

# A NEW AWAKENING

## Proclaiming a Season of Prophetic Climate Witness Through Preaching, Prayer and Practice



New England Regional Environmental Ministries (NEREM) invites churches, clergy, church leaders and denominational leaders to join us in proclaiming October 4, 2015 (Feast Day of St. Francis) to February 7, 2016 (the last Sunday of Epiphany) [A Season of Prophetic Climate Witness through preaching, prayer and practice.](#)

The news about climate change is grim. Yet, as Christians, we do not live in the tomb's despair but rather in the light of the Risen Christ. Our resurrection hope, which is grounded in the promise of renewal and restoration for all God's Creation, gives us energy and strength to respond to the threat of climate change. During this Season of Witness, we intend to harness that holy energy and strength to become heralds of hope and possibility.

The outcome of the December international climate talks in Paris (COP21) will be enormously important for us and for future generations – as vast as the sky and as close as our back yards. Stabilizing the climate is essential to creating a peaceful, just, and healthy world, and scientists tell us that we have only a short time in which to avert catastrophic climate disruption. At this decisive time in history we need the prophetic voice of the church as a spiritual, moral, and ethical leader.

But these talks are not all that matters. Although the COP21 meeting prompts us to announce this Season of Prophetic Climate Witness, as people of faith we are also called to continue to minister to a changing world after treaties and international meetings have disappeared from public view. As children of God, we will continue to pray, act, and advocate to stabilize the climate for the sake of our neighbors alive today – both human and nonhuman – and for the sake of future generations, whose fate we hold in our hands. Our call for a New Awakening transcends our limited, human imagination. It is, rather, a call to the Holy Spirit to create an inspired movement that galvanizes people of faith to embody a hope that is not limited by immediate failure or success, but that manifests an ever-deepening love for God and for all that God is creating.

In announcing this Season, we invite churches to become centers of prophetic preaching about the climate crisis. We hope that preachers will rise to the challenge and that at least 70% of our churches will hear at least one sermon on climate change. Focused, dedicated prayer vigils and worship services will bring us closer to God and God's Creation, and strengthen us to seek and do God's will. Because words alone are not enough, we pray that the Holy Spirit will lead us to respond to the climate crisis with such actions as offering an education series; creating programs on climate change resilience; participating in public witness and advocacy; and shifting to renewable energy such as wind and solar.

NEREM will make homiletical and educational resources available on-line to encourage congregations to engage in this critically important issue. NEREM welcomes any and all communities of faith to join us in this Season of Prophetic Climate Witness. **TO REGISTER: please visit [www.climatewitness.org](http://www.climatewitness.org).**

### CONTACTS:

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NEREM began in 2010 when UCC environmental ministers from all over New England gathered to support one another. In 2012 numerous Episcopal activists, staff and Bishops from New England joined forces with NEREM. Since then, NEREM has engaged representatives from virtually all Protestant denominations, along with Roman Catholic and Orthodox environmental leaders. While NEREM has no budget (at least at the moment!), we have undertaken projects such as the [Annual Ecumenical Lenten Carbon Fast](#) (with world-wide participation), the "Partnering with a Green God" Conference, and the [Climate Revival](#) (April 2013). Just as the UCC in New England is committed to making climate and environment its signature issue, we envision the day when this can be said of Christian churches across New England, and beyond.