

## **James Hansen, The “Godfather” of Climate Science and Some Facts**

The ICC Environment Action Mission (EAC) statement defines its leadership role to promote...As *an environmentally conscious church to strive, individually and collectively, to be good stewards of Nature and the environment and to address climate change through education and advocacy.*

In this month’s Green Corner, I want to first share information about an important Scientist, **James Hansen** who, since his appearance in 1988 before a Senate committee, has been considered a crucial figure of Climate Science. In addition, I want to share some facts to encourage members to be mindful of climate change in the midst of all the noise and demands of our busy lives, which can distract us from this existential crisis affecting us now and affecting future generations.

In 1988, while James Hansen was the director of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, his “...appearance before a Senate committee conventionally marks the beginning of the era for climate alarm, when many Americans started worrying about global warming and why their leaders were doing so little about it. But in recent years he has played a lonelier role – joining climate protests and getting arrested well before scientists of his stature doing the same...” In a recent paper he wrote, “Global Warming in the Pipeline,” Hansen stated that if fossil fuel emissions continue as they have, “We would be damned fools and bad scientists if we didn’t expect an acceleration of global warming...We’ve got to get this problem understood, or young people are in trouble.” (NY Times, Nov. 8, 2023)

Dr. Justin Mankin, climate scientist of Dartmouth in a January 20, 2024 NY Times article argued that everyday people have a right to climate data which portends the risks of the multi-trillion-dollar price tag of climate disasters shocking economies and destroying lives, not just “private” risk managers. If this information is not shared by public/governmental agencies, wealthy and “...companies who can afford private risk assessments will rent, buy and establish homes and businesses in safer places than the billions of others who can’t, compounding disadvantage and leaving the most vulnerable among us exposed.” Regular people must demand true information. The people who lived near the MIRA Trash to Energy Plant in Hartford deserved to know how their health was being affected because of where they lived.

In a January 24, 2024 article published in The Guardian, *Devastating Drought in Amazon Result of Climate Crisis*, study shows, “if human-induced emissions and deforestation continue, the Amazon rain forest will reach a point where it can no longer act as the world’s largest land-based carbon capture sink. What can we do?”

As publicized in the EAC’s Lenten Book study of *Rooted Faith, Practices for Living Well on a Fragile Planet*, people of faith are called to live differently. The book study will offer an opportunity to examine a new way of living in relationship with all of creation, and heighten one’s awareness of what we can do as individuals and collectively “to address climate change through education and advocacy.” Awareness and education is power, to be able to live more sustainably and ensure for our grandchildren that they too will have a world in which they can thrive.

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