



For Immediate Release

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Local church effort brings nationally recognized
Climate Speakers Network training for clergy to the west

Ashland, Oregon – For the past two years, the Climate Speakers Network (CSN), a program of The Climate Reality Project, has partnered with the Center for Earth Ethics at Union Theological Seminary in New York City to provide an in-depth climate leadership training for faith leaders on the East Coast and beyond. This year, CSN, in collaboration with the Ashland First United Methodist Church, is bringing a similar training to the West Coast.

“Climate has become a moral imperative for people of faith,” explained the Rev. Richenda Fairhurst, senior pastor of Ashland First United Methodist Church. **“The health and well-being of today’s children depend on us having the moral courage to address the consequences of climate change. Our daily prayer asks for ‘earth as it is in heaven.’ This prayer declares God’s will for us, and angels do not frack.”**

The training will be hosted by the Ashland First United Methodist Church in Ashland, Oregon, on May 1-3, 2018. Please e-mail csninfo@climatereality.com to receive a link to the application.

The conference will train ministers to address the reality of climate change in the American West. It is open to all congregations in the western United States and their extension ministries, and offers faith leaders the opportunity to network, learn how to best support their communities and congregations, and process the hope and grief of climate work in a sacred sanctuary space.

Increased concern about climate change has acutely impacted western church communities in recent years because of devastating forest fires in California, Oregon, and Washington; drilling and fracking in the Dakotas, California, and Alaska; the threat of expanding fossil fuel infrastructure, like pipelines, refineries, and oil barges and trains, in coastal states; and extreme heat waves across the region.

Churches everywhere are faced with a unique challenge when confronting the climate crisis: ministers must determine how they can be of the most good to their communities; and congregations are often involved in local relief efforts, ministering to those who lose their homes or livelihoods to forest fires, floods, storms, droughts, and rising seas.

The CSN training will address these concerns and much more.

“We as people of faith are the hope bringers of this world,” said Rev. Fairhurst. **“We bring the good news that the Spirit is moving in hearts and minds across the world. We as church leaders can bring truth and hope to every parish across the West.”**