City, was titled, "Legacy of Harm: From Extraction To Emission." I discussed negative externalities of mountaintop removal including effects upon health, community, and environment, and our need to pass the ACHE Act. *Green Faith's* mission is to inspire, educate and mobilize people of diverse religious backgrounds for environmental leadership. Its work is based on a belief shared in common by the world's religions that protecting the earth is a religious value, and that environmental stewardship is a moral responsibility.



Tim DeChristopher

Two days later I served on a panel hosted by *United Planet Faith and Science Initiative (UPFSI)* at Columbia University. UPFSI is an emerging multi-faith and science collaboration to mobilize ecological sustainability. James Hansen and Desmond Tutu are among the founders. Our panel discussion was filmed for later production. Afterward I went to Union Seminary where I attended a 1 ½ day *Religions For The Earth* conference with an impressive lineup of influential speakers and workshops. On Saturday evening I attended a full house gathering for a panel on climate that included Senator Bernie Sanders, Naomi Klein, Chris Hedges, and Bill McKibben.

Sunday was the big climate march. Appalachians and native peoples marched first, however I joined the **10,000-strong religious group** which of the five contingents marched second to last. Several hours of music and speeches at a stage preceded our marching. The energy from like-minded people was exhilarating and inspiring. As with all these events, I enjoyed meeting up with environmental and religious friends from across the country as well as meeting new organizational representatives. Sunday night I attended a service at St. John the Divine Cathedral, "*Religions for the Earth: A Multifaith Service.*" Al Gore and others spoke. Acoustics in the cathedral had so much echo that the talks were difficult to comprehend.

I met West Virginia native and activist Tim DeChristopher at the *Religions For The Earth* conference, who urged me to go to a "*Flood Wall Street*" protest on Monday. DeChristopher was born in West Virginia in 1981. At age 27, DeChristopher protested a gas and oil lease auction on public land in Utah by successfully bidding \$1.6 million on 14 parcels he had no intention to pay. He served 21 months in prison for his audacious act, although the U.S. Dept. of Interior later determined the auction had been illicit due to insufficient environmental review, and had to cancel many other leases. DeChristopher is currently a seminarian at Harvard Divinity School.

"Flood Wall Street" drew around 2000 people who gathered at Battery Park for a rally and instructions, then held an all-afternoon sit-in on Wall Street to publicize the link between climate change and investments in industries that abet climate and the correlated influence on climate policy. This direct action gathering was positive, self-controlled, generally peaceful, and dedicated, although media tend to ignore the primary focus.

From a personal perspective, my most helpful event was a workshop at the *Religions for the Earth* conference that dealt with "Grief."

That is, how to personally handle the mourning and grieving that we often feel in the face of ecological loss, the trajectory of planetary climate and other destruction, and our oft-felt sense of impotence when confronting powerful economic and political forces arrayed against God's creation and justice. Baseless optimism is quite different from Christian "hope." It is good to grieve, and out of grieving to move forward for justice, truth, and love. The panel included DeChristopher along with my friends Rabbi Mordecai Liebling, and Dr. Lise Van Susteren.

I stayed with Rabbi Larry Troster of *Green Faith* the first night, then in Harlem with Kwadwo Jauntuah for the next six nights of royal hospitality. Kwadwo was an exchange student from Ghana who stayed with our family for a year of high school, and we have been close friends since.



Veterans For Peace



Flood Wall Street held the day after the Climate March



Sally Bingham
Interfaith Power& Light

Sandra Steingraber: Why I Am In Jail

Breakfast in the Chemung County Jail is served at 5 a.m. This morning—Friday, November 21, 2014—it was Cheerios and milk plus two slaps of universally-despised “breakfast cake.” Along with trays of food—which are passed through the bars—arrive the morning rounds of meds for the inmates who take them. Now comes my favorite time of day in jail—the two quiet hours between breakfast and 7 a.m. before the television clicks on and we are ordered to make our beds and the loud day begins. Between the end of breakfast and 7 a.m., most women go back to sleep. Now I can hear only the sounds of their breathing—different rhythms all—and, on the far side of the steel door—the occasional voices of the C.O.s (correction officers, a.k.a. the guards) and the walkie-talkie orders they themselves are receiving.

Meanwhile, my bed is already made and I have repurposed my small laundry basket—by flipping it upside down—into a table on which I am writing. And because I am a writer who is writing, I am happy.

I am also happy because I know that, by writing, I am fulfilling a promise to Ashley (not her real name) who brought me last night a sharpened pencil and a stack of inmate medical request forms to use as writing paper. After hearing my story—narrated through the bars of my cell as I am being kept in “keeplock” until the results of my TB screening come back—Ashley said, “I know about you Seneca Lake protesters. I read about that. But only once. You have to keep fighting. You have to write to the newspaper. You can do that from here, you know. You can’t just sit in your cell for 14 days and do nothing. You have to fight.” And then she ran off and found me paper.

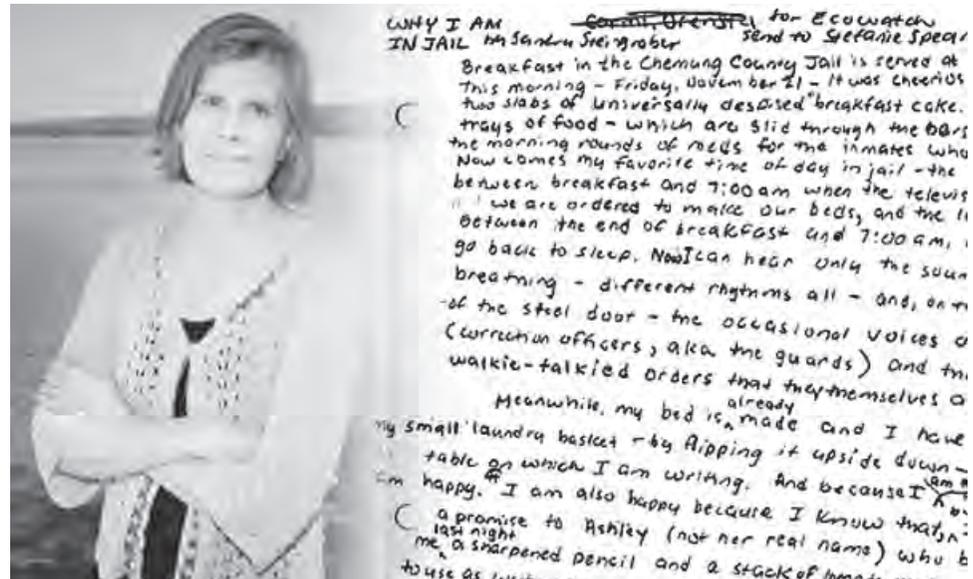
Sitting on a stool outside my cell—which is welded to the far row of—Ashley freely dispensed advice last night for the *We Are Seneca Lake* movement. “Don’t give up. Keep writing the newspapers. They are always looking for stories.” She added, “I may be only 21, but I’m wise about some things.”

Here’s Ashley’s story: She was arrested two years ago—at age 19—for stealing a pumpkin. She is jailed now for violating probation. She has three kids—ages 6, 4 and 2—who are staying with her foster mother in Allegany County until she serves her time. She’ll be out the day after Christmas. Meanwhile, she’s studying for her GED and laying plans to go to college.

Half the women in my cell block are here for probation violation. One thing they all agree on: It’s almost impossible to be a single mother in search of housing and a job, both of which require mobility, and comply with probation rules, which restrict mobility. Better to do the time and then make a fresh start.

I get that. And it’s a logic that runs parallel to my own. **I have come to believe that a successful civil disobedience campaign likewise depends on the willingness of at least some of us to gladly accept jail time over other kinds of sentences, such as paying fines.**

There are four reasons for this. First, it shows respect for the law. In my case, I was arrested for trespassing on the driveway of a Texas-based energy



company that has the sole intention of turning the crumbling salt mines underneath the hillside into massive gas tanks for the highly-pressurized products of fracking: methane, propane and butane. (The part of the plan involving methane storage has already been approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission). Even before the infrastructure for this gas storage is built, Crestwood Midstream has polluted the lake with salt, at levels that exceed its legal limits. Crestwood’s response is to pay a fine and keep polluting. By contrast, I refuse to pay a fine to excuse my crime and so accepted the lawful consequences of my actions.

“I have come to believe that a successful civil disobedience campaign likewise depends on the willingness of at least some of us to gladly accept jail time over other kinds of sentences, such as paying fines.”

Second, extending one’s civil disobedience testimony in jail shows seriousness of intent. Four of the 17 civil disobedients who have so far been arraigned as part of the We Are Seneca Lake campaign have chosen jail instead of fines: 75-year-old Dwain Wilder, a veteran of the Navy who was incarcerated for Veteran’s Day; 86-year-old Roland Micklem, a Quaker, who is now incarcerated in the Schuyler County Jail [Roland Micklem was released yesterday due to health concern]; 58-year-old Colleen Boland, a retired Air Force sergeant who served in the White House; and me (I’m a 55-year-old biologist and author).

Colleen occupies the cell next to mine. We talk through the wall. Colleen, Roland and I are on track to find out what they serve prisoners for Thanksgiving dinner.

By our willing separation from our families, by our sacrifice and consent to suffer, by our very absence, we are saying that we object in the strongest terms to the transformation of our beloved Finger Lakes

community into a hub for fracking. We object to the occupation of our lakeshore by a Houston-based corporation that seeks to further build out fossil-fuel infrastructure in a time of climate emergency, and in so doing, imperils a source of drinking water for 100,000 people.

Third, by filling the jails with mothers, elders and veterans, we peacefully provoke a crisis that cannot be

ignored by media or political leaders. Of course, civil disobedience is always a method of last recourse, deployed when all other methods of addressing a grievance have been exhausted. We have turned over all stones. We have submitted comments, written letters, offered testimony, filed Freedom of Information requests for secret documents—only to see our legitimate concerns brushed aside. Our incarceration shows that the regulatory system is broken. So far, in the Seneca Lake campaign, there have been 59 arrests, and a majority of those have yet to be sentenced. There will be more of us in jail before the year is out.

And the fourth reason is this: spending time in jail is a time of personal transformation. Alone with a pencil, some inmate request forms for stationery, the Bible and your own thoughts, you discover that you are braver than you knew. You are doing time, and time offers the possibility of rededicating oneself to the necessary work ahead: dismantling the fossil fuel industry in the last 20 years left to us, before the climate crisis spins into unfixable, unending calamity.

Last night I learned how to create a tool for changing the channel on the television, which blares from the other side of two rows of bars. It involves twisting newspaper around a row of pencils and stiffening it with toothpaste.

Thus do the women of the Chemung County Jail—all mothers—exert agency over the circumstances of their lives and defy the status quo. That’s a skill set we all need. As Ashley scolded me last night, while passing a sharpened pencil through the bars, “*You can’t just sit there for the next 14 days. Start fighting.*”

Dr. Sandra Steingraber is an acclaimed author, scientist, and activist. Steingraber is a cancer survivor who specializes in the study of environmental toxins. Her writing style is poetic, accessible, and persuasive. She lives in New York with her husband and two children.

Further information is at www.steingraber.org
Her letter was published by www.ecowatch.com

To Care and Cultivate the Garden by Fr. John S. Rausch

Last August during our 2014 Pilgrimage to the Holy Land of Appalachia, I asked Dr. Tom Barnes, a naturalist with the University of Kentucky's Department of Forestry, to show our group some Kentucky waterfalls and talk about the region. Near Wrigley, Ky, at a waterfall that had only a trickle in its dry season, Tom sat on a flat rock wearing his wide-brim hat, holding walking stick in hand, and discussed climate change. The Appalachian region, he said, the most diverse deciduous hardwood forest in North America, was warming, and southern pines and soft woods were creeping into the area. The harder woods were moving north together with other flora and fauna.

In retrospect, the image of Tom seated on a rock, worn from illness, yet teaching with staff in hand, evoked an image of Moses, or some other prophet, instructing God's people before his death. For almost 30 years, Tom had walked the forests of Kentucky, and he observed first hand how the climate of the mountains was changing. His talk, given two months before he died, incorporated not simply scientific knowledge, but wisdom. Humanity is contributing to global warming, and we must change our ways.

We count "care of creation" as one of the seven social teachings of the church, yet its importance for many rests solely with its relationship to people. Pollution causes cancer, foul air increases asthma. However, theologian Sr. Elizabeth A. Johnson looks at Matthew 25 with its admonition to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, and concludes the teaching focuses on the least among us, the poor and vulnerable. She then asks, considering how we treat the earth, whether creation is not the "new poor" and similarly the most vulnerable among us.

With Tom, a trek through the forest was like entering a cathedral. Reverent steps, moments of silence, unrushed gazing and looking filled the experience.



Tom Barnes giving a talk at the Pilgrimage to the Holy Land of Appalachia (August 2014)



Dr. Tom Barnes (1958-2014)

Tom introduced me to wild flowers, one time identifying 33 varieties in less than a mile along Indian Creek near the Red River Gorge. Along a trail he would move a heart-shaped cover leaf with his walking stick, and voila!, the reddish brown flower of wild

ginger. I've seen him prostrate himself with his camera, practically eating dirt, catching the correct angle of the sun striking a rare flower. He authored six books on Kentucky wild flowers and its beautiful undisturbed natural places. He knew where the state-threatened "blue monkshood" grew, and where secret patches of orchids flourished.

Because of our wild flower tours, I began thinking about the billions, no trillions, of flowers no human eye will ever behold, yet their beauty continually shouts praise to God! "Consider the lilies of the field... even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these" (Matt. 6:28, 29.)

Theologians refer to two sources of Revelation about God. Augustine sees creation as God's first revelation written in our hearts. The Scriptures contained in the Bible represent the second revelation written in words. To desecrate a Bible would be sacrilege, but to blow up a mountain, pollute a river or excessively burn fossil fuel is considered economic development.

A respected scientist, Tom remained a man of faith marveling at the beauty of God's Garden, delighting that he could share it with people. He saw creation, not for what it can give to us, but as God's gift. Going to the woods, companions with him could breathe in and absorb the revelation of God. He wrote: "I find it hard not to believe in God who would make such a wonderful place for us to enjoy, because you know, we all think we should please God, but we never seem to consider that He is also trying to please us."



Southern Red Trillium

Fr. John Rausch regards Tom Barnes as one of his closest and most admired friends. Barnes taught lessons in nature in the Pilgrimage to the Holy Land of Appalachia event in August, two months before his death. Rausch officiated his funeral.

Rausch has also published this tribute for Pax Christi. Rausch is a Glenmary Missioner living in Stanton, Kentucky. He serves on the Steering Committee of Christians For The Mountains.

Tom Barnes Dies October 12

Tom Barnes, the state extension wildlife specialist and a full professor in the UK Department of Forestry, was the author of a number of books on the state's natural gems, a self-taught photographer and a conservationist who sounded the alarm that, without protection, Kentucky could lose some of its rarest wildlife treasures.

"I don't think people realize what we have here, how precious it is and how it's not a given it will stay that way," Mr. Barnes said in a 2002 Herald-Leader article about *Kentucky's Last Great Places*, a coffee table book for which he drove 20,000 miles, crisscrossing the state to photograph hidden destinations.

Other works included *Gardening for the Birds*, *How to Find and Photograph Kentucky Wildflowers*, and *Wildflowers and Ferns of Kentucky*, a field guide he co-authored with S. Wilson Francis.

His latest book was published this past summer: *Kentucky, Naturally: The Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund at Work*, and he had been

working on a book about waterfalls that has not yet been released.

Even after multiple hip replacements, Mr. Barnes made long treks through difficult terrain to photograph Kentucky's unique features.

"He was incredibly driven," Archer said. "He put up with a lot of pain, but he couldn't not go up the mountain and see that one place that flower blooms."

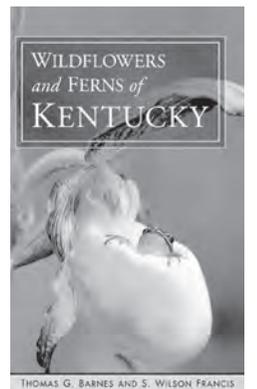
Of all the sights he had seen, Mr. Barnes said in 2011 that the trilliums covering Black Mountain in May were among his favorites.

"When I am up there, I find it hard not to believe in a God who would make such a wonderful place for us to enjoy, because you know, we all think we should please God, but we never seem to consider that God is also trying to please us," he said. "It really is a beautiful gift, and we should not destroy for some short-term gain."

Mr. Barnes described himself as an optimist, but he lamented the destructive nature of practices such as surface mining and development.

In 2009, he contributed an essay and photographs to *The Gift of Creation: Images from Scripture and Earth*, a collection to which his brother, Loyola University biologist Paul W. Barnes, also contributed. The book sought to highlight the connection between faith and concern for the environment.

NOTE: This article is excerpted from an obituary written by Karla Ward in Kentucky.com, an online publication of the Lexington Herald-Leader, October 14, 2014



ACHE Strategy and the 2014 Election

“Do behind-the-scenes organizing and wait out two years. No environmental-related legislation will pass until then.”

This some activists were heard to say after the results of the 2014 election were clear. Realism is defined as *the attitude or practice of accepting a situation as it is and being prepared to deal with it accordingly*. [Oxford Dictionary] The new 114th U.S. Congress is gearing up to unravel environmental protections and “green-light” stalled energy grabs. The long list includes approving the Keystone XL Pipeline to pump tar sands oil from Canada through western states to oil refineries on the gulf; deeply cutting the authority and capacity of the Environmental Protection Agency, or eliminating the agency completely; blocking the power plant carbon emissions standards; and prohibiting presidential proclamation of new National Monuments. Meanwhile, the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) is pressuring state governments to roll back clean sustainable energy initiatives.

As for West Virginia, and to an extent, Kentucky, the election changes little on the environmental home front. Almost all politicians grovel at the bid and call of the coal industry and are rolling out the red carpet for the shale gas industry.

Special interests are already turning on the money faucets for the 2016 Presidential election. The Koch brothers have pledged to garner \$889 million for their favored Republican candidates, while big-heeled Democrats such as Tom Steyer will be scarfing up huge sums through the Democracy Alliance. *Quid Pro Quo* for favors is not even a nod and wink anymore. The Bible says, *I know how terrible your sins are and how many crimes you have committed. You persecute good people, take bribes, and prevent the poor from getting justice in the courts.* [Amos 5:12, GNT]



M. Wuerker Politico

The Appalachian Community Health Emergency (ACHE) campaign focus is health. The ACHE Act is first and foremost a health bill. ACHE is an environmental health bill for similar reasons as previous legislation banned lead in paint and gasoline, and asbestos in buildings. The ACHE Act is premised upon the Precautionary Principle that if an “activity

raises threats of harm to the environment or human health, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically.” Two dozen peer-reviewed scientific studies point to serious human harm from mountaintop removal pollution. No new permits should be authorized.

“Healthy people work and pay taxes while chronically sick people are disabled from work and cost tax dollars for medical expenses”

So how can the ACHE campaign make progress in a new Congress that is friendly to coal? The same majority Congress is also opposed to the Affordable Care Act [Obamacare] and high federal health care outlays. **We can point out a trend that healthy people work and pay taxes while chronically sick people are disabled from work and cost tax dollars for medical expenses.** Notwithstanding the moral argument that pollution-related disease and death causes human suffering, those policymakers who value dollar metrics should get the math.

Family values is another arena to press before a conservative Congress. Research concludes links between childhood asthma and air pollution. For example, a recent study by Yueh-Hsiu Mathilda Chiu of the department of pediatrics at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City concluded, *“Babies born to women exposed to fine particle air pollution during the second trimester of pregnancy may be at greater risk for developing asthma in early childhood.”* Dr. Rosalind Wright, the study’s senior investigator, said it’s important to *“continue to improve air quality and minimize exposure to pregnant women throughout the entire pregnancy for a host of health reasons.”* [Mary Elizabeth Dallas, *Healthday News*, May 19, 2014]

The most divisive national issue of our times has been abortion. **Pro-life policymakers must be held to a consistent life ethic across the board in protecting innocent babies.** Peer-reviewed studies based upon massive government data show significantly higher levels of birth defects in populations close to mountaintop removal operations. Populations with similar lifestyle traits, culture, and socioeconomic characteristics yet far from mountaintop removal have significantly lower birth defect rates. Furthermore, pollution from fossil fuel combustion is linked to high rates of respiratory ailments and deaths across the age spectrum. Combatting pollution is a life issue.

Disentangling the ACHE campaign from the culture wars divide is a challenge that must be met. Passage of the ACHE Act should not be pigeon-holed as a leftwing, liberal, environmental cause. Rather, the ACHE Act should unite people of good will across the left/right spectrum.

A question naturally arises. “Who loses if the ACHE Act passes?” No coal miner loses his current job. All permitted mountaintop removal operations continue, albeit with water and air reporting requirements. The ACHE Act would place a moratorium (freeze) on issuance of new permits until the completion of a major federal health study and recommendation to Congress. During the moratorium, coal industry would be literally forced underground (mining) to expand coal operations. And underground mining employs more workers per tonnage output.

“Should we justify wars with the rationale to give people jobs as soldiers?”

The 2014 election in West Virginia and other coal producing states libelously propagandized against the EPA as taking away coal jobs. False! The major reasons behind the drop in coal-related employment include much cheaper western coal, depletion of easily mined Appalachian coal seams, and replacement of steam coal by the natural gas boom.

The fear of job loss contrasted with the promise of new high paying jobs is always rich fodder for 30-second campaign spots. Financial and sickness burdens that the public bears through polluting industries are seldom analyzed. **Here is a jobs analogy: “Should we justify wars with the rationale to give people jobs as soldiers?” The profit-seeking military-industrial complex might answer, “Yes.” But who bears the suffering?**

We at *Christians For The Mountains* recognize the difficult, seemingly impossible pathway toward a harmonious society and healthy ecosystem. We pray the Lord’s Prayer, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven.”

Idealistic Optimism and Christian Hope are different. Gil Bailie writes in his *Cornerstone Forum* that *“the theological virtue of hope is hope against hope. [Romans 4:18] It begins after worldly hope has died of disappointment.”*

Jesus taught us how to be faithful through his life and word. Faith is Hope in action. God is pleased with such faith. [Hebrews 11:1,2] Our faithfulness is an act of worship, gratitude, and expectant prayer that God does honor. Martin Luther King, jr. preached on Hope when he said, “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.”

Please join us in hope and faith to pass the ACHE Act. www.acheact.org





*Truly He taught us to love one another
His law is love and His gospel is peace
Chains shall He break for the slave is our brother
And in His name all oppression shall cease
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,
Let all within us praise His holy name.*

Oh Holy Night [Christmas Carol verse]

Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is filled with God's glory. [Isaiah 6:3]

In order to serve God,
one needs access to the enjoyment of the beauties of nature,
such as the cotemplation of flower-decoraed meadows,
majestic mountains, flowing rivers,
For all these are essential to the spiritual development of
even the holiest people.
It should not be believed that all the beings exist
for the sake of the existence of humanity.
On the contrary, all the other beings too have been intended
for their own sakes, and not for the sake of something else.
—Moses Maimonides (1135-1204)



*The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who
encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation
are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and
loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew.*

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gadium* Joy of the Gospel (1)



Christ of the Breadlines [a woodcut by Fritz Eichenberg (1901-1990)]

Upcoming for the Next Edition of *The Mountain Vision*

The sixth edition is hoped for in April. Please let us know if your friends would like a sample copy.

The upcoming issue will discuss the synergy and tensions in the nexus of education, science, technology, and faith within a Kingdom of God framework. What are the proper domains and boundaries of each?

We invite you to send your own personal stories of your conversions to Kingdom of God ethical behavior with emphasis on environmental justice.

Mountain Vision is an outreach ministry of *Christians For The Mountains*. Copies are sent free of charge to advocates for God's "will to be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Mt. 6:10).

