

Christians For The Mountains
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The Mountain Vision

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

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Awaken The Dawn

*My heart is steadfast, O God; I will sing, I will sing praises, even with my soul.
harp and lyre; I will awaken the dawn! I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among
the peoples, and I will sing praises to You among the nations.*

(Psalm 108:1-3; identical in Psalm 57:7-9. -NIV)



Awaken the Dawn! David is in a tight spot. A strong foe is arrayed against him. By any human reckoning, David's cause is lost. That is the context in both Psalms 57 and 108. So what does David do? He gets up early to greet the new day, desperate as that day portends, with songs of trust and praise to God!

Most of us reading *The Mountain Vision* are deeply worried and distressed about the plight the world is in. It's a mess— wars; terrorism; the specter of the hydrogen bomb; massive dislocation of refugees; climate change; portending ecological collapse—how in hell is humanity going to dig itself out? We surely won't through more hell-digging! Yet all is not lost. God wills to rescue and save if we look up to Heaven in our willing trust and faithful service (Psalm 108:12-13).

Mary's *Magnificat* begins with a song of praise. "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior" (Luke 1:46,47). Pope Francis' acclaimed encyclical, *Laudato Si, mi signore*, begins with that Latin phrase translated as "Praise be to You, my Lord." Praise and thanksgiving to God is our starting place as witnesses and advocates for God's justice on earth.

This of course does not mean that we sit back on our haunches in our comfortable,

secure homes? Quite the contrary! Jesus calls us to a faithful, committed work for God's justice, righteousness, and peace. We dawn God's light into darkness through loving acts of compassion, forgiveness of wrongs, and the courage to forge new beginnings. We are God's instruments with our willing hearts and hands empowered by The Holy Spirit to witness and act upon the Good News that God does love the *cosmos* (world) and will bring a triumphant consummation.

THIS ISSUE

Elections should not just be about who "get hired" for political offices. Elections are a thermometer that takes the temperature of a nation's people. Are we generous-hearted, or self-serving? If we want leaders who have integrity, do we have integrity? Are we ourselves truth-tellers or manipulators? Our political leadership will reflect our national temperament. (Editorial, p. 2)

CFTM has the privilege of working alongside other dedicated, effective organizations. Spattered throughout this issue are updates and newsy tidbits on some of these groups and our shared events.

The coal industry is crashing so fast it is hard to keep up. Our feature article on "The War On Coal" could be updated weekly with news of further industry bankruptcies, layoffs, stock downturns, health issues, and political disputes. Local coal-entrenched communities need help to forge a viable future without coal. Meanwhile, global energy price downturns is stalling the unconventional gas industry (fracking) in Appalachia. Boom-bust extractive industries are not long-term solutions for a region.

Fr. John Rausch, who serves on CFTM's Steering Committee, reports as the U.S. representative to an international conference on mining sponsored by the Vatican. Rausch also writes an article on moral dimensions of climate change with special reference to Pope Francis.

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A Call for Integrity in Public Life by Allen Johnson, Editor

*Whoever rules fairly over people,
who rules with respect for God,
is like the morning light at dawn,
like a morning without clouds.
He is like sunshine after a rain
that makes the grass sprout from the ground. (2 Samuel 23:3-4, NCV)*

When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan. (Proverbs 29:2, NIV)

It is an abomination for kings to commit wicked acts, for a throne is established on righteousness. (Proverbs 16:12, NASB)

Citizen cynicism toward government pervades American politics today. Politicians are distrusted. Increasingly voters are rebelling from traditional party lines.

I looked up online dictionary definitions for politicians. Oxforddictionaries.com says, "Politician: A person who is professionally involved in politics, especially as a holder of or a candidate for an elected office." Yet it also cites another definition, chiefly for the U.S. "Politician: A person who acts in a manipulative and devious way, typically to gain advancement within an organization." And the Urban Dictionary mocks scornfully, "Politics" is derived from the words "poly" meaning "many", and "tics" meaning "blood-sucking parasites." Yikes!

"Statesman" is another term for public officials. Dictionary.reference.com has the following definitions. "Statesman: 1. a person who is experienced in the art of government or versed in the administration of government affairs. 2. a person who exhibits great wisdom and ability in directing the affairs of a government or in dealing with important public issues." Much better!

Ah, statesmen and stateswomen, that's the representatives we citizens want! Or do we? I once heard someone say that "citizens get the leaders they deserve, and leaders get the citizens they deserve." Presumably if government is a mess, as many people purport, then we ourselves as citizens bear responsibility, at least in our democracy. Which is why an educated, informed, discerning, and moral/ethical citizenry is so vital. Do we vote for leaders who pander our private self-interests, or do we support leaders who consider the needs of the disadvantaged as well as future generations who will reap the good or bad consequences of today's decisions?

Public office candidates in many parts of the United States feel it is expedient to present their religious bona fides presumably to gain electoral support from like-minded voters. If a candidate publicly promises, say, that if elected he or she will lead in a Christian way, then it seems fair to hold that candidate's words and actions accountable to the teachings and example of his or her faith's founder. I've heard from time to time some politicians clamor for posting The Ten Commandments in public places. I've yet to hear any call for a public posting of Jesus's Beatitudes (Matthew 5). In saying this, I'm not at all calling for a triumphalist Christian state, but rather cautioning politicians to refrain from overt sectarian pandering.

Here is my counsel to a Christian office holder. *"Sometime in office (or on the campaign trail) I believe God will let you be in a situation that risks your political career. That is, you will have to decide whether or not to do the right thing. And from all appearance, doing the right thing looks to doom your political future, while to do the wrong thing promises a rosy political future."*

So why God would put a public officeholder in such a bind? (Or for that matter, a corporate executive, professor, clergyman, doctor, lawyer, investor, businessman, etc.?) The First Commandment is to have no other gods but God (Exodus 20:3). A political office, business, bank account, even family and friends cannot come before God. (e.g. Matthew 10:37) So if you are faithful to God, you might have your public office and you might not, but you will have God's pleasure.

We as Christians have citizen political responsibility far beyond the few minutes it takes to cast an election ballot. A fundamental priority is to prayerfully dig deeply into our own hearts to discern our true motives. Do we crave power, comfort, security, ego, revenge, etc. through politics? Are we able to honestly articulate the views of those we might disagree with? Do we engage in constructive civil discourse? Are we willing to volunteer in our local communities rather than just saying, "I paid my taxes, let the government take care of problems." Finally, do we trust God enough to keep cynicism from overcoming hope.

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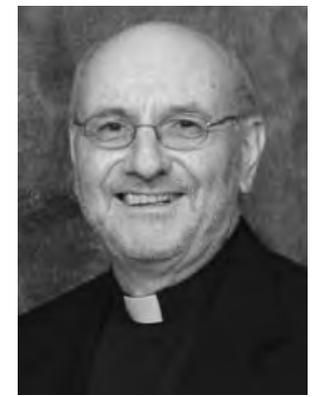
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Christians For The Mountains (CFTM) invites you to join with us together in partnership for wholesome communities, vigorous clean economies, honest effective governments, rich culture, and healthy populations. CFTM seeks to follow the path Jesus taught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

Mountain Mourning Collection DVD

Film is a very powerful medium in which to share with others the devastating impacts that Mountaintop Removal Mining has on the people, culture, and mountains of Appalachia. BJ Gudmundsson of **Patchwork Films** produced our **Mountain Mourning Collection** in 2006 for *Christians for the Mountains*. Although produced quite a while ago, these films continue to teach and inspire. This collection of films is applauded by Appalachian mountain people since it uses their own voices and music to tell their own stories in the context of mountaintop removal.

This DVD consists of three films of about 20 minutes each, along with a couple of shorter clips.

Mountain Mourning is our title film. Traditional music, local voices, and a biblical framework tell the nuts and bolts of Mountaintop Removal.

In **Look What They've Done**, Maria Gunnoe weaves a thread around our hearts as she surveys the aftermath of Mountaintop Removal near her backyard. Her family's gospel music spills forth as the foundation for her courage and strength.

Keeper of the Mountains is an emotionally-charged film. We recommend seeing this film last. Larry Gibson, whose ancestral home is being destroyed by Mountaintop Removal, brings out the pathos and tragedy of this practice. Larry Gibson takes a band of friends through what he calls "Hell's Gate, and in one breathtaking moment, they come across "the end of the world.

CFTM made these DVDs available free for Larry Gibson, who gave out many hundreds during his speaking tours during his last few years.

This resource is a very valuable tool for education and advocacy as well as a portrait of what is taking place in God's Appalachian Mountains. Several thousand copies have been distributed and shown in homes, churches, environmental meetings, and on television. For more information on the DVD or to order a copy please see our membership options below



Mountain Mourning Collection DVD Free for CFTM Members

Invitation to Join Together With Us

Name _____		Designate Gibson Biography circle "YES"			
Address _____		Senior	Individual	Family	Org
City _____	State _____	Student	Regular	Associate	Patron
Phone _____		Regular	Associate	Patron	Sponsor
Email _____		Regular	Associate	Patron	Sponsor
Organization/School(s) _____		Regular	Associate	Patron	Sponsor
We welcome any other information you would like to share (such as your faith; experience; skills; special interests; etc....use separate sheet)		Regular	Associate	Patron	Sponsor
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.]		Regular	Associate	Patron	Sponsor
CFTM has 501(c)3 nonprofit tax exempt status through a partnership with World Stewardship Institute. P.O. Box 7348, [3840 Finley Ave., Bldg. 33, Ste. 202] Santa Rosa, California 95407. Contact is Fred Krueger. Telephone 707-573-3161.		Regular	Associate	Patron	Sponsor
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Designate Gibson Biography circle "YES"			
	Individual	Family	Org
Senior	\$15		
Student	\$15		
Regular	\$25	\$35	\$50
Associate	\$50	\$75	\$100
Patron	\$100	\$150	\$200
Sponsor	\$500	\$700	\$1000
\$ _____			
Mountain Mourning Collection DVD			
For any current or new membership & \$3 postage. Write or Circle "Yes"			
Your donations are tax deductible. Thank you for prayer support.			

Shale Gas Fracking: The New Delusion for Appalachia

The gas industry's rush into Central Appalachia less than ten years ago initially overwhelmed informed citizen decision-making. The discovery that slickwater horizontal hydraulic fracturing ("fracking") of the deep Marcellus Shale might bring trillions of cubic feet of natural gas to harvest brought in a gas industry stampede into prime areas in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ohio. Deeper Utica and Rogersville shale layers were added for exploitation. On the other hand, concerted citizen opposition has held back New York and Maryland from lining up. Arguments rage over jobs vs. environment; domestic energy vs. imported energy; private property rights vs. community rights.

Christians For The Mountains (CFTM) opposes "extreme extraction" whether mountaintop removal, arctic and deep sea drilling, or this new form of unconventional horizontal hydraulic shale gas and oil extraction popularly known as "fracking." CFTM opposes Appalachian "fracking" on these grounds:

- (1) The potency of methane leakage rivals that of coal in contributing to climate change.
- (2) Natural gas prolongs fossil fuel dependency when a rapid and thorough shift to renewable energy is needed to avert global ecological collapse.
- (3) Drilling companies exercise underground mineral "rights" to set up their drilling operations on reluctant surface owners' lands. Forced pooling takes gas even from objecting mineral owners.
- (4) Vice-President Dick Cheney muscled through an exemption for fracking from the Safe Drinking Water Act. Cheney was former CEO of Haliburton that pioneered the horizontal hydraulic technology.
- (5) Surface properties typically lose considerable property value adjacent to drilling operations.
- (6) The promise of local jobs is hollow. Most skilled workers are from out-of-state living in man camps and are away from their own families for extended times. They do not support or volunteer in local community civic activities.
- (7) Health, nuisance, and ecological issues abound, including noise, light, air, and water pollution, increased traffic congestion and accidents, and the high risk of major groundwater or gas explosion catastrophe.
- (8) Massive, expensive pipeline projects carve up swaths of land, some of it ecologically sensitive, claim eminent domain, and risk explosions. These multi-billion dollar pipelines are amortized at 40 years, thus locking investors into advocating continued gas production.
- (9) The health impact on innocent life is serious.

A recent study by Shaina L. Stacy, University of Pittsburgh, found evidence of low birth-weight babies associated with proximity to unconventional natural gas wells in Butler County, Pennsylvania. Lisa M. McKenzie, Colorado School of Public Health, published peer reviewed research linking birth defects to methane production.

CFTM calls for a clean, renewable, cost effective, and plentiful energy policy that emphasizes direct energy from sun and wind, energy conservation through minimizing waste and maximizing efficiency, and restraint in use of energy.

WV Gas Summit Held in December

What is your organization doing about oil & gas development? What is your vision of victory? Who are you trying to reach, and what is your strategy?

These were questions that drew thirty organizations to a West Virginia statewide Summit on oil & gas development at Jackson's Mill on December 15, 2015. Janet Keating, executive director of OVEC (also a CFTM steering committee member), organized the Summit. Katey Lauer moderated the event. Networking was extensive, helpful, and encouraging.

With global energy prices very low, new gas development is at a standstill. However, many in the industry are waiting for prices to go up and resume expansion. Massive pipeline projects such as the Mountain Valley Pipeline and the Atlantic Coast Pipeline are still pushing for FERC approval. Everyone agreed to use this period of lesser activity to educate fellow citizens and public officials.



OVEC's Diane Bady (L) and Robin Blake (R) talk with WV Host Farms leader Diane Pitcock (C) at the Shale Gas Summit at Jackson's Mill, WV.

NOTES On A Brief Tour

CFTM thanks Tom Berlin for guiding Allen Johnson, CFTM Coordinator, and Kirk Bowers, Virginia Sierra Club's Pipelines Program Manager, on a tour of pipelines and other gas infrastructure in his Lewis County, WV neighborhood. Berlin showed us the pipeline project built immediately adjacent to the home he has lived in for decades. "Traffic and noise were constant during the day for several months while the line was laid," Berlin noted. Berlin noted that conventional pipeline leakage is widespread throughout the area, and showed us one on his property where the hissing leaking gas could audibly be heard. We also saw the giant Lightburn Compressor Station, water withdrawal from a stream, and well pads.

West Virginia Host Farms

Later that afternoon, Johnson met with Diane Pitcock, who leads West Virginia Host Farms. Diane's husband, John, and their younger son, Josh, took me to their property fence line, immediately across which the ground was bulldozed and flattened for a well pad along with tanks and other infrastructure. The contrast between the Pitcock's woodland and their neighbor's desolate landscape was startling. John went on to explain the noise, clouds of dust when wells were fracked, and the truck traffic congestion along their country road. One night an explosion awakened them. From their front porch they could see a fireball blazing up at the wellsite. That fire killed two workers



John & Josh Pitcock's property line by gas pad

Diane gave many hours of her time late that day sharing stories and her voluminous collection of videos and stills of the impact of the unconventional shale gas industry upon local communities. Pitcock shared her strong Christian faith that is her source of strength, courage, and resolve.

Upon John's retirement from Verizon in 2005, the family moved from Baltimore to a quiet, beautiful country hollow in Doddridge County, West Virginia. Not long after, their peace was broken by the invasion of the frackers. Diane, whose career was in adult education, organized volunteers in 14 counties into West Virginia Host Farms.



Tom Berlin

This network connects WV landowners with the environmental community who desire to study Marcellus gas drilling & fracking at ground zero. Participating landowners give access to their private properties so that university researchers, students, environmental journalists, photographers, public policy decision makers, public health professionals, and environmental education and advocacy organizations can document and evaluate the impacts of the "unconventional" natural gas drilling.

Please consider a financial contribution to West Virginia Host Farms. Their volunteers never charge a fee for tours, incur personal financial costs, and have limited funds for educational outreach. This is a very worthy cause that can significantly expand its already considerable influence with solid funding. For information, visit www.wvhostfarms.org

Launching Larry Gibson Biography Project

“Can you find someone to write a book about me?” During the spring and summer of 2012, Larry Gibson asked several people to help him write his biography. Those of us who knew Larry also knew he was modest and self-effacing. What Larry wanted was for the principles and causes he spoke about and stood for to carry on through his life story. Agreed! **Then suddenly, on Sunday September 9, 2012, Larry died.**



**“Keeper of the Mountains”
Larry Gibson (1946-2012)**

After Larry’s death, Allen Johnson, Coordinator of *Christians For the Mountains*, discussed a biography project with board members of *Keeper Of The Mountains Foundation*, the nonprofit organization Larry founded. Johnson has volunteered to collect stories, remembrances, and articles from family members as well as from people whose lives have been deeply impacted by Larry.

Elise Keaton offers to transcribe recorded stories. The foundation offers the resources of its extensive files. Importantly, we seek a talented, committed author(s) to write the biography (ideally someone who had personally known Larry). The goal is a biography to challenge and motivate readers for the cause of love and justice as Larry himself did for so many of us. A well-written book for a popular, non-academic market should sell well. All profits will go to the *Keeper Of The Mountains Foundation*.

We have recorded and transcribed a few interviews. But now, clearing off the table to make time (so to speak), we are gearing up to push through this project as a major goal in 2016.

This is how YOU can help:

1. Do you have any personal, first-hand stories and thoughts about Larry Gibson? We will take type-written or digitized anecdotal stories; good quality audio recordings to transcribe; or we can arrange for personal or phone interviews. We will need your permission for the Larry Gibson Biography Project. We cannot guarantee inclusion into the final project, but we will at least make mention in the book credits and archive your submission at the foundation.

Besides anecdotal stories, please share your personal impressions of Larry and his message that has influenced your life.

2. At this point we are not actively seeking photos. However, if you have any exceptionally unique or otherwise special photos that have good printable resolution, please describe and we might contact you later.

3. Family members and early friends will be important in constructing the timeline of Larry’s earlier years and the influences and life experiences that led him to have such powerful impact in his later activist years.

4. We are open for other volunteers for an editorial team to help compile and winnow through the material, find an author(s) to write the biography, and engage a publisher to produce and market the book. Owen Owens, Elise Keaton, and Allen Johnson are on the startup editorial team.

5. Some financial costs will arise as the project shapes up. CFTM will undertake the biography project as a major component of its work in 2016. Donations designated to the Larry Gibson Biography Project will be used for the specific purposes of developing the biography and will be noted in the book credits.

6. This project is still in preliminary stages. We will happily appreciate constructive advice. Please pass this announcement on to others. Pray for us. Thank you! **Contact:** allen@christiansforthemountains.org and note in subject line “Gibson Book Project.”

The ACHE ACT Will Save Lives



Bankruptcy! Crashing stock prices! Production dropping! The coal industry is on the ropes, according to news reports. And yes, exports are down, tonnage pricing has tanked, power plants are converting to natural gas, and energy conservation is curbing power consumption, thus the coal industry is weakened.

Still, a lot of coal is coming out of the ground. In Appalachia, much of that coal still comes from mountaintop removal. After all, with fewer workers needed to extract coal, mountaintop removal still turns a profit. Some operations have closed, others have opened and expanded. Coal operators are getting new permits.

And people in nearby communities continue to get sick and too many die. Over two dozen peer-reviewed health studies show strong correlation between mountaintop removal and statistically worsened health outcomes. Besides statistics, people in these communities can cite a lot of corroborating stories, that is, when they are not intimidated into silence by coal industry pressure.

The Appalachian Community Health Emergency (ACHE) Act, H.R. 912, calls for (1) A freeze on new or expanded mountaintop removal permits; (2) Air, water, and noise monitoring of existing operations; (3) A comprehensive federal health study through the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences toward a report to Congress by the Secretary of Health and Human Services on mining-related health risks to individuals in those communities. (4) Costs to be borne by a one-time assessment on current mountaintop removal operations.

Congressional Representatives John Yarmuth (KY) and Louise Slaughter (NY) introduced the legislation, which now has many other co-sponsors. Currently, with legislation blocked in pro-coal House committees, the ACHE Coalition is working to get a bipartisan companion bill introduced in the Senate.

Congressman Yarmuth says, “We cannot sit idly by as this harmful mining method destroys our environment, contaminates our water, and jeopardizes the safety and well-being of the American people.”

Says Congresswoman Slaughter, a native of Harlan County, KY. “Scientific evidence demonstrates that mountaintop removal mining puts Americans’ health at risk and heightens the risk of birth defects in babies born near mining sites. People in mining communities have the right to live and raise their families in a safe, healthy environment, and reckless, profit-driven mining practices that contaminate the air and the water are putting that in jeopardy. Until we can ensure that the health and safety of surrounding communities is not compromised, we should place a moratorium on new permitting for mountaintop removal mining.”



Maria Gunnoe lives under the shadow of a mountaintop removal operation. “The dust in the air that surrounds my home and community has been shown to be toxic to human health. I hear daily of another community member who is dying or has died of cancer. I fear for the health of my children and grandchildren. Passing the ACHE Act is the only chance that we can end mountaintop removal and stop this out-of-control industry from further damaging our health and the health of our next generation.”

You Can Help!

1. Go to the coalition website at www.acheact.org At that site, click the link on the upper right corner to familiarize yourself on some of the health studies.

2. Educate your congressional delegation and urge them to take leadership in resolving this serious health issue. And share with others.

Christians should oppose environmental pollution and ecological degradation as life issues that destroy health and God’s creation. (e.g. Matthew 25:31-46).

PRAY and ACT.

THE WAR ON COAL: Dispatches From The Front Line Reporting by Allen Johnson

The Coal Industry Digs Into Its Trenches

Survivors of coal corporations and its miners hunker down in foxholes while sharply-aimed EPA-regulatory bullets whiz by their heads. Coal-state battlefields are strewn with “corpses” of laid-off coal miners, emptied towns, and cash-emaciated state governments. Wounded coal industry veterans scream their misery and anger to President Obama, the EPA, and to environmentalists. “Stop your War on Coal!!!”



“We must acknowledge the real suffering of miners and community-related businesses and their employees who lose livelihoods because of shuttered coal mines.”

How do I begin to report? We must acknowledge the real suffering of miners and community-related businesses and their employees who lose livelihoods because of shuttered coal mines. **Full disclosure: Coal has paid me very good wages.** No, I was not a coal miner. However I worked on a coal coke conveyor at U.S. Steel Corp. in Gary, Indiana. Later I was a brakeman on the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad running western coal into Chicago area power plants and steel mills. And for five years I worked on the construction of the 3000 MW Bath County Pumped Storage Station in Virginia that is reliant upon nuclear and coal-fired power plants. **So yes, the job multiplier economic effect of coal stretches far beyond the coal miner when coal slumps.**

Appalachian coal communities typically are in rural areas without other major industries to absorb jobless miners or to buffer the downturn in local community revenue. One major hurdle is the truism that so many coal producing areas are mono-economies that struggle to survive “boom & bust” cycles. A healthy economy is diversified.

Democrats and Republican alike in coal mining states compete to pay homage to coal. Running as a Democrat for the U. S. Senate in 2014, Natalie Tennant emphasized, “I am pro-coal, and I am pro-coal miner. I will fight President Obama, the EPA, the Senate, and anyone else who tries to undermine coal jobs.” Her Republican opponent, Shelly Moore Capito, also

sang the pro-coal mantra, painting Tennant as guilty by association, Obama after all being a Democrat. Capito won the election.

The scenario continues unabated. **West Virginia state attorney general Patrick Morrisey** leads eleven other states in court against the Obama administration’s new proposal for the regulation of carbon emissions. “The casualties of the administration’s destructive, anti-coal policies are clear,” notes Morrisey regarding a recent announcement that as many as 1,800 coal mining jobs may be lost in West Virginia as a result of the new EPA regulations. “Unfortunately, this is the tip of the iceberg, since for every direct coal mining job lost, up to seven other jobs are lost.” Evan Jenkins, who out-kissed the black rock to oust long-term congressman Nick Rahall to win a seat in the House of Representatives, wrote an Open Letter to Obama on the eve of the President’s announcement of a policy to deal with drug abuse that plagues Appalachia. “Mr. President,” wrote Jenkins, “if you truly want to make an impact on the drug crisis in West Virginia, we have to get people back to work.” Jenkins continued. “Until you end your war on coal, our state will continue to suffer.” In other words, the drug crisis is the fault of Obama and his EPA.



Patrick Morrisey

The unanimous chorus from the “defensive side” of the “War On Coal” is that the new **Clean Power Plant** regulations will shut down the thermal coal industry that then will exorbitantly increase electric energy costs that will then inflate consumer costs with an especially egregious burden upon lower-income people. One estimate is \$100 billion per year between 2015 and 2023. **The U.S. Chamber of Commerce**, a major supporter of the coal industry, projects that the Clean Power Project will cost \$859 billion in economic growth over 17 years; meanwhile “the rest of the world will continue to emit CO₂ with abandon.”



Gina McCarthy, EPA

Beyond Coal: Is it Warranted?

For the sake of our families’ health and for our kids’ future we have a moral obligation to act on climate.

Gina McCarthy, EPA Administrator, announcing Clean Power Plan, June 2, 2014

Suffering encompasses a wide swath. People suffer when they struggle to meet basic financial needs due to unemployment. People also suffer when they are sick, which involves both pain and financial outlay. The EPA contends that air pollution from power plants substantially contributes to worsened health outcomes. **The Clean Power Plan can reduce suffering from illness along with substantial financial improvement for the U. S. economy.**

“In 2030, the Clean Power Plan will deliver climate and health benefits of up to \$90 billion dollars. Soot and smog reductions alone will mean that for every dollar invested in the Clean Power Plan, families will see \$7 dollars in health benefits.”

The major thrust of the Clean Power Plan is to reduce CO₂ emissions 30% by year 2030. As an additional benefit, soot and smog will be reduced by 25%, which according to the EPA will avoid 100,000 asthma attacks and 2100 heart attacks in the first year alone with an improving trajectory to follow. This especially helps the young, the elderly, the poor, and minorities who tend to be hardest hit with environmental pollution. In 2030, the Clean Power Plan will deliver climate and health benefits of up to \$90 billion dollars. Soot and smog reductions alone will mean that for every dollar invested in the Clean Power Plan, families will see \$7 dollars in health benefits. States that take advantage of energy efficiency opportunities could reduce average electricity bills by 8% in 2030. America has demonstrated resiliency and innovation to meet challenges in the past and can meet this one for clean energy, too.



What About Jobs?

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported 73,830 U.S. coal mining jobs in May 2014. These jobs are inclusive of administrators, engineers, miners, and custodians, with a mean average hourly wage of \$26.80.

The War On Coal... (continued from page 6)

Approximately half of coal extraction jobs have been in Kentucky and West Virginia although job losses have accelerated in recent months. Kentucky coal mine employment peaked at 75,000 in 1949, and has decreased to 10,356 by April 1, 2015 (a 10% decrease in just one quarter from 11,586). West Virginia employed 116,000 in 1924. Modern heavy machinery had cut jobs in half by the mid-1950s although coal tonnage output remained relatively constant. West Virginia miners now number under 20,000, and coal tonnage has begun to decrease. Coal-dependent towns such as Logan, WV, which have weathered boom and bust cycles in the past, are now caught in a fatal downward spiral unless they can miraculously diversify. **Coal jobs are not coming back.**



Why is Coal Not Coming Back?

Several years ago Bo Webb, Eric Autenreith, and I met with then Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) in his Washington office to talk about studies implicating mountaintop removal as contributive to worsened community health. Rockefeller told us how he first came to a West Virginia mining community as a VISTA volunteer. "I love coal miners," he said. "But I also deeply care about health." Pointing to his body, he intoned, "I now feel conflicted in my heart, and in my gut. Tell me more." As we talked, Rockefeller told us he was upset that the mining industry is blaming their industry's economic downturn on environmental regulations. "That's not being honest to their employees, the miners. The reality is that Appalachian coal is not competitive in the market, and the industry is not willing to adapt."

There are several reasons for the downturn in Appalachian coal.

(1) The "low-hanging fruit" has been plucked. After 150 years of increasingly intensive mining, richer and easier-mined coal seams have played out. In other words, it takes more to produce a ton of coal.

(2) Extracting Western and Midwestern coal is much cheaper than Appalachian coal due to geology. Appalachian coal has the highest thermal output and is moderate to low in Sulfur (a contaminant that power

plant scrubbers must purge). Midwestern coal from the Illinois Basin has slightly less thermal output and is high in sulfur. Western coal, a lignite, from the Powder River Basin is low in thermal output and low in sulfur. Total mining production costs (FY 2013) for Appalachian coal were \$80/short tons; Midwestern \$35; Western \$10. The disadvantage for Western coal has been the high cost of rail transport to eastern markets, for example, \$30/ton to ship lower thermal energy coal from the Powder River Basin to Ohio.



(3) Natural gas has become far cheaper than coal per thermal unit since the horizontal hydraulic fracturing boom ("fracking") has outstripped demand with prodigious supply. Furthermore, with gas, power plants can avoid many of the regulatory pollution controls for mercury and sulfur and nitrous oxides that come with burning coal.

(4) Popular sentiment is rising in the United States and across the planet to move away from coal due to climate and health concerns. Electric utility companies are taking this into consideration as they construct new power capacity. The "Beyond Coal" campaign of the Sierra Club has been instrumental in pressing for the retirement of coal-fired power plants. Meanwhile, so-called "Clean Coal Technology" such as carbon sequestration would increase costs per unit to a level uncompetitive with current alternatives, and is yet unproven on a large scale. The divestment movement against fossil fuels, increased carbon limits on the horizon, and a massive downturn in coal companies' stock values along with their worsened borrowing terms have put the coal industry on the ropes.



Jerry Taylor and Peter Van Doren of the conservative Cato Institute wrote in *Forbes* (Aug. 31, 2012) that natural gas must exceed \$9.60 per million BTU (2007 dollars) in order for coal to compete. Gas is much cheaper. Taylor and Van Doren note that future prices as far as August 2022 on the NY Mercantile Exchange is \$3.01/million

BTU. Furthermore, retrofitting power plants or constructing new ones to burn gas is far cheaper with respect to pollution control.

(NOTE: CFTM DOES NOT ENDORSE replacing coal with gas but instead strongly supports a transition to clean renewable energy coupled with energy conservation and efficiency)

Charles Patton, head of a major utility company, Appalachian Power, spoke at the Energy Summit in West Virginia October 27, 2015. "Coal consumption is not likely to increase, regardless of whether new federal regulations on power plants go into effect, and, from coal's perspective, the national debate on coal and climate change has largely been lost... What's more, the debate over the 'war on coal,' which sucks up so much of the political air in West Virginia, has largely been settled in other states."

What Hath Coal Wrought? (Its Legacy of Poverty and Wreckage)

Mining extracts non-renewable wealth from a region and ships it off to use somewhere else for profit. As one definition has it, extraction is the act of pulling out. The common end game for coal mining regions worldwide is impoverishment of people and land. Wealth is pulled out, not put back in equilibrium. Furthermore, coal mining tends to develop as a mono-economy that squeezes out other non-related business. Finally, coal mining is subject to the volatility of market prices and the eventual depletion of the coal, resulting in boom/bust cycles that inhibit long-term community investment. Today, coal operations are owned by out-of-state corporations that have no personal involvement with mining communities.

"The common end game for coal mining regions worldwide is impoverishment of people and land."

Statistics are telling. Downstream Strategies did a comprehensive study of West Virginia for 2008 that factored the positive coal-related revenues of wages and taxes with the negative outlays of road repair, health and safety mechanisms, and subsidies, and concluded net annual loss of \$97 million to the state. Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED) published a study on the economic impact of the coal industry in 2009 that concluded over \$100 million in annual net loss for Kentucky. Omitted from these studies is the serious pollution-related economic impact on health. One only needs to drive along coal region roads to visually confirm the statistics of high poverty. For example, Kentucky's coal-producing counties have a 28 percent poverty rate; double that of the national average.

***** Continued on Page 13 *****

Appalachian Power Head Says Coal Will Decline



Charles Patton, President of Appalachian Power said, “Alternatives to fossil-fuel based fuels are making inroads in the utility plan. Companies are making decisions today... moving away from coal-fired generation.”

“Coal consumption is not likely to increase, regardless of whether new federal regulations on power plants go into effect, and, from coal’s perspective, the national debate on coal and climate change has largely been lost, the president of West Virginia’s largest electric utility told a roomful of energy executives Tuesday.” David Gutman summarizing a speech at a recent West Virginia Energy Summit by Charles Patton, President of Appalachian Power. (*Charleston Gazette-Mail*, October 27, 2015)

Patton’s straight talk focused on economic realities. New coal power plants are simply not economically feasible in with the current reality of lower cost alternatives. Patton priced the construction of a new conventional coal plant at \$95 per megawatt hour, natural gas at \$73/MWH, and wind at \$73/MWH. Patton computed a carbon capture with storage coal plant at \$144/MWH.



Appalachian Power and other electric utilities will NOT replace retiring plants with coal-fired units.

“With or without the Clean Power Plan, the economics of alternatives to fossil-based fuels are making inroads in the utility plan,” Patton said. “Companies are making decisions today where they are moving away from coal-fired generation.”

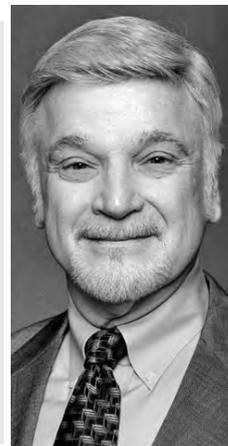
What’s more, the debate over the “war on coal,” which sucks up so much of the political air in West Virginia, has largely been settled in other states, Patton said. (Gutman)

Patton said 72 percent of Americans believe the earth is getting warmer and that man-made causes are partly attributable. Nearly two-thirds of Americans favor stricter emissions limits on greenhouse gases, Patton said, with even larger majorities among young people. (Gutman)

Jeremy Richardson, Senior Energy Analyst with the Union of Concerned Scientists and a West Virginia native says, “What’s surprising about the piece is not the message—it’s the source. The person making this point was the president of West Virginia’s largest electric utility...The reality [is] that the coal industry is simply not going to return to its heyday of years past.

“The fact is that we are facing a lower-carbon future no matter which party is in control of the White House or Congress.”

Cecil Roberts, President of the UMWA.



Cecil Roberts, president of the United Mine Workers of America, also spoke at the Energy Summit. “Different administrations may take different approaches to implementing the Clean Air Act, but no administration can just ignore it. People can try to score all the political points they want, but the fact is that we are facing a lower-carbon future no matter which party is in control of the White House or Congress. It’s really just a question of how fast we go.” (Richardson)

SOURCES

“Coal Not Coming Back, Appalachian Power President Says” (David Gutman, *Charleston Gazette-Mail*, October 27, 2015)

“The Latest Reality Check for Coal: A Surprising Message from West Virginia” (Jeremy Richardson, *The Equation*, October 28, 2015)

Remembering Judy Bonds Mother of Our Movement ---Allen Johnson

Judy Bonds died 5 years ago January 4, 2016. Cancer had ravaged her body as it has for too many people in communities near mountaintop removal. Judy’s unconquered spirit is now in the eternal embrace of her loving God, while her legacy lives on in the inspired lives of thousands she inspired.

Judy was a fiery activist. Short in stature, Judy was like the shepherd-boy David armed with 5 smooth stones and a sling—face like flint, jaw set, eyes glistening, eager to battle the coal company Goliath that dared destroy her beloved mountains and abuse her community. Judy slung her stones as hammer-shot words of sorrows



and angers and facts and truths. Like the biblical Deborah, Judy’s inspiring courage led the charge. Deborah, a mother of Israel; Judy, a mother of the mountains and its inhabitants, a keeper of the covenant, a lover of God and God’s people (Judges 5). All of us also fondly recall Judy’s eyes twinkling with joy and laughter, her arms embracing and hugging, her words consoling, inspiring, emboldening, and appreciating. Judy was consistently other-centered, non-egocentric, honest, and generous of heart.

Judy Bonds lived in Marfork Hollow in the Coal River valley, as her ancestors had lived for seven generations (many of them underground coal miners). As the heavy foot of Massey Energy Coal Company blasted her surrounding mountains, bled out its waters and suffocated its trees, Judy organized Coal River Mountain Watch to fight mountaintop removal. In 2003 Judy Bonds received the Goldman Prize, the world environmental equivalent of the Nobel Prize.

Judy was a woman of deep faith in God. She was not a “churchy person” nor did she wrap herself up in pieties or heavenly chatter. Judy’s earthy, robust faith placed her feet on the ground, sleeves rolled up, hands working for God’s truth and justice. She trusted God for strength, for truth to prevail, for “justice to roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream” (Amos 5:24). Judy Bonds was a prophet of our time. To use Walter Bruggemann’s theme in his book, “The Prophetic Imagination,” Judy called people out of spiritual hopelessness at their plight of coal industry abuse. And then, she envisioned the people to fight injustice for the promise of a renewed land of peace and wholeness.

Please consider a donation toward the Judy Bonds Center and the work of Coal River Mountain Watch. www.crmw.net

Catholic Committee of Appalachia

CCA's 45th Annual Gathering was held Sept 18-20, 2015, at John XXIII Pastoral Center in Charleston, WV. The gathering was a huge success, with the largest number of participants in decades. 13 kids joined in the fun (first time in ages!).



The conference theme was **WATER: The Practical, Political and Spiritual Implications**. Dr. Ben Stout, Biologist, Wheeling Jesuit University, gave a lucid introduction titled, *"The Global Water Crisis as it Relates to Appalachia."* Denise Giardina, a nationally renowned Author, Activist, and Spiritual Leader from Charleston, WV, and Shannon Bell, Author, Professor of Sociology, University of Kentucky, gave the Keynote Presentation, *"The Spirituality and Ethics of Water."* Breakout Sessions included Laura Michele Diener's *"Women & Water in Appalachia"* and Fr. Les Shmidt and Sr. Beth Davies on the *History of the Pastorals*.

A PEOPLE'S PASTORAL



The Catholic Committee of Appalachia (CCA), a Catholic social justice organization based in Spencer, West Virginia, has issued a regional grassroots pastoral letter on the call to be a "church of the poor" and the transformative power of people's stories in the work for justice. Issued December 21, this new pastoral is in the 40th anniversary year of its groundbreaking 1975 pastoral letter, *"This Land is Home to Me,"* and on the 20th anniversary year of its follow-up letter, *"At Home in the Web of Life,"* both of which were signed by the Roman Catholic bishops of the region.

"The Telling Takes Us Home; Taking Our Place in the Stories

that Shape Us" is the result of four years of planning and listening sessions, interviews, and tours conducted throughout the region and across religious traditions. For this third letter, called a "People's Pastoral," the planning team did not seek the signatures of the region's bishops, but rather sought to lift up the authority of the people, their stories, and Earth itself as an expression of the Roman Catholic Church's teaching of the "preferential option for the poor."

Since 1970 the Catholic Committee of Appalachia exists to serve Appalachia, her poor, and the entire web of creation. Mountaintop removal, labor, private prison development, sustainable lifestyles and communities, poverty, health, clean water, racism and climate change are among those issues which CCA addresses.

The People's Pastoral is available for download on CCA's website at www.ccappal.org. Printed booklets are available to order on the website as well. A full website with discussion guides, resources, photographs, art, action plans, and more is forthcoming at www.peoplespastoral.org.

Appalachian Mountain Patrol Film Project

The Appalachian Mountaintop Patrol (AMP) is a media education initiative that trains people to use documentary video and environmental sensors to tell the story of how Mountaintop Removal and Hydro-fracking affect communities and ecosystems.

Seven West Virginia residents are participating in the training in the 2015 – 2016 pilot year and will create a series of collaboratively produced short documentaries that explore how local energy extraction operations affect Appalachian culture, ecosystems, public health, land rights and local economies. Documentaries will also explore local people's ideas for creating a sustainable economy and healthy communities.

Collaboratively-produced documentaries created by AMP participants will be distributed via television broadcast, social media and public screenings. A 40-minute documentary that includes participant work and documentation of the media education initiative process will also be produced.

AMP is spearheaded by Laura Chipley, an interdisciplinary artist based in Queens, New York. Her past projects include *"Deep Black Sea"* – an experimental documentary series that chronicles the aftermath of oil spills around the world, and *"The Newtown Creek Armada"* – an interactive boat pond created in a New York Superfund site.



Drone Photography is useful in rugged mountainous terrain

Chipley is training AMP participants in field video production, social media and web-based video skills, aerial photography and environmental sampling techniques. Allen Johnson, Coordinator for *Christians For The Mountains*, is an AMP participant. Johnson said, *"The AMP project empowers justice-oriented citizens equipment and skills to monitor our home lands and tell our stories."*

MTR IS A Topic At Interreligious Climate Stewardship Summit

Building on the Pope's call for a moral response to climate change in his recent encyclical, the Climate Stewardship Summit emphasized an action-oriented agenda to address environmental injustice related to climate change and the consumption of fossil fuels. Over 200 concerned citizens and religious leaders packed Congregation Beth Israel synagogue in Hartford, Connecticut on November 5, 2015 for the third annual climate event. Muslims comprised about 10 % of the participants.

The opening plenary session, *"The True Cost of Fossil Fuels,"* was moderated by Rev. Tom Carr. Presenters included Jacqui Patterson, NAACP (environmental racism); Barbara Jarmoska, *Responsible Drilling Alliance* (gas fracking); and Allen Johnson, *Christians For The Mountains* (mountaintop removal).



Tim DeChristopher

The Summit held a variety of workshops ranging from low-carbon agriculture, gas pipelines, climate science and public policy, global water scarcity, along with local issues. An interfaith service was held at noon. Climate activist-resister and theological student Tim DeChristopher, a native of West Virginia, gave the closing plenary address and served on a panel titled, *"How We Can Be A Blessing."*

The Interreligious Eco-Justice Network is based in Connecticut with a mission "to be a unifying voice dedicated to positive, hopeful action on behalf of the earth, the one thing we all share and the one place we all call home."

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew NRCCC 2015 Steward of Creation

On August 6th, the Eastern Orthodox Feast of the Transfiguration, members of the National Religious Coalition on Creation Care (NRCCC) gathered in Istanbul, Turkey, to extend to His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew the 2015 Steward of God's Creation award.

NRCCC delegation members presenting the award were Fred Krueger, NRCCC Coordinator; Rev. Tom Carr, an American Baptist minister from Suffield, Connecticut and the director and co-founder of the Interreligious Eco-Justice Network in Connecticut; Dr. Lise Van Susteren, a forensic psychiatrist, medical doctor, and president of Interfaith Moral Action on Climate, and living in Bethesda, Maryland; Dr. Thomas English, Creation Care Educator for the Presbyterian Church's Synod of Southern California and Hawaii. Carlos Agnesi of Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico, and former president of Mexico's Interreligious Council (Consejo Interreligioso de Mexico), sent a communication. Krueger's daughter, and spouses of Carr, Van Susteren, and English attended the event.

In response to his award of the Steward of God's Creation, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew delivered an elegant statement to the gathering for this special program.

He told the individuals present, *"In all that we do and say, we strive for an inter-religious and inter-disciplinary approach. Precisely because we are convinced that we can only achieve change when we work together, moved by the inspiration of God that created this universe and our planet out of love, and motivated by the preservation and protection of our world for the sake of future generations."*

He then added, *"This world is not just a gift from God; it is a challenge for humanity. We have at last come to learn the truth that we have mistreated the natural environment and its resources. The consequences are plain and painful. They are evident in the air that we breathe, the water that we drink, the food that we consume, the emotional and physical problems that we face in our health, but also in our relationships with each other on the local, regional, national and global levels."*

He then concluded, saying *"This is a day... of celebration. We are extremely grateful for your presence, sincerely humbled by your gracious remarks, and greatly honored by your award.... May God continue to strengthen the efforts of the National Religious Coalition on Creation Care; may God always strengthen you in your invaluable ministries in the religious as well as in the secular worlds; and may you... enjoy the gifts that God has showered on and entrusted to His creation. God bless you all."*



(L-R) Fred Krueger, Peg Carr, Tom Carr, HAH Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Lise Van Susteren, Jonathan Kempner, Tom English

2015 Week in Washington National Religious Campaign for Creation Care

The annual "Washington Week" is usually held in late winter, however this year the NRCCC gathering was timed with the visit of Pope Francis to the United States as well as to gather momentum for the upcoming COP21 climate talks in Paris.

NRCCC hosted its National Prayer Breakfast Monday September 21 at the Capitol Hill Lutheran Church. Co-chairs Rabbi Warren Stone and Rev. Owen Owens once again superbly emceed the event. Fred Krueger provided the breakfast food and reiterated the Interfaith Protocol in which each participant exhibits the full expression of his or her faith while respecting that of others. Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb, Rev. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, and Rev. Tom Carr led opening prayers.



Rev. Dr. Gerald Durley on Climate

Patrick Carolan, Director of the Franciscan Action Network, gave the keynote speech on *Laudato Si*, the Papal Encyclical on Care for Our Common Home. Responses were given by Rachel Lamb, Evangelical Environmental Network, Youth coordinator; Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb, COEJL, Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation; and Rev. Dr. Gerald L. Durley, pastor emeritus, Providence Missionary Baptist Church, and Georgia Interfaith Power and Light.



Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb and Rev. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas

Rev. Tom Carr and Dr. Lise Van Susteren gave reports on their presentation of the 2015 Steward of God's Creation award to HAH Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. Others giving reports, prayers, and announcements included Connie Hanson, Allen Johnson, Farley Lord Smith, Johanna Bozuwa, Cindy Harris, Fr. Sergei Kapral, Rev. Jim Antal, and Dave Carroll.

After the prayer breakfast and following days, members visited 29 US Senate offices plus many others from the House of Representatives. These included Senator Majority Leader Mitch McConnell from Kentucky; Ted Cruz from Texas; Marco Rubio from Florida; Rand Paul from Kentucky; Shelly Capito from West Virginia; Ron Johnson from Wisconsin; Jeff Flake from Arizona; plus many others. The goal was to focus especially on those senators who did not yet understand in the public pronouncements why global climate change is an urgent moral, ethical, and religious issue.

Many of us caught a glimpse of Pope Francis as he addressed a large crowd on the steps of the Capitol following his talk to Congress. Numerous other events during the week engaged, inspired, and challenged us.

Further details, photos, and videos will be on the website, www.nrccc.org



Thousands crowded on the Capitol Lawn to see and hear Pope Francis

Evangelical Leaders Tackle Climate Justice as a Church Mission Component at Lausanne Conference

“How can we produce transformational change?” That’s a question that advocacy organizations constantly wrestle to answer. Allen Johnson, Coordinator of *Christians For The Mountains*, and long-time colleague Peter Illyn, head of *Restoring Eden*, presented a path to that answer at a plenary presentation during a five day conference. Drawing upon their experience with college students volunteering their spring breaks conducting family health histories in mountaintop removal communities, Illyn and Johnson shared the power of experiential “aha moment” epiphanies along with storytelling that gain transforming heart changes. The mind is then prepared to “connect the dots” of, say, unjust pollution with public policy.



Peter Illyn and Allen Johnson gave a plenary address on influencing epiphany and storytelling (referencing MTR) credit: Amy Brown, Care of Creation, inc.

Held at beautiful Gordon College in Wenham, Massachusetts the last week of July, 2015, “Hope For A Time Of Crisis: Creation Care And The Mission Of The Church” was sponsored by the Lausanne Creation Care Network.

The conference, which included approximately 100 theologians, scientists, creation care practitioners and evangelical leaders, involved lively discussions, presentations, prayer times and breakout groups. All these activities brought a renewed commitment and dedication to how individuals, churches and organizations can recommit themselves to creation care, fossil fuel divestment, climate justice and sustainability. A new initiative, Climate Caretakers, campaign aims to connect ordinary Christians with biblically-based, real world solutions to climate change.



Table discussions. Allen Johnson (foreground left); Chris Berdik (on far left) wrote a major article for Politico. credit: Amy Brown, Care of Creation, inc.

The Rev. Edward Brown, Global Campaign and Conference Director, said, “Our goal was to bring together the best scientific, theological and practical minds in the US and Canadian evangelical communities. I think we achieved that.” Brown continues, “What was a surprise to me was the extent to which this group embraced both ‘lamentation’ and hope, that is, genuine grief and distress at the extent of environmental devastation and degradation in the world, but also a confidence that with hard work and dependence on God, creation can in fact be healed.”

One example of this unified commitment to creation stewardship is a national movement in the United States called **Climate Caretakers** that launched publicly on August 11, 2015. Climate Caretakers is a grassroots community of Christians committed to faithful prayer and regular action in order to respond to the challenge of climate change.

ACHE campaign coordinator Bo Webb presented a stirring talk on coalfield injustices during a panel discussion on environmental justice.

The **Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization** is a global movement that mobilizes evangelical leaders to collaborate for world evangelization. Begun in 1974, the stated vision is “the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world”. Creation care is now understood as a pillar of the whole gospel.

CFTM Hosts MTR Tour for Social Conservative Leaders

A rainy weekend was not on the ordered menu for a tour of social conservative religious leaders held in Charleston, WV October 2-4. A scheduled flyover of the mountains by Southwings was cancelled (although some late staying guest got in the air Sunday afternoon). Our visit to Kayford Mountain was chilly and foggy. Our “plan B” worked out well, however. We sidetracked into the Coal River Valley where our guests saw the coal processing plant looming against the former Marsh Fork Elementary School, and visited the site of the Upper Big Branch Mine disaster that claimed 29 lives.

Our stellar resource team included tour guides Chuck Nelson and Bo Webb, scientist Dr. Michael McCawley, Create WV founder and traditional Appalachian singer Rebecca Kimmons, justice advocate and priest Fr. John Rausch, and co-hosts John Murdock and Allen Johnson.

Our guests were all touched by the experience. Emily Belz wrote a feature article in *World Magazine* [*Blowing Their Tops*, Nov. 4, 2015]; John Murdock wrote for *Front Porch Republic* [*Saving Life On Mars, And In Appalachia*, Oct. 22, 2015]; and Chris Berdik wrote a major article for *Politico* that extensively drew upon the tour experience [*Christian, Conservative, Treehugger*, Dec. 6, 2015].

A number of invitees regretfully declined due to schedule conflicts, expressing interest in future events.

Said Johnson, “Protecting the health of people and the earth must be liberated from the divisive culture wars of left/liberal and right/conservative.”



L to R: Bo Webb; Fr. John Rausch; Jim Presswood; Emily Belz; and Chuck Nelson on Kayford Mountain



Prayer on a rain-soaked morning by the crosses on Kayford

The Silent Epidemic

by Alan H. Lockwood, MD
(MIT Press: Cambridge, MA) @2012
(reviewed by Allen Johnson)

Apartment B-1 was a “sweet suite,” not fancy or plush, yet close in proximity to congressional offices. Our ACHE Coalition basement apartment/office was in the Methodist Building. The neighboring U.S. Supreme Court was just across Maryland Avenue, with U.S. Senate Office buildings out our back door. One could literally walk from our place to the Hart Senate Building entrance in 90 seconds. Our office had a bedroom, kitchen, and plenty of space for several of us to sleep and work. Although our rent was quite low for Washington, we eventually and regretfully had to move out because of limited income.

So one day I was about the ACHE office and saw on a nightstand an intriguing book, *The Silent Epidemic*. I leafed through it. “Strong stuff,” I thought. “High octane science. 229 pages of studies, statistics, and evidence that indicts coal as massively contributing to health impairment and death.” I determined to read the book... along with a stack of other “wanna reads.”

This fall I finally read *Silent Epidemic*. Notwithstanding the technical jargon, plethora of statistics, and endless study citations, my reading came easily. The author, Dr. Alan Lockwood, sets out layer after layer of evidence like a prosecutor trying a criminal murder case. Which, come to think, a murder case it is.

Lockwood is not a fly-by-night yellow journalist. He is Emeritus Professor of Neurology and Nuclear Medicine at the State University of New York in Buffalo, and the lead author of a Physicians For Social Responsibility report on coal’s adverse health effects. By the way, Physicians For Social Responsibility was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985. Just sayin’.

I cannot do justice to a comprehensive overview of this remarkable and important volume. Lockwood’s book is not about ecological “mayflies and salamanders” issues that are dear to many environmentalists. With surgical precision, Lockwood scalpels into coal’s chilling effect on human health! Lockwood piles up mounds of solidly researched evidence. I concur with the book’s cover blurb that “*Lockwood’s comprehensive treatment examines every aspect of coal, from its complex chemical makeup to details of mining, transporting, burning, and disposal—each of which generates significant health concerns. He explains the impact of global warming on coal-related health problems and discusses possible policy approaches to combat coal pollution.*”

The subject matter—namely coal’s pollution is a human health hazard—is laid out in a systematic, block by block way. Chapters include the following: (3) The Pollutants; (4) From Mine to Ash; (5) Mitigation of Pollutants from Burning Coal; (6) Pathophysiology: How Pollution Damages Cells and Tissues; (7) Basic Health Considerations. Succeeding chapters cover specific diseases of respiratory, cardiovascular, and nervous systems. Later chapters center on global warming, and on health care economics. Yes, I’ll admit that most lay readers will need to push in. I use a red pen to underline key points and make comments, an interactive participation that grounds high points into

my mind. Just about every page is red-inked.

Due to space limitations, I’ll make a few observations. Lockwood quotes the 1948 Preamble to the Constitution of the World Health Organization. “*Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.*” (p. 174). I recall annual Gallup/Healthways studies that point out southern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky congressional districts as the nation’s worst in physical, mental, and emotional health. Coal districts, y’all.

I’ll conclude with a quote from the book’s closing chapter on Policy Implications.

Therefore it is imperative to educate the public and those who make decisions on the local, state, and federal levels about the public health consequences of building new coal-fired plants and allowing existing units to avoid modernization. The message must be, “Coal-fired plants make people sick and die, particularly children and those with chronic diseases, and they cost society huge amounts of money desperately needed for other purposes.” (p. 216)

The prosecutor rests his case. We, the jury, need to act justly so that further crime is averted.

Pain Killer
by Barry Meier
(Rodale: Emaus, Pa.) @2003
(reviewed by Allen Johnson)

“**H**eroic woman tells spellbinding stories of injustice and tragedy.” Ok, I’ll tone down the marquee verbiage. Let’s say our student volunteers and co-leader, Peter Illyn, were describing their encounter with **Sister Beth Davies**. In 2013 our volunteers, most of them from Christian colleges, were conducting family health history surveys in southeastern Virginia for researcher Dr. Michael Hendryx on health impacts of mountaintop removal. Our group had met Sr. Beth in **Pennington Gap, Virginia**. I missed the visit, and now longed for an opportunity to meet this legendary figure.

This recent fall I attended the annual conference of **The Catholic Committee of Appalachia** (see page 9). And lo and behold, I met up with the very energetic, spirited, and feisty (in a good way) Sister Beth. During a lull (well, I made it a lull), she graciously agreed to an interview.

Pain Killer tells much of what Sr. Beth shared. Painkilling drugs have addicted and ruined tens of thousands of Appalachian people, too many dying of overdoses, too many resorting to illicit dealing, prostitution, and theft, too many family hearts broken, and too many communities bereft of their rising generation. **Pain Killer** focuses on **OxyContin**, slapped with the moniker “hillbilly heroin,” as the breakthrough so-called wonder drug that wheedled high profits through a manipulative and dishonest marketing scheme.

Until the 1990’s, strong opioid pain medication was limited to severe terminal illnesses (e.g. morphine for cancer) or short-term surgical procedures. Based upon what author Barry Meiers describes as limited and inadequate research, certain pharmaceutical interests began to tout opioid medicines for chronic pain.

Small, little known Purdue Pharmaceuticals patented a time-release oxycodone opioid named **OxyContin**. Two counties were chosen to extensively market **OxyContin**—Washington County in Maine has a high number of timber workers, and timber workers have high rates of painful injuries. Lee County, Virginia, has a high number of coal miners who likewise often suffer painful accidents. Disability and Medicaid rates were high as well.

Sr. Beth, by then in her 60’s, was a seasoned addiction counselor. In 2000, **OxyContin** abuse skyrocketed in her Lee County and spread like a bubonic plague into neighboring Kentucky and West Virginia counties.



Sister Beth Davies

In his book, Maier tells the story of Lyndsay, a pretty, talented, high school cheerleader from an affluent, respected family in Pennington Gap. Under peer pressure, Lyndsay experiments crushing and snorting **OxyContin** and is immediately hooked. Her school performance crashes. She hides her addiction, steals from her family to support her habit, and her parents struggle with denial.

Meanwhile local citizens led by local physician Dr. Art Van Zee, Sr. Davies, and others try to figure out what is going on. They confront Purdue Pharmaceutical officials, who evade and obscure their concerns. Federal agency turf wars preclude quick response. Meanwhile, certain unscrupulous doctors rubber stamp **OxyContin** prescriptions at “pill mills,” while certain unscrupulous drug stores ask no questions. Drug addicts pass the word.

Meier publishes **Pain Killer** in 2003. Much has happened since. The addiction plague in Appalachian and continued. Lawsuits against Purdue Pharmaceuticals garnered a \$600 million settlement in 2007 for misleading the public about the addictive risks. Several company executives pled guilty of felonies and were fined over \$34 million. However, check that settlement to a cost of business as Purdue has cumulatively sold \$35 billion in **OxyContin**. Purdue’s founders, the Sackler family, are worth \$14 billion, placing them number 16 on the Forbes list of largest fortunes. As Sr. Beth points out, the **OxyContin** made them billionaires—presumably without conscience of the agony of thousands of early graves, eviscerated communities, and a lost generation.

Purdue has since developed a tamper resistant pill that has discourages addicts from snorting or injecting crushed pills. Addicts now go after cheap, abundant heroin. The deadly drumbeat carries on.

And valiant heroes like Sr. Beth Davies keep hope alive by pushing back against the institutional violence that abuses people, bringing healing to the suffering and addicted, and witnessing God’s love and justice with mercy, courage, and conviction.

The War On Coal... (continued from page 7)



The Harvard Center for Health and the Global Environment published in February 2011 a study, “Full Cost Accounting for the Life Cycle of Coal.” *Grist Magazine* reported on the study, “In terms of human health, the report estimates \$74.6 billion a year in public health burdens in Appalachian communities, with a majority of the impact resulting from increased healthcare costs, injury and death. Emissions of air pollutants account for \$187.5 billion, mercury impacts as high as \$29.3 billion, and climate contributions from combustion between \$61.7 and \$205.8 billion... Our comprehensive review finds that the best estimate for the total economically quantifiable costs, based on a conservative weighting of many of the study findings, amount to some \$345.3 billion, adding close to 17.8¢/kWh of electricity generated from coal... These and the more difficult to quantify externalities are borne by the general public.”

Mountaintop Removal is especially egregious in its detrimental effects upon ecology and health. Mountains are decapitated, streams are buried in valley fills, while water and air pollution contributes to



serious worsened community health outcomes, as almost 30 peer-reviewed studies point out.

Calling For A Coal Wars Armistice

Coal will lose the war. The “why and how” are clear, and the “when” is becoming more clear. The “what to do” for Appalachian coal-enthralled states and communities is the challenge. We suggest some steps.

1. A region’s best resource is its people—community-minded, creative, altruistic, moral, talented, motivated, hard-working people. These folks coach youth baseball and sponsor 4-H programs, serve on the school board and help with the hospital auxiliary. Such folks work for quality schools, health clinics, participate in churches and civic groups, and are dependable workers at their jobs. Some of them start businesses that employ others. The important point is to keep these folks in our Appalachian communities, and attract others from outside to move in.

2. Developing high quality community infrastructure is critical. Young talented people will not tolerate living in communities with unsupported libraries, dismal Internet, weak schools, unsafe roads, polluted environments, inept local government, and limited social opportunities. Government investment toward Broadband parity is critically needed for rural areas, just as rural electrification was in the 1930’s.

“A region’s best resource is its people—community-minded, creative, altruistic, moral, talented, motivated, hard-working people.”

3. All-out efforts should be made to produce and market local goods. For example, WV Agriculture Commissioner Walt Helmick talks up “the \$6-billion-dollar opportunity,” referring to the fact that less than \$1 billion of the \$7.3 billion worth of food consumed annually by West Virginians is raised in the state. Developing potatoes as a major crop is his first initiative.

4. Inculcating an appreciation and hunger for education is especially important in a region that has among the lowest educational achievement in the nation. This education should be well-rounded, including not only STEM but also a deep knowledge and appreciation for the rich culture and ecology of Appalachia.

5. Policymakers need to “push to the front of the line” in the upcoming clean energy revolution. Appalachian coal fueled the American Industrial

Revolution but left coal belt communities in shambles. It is fair and just to get grant funding toward clean economic development. The White House is proposing a \$3 billion Power+ Plan aid package; nevertheless, some influential congressmen are spiting this because they still hold on to coal. The captivity of policymakers to the coal industry must be broken!

6. Local and regional partnerships leverage funds and resources and provide new opportunities. For example, SOAR (Shaping Our Appalachian Region) is a new collaborative project encompassing all eastern Kentucky counties to identify development strategies in agriculture, business recruitment, health, tourism and other areas that can expand and diversify the region’s beleaguered economy.

Laid-off miners can be retrained to undertake restoration of mine-damaged lands. The federal Abandoned Mine Land Trust is sitting on \$2.5 billion.

“Church congregations are vitally important in developing moral character, sparking genuine hope and a “can do” attitude, and in providing meeting space, leadership, and skill.”

7. Church congregations are vitally important in developing moral character, sparking genuine hope and a “can do” attitude, and in providing meeting space, leadership, and skill. Collaboration between congregations and denominations can be valuable toward reconstituting communities besotted with joblessness, drug abuse, outmigration of young people, and community blight.

It is past time for Appalachia to move beyond the so-called War On Coal. Appalachian coal output and jobs will continue to diminish under its own weight. Let the “Appalachian hand” drop the black rock and pick up the future!

The Bible can translate the Hebrew word Ruach (OT) and the Greek word Pneuma (NT) as spirit or as breath or as wind. The meaning is derived from the context. For example, pneuma hagion would be translated as The Holy Spirit. When Jesus says, “And when you see a south [pneuma] blowing, you say, ‘It will be a hot day,’ and it turns out that way,” pneuma is understood in context as wind, not spirit.

This is not to eisegete biblical pneumatic passages out of context to indict polluted air. Biblical prooftexting is unnecessary since clean air is obviously essential to life; therefore purposefully fouling air is sin. ---AJ

Climate Change Is A Moral Issue by Fr. John S. Rausch

Throng of people poured into Washington, New York and Philadelphia during Pope Francis's visit to see him, receive his blessing and hear his words.

Addressing Congress, Pope Francis touched on numerous themes, but reference to the environment will continue to receive great scrutiny: *"In Laudato Si, I call for a courageous and responsible effort to 'redirect our steps' (par. 61) and to avert the most serious effects of the environmental deterioration caused by human activity."* In his environmental encyclical, he affirmed, referencing the bishops of Bolivia, that countries having benefitted the most economically from the enormous emissions of greenhouse gases, *"have a greater responsibility for providing a solution to the problems they have caused"* (par. 170.) Ultimately we Americans face a moral obligation.

Curiously, many people in Developing Countries might have missed the pope's visit to the U.S.—people in villages of Bangladesh or on small South Pacific islands—yet, his message to the world's wealthiest nation may directly affect them.

About 100 million people world-wide live one meter above sea level. Some 650 million live along coastal areas that could be submerged if global climate change melts the great ice packs and raises the ocean level. Lives, cultures and livelihoods depend on a stable environment.

If a person accidentally kills someone by reckless behavior, it's considered manslaughter. If the lifestyle of the world's wealthy destroys a culture, or people, it approaches genocide. This is why human activity contributing to climate change is a moral issue.

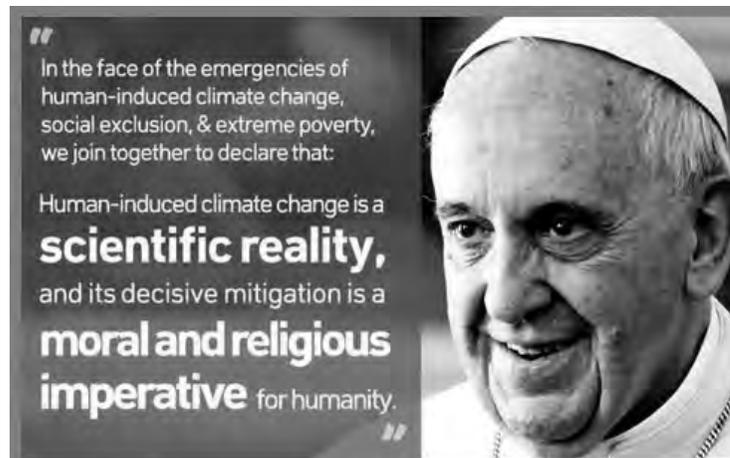
Pope Francis cited the Golden Rule before Congress: *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. The basis of Christian morality is interconnectedness. We are our brother's (sister's) keeper! And, we can't submerge them!*

The first defense against this moral responsibility is denial. Dr. Katherine Hayhoe, a climatologist and evangelical Christian at Texas Tech University cites three reasons for the disconnect between believers and the findings of science.



Dr. Katherine Hayhoe

"The evidence is not easy to see." With air conditioning and adjustable thermostats everything looks fine. But, recall photos of birds and shorelines caked with oil after the BP spill. Our dependence on oil is easy to see, and our lifestyle can display some graphically bad effects.



"Confusion is rampant." The fossil fuel industries have adopted the "tobacco strategy" that sows doubt about scientific conclusions, e.g. does smoking really cause cancer? The oil and coal industries maintain that human activity contributing to climate change is not certain. In reality, the peer-reviewed work of 97 percent of climatologists agree it is. Carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that traps the sun's rays and heats the earth, has risen dramatically since the Industrial Revolution. Science can measure CO2 precisely, and temperatures can be tracked. Conclusion: human activity is a major factor in climate change.

"The truth is frightening." To change our lifestyle appears threatening, yet "to redirect our steps," in the words of Pope Francis, may begin simply with turning off lights to save electricity, consolidating trips to use less gas, and avoiding drive-through lines to reduce idling. Small steps can develop an awareness that we are interconnected with one another and creation.

The way forward Pope Francis mentioned in his speech before Congress and wrote in his encyclical: *"I would like to enter into dialogue with all people about our common home"* (par. 3.) This dialogue will require putting aside ideologies and polarized thinking. It asks for honesty within and with others.

The dialogue can begin with a walk in nature, especially as the leaves turn and vibrant colors dot the landscape. It will deepen when we see the face of homeless as individuals struggling for the same dignified life we enjoy. Eventually, it will avoid scoring points in debates, and nurture that interconnectedness that exposes the moral sentiment allowing us to take responsibility for creation.

Climate change is a moral issue. And, Pope Francis reminds us, *"If we approach nature and the environment without this openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs"* (par. 11.)

Excerpts From *Laudato Si*

Access to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential to human survival and, as such, is a condition for the exercise of other human rights. Our world has a grave social debt towards the poor who lack access to drinking water, because they are denied the right to a life consistent with their inalienable dignity. [LS 30, italics in orig.]

When people become self-centered and self-enclosed, their greed increases. The emptier a person's heart is, the more he or she needs things to buy, own and consume...As these attitudes become more widespread, social norms are respected only to the extent that they do not clash with personal needs... Obsession with a consumerist lifestyle, above all when few people are capable of maintaining it, can only lead to violence and mutual destruction. [LS 204]

So what they all need is an "ecological conversion", whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience. [LS 217]

Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start, despite their mental and social conditioning. We are able to take an honest look at ourselves, to acknowledge our deep dissatisfaction, and to embark on new paths to authentic freedom. No system can completely suppress our openness to what is good, true and beautiful, or our God-given ability to respond to his grace at work deep in our hearts. [LS 205]

Our insistence that each human being is an image of God should not make us overlook the fact that each creature has its own purpose. None is superfluous. The entire material universe speaks of God's love, his boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God. [LS 84]

Each year sees the disappearance of thousands of plant and animal species which we will never know, which our children will never see, because they have been lost forever. The great majority become extinct for reasons related to human activity. Because of us, thousands of species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence, nor convey their message to us. We have no such right. [LS 33]

O Lord, seize us with your power and light, help us to protect all life, to prepare for a better future, for the coming of your Kingdom of justice, peace, love and beauty. Praise be to you! Amen.

[Last lines of the closing Prayer, LS 246]

International Mining Conference At The Vatican by Fr. John S. Rausch

Because I ministered around the Appalachian coalfields for over forty years, I was invited to Rome, July 17-19, 2015, to represent the mountains at “United with God, We Hear a Cry,” a conference dealing with communities affected by mining activities. Sponsored by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace in collaboration with the Latin American “Churches and Mining” network, the meeting convened **grass-roots representatives from 18 countries:** Chile, Peru, Brazil, Columbia, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Mexico, United States, Canada, Switzerland, Italy, Mozambique, Ghana, Democratic Republic of the Congo, India and the Philippines.

Transnational mining corporations exert disproportionate power over most local communities with negative results which raise grave concerns for Rome. Too frequently the mining practices violate the human rights of workers, destroy local environments, introduce negative health impacts, greatly enable substance abuse, allow prostitution and human trafficking, threaten local cultures and display ties to organized crime. After citing many of these abuses, **Pope Francis** in a letter to the participants stated clearly: “*The entire mining sector is undoubtedly required to effect a radical paradigm change to improve the situation in many countries.*”

The stories from the participants underscored that sentiment. A representative from the native peoples of Canada said a breached mine tailing dam in upper British Columbia released 25 million cubic meters of debris into Lake William and polluted the crystal clear lake where 80 million salmon spawn. Worse, a Philippine village witnessed the killing of the mayor’s wife and two sons, because he opposed the mining practices. Others in the village received the “blanket” threat—the symbol of wrapping for death. Continuously participants told stories from mining practices about violence, dishonesty and theft, besides testimonials about pollution, destruction and sickness.

Practical Content

With so many participants from different parts of the world, no one set of recommendations would be acceptable, plus the conference was not a deliberative body. However, certain principles and suggestions could spark further dialogue in Appalachia about how communities could control their own destinies.

1. FPIC: Free, Prior, Informed, Consent

International practice recognizes this formula for intruding into a local community. However, participants through their stories questioned each word. How “free” is a decision made by lawful authority issuing mining permits, especially if graft is involved? Frequently information is partial with no references to unintended consequences at the mining site. Does “consent” include consultation of the whole local community, or just of elders or representatives?

2. No-Go Zones: Some ecological areas are so

fragile or unique that international treaties should prohibit mining there. Small island communities may be overwhelmed by a gigantic mining project. Sacred spaces that celebrate a people’s history or culture should be off limits. Over-mined areas need some cessation till the environment can adjust and recover. Places of natural beauty need to be preserved for future generations. People who have been moved once for reasons of mining should not be forced to move again. Finally, “no” means “no”—when the community and its legitimate authority say no to mining, their decision should be final.

3. Other Practical Considerations:

- Train Catholic bishops, priests and seminarians about *Laudato Si*, the encyclical on the environment, and extend this to all people of faith within Appalachia
- Establish a dialogue within the churches
- Involve Catholic universities and other denominations’ religious institutions
- Support dialogue with the mining corporations, if the power dynamic is equalized
- Initiate dialogue at the local level and include the poor and oppressed as partners
- Declare the church’s option for the poor and powerless, and not assume a false neutrality
- Empower a justice team to make regular visits to mine sites
- Issue a pastoral letter to the Catholic faithful, and statements from Protestant denominations about the issues of mining
- Have churches divest from businesses that support bad mining practices
- Stop violence against protestors and support them with legal and medical help
- Press for redress and reparations in abused mining areas

Many of these recommendations could become the agenda for a dialogue among people of faith concerned with mining and the local communities.

Returning Home

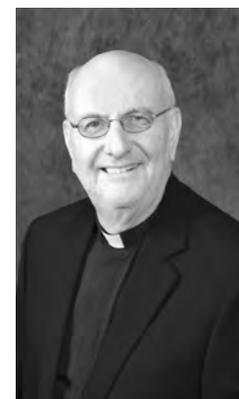
Shortly after returning from Rome, I toured the coalfields with **Bishop John Stowe, our new Catholic bishop of Lexington, KY**, hearing stories resembling those from the international conference. One family, we met, contracted with a company to mine 70 acres for coal, but instead,

saw it illegally mine 90 acres, allegedly because the company changed the property map. Another fellow said the blasting from mining caused a separation in his brick home large enough to put his fist into the gap. Still another complained he was never paid the agreed-upon amount for the coal that was mined on his property. Instead, the company eventually declared bankruptcy and then resumed operations under a different name without the liability.

Add to these stories the discarded miners with black lung, the numerous kids with asthma and the increased rates of cancer for women attributed to mining practices, and **Appalachia unfortunately shares the same dishonesty, theft and despoiled environment that breeds sickness and human distress discussed at the international conference.**

“Nationally, we must awaken people of faith to the link between the demand for mine products and their lifestyles.”

Nationally, we must awaken people of faith to the link between the demand for mine products and their lifestyles. Dialogue within the church and with mining interests remains key, while divestiture from businesses supporting bad practices requires action. Ultimately, we people of faith must reflect the teachings from *Laudato Si* and other documents from various denominations about care of creation, and pursue an integral ecology that links the poor, the earth and human community in the web of life.



Fr. John Rausch has served Appalachian communities as a Glenmary priest for almost 40 years. Rausch was 2007 *Pax Christi* “Teacher of Peace,” has led numerous tours on mountaintop removal, and is a Steering Committee member with *Christians For The Mountains*. Rausch lives in Stanton, Kentucky, where he enjoys preparing culinary treats for guests.



Glenmary Father John Rausch concelebrating Mass with Cardinal Turkson in the crypt of St. Peter, Vatican City. Father John recently returned from a gathering in Rome, “In union with God we hear a plea,” the meeting of Representatives of Communities affected by mining activities with the

Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (PCJP).



Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.
Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.
(Psalm 51:10-13 ESV)

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

Music from Beethoven's 9th Symphony,
Text by Henry van Dyke (Second Stanza)

All Thy works with joy surround Thee,
Earth and heaven reflect Thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around Thee,
Center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
Flowery meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird and flowing fountain,
Call us to rejoice in Thee.



Holy, Holy, Holy!

Music by J. Dykes, Text by R. Heber, 4th Stanza

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth
and sky and sea;
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Love in action is a harsh and dreadful thing compared with love in dreams. Love in dreams is greedy for immediate action, rapidly performed and in the sight of all. Men will even give their lives if only the ordeal does not last long but is soon over, with all looking on and applauding as though on the stage. But active love is labor and fortitude...



Doestoevski



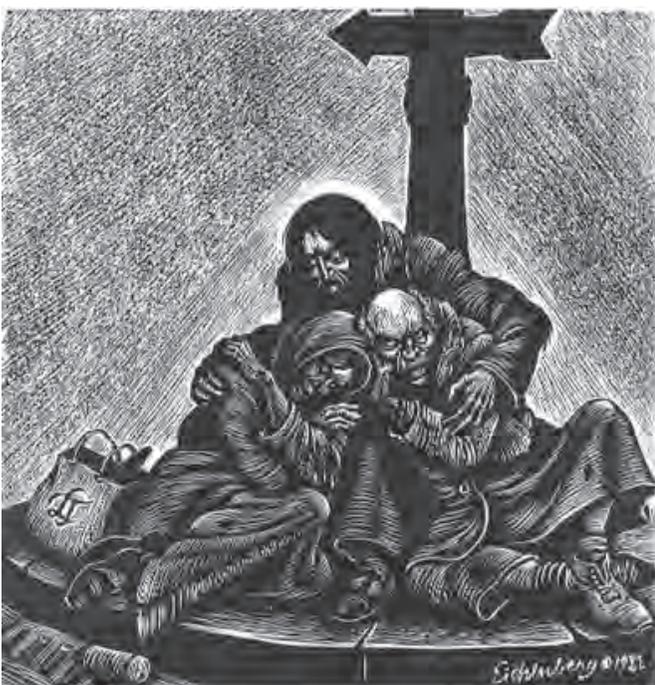
We were the last house up in the holler, which we call the 'head' of the holler. The 'mouth' of the holler is what we call the entrance. You'll hear a lot of that kind of talk in Appalachia, the talk of body parts. We talk in human, living parts—the mouth, the head, the spine or backbone of the mountain, the finger ridge. We speak the language of a living, breathing world. I don't think I realized that until about 10 years ago when I became an activist. Somebody came up and said, 'You talk about your home as if it were part of your own body?' And they were right, this landscape is a living, breathing part of me. I consider it something to protect, like I would my own body. That's an idea that's been passed down from generation to generation."



- Judy Bonds

"We know that every effort to improve society, above all when society is so full of injustice and sin, is an effort that God blesses; that God wants; that God demands of us."

- Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador.



"Christ of the Homeless"
(woodcut by Fritz Eichenberg)



Upcoming for *The Mountain Vision*

CFTM is planning its eighth edition for summer, as our schedule permits. Please let us know if your friends would like a sample copy.

We invite you to send your own personal stories of your conversions to Kingdom of God ethics 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

