

Title: Why Climate Action Should be a priority

1: All We Can Save (from the <http://allwecansave.earth> Website)

“All We Can Save”, edited by Johnson and Wilkinson is a collection of essays from 60 women on the forefront of Climate action.

From campaigning to shut down coal- plants to educating about soil carbon content, these 60 women are changing the world by providing innovative solutions to transition away from destruction to restoration.

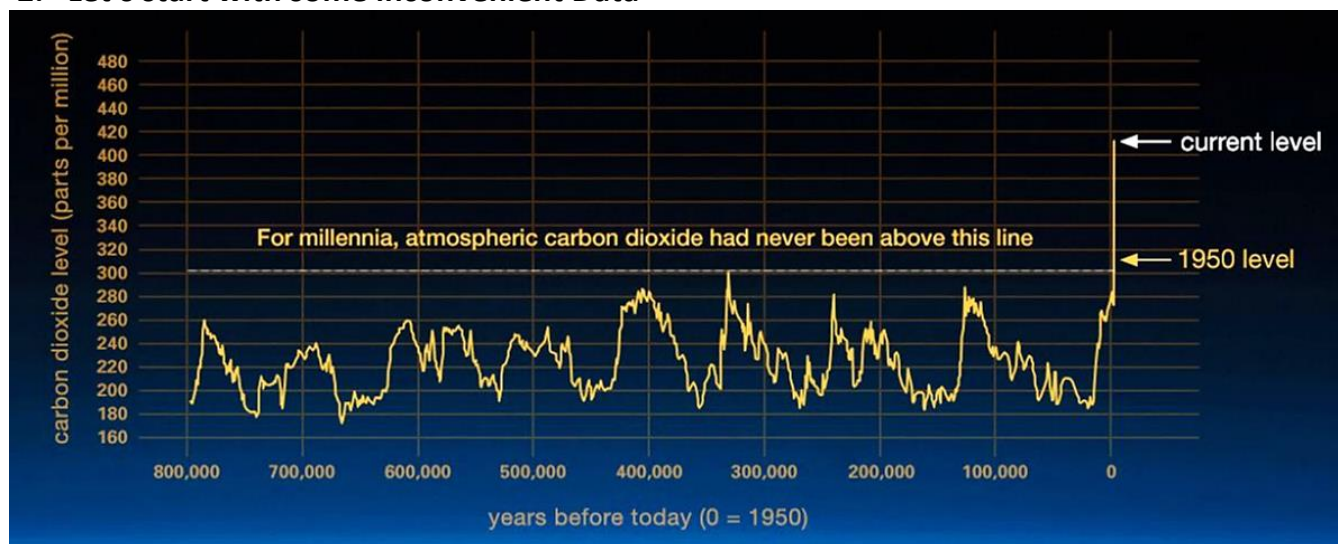
The editors organized circles discussion groups. Mary Bennett and I and several others are now meeting in one of these circles where we discuss –

- **Truth:** The facts about climate change and how to have conversations about the impacts with folks who usually turn off climate messaging.
- **Courage:** how to summon the guts to act, both small-scale and for big impact, and for the long-haul.
- **Solutions:** Taking inspiration from the essays, we discuss solutions that we can take as individuals and as a community.

Mary will be presenting ideas for how to find your Climate Action and Community.

I would like to talk to you about motivation for urgent action.

2: Let's start with some inconvenient Data



This graph shows the atmospheric CO2 content over the last 800,000 years. CO2 levels fluctuated but never exceeded 300 ppm until just before I was born - around 1950.

Then it increased dramatically. It is currently around 420 ppm.

As you know the rising CO2 and other Greenhouse Gases are the cause of global heating and are due chiefly to burning fossil fuels and deforestation.

As a scientist, this data is all the motivation I need for climate action.

My goal in life is to work with others to stop the increase.

I'm sure you want to help too.

And that's good, because Individuals cannot do this alone;

It will take a world-wide effort with everyone helping – and this is the key point of the book – helping by working within a community. Like UCV!

3: There are both Risks and Opportunity linked to Climate Change.

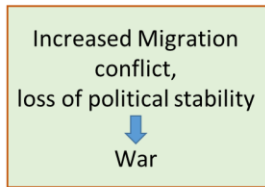
What are Risks? (note, I did not show this slide in the service but include it here)

RISKS OF GLOBAL HEATING (> 1.5 C) on Human Society

Dr. Jan Dash

Physicist, Climate Risk Analyst, *Unitarian*

1. More Crop Failures → hunger
2. Increased Water scarcity
3. Sea Level Rise
4. More intense fires
5. More intense heat waves, floods, hurricanes
6. Ocean acidification killing marine life
7. More disease
8. Accelerated species extinction
9. Economic collapse
10. *Irreversible tipping points*



You hear about climate impacts every day if you listen to the news

For Canadians the latest in-your-face impacts are to our forests. We wish them to sequester carbon, but instead they are burning up and releasing it.

Sadly, the commitments and efforts taken thus far (INCLUDING BY CANADA) have not reversed the upward trend in CO2 and temperature

Suffice it to say that Climate Action is not *just* about saving polar bears. It's about saving human civilization.

Without accelerated and urgent action to curtail fossil fuel burning - 100s of millions of humans will suffer intensely IN THIS CENTURY, due to climate breakdown

Isn't it worth the effort to ratchet up our actions?

4: The good news is that the Climate crisis presents a historic Opportunity to build a better world and learn, out of necessity, to work together for the common good.



The public and private sector will need to work in synch to provide the trillions of dollars we need to - Revolutionize Energy production and Agriculture, for example. In the process we will restore health to parts of the world that we've destroyed (like the tar-sands); and we will reconstitute our place in the biosphere.

**So it's not the end of society,
it's the beginning of a new society.**

[And Unitarians are champing at the bit to be at the forefront as Change-Makers!](#)

5 : Prioritizing Climate Action

Is Climate Change just one of many issues?

I have had conversations with people close to me recently where this was their point of view.

Professor Bill Winder addressed this issue in his Statement to the Judge who sentenced him to 3 weeks in jail for sitting in a tree to block installation of the TMX pipeline.

Bill said: "If climate breakdown breeds societal chaos and collapse, where there is no rule of law, no health care, no food-aid, no housing advocacy, in short –none of the welfare institutions of society, then all of these causes will be irrelevant"

[If we agree with this, then we need to move Climate Action up higher on the priority list.](#)

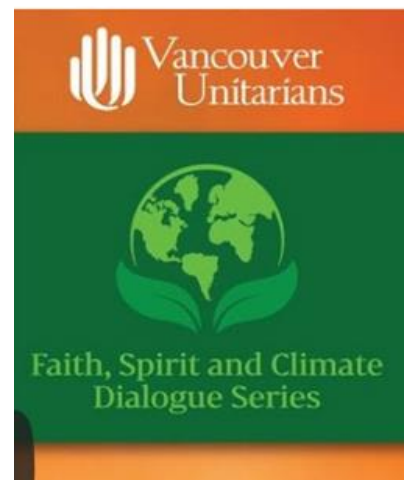
6 - Unitarians leading on Climate Action

Unitarians and other faith groups have a key role because we are comfortable using the word "SHOULD".

Thus we can talk about moral imperatives to behave so that if everyone followed our actions, the world would have less suffering.

Yet it's also a reality that we are very busy with other endeavors to make the world better. But here's the thing.....

Climate chaos is having a big impact on the other major concerns of Unitarians



I'll just speak to one of these:

- *human Rights*. In Oct 2022 the UN Office on Human Rights stated :
“Throughout the world, human rights are being violated as a consequence of climate change. This includes the right to life, health, food, development, self-determination, water and sanitation, work, adequate housing and freedom from violence, sexual exploitation, trafficking and slavery.”

So do you need to abandon your passion for human rights, for example?

No way!

We are going to need knowledge and informed strategy in this arena and many others to effectively tackle the climate issue.

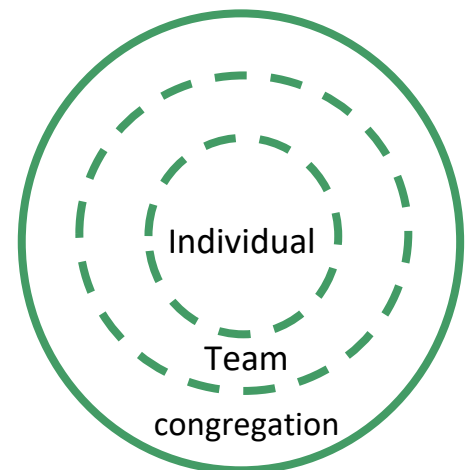
BUT-- could you adapt a climate lens in all your decisions as you do your work?

7 - What does climate action look like at UCV?

Action is occurring at the individual, team and congregational level.

At the individual level many of us are:

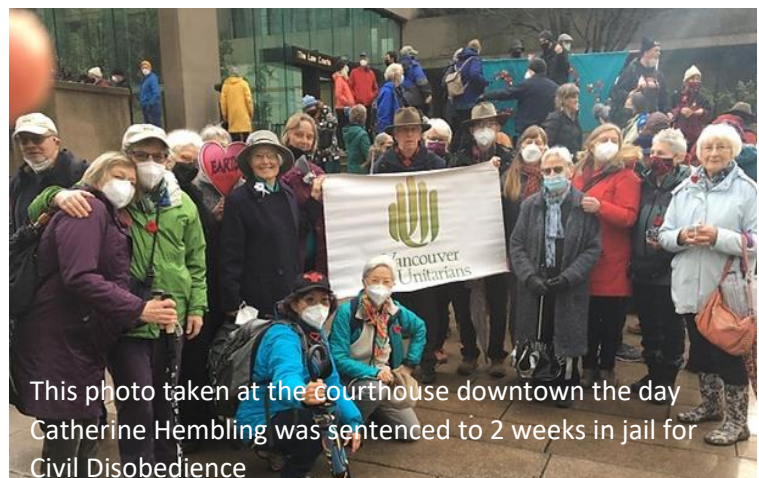
- Arming ourselves with knowledge
- Reducing our personal carbon footprint - e.g. by taking transit, going vegan, and moving our money out of banks like RBC that are funding climate chaos!
- Stepping up political action (e.g. by writing to gov't ministers urging coherent, effective action)



At the Team level - LOTS is happening

The *Enviro-Team* is

- attending anti-pipeline and save old-growth rallies together
- Advocating to remove open-pen salmon farms which harm wild salmon, already stressed by warmer waters
- Raising \$ to make our buildings carbon neutral
- Several UCV members have been sued, arrested, and even *jailed* for resistance against TMX.



The *IPA team* (Indigenous, Black, People of Color and Allies) is looking at insights that diverse cultural traditions can bring to climate action; e.g. in cuisine and food practices that reduce waste.

The *Zero Waste team* has helped to reduce our campus emissions via recycling and composting and is sponsoring small, deep-dive discussion circles.

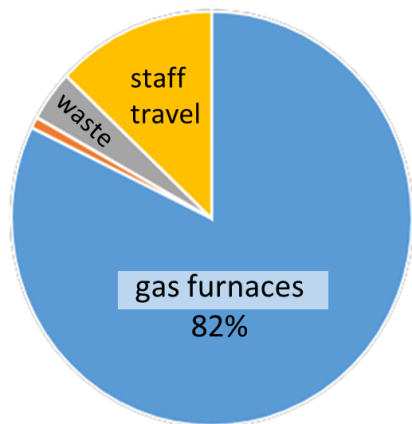
The *Refugee team* is doing the really hard work of settling refugees and this work is only going to expand in the coming years.

The *Buildings and Grounds Team* has installed a heat pump in the Admin Building in our effort to get off the gas.

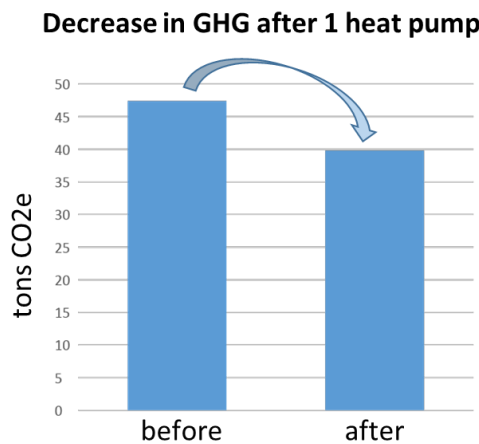
Let me tell you a little more about that as it leads right into action at the CONGREGATIONAL level

8 – Congregational action.

An inventory done in 2019 revealed >82% of our emissions are due to burning gas for heating.



UCV Inventory of GHG emissions 2019



So it was obvious what to do- If we replace the gas furnaces with electric heat pumps, we will make a huge impact.

A heat-pump was installed in the Admin Bldg in 2021, with the generous help of Hans [Elfert](#).

In 1st year of use, campus-wide emissions were reduced 17% (and the pump wasn't even running at full efficiency – that's now been fixed)

We need **Congregational support** for heat pumps because they're not cheap:

Fund-raising has begun for heat pumps and window replacements in Hewett Hall and a heat pump in this sanctuary.

So give generously at these fund-raising events, such as the vegan pizza lunches.

9 – Going back to the idea of prioritizing Climate Action, our To Do list might need some revision

The wins for us and the planet

- We can become truly carbon neutral (and have a good conscience)
- We can broadcast our success to other churches and the metro-Vancouver community
- We can start a wave of climate action as other churches and organizations get on board.

To Do List:

1. Fix this
2. Fix That
3. Decommission this
4. Install that
5. Spruce up this
6. Renovate that
7. Install Heat Pumps and air-tight windows

SOME DAY SOON we can put up a big sign out front and on our Website that says.....

This church campus is carbon neutral
Find out how we did it.
Join the movement
<https://vancouverunitarians.ca>